

Planning Guidance Report for Bleadon Neighbourhood Planning Group

- *Mr Graham Quick, September 2019*

Bleadon Neighbourhood Development Plan (BNDP)

Planning Guidance

1 Introduction

2 Executive Summary

3 Development Plan for North Somerset

- **North Somerset Core Strategy**
- **Site Allocations Plan**
- **Development Management Policies**

4 Emerging Development Plans for North Somerset

- **Joint Spatial Plan**
- **North Somerset Local Plan 2036**

5 Supplementary Planning Documents

- **Landscape Character Assessment**
- **North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Guidance on Development**

6 Future Housing Sites in Bleadon Village

7 Community Infrastructure Levy

8 Renewable Energy

9 Other Neighbourhood Development Plans in North Somerset

10 Evidence

11 Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment

12 Other Community Actions

13 Further Information

Appendices

1 NSC Development Management Policies that are relevant to Bleadon and the surrounding countryside

2 Relevant extract from Page 63 of Landscape Character Assessment

3 Map of Bleadon village showing sites with planning consent for residential development

4 Planning Consents for residential development granted consent in Bleadon Parish since 2006

5 Suggested contents list for the Bleadon Neighbourhood Development Plan

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this short report is to provide the Bleadon Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Group with guidance on preparing the BNDP. It does not draft the policies and proposals that could be contained in the plan, but rather directs the Working Group to the relevant sources of information and suggests various ideas that are worthy of further investigation. In particular it focuses on the current and emerging Development Plan for North Somerset, how this will impact on the future planning of Bleadon and whether there are any potential policy gaps that the BNDP could address to the benefit of the local community. The report focuses specifically on the village as it is considered that the “countryside” policies contained in the current Development Plan for North Somerset give adequate protection to the surrounding environment

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- It is within the remit of the BNDP to amend the settlement boundary and allocate some housing provided it is of a nature and scale commensurate with Core Strategy Policy CS33 i.e. the form of development respects the scale and character of the settlement, the size, type, tenure and range of housing reflects local needs and there is no significant adverse impact on service delivery and the infrastructure provision is sufficient to accommodate the demands of the development.
- The Croquet Club site at the western edge of the village justifies being designated as Local Green Space with a suitable policy to protect it from development.
- A strategic gap between Weston-super-Mare and Bleadon would be difficult to justify given that this would not be deemed a local policy and there is sufficient protection afforded by current planning policies
- Consideration should be given to the inclusion of detailed policies in the BNDP to:
 - Protection of Purn Farm Business Units
 - Protect important community facilities within the village
 - Retain and protect stone walls
 - Protect the views and setting of important landmarks within the village
 - Retain the number of small properties within the village and ensure any new development has a suitable mix of housing types
 - Protect land between the village and the A370
- Within or adjacent to the settlement boundary there is current planning consent for 46 dwellings. In addition, there is an undetermined application for 16 dwellings to the north of Purn Way.
- From an analysis of the various constraints it is considered that the only potential area that may be suitable for residential development is land to the north of Purn Way and Amesbury Drive.
- Land south of The Veale could be considered suitable for housing but it would be contrary to NSC Development Management Policies due to its nature conservation significance. Further discussions with NSC and the landowner are recommended

- If no housing sites are to be allocated for residential development then the amount of work involved and rationale for preparing a NDP needs to be closely examined
- The neighbourhood plan should outline the priorities your community has for how you would like Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds to be spent. Such priorities could include the provision of a recreation field, cycleway route provision, footpath improvements, improved youth facilities, play areas, highway safety schemes etc.
- Although the Plan should focus on land use policies a list of proposed community actions can be included perhaps as an Appendix
- NSC's documents must (taken as a whole) include policies which ensure a contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation. If you think the council's development plan documents do not make enough of a contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation then your neighbourhood plan is an opportunity to fill this gap
- A suggested contents list for the Bleadon Neighbourhood Development Plan is set out in Appendix 5
- A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) will be required due to the planning constraints in the area.
- The Congresbury Neighbourhood Development Plan is a good model to follow

3 DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR NORTH SOMERSET

3.1 If it is to meet the basic conditions as set out in the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (see Para 37) a neighbourhood plan when submitted must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan in force for the area

The Basic Conditions are:

- Have regard to national policy
- Contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development
- Be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the local area (North Somerset)
- Be compatible with EU obligations
- Comply with human rights legislation

The Development Plan for North Somerset is made up of the following documents:

- North Somerset Core Strategy (2017)*
- Site Allocations Plan (2018)*
- Development Management Policies (2016)*
- West of England Joint Waste Core Strategy (2011)
- Backwell Neighbourhood Plan (2015)
- Long Ashton Neighbourhood Plan (2015)
- Claverham Neighbourhood Plan (2018)
- Yatton Neighbourhood Plan (2019)

Those documents marked (*) are the most relevant for the BNDP

North Somerset Core Strategy <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/planning-building-control/planningpolicy/core-strategy/corestrategy/>

3.2 The North Somerset Core Strategy which covers the period 2006-2026 has been subject to a complex, lengthy and ongoing plan-making process, but has now been concluded. The Core Strategy was adopted on Jan 10th 2017 at the full North Somerset Council meeting. The Core Strategy sets out the broad long-term vision, objectives and strategic planning policies for North Somerset up to 2026. The Core Strategy is not a detailed document. It includes a key diagram and can allocate strategic sites, but does not provide detailed guidance on new development sites or planning applications. This has been undertaken through separate documents such as The Site Allocation Plan and Development Management Policies.

3.3 The Core Strategy sets out a settlement hierarchy where the larger settlements e.g. Weston-super-Mare can accept greater levels of development. Bleadon is classed as an infill village which largely reflects the lack of services and facilities within the village to support an expanded population. To avoid perpetuating unsustainable patterns of development and retain the character of villages and openness of the countryside, development within “infill villages” is strictly controlled by the use of settlement boundaries.

