

Bath & North East
Somerset Council

Improving People's Lives

Local Plan Options Consultation

Transport Topic Paper



Contents

Introduction	3
Local Plans & Transport Delivery	4
Transport Vision and Objectives	5
Overarching Transport Context	6
Network Mobility Study	7
Transport Methodology	8
Transport Strategies	9
Creating Sustainable Communities	9
Active Travel Masterplan	10
Transport Vision Maps	11
Transport Glossary	12
Initial Accessibility Assessments - DfT Connectivity Tool....	13
Next Steps	14

Introduction

This paper forms part of the transport evidence base developed to support the Local Plan Options Consultation. It explains and highlights the suite of Transport reports that have been prepared that collectively provide a comprehensive assessment of transport-related issues, opportunities, and implications associated with the emerging spatial strategy options.

The Transport reports have been prepared to show how transport considerations are being fully integrated into the plan-making process. They examine the potential impacts of growth on the transport network, assess the capacity and resilience of existing infrastructure, and explore opportunities for sustainable travel and connectivity enhancements to help deliver sustainable growth. The evidence presented is, and will continue to inform decision-making, support the development of sound planning policies, ensure alignment with wider transport and environmental objectives, and assist those taking part in the consultation by providing clear, accessible information on the transport considerations underpinning the Local Plan options.

The evidence provided contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the transport implications of the Local Plan, addressing a range of thematic areas critical to sustainable growth. These include the overarching transport vision and strategic objectives for the district, the context for transport planning in relation to wider policy aims, and an assessment of existing network conditions and mobility challenges. The

evidence base also covers the methodology for modelling transport and carbon impacts, place-based transport strategies for potential growth locations, and the infrastructure needed to support active travel.

Together, they provide a coherent and transparent basis for the ongoing evaluation of the transport implications of the Local Plan options and for identifying the interventions needed to support sustainable development across the plan area.



Local Plans & Transport Delivery

Bath & North East Somerset Council (B&NES), in its role as the Local Planning Authority (LPA), holds statutory responsibilities for shaping and managing development across the district. As the LPA, B&NES prepares and maintains the Local Plan, which sets out the strategic vision, policies, and land allocations to guide development up to 2042. This includes decisions on housing, employment, environmental protection, and crucially, transport infrastructure. The Local Plan is informed by a robust evidence base and must align with national planning policy, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

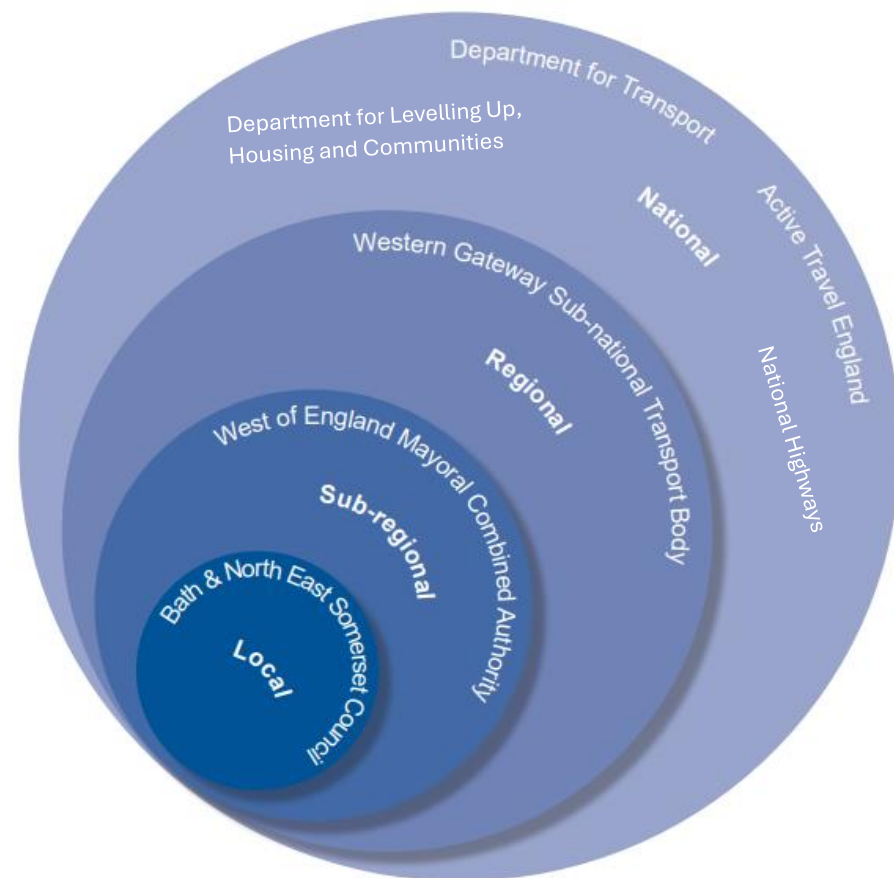
In respect of transport, B&NES can influence and shape how development supports sustainable mobility. Through planning obligations and supplementary planning documents, the council can require developers to contribute to transport infrastructure such as walking and cycling routes, public transport improvements, parking standards, and facilities for ultra-low emission vehicles.

