



BFA Response Local Plan Options

**Bear Flat Association (BFA) submission on the
Bath and North East Somerset Council Local Plan
Options Document**

November 2025



We recognise that the background to the Local Plan Re-set is the Government's publication of changes to national planning policy in December 2024, in particular the changes to housing targets. B&NES has seen an uplift in its target of 105% from 717 new homes per year to 1,471 new homes per year. Over the next 20 years, this would equate to over 29,000 new homes in the local authority area. The Re-set Local Plan is not simply about added housing numbers, however, it is about creating sustainable and healthy places and supporting job growth. Providing land for businesses, schools, health facilities and green spaces is essential in addition to land for new housing. The WHS status, Conservation Area designation etc clearly limit the opportunities for new development in and close to the historic city.

The consultation leaflet regarding options for the City of Bath indicates all the existing sites, allocated in the current Local Plan, which are to be retained. Eight new sites are shown on the map, of which the largest is West of Bath (adjoining Newton St Loe) for 850 -1,950 new dwellings. The main site which could be relevant to Bear Flat is at Odd Down where employment use south-west of the P&R site is proposed, alongside the existing site for new housing development. There are various constraints on developing this site, notably, setting of WHS; proximity to Cotswolds National Landscape; part of the site is within a SNCI to protect butterflies and bats. It might generate more traffic on the A367, including through Bear Flat.

We are concerned that a substantial proportion of the 29,000 new homes are to be at various locations south of Bath. A significant number of the residents - especially those at or near Midsomer-Norton, Radstock and Peasedown St John - will inevitably commute to Bath, mostly on the A367. Development to the south of Bath should be limited to that which would not have a negative and harmful impact on the A367, including Wellsway through Bear Flat Local Centre, that is heavily congested already at peak hours.

In addition to causing pollution, poor air quality, congestion and road accidents, more traffic from commuters on Wellsway could have a negative impact on our Local Centre. Bear Flat is one of the few Local Centres designated in the adopted Local Plan as a place for local retail and community use. It is also referenced in the upcoming Re-set Local Plan. The Bear Flat Association's Vision for Bear Flat Centre includes measures to enhance the vitality and viability of our Local Centre.

The extent of traffic generation from new employment and residential development could be moderated by planning for balanced communities where many residents would have a short journey to work that could be undertaken on foot, by cycle or scooter. The Local Plan should encourage more self-contained towns and villages.



Also, all development must be supported by new infrastructure, in particular improved public transport services.

Bear Flat Association

planning@bearflat.org.uk

www.bearflat.org.uk

* * *