3.4 The policy governing residential development in Bleadon is Policy CS33. The relevant clause of that policy states:

“Within the settlement boundaries of the infill villages of Bleadon, Claverham, Cleeve, Dundry, Felton, Flax Bourton, Hutton, Kenn, Kewstoke, Locking, Sandford, Uphill and Winford, residential development of an appropriate scale which supports sustainable development will be supported providing that:

- The form of development respects the scale and character of the settlement;*
- The size, type, tenure and range of housing reflects has regard to local needs; and*
- There is no significant adverse impact on service delivery and infrastructure provision and the local infrastructure is sufficient to accommodate the demands of the development*

In the case of redevelopment proposals within settlement boundaries it must be demonstrated that if the site or premises was last used for an economic use, that continuation in economic use is unsuitable”

3.5 Bleadon’s settlement boundary has remained largely unaltered since the Woodspring Local Plan in the early 1990’s. Since then it has been carried forward into the North Somerset Replacement Local Plan (1998) and the Site Allocations Plan (2018). It follows tightly the extent of the built development and offers little if any scope for expansion of the village. The Core Strategy reinforces the principle of settlement boundaries but importantly recognises that *“The settlement boundaries as defined in the Replacement Local Plan for the infill villages will remain, although there is scope for these to be reviewed and adjusted via the plan making process.”* (para 4.93).

3.6 The production of the BNDP is part of the plan making process and it is within the remit of the BNDP to amend the settlement boundary and allocate some housing provided it is of a nature and scale commensurate with Policy CS33. It will also be necessary for any such housing sites to be fully assessed to verify that they comply with other policies

3.7 The Core Strategy will eventually be replaced by the Joint Spatial Plan and the new North Somerset Local Plan. Both of which look ahead to 2036. The new North Somerset Local Plan could review the status of Bleadon as an infill village. However, there are delays with the preparation of these plans which will result in the Core Strategy being in force for at least another 18 to 24 months

The Site Allocations Plan

<https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/planning-building-control/planningpolicy/sites-policies-development-plan-document/sitesandpolicies/>

3.8 The Site Allocations Plan looks ahead to 2026 and identifies housing and employment allocations to deliver the Core Strategy. The plan makes provision for new residential, employment and community facility sites, sets the settlement boundaries of towns and villages and designates local green spaces and strategic gaps. The plan was adopted in April 2018 following an examination in 2017

3.9 The settlement boundary for Bleadon was carried forward from previous plans and the only housing allocation relates to the current planning consent for 42 dwellings at Marshall's Quarry. There are no other policies or proposals in the plan that specifically relate to Bleadon.

Local Green Space

3.10 The Government, in its National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) of March 2012, introduced a new designation called Local Green Space (LGS) enabling local communities, through local and neighbourhood plans, to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. *'By designating land as Local Green Space, local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances'* (paragraph 76 of NPPF)

3.11 Paragraph 77 of the NPPF states that the designation *'will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space'* and should only be used where specified criteria would be met. It states that the designation should only be used where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves, is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity or richness of its wildlife, and is local in character and not an extensive tract of land. Paragraph 78 states that local policy for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with the policy for Green Belts i.e. special circumstances would have to be demonstrated.

3.12 The BNDP could consider whether any areas of land within or in close proximity to the village warrant the status of “Local Green Space “. The Croquet Club site at the western edge of the village is the only site that springs to mind and a proposal to designate it as Local Green Space and a policy to protect it would be justified. The wording of the policy in the Site Allocations Plan (Policy SA5) would be more than adequate especially as it has been tested at examination. Appropriate evidence to support this proposal would be its position on the entrance to the village and its local significance as demonstrated by the Local Survey: Bleadon Future (June 2019).

Policy SA5 states:

Planning permission will not be granted except in very special circumstances for development which adversely affects a designated Local Green Space as shown on the Policies Map and set out in Schedule 3 particularly regarding the characteristics underpinning its designation, such as beauty, historic importance, recreational value, tranquillity or richness of wildlife.

Strategic Gaps

3.13 Core Strategy Policy CS19 establishes the need for strategic gaps. It states that *“the council will protect strategic gaps to help retain the separate identity, character and/or landscape setting of settlements and distinct parts of settlements”*. The Core Strategy indicates that strategic gaps will be identified, and a policy to guide assessment of development proposals affecting strategic gaps will be set out in future planning documents I.e. Site Allocations Plan

3.14 Strategic gaps are needed because reliance on countryside policies alone would be unlikely to provide sufficient protection against development which would harm the separate identity, character and/or landscape setting of settlements or distinct parts of settlements.

3.15 Thus, there is a significant risk that, without the added protection of strategic gaps, the open character of land between the settlements would be significantly adversely affected and their landscape setting, separate identity and character harmed. There would particularly be a risk of gradual incremental development, and where the gap is narrow there would be a potential risk of eventual coalescence of the settlements.

3.16 Strategic gaps, with detailed boundaries, are identified in The Site Allocations Plan , between the following places:

- Weston-super-Mare, Hutton, Locking and Parklands Village
- Weston-super-Mare and Uphill
- Weston-super-Mare and St Georges
- Congresbury and Yatton
- Nailsea and Backwell

3.17 A number of NDP's (Long Ashton, Yatton) have unsuccessfully tried to define strategic gaps on the edge of their villages. Such designations were considered to be "non local" i.e. strategic and did not find favour with the Council.

3.18 It is recommended that the BNDP does not designate a strategic gap and relies on the countryside policies. There are sufficiently strong policies contained in North Somerset Council's Development Management Policies and a number of significant planning constraints to protect the separate identity and character of Bleadon village and its environs.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES

<https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Sites-and-Policies-Plan-Part-1-Development-Management-Policies-July-2016.pdf>

3.19 This document was adopted in 2016 and brings forward a range of detailed policies which are used in the determination of planning applications. There are over seventy policies covering a wide range of topics. With the exception of policies relating to the Airport, Royal Portbury Dock and specific areas such as the Green Belt, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty the vast majority of the policies are very general and cover the whole of the district. This approach is understandable and pragmatic given the number and wide range of planning applications that are received in North Somerset.