However, B&NES's powers in transport are not unlimited. While it can guide and require transport-related measures through the planning system, it does not directly control all aspects of transport delivery. Strategic transport planning and funding decisions often sit with regional bodies such as the West of England Combined Authority (WECA), which oversees the Joint Local Transport Plan and broader regional mobility strategies. Additionally, national transport infrastructure, such as rail services and major highways, fall

under the remit of central government agencies and operators, limiting B&NES's direct influence.

Moreover, B&NES must operate within the constraints of planning legislation and viability considerations. Developer contributions must be justified and proportionate, and the council cannot impose requirements that would render development unviable or conflict with national policy.

The following diagram shows the relationship between the various government bodies and their level of responsibility.



Transport Vision and Objectives

Bath and North East Somerset Council's [Transport Vision and Objectives](https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Transport%20Vision%20and%20Objectives_0.pdf)¹ form a cornerstone of the emerging Local Plan, setting out both the aspirations and the strategic direction for transport across the district to 2042. The vision not only focuses on how to deliver growth, but shaping it in a way that supports the Council's wider ambitions, particularly its commitment to tackling the climate and ecological emergencies.

At the heart of this Vision is the need to ensure that people can get to where they need to go and are able to access the facilities and services that they need, as sustainably as possible. We recognise that delivering this means a fundamental shift in how transport is planned and delivered, with a strong emphasis on reducing reliance on private cars and enabling active and public transport alternatives.

The Vision is closely aligned with our Corporate Strategy and the Journey to Net Zero programme, which together set out a bold pathway to decarbonise transport by 2030. This includes improving air quality, enhancing public health, and creating more vibrant, people-focused places. It also reflects the need to address inequalities in transport access, ensuring that all residents regardless of age, ability, or location can benefit from a connected and resilient transport network.

1

https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Transport%20Vision%20and%20Objectives_0.pdf

Supporting this Vision is a robust evidence base, including the Network Mobility Study and Active Travel Masterplan, which identify current challenges and opportunities across the district. These documents will inform the development of targeted interventions that will not only support new development but also improve transport options for existing communities. The Local Plan is therefore a key delivery mechanism for transforming mobility across Bath and North East Somerset, making sustainable travel the natural choice for more of our journeys and embedding transport as a driver of healthier, fairer, and more prosperous places.



Overarching Transport Context

The [Overarching Transport Context](https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Overarching%20Transport%20Context_0.pdf)² sets the strategic foundation for how transport will support and shape the emerging Local Plan for Bath and North East Somerset. It provides a framework for developing transport interventions that not only respond to the district's forecast growth, but also deliver tangible benefits for existing communities and visitors, particularly through a transformative shift towards active travel and public transport.

The Overarching Transport Context helps guide decisions around transport planning within the Local Plan. It draws on the principles of the Corporate Strategy, which outlines a commitment to improving health and wellbeing, addressing the climate and ecological emergencies, and creating more connected and inclusive communities. Transport is recognised as a key enabler of these goals.

Central to the approach is the concept of 'Decide and Provide', a progressive approach to transport planning that prioritises our long-term vision for the district and seeks to identify the necessary measures to achieve this vision. This marks a deliberate move away from more reactive, car-centric planning, towards a model that supports sustainable mobility, reduces emissions, and makes more efficient use of our limited road space.

²

https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Overarching%20Transport%20Context_0.pdf

The document also highlights the importance of aligning transport with place-making. It acknowledges that transport infrastructure must be designed not just to move people, but to enhance the quality of places, supporting vibrant local centres, improving accessibility, and enabling healthier lifestyles.

