This document sets out the current set of draft Core Strategy policies as the basis for further discussion and refinement. These must be treated as ‘work in progress’ and are collated together to illustrate the scope and content of the document. They are also presented without their supporting text, references to the evidence base or discussion of alternative approaches. Detailed reference to urban extensions is not included.
CORE STRATEGY CORE POLICIES

Elements of placemaking

This section of the Strategy contains a suite of policies structured around four headings derived from the Sustainable Community Strategy. The policies represent the core spatial planning policies to guide development across North Somerset up to 2026, and set out a cohesive and integrated strategic policy framework within which more detailed policies will emerge.

The policies are linked to a Spatial Vision for North Somerset as well as specific visions for each sub-area within North Somerset.

The policies within each section should be read as a whole and each is concerned with a specific element of place making within North Somerset. Where policies have a geographic implication, this will be referred to on the Key Diagram.

The four sections are as follows:

- Living within Environmental Limits (LEL)
- Delivering Strong and Inclusive Communities (DSC)
- Delivering a Prosperous Economy (DPE)
- Ensuring Safe and Healthy Communities (ESHC)
Introduction to Section
Environmental issues have gained considerable momentum over recent years encompassing a wide range of issues and form a key element of spatial planning. Not least is the pressing need to address climate change with local action that reduces further carbon dioxide emissions and helps to prepare places within North Somerset to be resilient to the likely impacts climate change will bring.

Core policies in this section express the Council’s ambitions and objectives covering a range of environmental issues including flooding, climate change, renewable energy, minerals, waste, and green infrastructure.

A cohesive set of Core Policies are aimed at promoting sustainable development where the economic, social, and environmental objectives are met. In this regard the policies in this section are interrelated to all other policy sections and should be considered for all types of development.
The objectives below are taken from the list of Strategic Objectives in chapter 2 of the Strategy and are those that the policies in this section can work towards. They are primarily concerned with environmental issues, including the use of resources, and bring in related issues of reducing carbon emissions from transport.

**Objective 1:** Promote sustainable communities that are safe, encourage healthy lifestyles and contribute to social, economic and environmental well-being.

**Objective 6:** Reduce the need to travel by private car by ensuring services, facilities, jobs and homes are accessible by sustainable modes of transport.

**Objective 11:** Seek to ensure development has a net beneficial effect on the local and global environment by reducing pollution and waste, reducing fossil-fuel based energy consumption and increasing the proportion of energy used that is generated from renewable resources.

**Objective 12:** Ensure delivery of high quality, sustainable architecture and urban design that contributes to creating attractive, safe, resource efficient environments.
North Somerset Council is committed to tackling climate change, and to support this, the following principles will be used to guide development:

(i) Development must demonstrate a commitment to reducing carbon emissions, including through maximising natural lighting and ventilation to reduce energy demand, and should use renewable energy where viable and feasible.

(ii) Major new development areas must incorporate community scale renewable energy systems to provide a percentage of the energy required by the development. Given their potential impact on the local carbon footprint, such schemes should be carbon neutral from day one.

(iii) Development must maximise the opportunities for all new homes to contribute to tackling climate change through adherence to emerging national standards such as the Code for Sustainable Homes to ensure they perform well against evolving energy standards.

(iv) Proposals for large scale developments must demonstrate a commitment to maximising the use of sustainable transport solutions. In the case of public transport, close consultation with service providers and other stakeholders must take place to ensure services are accessible and viable in relation to new developments. Opportunities for walking and cycling will be maximised. Public transport and strategic footpaths/cycleways must be provided from the outset.

(v) Proposals for large scale development should include open (green) spaces taking the opportunities for ‘urban cooling’ and to act as ‘carbon sinks’. These should be located throughout and adjacent developments and demonstrate a relationship to the proposed development. These features have multiple benefits including for habitat creation, integrating with footpath corridors and creating more pleasant environments.

(vi) Proposals must protect and enhance biodiversity across North Somerset including species and habitats that are characteristic of the area, in order to support adaptation to climate change. This will be achieved through on and off-site measures to conserve species and habitats as well as the reduction or preferably elimination of any adverse impacts through sensitive design and layout of developments.

(vii) Development must encourage the reduction, re-use and recycling of waste with particular emphasis on waste minimisation on development sites and waste to energy facilities at major development locations.

(viii) Priority will be given to the re-use of previously developed land and existing buildings in preference to the loss of further greenfield sites.
(ix) Proposals for development that contribute to mitigating and adapting to climate change will be encouraged where they are compatible with other national, regional and local policy objectives.

(x) Opportunities for local food production will be encouraged to reduce the district contribution to food miles and to support the reduction of the district carbon footprint.
New residential development (including conversions) must demonstrate a commitment to sustainable design and construction, increasing energy efficiency and prioritising the use of more sustainable low or zero carbon forms of renewable energy generation in order to increase the sustainability of the building stock across North Somerset. It is considered that most energy saving opportunities can be achieved within major new developments and within Weston town centre due to the larger quantity of development proposed.

When considering proposals for residential development the Council will require:

- designs that are energy efficient,
- the use of on-site renewable sources or by linking with/contributing to available local off-site renewable energy sources to meet a minimum of 10% of predicted energy use for residential development proposals involving 1-9 dwellings, and 20% for 10 or more dwellings;
- Code for Sustainable Homes standards to be met as set out in the table below.

Further details on implementation will be set out in the Development Control Development Plan Document and within a Supplementary Planning Document to this policy.