3.20 Appendix 1 lists all the NSC Development Management Policies that are relevant to Bleadon and the surrounding countryside

3.21 The policies of a neighbourhood plan and the local plan together form the statutory development plan for the area and will be used as a basis for making decisions on planning applications. A neighbourhood plan should not repeat national or local plan policies, as such policies already apply and repeating them causes confusion and unnecessary work.

3.22 Based on the evidence, community feedback and direct knowledge of the area, a useful approach may be to consider what is unique about Bleadon that makes the area distinctive, attractive and a desirable place to live and work in, and which is not covered in NSC's plans. Are there examples of recent development in the BDNP area that you wished could have been determined against more local criteria? Are the NSC policies too generic to take into account local circumstances?

3.23 The NSC policies are often referred to "catch all" policies in that they are so general that many factors can be used to determine planning applications. This has its advantages given the complexities of many planning applications and the wide range of issues that need to be addressed. However, there is always a danger in being too specific as some matters can be overlooked.

3.24 From my meeting with the NDPWG and a walk around the village there are a number of policy areas that could be the subject of specific policies for Bleadon. These are set out below:

Employment site west of village (Purn Farm Business Units)

3.25 These units are ideally located to the west of the village. Within easy walking distance of the majority of residents, but in a location where much of the traffic generated does not use the roads within the village. The site is also the location of the popular café and Post office/shop. Their loss to an alternative use would significantly reduce employment opportunities and a valuable community facility in the locality and should be resisted by a specific policy

Protection of Community Facilities

3.26 Bleadon like many villages have very few community facilities but because of their isolation and poor transport links rely heavily on these facilities to ensure community life can continue. The Coronation Hall, Youth Centre, the village pubs should be protected from alternative uses unless it is clearly demonstrated that they are not viable

Land between the A370 and village

3.27 The eastern half of this stretch of land is currently subject to a planning appeal for 200 dwellings (<https://planning.n-somerset.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=P15JY9LP00600>) . It is a highly prominent site which helps to maintain the rural character of Bleadon village. It is classed as a “High Sensitive Landscape” in NSC’s Landscape Sensitivity Assessment and the whole area between the village and the A370 could be given this designation and afforded protection for this very reason. Congresbury NDP includes such a designation to the south of their village

Smaller properties

3.28 Much of Bleadon village is made up of smaller properties that not only help to meet local housing need but help to make up the character and identity of the village. Ensuring that existing properties are not combined or substantively enlarged and that any new development includes a range of smaller dwellings will help to retain this important balance.

Detailed design policies

3.29 New development (including extensions) could be the subject of a design code based on a design policy in the BNDP. The protection of stone walls, the use of suitable building material and retention of views to the surrounding countryside and local landmarks e.g Church, would be important elements of such a policy

Specific landmarks and important features

3.30 There are a number of important local features in and around the village e.g. war memorial, Church and Churchyard, the Well, grass verge on Shiplate Hill. Their setting could be adversely affected by the proximity and design of development and a policy to avoid this would help to retain the character of the village.

EMERGING DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR NORTH SOMERSET

Joint Spatial Plan (JSP)

<http://www.hwa.uk.com/projects/west-of-england-joint-spatial-plan/>

4.1 The four West of England Councils – Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol City, North Somerset, and South Gloucestershire are working together to produce a West of England Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) which will set out a prospectus for sustainable growth to help the Region meet its housing and transport needs for the next 20 years, to 2036.

4.2 The Plan was submitted for examination on 13 April 2018. Detailed technical evidence papers were produced between 12 November 2018 and 7 January 2019 and an examination was held in July 2019.

4.3 For North Somerset an estimated 25,000 new dwellings are needed between 2016 and 2036. This required building rate (1,250 dwellings p.a) is considerably higher than previous years and represents a major challenge to North Somerset Council and the housebuilding industry. Although nearly 14,000 dwellings already have planning consent the majority of the balance (11,000) will be built on greenfield sites. The JSP proposes four garden villages at Nailsea (2575 dwellings), Backwell (700) , Churchill (2675) and Banwell (1900) . For Weston and the surrounding villages, the approach is one of urban intensification primarily to help redress the employment/ residential balance and not worsen the existing out commuting levels. In North Somerset the green belt around Bristol is to be retained despite strong pressure to develop on the edge of Bristol

4.4 Following the examination, the Inspectors on 1st August 2019 wrote to the four authorities suggesting that the JSP be withdrawn and reassessed to ensure a clear spatial strategy throughout the area. For example, some of the local authorities are proposing development within the Green Belt (B& NES) whilst North Somerset retain the Green Belt.

4.5 At the time of writing, the implications for the future of the JSP is unclear. One possibility is that NSC could break away from the other local authorities. What is clear though is that the required building rate for North Somerset up to 2036 is unlikely to drop and there will be increasing pressure on the towns and villages in the district to accommodate this development. The Green Belt boundary is likely to come under closer scrutiny and the viability and merits of the “garden villages“ will be reassessed.

4.6 For Bleadon it is considered the planning constraints around the village, the high value landscape and the lack of key facilities does not make it a reasonable candidate for any large scale expansion.

North Somerset Local Plan 2036

<https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/planning-building-control/planningpolicy/local-plan/new-local-plan-2036/about-the-new-local-plan-for-2036/>

4.7 North Somerset are preparing a new Local Plan which will provide detailed policies and additional housing, employment and other land allocations up to 2036. It will review and roll-forward policies and allocations in existing documents and plan for the amount of housing, jobs and infrastructure set out in the Joint Spatial Plan (JSP).

4.8 Although work on the new Local Plan has been delayed due to the uncertainty over the JSP, NSC have produced an Issues and Options document in order to identify the issues which need to be addressed and to receive initial feedback on a range of proposed alternatives. This is not a draft plan and does not contain detailed policies or site allocations. Detailed draft policies will be consulted upon at a later date, taking into account the results of this consultation.

4.9 One of the issues that NSC raised for discussion was the settlement hierarchy that gives Bleadon its infill village status. Given the proximity of Bleadon to Weston with all its services, facilities and jobs there is an argument for the village to have the scope to accommodate more growth. The decision on this will need to await the outcome of the JSP and should not influence the preparation of the BNDP.