By embedding transport within the spatial development strategy, the Local Plan seeks to ensure that new growth is located and designed in ways that support sustainable travel choices from the outset. This integrated approach is supported by a suite of technical evidence set out below, which collectively inform the Local Plan's transport strategy and mitigation proposals.

✓	Overarching Transport Context	Suite of Transport Technical Evidence
✓	Network Mobility Study	
✓	Transport Methodology	
✓	Transport Strategies – Creating Sustainable Communities	
✓	Transport Vision Maps	
✓	Initial Connectivity Assessment	
✓	Active Travel Masterplan	

Network Mobility Study

The [Network Mobility Study](https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Mobility%20Study%20Stage%201%20Evidence%20Review%20Report.pdf)³ provides a comprehensive assessment of the current transport landscape across Bath and North East Somerset, forming a key part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan. The study examines the characteristics, challenges, and opportunities of the district's transport network at a strategic level.

Its primary purpose is to review existing transport data and policy, identifying gaps in provision and areas where improvements are needed to support future growth and sustainability objectives. This includes an evaluation of walking, cycling, wheeling, public transport, shared micromobility, car parking, highways, and road safety. The study also considers how national, regional, and local transport policies intersect with the district's spatial development ambitions.

Importantly, the study adopts a forward-looking approach, recognising that transport planning must evolve to meet the demands of a changing population, climate commitments, and technological innovation. It highlights the need for a more integrated and inclusive transport system, one that supports modal shift, reduces carbon emissions, and enhances accessibility for all users.

3

<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Mobility%20Study%20Stage%201%20Evidence%20Review%20Report.pdf>

By identifying strategic transport opportunities and constraints, the study informs the development of targeted interventions within the Local Plan. These interventions, such as protected cycle lanes, improved walking routes and new bus lanes are designed not only to accommodate projected growth, but also to improve connectivity, reduce inequalities, and support healthier, more sustainable communities across the district.



Transport Methodology

The [Transport Methodology Technical Note](https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Transport%20Methodology_0.pdf)⁴ outlines the approach to ensuring the Local Plan is underpinned by a robust and credible transport evidence base. This process involves a comprehensive review and analysis of transport-related data, policies, and modelling tools to assess the implications of future growth and to inform the development of effective transport strategies and mitigation measures.

The methodology sets out how transport impacts, particularly those related to carbon emissions, accessibility, and network capacity will be assessed across the district. It integrates national and local policy objectives, including the Council's commitment to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030, and aligns with the principles of the "Decide and Provide" approach. This planning philosophy prioritises desired future outcomes—such as increased use of sustainable modes—over simply accommodating existing travel behaviours.

Key components of the methodology include:

- Strategic modelling to understand how different development scenarios affect travel demand and network performance, both with and without transport mitigation schemes
- Carbon impact assessments to evaluate how proposed interventions contribute to decarbonisation targets.

- Accessibility analysis to ensure equitable access to services and opportunities across the district.
- Place-based transport strategies that reflect local context and support active travel, public transport, and shared mobility.

The methodology also emphasises the importance of stakeholder engagement to ensure that transport proposals are not only technically sound but also responsive to community needs and aspirations. By embedding transport planning within the wider spatial strategy, the Council aims to support growth in locations that are, or can be made, sustainable, reducing the need to travel and encouraging a shift away from car dependency.



4

https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Transport%20Methodology_0.pdf

Transport Strategies

Creating Sustainable Communities

The [Creating Sustainable Communities strategy](https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/document-and-policy-library/creating-sustainable-communities-journey-net-zero)⁵ sets out a long-term, place-based approach to meeting the transport needs of residents, workers, and visitors across the district. Focusing on four key areas identified as potential locations for strategic growth, Keynsham and Saltford, Hicks Gate, Somer Valley, and Whitchurch Village, the strategy aims to better understand the distinct transport challenges and opportunities in each location and to shape a future transport system that supports sustainable development over the next 20 years.

