



HIF Banwell Bypass and Highways Improvements Project

Planning Statement

BNWLBP-ARP-GEN-XXXX-RP-TP-000002

P05 | S4
12/07/22

Document Verification

Project Title	HIF Banwell Bypass and Highways Improvements Project
Document Title	Planning Statement
Document Reference	BNWLBP-ARP-GEN-XXXX-RP-TP-000002
Project Stage	1B
Document Status	P05 S4 - FOR PLANNING APPLICATION

Approvals

Revision	Status	Role	Name	Date
P05	S4	Author	Harrison Moore	12/07/22
		Checker	Geraint Jones	12/07/22
		Approver	Tom Edwards	12/07/22
		Authoriser	Tom Edwards	12/07/22

Revision History

Revision	Date	Description	Author
P05	12/07/22	FOR PLANNING SUBMISSION	HM
P04	30/06/22	INTERNAL REVIEW	HM
P03	13/06/22	INTERNAL REVIEW	HM
P02	11/05/22	INTERNAL REVIEW	HM
P01	17/03/22	FOR REVIEW AND COMMENT	HM

Contents

		Page
1	Introduction	1
1.1	Purpose	1
1.2	Need for intervention	2
1.3	Scheme objectives	4
1.4	Scheme location	6
1.5	Existing land use and character	8
1.6	Pre-application process	14
1.7	List of Plans and Documents	14
1.8	Structure	17
2	Planning framework	18
3	Proposed development	27
3.1	Overview	27
4	Case for the Scheme	32
4.2	Transport case	32
4.3	Economic case	38
4.4	Environmental case	44
4.5	Review against Scheme objectives	52
5	National legislation and policy context and assessment	56
5.2	National Planning Policy Framework (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government), 2021	56
5.3	Summary	72
5.4	National Policy Statement for National Networks in the context of climate	72
6	Local policy context and assessment	76
6.1	Relevant local policy context	76
6.2	Neighbourhood plans	79
6.3	Emerging policy	79
6.4	Planning guidance	79
6.5	Local Policy Context	79
6.6	Local planning policy assessment	79
6.7	Summary	79
7	Conclusion	80

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

- 1.1.1 The purpose of this Planning Statement (“Statement”) is to consider the Banwell Bypass and Highways Improvements Project (the “Scheme”) against the relevant planning policy and material considerations. This Statement presents the case in support of the Scheme in accordance with planning balance.
- 1.1.2 This Statement demonstrates that the Scheme accords with the relevant planning policy tests and is acceptable in land use and planning terms.
- 1.1.3 The Statement has been prepared by Arup on behalf of and in support of a full planning application made by North Somerset Council (“NSC”) Major Schemes Team for the Scheme. NSC are also the Local Planning Authority (“LPA”), with the entirety of the Scheme to be situated within North Somerset.
- 1.1.4 Applications for planning permission are determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise (Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990).
- 1.1.5 The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 20151 and NSC Local List of Planning Application Requirements (PAR) (2019)2 do not specifically require a Statement to accompany the application. However, it is considered that this Statement would assist NSC LPA with the determination of this Planning Application.
- 1.1.6 This Statement gives particular consideration to the National Planning Policy Framework (2021)³ and NSC adopted Local Plans. It sets out and considers how the Scheme relates to the planning policy context at national, regional, and local levels.
- 1.1.7 This Statement sets out the need and case for Scheme, explaining how it complies with the NSC local development plan and other relevant legislation and policies.

1.2 Need for intervention

- 1.2.1 The current highway network through Banwell, North Somerset (the A371 and A368) generally comprises a single carriageway road with one lane in each direction. The routes pass through the villages of Banwell, Churchill, Sandford, Winscombe and Locking. The sections of the highway between the villages provide access to residential and agricultural properties.
- 1.2.2 The A371 is the main route from Weston-super-Mare to Banwell. The route passes through Banwell and continues in a generally south-easterly direction onto Winscombe, Cheddar, Wells, and eventually terminates in a junction with the A303 at Wincanton. A section of this road through Banwell reduces to two single lane sections. At certain times of the day this causes congestion, journey time delays, and uncertainty. HGV and bus movements through this section can cause issues at any time of the day with congestion.
- 1.2.3 The A368 corridor runs along the northern edge of the Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural beauty (AONB). Starting at Banwell, it forms part of the main route from Weston-super-Mare in the west to Bath in the east. The A368 connects to the A38 at Churchill providing a strategic route to Bristol.
- 1.2.4 NSC would like to improve walking routes to Churchill as the A368 is a key route to school and the Churchill Academy Secondary School and Sixth Form. The route is generally narrow in character, and beyond the village centres there is a lack of suitable walking/cycling facilities along its length. Towards Churchill, there are some areas where the road narrows and the centreline has been removed.
- 1.2.5 These strategic routes are significant to the area, providing critical connectivity throughout the rest of the South West strategic transport network. The routes play a big part in everyday lives of tens of thousands of people as they travel to work and school, and for business and leisure purposes. The importance of these routes is further highlighted by the following studies and reports. Environmental Statement (ES) Volume 1 - Chapter 3 - Alternatives Considered provides the history to the Banwell Bypass.

1.2.6 A Banwell Transport Area Study was commissioned in 2000 by North Somerset Council (“NSC”) to consider and assess transport options for the Banwell area. The Final Study Report concluded a bypass should be progressed, with a route recommendation to the north of Banwell to reduce congestion through the village. This formed the basis for the route that is currently safeguarded for planning purposes within the NSC Local Plan⁴ under Policy DM20.

1.2.7 A Greater Bristol Strategic Transport Study (GBSTS) (Atkins, 2006) proposed a Banwell, Churchill and Sandford bypass to improve movements in and out of the greater Bristol region. Due to requirements and cost, this was not progressed at the time.

1.2.8 The Option Selection Report (WSP, July 2018) recommended a route referenced as route 2 which resembles the safeguarded route in the existing Local Plan. This has led to a Scheme presented in this application which aims to address problems in the area. Despite withdrawal from the Joint Spatial Plan, Banwell is still being put forward as a strategic housing location in the emerging Local Plan (2023-38). The ‘Scheme’ is defined in ES Volume 1 - Chapter 2 - Scheme Description.

1.2.9 The Banwell Bypass will help enable this development, it supports the emerging local plan and Wolvershill village is being put forward (near Banwell) as a strategic site housing site.

1.2.10 In 2019, NSC secured £97.1m of funding from Homes England’s Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF). The HIF funding was awarded so that essential infrastructure projects could be delivered to support North Somerset’s growing population, whilst also supporting the delivery of potential housing sites to help meet the need for new homes over the next 15 years.

1.2.11 Overall, routes which pass through Banwell are significant to connectivity locally and regionally. Congestion through the village causes journey time delays and uncertainty. This in turn, has economic, transport, cultural, environmental impacts on the area and the wider network. The Banwell Bypass would strive to address these needs.

1.2.12 The particular problems that NSC is seeking to address through the Scheme are listed below.

Economic

- a) Productivity in the South West is restricted by poor connectivity.
- b) Economic growth is constrained by traffic congestion, delay, and unreliable journey times.
- c) Tourism and the visitor economy are harmed by congestion and unreliable journey times.
- d) Lack of infrastructure that can enable future housing development (subject to the Local Plan).
- e) Weston is more deprived than the rest of the South West.

Environment

- a) Traffic causes severance, visual intrusion, poor air quality and noise.
- b) Traffic has a negative visual impact upon the surrounding countryside.

Social and Cultural

- a) Traffic has an adverse impact on local communities.
- b) Traffic has an adverse impact on the townscape and heritage assets of Banwell.

Transport

- a) Lack of capacity on the existing section of highway which goes through Banwell leads to congestion and delay.
- b) Poor journey time reliability makes it difficult to plan journeys.
- c) Lack of active travel and sustainable travel between local villages and Weston-super Mare.

1.2.13 These problems with the existing highway network through Banwell and wider connectivity issues have been recognised through various strategies and policy documents, which are considered in the policy context and assessment provided later in this report.

1.3 Scheme objectives

1.3.1 Taking into account the identified problems, NSC's overall objectives for the Scheme are to:

- a) Improve the local road network to deal with existing congestion issues.

- b) Improve and enhance Banwell's public spaces by reducing traffic severance and improving the public realm.
- c) Provide the opportunity to increase active and sustainable travel between local villages and Weston-super-Mare.
- d) Deliver infrastructure that enables housing development (subject to Local Plan).
- e) Ensure the development respects the local area and minimises visual impact upon the surrounding countryside and Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- f) Innovative and efficient in reducing and offsetting carbon from the design and construction of the infrastructure.
- g) Ensure the development provides the opportunity to increase Bio-Diversity Net Gain by at least 10%.
- h) Proactively engage with stakeholders in a way that is both clear and transparent.

1.4 Scheme location

- 1.4.1 Banwell is a village and civil parish in North Somerset, its population was 2,929 (according to 2011 Census). The centre of Banwell village is covered by a Conservation Area.
- 1.4.2 Banwell Village is located approximately 6km east of Weston-super-Mare and 28km south west of Bristol. There are several villages in the vicinity of Banwell, including Sandford and Winscombe to the east and Locking and Hutton to the west.
- 1.4.3 The immediate surrounding land use is predominately agricultural, with the Mendip Hills AONB to the south of the village.
- 1.4.4 The A368 (East Street) and A371 (Knightcott Road/West Street/Castle Hill) run through the centre of Banwell. The M5 runs from south to north, approximately 0.9km west of Banwell at the closest proximity.
- 1.4.5 The location of the Scheme is shown in Figure 1.