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

<https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/planning-building-control/planningpolicy/supplementary-planning-advice/adopted-supplementary-plans/supplementary-plans-adopted/>

5.1 Supplementary planning documents provide more detail on policies in local plan documents and support decisions on planning applications. Because these documents are not subject to examination, they do not carry the same weight as development plan policies. However, they have been subject to public consultation and are based on extensive research and evidence

5.2 NSC have produced a number of Supplementary Planning Documents with the following specifically related to Bleadon:

- **Landscape Character Assessment** <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Landscape-Character-Assessment-September-2018.pdf>

Landscape character assessment is a technique that has been developed to facilitate systematic analysis, description and classification of the landscape. It involves identification of those features or combinations of elements that contribute to the character of the landscape, thereby enabling the special character and qualities of a particular area to be understood. This information allows reasoned consideration of those issues affecting the landscape, which can be used as a basis for the development of appropriate recommendations for future landscape conservation and management.

The main purpose of this assessment is to document the current status of the North Somerset landscape, furthering the understanding of the landscape resource

available in the area and giving an indication of areas in need of enhancement and of conservation. This will enable better-informed decisions to be made on the future management of the landscape

The relevant extract for Bleadon Moor (page 63) is reproduced in Appendix 2

- **North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Guidance on Development** <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/North-Somerset-and-Mendip-Bats-SAC-guidance-supplementary-planning-document.pdf>

This advice is aimed at developers, consultants, and planners involved in planning and assessing development proposals in the landscapes surrounding the North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC. The guidance provides a consistent basis for understanding how rare horseshoe bats use the landscape and where there is likely to be greater risk or opportunity for development. This will help inform strategic planning for the area's future housing needs.

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) are European sites of international importance for wildlife. The Bat SAC is important for two bat species, Greater and Lesser Horseshoe bats. The SAC itself comprises component SSSIs which in North Somerset include, for example, the hibernation roosts like the Banwell Bone Caves, Cheddar Complex and Wookey Hole.

The landscapes around the SAC itself are also important in providing foraging habitat needed to maintain the favourable conservation status of the horseshoe bats. Therefore, the guidance sets out strong requirements for consultation, survey information and appropriate mitigation, to demonstrate that development proposals will not adversely impact on the designated bat populations.

Bleadon parish is within the Zone C of the Bat Consultation Zone where planning applications have to be accompanied by a report from a consultation ecologist. The BDNP will also have to have regard to this constraint and will be subject to a Habitat Regulations Assessment (see 11.5)

5.3 There are other Supplementary Planning Documents that are more generic covering specific subjects such as:

- Wind Turbines
- Accessible Housing Standards
- Affordable Housing
- Biodiversity and Trees
- Creating sustainable building and places
- Parking Standards
- Residential Design
- Solar Photovoltaic Array

5.4 The authors of the BNDP should make themselves aware of the above documents but given the amount of research and evidence gathering that took place to prepare these documents it is recommended that these subject matters are not included within the BNDP.

FUTURE HOUSING IN THE VILLAGE

6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (Para 69) encourages neighbourhood planning groups to *“consider the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites..... suitable for housing in their area.”*

6.2 National guidance encourages Local Authorities to determine a housing requirement for each Neighbourhood Planning Area. This would certainly assist all Parish Councils. However due to the delay and uncertainty over the Joint Spatial Plan NSC are in no position to provide such an assessment. Therefore, if any housing sites are to be allocated in the BNDP they must be justified by being in accordance with Policy CS33 of the NSC Core Strategy and other policies

6.3 The [National Planning Policy Guidance](#) (Para 105) states that if a local planning authority is unable to provide a housing figure, then *“the neighbourhood planning body may exceptionally need to determine a housing requirement figure themselves, taking account of relevant policies, the existing and emerging spatial strategy, and characteristics of the neighbourhood area”* There is guidance on this with any assessment largely based on past housing build rates and population growth. Even with a housing figure, the scale of development in Bleadon would be largely driven by the need to conform with Policy CS33 and the planning constraints in the locality. Therefore, it is not recommended that a housing requirement for the BNDP area be undertaken at this stage and you await this output from NSC when the spatial strategy up to 2036 is adopted

6.4 Within or adjacent to the settlement boundary there is current planning consent for 46 dwellings. This total is made up as follows and the sites can be viewed in Appendix 3

[10/P/0737/E](#) 3 Dwellings Field OS 9978 off Bleadon Rd Bleadon

Planning consent for four dwellings with one completed

[17/P/2278/O](#) 1 Dwelling Land adjacent to Rivermead/Purn Way BS24 0QF

Outside of settlement boundary but granted consent because of the lack of a five year housing supply

[14/P/0687/O](#) 42 Dwellings and 500 sq m of employment Marshalls Quarry Bridge Rd BS24 0AT (Application [19/P/0835/OUT](#) has been submitted to renew this application)

6.5 In addition to the above there is an undetermined application for 16 dwellings to the north of Purn Way ([18/P/5035/OUT](#)). A similar application ([17/P/1331/O](#)) was refused due to lack of sufficient information on surface water drainage and ecology concerns. These matters have now been addressed by the new planning application and given the lack of a five year housing supply in North Somerset there is a real prospect of this application

gaining approval. This would take the number of dwellings with consent to 62 dwellings. Appendix 4 sets out a list of residential planning consents granted within the parish (2006 to 2019)

6.6 At the Neighbourhood Planning Group meeting on 21st August 2019 the view that the settlement boundary should remain unaltered was expressed. This stance is understandable given the planning constraints but it could result in the village being more susceptible to ad hoc development by not being a NDP where residential planning applications are assessed against a 3 year housing supply rather than five years (See [Para 14 National Planning Policy Framework](#)). In addition, there will be less Community Infrastructure Levy passed to the Parish Council and the potential for a greater amount of affordable housing will be lost. If no housing sites are to be allocated for residential development then the amount of work involved and rationale for preparing a NDP needs to be closely examined

6.7 Irrespective of whether the BNDP allocates any housing sites, an appraisal of options and an assessment of individual sites or areas against clearly identified criteria should be undertaken. This need not be a complicated exercise. Each potential site/area needs to be assessed against a number of criteria many of which will relate to the planning constraints surrounding the village e.g. AONB, Nature Conservation site, Flood plain. All this information can be obtained from [The Planning Map](#) on the NSC Website. The common practice is to assess each site/area either as Red, Amber or Green.