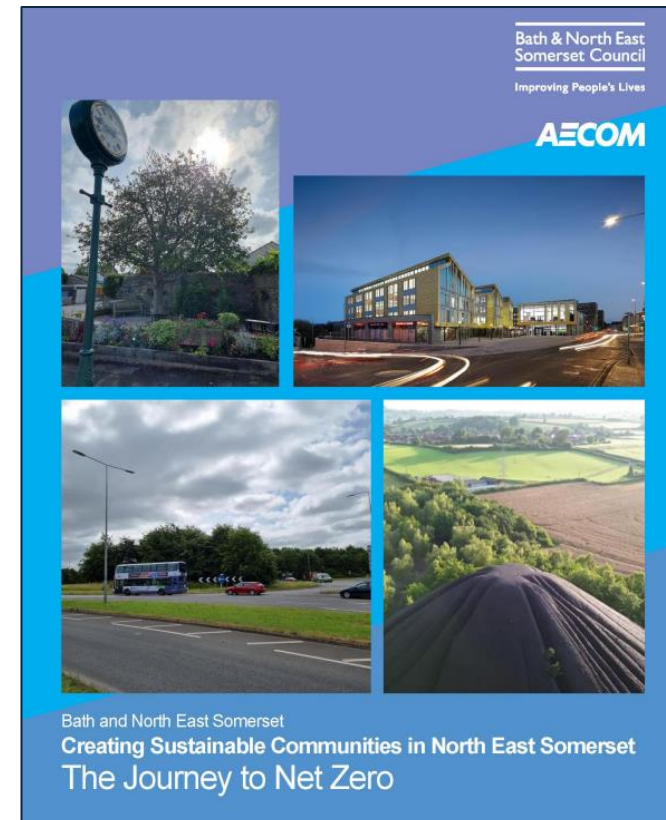
The strategy takes a holistic view, aligning transport planning with wider goals such as improving public health, enhancing air quality, reducing environmental impacts, tackling congestion, and addressing the climate emergency. It promotes a shift towards sustainable modes of travel while recognising the need to provide more inclusive and flexible travel choices.

Key principles include:

- **Local living:** Supporting residents to meet daily needs within walking or cycling distance.
- **Mobility hubs:** Co-locating public, shared, and active travel modes to facilitate smooth transfers.

⁵ <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/document-and-policy-library/creating-sustainable-communities-journey-net-zero>

- **Micromobility:** Expanding access to e-scooters, e-bikes, and shared mobility options.
- **Active travel and public realm improvements:** Reallocating road space to prioritise pedestrians, cyclists, and bus users.
- **Public transport enhancements:** Improving bus journey times, expanding services, and supporting rail connectivity.
- **Supporting low emission vehicles:** Encouraging car clubs and ultra-low emission vehicles, including through Bath's Clean Air Zone.



To support this transformation, the strategy outlines a series of indicative short, medium, and long-term interventions tailored to each area.

The new Local Plan is an opportunity to make a real difference in how we provide for our journeys to enable people to travel by more sustainable and active modes of transport including walking, wheeling and cycling. The new Local Plan is a critical tool in helping deliver the active travel infrastructure needed, not just for those developments contained in the plan but for the wider community.

While the Creating Sustainable Communities strategies were consulted on with our communities in July 2024 and adopted by B&NES Council in February 2025, we are building upon them by testing the resulting Transport vision maps with our communities, through the Local Plan Options consultation this Autumn 2025. See below for more.

Active Travel Masterplan

The [Active Travel Masterplan](https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/document-and-policy-library/active-travel-masterplan)⁶ for Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES) outlines an ambitious vision to make walking, wheeling and cycling the natural choice for a lot more of our journeys. It forms a comprehensive plan that sets out the existing and future network of active travel infrastructure required to enable and provide for sustainable and healthy forms of transport, as well as addressing the Climate Emergency, reducing inequalities, improving air quality, tackling obesity and reducing traffic congestion across Bath

⁶ <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/document-and-policy-library/active-travel-masterplan>

and North East Somerset. The plan is for all types of active travel whether it is for commuting, leisure, business or everyday journeys such as travelling to a local shop, school or doctor's surgery.

The vision of the Masterplan is to create well-connected, sustainable communities with reduced reliance on cars, enabling healthier and more accessible spaces.

The plan's goals include reducing transport emissions, improving public health through active travel, and supporting economic growth by making urban spaces more pleasant and accessible.