In particular the major new development areas and town centre regeneration at Weston-super-Mare should demonstrate high levels of sustainable design and offer maximum opportunities for this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development proposals in the following period:</th>
<th>1-9 dwellings</th>
<th>10+ dwellings</th>
<th>50+ dwellings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Level 3 and 10%</td>
<td>Level 3 and 20%</td>
<td>Level 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2013</td>
<td>Level 3 and 10%</td>
<td>Level 4 and 20%</td>
<td>Level 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2015</td>
<td>Level 4 and 10%</td>
<td>Level 5 and 20%</td>
<td>Level 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016+</td>
<td>Level 6 and 20%</td>
<td>Level 6 and 20%</td>
<td>Level 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(A separate policy relating to non-residential development will also be prepared)
Development that, on its own or cumulatively, would result in air, water or other environmental pollution or harm to amenity, health or safety will only be permitted if the potential adverse effects could be mitigated to an acceptable level by other control regimes, or by measures included in the proposals, by the imposition of planning conditions or through a planning obligation.

Proposals within flood risk areas as defined in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment will need to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment which will need to demonstrate that the development will be safe from flooding without increasing flood risk elsewhere and where possible will reduce flood risk overall.

Proposals within flood risk areas and which are not allocated in this Core Strategy will need to demonstrate that there are no reasonable available sites in areas with a lower level of flooding probability. Where this is not possible it must be demonstrated that the development:

(i) provides wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh flood risk;

(ii) is located on previously developed land or there are no reasonable alternative sites on previously developed land;

(iii) will not increase flood risk elsewhere and where possible will reduce flood risk overall.
The biodiversity of North Somerset will be maintained and enhanced by:

(i) Seeking to meet regional biodiversity targets set out in the South West Regional Nature Map for the restoration, creation, improvement and management of habitats;

(ii) Seeking to ensure that major development, provides habitats, enhances biodiversity and supports the needs of a range of species found in the area;

(iii) Permitting development likely to have a significant impact on biodiversity only where there is an overriding need for the development in the proposed location or where measures can be introduced to mitigate such an impact;

(iv) Permitting development which could harm, directly or indirectly, nationally or internationally protected species of flora or fauna or the habitats used by such species only where the particular harm could be avoided or mitigated and the species protected by the use of planning conditions or planning obligations;

(v) Not permitting development which would be likely to have a direct or indirect adverse effect or which conflicts with the conservation objectives of a potential, candidate or designated Special Protection Area, Special Area of Conservation, or Ramsar Site;

(vi) Not permitting development within or near a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or National Nature Reserve that is likely to have a direct or indirect adverse effect on its biodiversity or geological interest unless other material considerations outweigh the loss of biodiversity or geological value of the site;

(vii) Not permitting development that would have a significant adverse effect on local biodiversity or geological interests, unless the importance of the development outweighs the value of the substantive interest present; and

(viii) Implementing the proposals of the North Somerset Green Infrastructure Strategy relevant to biodiversity.

The approach to biodiversity in North Somerset is supported by the Biodiversity and Trees Supplementary Planning Document.
LEL/5: Landscape and the historic environment

Landscape
The character of North Somerset’s landscape will be protected from the likely adverse affects of development and its distinctiveness and diversity promoted, having regard to the North Somerset Landscape Character Assessment.

The Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) will be protected by ensuring that development proposals conserve and enhance its natural beauty and respect its character, taking into account the economic and social well-being of the area.

Major developments will only be permitted in the AONB where there is:

(i) a proven national need for the development; and
(ii) no adverse effect on the local economy; and
(iii) no alternative site available outside of the area; and
(iv) no harm to the natural beauty or character of the landscape and the development can be carried out to a high standard.

In the Forest of Avon, landowners and developers will be encouraged to promote its aims and objectives. Where development is permitted building design and materials should reflect any woodland setting. A contribution to the establishment of the Forest may be required. Development should not conflict with community forest projects.

Historic Environment
The historic environment of North Somerset, comprising conservation areas, listed buildings, buildings of local significance, scheduled ancient monuments, registered parks and gardens, archaeological sites and historic parks and gardens will be protected from development that does not conserve or enhance their character or appearance or affects their special interest. This applies to both the sites and their settings. Demolition of listed buildings, buildings of local significance and unlisted buildings in conservation areas will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances.

Development that would involve significant alteration or cause damage to nationally-important archaeological remains or would have a significant impact on the setting of such remains will not be permitted.
The boundaries of the Green Belt, defined on the Proposals Map, will remain unchanged for the period to 2026. Only in exceptional circumstances where there is an over-riding need to accommodate what would otherwise be inappropriate development, which can not be met elsewhere and where Green Belt land offers the most sustainable option, will land be taken out of the Green Belt through an appropriate local review and identified through a Local Development Document.

Most types of development in the Green Belt are inappropriate and will only be permitted in very special circumstances. Development proposals will only be permitted where they accord with national and regional planning policies and statements.

**LEL/7: Waste**

Provision will be made for a network of local waste management facilities for the transfer, treatment (including recycling) and disposal of waste to provide for anticipated requirements. This local network will complement the network of strategic waste management facilities proposed by the West of England Joint Waste Core Strategy and the waste management strategies relating to North Somerset, and will include:

(i) a replacement Household Waste Recycling Centre for Weston-super-Mare; and

(ii) a new enclosed (in-vessel) composting facility with a capacity of at least 30,000 tonnes per annum; and

(iii) the provision of site(s) suitable for the landfill and / or recycling of inert (e.g. Construction and Demolition) waste; and

(iv) appropriate recycling and waste minimisation facilities within large development areas, including Urban Extensions.

Priority will be given to the re-use of previously developed, derelict and despoiled land or land otherwise associated with existing waste management facilities.

A North Somerset Waste Development Plan Document, supported by a Supplementary Planning Document on Waste Audits relating to major development proposals expected to generate significant waste will provide further details.
North Somerset Core Strategy: April 2009 DRAFT policies for discussion. These policies have no formal status and are presented for discussion purposes only.

LEL/8: Minerals

Provision will be made for North Somerset to contribute 40% of the West of England’s aggregates requirement, consistent with national and regional policy and the principles of sustainable development.

Proposals for mineral working will be assessed against a range of environmental criteria and having regard to the quality, quantity and location of the minerals and the period over which they are to be worked.

Detailed minerals proposals, including development control policies controlling minerals development and proposals for the production of secondary and recycled materials for use in substitution for primary aggregates, will be established through a Minerals Development Plan Document for North Somerset.

LEL/9: Green Infrastructure

The existing network of green infrastructure will be safeguarded, improved and enhanced to create a multi-functional, accessible network. Green infrastructure considerations must be the starting point for all new developments, and in the case of major new developments, will be created as an integral part, and including wildlife corridors. This will promote healthy lifestyles, maintain and improve biodiversity and landscape character and contribute to climate change objectives.

A Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document will be prepared in support of green infrastructure policies.
Travel management policies and development proposals that encourage an improved and integrated transport network with a re-balancing in favour of non-car modes as a means of access to jobs, homes, services and facilities will be encouraged and supported.

Priority will be given to schemes that:

(i) enhance the facilities for pedestrians, including those with reduced mobility, and other users such as cyclists;

(ii) deliver better local bus and rail services in partnership with operators;

(iii) develop innovative and adaptable approaches to public transport in the rural areas of the district;

(iv) improve road and personal safety and environmental conditions;

(v) reduce the adverse environmental impacts of transport;

(vi) improve connectivity within and between Strategically Significant Cities and Towns (SSTCs).

Development proposals must show how all highway, public transport, walking and cycling needs arising from the development will be satisfied and provide for the timely implementation of all necessary infrastructure or service improvements.

Developments that would generate significant traffic movements will need to ensure:

(a) that it is not likely to lead to an unacceptable degree of traffic congestion or to generate traffic that cannot be accommodated without seriously affecting the character of the surrounding area;

(b) that it can readily be integrated and accessible to public transport, cycleway and footpath links, and bridleways where appropriate;

(c) the submission of a Travel Plan that will reduce planned car use and deliver alternative sustainable transport initiatives.

New developments must provide an intelligent highways design with natural traffic calming features to ensure safe and inclusive roads which appear less cluttered.

Adequate provision of car parking that ensures a balance between good urban design, highway safety, residential amenity and the desire to reduce
reliance on the car will be sought. All new developments must adhere to the following principles for parking solutions:
- adequate provision
- parking solutions that remove cars from the street scene
- a road network that incorporates street parking in specific areas
- a road network that allows safe use by pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.

Parking Standards for all forms of development will be reviewed as part of the Development Control Development Plan Document.

LEL/11: Bristol International Airport

Proposals for the development of Bristol International Airport will be required to demonstrate the satisfactory resolution of environmental issues, including the impact of growth on surrounding communities and surface access infrastructure. Detailed requirements will be set out in an Area Action Plan.

LEL/12: Port of Bristol

Land at Court House Farm will continue to be safeguarded for port uses, subject to demonstrable need for those uses that cannot be accommodated elsewhere within the Port estate and to detailed requirements to be set out in a Site Allocations DPD. Further expansion of the Port within North Somerset is not supported.
North Somerset Core Strategy: April 2009 DRAFT policies for discussion. These policies have no formal status and are presented for discussion purposes only.

DELIVERING STRONG AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

Introduction to Section
There is a pressing need to ensure all people in North Somerset have access to affordable, and quality homes, and to ensure that new communities are accommodated within sustainable places with the right balance of employment opportunities, services and open spaces. These should be places that function well as well as look pleasant, and support people in contributing to a sustainable lifestyle.

Core policies in this section express the Council’s ambitions and objectives covering a range of issues including design quality and place making, new homes, affordable housing, and major development.

A cohesive set of Core Policies are aimed at promoting sustainable development where the economic, social, and environmental objectives are met. In this regard the policies in this section are interrelated to all other policy sections and should be considered for all types of development.
Objective 1: Promote sustainable communities that are safe, encourage healthy lifestyles and contribute to social, economic and environmental well-being.

Objective 2: Deliver sustainable housing provision across North Somerset, focussing major housing development within the existing built up area of Weston-super-Mare. (Pending RSS approval)

Objective 4: Develop vibrant and prosperous market towns by encouraging appropriate development that supports their function as service centres with a range of good quality jobs, businesses, shops and services that meet the needs of local people.

Objective 5: Sustain the role and function of service villages in providing facilities to serve their local catchment.

Objective 6: Reduce the need to travel by private car by ensuring services, facilities, jobs and homes are accessible by sustainable modes of transport.

Objective 7: Increase self-containment in Weston-super-Mare through the promotion of employment led growth to give a better balance between homes and jobs.

Objective 8: Redress the unsustainable imbalance of jobs and housing in the towns and villages across North Somerset.

Objective 9: Promote mixed and balanced communities through the provision of a range of housing.

Objective 10: Promote social inclusion through equality of opportunity and equality of access to decent housing and social, educational, health, employment, recreational green space and cultural facilities set within a high quality, safe environment.

Objective 14: To protect and enhance the architectural and historic heritage and the unique character and identity of the towns and villages.
**Well designed buildings and places**

North Somerset Council is committed to achieving high quality buildings and places across all of North Somerset. High quality architecture and urban design will be sought from development demonstrating a robust design process to generate solutions that have clearly considered the existing context, and contribute to social, economic and environmental sustainability. Poor design standards in individual buildings and larger schemes are not acceptable.

Proposals of all scales will be required to demonstrate sensitivity to the existing local character already established in an area, and proposals should take the opportunity to enhance the sense of place and local identity through a well thought out design. Where the existing design characteristics are not considered of a high quality, new development should actively aim to enhance the area through good design. Schemes must be based on a thorough site appraisal, with new developments reflecting local distinctiveness and iconic aspects of the built and natural environment. Design codes will be required for major new development proposals.

Elements such as landmark buildings, workplaces and public art should be provided at the outset of a new development to avoid potential conflict once residents have moved in.

New developments must identify responsibility for maintaining public spaces and facilities.

**Urban Design**

Proposals for development must clearly demonstrate how they contribute to creating attractive, high quality places through the application of the following urban design principles;

i) the creation of places that are inclusive and accessible to all users,

ii) the creation of permeable places that allow convenient, safe and well planned routes through to key places and spaces particularly for walking and cycling, and that are well connected to surrounding areas,

iii) the creation of legible places that have distinctive qualities including key buildings; a well structured hierarchy of well conceived public spaces, convenient opportunities for meeting and social interaction,

iv) the protection of important views and vistas,
v) appropriate mixed uses and the provision for flexibility of use for future change,

vii) contributing to the creation of safe environments including through designing out crime principles,

viii) active frontages in town and district and local centres that have a positive relationship to public spaces and contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of land uses and public spaces;

ix) creating environments that are responsive to local climate conditions including solar and wind direction with consideration given to sheltered spaces through the design of buildings and the public arena;

x) encouraging walking and cycling through the provision of quality routes that are enjoyable as destinations in themselves, and link with green infrastructure provision;

xii) incorporating trees and other greenery throughout developments enriching the environment, providing shelter, and contributing to the wider green network (the Council will aim for 1ha of greenspace for every 2ha of hard surface within new developments),

xii) a density of development that is appropriate to the context taking into account neighbouring uses, and,

xiii) a well thought out layout of buildings and spaces, integrating residential, commercial and community activity.

Residential development

In designing residential developments of 10 or more dwellings the Building for Life Gold standard should be achieved. Applicants should demonstrate how they meet the criteria of the standard and the granting of planning permission will take into account meeting the stated standard.

All applications for 10 or more new homes should incorporate 50% constructed to the Lifetime Homes standard.
DSC/2: The Scale of New Housing

The Council, and its partners together will seek to achieve the completion of a further xxx dwellings to meet the xxx additional dwellings from 2006 to 2026 required by the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West. This will include a mix of dwelling types, size and tenure to meet existing and future community needs.

A range of housing densities will be developed throughout the District with a minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare. 40 dwellings per hectare will be achieved on major development sites.
In order to achieve the housing targets set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy and established in Policy DSC/2 for each level of the settlement hierarchy, land will be allocated for housing and support given to proposals for housing development in accordance with the principles below:

(i)  xxx dwellings will be built at new major development areas (pending RSS confirmation)

(ii) At least a further 1,796 dwellings will be accommodated within the existing urban area of Weston-super-Mare

(iii) Market & Coastal Towns: Clevedon, Nailsea, and Portishead are included as broad locations to accommodate approximately 2,566 new dwellings within the existing urban areas on brownfield sites.

(iv) Service villages: Within the settlement boundaries of Backwell, Banwell, Churchill, Congresbury, Hutton, Locking, Long Ashton, Pill/Easton-in-Gordano, Uphill, Winscombe, Wrington, and Yatton small-scale new infill housing and conversions may be appropriate but only when it will increase self-containment, help to retain existing services or fulfil an identified local housing need with regard to the existing dwelling mix or affordability.

(v) Elsewhere, housing development will not be permitted, unless it is for essential workers in rural enterprises or where a need for affordable housing cannot be accommodated in (iii) or (iv). A net increase of replacement housing and the relaxation of occupancy restrictions will only be permitted as part of a live/work development.

Priority will be given to housing development on previously-developed sites. At least x% of housing will be delivered on brownfield sites.

In all cases, new housing development must not conflict with the environmental protection, Green Belt and nature conservation or any other relevant policies of the Development Plan and should provide any necessary mitigating or compensatory measures to address any adverse implications.

Settlement boundaries for places listed in (ii), (iii) and (iv) will remain as defined in the Replacement Local Plan pending any alterations as part of a future Site Allocations DPD. All other settlement boundaries will be deleted.
The Council will seek to ensure a genuine mix of housing types within existing and future communities in North Somerset through considering proposals for development in terms of the extent to which they:

(i) Contribute to a well integrated mix of housing types and tenures to support a range of household sizes, ages and incomes to meet identified housing needs in accordance with the Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

(ii) Reduce an existing proliferation of one housing type within an area through encouraging the development of a range housing types that meet an identified local housing need.

(iii) Contribute to creating an accessible, inclusive and safe community with easy access to a range of services.

(iv) Ensure a genuine integrated mix of affordable and market housing within new developments with x% meeting the Lifetime Homes Standard on each development.
Affordable housing comprises social rented and intermediate housing provided to those eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.

Within North Somerset, the target for the provision of affordable housing is 400(?) dwellings per annum. To reflect identified needs, this will be provided as 75% social rented and 25% intermediate housing.

Residential developments of 15 dwellings or more (or on sites of 0.5 hectare and above) will be expected to include an appropriate proportion of affordable homes, with the target being 30% of the total, in order to meet the proven needs of people who are not able to compete in the general housing market.

Affordable housing should be seamlessly integrated into new developments so it is indistinguishable from market housing, and limited to small groups (no more than 6 dwellings).

The precise size and type of affordable housing to be provided on individual sites will be determined through negotiation, guided by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, taking into account viability and abnormal costs. The Council will prepare a Supplementary Planning Document setting out in more detail the provision of affordable housing.

The presumption is that affordable housing will be provided on-site. Where exceptionally it can be robustly justified, off-site provision or a financial contribution in lieu of off-site provision (of broadly equivalent value) may be acceptable where this contributes to the objective of creating mixed communities.
DSC/6: Rural exception sites

Housing schemes within or adjacent to the settlement boundaries of Market Towns and Service Villages for 100% affordable housing will be supported where:

(i) the development meets an identified local need demonstrated by an up to date Parish Housing Need Survey or the Housing Register, and

(ii) the development is supported or initiated by the Parish or Town Council(s), and

(iii) the site search has followed a sequential approach with sites available within the settlement boundary being appraised first, followed by sites adjacent to the village boundary, and

(iv) the development is modest in scale having regard to the size of the settlement, and

(v) the affordable housing is provided in perpetuity.

In addition, sites adjacent to small settlements elsewhere in the District for 100% affordable housing will be supported where they meet the above criteria and the need cannot be met in or adjacent to the nearest Market and Coastal Town or Service Village.

Where appropriate, specific sites may be allocated in the Site Allocations Development Plan Document for 100% affordable housing adjacent to the settlement boundaries of Market and Coastal Towns or Service Villages.

DSC/8: South West Bristol urban extension

(Policy required depending on RSS outcome)

DSC/9: Weston-super-Mare urban extension

(Policy required depending on RSS outcome)
Provision will be made for an additional 36 residential and 10 transit pitches for Gypsies and Travellers for the period 2006 to 2011.

Prior to a review of the West of England Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Assessment, residential provision for the period 2011 to 2016 will be assessed on the basis of a 3% compound growth in requirements per annum, and transit provision will be assessed having regard to the incidence of unauthorised encampments.

**Residential Sites**

Proposals for the use of land for residential caravans occupied by Gypsies or other Travellers or as a permanent base for Travelling Showpeople will be permitted in the Green Belt in very special circumstances only. Preference will be given to proposals for the use of previously developed land or land associated with new major housing development, including urban extensions. All proposals for residential sites will be considered on the basis of the following criteria:

i. the site is well related to local services and facilities including schools, health and welfare facilities; and

ii. the site is already or capable of being adequately screened and would otherwise respect the landscape character of the locality; and

iii. the proposal would not unacceptably prejudice the amenities of adjoining occupiers; and

iv. the site is capable of being provided with foul and surface water drainage, including appropriate infrastructure and facilities to manage wastes; and

v. there is adequate parking and safe access into and out of the site; and

vi the site is capable of being developed within the required timescale.

**Transit Sites**

All proposals for transit sites for Gypsies and Travellers will be considered in the context of the above policy and criteria, excluding (i). Preference will be given to proposals on land with easy access to major road network, including M5 Motorway junctions.
DELIVERING A PROSPEROUS ECONOMY

Introduction to Section
An efficient economy that achieves low unemployment and provides a range of employment opportunities is critical to a sustainable future in North Somerset. Reducing unsustainable car use and out-commuting from the towns and villages is a key driver for the economic strategy in particular at Weston-super-Mare.

Core policies in this section express the Council’s ambitions and objectives covering a range of issues including retail, employment, tourism, and regeneration.

A cohesive set of Core Policies are aimed at promoting sustainable development where the economic, social, and environmental objectives are met. In this regard the policies in this section are interrelated to all other policy sections and should be considered for all types of development.
North Somerset Core Strategy: April 2009 DRAFT policies for discussion. These policies have no formal status and are presented for discussion purposes only.

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

The objectives below are taken from the list of Strategic Objectives in chapter 2 of the Strategy and are those that the policies in this section can work towards. They are primarily concerned with environmental issues, including the use of resources, and bring in related issues of reducing carbon emissions from transport.

**Objective 1:** Promote sustainable communities that are safe, encourage healthy lifestyles and contribute to social, economic and environmental well-being.

**Objective 3:** Regenerate Weston-super-Mare’s town centre to create a thriving and vibrant retail, leisure, tourist and commercial centre to serve the district.

**Objective 4:** Develop vibrant and prosperous market towns by encouraging appropriate development that supports their function as service centres with a range of good quality jobs, businesses, shops and services that meet the needs of local people.

**Objective 6:** Reduce the need to travel by private car by ensuring services, facilities, jobs and homes are accessible by sustainable modes of transport.

**Objective 7:** Increase self-containment in Weston-super-Mare through the promotion of employment led growth to give a better balance between homes and jobs.

**Objective 8:** Redress the unsustainable imbalance of jobs and housing in the towns and villages across North Somerset.

**Objective 10:** Promote social inclusion through equality of opportunity and equality of access to decent housing and social, educational, health, employment, recreational green space and cultural facilities set within a high quality, safe environment.

**Objective 11:** Seek to ensure development has a net beneficial effect on the local and global environment by reducing pollution and waste, reducing fossil-fuel based energy consumption and increasing the proportion of energy used that is generated from renewable resources.
DPE/1: Supporting a Successful Economy

The Council, in conjunction with its partners will make provision to support forecast employment growth throughout North Somerset in the period up to 2026.

Key objectives for employment development are:

i) to support the development of sustainable communities,
ii) to provide the opportunities to work locally thus reduce out-commuting from towns and villages through a better balance between jobs and homes,
iii) to support the provision of jobs in the B use classes (office, industrial, and warehousing) and also other priority growth sectors in North Somerset,
iv) improving the skills and qualifications of the resident workforce,
v) reduce unemployment across North Somerset particularly in the most deprived areas.

In order to attract economic investment and to deliver the Council’s wider economic development and regeneration initiatives, employment land will be allocated through Local Development Documents in key areas. Land will be allocated for offices, industrial and warehousing uses and also where justified by evidence, emerging specific priority sectors identified through the Employment Land Review. Where appropriate, opportunities should be taken to support innovative ways of working, including the provision of live/work units where acceptable and planned for in other Local Development Documents.

**Safeguarding employment sites and premises**
Existing and proposed employment generating sites will be safeguarded in order to support a wide range of employment opportunities across the towns and villages, unless it can be demonstrated that an alternative use of the site would give greater social, economic, and environmental benefits.

**Initiatives to support workforce skills**
In order to encourage a wide skills base and strong workforce within North Somerset, opportunities should be sought to develop initiatives to support learning and skills development across North Somerset in association with key public and private partners.

**Employment Fund**
Funding for such initiatives will be sought through development whereby schemes contribute through mechanisms such as Section 106 agreements. Other mechanisms such as an Employment Investment Fund will be set up to channel funding where it can be used to support economic development.
Opportunities should be taken to enhance higher and further education facilities to widen and enhance the skills base necessary to support a strong and prosperous economy.

DPE/2: Spatial Distribution of New Employment Development

Provision will be made for around xxx hectares to support employment development in offices, industrial and warehousing as set out below:

Weston-super-Mare  xxx hectares
Elsewhere  xxx hectares
(Pending RSS approval).

Employment land will be allocated to support a range of business types and sizes. In some cases specific sectors may be planned for to maximise the value contributed to the local economy and availability of jobs. Sites may also be allocated in other areas where there is an identified need.

Employment development will be prioritised at the allocated sites and encouraged within the settlement categories as defined by the spatial strategy where it is commensurate with the role and function of the settlement. Employment development will only be permissible where it does not conflict with the social, environmental or any other objectives in an area. Major new development areas should be mixed use in character, with easy access by foot and cycle between homes and jobs. Jobs must be provided before homes are built.

Within smaller villages (not defined above) in the countryside outside the green belt, employment development that would increase self containment will be permitted provided that it is commensurate with the scale and character of the settlement, is within or adjacent to the main body of the settlement and avoids encroachment onto open countryside. It should not have any adverse impacts on the existing area, and there should be a demonstrable need for additional local employment opportunities. Where possible in these cases the preference will be for reuse and refurbishment of existing buildings before new build.

Outside the new major development areas, priority will be given to meeting employment needs through regeneration, utilising previously developed land or vacant buildings within existing built up areas as set out above.

Proposals for employment development will also be expected to demonstrate high levels of design quality, energy efficiency and energy savings in line with Policy DSC1 and LEL2.
DPE/3: Retail Hierarchy and Provision

The vitality and viability of the following hierarchy of centres will be maintained and enhanced:

1. Weston-super-Mare town centre

2. Town centres in Coastal and Market Towns
   - Portishead
   - Clevedon (Triangle)
   - Nailsea

3. Local Centres in Service Villages
   - Backwell
   - Congresbury
   - Churchill
   - Long Ashton
   - Pill
   - Winscombe
   - Wrington
   - Yatton

In the rural areas, outside the Service Villages, proposals for local shops and facilities e.g. public houses which would increase the self containment of small villages will be permitted provided that it is commensurate with the scale and character of the settlement, is within or adjacent to the main body of the settlement and avoids encroachment onto open countryside.

Within the urban areas of Weston-super-Mare and Clevedon, the vitality and viability of the following centres will also be maintained and enhanced:

District Centres
   - Clevedon (Hill Rd)
   - Worle High Street
   - Queensway, Weston-super-Mare
   - Locking Castle, Weston-super-Mare
   - Phillips Road (Asda) Weston-super-Mare

Local Centres (all within Weston-super-Mare)
   - Milton Rd
   - Whitecross Rd
   - Locking Rd
   - Milton Hill
   - Castle Batch
   - St Andrews Parade, Bournville
   - Aller Parade, Oldmixon
   - Loxton Road, Coronation Estate
Proposals for town centre uses in the above identified district and local centres will be supported, provided they are of a scale appropriate to the size and role of these centres, support the creation of a comfortable, safe, attractive and accessible shopping environment, improves the mix of land uses in each centre and do not conflict with other policies.

Loss of town centre uses in these centres will need to demonstrate that the vitality and viability of these centres is not adversely affected and adequate retail provision remains for local residents.

Proposals for new or extended town centre uses outside these centres with a floorspace above 200 m$^2$, need to demonstrate that they have no adverse impact on the vitality and viability of these centres, that there is a quantitative and qualitative need for the development and that the uses could not be located within or on-the-edge of an existing centre.

Within major new development areas, a network of local/neighbourhood centres (for each 1000 residents?) will be provided with access to retail, jobs public houses/cafes and play space and leisure facilities.

A future Site Allocations Development Plan Document will define the exact boundaries of the retail centres and Primary Shopping Frontages.
Within Weston-super-Mare town centre the following areas will be defined to provide a focus for retail, leisure and entertainment facilities and commercial office development. Housing, along with other appropriate uses, will also be incorporated as part of mixed use schemes in these areas.

**Retail Core:**
The regeneration of Weston-super-Mare’s town centre will be achieved though the provision of land for major retail development within the retail core. This may include other uses that are appropriate and compatible with town centre activities and which will assist in the enhancement of the centre and the range of shops, services and facilities it has to offer. The two main sites identified for retail-led development within the town centre are Victoria Square and Dolphin Square. Retail-led development proposals will need to:

(i) Significantly contribute towards the provision of approximately 20,000m$^2$ of comparison floorspace, as identified in North Somerset Retail and Leisure Study as being needed by 2016.

(ii) Address the need for an additional 2000m$^2$ of convenience floorspace in the town centre, as identified in North Somerset Retail and Leisure Study as being needed by 2016, through an improved and enlarged food store.

(iii) Be of the highest quality design which makes a positive and distinct contribution to the existing built environment.

(iv) Strengthen physical and visual connections between the retail core, the seafront and gateway area.

**Seafront:**
Major redevelopment sites along Weston-super-Mare seafront will be allocated primarily for leisure uses to reinforce Weston’s role as a tourist destination. This policy recognises the circumstances of a seaside town resort where, due to the seafront being a significant feature of the town and a destination in its own right, entertainment, leisure uses and tourist accommodation are located close to and along the seafront, and not solely located in the defined retail core of the town centre. Key redevelopment sites along the seafront include Tropicana, Grand Pier and Birnbeck Island. Redevelopment of these sites should:

(i) Have consideration for the sequential approach to development based on PPS6: Planning for Town Centres and not prejudice the vitality and viability of the retail core, but instead should complement activities in the town centre. Retail uses on seafront sites will be restricted to ancillary uses only.

(ii) Strengthen pedestrian and visual links and connections between
the seafront and the retail core.

(iii) Take account of their prominent and highly visible position along the seafront and be of the highest quality design which will enhance the visual appearance of the seafront and promenade.

Gateway area and A370 Corridor:
The redevelopment of sites within the gateway area will make more efficient use of land intensifying development in this area. Redevelopment proposals in the gateway area will primarily be for commercial office development and should not harm the viability or vitality of Weston’s town centre or seafront. Development in this area should:

(i) Be of a high quality design that will enhance the visual image, and emphasise the importance of the gateway approach to the town centre.

(ii) Minimise the generation of car trips by concentrating uses around the train station and improving the public transport infrastructure.

(iii) Strengthen connections to the town centre through new and improved pedestrian and cycle routes.

Tall Buildings
Within the retail core, gateway area and seafront there is scope for some well designed high quality taller buildings at appropriate locations. The use of taller buildings within the town centre serve a number of purposes. They provide landmarks to increase legibility around the town; can assist in the intensification of land uses activities resulting in a broader mix of uses creating a more sustainable, viable and vibrant development; and provide enclosure and identity to areas which lack character.

Historic Identity
Weston-super-Mare has a strong historic identity as a Victorian seaside town. The town centre and seafront contains five conservation areas and numerous listed buildings including the Grand Pier, Birnbeck Pier, a number of buildings on Knightstone Island and the Royal Crescent.

Any development in the town centre must respect the historic context of the town in accordance with policies LEL/5 and DSC/1.

Connectivity,
Any development within the town centre will need to make a positive contribution towards strengthening connections between the gateway area, retail core and seafront. Contributions will be sought from developments within the town centre and gateway for improvements to the public realm.

Education,
Education is a key element in the future growth and economic development of Weston-super-Mare. Support will be given to the modernisation of education and training facilities in Weston-super-Mare by:

i) Supporting future growth of further and higher education and training initiatives in the town in line with Sustainable Community Strategy objectives.

ii) Identifying suitable sites for new pre-schools, schools, play sites, youth centres and children’s centres.

iii) Ensuring that new education facilities are well designed, easily and safely accessible, and well related to associated neighbourhood services and facilities.

iv) Ensuring that new developments contribute appropriately to meeting the educational needs of children, young people and adults generated by the proposal.

The Council will produce an Area Action Plan for Weston Town Centre which will be the mechanism for delivering this policy.
The regeneration of Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead town centres will be supported through a range of environmental improvements and by encouraging development proposals that:

(i) improve the range of services, shops and facilities available;

(ii) make a positive contribution to design quality and public realm improvements;

(iii) improve pedestrian/cycle/public transport linkages both within and to the town centres;

(iv) attract more people to work, visit and live in the town centres;

(v) help to develop a vibrant evening economy.
DPE/6: Tourism Strategy

North Somerset:

Within North Somerset the focus will be on promoting and improving existing attractions and destinations within the district. Weston-super-Mare will be the main focus for developing the tourist market, but within the Market and Coastal Towns, Service Villages and rural areas tourist facilities and accommodation will be supported provided they:

i) Are of an appropriate scale and improve the quality and diversity of the tourist offer;

ii) Do not result in a significant increase in car use and are accessible by public transport;

iii) Support conservation and economic development objectives;

iv) There are no adverse implications for the environment, local amenity and character of the area.

Weston-super-Mare:

In Weston-super-Mare the focus will be on re-establishing the town as a popular seaside tourist destination within the South West appealing to a broad tourism market. This will be achieved through:

i) Diversifying the range and improving the quality of attractions and activities in Weston-super-Mare to appeal to a broader range of visitors. New visitor attractions will be expected to:
   a) Comply with a sequential approach which firstly identifies sites within the town centre or seafront;
   b) Be of high quality environmental standards in terms of design and access;
      c) Support the regeneration of the town centre;
      d) Reduce seasonality ie all year round attractions;
      e) Complement and build on the towns existing tourist offer;
   f) Be accessible by public transport
   g) Offer a high quality visitor experience and value for money

ii) Improving the range and quality of tourist accommodation. Tourist accommodation should follow a sequential approach which firstly identifies sites within the town centre or seafront. All visitor accommodation will be encouraged to obtain national quality accreditation and to adopt sustainable tourism principles.
ENSURING SAFE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Introduction to Section
The policies within this section aim to induce action on some of the wider issues planning policy can tackle including reducing the potential for crime and the creation of safe environments, and promoting active lifestyles through the creation of facilities for play, and opportunities for walking and cycling.

Core policies in this section express the Council’s ambitions and objectives covering a range of issues including health, and crime.

A cohesive set of Core Policies are aimed at promoting sustainable development where the economic, social, and environmental objectives are met. In this regard the policies in this section are interrelated to all other policy sections and should be considered for all types of development.
Strategic Objectives

The objectives below are taken from the list of Strategic Objectives in chapter 2 of the Strategy and are those that the policies in this section can work towards. They are primarily concerned with environmental issues, including the use of resources, and bring in related issues of reducing carbon emissions from transport.

**Objective 1:** Promote sustainable communities that are safe, encourage healthy lifestyles and contribute to social, economic and environmental well-being.

**Objective 10:** Promote social inclusion through equality of opportunity and equality of access to decent housing and social, educational, health, employment, recreational green space and cultural facilities set within a high quality, safe environment.

**Objective 12:** Ensure delivery of high quality, sustainable architecture and urban design that contributes to creating attractive, safe, resource efficient environments.
ESHC/1: Children and Young People

Where local provision for children & young people is inadequate to meet the needs of new residential developments, improved facilities/services or new learning facilities (i.e. schools, pre-schools, youth provisions etc) will be sought to meet any identified shortfall.

These learning facilities will be provided in tandem with population growth. Where appropriate, new schools will become focal points for communities and act as a venue for a wide range of community activities.

New schools/children & young people facilities will be located in a location that would facilitate safe routes to the venue and be directly accessible to a pedestrian and cycleway network.
North Somerset Core Strategy: April 2009 DRAFT policies for discussion. 
*These policies have no formal status and are presented for discussion purposes only.*

**ESHC/2: Supporting healthy living and provision of health care facilities**

The planning process will support programmes and strategies which increase and improve health services throughout the district, promote healthier lifestyles and aim to reduce health inequalities. This will be achieved through:

(i) Requiring Health Impact Assessments on all strategic and major developments in the district.

(ii) Joint working with health providers to help deliver a district-wide network of health facilities which are located within towns or service villages and are easily accessible by sustainable modes of transport or travel. Where the local provision of health services are insufficient to support a increased population arising from large scale new residential development additional health facilities will be sought to meet any identified shortfall.

(iii) Working with relevant stakeholders to reduce geographical inequalities in health within the district.

(iv) Encourage development that promotes active living through creating places that are easily accessible, attractive and safe to move around by walking or cycling.

(v) Promote healthy lifestyles by addressing existing deficiencies in provision, and aiming to improve the quality and quantity, of sports facilities, playing pitches and children’s play spaces throughout the district and access to them.

(vi) Encourage development which incorporates, or is within walking distance, from attractive, usable green public open space and contributes to enhancing the green infrastructure network.

(vii) Recognise and safeguard the role of allotments, small scale agriculture and farmers markets in providing access to healthy, affordable, locally produced food options.
North Somerset Core Strategy: April 2009 DRAFT policies for discussion. These policies have no formal status and are presented for discussion purposes only.

ESHC/3: Sport, recreation, childrens' play facilities and other community facilities

Where the local provision of sport, recreation, childrens' play and other community facilities arising from new residential development are inadequate to meet projected needs and standards, additional provision in safe and accessible locations will be sought to meet any identified shortfall. This provision may be in the form of on site provision or the enhancement/improved access to existing facilities.

Existing facilities will be safeguarded from alternative use unless suitable alternative facilities can be made available or the existing facilities are surplus to requirements.

On major developments facilities will be provided in tandem with population growth and will be designed as an integral part of the development.

ESHC/4: Designing out Crime

Development proposals must demonstrate a commitment to designing out crime through the creation of safe spaces that benefit from natural surveillance, visible streets and open spaces, lighting and other security measures.

Principles for designing out crime should be integrated within comprehensive planning and design proposals for the new major development areas. Development elsewhere should seek to enhance the safety of areas.