Red – total constraint to development e.g. Flood Zone 3

Amber – potentially acceptable subject to further assessment or planning conditions e.g. Bat Zone C

Green – no constraint

6.8 Another important source of information is the [Landscape Sensitivity Assessment](#) commissioned by NSC in 2018. This report assesses the landscape surrounding each village and town in North Somerset so as to provide a valuable evidence base for the identification of future development sites. Landscapes are assessed as being either low, medium or high sensitivity.

6.9 The assessment of Bleadon can be found on Page 59/60 of the document and states as follows:

“Bleadon is located to the south of Weston-super-Mare, on the boundary of the Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and has an estimated population of 715. Land to the north-east of the village, east of Celtic Way and north of Shiplate Road, is located within the AONB.

The majority of land surrounding the village rises steeply from the settlement edge, up to Purn Hill to the west, Bleadon Hill and Hellenge Hill to the north and north-east, and South Hill to the south-east. There are a number of Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) at these locations, as well as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at Purn Hill and Bleadon Hill. In addition, Purn

Hill and Hellenge Hill have open access, and there are a large number of footpaths at South Hill, indicating high recreational value for these areas. Owing to the above, land beyond the settlement edge, to the north, east, south, south-east and west is of high sensitivity.

There are a number of small fields immediately north of the settlement edge, to the east and west of Celtic Way, that are located outside of ecological designations and generally enclosed by surrounding development, vegetation and the rising topography. These fields have low to medium visual prominence, and fit well within the existing settlement form. Fields to the east of Celtic Way are located within the AONB, however they have very low visual prominence and are generally not visible from other locations within the AONB. Fields to the west of Celtic Way are more open, however, these are not located within the AONB and are not visible from it. Owing to this, land to the north of the settlement adjacent to the settlement edge is of medium sensitivity. There are a small number of fields to the north of Birch Avenue that are of low sensitivity.

To the south, there is a small parcel of land which is surrounded by development and has very low visual prominence. Owing to this, this parcel of land is of low sensitivity.

The topography to the south-west of the village is flat, contrasting sharply with the steeply undulating topography elsewhere. There are large, flat fields to the south of the village, enclosed by the settlement edge and the A370. Although these fields are enclosed by development on three sides, adjacent housing is generally single storey and the settlement edge is partially vegetated. In addition, this land is open and visually prominent, including from viewpoints within the AONB. This land also contributes to the settlement form and the transition to Bleadon Moor. Owing to the above, this land is of high sensitivity.

Conclusion

Fields immediately north and north-west of the settlement edge are of medium sensitivity. The small fields adjacent to the settlement edge, to the north of Birch Drive, are of low sensitivity.

The field to the south, surrounded by development, is of low sensitivity.

All remaining land surrounding Bleadon is of high sensitivity.”

The areas referred to can be viewed on Map1 of the document

6.10 From an analysis of the various constraints it is considered that the only potential area that may be suitable for development is land to the north of Purn Way and Amesbury Drive. Although this area is regarded as medium sensitivity in landscape terms there are no overriding planning constraints to development. Access to the land north of Amesbury Drive would be via Amesbury Drive and there could be an issue here with ownership of the narrow strip of land (ransom strip) at the end of the road.

6.11 This assessment accords with the [North Somerset Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment SHLAA](#) where in its [Appendix B](#) land north of Amesbury Drive (Site HE1851) and land north of South Coombe Site HE18356) are identified as “ *potentially being suitable for development subject to further plan making*”

6.12 There is one other site that is worthy of further investigation. This site is south of The Veale and could accommodate approximately 12 dwellings. It is currently owned by the Church Commissioners who have expressed a willingness to develop it for residential purposes. No planning application has been submitted. Although outside of the settlement boundary it is well contained and despite being in a “highly sensitive landscape area” (See the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment) it is not a prominent or open site. However, the site is located within the South Hill Site of Local Nature Conservation Interest designated by NSC and therefore allocating it for development would be contrary to Policy DM8 of [NSC Development Management Policies](#). There is also potential surface water run off issues that need to be addressed.

6.13 If the BNDP group wish to pursue this site then it is recommended that discussions be held with the Church Commissioners who may, with the backing of local support, wish to investigate with NSC potential mitigation and compensation measures that could help to overcome the nature conservation objections .

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

7.1 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a levy on new development to contribute towards the cost of local infrastructure. The levy is charged according to the floor area of the development, at a rate set by NSC (with some exemptions for certain types of development). NSC have also published a list of the infrastructure that is intended to be funded by the CIL in their area. More information can be found on NSC’s website at <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/planning-building-control/planningpolicy/cil/community-infrastructure-levy/>

7.2 When CIL is paid, 15% of the money must be reinvested in the local area, or 25% in areas where there is a neighbourhood plan. Where there is a parish council, it will decide how to spend this money; elsewhere, the money will remain with the local planning authority to decide how to spend it (in consultation with the community). In all cases, where there is a neighbourhood plan, the priorities outlined in the BNDP should guide how the money is spent.

CIL money can be spent on:

- (a) the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or
- (b) anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area

7.3 You should include a policy statement in your neighbourhood plan outlining the priorities your community has for how you would like CIL funds to be spent. Such priorities could include the provision of a recreation field, cycleway route provision, footpath improvements, improved youth facilities, play areas, highway safety schemes etc.

7.4 Although the BNDP may not allocate many housing sites there will be CIL funds arising from the Marshalls Quarry development of 42 dwellings and other sites granted consent.