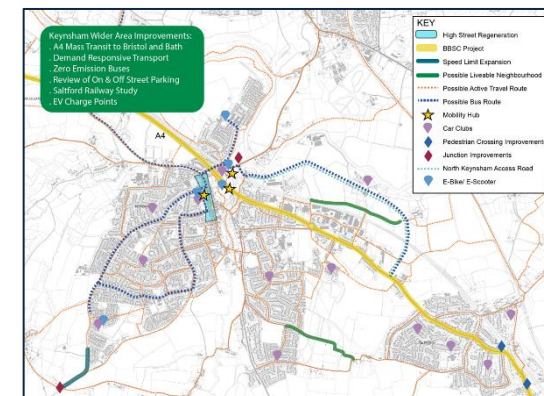
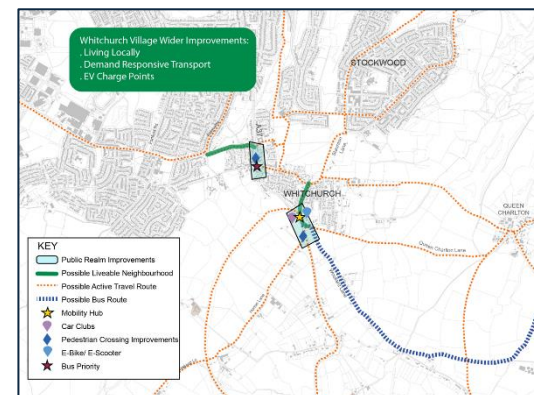
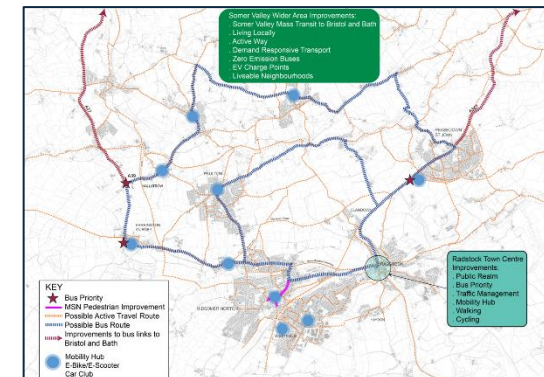
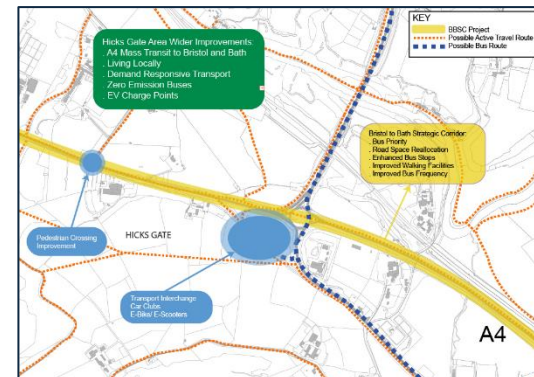
Transport Vision Maps

To help visualise the transport improvements and interventions identified in the Creating Sustainable Communities strategy⁷, a series of transport vision maps have been produced.

These maps are designed to present the emerging transport enhancements in a clear and accessible format, helping stakeholders and the public to better understand how transport infrastructure and services could evolve to support existing communities and sustainable growth. By illustrating potential enhancements, such as improved walking, wheeling and cycling routes, public transport upgrades, and mobility hubs, the maps show how key growth locations across the district can become more accessible and sustainable in transport terms.

The maps provide a spatial representation of its content, helping to communicate the scale and nature of the proposed interventions in each area.

We want to hear from our communities and stakeholders about the emerging transport vision maps, including what they support and what we might have missed. Feedback can be provided via the Local Plan Options consultation homepage on the B&NES Council website.



⁷ <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/document-and-policy-library/creating-sustainable-communities-journey-net-zero>

Transport Glossary

The [Transport Glossary](https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Transport%20Glossary_0.pdf)⁸ serves as a comprehensive reference and explains some of the technical terms used in the transport evidence papers. By providing concise definitions, the glossary enhances the accessibility and understanding of key terms and ensures that key concepts are interpreted consistently. It covers a wide range of terminology from active travel and micromobility to mobility hubs and demand responsive transport reflecting the evolving nature of transport planning and policy.

By providing concise definitions, the glossary enhances the accessibility and understanding of key terms and ensures that key concepts are interpreted consistently.



