Setting the scene: Our Summary Statement about South Gloucestershire today

This section gives a summary of the authority with key facts and figures which provide the context for our new Local Plan's objectives.

2.1 The Local Plan for South Gloucestershire highlights how we will deliver the changes the district needs. This is an area of great opportunity, but we also face challenges. The plan shows how development can be managed in a way which supports the area's strengths, takes advantage of new and existing opportunities and addresses local needs. But it also recognises the challenges we face.

2.2 From our conversations with local people, we have heard many different views of what their place means to them. Below we've set out what people think it means to live in, work in and visit South Gloucestershire. We've described what makes people proud of where they live and what ambitions they have for South Gloucestershire.

Opportunity to deliver 'first-of-a-kind' energy production, research & development skills, and training on former Oldbury nuclear site

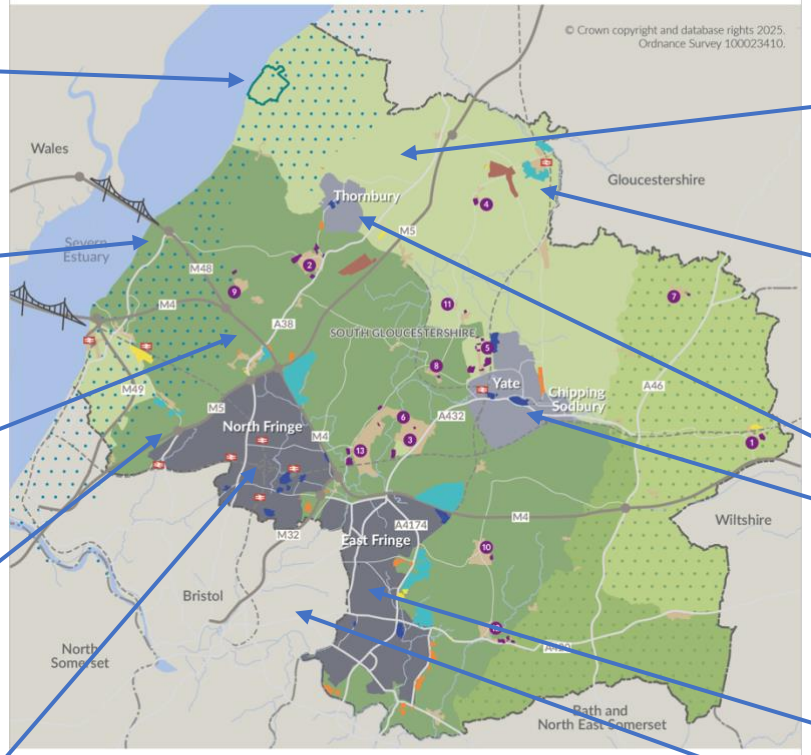
Flood risk limits sustainable development across a large area incorporating the Severn Estuary and Avonmouth and Severnside Enterprise Areas

40% of South Gloucestershire's land area is within the Green Belt. This is mostly in the areas with the closest and best links to Bristol.

Constraints on development due to lack of capacity at motorway junctions.

South Gloucestershire has a prosperous and innovative economy. Traditionally a hub for the aerospace industry, today industries as diverse as robotics, logistics, retail and the green sector thrive. A strong research and development cluster drives future opportunities.

KEY DIAGRAM*



South Gloucestershire has a rich and varied natural environment including internationally, nationally and locally designated nature conservation sites.

To the north are several rural villages and communities with fewer transport links and facilities, notably schools.

Significant recent development in market towns of Yate, Thornbury and Chipping Sodbury. Good facilities but limited public transport and work to do to build cohesion between and within communities.

Support required to boost local economies impacted by decline of manufacturing and traditional industry. Opportunity to use development to drive regeneration.

Proximity to jobs and facilities in Bristol and access to beautiful countryside makes South Gloucestershire a popular place to live.

A region with its own strong, independent character, which benefits from close links to neighbouring Bristol

2.3 We are a district in the west of England bordering the city of Bristol to the north and east. We're within easy commuting distance of Bristol city centre and many people live in South Gloucestershire, travelling into the city regularly for work and to access facilities.

2.4 Recognising the links, South Gloucestershire is part of the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) alongside Bath & North East Somerset and Bristol City Councils. Being part of this broader body allows us to better plan and manage housing, transport and economic development.

2.5 As well as the connections with Bristol, some communities in the north and east of the authority have functional links with Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Bath & North East Somerset and south Wales.

A rapidly growing and aging population, with a mix of urban and rural communities

2.6 More than half of South Gloucestershire's population (around 63%) live in the urban and suburban areas to the north and east of Bristol. And a further 17% call the market towns of Yate, Chipping Sodbury and Thornbury home. The remaining population is spread across many smaller towns, villages and communities.

2.7 South Gloucestershire's proximity to the cities of Bristol and Bath provides local people with access to jobs, entertainment, retail and wider facilities, but they can also take advantage of beautiful countryside on their doorstep. This mix of urban and rural benefits is one of the key reasons why more people are moving here. The population recorded through the Census in 2021 was 290,400, an increase of 10.5% compared to the same survey ten years earlier. And this trend is predicted to continue. The population (based on 2018 projections) is forecast to rise to over 350,000 in the next 20 years.

2.8 We need more homes, but we need the right kind of homes in the right locations.

- We have over 5,800 families on the housing waiting list, with an increasing number of families being evicted from private rental properties.
- Rental prices in the private sector are high and become unaffordable when wages don't keep pace. In the year to October 2024, rental prices in South Gloucestershire grew by 6.1% to an average price of £1,352 per month - over £200 per month more than the average across the South West.
- House prices are well above the national average (£346,000 in South Gloucestershire compared to England and Wales average of £304,000) and continue to rise.

2.9 We need more affordable homes to address social need and to ensure people can continue to live in the places they know and love.

2.10 The diversity of South Gloucestershire and its local areas is a key strength. However, it also presents challenges. We have an aging population with an increasing number of residents who need access to appropriate housing and services. Data shows that more older people tend to own their home, often in larger, sometimes older properties. In South Gloucestershire, there are also higher proportions of older people living in rural areas. We are an 'Age Friendly' council and are committed to supporting people to continue living independently in their communities. The Local Plan will play an important role in achieving this aim by delivering homes that can adapt as our needs change, public spaces and facilities to meet the ongoing needs of our population in all parts of the district.

2.11 The Council is committed to supporting people to ensure everyone has access to an affordable, decent, safe, secure and sustainable home. The Local Plan shows how we will deliver an additional 24,095 new homes of the right type and in the right location to meet our needs from 2026 until 2041. This means increasing the current number of homes in South Gloucestershire by nearly a fifth.

2.12 There are several factors to consider. Key is concentrating development in areas which give people easy access to facilities and transport links, predominately either on the fringes of greater Bristol or in existing settlements. But we must also plan development in a way which is sympathetic to and protects and enhances the heritage and character of our different areas.

2.13 Many parts of our urban areas are well connected to existing services, facilities and public transport hubs. In these locations, where evidence supports it, we can adopt high quality new design to optimise density of new housing and employment and make best and most sustainable use of land.

2.14 The market towns of Yate, Chipping Sodbury and Thornbury also have strong local facilities and have recently seen considerable levels of planned and unplanned new housing. However, as we explore later in this summary, access to transport constrains future growth, and previous expansion in the towns has in some cases, impacted cohesion between communities.

2.15 Our villages and rural areas each have their own character and identity, but they are subject to uneven levels of services and facilities. Accessibility is a particular problem. Rural public transport, especially local bus services, have been cut over recent years as services become less financially viable, leaving some areas with no public transport provision except voluntary sector or temporary services.

2.16 Additionally, some villages and communities either do not have a school or have schools with low or declining pupil numbers. Given financial constraints, it is unrealistic to deliver new schools in the most remote areas and the costs of home to school transport are rising. Therefore, availability of, and capacity in, local schools also limits future development in some rural areas.

A Green Belt which covers 40% of South Gloucestershire

2.17 The Bristol and Bath Green Belt was established to limit urban sprawl and maintain the open character of areas, towns and villages around the Bristol and Bath built up areas.

2.18 The Green Belt plays an important role in the planning of development in South Gloucestershire as it occupies 40% of the district's land area, including the areas with the closest and best links to Bristol. Many of South Gloucestershire's towns and villages are located within or immediately adjoining the Green Belt. The locations of Thornbury, Yate and Chipping Sodbury outside, but bordering the Green Belt, has driven extensive previous development in these areas.

2.19 Any plan which avoids building on the Green Belt significantly limits the areas where development is possible. And, as highlighted in the next section, this approach would also focus development in areas away from existing facilities and transport links, which we consider unsustainable.

Partnership working is driving investment in infrastructure and services, but we need more and better options

2.20 The substantial levels of new development over recent years and decades has not always been fully matched by the timely provision of essential infrastructure. Local people want and deserve good quality and inclusive public transport, education, health, retail, open space and community facilities. In some communities, access to services and facilities needs to improve ahead of future housing development. Physical infrastructure is crucial, but the importance of community facilities also needs to be prioritised to act as a focal point for new developments and give people a head start in forging new communities.

2.21 The West of England Mayoral Combined Authority is the transport authority for the area, and we have been working with them in partnership with neighbouring local authorities, delivery partners and other stakeholders on our Joint Local Transport Plan. This has seen investment in infrastructure over the last 10 years, with a major focus on active and sustainable travel. This includes the ongoing expansion of the Metro Bus service connecting the Science Park, the Bristol North Fringe and Cribbs Causeway to Bristol city centre and Hengrove and more frequent train services between Yate and Bristol. Money has also been invested in flood defences along the Severn Estuary, drainage infrastructure in the Bristol north fringe and in improving provision of essential utilities.

2.22 Whilst we have seen new investment in some infrastructure, net funding for local bus services over the last 10 years has been reduced significantly, resulting in several local bus services connecting towns and villages being cut. This has come at a time when demand is increasing; latest figures show that from 2023 to 2024 there were nearly 40% more passenger journeys, and a 9% increase in bus journey vehicle miles. This issue of people being cut off from services because of a lack of transport options is one which is commented on regularly by local residents.

2.23 Delays in the delivery of key infrastructure necessary to support new development has added to the challenge.

2.24 The market towns of Yate, Chipping Sodbury and Thornbury benefit from a range of services and facilities and while located close to Bristol, public transport options are very limited and facilities for active and sustainable travel are currently lacking. People living in these rapidly expanding towns cannot access their local hospital using public transport and most commutes for work or education are reliant on driving in private vehicles. The options for some smaller villages are worse, with some located several miles away from a regular bus service.

2.25 We continue to work with the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority to improve options, but our plans assume that major scale sustainable trans-green belt transport infrastructure will not be delivered over the short to medium term.

2.26 Instead, our strategy for new development is designed to take advantage of existing infrastructure, whilst being synchronised and aligned with more realistic improvements and enhancements.

2.27 Looking at it on a map, South Gloucestershire has very good strategic road and motorway links including the M4, M5, M49 and the M32 leading to/from central Bristol. However, we experience issues with capacity at motorway junctions, with particular strain on junctions of the M5. This means that some areas, particularly in the north of the district, would not be able to cope with significant additional new housing or employment because of the impact on the strategic road network.

2.28 Except for the communities of the Bristol East Fringe area, all development in South Gloucestershire would have implications for use of motorways. Improved motorway junctions around the edge of Bristol would open development opportunities, but financial and environmental concerns make 'big ticket' infrastructure less forthcoming, and it often takes longer to deliver. There are no significant, deliverable plans to upgrade the junctions. Therefore, in determining where to locate houses, we must consider where those impacts can be best managed. We are committed to an approach which seeks wherever possible to prioritise embedding active and sustainable travel as a viable alternative to travel by private vehicle.

2.29 Mainline railways provide strategic links to the north, south, east and west and there are some local rail services and a local network of bus services.

2.30 South Gloucestershire Council has a strong commitment to improving options for all forms of active travel, opening additional opportunities for wheelchair users, cyclists and walkers. Our evolving strategic active travel network includes significant stretches of dedicated walking, wheeling and cycle lanes connecting key destinations around the North and East Fringes of Bristol and links to Bath and Bristol City Centres via the National Cycle Network. There is also an extensive network of public rights of way throughout the urban and rural areas.

2.31 But options to access key services, facilities and job opportunities by walking and wheeling varies significantly across both urban and rural areas. Active travel networks are still fragmented in places and road and rail corridors restrict movement. As a result, car ownership and the number of people who commute by car remains high in South Gloucestershire, especially for those who need to travel across the Green Belt.

2.32 Parts of the strategic and local road network can be impacted by congestion at peak periods and transport and private car use is a significant contributor to climate change.

2.33 Air quality problems have been identified in parts of Staple Hill and in areas near the A420 road between Kingswood and Warmley, which have been declared Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). The most recent data (2022) suggests that A roads in South Gloucestershire produced the most Co2 emissions in the West of England (142 kilotons) (although it should be noted we also have the greatest length of roads maintained in miles).

2.34 We must ensure that new development is accessible, inclusive, connected and decarbonised to allow people to get around quickly, efficiently and sustainably.

A prosperous, innovative and diverse economy

2.35 South Gloucestershire is the economic engine room of the West of England:

- South Gloucestershire is the most productive area in the South West with a figure of £52.20 Gross Value Added per hour worked (ONS Local Economic Indicators).
- Latest published data shows our GDP was £16,387m in 2022 ranking us 20th of all local authorities and 13th outside of London[3].

2.36 Our economic strength is spread across many industry sectors.

2.37 We have a globally significant aerospace innovation cluster, with Airbus UK, GKN Aerospace, BAE Systems and Rolls Royce all based here.

2.38 Together with Avonmouth (within the administrative area of Bristol City Council), the Severnside Employment Area is a globally significant enterprise area with strengths in net zero energy transition and logistics.

2.39 The West Innovation Arc is a major growth zone covering the North Fringe of Bristol urban area through to Emersons Green. The aerospace sector is based here, but it is also home to the Bristol & Bath Science Park, the National Composite Centre, the Institute for Advanced Automotive Propulsion Systems (IAAPS), the Isambard AI Supercomputer and the University of the West of England – the South West's largest university - and the world-renowned Bristol Robotics Laboratory.

2.40 We have a strong and diverse retail sector. The Mall at Cribbs Causeway has the largest concentration of shopping and leisure facilities in one location. And local town centres, high streets and retail parks provide shopping, community and leisure facilities and jobs for local people.

2.41 We see significant growth potential for our area, building on existing strengths and supporting the emergence of evolving and new sectors.

2.42 The strategic regeneration of the brownfield site at the former Filton Airfield (now known as Brabazon) is underway. The development will deliver a 19,000-seater indoor stadium, conference, leisure and entertainment facilities within the historic Brabazon hangar (within the boundary of Bristol City Council). The development will also bring thousands of new homes, substantial commercial floorspace and a new railway station.

2.43 Land around the former Magnox Nuclear Power Station at Oldbury Power Station has been recognised as a site of national importance alongside Berkeley Power Station (within the administrative area of Stroud) for the West of England to lead the UK in 'first-of-a-kind' energy production, research & development skills, and training.

2.44 South Gloucestershire is also an emerging tourist destination. Recently developed attractions including Britain's first man-made surfing lake, the Aerospace Bristol Museum which is home to Concorde and Bristol Zoo's Wild Place attract people to the District from across the country and abroad. Those who enjoy the natural environment are also well served. We have beautiful countryside on our doorstep and established attractions including the National Trust's Dyrham Park and the Cotswold Way national trail.

[3] ONS Regional gross domestic product by local authority, latest release April 2024

2.45 The principles of the Local Plan must support the ongoing success of the sectors and organisations which have called South Gloucestershire home for many decades and help us take advantage of new opportunities.

2.46 We must plan development so people can get to schools, colleges, universities and training centres and develop the skills employers need both now and into the future.

2.47 We must plan development so that people can get to work and customers can get to shops and entertainment facilities.

2.48 And we must deliver affordable homes so that people can stay or settle in South Gloucestershire.

A good community is an inclusive community

2.49 South Gloucestershire is a relatively affluent area with local people generally enjoying happy and healthy lives.

- The proportion of the economically active (aged 16-64) population in employment in South Gloucestershire (84.2%) is significantly higher than the national average (75.7%), and only 2.0% of the economically active population (16+) are unemployed (June 2024) (ONS local indicators).
- The median annual earnings of full-time workers in South Gloucestershire was £39,300 in 2024, greater than the England average of £37,600.
- Life expectancy for people in South Gloucestershire (84.6 for women and 81.0 for men) is higher than the national (82.8, 78.9) and South West (83.9, 80.0) averages.

2.50 But not everyone has benefited from the district's success and inequalities are growing.

2.51 In the wake of the pandemic, recent economic shocks and the rising cost of living, evidence shows that the inequalities gap in South Gloucestershire between the most and least deprived residents has increased across seventeen out of twenty-five health indicators. The most striking evidence of this is that men living in the most deprived areas of South Gloucestershire die on average 7.4 years before those in wealthier areas (the gap for women is 5.4 years). This means that many people in our communities have reduced opportunities for good economic, physical and mental health and well-being.

2.52 A new strategic and holistic approach to tackling inequality in our authority has been adopted and is recognised in our Council Plan. Our Local Plan has an important role to play in supporting this priority. For example, we can support better health and wellbeing by ensuring communities have access to healthy living environments, green spaces, good employment and social infrastructure to support their needs.

2.53 There are areas which need more support, particularly clustered around the urban area of the Bristol East Fringe. Here, the long-term decline of manufacturing industries brought large-scale job losses and there remain too few jobs for the number of residents.

2.54 We have directed in our new Local Plan how we will offer new opportunities for local people by developing the employment, housing, community and transport infrastructure needed to regenerate and rejuvenate the areas of South Gloucestershire which have suffered most from decline. We have also worked with our health and community partners to think about how we create well designed places which support the mental and physical health of our communities.

A rich and varied natural environment which must be protected

2.55 South Gloucestershire has a rich and varied natural and built environment.

2.56 We enjoy contrasting landscapes, ranging from the distinctive scarp and hills of the Cotswolds National Landscape, which covers 11,800ha (22%) in the east of the authority, to the flat expanses of the Severn levels, and the urban landscape around the edge of Bristol. Landscape ridges, hillsides and views frame the urban area and provide the setting for rural villages and settlements. More than 11% of South Gloucestershire is covered with trees and woodlands.

2.57 Our area also contains a high number of internationally, nationally and locally designated nature conservation sites:

- The Severn Estuary is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site due to its international importance for wildlife
- 22 nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), with the most significant concentrations found near Cold Ashton and Wickwar. The Severn Estuary comprises the largest SSSI
- 271 locally designated Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs) and 64 Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS) which together form a network of what are known as Local Sites
- 10 Local Nature Reserves
- 75 registered commons covering 1.17% of the area; and
- A diverse range of nationally and internationally important wildlife species, including bats, dormice, great crested newts, otters and water voles

2.58 South Gloucestershire currently contributes slightly higher greenhouse gas emissions than the UK average per year, and significantly higher than the South West average. Energy consumption by businesses, homes and road transport are the primary contributors to these emissions.

2.59 There are also regionally connected and multifunctional Green Infrastructure Corridors and areas of focus for the West of England Nature Recovery Strategy. However, our wildlife habitats and their biodiversity are under considerable pressure and are, in places, fragmented and disconnected.

2.60 Within South Gloucestershire there are areas at high risk of flooding. A large area of the district, predominantly along the Severn Estuary, the Avonmouth and Severnside Enterprise Area, and the villages of Severn Beach and Pilning, falls within Flood Zone 2 and 3. This limits the areas which are suitable for sustainable development.

2.61 Relics of historic settlements and the industrial past texture the landscape. These historic buildings, settlements, parks and gardens, and archaeological features make an important contribution to the character of our communities, and many are designated for protection in the planning system.

2.62 There are:

- 30 conservation areas
- 2,085 listed buildings and 1,470 locally listed buildings
- 38 scheduled ancient monuments; and
- 8 registered parks and gardens

Planning for the future

2.63 We have set out above what South Gloucestershire means to us. When things aren't planned properly, development can cause and exacerbate these problems. South Gloucestershire Council declared a climate and nature emergency in 2019, setting an overarching target for the district to be carbon neutral by 2030. Our Local Plan can play an important role in supporting these commitments.

2.64 We believe planning can and should make a positive difference to all our lives. Good planning delivers homes, jobs and better opportunities which provide better opportunities for South Gloucestershire's residents. Good planning delivers these priorities whilst protecting and enhancing our high quality natural and historic environment and conserving the countryside and open spaces. Above all, good planning helps create and strengthen sustainable communities; communities that stand the test of time, where people want to live, and which will enable people to meet their aspirations and potential.

Local Plan Objectives

Introduction

3.1 The Local Plan is the result of extensive consultation and engagement with local people, partner organisations and other key stakeholders. Our work on the Council Plan has also identified the key goals and ambitions of our communities.

3.2 The foundations and core principles for our Local Plan were agreed through lengthy and wide-ranging conversations through both these processes to identify and better understand:

- what people like about our place, which we must protect and enhance,
- what opportunities there are to use development to make things better, and
- what challenges we must overcome and where there are restrictions which limit our ambitions.

Alignment with the West of England Growth Plan

3.3 The West of England Mayoral Combined Authority's Local Growth Plan, although not formally a part of our statutory development for South Gloucestershire, will be a regional level plan driven by jobs, innovation and a just transition to 'green jobs', alongside regional transport.

3.4 The Local Plan will have a key role in delivering these ambitions through its locational strategy and site allocations for homes and jobs and its polices on housing, employment, transport, energy, climate change and biodiversity, as well as its commitment to addressing inequality and the cost of living.

Alignment with the Council Plan

3.5 The South Gloucestershire Council Plan 2024 - 2028 is the overarching strategy for the Council and has five core goals:

1. Respond to the climate and nature emergency,
2. Help reduce inequalities,
3. Support children and young people to thrive,
4. Support wellbeing and independence in our communities,
5. Build better places with secure affordable housing and good sustainable transport links.

3.6 The table below shows how the Local Plan's objectives will contribute to the five core goals of the Council Plan.

Respond to the climate and nature emergency	Help reduce inequalities	Support children and young people to thrive	Support wellbeing and independence in our communities	Build better places with secure affordable housing and good sustainable transport links
			Objective 1	Objective 1
Objective 2			Objective 2	Objective 2
Objective 3	Objective 1	Objective 1	Objective 3	Objective 3
Objective 4	Objective 2	Objective 4	Objective 4	Objective 4
Objective 5	Objective 4	Objective 5	Objective 5	Objective 5
Objective 6	Objective 5	Objective 6	Objective 6	Objective 6

Objective 1	**Providing new homes to meet the needs of all our communities**
Objective 2	**Connecting development to existing transport and travel infrastructure, maximising opportunities to embed active and sustainable travel**
Objective 3	**Supporting development which mitigates and improves our resilience to climate change and enhances nature and biodiversity**
Objective 4	**Focusing on high quality design and adopting best practice approaches to place-making**
Objective 5	**Supporting a prosperous, innovative and diverse economy, which delivers good quality, high paid jobs for local people**
Objective 6	**Deliverability and Viability**

3.7 Reducing inequality is a key council priority. Through the Plan's objectives, strategy and polices we have sought to address issues of inequality and promoted inclusion. We will achieve this by listening to and addressing the needs of everyone in our community, opening up access to, and availability of, homes and jobs and the supporting physical infrastructure people need to live successful and prosperous lives. This Local Plan is about helping everyone have the best life chances and opportunity to reach their potential.

Local Plan Objectives

3.8 Our priorities for addressing issues and realising ambitions are set out in six Local Plan objectives. Our objectives are wide ranging and ambitious. It is the role of the planning system and our Local Plan to provide the structure to ensure that in our decision-making we reach the best outcomes given the range of issues and perspectives we need to consider.

Objective 1 – Providing new homes to meet the needs of all our communities

3.9 Through our Local Plan we will:

a. Support people with the cost of living and reduce inequality, helping to ensure that everyone has access to an affordable decent, safe and sustainable home. The Local Plan aims to deliver on this priority by allocating sites to deliver enough high-quality homes, with a focus on affordable and specialised homes, of different sizes, types and tenures to meet identified needs for all sections of our community, including, students, and travellers.

b. Ensure that a range of differently sized sites for new homes are planned for in sustainable locations to deliver and maintain a rolling five-year supply of housing. Development will be spread across urban and rural South Gloucestershire to provide opportunities for people to stay close to their existing social support networks.

c. Make the best use of land by optimising density in locations, such as town centres, where a range of local facilities can be accessed by walking and wheeling and there are wider transport connections.

Objective 2 – Connecting development to existing transport and travel infrastructure, maximising opportunities to embed active and sustainable travel

3.10 Through our Local Plan we will:

a. Locate homes and jobs in locations that are on existing public transport routes or could be capable of delivering in the future high-quality, viable and reliable journey patterns using active travel, and public transport to access key services and facilities, with the purpose of reducing dependency on long distance car reliant travel.

b. Plan development in places where there is capacity on existing transport infrastructure, including the strategic road network and motorway junctions or a realistic prospect of delivering new or enhanced infrastructure.

c. Locate new development on the edge of the urban area of Bristol to open up easy access to the full range of existing services and infrastructure rather than locations which embed longer distance car reliant commuting.

d. Support the future vitality of villages and settlements by locating small and proportionate development in these communities which have some access to services and facilities, in particular rural primary schools (with existing capacity).

e. Enable more active lifestyles and minimise the need to travel. Where travel is necessary, we will seek to decarbonise it by designing new development and infrastructure and adapting existing infrastructure to be inclusive, making it easier and safer to walk, cycle, wheel and to use public transport.

Objective 3 – Supporting development which mitigates and improves our resilience to climate change and enhances nature and biodiversity

3.11 Through our Local Plan we will:

a. Design places which people experience with the understanding of the future needs of a changing world. Development will be adaptable over time in response to climate change and to evolving lifestyle and working patterns. These places need to be safe, help to improve community cohesion and support the mental and physical health of our communities.

b. Increase our resilience to climate change impacts and threats, including buildings, infrastructure, and the natural environment.

c. Recognise the impact of locational decisions on both the causes and consequences of climate change, including risk of flooding.

d. Establish, maintain and enhance the function and connectivity of green infrastructure and Nature Recovery Networks for all our communities and, unless exempt, provide a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain in new developments.

e. Prioritise the preservation of existing trees and hedgerows and increase tree cover and new tree-planting. Trees lost to development will be replaced.

f. Ensure all our communities – including urban populations - have access to high quality green infrastructure, nature rich habitat and open spaces.

g. Support South Gloucestershire's net zero commitments by significantly increasing renewable and low-carbon energy generation, including through community energy projects.

Objective 4 – Focusing on high quality design and adopting best practice approaches to place-making

3.12 Through our Local Plan we will:

a. Protect and enhance the character, distinctiveness, quality and intrinsic features of the natural and historic environment including the Cotswolds National Landscape and assets protected under a range of local, national and international legislation.

b. Create a positive sense of place, fostering a sense of belonging and safety and enable people to build relationships by reflecting and reinforcing the community's own identity, its sense of history and place, as well as responding to key natural, built, historic and landscape assets and character of both the local landscape and townscape to create high-quality developments.

c. Employ best practice design principles to enable residents from all backgrounds to live and work in places that provide opportunities for easy movement between everyday places and the type of living environment which avoids separation or segregation.

d. Require zero carbon, energy-efficient building design and construction and support retrofitting to reduce energy bills, decarbonise heating and adapt to climate change.

e. Design new homes and infrastructure so that it is adaptable and accessible to cater for our ageing population and for households whose needs may change over time.

f. Optimise the quality, density and range of uses in all new development, with higher density in the most accessible locations.

g. Ensure new homes and workplaces provide high quality private outdoor space and internal layouts, with positive residential amenity, including suitably sized new homes.

h. Ensure streets and areas of public realm adopt best practice design to safe, functional, accessible and attractive, with new streets being tree lined.

Objective 5 – Supporting a prosperous, innovative and diverse economy, which delivers good quality, high paid jobs for local people

3.13 Through our Local Plan we will:

a. Plan for a better balance between local jobs and resident workers in all our communities, recognising the need for more employment opportunities in the communities of our Bristol East Fringe urban area.

b. Allocate land, across both existing and new sites, dedicated for employment use to meet evidence-based need.

c. Support a "green" economic recovery through encouraging green technology and businesses which contribute to carbon reduction.

d. Recognise the rapidly changing economic and retail environment and ensure safeguarded employment areas are flexible and attractive to accommodate businesses of all sizes, including key local sectors.

e. Support town centres and high streets to be places that thrive, are flexible, adaptable and inclusive, fulfilling the needs of the communities they serve, and providing opportunities to deliver local regeneration.

f. Plan for mineral working to ensure a steady and adequate supply of aggregates.

Objective 6 – Deliverability and Viability

3.14 Through our Local Plan we will:

a. Direct development to those locations which are well-served or capable of being well-served by existing utilities and infrastructure.

b. Ensure that the delivery of new development is supported by the timely provision of all necessary infrastructure and that that the development industry plays its role in providing infrastructure.

c. Safeguard land for infrastructure and renewable energy where necessary.

d. Require new development to enable and support the long-term success and sustainability of schools, sports and community infrastructure and public open spaces, green infrastructure and areas identified for biodiversity net gain and nature recovery.

e. Build on and enhance digital connectivity across the area.

f. Embed infrastructure for alternative-fuel vehicles in new developments.

g. Establish strong and inclusive communities, working with a range of stakeholders and by using various approaches, including community engagement events, neighbourhood planning, design codes, and masterplans.