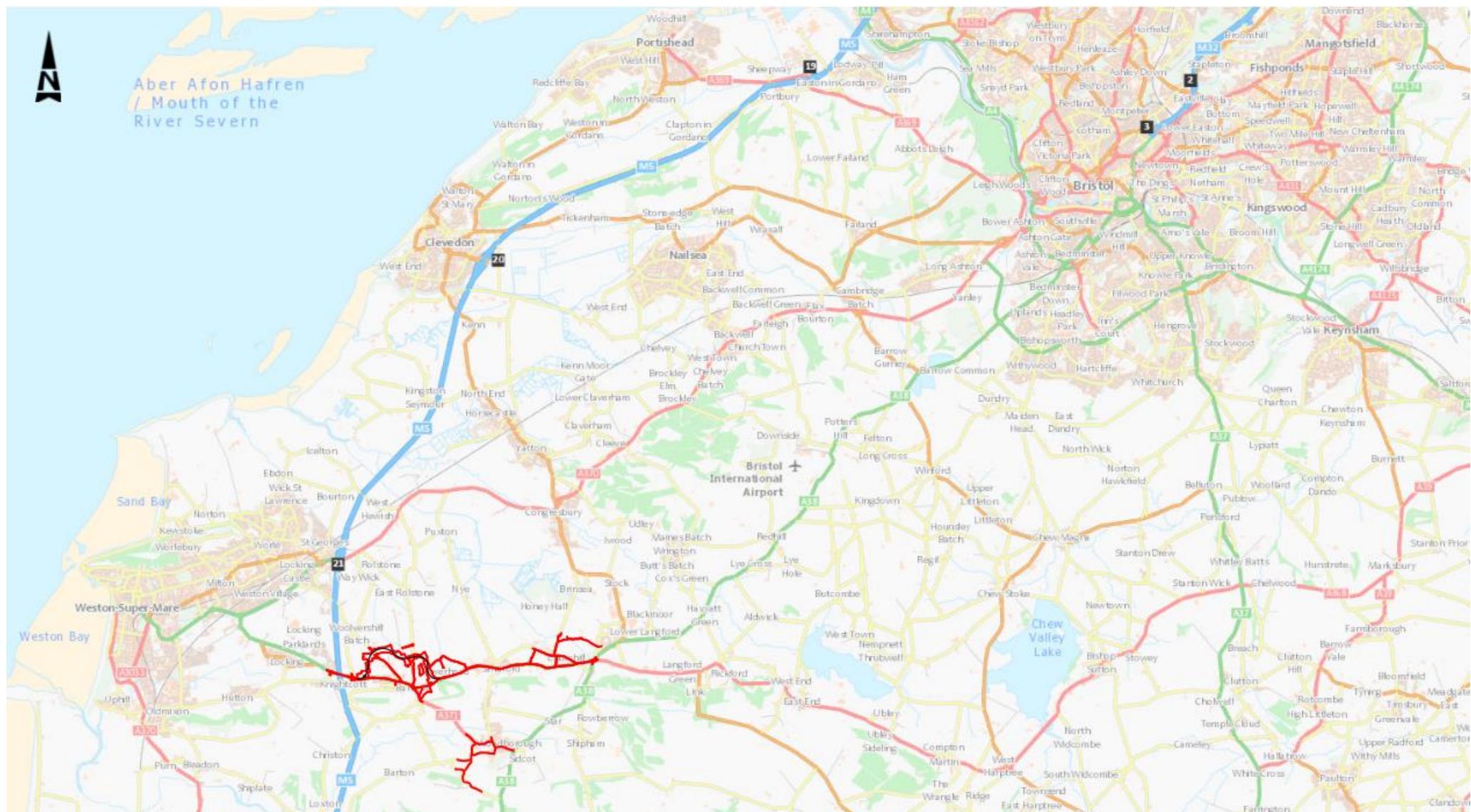


Figure 1 - Site Location Plan (refer to Planning Document – Site Location Plan)

1.5 Existing land use and character

- 1.5.1 At the western extent of the Scheme, Banwell Bypass connects into the existing A371 and the route travels north to bypass Banwell Village crossing Wolvershill Road, Moor Road and Riverside, connecting to the existing A368.
- 1.5.2 The route is generally flanked by rural fields and is situated alongside residential dwellings, farms, businesses, playing fields and a solar farm.

Settlements

- 1.5.3 The existing A371 and A368 serve four villages, including a moderate number of residential properties and businesses. Villages include Banwell, Sandford, Churchill and Winscombe.
- 1.5.4 West of Banwell Village, there are a low number of residential properties and businesses along Knightcott Road (A371). North of Knightcott Road off Summer Lane lies Summer Lane Park Homes, a residential park home estate, situated approximately 165 metres from the proposed Banwell West junction.
- 1.5.5 The Banwell Bypass would pass through Stonebridge Farm Caravan Park. South of this intersection would be Stonebridge Farm, with a small collection of residential dwellings further south along Wolvershill Road.
- 1.5.6 Banwell village is identified via a settlement boundary on the policies map in accordance with Policy SA 2 of the Site and Policies plan Part 2: Site Allocations Plan (2016). Settlement boundaries aim to direct development to the towns and other settlements.
- 1.5.7 Banwell village is located at the heart of the Scheme. It is important to the local area in terms of services and facilities it provides. These include a nursery, primary school, local shops, sports facilities, and a number of public houses. There are residential properties serving a population of approximately 7,813 as per the Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2020 mid-year population estimates.

1.5.8 Sandford is highlighted via a settlement boundary and is the smallest of the three relevant settlement boundary areas. Sandford is also important to the local area in terms of the services and facilities it provides. These include a primary school, local shops, Thatchers Cider factory and associated public house.

1.5.9 Churchill's settlement boundary is split across three separate areas. The most northern settlement boundary extends into Langford. The areas include residential dwellings along Front Street, a small area of residential dwellings along New Road south of the Churchill Junction, and a relatively large settlement boundary north of Churchill junction and on the north side of the A38 (Bristol Road). This larger settlement boundary which extends into Langford includes important services and facilities such as a primary school, local shops, and a public house. Churchill Academy and Sixth Form Centre, the catchment area of which includes the villages of Banwell, Sandford, Churchill and Winscombe, is located immediately west of Churchill's settlement boundary on Churchill Green.

1.5.10 To the south of Sandford lies the settlement boundary of Winscombe. Residential dwellings and some businesses are generally spread along both sides of Sandford Road. Winscombe provides services and facilities. Including nurseries, primary school, boarding school, local shops, public house, and cafés.

1.5.11 To the west of Banwell, there are two separate settlement boundaries on either side of the A371. To the north of the of A371 lies the settlement boundary of Locking Parklands and to the south of the A371 is the settlement boundary of Locking. The settlement boundaries include residential dwellings, services, and facilities including primary schools, local shops, businesses, pharmacy, and public house.

Categories of farmland

1.5.12 Agricultural Land Classifications for land required for the Banwell Bypass varies between Grade 1 and Grade 4 (1- best quality and 5 – poorest).

1.5.13 Full details on the categories of farmland are included within ES Volume 3 - Appendix 9.D - Agricultural Land Classification Report.

Natural features

- 1.5.14 Banwell lies to the immediate north of the Mendips Hills AONB. While the Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is not a designated International Dark Sky Reserve (IDSR), it is well known for its dark sky environment.
- 1.5.15 Major surface water features within the Scheme area are the River Banwell and Towerhead Brook. The River Banwell is a “Main River”, and the source of the River Banwell Estuary, which flows northwards through the study area immediately adjacent to the left verge of Riverside (road) and then continues north-westerly to outfall via the New Bow Sluice to the Bristol Channel approximately 8km downstream of Banwell.
- 1.5.16 The River Banwell is characterised as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest for its entire length from its source to the New Bow Sluice.
- 1.5.17 Banwell Wood is located to the east of Banwell village, south of the A368. It is a Site of Nature Conversation Interest and a designated Wildlife Site. Part of Banwell Wood is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The site is also covered by a Tree Preservation Order and is defined as Ancient Woodlands.
- 1.5.18 Banwell Ochre Caves forms part of Banwell Wood and is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
- 1.5.19 To the southwest of Banwell village lies Banwell Hill Site of Nature Conservation Interest. This site is covered by a Tree Preservation Order and is defined as a Wildlife Site in local policy.

Playing fields (open space)

- 1.5.20 The Scheme will directly impact and result in a loss of land currently used as playing fields by Banwell Football Club (FC), located northeast of the village of Banwell.
- 1.5.21 The impact is unavoidable due to the alignment of the Scheme.
- 1.5.22 The area of land to be acquired by the Scheme is 2.57ha.
- 1.5.23 The Scheme proposed to provide replacement land, which has

been informed by engagement with the club. This is considered further in section 5.2 of this Statement.

Commercial Property/Business

1.5.24 There are 25 commercial properties/businesses located within the site location or adjoining the site, as well as one solar farm and a mobile library. These have been identified as being either directly or indirectly impacted as a result of the Scheme. The effect of the Scheme on local businesses is assessed in ES Volume 1 - Chapter 12 – Population and Human Health.

Heritage Assets

1.5.25 The desk-based assessment and geophysical survey suggest that, despite the area covered by the Scheme, and the archaeological potential of this landscape, only a limited number of archaeological features have been clearly identified on or close to the Scheme. The geophysical survey has indicated that some areas along the route have archaeological potential and the wetland-dryland interface would appear to be one of the most significant archaeological features of the landscape immediately surrounding the Scheme. There is also the potential to encounter unrecorded features within the area of the former Banwell Deer Park.

1.5.26 The scale and size of the Scheme has the potential to affect the setting of designated heritage assets across a wider area. There are 37 Listed Buildings (one Grade I building and six Graded II* buildings), four Scheduled Monuments, and one Conservation Areas (Banwell) within a c.1km radius of the Banwell Bypass. There are numerous non-designated structures in Banwell village comparable to the Listed examples.

1.5.27 Other cultural heritage features located beyond the 1km study area, such as the Churchill Conservation Area, have also been considered within the cultural heritage assessment. The scope of assessment beyond the 1km study area, and the heritage assets identified and assessed, is outlined in ES Volume 3 – Appendix 6.L – Wider Mitigation Scope.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW), National Cycle Routes (NCR) and existing Walking and Cycling Routes

1.5.28 There are 26 recorded Public Rights of Way (PRoW) within 500m

of the Scheme.

1.5.29 The Walking, Cycling and Horse-Riding assessment (WCH) carried out for the Scheme considered a study area of 5km from the Scheme, including Banwell, Sandford, Winscombe and Churchill. Further details can be found in Planning Document – Walking, Cycling and Horse-riding Assessment Report and ES Volume 1 - Chapter 12 – Population and Human Health, which provides greater detail on specific routes.

1.5.30 The PRoW network is used for a variety of purposes, such as leisure and access to facilities within Banwell. This includes an extensive bridleway network, particularly to the north of Banwell, with high numbers of equestrians utilising routes on PRoW and quiet lanes. These are shown on ES Volume 2 - Figure 7.2 Environmental Constraints Plan, and summarised below:

- a) To the west of Banwell (A371) there is a segregated shared-use footway/cycleway towards Locking and Weston-super-Mare on the northern side of the carriageway only. There are two existing crossing facilities to the west of Banwell in the form of lit pedestrian refuge islands. Street lighting is present along the A371 carriageway.
- b) Along A371/A368 through Banwell - For the majority of the rural sections of the A371 and A368 at the outskirts of the village there is a footway on one side of the carriageway only. Throughout the urban section of the A371 through Banwell footways are generally present on both sides of the road. The width of footways varies considerably, generally being wider to the west and east, narrowing towards the centre of the village near the primary school, including sections with no footways at all through 'the Narrows'. Some areas of vegetation overgrowth were noted.
- c) Banwell also has limited crossing facilities for pedestrians with the longest spacing between two crossing points at 500m apart. Pedestrian crossing facilities in the urban setting consists of zebra crossings, with Belisha beacons, road zebra demarcation, and tactile paving for the visually impaired.
- d) A371 towards Sandford – there is no pedestrian route along the rural section of the A371 between Sandford and Banwell, with no footways on Castle Hill or Banwell Road.
- e) A368 Towerhead Road (east of Banwell) & Sandford – For the majority of the A368 around Sandford there is a footway on both sides of the carriageway. There are no footways between Banwell and Sandford. Within Sandford, there are two signalised pedestrian crossings (pelican crossings) with

demarcation and tactile paving for the visually impaired located within the village centre, including one by the primary school.