⁸

https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Transport%20Glossary_0.pdf

Initial Accessibility Assessments - DfT Connectivity Tool

As part of this Local Plan consultation, an initial transport accessibility assessment has been undertaken for each of the potential development sites using the Department for Transport (DfT) Connectivity Tool. This assessment aims to provide a comparative understanding of how each site performs in terms of accessibility in transport terms, particularly by sustainable modes including walking, cycling, and public transport. Applying the Connectivity Tool at this early stage helps to evaluate the relative merits of each of the potential sites or options and will inform decisions about future development locations based on their ability to connect people to jobs, services, and other essential destinations.

The Connectivity Tool combines transport and land use data to generate a consistent national measure of connectivity for any location in England and Wales. The tool assists plan-makers and decision-takers in locating development in the most sustainable locations and can help with planning for the transport infrastructure required to support it. It also indicates which new sustainable transport schemes could prove most useful in raising people's connectivity to vital jobs and services.

The tool and the data underpinning it has been rigorously and robustly tested, and the DfT consider it to be a fit-for-purpose tool ready to be applied in policy-making and decision-taking.

The overall Connectivity score is the primary guide to understanding how connected a particular place or development site is compared to other places/sites across B&NES. This takes into account access to all destinations included in the Connectivity score by public transport, walking and cycling.

Connectivity Tool and New Development

The Connectivity Tool can be used to better understand how easily the occupants of a new development or existing place can access the places they need to go by sustainable modes of transport.

It's important to note that the Tool does not currently take account of the impact new transport infrastructure, facilities or land uses will have on a site or the movements this may generate into the site. Mixed use development and the creation of new destinations will have an impact on connectivity so the connectivity scores should be treated as a baseline, with an understanding that scores should rise once further infrastructure and facilities are delivered.

Local Authority Banding

To better understand how connectivity scores vary across different areas, the tool allows users to filter results by local authority. It categorises locations into bands ranging from A to J (where Band A represents the most connected areas). These bandings reflect the existing, average, overall relative connectivity from these sites by sustainable modes (walking, cycling and public transport) to all destination types.

This banding system helps users assess how well-connected a specific location is in comparison to others within the same local authority.

Each of the site options have been uploaded to the tool and an average connectivity score for the area and the associated Bath & North East Somerset band have been established. These bandings are shown on the Spatial Connectivity and options maps for each broad location within the Local Plan Options Document.

Next Steps

Following the conclusion of the Local Plan consultation, the first priority will be to analyse the feedback received. This will help identify any necessary changes to the proposed spatial strategy, site allocations, and supporting evidence. Stakeholder input will be carefully reviewed to ensure that wherever possible the plan takes account of local priorities and concerns.

In parallel, further technical work will be undertaken to strengthen the transport evidence base. This includes progressing the strategic transport modelling to assess the individual and cumulative impacts on the transport network of development sites proposed to be allocated in the Draft Local Plan.

The modelling will help test different development scenarios and inform the refinement of mitigation strategies. This

includes not only the development of new measures but also the testing of those already identified in the Creating Sustainable Communities report. By evaluating their effectiveness under various growth and transport scenarios, the modelling will support a more robust and evidence-led approach to planning – and ultimately a deliverable Local Plan.

Alongside this, carbon assessments will be further developed to understand the transport-related emissions associated with the proposed spatial strategy. These assessments will help quantify the impact of different options and support the Council's wider climate commitments, ensuring that the Local Plan contributes meaningfully to decarbonisation goals.

The diagram below sets out the work that has already been undertaken in blue with the next steps highlighted in green.

✓	Overarching Transport Context	Suite of Transport Technical Evidence
✓	Network Mobility Study	
✓	Transport Methodology	
✓	Transport Strategies – Creating Sustainable Communities	
✓	Transport Vision Maps	
✓	Initial Connectivity Assessment	
✓	Active Travel Masterplan	
	Transport Modelling – transport impacts and mitigation	Next Steps
	Supporting Detailed Transport Technical Reports	
	Review of Development Management Policies	
	Transport Carbon Appraisal	

Engagement with statutory stakeholders such as National Highways, Active Travel England, the West of England Combined Authority and neighbouring authorities will continue to ensure alignment with strategic transport priorities and infrastructure planning across local authority borders. This collaborative approach will support the development of a robust and deliverable draft Local Plan.

The outputs from this work will feed into the preparation of the draft Local Plan, which is scheduled for further public consultation in 2026. Following this, the plan will be finalised and submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination.