Corston Parish Council

Chair: Councillor John Twist OBE Clerk: John V May

9 Meadlands, Corston BA2 9AS

Telephone: 01225 873403

email: corstonpc@gmail.com

31st December 2017

**Subject: Corston Parish Council Combined Consultation Response for:**

**a) West of England Joint Spatial Plan November 2017**

**b) B&NES Local Plan 2016-2036 Winter 2017**

Reference:

a) WoE Joint Spatial Plan Publication Document November 2017

1. B&NES Local Plan Issues & Options Consultation Winter 2017

**1. Introduction**

1.1 Corston Parish Council arranged for an Ad-Hoc Parish Meeting to take place on Thursday 14th December to review the two referenced consultation documents.

1.2 The meeting’s purpose was to raise overall awareness of the totality of these proposals, allow Parish Councillors and Parishioners to identify local factors in relation to the proposals, offer ideas that have the potential to add value or, highlight shortcomings that require further consideration by the Authorities concerned before either of these plans are adopted.

1.3 After a wide ranging discussion and general agreement on the long-term benefits of the proposals, the meeting agreed to restrict comment to those aspects of the two document that have the potential to adversely impact on the local environment. Namely increased traffic congestion on Main and Secondary roads including the A39 and A4 transport corridors, options for non-strategic development in the B&NES region and the Unitary Authority’s on-going HELAA initiative.

1.4 Considering that Corston is a small rural village the meeting was well attended.

**2. Strategic Development Proposals**

*The following points are offered for JSP Policy 7.1 – North Keynsham.*

2.1 The JSP strategic housing development proposed together with the existing B&NES Core Strategy allocated development site adjacent to this location has the potential to significantly increase road traffic in the local vicinity and particularly on the A4 transport corridor between Bath and Bristol.

2.2 Up to a point, it was recognized that the JSP does mitigate this with the introduction of much improved public transport links between Keynsham and Bristol which includes a Metrobus service, the multi-modal link connecting A4, and A37, the South Bristol link road and the relocated Park & Ride facility for Bristol at Hicks Gate. As a result the transport links between Bristol and Keynsham should be much improved.

2.3 However it is inconceivable that those living in the new dwellings at North Keynsham will all travel West to the Bristol area. It is considered that a significant proportion will travel East on the A4 towards Bath using business, commercial or private vehicles. As this is not addressed in either consultation document, this factor is considered to be a major shortcoming of both the JSP and Local Plan for the following reasons.

2.4 The volume of traffic currently using A4 highway between the Hicks Gate roundabout and the Globe roundabout is already at or above the capacity of large sections of this major transport corridor and at peak times traffic congestion in Saltford regularly causes long tailbacks of slow moving or stopped vehicles in both directions.

2.5 Likewise the volume traffic using both the A39 through Corston and the classified Secondary road between the A4 at the Globe roundabout via Pennyquick and Rush Hill to the A367 at the Red Lion roundabout is also already above the capacity of the road with long tailbacks of slow moving or stopped traffic occurring at peak tines.

2.6 Consequently it is considered a significant shortfall that the stated JSP policies and the Local Plan fail to recognize and offer any mitigating solution to these long-standing traffic congestion problems. It is proposed that the Joint Transport Study now focuses on these particular and significant traffic congestion issues and develops effective proposals to overcome these long-standing problems.

2.7 Before starting any housing development at North Keynsham the critical issue of traffic congestion as identified above requires to be resolved.

2.8 The Local Plan consultation document Diagram 9: North Keynsham shows at item 17, a Metrobus linking Bristol to Bath, however the JSP Policy 7.1 at paragraph iv only introduces at a Metrobus route from Bristol to Keynsham on the A4 corridor.

2.9 The policy requirement to have a Metrobus link between Bristol and Bath appears to be missing from the JSP and it is considered that this is a policy shortcoming that needs resolution. Additionally a new Park & Ride facility at North Keynsham was considered an essential addition to help encourage Bath bound travellers from the surrounding area to use public transport.

*The following points are offered for JSP Policy 7.3 –Land at Bath Road Brislington*

2.10 The relocated Brislington Park & Ride at Hicks Gate should be of sufficient size to accommodate not only commuters who wish to use public transport but also those whom car sharing is the only viable option.

2.11 From local experience it is concluded that small rural communities adjacent to major transport corridors suffer excessive on-street parking during working hours as a consequence of car sharing, probably because traffic congestion prevents easy access to existing Park & Ride facilities.

**3. Non-Strategic Development Proposals**

*The B&NES Local Plan 2016-2036*

3.1 The B&NES Local Plan offers 3 Options to consider for non-strategic growth and asks which is considered to best accommodate the requirement.

3.2 It was concluded that there is no one answer that effectively resolves this issue.

3.3 Two of the most important factors to consider are the provision of affordable dwellings in rural communities and realistic public transport links that establish dependable services for travel to further education and employment locations.

3.4 If circumstances prevent current and future generations of local young people from becoming active members of the rural communities where they live, these villages will quickly become dormitory locations for those who work in the high-tech and well paid businesses the authorities seek to attract to the major conurbations.

3.5 Each of the options offered has some merit and the creation of realistic and effective Neighborhood Plans is considered to be an important element in determining an optimal solution.

*The ongoing B&NES Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment exercise (HELAA)*

3.6 Corston Parish Council addressed the proposed local sites during the October 2017 confidential consultation. Now that the location of these sites is in the public domain, the conclusions submitted in October are attached for wider information.

**4. Conclusion**

4.1 Before development commences at North Keynsham, the identification and implementation of measures to effectively mitigate the existing serious traffic congestion on the following transport corridors is required. The A4 between the Hicks Gate and Globe roundabouts, the A39 through Corston and the Secondary Road link between the A4 Globe roundabout and the A367 Red Lion roundabout.

4.2 Further work and local consultation is required to establish the optimum and realistic locations of the sites for non-strategic development.

Councillor John Twist

Chair Corston Parish Council

Distribution:

WoE JSP Publication:CPC comments submitted [online](https://www.jointplanningwofe.org.uk/consult.ti/JSPPublication/view?objectId=9163508" \l "9163508" \t "_blank)

B&NES Local Plan: CPC comments submitted on-line local\_plan2@bathnes.gov.uk

Corston PC email distribution network to Councillors and Parishioners

***Attachment:*** *Corston Parish Council’s October 2017 response to B&NES HELAA 2017*

Corston Parish Council

Chair: Councillor John Twist OBE Clerk: John V May

9 Meadlands, Corston BA2 9AS

Telephone: 01225 873403

email: corstonpc@gmail.com

28th October 2017

Subject: Housing & Economic Land Availability (HELAA) 2017

Reference: B&NES Planning Policy email dated 2nd October 2017

**Introduction**

As requested at reference, Corston Parish Council is pleased to comment and submit factual information regarding COR1 and COR2. These two local sites are included in the initial draft list of sites currently being considered for suitability to be taken forward for further examination as part of the HELAA 2017 initiative.

As requested, the Parish Council’s comments have been recorded in the excel spreadsheet format. However there is one statement in the B&NES draft HELAA spreadsheet that Corston Parish Council strongly objects to.

**COR1**

COR1 was included in the B&NES call for sites in 2008 and again in the 2013 SHLAA exercise. On both previous occasions because of a variety of serious restrictive issues this site was not selected for development. The issues that existed in 2008 and 2013 remain and indeed, some issues such as transport, volume of traffic on the A4 together with a deterioration of pedestrian safety and air pollution has markedly increased.

The following statement by B&NES is considered to be exceptionally misleading

*Line 200 COR1 Tab - Transport 1*

*Large site to west to of Corston village and within walking distance of Corston village centre but with limited facilities (Post Office, church, pub). Within walking distance (although footways lacking and not all lit) of frequent bus services (38/39/X39) along A4 (and new A4 pedestrian crossing and cycle path) so good bus service to Bristol/Bath and cycle access to Bath. Moderate to good site in accessibility and sustainability terms. No showstoppers or significant transport, highways or access implications.*

**Corston PC’s response**

a) Recognizing that where footpaths in the village exist they are generally quite narrow and mainly not lit. The limited facilities in the village that are within realistic walking distance of COR1 are the village shop, the post office, the playing field, the church and the village hall. The Wheatsheaf public house, which should be considered a local country pub rather than a centrally located village pub as implied, is situated over a mile away on the A39. This exceptionally busy highway has very restricted footpaths and walking from the village to the Wheatsheaf pub should not be considered a particularly attractive activity given the speed and volume of fast moving traffic.

b) Regarding the comments on the A4, as there are no controlled pedestrian crossings, or a footpath or bus stops on the south verge of this section of the A4 (adjacent to COR1), to reach the bus services, pedestrians will need to cross this very busy road using the central pedestrian refuges. Even now, due to the very high volumes of fast moving traffic using this section of road, currently villagers are invariably stranded in the center of the A4 with traffic passing in front and behind them at 50mph or even faster. This is a most dangerous situation.

c) As mentioned in the B&NES statement, the new pedestrian controlled crossing and the start of the cycle path serving the A4 exist, but these are located at the Globe roundabout, which is about a mile east of COR1. There is no cycle path on the A4 between Saltford and the Globe roundabout and, the only footpath on the A4 serving COR1 is across the road on the north side of this busy highway. Consequently access to and from COR1 for pedestrians and cyclists is considered to be exceptionally poor.

d) Site accessibility for vehicles is not considered to be moderate to good as stated. It is exceptionally poor.

The access from Corston Lane is totally unrealistic for the size of the development proposed. The lane is little more than a single carriageway from the village centre to the A4 and has no designated passing places. Two-way traffic can only pass on an opportunity basis when space allows a vehicle to move over, occasionally by mounting the very narrow pedestrian footpath.

Vehicle access from COR1 onto the A4 is considered even more problematic. Primarily caused by the high volume of fast moving traffic, or conversely, at peak time the traffic is very slow moving or at a standstill due to congestion in Saltford. The addition of a large number of new dwellings at COR1 will unacceptably exacerbate the volume of traffic on a section of road that is already regularly at or over its capacity. The already unacceptable risk from air pollution from the slow moving traffic will rapidly get worse.

**Conclusion**

Corston Parish Council comments have been added to the excel template as requested.

However given the above and other recorded comments regarding COR1, it is considered that the suitability recorded for this site in the Overview matrix-2 spreadsheet line 56 should be amended from Amber to Red as not suitable and COR1 now excluded from HELAA 2017.

Councillor John Twist Chair Corston Parish Council