The current CIL charge for Bleadon is £80 per sq m, of residential development and allowing for affordable housing (which is exempt) Bleadon Parish Council could expect in the region of £40,000 to £50,000 from CIL when all the sites are completed

RENEWABLE ENERGY

8.1 The Climate Change Act 2008 commits the UK to an 80% reduction in CO2 emissions by 2050 – this is a big feat which will require everyone to be engaged, from households and communities, to businesses and local and national government. It is a UK legal instrument, separate from any EU directive

8.2 NSC's documents must (taken as a whole) include policies which ensure a contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation. If you think the council's development plan documents do not make enough of a contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation then your neighbourhood plan is an opportunity to fill this gap

8.3 The Government has set a target to deliver 15% of the UK's energy consumption from renewable sources by 2020 (this is a legal obligation, and stems from a Europe-wide 20% target), yet in 2016, only 8.9% of our energy was met by renewable generation⁴, so there's still further to go to meet this target.

8.4 National planning policy stresses the responsibility on all communities to contribute to energy generation from renewable or low carbon sources. Your neighbourhood plan is your opportunity to develop a renewable energy strategy that your community could support and which could generate income which can be invested in community priorities.

8.5 Further information is available from The Centre of Sustainable Energy (CSE) in their guide [Low carbon Neighbourhood Planning](#) which covers such topics as:

- (a) Renewable Energy Projects e.g wind farms, solar farms
- (b) Energy Efficiency e.g. low carbon development
- (c) Sustainable transport

CSE are happy to talk to Neighbourhood Planning Groups and their contact details can be found on the website <https://www.cse.org.uk/local-energy/neighbourhood-plans>

OTHER NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLANS IN NORTH SOMERSET

9.1 Details of other NDP's prepared in North Somerset and advice from NSC can be found on the following link: <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/planning-building-control/planningpolicy/neighbourhood-plans/neighbourhoodplanning/>

9.2 At present there are four plans that have gone through the whole process and now form part of North Somerset's Development Plan. These are:

- Long Ashton

- Backwell
- Claverham
- Yatton

9.3 Congresbury is about to go to referendum (September 19th) and in my opinion is the best in terms of presentation, evidence and justification. They have proposed a number of housing sites and all the policies are precise, clear and accompanied by justification and evidence. Details of the plan can be found at the following link;

<https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/planning-building-control/planningpolicy/neighbourhood-plans/congresbury-neighbourhood-plan/>?

EVIDENCE BASE

10.1 Planning practice guidance sets out that proportionate, robust evidence should support the choices made and the approach taken. Planning policies need to be based on clear planning rationale and proper understanding of the place they relate to, if they are to be relevant, realistic and to address local issues effectively. The data and analysis about a place is called the evidence base.

10.2 Whilst evidence gathering should commence from an early stage, it is likely to continue until late stages of drafting the plan, as policies and content of the plan are developed. At the early stage, evidence gathering will be more generalised, to 'paint' a picture of the social, economic and environmental characteristics of the area. As work on the plan progresses, more specific or detailed evidence may be required to support specific policies. Policies need to be based on evidence, but also to take account of effective community engagement. This ensures that they reflect the needs of the local area, economy and community.

10.3 A sound approach is to consider the evidence base in stages. At the beginning of the process, general evidence may be compiled to provide an overview of the neighbourhood area. This would include information on population, environment, employment, transport links and strategic context. As key themes for the neighbourhood plan emerge, more specific subject-based evidence may be compiled as a basis for formulating specific policies.

10.4 A good starting point is to look at the socio-economic profile of the local population. Population trends, local employment, industries and social trends should be identified. Predominant land uses in the neighbourhood area may be identified. Other evidence may relate to things like housing, transport, natural environments, built heritage, design, community facilities and any other subjects relevant to the planning and development of the area.

General guidance on this is set out in Page 22 of the following link;

https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/NP_Roadmap_online_full.pdf

Specific information on Bleadon (2011 census) can be found at:

<https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/parish-census-profiles.pdf>

North Somerset's evidence base for the preparation of their Local Plan to 2036 can be found at:

<https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/planning-building-control/planningpolicy/local-plan/new-local-plan-2036/evidence-base-local-plan-2036/>

Congresbury's NDP evidence base is extensive and can be found at:

<https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/planning-building-control/planningpolicy/neighbourhood-plans/congresbury-neighbourhood-plan/>

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA) AND HABITAT REGULATION ASSESSMENT (HRA)

11.1 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) states that one of the basic conditions that will be tested at examination stage is to see if the Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with the European Union obligations (including under the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive)

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

11.2 As the Neighbourhood Plan will become a statutory development plan document, there is a legal requirement to assess the policies and proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan against the requirements of European Union Directive 2001/42/EC; also known as the "Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive". The objective for SEA is: *"to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development, by ensuring that, in accordance with this Directive, an environmental assessment is carried out on certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment."* (SEA Directive, Article 1). A full SEA is only required if the plan proposals are likely to have significant environmental effects and a screening report assesses the likelihood of this.

11.3 Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan which in this case is taken to be the North Somerset Core Strategy and the emerging Joint Spatial Plan. The Core Strategy was subject to a full Sustainability Appraisal which included a SEA assessment. This ensured that there were no likely significant effects which would be produced from the implementation of the Core Strategy

11.4 If, as is very likely, NSC considers that there is general conformity between the Bleadon Neighbourhood Plan, the Core Strategy and the emerging JSP and North Somerset Local Plan 2036 and that there are no significant changes introduced by the Plan. Then it follows that the implementation of the Bleadon Neighbourhood Plan would not result in any likely significant effects upon the environment.

Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA)

11.5 The Habitats Regulations (2010) requires an assessment of land use planning proposals associated with neighbourhood plans. The assessment process examines the likely significant effects of the different spatial options on the integrity of the European wildlife sites of nature conservation importance within, close to or connected to the plan area. European wildlife sites are areas of international nature conservation importance that are protected for the benefit of the habitats and species they support. This assessment is known as a Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA).

11.6 The screening exercise must consider whether significant effects would be likely regarding one of the four European Sites within North Somerset, namely the North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC. The o the Severn Estuary European Marine Site, Mendip Limestone Grasslands SAC and Avon Gorge Woodlands. The latter will be too remote from Bleadon and need not be assessed

11.7 Neighbourhood Plans that are located near to a European wildlife site may trigger the Habitats Directive depending on how complex the proposed policies are. The Duty to Cooperate requires the Local Planning Authority alongside Natural England, Environment Agency, and English Heritage to advise and assist on SEA and HRA requirements. This involves the Local Planning Authority undertaking a screening assessment of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan proposals at an early stage to ascertain whether they will trigger any EU directives or Habitat directives and thus to avoid the community and local authority undertaking unnecessary work

11.8 If no development sites are allocated in the Bleadon NDP it is highly unlikely that any screening reports will indicate that further assessments are required. However, it will still be necessary to assess the planning policies contained in the plan. Congresbury undertook this work and their screening reports can be viewed at:

<https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/planning-building-control/planningpolicy/neighbourhood-plans/congresbury-neighbourhood-plan/>

OTHER COMMUNITY ACTIONS

12.1 Within your plan you can include objectives, actions or initiatives that your community is keen to pursue but which are not planning issues – so these are statements of intent for what your community will do, or would like to see happen (it's important that these are clearly labelled as non-planning issues, and that you separate them from the planning issues in your plan). More often now examiners are suggesting that they are included as an appendix and removed from the main planning content.

12.2 Such topics that could be covered include highway safety issues e.g. speed limits, better cycle links to Weston or the desire to see the historic core of the village designated as a conservation area

FURTHER INFORMATION

13.1 Legal framework

Localism Act 2011 (which amends the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004)

Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 (which adds to and amends the above)

Neighbourhood planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

13.2 The Government's policies on neighbourhood planning

National Planning Policy Framework (June 2019 but updated periodically)

Sets out the Government's approach to Planning and provides an overview for neighbourhood planning groups in relation to the aims and objectives of the planning system. Neighbourhood plans must have regard to national policy set out in the NPPF. Contains some specific paragraphs directed at neighbourhood planning. Paragraphs are updated periodically.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

13.3 Planning Practice Guidance (updated periodically)

Government step by step guidance for neighbourhood planning in paragraphs. Sets out the main requirements of the various Acts and Regulations relating to neighbourhood planning. Paragraphs are periodically updated. You can sign up to get notifications from gov.uk when this happens

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>

13.4 Toolkits and in-depth guidance

Locality website for all advice, toolkits and good practice examples (suite of documents dealing with matters from a Step by Step guide to Neighbourhood Planning, Neighbourhood Planning Grant and technical support guidance, how to assess and allocate sites for development, making local green space designations and many more)

<https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/>

13.5 Building your evidence base

Census information for parish on Nomis (government site for population and census info at parish level)

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/localarea?compare=1170221207>

APPENDIX 1

LIST OF NSC DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND THEIR RELEVANCE TO THE BLEADON NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN (BNDP)

*Applicable both within and outside of Settlement Boundary

(OUTSIDE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY) only applicable outside of Settlement Boundary

The Environment

DM1: Flooding and drainage *

DM2: Renewable and low carbon energy *

DM4: Listed Buildings *

DM6: Archaeology *

DM7: Non-designated heritage assets *

DM8: Nature Conservation *

DM9: Trees and Woodlands *

DM10: Landscape *

DM11: Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) *

Transport

DM22: Existing and proposed railway lines (OUTSIDE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY)

DM24: Safety, traffic and provision of infrastructure, etc. associated with development *

DM25: Public rights of way, pedestrian and cycle access*

DM26: Travel Plans*

DM27: Bus Accessibility Criteria *

DM28: Parking Standards*

DM29: Car Parks *

Delivering Strong and Inclusive Communities

DM32: High quality design and place-making *

DM33: Inclusive access into non-residential buildings and spaces *

DM34: Housing type and mix*

DM36: Residential densities *

DM37: Residential development in existing residential areas *

DM38: Extensions to dwellings *

DM39: Sub-division of properties *

Older and vulnerable people

DM40: Retirement accommodation and supported independent living for older and vulnerable people *

DM41: Nursing and care homes for older people and drug and alcohol rehabilitation units*

DM42: Accessible and adaptable housing and housing space standards *

DM43: Residential annexes *

Dwellings in the Countryside

DM44: Replacement dwellings in the countryside (OUTSIDE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY)

DM45: The conversion or re-use of rural buildings to residential use. (OUTSIDE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY)

DM46: Rural workers dwellings (OUTSIDE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY)

Delivering a prosperous economy

DM47: Proposals for economic development within towns and defined settlements*.

DM48: Broadband.*

Agriculture

DM51: Agriculture and land-based rural business development in the countryside (OUTSIDE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY)

DM52: Equestrian Development (OUTSIDE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY)

Businesses in the countryside

DM53: Employment Development on greenfield sites in the countryside (OUTSIDE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY)

DM54: Employment development on previously developed land in the countryside (OUTSIDE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY)

DM55: Extensions, ancillary buildings or the intensification of use for existing businesses located in the countryside. (OUTSIDE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY)

DM56: Conversion and reuse of rural buildings for employment development. (OUTSIDE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY)

DM57: Conversion, reuse and new build for visitor accommodation in the countryside (OUTSIDE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY)

DM58: Camping and caravan sites (OUTSIDE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY)

DM59: Garden centres (OUTSIDE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY)

Retailing, town, district and local centres

DM67: Retail proposals outside or not adjacent to town, district or local centres

Ensuring safe and healthy communities

DM68: Protection of sporting, cultural and community facilities

DM69: Location of sporting, cultural and community facilities.

Delivery

DM70: Development Infrastructure

DM71: Development contributions, Community Infrastructure Levy and viability.

APPENDIX 2

Relevant extract from Page 63 of NSC's Landscape Character Assessment

Location and Boundaries: Bleadon Moor is a small section of land to the south of Weston-super-Mare and the Mendip Ridge. The boundary follows the 10m contour/field boundaries to the north and the authority boundary forms the edge of the area to the south (with the River Axe forming the boundary line). The area is a small part of the Somerset Levels which continue to the south into Sedgemoor District.

Key Characteristics

- Flat lowland based on beach and tidal flat deposits.
- Mixed pastoral (sheep and cattle grazing) and arable land use.
- Views to wooded hills give enclosure and form a complex skyline to an otherwise simple and open landscape.
- Regular fields pattern, medium in size in the heart of Bleadon Moor, with larger geometric fields to the east and around the margins of the Moor.
- Mainly grassland but some in arable use appearing bleak and monotonous.
- Hedgerows intermittent with sparse hedgerow trees in the west of the area, to the east more complete with variety of hedgerow species including willows, oak, elm and ash.
- Network of drainage channels, ditches and rhynes in evidence but not visually dominant due to growth of scrub along smaller channels forming gappy hedgerows.
- River Axe forms southern boundary, partially embanked for flood defence.
- Very little settlement with a few scattered stone farmsteads to the east, associated with pasture, small orchards, stone walls and species rich hedgerows.
- Signs of urban influence to the west with marginal land uses such as model car racetrack, caravan park, sewage treatment works, and with pylons highly visible in the flat terrain.
- Main part of the moor to the west is remote and inaccessible, with just one rural

road giving access to the centre of the area, to the east the road skirts the north of the area.

- Historic landscape dominated by medieval enclosure with post medieval reclamation of the warths.

DESCRIPTION

Bleadon Moor is a remote area cut off from the other moors by the Mendip Ridge. The western section is a roughly circular piece of land with an inner core of medium sized regular fields and an outer area reclaimed later from the flood plain of the River Axe. This latter area has large fields of regular rectangular shape, a proportion of which are used for arable farming. The landscape here is monotonous and large in scale although the varied views to the wooded ridges and buildings of Weston-super-Mare (particularly the Old St Nicholas Church at Uphill) add complexity and interest. In this section of the area, hedgerows are mainly hawthorn, flailed in places and in others gappy and generally with few hedgerow trees. Ditches and rhynes are less in evidence in this area than the Moors type generally due to scrub growing up over them. This part of the area feels remote and rural but lacks the strong pastoral character typical of the Moors type. Along the single road though the area there are non-agricultural land uses such as a model car racing circuit, caravan park and other developing leisure uses. A line of pylons is visually prominent in the flat landscape. Away from the road there is very little access although the West Mendip Way footpath runs around the area following the New Rhyne which forms the division between the two types of field patterns.

The character area continues along the base of the ridge to the east forming part of a larger area which continues on the other side of the River Axe into Sedgemoor District. Here, the landscape is predominantly pastoral with sheep grazing in large rectangular fields and with hedgerow trees and hedgerows that are largely intact and richer in species than the part of the area to the west, with willow, oak, sycamore, elm, field maple and ash. There are also small farm orchards. The few buildings include substantial old farmsteads of stone and the 18th century, brick built, Shiplate House.

This easterly section of the Bleadon Moor character area is more typical of the Moor character type in its remote, rural and pastoral feel, although to the eastern end the noise of the M5 is intrusive.

EVALUATION

Forces for Change

- Areas of arable farming stand out from the characteristic pastoral landscape of the Moors type.
- Hedgerow management is variable, with few hedgerow trees in some sections and generally gappy, species poor hedgerows, many originating as scrub grown up over ditches.
- Loss of historic orchards.
- Pressure for diversification of land use particularly near the urban edge of Weston-super-Mare.
- Urban influences apparent in the form of neglect, fly tipping and increased leisure related uses, such as caravans/mobile homes in western section.

Character

Bleadon Moor character area has a strong character although in places, particularly at the west of the area this has weakened due to the large scale change in land use to arable farming plus the influence of urban fringe activities. Elsewhere, the area is more typical of its type with a strongly rural and peaceful pastoral character with intact hedgerows and drainage ditches.

Condition

The condition of the landscape in the Bleadon Moor area is variable with overall condition declining. To the south of Summerways Bridge the traditional grazed landscape has been replaced with arable, which with the large scale regular fields with flailed thorn hedgerows and few hedgerow trees and visually dominant pylons contrasts strongly with the pastoral landscape with ecologically rich hedgerows found elsewhere in the area and throughout the Moors landscape type.

STRATEGY

Landscape Strategy

The overall strategy for Bleadon Moor will be to conserve the rural pastoral landscape with its intact, species rich hedges and hedgerow trees, its network of ditches and rhynes and historic farmsteads. Alongside this, the areas and elements of the landscape which are in decline should be enhanced, in particular through enhancement of field boundaries for visual enclosure and biodiversity and control of visually intrusive or anti-social land use.

Landscape Guidelines

- Conserve remote rural, pastoral character, with its absence of settlement and buildings.
- Encourage restoration of pasture in areas now under intensive arable, and encourage less intensive farming methods to enhance the biodiversity interest of ditches and rhynes.
- Enhance the historic hedgerow network where this has become weakened through replanting using a range of species and cyclical cutting.
- Nurture new and existing hedgerow trees and manage/restore the pollards and traditional orchards using local stock.
- Encourage sensitive management of ditches and rhynes for nature conservation for instance through cyclical de-silting.
- Consider restoration of scrubbed over ditches back to open water bodies.
- Control marginal/leisure uses of land such as that can have a significant visual impact within this flat open landscape. Planting of new wet woodland belts may be appropriate in the area adjoining Weston-Super-Mare.
- Discourage anti-social behaviour such as fly tipping that affects the condition and rural ambiance of the landscape.
- Maintenance of high water tables required to preserve the organic cultural and palaeoenvironmental evidence.
- Maintenance of grassland containing archaeological sites

APPENDIX 5

SUGGESTED CONTENTS LIST FOR THE BLEADON NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

1 Introduction

- Aims of the plan
- Legal Status of the NDP
- Bleadon village and parish
- History
- Area covered by plan
- Consultation
- Duration of the plan

2 Vision

3 Summary of policies and community actions

4 NDP policies

- Settlement Boundary
- Housing
- Employment
- Protection of community facilities
- Design
- Local Green Space
- Area of High Landscape Sensitivity
- Renewable Energy
- Transport
- Community Infrastructure Levy

Maps

- Plan of NDP area
- Plan of sites with planning consent for residential development
- Proposals Map e.g Local Green Space, Area of High Landscape Sensitivity

Evidence

- List of sources of reference
- Community Actions