- f) An additional crossing facility (toucan crossing) is located on the western end of Sandford which facilitates crossing of the A368 for users of the Strawberry Line (National Cycle Network route 26).
- g) There are two 'missing links' in the footway network, including near the Railway Inn public house (by the Thatchers Brewery) on the northern side of the carriageway, and outside the village hall. With the exception of a small number of localised narrow sections, the condition of the pedestrian facilities in Sandford is generally good.
- h) A368 Dinghurst Road (Churchill) - There is a significant lack of pedestrian facilities along the majority of A368 Dinghurst Road in both directions, with tall stone walls and vegetation from properties extending right up to the edges of the carriageway. There is no continuous footway route between Sandford and Churchill Gate, with pedestrians required either to use grass verges (where available), or parallel roads with lower traffic flows (Front Street, Churchill Green etc).
- i) A38/A368 Churchill Junction - Existing footways on either side of the Churchill Junction west arm are evident on the approach, with one footway continued until the Beeches and the other footway being stopped up past the junction arm to provide access to a limited number of properties.
- j) A signalised two-stage crossing with tactile paving and safety barriers is provided at the west arm of Churchill Junction. There is an existing footway that runs along the approach north arm at Churchill Junction with an uncontrolled crossing at the turn off road east towards Bath. There are no crossing facilities for pedestrians to cross the A38 north arm carriageway.
- k) An uncontrolled two-stage pedestrian crossing with a refuge island is present at the A368 east arm of Churchill Junction.
- l) There is a two-stage signalised pedestrian crossing with tactile paving and safety railings present across the A38 south arm of Churchill Junction.
- m) The condition of some of the pedestrian facilities around A38/A368 Churchill Junction is poor in some areas and in need of updating or more regular maintenance, including cutting back of vegetation.
- n) Winscombe - Footways are narrow in areas, particularly on sections of the A371 in the centre of the village outside of the local shops. On Sidcot Lane at the east of the village, footways are only present on the north of the carriageway.

Formal crossing facilities are limited, with only a single zebra crossing between The Lynch and Sandford Road.

- o) Sandford Road / Hill Road - There are a number of breaks in footway continuity, with pedestrians frequently required to cross from one side of the carriageway to the other. with a lack of crossing facilities beyond dropped kerbs.
- p) The National Cycle Route (NCR) 26 runs along the course of the former Railway line known as the Strawberry Line approximately 1.35km to the east of the Scheme. There will be no direct impacts on this asset as a result of the Scheme, but it forms an important active travel route in the wider environment.

1.6 Pre-application process

- 1.6.1 There is a Planning Performance Agreement in place for the Scheme and associated application. This has involved extensive engagement with the Local Planning Authority and stakeholders throughout the development of this planning application.
- 1.6.2 A comprehensive approach to stakeholder engagement and public consultation has been undertaken to help inform the proposals for the Scheme. Public consultation (non-statutory) has been undertaken to inform the development of this planning application between 5 July to 16 August 2021, then again to refine the scheme between 10 March to 22 April 2022. Details are provided in the Design and Access Statement, which supports this planning application.

1.7 List of Plans and Documents

- 1.7.1 A complete list of application documents submitted as part of this planning application is provided in the cover letter in support of the planning application to NSC LPA.
- 1.7.2 The following key plans and documents are submitted in support of the planning application and provide key details of the proposed development (see Table 1).

Plans and Documents

Table 1 - Planning and supporting documents

Document / Drawing Number	Document / Drawing Title	ES Reference
BNWLBP-ARP-GEN-XXXX-FM-TP-000001	Application Form and Ownership Certificate(s)	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-GEN-XXXX-RP-TP-000003	Design and Access Statement	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-GEN-XXXX-RP-TP-000002	Planning Statement	N/A
N/A	First Public Consultation Report	N/A
N/A	Second Public Consultation Report	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-LSI-XXXX-DR-ZL-000011	Site Location Plan	N/A
BNWLBP-WHS-GEN-X_BB_Z-RP-CD-000004	Flood Evacuation Plan	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-EGN-XXXX-RP-TR-000001	Transport Assessment	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-HAC-XXXX-RP-CH-000002	Road Safety Audit	N/A
BNWLBP-TACP-EBD-XXXX-RP-LE-000013	Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)	ES Volume 3 - Appendix 8.C
BNWLBP-ARP-GEN-XXXX-RP-TP-000006	Open Space Assessment	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-EGN-XXXX-RP-LE-000002	Health Impact Assessment	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-ENM-XXXX-RP-CH-000001	Walking Cycling Horse-riding Assessment Report	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-ENM-XXXX-RP-CH-000002	Walking Cycling Horse-riding Review Report - Preliminary Design	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-HGN-X_BB_Z-DR-CH-000009	Visibility Splay drawings for PMAs	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-HDG-XXXX-RP-CD-000001	Surface Water Drainage Strategy	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-HLG-XXXX-TN-CH-000001	Lighting Strategy Technical Note	N/A
VARIOUS	Environmental Statement Volume 1 – Technical Chapters	ES Volume 1
	Environmental Statement Volume 2 – Figures	ES Volume 2
	Environmental Statement Volume 3 – Appendices	ES Volume 3

Document / Drawing Number	Document / Drawing Title	ES Reference
BNWLBP-TACP-EGN-XXXX-RP-LE-000016	Environmental Statement – Non-Technical Summary (NTS)	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-LSI-XXXX-DR-ZL-000005 - 000018	Planning Application Red Line Boundary - Sheets 1 to 9	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-HGN-X_BB_Z-DR-CH-000001 to 000006	Banwell Bypass and Southern Link General Arrangement Drawings Sheet 1 to 6	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-HGN-X_BB_Z-DR-CH-000006 to 000007	Banwell Bypass and Southern Link Typical Cross Section Sheet 1 to 2	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-ELS-XXXX-DR-LS-000002 to 000011	Banwell Placemaking site layout drawings Sheet 1 to 9	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-GEN-X_A368WCH_Z-DR-CH-000001 to 000012	Wider road network and communities' mitigation measure site layout drawings. Sheet 1 to 13	N/A
BNWLBP-TACP-ELS-X_BB_Z-DR-LE-000010 to 000014	Banwell Bypass and Southern Link Environmental Master Plan Drawings. Sheet 1 to 5.	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-HML-X_BB_Z-DR-CH-000101 to 000106	Banwell Bypass PLAN AND PROFILE - MAINLINE - Sheet 1 to 6	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-HSR-X_BB_Z-DR-CH-000101	Banwell Bypass PLAN AND PROFILE - SIDE ROADS – Sheet 1 to 5	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-SBR-X_BB_Z_0550-DR-CB-000001	SBR-0550 Wallymead Rhyne Culvert (West) General Arrangement	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-SBR-X_BB_Z_1375-DR-CB-000001	SBR-1375 Wallymead Rhyne Culvert (East) General Arrangement	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-SBR-X_BB_Z_1760-DR-CB-000001	SBR-1760 Old Yeo Rhyne Culvert (Mainline) General Arrangement	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-SBR-X_BB_Z_2310-DR-CB-000001	SBR-2310 East Mead Rhyne Culvert General Arrangement	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-SBR-X_BB_Z_1930-DR-CB-000001	SBR-1930 Banwell Bypass Underbridge GA	N/A
BNWLBP-ARP-SBR-XXXX-SK-CB-000017	Moor road to Riverside Bridge Structure Sketch	N/A

1.8 Structure

1.8.1 The remainder of this Planning Statement is structured as follows:

- a) Section 2 – Planning framework
- b) Section 3 – Proposed development
- c) Section 4 – Case for the Scheme
- d) Section 5 – National legislation, policy context and assessment
- e) Section 6 – Local policy context and assessment
- f) Section 7 – Conclusion

2 Planning framework

Relevant legislation

- 2.1.1 The Environmental Statement submitted with this planning application includes a comprehensive assessment of the Scheme in accordance with environmental policy and legislation.
- 2.1.2 Design and access related policies are assessed in relation to the Scheme in the Design and Access Statement submitted with this planning application.
- 2.1.3 This section focuses on the relevant planning legislation and policy documents considered as part of this planning application, and they are summarised below.
- 2.1.4 Section 3 of this Statement provides a description of the proposed works comprising the Scheme and sets out a schedule of those works alongside the appropriate planning and consenting requirements.

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

- 2.1.5 Section 57 of the Town and Country Planning Act (TCPA) 1990 requires planning permission to be obtained for the “development” of land. What amounts to “development” is defined in section 55 TCPA 1990, which is very broad but contains (for current purposes) two key exemptions relating to the improvement and maintenance of highways, which in certain circumstances do not constitute “development”.
- 2.1.6 This can be summarised as follows:
 - a) Where relevant works are for maintenance purposes only (notwithstanding that the wider project is Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development) these works would not fall within the definition of “development” under the TCPA 1990 (and therefore would not require planning permission); and

b) Where the relevant works are for improvement purposes and form part of the wider project for EIA purposes (e.g. because they are required as mitigation), the TCPA 1990 exemption will not apply, and planning permission would be required.

2.1.7 None of the bypass works would constitute “maintenance” and it is not considered that any authorisation in Part 3 of the TCPA 1990 would apply given the proposed works set out in section 3.1 of this report.

2.1.8 Furthermore, Section 337 of the Highways Act 1980 makes it clear that it does not authorise the carrying out of development of land for which permission is required under section 57 TCPA 1990 (or the Planning Act 2008) and which is not authorised or deemed to be permitted under Part 3 of the TCPA 1990. Sections 14 and 125 of the Highways Act 1980 are still relevant here, see section 2.1.22 of this report for the likely requirements.

EIA Development

2.1.9 Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (EIA Regulations) lists developments which require environmental assessment, ‘if the proposed scheme is likely to have significant effects on the environment ‘by virtue of its nature, size or location’. The process of determining whether a Schedule 2 development requires an environmental impact assessment is referred to as “screening”.

2.1.10 Under Schedule 2, Category 10 – Infrastructure Projects, the construction of roads where the area of works exceeds 1 hectare is Schedule 2 development. Therefore, the Scheme falls within Schedule 2 and a screening opinion must be sought to determine whether the Scheme is EIA. Further details are included in ES Volume 1 - Chapter 4 – Planning Framework.

2.1.11 A Combined EIA screening and scoping exercise was undertaken prior to route selection and therefore covered all the routes that were being considered. The purpose of this report was to identify the likely significant environmental issues resulting from the Scheme and establish the scope of the EIA across a range of environmental topics.

2.1.12 The Combined EIA Screening and Scoping Report states that the nature of the proposal: “is expected to give rise to significant environmental effects.” To that extent, a formal EIA Screening

Opinion was not requested because NSC had concluded that an EIA will be needed for a planning application. The EIA Screening and Scoping Report was submitted to NSC Planning Department in July 2021. An EIA Scoping Opinion was received from the LPA on 13 September 2021.

2.1.13 As such, an ES has been prepared in accordance with Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations and comprises report sections and appendices as described below. Specific technical guidance and legislative requirements relating to each environmental topic is referred to in the relevant technical ES chapters (ES Volume 1 - Chapters 5 to 14). A non-technical summary ("NTS") of the ES has also been prepared to support the planning application. The ES and its NTS has been submitted to support the planning application.

2.1.14 Chapters 1-4 of the ES (ES Volume 1 – Chapters 1-4) introduce the Scheme and the EIA process that has been followed.

ES Introductory chapters

2.1.15 **Chapter 1:** Introduction – provides the background information to the Scheme and outlines the purpose, structure, and content of this ES. This chapter also provides an overview of the Environmental Assessment Process, including Scoping and Consultation.

2.1.16 **Chapter 2:** Scheme Description – Present a description of the site and location within which the site is set, existing land, land use and facilities. This chapter also outlines the Scheme in detail, including Land use, siting, and scale of the scheme, enabling works, access, and phasing.

2.1.17 **Chapter 3:** Alternatives Considered – This Chapter describes the alternatives considered and describes the design development carried out on the Preferred Option to further reduce the impact of the Scheme on the environment, enhance landscape fit and maximise the benefit/cost ration.

2.1.18 **Chapter 4:** Planning Framework - Presents an overview of the environmental and planning legislation and policy context with all relevant adopted and emerging national, regional, and local policies, strategies, and guidance against which the Scheme will be considered.

ES Technical Chapters

2.1.19 **ES Volume 1 - Chapters 5-14:** Topic-specific technical assessments - to identify the likely significant effects of the Scheme and having due regard to the EIA Regulations, the following chapters provide specific technical assessments of potential impacts across a range of environmental topics:

- a) Chapter 5 – Air Quality;
- b) Chapter 6 – Cultural Heritage;
- c) Chapter 7 – Landscape;
- d) Chapter 8 – Biodiversity;
- e) Chapter 9 – Geology and Soils;
- f) Chapter 10 – Material assets and Waste;
- g) Chapter 11 – Noise and Vibration;
- h) Chapter 12 – Population and Human Health;
- i) Chapter 13 – Road Drainage and the Water Environment;
- j) Chapter 14 – Climate;
- k) Chapter 15 – Cumulative Effects;
- l) Chapter 16 – Environmental Management; and
- m) Chapter 17 – Conclusion.

Other consents

2.1.20 A series of other consenting regimes are relevant to this planning application to support the delivery of the Scheme. Whilst this TCPA planning application is submitted seeking planning permission for the proposed development as a whole, it is acknowledged that other [supporting] consents or procedures are required for some of the works. These are described below.

Highways Act 1980

2.1.21 The Highways Act 1980 provides for the creation, improvement, and maintenance of roads and for acquisition of land.

Side Roads Order

2.1.22 The planning permission will need to be complemented by further Orders necessary to deliver the Scheme.

2.1.23 A Side Roads Order (SRO) will need to be made under Sections 14 and 125 of the Highways Act 1980 and confirmed by the Secretary of State for Transport. The SRO is required to authorise NSC (as highways authority) to stop up, divert, improve, raise, lower, or otherwise alter a highway that crosses

or enters the route of the road (“the road” in this context being the Banwell Bypass and/or the Southern Link), or which may be otherwise affected by the construction or improvement of the road.

2.1.24 The SRO can authorise the construction of a new highway for purposes concerned with such alteration, or for any other purpose connected with the road or its construction.

2.1.25 Section 125 of the Highways Act 1980 also allows the SRO to be used to stop up or create new Private Means of Access (PMA) to premises for the purposes of constructing the Scheme. Where the SRO permits stopping up of a PMA, the SRO will only be authorised if the Secretary of State is satisfied that no access to the premises is reasonably required, or that another reasonably convenient means of access to the premises is available or will be provided.

2.1.26 It is a requirement that provision be made in the SRO for the preservation of any rights of statutory undertakers and telecommunications code operators in respect of their apparatus affected by the SRO, subject to Section 21 of the Highways Act 1980.

2.1.27 Section 21 applies certain provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (subject to modifications) which allow the extinguishment of these rights where a highway is stopped up or diverted under an SRO.

2.1.28 Owners or occupiers to which a supply was provided by that apparatus may be entitled to compensation for costs incurred due to the removal of the apparatus and the need to install a new connection with other apparatus.

New or amended Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

2.1.29 Works to PRoW will be implemented through the SRO, and NSC will update their definitive mapping accordingly.

Traffic Regulation Order

2.1.30 Traffic Regulation Order(s) (TRO) will be required to authorise NSC to set and amend speed limits, and any other vehicular restrictions (e.g., weight limits). As part of the Scheme’s delivery, the following would likely be included in the TRO(s);

- a) Changes to speed limits, including speed reductions in Banwell and the surrounding villages.
- b) Weight and width restrictions to replace/relocate the current restrictions on Castle Hill.
- c) Prohibition of stopping or waiting or loading.
- d) Creating a rural clearway.
- e) Prohibition of traffic with an exemption for buses, bicycles at some agricultural traffic turning onto Wolvershill Road southbound.
- f) Prohibition of traffic with an exemption for bicycles (this may be required for active travel routes depending upon designation as part of the detailed design).

Compulsory Purchase Order

2.1.31 It is envisaged that a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) will be required to authorise NSC to compulsorily acquire the land and rights required to construct the Scheme with its associated works and mitigation measures.

2.1.32 The CPO will only be required to the extent that the land and rights required for the Scheme cannot be acquired voluntarily by negotiation with affected landowners.

2.1.33 Engagement has taken place with all landowners impacted by the Scheme and the majority are currently in negotiation with NSC's appointed land agents, following issue of heads of terms.

2.1.34 Initial engagement took place in June/July 2020 with landowners likely to be affected by the scheme, these have been updated with frequent newsletters informing of progress, many landowners signed licence agreements with us to undertake environmental surveys over the last 18 months.

2.1.35 Follow up meetings took place in November/December 2021 with landowners along route of the Banwell Bypass with general arrangement drawings to discuss accommodation works and sentiments towards land negotiations. Many have received follow up letters informing them of design alterations ahead of latest round of public consultation. Early 2022 meetings were undertaken with landowners affected by wider mitigation works.

2.1.36 The CPO will be made under Sections 239, 240, 246, 249 and 250 of the Highways Act 1980 and the Acquisition of Land Act

1981.

Relevant plans and policy

2.1.37 This section highlights the plans and policies relevant to the determination of the Scheme's planning application.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021)

2.1.38 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and revised in 2018, 2019 and most recently in July 2021. It sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

2.1.39 On 9 June 2022 the housing secretary Michael Gove, on behalf of the Government, announced a new draft of the NPPF will be published in July 2022. This application has only considered the latest adopted version of the NPPF (July 2021).

2.1.40 The NPPF recognises that the purpose of the planning system is to deliver sustainable development, which can be achieved when economic, social, and environmental gains are sought jointly.

2.1.41 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development where the proposal accords with the local development plan (North Somerset Development Plan (2021 - 2024)).

2.1.42 The NPPF aims to ensure that planning policy guides development that contributes to protecting and enhancing our natural, built, and historic environment; and, as part of this, helps to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

2.1.43 It also aims to deliver a sufficient supply of homes, building a strong competitive economy, promoting healthy and safe communities, and promoting sustainable transport

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

2.1.44 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was first published in March 2014 and provides an additional layer of information to policies within the NPPF. Guidance is available for a range of topics, including the following relevant to the Scheme:

- a) Design - This guidance provides advice on the key points to consider when designing proposals.
- b) Flood Risk and Coastal Change - Provides advice on how planning can take account of the risks associated with flooding and coastal change in plan-making and the application process.
- c) Environmental Impact Assessment - Explains requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.
- d) Natural Environment - Explains key issues in implementing policy to protect biodiversity, including local requirements.
- e) Tree Preservation Orders and trees in conservation areas - Explains the legislation governing Tree Preservation Orders and tree protection in conservation areas.
- f) Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment – Advises on the need to protect and enhance the historic environment in a manner appropriate to its significance.
- g) Noise - This provides guidance on the application of government noise policy. This document reaffirms the effect levels set out in the NPSE.
- h) Light Pollution - Advises on how to consider light within the planning system (relevant considering Dark Night Skies and Light Pollution Position Statement for the Mendip Hills).
- i) Air Quality - This provides guidance on how planning can take account of the impact of new development on air quality.
- j) Climate change - Advises how to identify suitable mitigation and adaptation measures in the planning process to address the impacts of climate change.
- k) Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space - Gives key advice on open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and the new Local Green Space designation.

Local Policy

2.1.45 The following documents have been identified as the relevant local planning policy documents. Chapter 6 and Appendix B of this Planning Statement will demonstrate the Scheme's compliance with the relevant policies in these plans:

- a) North Somerset Council Core Strategy (2017)
- b) Site and Policies Plan Part 1: Development Management Policies (July 2016)
- c) Site and Policies Plan Part 2: Site Allocations Plan (2018)
- d) North Somerset Emerging Local Plan (2026-2038)

2.1.46 The following documents have been identified as the relevant NSC supplementary planning guidance. Chapter 6 and Appendix B of this Planning Statement consider the Scheme's compliance with the relevant supplementary guidance:

- a) Biodiversity and Trees Supplementary Planning Document (2005);
- b) Landscape Character Assessment (2018); and
- c) North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Guidance on Development: Supplementary Planning Document (January 2018).

3 Proposed development

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 The following section provides a brief description and overview of the Banwell Bypass and Highways Improvements Project. Reference should be made to ES Volume 1 - Chapter 1 - Introduction for the Scheme objectives, and ES Volume 2 - Chapter 2 - Scheme Description for the full description.

3.1.2 The Scheme would comprise of the following distinct elements:

- a bypass of the village of Banwell (referred to as the “Banwell Bypass”);
- a route connecting the A371 at Castle Hill and the A368 at East Street (referred to as the “Southern Link”); and
- Mitigation and enhancement measures, which broadly consist of the following:
 - Environmental mitigation and enhancement measures in connection with the Banwell Bypass and the Southern Link*, examples of which include (but are not limited to) flood compensation areas, planting and habitat creation, attenuation basins etc.
 - Placemaking improvements within Banwell*, comprising mitigation and enhancement measures to the public realm; and
 - Improvements to the wider local road network in Sandford, Churchill and Winscombe.

3.1.3 Together, these elements comprise the “Scheme”, for which planning permission is sought (notwithstanding the other consents or procedures required as set out in section 2.1.20 of this Statement. Each element as listed is described in more detail below.

Banwell Bypass

3.1.4 The Banwell Bypass would be located within the administrative area of North Somerset. The village of Banwell is located approximately 8km east of Weston-Super-Mare. The Banwell Bypass would primarily consist of:

- a) Signalisation and capacity improvements to the Summer Lane/Wells Lane junctions on the A371;
- b) A 40mph single carriageway bypass, connecting the existing A371 (Knightcott Road, east of Summer Lane) to A368 (east of Towerhead Farm);
- c) A 3 metre wide walking and cycling route provided along the majority of the Banwell Bypass providing a link from Weston-Super-Mare and to Sandford;
- d) Banwell Bypass West Junction - a three arm roundabout located east of Knightcott Industrial Estate at the western end of Banwell;
- e) Wolvershill Road Junction – a traffic signalised junction, providing access for all users to the west, east, and north. Access to the south would be restricted to public transport and walking, cycling and horse-riders, and limited agricultural access only;
- f) Riverside Crossing – an overbridge across Riverside and the River Banwell. There would not be a direct connection between Riverside and the Bypass;
- g) A side road connection between Riverside and Moor Road; and
- h) Banwell Bypass East Junction - A three-arm traffic signalised junction, with dedicated turning lanes from the bypass towards the Southern Link.

Southern Link

3.1.5 The Southern Link would be located within the administrative area of North Somerset and within the Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

3.1.6 The Southern Link would be a 30mph single carriageway, connecting the A368 (East Street) to the A371 at Castle Hill.

3.1.7 The Southern Link would link into the Bypass at the Banwell Bypass East Junction. A T-junction located along the Southern Link would provide access into the east of Banwell (at East Street).

Reclassification of highways

3.1.8 Changes to the highway network and road classification are proposed to take place as a result of the Banwell Bypass. A drawing and a list describing the sections of new roads, and existing classified roads to be reclassified, is included in Appendix B of the Design and Access Statement (DAS) submitted as part of the planning application.

3.1.9 All other roads not included in Appendix D of the DAS are unclassified highway and remain unchanged.

Provision for future development

3.1.10 There is provision within the Scheme for a connection into anticipated future development by means of a widened section of carriageway to the east of Wolvershill Road Junction (Ch. 0+800 to Ch. 1+300). The purpose of the widened section is to allow for a future access to housing development to the north of the Banwell Bypass expected to be allocated in the emerging Local Plan. No junction or access is being provided by the Scheme, only a widened section which would allow for an additional turning lane. The precise location and requirements of the junction will not be known until after the new Local Plan process is determined, but the NSC Local Plan team has been consulted on their preferred location for the inclusion of the additional lane to accommodate the junction. The additional lane will be hatched until the junction is required. It is highly likely that the Banwell Bypass will be completed before the start of construction of any future housing and its associated infrastructure. Providing this widening as part of the Scheme will minimise potentially significant disruption to the newly built Banwell Bypass infrastructure due to the construction of the access, avoid wasted resource and minimise traffic disruption. It also supports the enabling of housing development (subject to the Local Plan), which is an objective of the Scheme.

Mitigation and enhancement measures

Environmental mitigation and enhancement measures in connection with the Banwell Bypass and the Southern Link

3.1.11 The Scheme would include measures that are provided to offset the impact of the highway works. These include (but are not

limited to):

- a) flood mitigation to ensure that the Banwell Bypass does not increase flood risk for third-party properties;
- b) essential environmental mitigation, such as ecology and landscape mitigation; and
- c) sustainable urban drainage systems (e.g. attenuation basins and swales), and additional groundwater mitigation, to prevent adverse water quality impacts (including the Source Protection Zone (SPZ)).

Placemaking improvements within Banwell

3.1.12 As a result of the Banwell Bypass and Southern Link, there would be a reduction in traffic through Banwell. The reduction in traffic (and resulting reduction in congestion) through the village could result in higher traffic speeds without mitigation.

3.1.13 A reduced 20mph speed limit through Banwell would discourage vehicles from travelling at higher speeds, whilst also discouraging the use of the road as a through route (instead of the Banwell Bypass and Southern Link).

3.1.14 The reduction of traffic through Banwell due to the provision of the Banwell Bypass and Southern Link provides the opportunity to make improvements to the existing road and public spaces within Banwell to enhance the historic and urban setting of the village.

3.1.15 These improvements would include, but are not limited to:

- a) Alteration to the road and footways including resurfacing, widening, and narrowing (which would encourage drivers to comply with the posted 20mph speed limit);
- b) Incorporation of active travel measures;
- c) Soft landscaping and ecological improvements; and
- d) Street signage improvements.

Improvements to the wider local road network

3.1.16 Improvements to the local road network and junctions including the surrounding villages of Churchill, Sandford and Winscombe are proposed to mitigate increases in traffic as a result of the Banwell Bypass and Southern Link. These mitigation measures would consist of:

- a) Lowered speed limits:

- b) 20mph: A368 through Churchill, A368 through Sandford, A371 through Winscombe.
- c) 30mph: A368 between Churchill and Sandford Villages.
- d) Gateway Features when entering and exiting the villages of Sandford, Churchill and Winscombe;
- e) Non-physical traffic calming measures through and between villages (e.g. road markings and speed signage);
- f) Capacity improvements to the Churchill Junction (A38/A368);
- g) Provision of new / improvements to existing pedestrian and cycling crossings;
- h) Active travel measures along the A368, with improved footway/cycleway access from Churchill and Langford to Churchill Academy;
- i) Improvements to footways, shared pedestrian, and cycleway; and
- j) Soft landscaping, native planting, rewilding, and ecological enhancements.

Replacement playing fields

3.1.17 As part of the Scheme, 2.57ha of playing fields at Banwell FC will be replaced to mitigate for the direct impact that is unavoidable by virtue of the highway alignment of the Bypass.

3.1.18 An Open Space Assessment (see Planning Document – Open Space Assessment) and engagement with the club has helped identify potential replacement options, with a preferred solution being found that offers 2.57ha of land benefiting from the following features:

- a) At least equivalent in area than the land being acquired by the Scheme;
- b) at least as accessible to pedestrians, cyclists, and motor vehicles;
- c) at least equivalent in terms of usefulness, attractiveness, and quality to the facility it replaces; and
- d) the replacement will be available for use before use of the existing facility is lost.

3.1.19 Replacement land will be provided east of Banwell FC, with details provided within the Open Space Assessment that accompanies this planning application.

4 Case for the Scheme

- 4.1.1 Section 1.2 of this Statement sets out the need for intervention, considering the existing problems. This section presents the case for the Scheme, which illustrates the costs and benefits of the Scheme, including how they address the need for the Scheme.
- 4.1.2 This section focuses on the transport, economic and environmental (including social) cost and benefits, which are key to considering sustainable development. Such matters are important when assessing whether the Scheme is sustainable and acceptable in policy terms, as is considered in the remaining chapters of this Statement.

4.2 Transport case

Introduction

- 4.2.1 The transport case for the Scheme is based on the traffic models developed to assess the Scheme. The detailed evidence informing the transport case for the Scheme is summarised in the Transport Assessment that is submitted in support of this planning application.
- 4.2.2 NSC Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) proposal supports potential housing sites (subject to the emerging Local Plan 2038). NSC is preparing a new local plan with a 15 year plan period 2023-2038. The allocation to the north of Banwell and east of the M5 relates to draft Policy LP1, Strategic Location: Wolvershill. This allocation is identified as a new mixed use strategic growth location to accommodate up to around 2,800 dwellings, including 980 affordable homes, around 11 ha of employment land, a mixed-use local centre and at least three 420-place primary schools. This potential housing site has been included in the transport modelling and is referred to in this section as the "HIF Development". Further details on the inclusion of the HIF development in the transport case can be found in the Planning Document - Transport Assessment.

4.2.3 A summary of traffic conditions and the impact of the Scheme is provided below.

Base Year

4.2.4 The two-way Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) on the A371 through Banwell in 2018 is around 12,900 vehicles. To the east, on the A368 in Sandford, it is around 7,700 vehicles. To the west, on the A371 in Locking, it is around 9,700 vehicles. To the south, on the A371 Castle Hill, it is around 7,300 vehicles.

4.2.5 These routes play a big part in everyday lives of tens of thousands of people as they travel to work or school, and for business and leisure purposes. They are strategic routes providing critical connectivity throughout North Somerset. The existing volumes of traffic result in significant congestion and delay, particularly on the narrow sections of the A371 within Banwell, as identified in Section 1.1.

Do Minimum (without Scheme)

4.2.6 In the future Do Minimum scenario (without Scheme), traffic at the locations detailed in 4.2.4 and around the local road network is forecast to increase by Scheme opening year (2024) and further increase by Scheme design year (2039) as a result of residential and employment development in the area. These traffic increases are forecast to worsen congestion, delay and severance caused by traffic on the existing road network.

Do Something (with Scheme)

4.2.7 In the 2024 Do Something scenario (with Scheme, without wider mitigation measures), traffic on the A371 through Banwell is forecast to decrease significantly compared to the Do Minimum as traffic redistributes to make use of the bypass. This would significantly reduce congestion, delay and severance caused by traffic in the village.

4.2.8 This aligns with the Scheme objectives to deal with existing congestion issues and improve and enhance Banwell's public spaces by reducing traffic severance.

4.2.9 Elsewhere on the local road network traffic is generally forecast to increase with the Scheme in 2024 as a result of traffic from alternative routes, such as the A370 and M5, switching to the

A368 and A371 to make use of the bypass.

4.2.10 Further into the future, in the 2039 Do Something scenario (with Scheme, with HIF development at Banwell, without wider mitigation measures), traffic on the A371 through Banwell is also forecast to decrease significantly compared to the Do Minimum.

4.2.11 Again, this would significantly reduce congestion, delay and severance caused by traffic in the village which aligns with the Scheme objectives to deal with existing congestion issues and improve and enhance Banwell's public spaces by reducing traffic severance.

4.2.12 Elsewhere on the local road network traffic is generally forecast to increase with the Scheme in 2039, as a result of traffic from alternative routes, such as the A370 and M5, switching to the A368 and A371 to make use of the bypass, and as a result of the HIF development.

4.2.13 Increases in traffic above those identified in 2024 are generally attributable to the HIF development. Sandford and Churchill have sufficient link capacity to accommodate these increases, whereas parts of Winscombe do not.

4.2.14 Traffic volumes and changes at key locations are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 - Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) in Base Year (2018), Opening Year (2024) and Design Year (2039)

2018 Base	2024 Do Minimum	2024 Do Something	% Difference from Do Minimum	2039 Do Minimum	2039 Do Something	% Difference from Do Minimum
A371 West of Banwell Road (Locking)						
9673	12284	12670	+3%	13468	19772	+47%
A371 Banwell - Between Wolvershill Road and Riverside						
12866	13823	3028	-78%	15199	4493	-70%
Bypass Western Section						
N/A	N/A	10524	N/A	N/A	18080	N/A
Bypass Eastern Section						
N/A	N/A	13776	N/A	N/A	16776	N/A
A371 Castle Hill (East of Dark Lane)/ Southern Link						
7283	7975	8327	+4%	8926	10352	+16%
A368 West of A38 (Churchill)						

2018 Base	2024 Do Minimum	2024 Do Something	% Difference from Do Minimum	2039 Do Minimum	2039 Do Something	% Difference from Do Minimum
9196	9622	11063	+15%	10785	13122	+22%
A371 West of Sandford Road (Winscombe)						
4216	5029	5264	+5%	5841	7126	+22%
A368 (Sandford) East of Eastern Bypass Junction						
7652	7982	10052	+26%	8122	12375	+52%

Wider mitigation measures

4.2.15 It is acknowledged that the 2024 and 2039 Do Something scenarios (with Scheme) are presented without the proposed wider mitigation measures, as set out at 3.1.2 of this Statement. This presents a worst-case scenario for the transport case for the Scheme. A sensitivity test has been undertaken that shows the changes to traffic flows using the Scheme as a result of those measures would be minimal whilst delivering wider benefits as follows:

- Three junctions are forecast to operate over capacity as a result of the Scheme (A371/ Banwell Road, A371 Knightcott Road/ Summer Lane/ Well Lane, Churchill Gate). Mitigation is proposed at the three junctions to improve performance and with the proposed improvements, the traffic impacts of the Scheme are fully mitigated in the opening year. Whilst these junctions are forecast to exceed capacity in the future year scenarios, a comparison of the traffic modelling results indicates that the bypass is anticipated to have a limited impact on the operation of these junctions. The capacity issues forecast at these junctions can therefore be associated with existing traffic demand or background traffic growth associated with future developments.
- Placemaking improvements are proposed in Banwell, including the introduction of traffic calming measures and pavement widening to reduce the prominence of the road. This aligns with the Scheme objective to improve and enhance Banwell's public spaces by reducing traffic severance and improving the public realm. This is only possible because of the significant reduction in traffic through Banwell as a result of the Scheme.
- A package of wider mitigation measures would reduce the potential impacts of the Banwell Bypass in local areas such as Churchill, Sandford and Winscombe. These include walking and cycling routes, reduced speed limits, pedestrian crossings, and improvements to PRoWs. This aligns with

Scheme objective to provide the opportunity to increase active and sustainable travel between local villages and Weston-super-Mare. The measures are forecast to reduce traffic volume and traffic speed, accidents, and only marginally increase journey times.

Journey Times

4.2.16 As a result of the existing congestion and delay within Banwell, journey times on the A368 and A371 corridors suffer, with some average speeds around 10mph on the A371 between Summer Lane and the A368.

4.2.17 In the Do Minimum scenario (without Scheme), current journey times on the A371 and A368 corridors are forecast to increase by 2024 and significantly increase by 2039 in both directions.

4.2.18 In the 2024 Do Something scenario (with Scheme, without wider mitigation measures), journey times are forecast to decrease by up to six minutes compared to the Do Minimum scenario (without Scheme). This aligns with the Scheme objective to deal with existing congestion issues.

4.2.19 In the 2039 Do Something scenario (with Scheme, with HIF development, without wider mitigation measures), journey times are forecast to decrease by up to 11 minutes compared to the Do Minimum scenario (without Scheme). This aligns with the Scheme objective to deal with existing congestion issues.

4.2.20 Journey Times on the A368 and A371 corridors are shown in Table 3 and Table 4.

Table 3 - AM Journey Times (mm:ss). Do Minimum compared to Base; Do Something compared to Do Minimum

Route	Direction	2018 Base	2024 Do Minimum	2024 Do Something	2039 Do Minimum	2039 Do Something
A368 Corridor A371 Helicopter Roundabout to A38 Churchill Gate	Eastbound	20:05	22:53	19:15	37:46	28:28
	Change	-	+02:48	-03:38	+17:41	-09:17
	Westbound	15:21	17:52	15:07	20:24	20:05
	Change	-	+02:31	-02:45	+05:03	-00:19
A368/A371 Corridor	Eastbound	17:14	19:46	13:14	32:42	22:59
	Change	-	+02:32	-06:32	+15:28	-09:43

Route	Direction	2018 Base	2024 Do Minimum	2024 Do Something	2039 Do Minimum	2039 Do Something
A371 Helicopter Roundabout to A38 Sidcot Junction	Westbound	13:09	15:41	12:47	18:15	17:52
	Change	-	+02:33	-02:54	+05:07	-00:23

Table 4 - PM Journey Times (mm:ss). Do Minimum compared to Base; Do Something compared to Do Minimum

Route	Direction	2018 Base	2024 Do Minimum	2024 Do Something	2039 Do Minimum	2039 Do Something
A368 Corridor - A371 Helicopter Roundabout to A38 Churchill Gate	Eastbound	19:31	20:15	16:31	26:12	18:25
	Change	-	+00:44	-03:44	+06:41	-07:48
	Westbound	18:01	20:25	14:40	28:19	17:58
	Change	-	+02:24	-05:45	+10:19	-10:22
A368/A371 Corridor - A371 Helicopter Roundabout to A38 Sidcot Junction	Eastbound	15:54	17:58	13:37	24:21	14:18
	Change	-	+02:04	-04:21	+08:27	-10:03
	Westbound	15:46	18:12	11:56	26:05	14:43
	Change	-	+02:26	-06:17	+10:19	-11:22

4.3 Economic case

- 4.3.1 The economic case for the scheme is informed by an economic appraisal, the results of which are presented in this section.
- 4.3.2 The Scheme will deliver a new 3.3km single carriageway that will unlock new residential and employment opportunities through proposed development sites (to be allocated within the NSC Local Plan 2038) and make housing and employment opportunities more accessible. Together this will not only address longstanding local transport issues but represents critical enabling infrastructure that will unlock significant economic development opportunity.
- 4.3.3 Scheme costs have been provided in current market prices and have been rebased and discounted to 2010 prices with risk included to provide a Present Value of Cost for use in the economic appraisal. Costs are typically rebased and discounted to 2010 in economic appraisals to allow like for like comparison between assessments of schemes undertaken in different years. The Most Likely Scheme cost in 2010 prices is £36,587,774.

Monetised Benefits and Disbenefits

- 4.3.4 Table 5 shows the monetised benefits and disbenefits of the scheme as well as the overall Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) which combines benefits and disbenefits to assess the viability of the Scheme in terms of its value for money.

Table 5 - Analysis of Monetised Costs and Benefits, 2010 prices (£,000s)

Element	Benefit/ Disbenefit
Noise	3,223
Local Air Quality	-1,712
Greenhouse Gases	-13,873
Accidents	-14,873
Economic Efficiency: Consumer Users (Commuting)	54,864
Economic Efficiency: Consumer Users (Other)	35,332
Economic Efficiency: Business Users and Providers	43,087
Wider Public Finances (Indirect Taxation Revenues)	-2,658
Present Value of Cost (PVC)	36,588
Present Value of Benefit (PVB)	103,390
Net Present Value (NPV)	66,802
Initial Benefit Cost Ratio	2.83

4.3.5 Transport user benefits (travel time, travel cost and wider public finances) are large; totalling around £130.6 million as the scheme reduces the journey times of trips through the area. This aligns with the Scheme objective to deal with existing congestion issues.

4.3.6 The Scheme is forecast to increase accidents and casualty types. This results in accident disbenefits of around -£14.9 million. This is a comparative assessment to the Do Minimum scenario without the scheme and is not to say that the Scheme is dangerous or unsafe. The forecast disbenefit can be explained as follows:

- The Scheme provides a longer and faster route than the existing A371 through Banwell. Greater travel distances and travel speeds increase the likelihood of accidents;
- The national average accident rate of the bypass per million vehicle kilometres is higher than the very low observed accident rate of the existing A371 through Banwell. A higher accident rate increases accidents per vehicle kilometre travelled;
- The Scheme attracts additional traffic to the area. A greater volume of traffic increases the likelihood of accidents; and
- From 2039 the Do Something scenario also assesses additional traffic associated with the HIF development. A greater volume of traffic increases the likelihood of accidents.

4.3.7 Overall, there is a beneficial change in noise impacts because of the Scheme, as traffic moves away from the A371 through Banwell to make use of the bypass. The net present value of change in noise is around £3.2 million.

4.3.8 There is an adverse impact on local NOx and PM2.5 emissions as a result of the scheme. This is due to an increase in capacity of the network. This makes the route more desirable over time and increases the volume of traffic in the area; therefore, increasing emissions.

4.3.9 The net present value of change in local air quality is a disbenefit of around -£1.71 million.

4.3.10 There is also an adverse change in CO² emissions as a result of the scheme for the same reason. The net present value of change in carbon dioxide equivalent emissions is around -£13.9 million.

4.3.11 The BCR considers all the monetised elements included in Table 5.

4.3.12 The Initial BCR for the Scheme is 2.83 meaning that for every £1.00 in cost, £2.83 is returned in benefit. In accordance with the DfT Value for Money Framework, a BCR of 2.83 represents 'High' value for money.

4.3.13 The BCR for the Scheme is 'High' value for money which demonstrates the Scheme would provide significant monetary benefits that justify the cost of the Scheme.

4.3.14 Paragraph 4.3.20 of this Statement explains the 'adjusted' BCR.

Land Value Uplift

4.3.15 The Banwell Bypass remains critical to bringing forward strategic and sustainable growth. The HIF proposal was originally developed with the intention of utilising public funding to deliver a package of measures (including an additional school) that were required to unlock Strategic Development Locations (SDLs) under the West of England Joint Spatial Plan. North Somerset Council withdrew from the Joint Spatial Plan but the housing allocation identified were carried through to the emerging Local Plan.

4.3.16 Land value uplift is an assessment tool (see 'DCLG Appraisal Guide 2016') that measures the difference between the price of the land in its new and former uses and provides a convenient way of estimating the economic value of a development which is dependent on a transport intervention. It captures the economic benefit of a transport intervention unlocking land for a more productive use. The appraisal is presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6 - HIF Appraisal, (Present Value Benefits, 2018)

	Value
Residential Sales	£455,150,351
Commercial revenue	£6,624,738
Total Revenue	£461,775,089
Land Purchase costs	£8,864,668
Infrastructure costs	£29,782,974
Build costs	£165,434,131
Professional fees & contingency	£22,995,586
Marketing & sales costs	£13,754,589
Finance	£5,305,807
Total Costs (exc. residual land value)	£246,137,755
Developer Surplus (post finance)	£74,759,399
Residual Land Value	£140,877,935
Gross Existing Use Value	£2,918,000
Gross Land Value Uplift	£137,959,935

4.3.17 After accounting for additionality (development that would occur beyond a do-nothing scenario) and adjusting the outputs to arrive at present value benefits for 2010, the net additional land value uplift generated by the scheme is £81.9m.

4.3.18 This tells us the value of enabling, through improved transport provision, a shift in land use to more productive uses (i.e., greenfield to housing and employment space), supplying a significant number of necessary homes. However, the additional dwellings are likely to put additional pressure on the transport network, this is an external economic cost that is not captured by the land value uplift calculation.

4.3.19 Transport modelling has been undertaken to gauge the extent of

external impacts. The external impacts capture the impact that additional vehicles (from increased residential provision) will have on the transport network in terms of increased congestion pressure. The results are shown below in Table 7.

Table 7 - Transport modelling

	TUBA Benefit (£000's, 2010)
Core Growth with bypass without HIF residential development (A)	£115,752
Core Growth with bypass with HIF (B)	£12,882
Transport External Cost [(A) – (B)]	£102,870

Adjusted BCR

4.3.20 An adjusted BCR has been calculated that considers the benefits/ disbenefits of Land Value Uplift, Transport External Cost and Wider Economic Impacts in addition to the elements used initial BCR. The adjusted BCR for the scheme is 4.94 which represents 'Very High' value for money in accordance with the DfT Value for Money Framework.

4.3.21 It should be noted that the Wider Economic Impact results were larger than usually expected for a scheme of this type, and significantly higher than the 10% to 30% threshold of total Transport Economic Efficiency (TEE) user benefits that is suggested by the DfT as a general benchmark.

4.3.22 If a lower-bound benchmark of 10% of TEE benefits is applied, this results in an adjusted BCR of 2.62 which still represents 'High' value for money in accordance with the DfT Value for Money Framework.

Non-monetised Benefits and Disbenefits

4.3.23 Impacts to journey quality, physical activity and travel time variability have not been monetised as part of the economic appraisal but qualitatively all are likely to beneficially impacted as a result of the scheme.

4.3.24 The free-flowing bypass and removal of traffic from the A371 through Banwell will improve journey quality and reduce travel time variability.

4.3.25 The reduction in severance, introduction of placemaking

measures and provision of walking, cycling and horse riding routes will increase physical activity.

4.4 Environmental case

4.4.1 The environmental case is based on the results of the Environmental Impact Assessment. The detailed assessment is presented in the ES in support of this application. An overview of the assessment and summary of the significant effects, mitigation and enhancement is provided below. It should be noted that the assessment of environmental impacts in the do something scenario (2039) includes the HIF enabled development located in the Banwell Area. Table 2-7 of ES Volume 1 - Chapter 2 – Scheme Description provides a detailed summary of the model scenarios and assessment years.

Air quality

4.4.2 In summary, the air quality assessment (ES Volume 1 - Chapter 5) details that the construction phase impact of the Scheme would be reduced or avoided with the embedded mitigation in place.

4.4.3 The operational phase effects are concluded to be negligible, and it is expected the air quality will improve through Banwell Village due to the Scheme. The location of the proposed route outside of Banwell would have a significant beneficial impact to air quality for those living in Banwell village given the significant reduction in traffic which would travel through the village.

4.4.4 Overall, there are no predicted significant effects with mitigation measures in place during construction or operation.

Cultural Heritage

4.4.5 The cultural heritage assessment (ES Volume 1 - Chapter 6) summarises that there is a limited number of archaeological features clearly identified on or close to the Scheme. However, the geophysical survey has indicated that some areas along the route have archaeological potential, with the wetland-dryland interface being the most significant. There is also the potential to encounter unrecorded features within the area of the former Banwell Deer Park. It should be noted that it cannot be assumed that the absence of archaeological features on the geophysical survey necessarily indicates an absence of buried archaeological remains.

- 4.4.6 It is concluded that overall, there would be a net benefit to the built heritage of Banwell due to the reduced traffic through the village.
- 4.4.7 Overall, there are no predicted significant effects with mitigation measures in place during construction or operation.

Landscape

- 4.4.8 The landscape assessment (ES Volume 1 - Chapter 7) concludes that the landscape character areas are generally of, or above, Medium Quality or Sensitivity with the AONB representing a landscape of national significance. These character areas will experience long lasting significant impacts due to the introduction of the Scheme into the rural landscape context and the associated changes in landform.
- 4.4.9 The impact on views within the study area will be variable influenced by a range of factors including topography, vegetation cover and distance from works. However, and there will be a significant and residual effect on some, in particular those near the proposed Banwell River Bridge and those where the affected view is of a previously unspoilt rural scene.
- 4.4.10 The Southern Link would be located within the AONB, and despite its impact on the AONB, there are no other alternatives to the Southern Link. Different approaches to the Southern Link would not be possible for example alternative locations would require cut and fill. The only way the Banwell Bypass can be delivered is through the Southern Link as proposed in this planning application.
- 4.4.11 In general, the proposed embedded mitigation measures would reduce the visual impact to be acceptable over time and even enhance the integration of the Scheme into the landscape.

Biodiversity

- 4.4.12 The biodiversity assessment (ES Volume 1 - Chapter 8) concludes that the Scheme would meet the requirement of biodiversity net gain over the long-term resulting in over 40% BNG and exceeding the identified Scheme objective.
- 4.4.13 The ES identifies there would be a residual impact on the Banwell

woods due to an increase in air pollutants as a result of the Scheme, but this impact would not be significant.

4.4.14 A group of six hybrid Black Poplar would be lost, exact species would be confirmed when known from samples taken in June 2022. The loss of hybrid black poplar would be replaced by new planting, but this impact would remain significant until the replacements have matured. Trees lost to the Scheme would be replaced through new planting along the Scheme.

4.4.15 The Scheme is in close proximity to the North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC and works adjacent to designated sites will be mitigated for by general construction measures and a preferred method of works as outlined in the CEMP (ES Volume 3 - Appendix 16.A – Outline CEMP). The ES concludes no direct impact to the SAC is anticipated, with appropriate consideration also made as part of the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) submitted in support of this application.

4.4.16 Stage 1 of the HRA (Screening) identified that there would be a likely significant effect on lesser and greater horseshoe bats. These are qualifying features of several of the European sites under consideration, but specifically the North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC, part of which lies adjacent to the eastern end of the Scheme. It was also considered that the Scheme would have a likely significant effect on the Severn Estuary SAC due to hydrological connectivity.

4.4.17 The HRA concludes that with appropriate mitigation as identified and assessment as part of that document, the Scheme would not delay or interrupt progress towards achieving the Conservation Objectives of any of the identified protected sites. The assessment concludes that the Scheme will not affect the integrity of the sites under consideration, as it has been determined that on implementation of the proposed mitigation there would be no effect on the achievement on any of the Conservation Objectives.

4.4.18 The area of woodland to be created under the proposals would comprise a total area equating to twice the area to be lost during the site clearance phase. Therefore, mitigation would be above a 'like for like' compensation.

4.4.19 A main badger sett would be lost to the Scheme, and this would

be carried out under licence from Natural England. An artificial badger sett would be constructed six months prior to the exclusion as appropriate mitigation.

4.4.20 Overall, there are no predicted significant effects with mitigation measures in place during construction or operation.

Geology and Soils

4.4.21 The geology and soils assessment (ES Volume 1 - Chapter 9) concludes that with the Scheme's embedded mitigation, there is unlikely to be a significant impact on geology and soils. However, the permanent loss of soil resources leads to significant effects, which cannot be mitigated due to the location and nature of the Scheme.

4.4.22 There would be a significant loss of agricultural land, which cannot be mitigated for due to the location and nature of the Scheme.

4.4.23 In terms of land contamination, there may be potential impacts on the water environment in the area of the historical landfill, however not resulting in significant effects.

Material Assets and Waste

4.4.24 The material assets and waste assessment (ES Volume 1 - Chapter 10) concludes that there would be no significant effects from construction of the Scheme. The operation phase effects were scoped out during the EIA scoping stage.

Noise and Vibration

4.4.25 The noise and vibration assessment (ES Volume 1 - Chapter 11) concludes that there would be five receptors subject to major adverse noise impacts and two receptors subject to moderate adverse noise impacts during construction of the scheme. There is also likely to be moderate adverse vibration impacts during construction. However they are assessed to be not significant based on mitigation measures (for example best practicable means of construction) and the short duration / temporary nature of works.

4.4.26 The horizontal alignment of the Scheme has been designed to

avoid built-up areas with noise sensitive receptors as far as is practicable. A noise barrier has also been provided along the north-western section of the Southern Link to reduce noise impacts.

4.4.27 Taking into account these mitigation measures, during Operation there are 16 dwellings predicted to experience likely significant adverse effects above the Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level (SOAEL). For 12 of these properties, all located on Summer Lane, this would be as a result of traffic increases in the future year scenario due to increased traffic from the HIF development. There would be a negligible effect at these properties in the opening year but as a result of the HIF development near Banwell, traffic flows are predicted to increase substantially on Summer Lane in the future. Five of these- 12 properties would be subject to major impacts and seven of the 12 properties would be subject to moderate impacts.

4.4.28 Three properties subject to effects above the SOAEL are located on Castle Hill where there would be minor impacts in the opening year. The same impact would apply to one property located on Wolvershill Road close to the Scheme.

4.4.29 There are 134 residential receptors, together with Banwell Methodist Church, which are assessed as being subject to likely beneficial effects above SOAEL where there is at least a 1dB(A) reduction in noise as a result of the Scheme. (All receptors experience a noise reduction of at least 3dB(A) on at least one façade of the building).

4.4.30 There are 32 residential receptors which would be subject to likely significant adverse effects between the Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level (LOAEL) and SOAEL. The majority of these are facing Scheme roads, including the eastern edge of Summer Lane Park Homes, properties to the north-east of Wolvershill Road and on Cooks Lane, properties on Moor Road, properties to the north of the Scheme on Riverside and Eastermead Lane.

4.4.31 There are 199 residential receptors, including 18 dwellings to be occupied within a committed development on Wolvershill Road, which would be subject to likely significant beneficial effects between the LOAEL and SOAEL. The majority of these are located around East Street, Castle Hill, West Street, Knightcott Road and Wolvershill Road but extend further out where existing

noise levels are at a lower level.

4.4.32 Banwell Primary School and Banwell village hall would be subject to likely significant beneficial effects between LOAEL and SOAEL.

4.4.33 There is one noise important area (NIA), within the study area, situated on the M5. Properties within the NIA would be subject to negligible impacts as a result of the Scheme. Albeit the location of the proposed route outside of Banwell would have a significant beneficial impact to noise and vibration for those living in Banwell village given the significant reduction in traffic which would travel through the village.

Population and Human Health

4.4.34 The population and human health assessment (ES Volume 1 - Chapter 12) concludes that there would be significant adverse effects on properties north of the Banwell Bypass including:

- a) properties along Knightcott road at the western tie-in of the Scheme;
- b) temporarily occupied caravan;
- c) Banwell Football Club;
- d) Stonebridge farm Caravan Park;
- e) Court Farm Country Park;
- f) 13 agricultural land holdings,
- g) 5 of these are commercial holdings;
- h) 2 footpaths dissected by the Scheme.

4.4.35 There are negative and positive health outcomes identified during construction and operation.

4.4.36 The Scheme provides benefits for walkers, cyclists and horse riders in the form of a 3 metre wide walking and cycling route provided for the entire length of the proposed Banwell Bypass. This will provide a dedicated route for walkers, horse riders and cyclists alongside the road.

4.4.37 The route will also provide links to Wovershill Road, Moor Road and Riverside. To the West it will connect with walking and cycling routes leading to Weston-Super-Mare and to the East the route will link to Sandford, the Strawberry Line and Banwell.

4.4.38 Proposed walking and cycling routes through Banwell provide safe walking, cycling and horse-riding routes as well as infrastructure to encourage these forms of transport and better links to the wider public rights of way network.

4.4.39 As part of the Scheme, 2.57ha of playing fields at Banwell FC will be replaced to mitigate for the direct impact that is unavoidable by virtue of the highway alignment of the Bypass.

4.4.40 The replacement is appropriate because it is at least equivalent in area, at least as accessible to pedestrians, cyclists, and motor vehicles, at least equivalent in terms of usefulness, attractiveness, and quality to the facility it replaces, and the replacement will be available for use before use of the existing facility is lost.

4.4.41 Overall, with the proposed mitigation there are unlikely to be any significant effects on Land Use and Accessibility as well as Human Health due to the Scheme during operation.

Road Drainage and Water Environment

4.4.42 The road drainage and water environment assessment (ES Volume 1 - Chapter 13) concludes that with the proposed embedded mitigation of culverts and Flood Compensation Areas, the Scheme would not have any significant effects on costal, fluvial and reservoir flooding.

4.4.43 However, some areas of farmland will experience a decrease in flood levels of up to 25 mm, while other areas would experience an increase in flood levels of up to 20 mm.

4.4.44 There will be a slight adverse but not significant effect on surface water, groundwater and hydromorphology of surface waters.

4.4.45 Overall, there are no predicted significant effects with mitigation measures in place during construction or operation.

Climate Change

4.4.46 The climate change assessment (ES Volume 1 - Chapter 14) concludes that the GHG emissions caused by this scheme will not cause a significant effect to the UK Government's ability to adhere to the Carbon Budgets when considered as an individual

scheme and its cumulative impacts with the ARN.

4.4.47 The Scheme does affect the ability for NSC to achieve the West of England's Combined Authority's target of net zero for transport by 2030 however the extent of this is considered to be insignificant.

4.4.48 Overall, there are no predicted significant effects with mitigation measures in place during construction or operation.

Cumulative impacts

4.4.49 There is the potential for significant in-combination effects on properties located close to the Scheme. This includes properties along Knightcott road in proximity to the western tie-in to A371; Stonebridge farm and caravan park; properties on Wolvershill road (south); Riverside (north); Banwell Football Club and playing fields; Towerbrook farm; properties along A368 East St.; properties on A371 Castle Hill; and properties along Dark Lane. One Public Right of Way (PRoW) (AX 3/6/10 Cook's Lane to Moor Road) would also have significant in combination effects.

4.4.50 Given the anticipated timing of construction or the location of the other planning applications considered there are no predicted cumulative impacts during construction.

4.4.51 Any small-scale developments between the Banwell and the Scheme or large scale developments to the north of the Scheme are considered likely to have significant cumulative impact upon the historic landscape of the area.

4.4.52 The HIF developments are likely to have cumulative impacts on the landscape and visual amenity and the noise and vibration effects in combination with the Scheme.

4.4.53 There are likely population and human health impacts in combination with the developments on land to the West of M5 and east of Trenchard road, Locking and William Daws Close, in terms of the potential for additional pressure on local facilities and resources in Banwell.

4.4.54 With mitigation in place it is not anticipated that there will be cumulative impacts on air quality, biodiversity, materials and waste, geology and soils or the water environment.

4.5 Review against Scheme objectives

4.5.1 Based on the above, a summary as to how the Scheme achieves the objectives is presented in Table 8 below.

Table 8 - Scheme objective compliance

Scheme objective	Compliance with objective
Improve the local road network to address existing congestion issues	a) Traffic modelling results demonstrate that the Bypass will significantly reduce traffic congestion on the A371 through Banwell Village. In the opening year (2024), there would be a total reduction of vehicles driving through Banwell of ~70%.
Improve and enhance Banwell's public spaces by reducing traffic severance and improving the public realm	a) The Scheme would see placemaking improvements and enhancements to the centre of Banwell village, with the introduction of traffic calming measures and pavement widening that would reduce the dominance of the road. The impact of the proposed Banwell Bypass would be a reduction in traffic volumes through Banwell village as a result of traffic using the Bypass route. This will make Banwell a safer, more attractive place for the residents and visitors.
Provide the opportunity to increase active and sustainable travel between local villages and Weston-super-Mare	<p>a) The design includes a separated, traffic-free shared use route running alongside the Bypass. The route would start to the west of Banwell, linking with the new route being provided on the A371 as part of the Safer Roads Scheme.</p> <p>b) Regular crossings of the Bypass are also proposed to maintain existing walking, cycling and horse-riding routes, whilst also creating new ones.</p> <p>c) Dedicated routes for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders are also proposed on roads which do not allow through traffic, such as Castle Hill, Eastermead Lane and Moor Road.</p> <p>d) Within Banwell, a range of improvements are proposed, including improved walking and cycling facilities, created by widening the existing pavement where possible, as well as increased cycle parking.</p> <p>e) A walking/cycling route from the Bypass through to Sandford to the north of the A368, which will create a continuous, traffic-free route between Weston-super-Mare, Sandford and onwards via the Strawberry Line (National Cycle Route 26).</p> <p>f) There are proposed new or improved pedestrian crossings in Sandford and Winscombe. Improvements to the existing public footpath between the A368 and Churchill Green for walkers.</p> <p>g) To the east of Churchill Academy, there are improvements to the surfacing of existing PRoW footpaths towards Langford to make them suitable for cyclists.</p>

Scheme objective	Compliance with objective
Deliver infrastructure that enables housing development (subject to Local Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Banwell Bypass is funded by Homes England's Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) to support the delivery of 7,557 new homes. b) 4,482 of these homes will be located at existing housing development sites in the Weston Villages of Haywood Village and Locking Parklands. c) The location of the remaining homes will be subject to the new Local Plan process. However, it is currently suggested that these will be delivered through the creation of a new strategic growth area made up of 2,800 to the north of Banwell and the remainder through smaller sites in the area. d) Whilst Local Plan and subsequent future housing still needs to go through a process to become adopted policy, the Bypass is vital to support its delivery as it improves access to any homes, employment, and education in the area. e) Any additional increases to traffic as a result of future housing has been considered in the Bypass traffic modelling and subsequent development of the Scheme.
Ensure the development respects the local area and minimises visual impact upon the surrounding countryside and Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To minimise any visual impact on the surrounding countryside, the Scheme's current landscape design considers views both to and from the countryside and AONB. b) Fields severed by the Bypass create opportunities to retain the existing layout of fields in the area with space for habitat creation, landscape integration and further screening, such as hedgerows, to obscure the Bypass from view. c) Consideration has been given to walking, cycling and horse-riding routes and other mitigation features, such as the attenuation basins, and how these can be properly integrated with the landscape.

Scheme objective	Compliance with objective
Innovative and efficient in reducing and offsetting carbon from the design and construction of the infrastructure	<p>a) Road transport and construction are both responsible for generating a significant amount of carbon emissions. However, the following elements have been considered to reduce carbon emissions in both construction and the eventual operation of the Bypass.</p> <p>b) Considering the 'Whole Life Carbon' impact of the Bypass from the beginning of design. The carbon impacts are considered before and during construction, in maintenance and use of the Bypass in future. By doing this, carbon reduction measures can be built into the Scheme design. These include:</p> <p>c) The Bypass as a single carriageway as opposed to dual carriageway – this reduces the amount of material required to construct the Scheme and creates less construction carbon emissions.</p> <p>d) Use of recycled materials in construction of the Scheme, as well as locally sourced materials to avoid transporting them long distances.</p> <p>e) The use of swales for highway drainage reduces the amount of drainage material needed in the design and therefore creates fewer construction carbon emissions.</p> <p>f) Optimising the Bypass' alignment to reduce the amount of carbon heavy earthworks needed to build both the Bypass and Southern Link.</p> <p>g) Minimising additional street lighting, therefore reducing the amount of energy needed to light the road, as well as reducing material needed to construct the Scheme.</p> <p>h) Reducing carbon once the Bypass is in use by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40mph speed limit with slower moving vehicles in free-flowing traffic, which generates fewer carbon emissions than vehicles travelling at high speeds. • Using junctions (for example, a roundabout or signalised T-Junction) to ensure vehicles can be as free flowing as possible, to reduce the carbon impact of vehicles stopping and starting. • Improvements to routes through Banwell and nearby villages to make walking, cycling and horse riding a safer and more attractive low carbon alternative for residents travelling between local villages and Weston-super-Mare.

Scheme objective	Compliance with objective
Ensure the development provides the opportunity to increase Bio-Diversity Net Gain by at least 10%	<p>a) The Scheme has exceeded this objective, it would provide over 40% BNG. Measures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating habitats for biodiversity by reinstating and enhancing the ditch and rhyne system, management of invasive and non-native weeds, reinstating dried ponds and enhancing habitats with seasonally wet/ damp species-rich grassland – all of which have the potential to enhance the number of invertebrates, protected species, and pollinator habitats. • Using traditional techniques to manage wetland areas, such as seasonal and controlled flooding and the management of vegetation (e.g. pollarding, coppicing, reed, or osier beds if appropriate). • Replanting riverbanks with native trees and creating species rich grassland habitats within the verges and along the Scheme embankment. • Planting more local native species and further enhancements such as new hedgerows for woodland species, birds, dormice, and bat boxes. Types of plant would be chosen to provide food sources for protected species and soil conditions for wetland species. • Water and flood management areas designed to emphasise the natural landscape.
Proactively engage with stakeholders in a way that is both clear and transparent	<p>a) Non-statutory consultation has been undertaken in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banwell Bypass and Highway Improvements non-statutory consultation (5 July 2021 to 16 August 2021) • Banwell Bypass and Highway Improvements non-statutory consultation (10 March 2022 to 22 April April) • Consultation with Environmental Consultees such as the Environment Agency, Natural England, Lead Local Flood Authority, Internal Drainage Board, Bristol Water, regular Environmental Liaison Group (ELG) consultations with statutory and non-statutory consultees • Engagement with Parish Council's, resident working groups, statutory working groups and Banwell FC. Engagement has helped understand the breadth of local issues, opportunities, and concerns.

5 National legislation and policy context and assessment

5.1.1 Section 2 of this Statement sets out the planning framework, whilst this section considers the Scheme's alignment to the identified national policy and guidance context. In summary, the following documents have been considered as those most relevant to the determination of this Scheme's planning application:

- a) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- b) Planning Practice Guidance

5.1.2 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was first published in March 2014 and provides an additional layer of information to policies within the NPPF. The relevant parts have been considered as part of design development as demonstrated in the Design and Access Statement and ES Chapters in support of this application. To avoid unnecessary duplication in assessing the Scheme against national planning policy, this section focuses on the NPPF and makes reference to any additional layers of information to policies within the NPPF when appropriate.

5.2 National Planning Policy Framework (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government), 2021

5.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and revised in 2018, 2019 and most recently in July 2021. It sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF recognises that the purpose of the planning system is to deliver sustainable development, which can be achieved when economic, social, and environmental gains are sought jointly.

5.2.2 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Section 1 – Introduction

5.2.3 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.

5.2.4 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise (Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990). In this case, North Somerset Local Planning documents, as outlined in section 6 of this Statement, are a material consideration in the determination of this planning application.

Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development

5.2.5 Paragraph 7 of the NPPF explains that the role of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, which is summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

5.2.6 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF states that there are three overarching objectives to achieving sustainable development, which are interdependent and should be pursued in mutually supportive ways. These themes are outlined below:

- a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive, and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation, and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

- b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant, and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”

5.2.7 Paragraph 10 explains that there is a ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’ ‘at the heart of the Framework’, ‘so that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way’.

5.2.8 The compelling reasons for the Scheme and its overall need are set out in Section 4 of this report.

5.2.9 Sustainable development is an inherent element of the scheme, the design of which has been developed to deliver, wherever possible, the best balance between maximising benefits and minimising environmental impacts. As set out in Chapter 4 of this report, the objectives of the Scheme reflect the NPPF’s three overarching objectives for sustainable development; as it seeks to:

- a) support economic growth through improved infrastructure;
- b) support the health and wellbeing of the population through improved the safety within village communities and an improved PRoW network, and reduced rat running; and
- c) contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment through mitigation and enhancement measures incorporated into the design.

5.2.10 The Scheme is therefore considered to comply with planning policy for sustainable development.

Section 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy

5.2.11 This section of the NPPF is clear about the need for economic growth and the role of planning in facilitating this. Paragraph 81 states that:

“Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local and business needs and wider opportunities for development”

5.2.12 The Scheme is forecast to provide economic benefits. These include an initial Benefit Cost Ratio of 2.83 and large transport user benefits (economic efficiency and wider public finances) totalling around £130.6 million across all journey purposes and user types as the scheme reduces the journey times of trips through the area.

5.2.13 Overall, in accordance with the DfT Value for Money Framework, the initial BCR represents ‘High’ value for money.

5.2.14 Further economic justification for the Scheme is provided within section 4.3 (Economic Case) of this Planning Statement.

5.2.15 The Scheme is therefore considered to comply with planning policy for economic development.

Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities

5.2.16 This section of the NPPF seeks to achieve healthy, inclusive, and safe places. Paragraph 92 states that:

“Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks...”

5.2.17 A summary of how the Scheme protects and enhances PRoW is provided ES Volume 1 - Chapter 2 - Scheme Description. It identifies that, as set out in ES Volume 1 - Chapter 12 - Population and Human Health, access to open space and opportunities for active travel would be improved as a result of the Scheme.

5.2.18 This would bring health benefits to those people who make use of the new and improved assets created, improving the current experience of users of the proposed active travel measures along the A368, with improved footway/cycleway access from Churchill and Langford to Churchill Academy. Also, the users of the proposed improvements to existing footways, shared pedestrian, and cycleway through Banwell, Churchill, Sandford and Winscombe.

5.2.19 Safety and quality of life for communities in close proximity to the Scheme would also be improved, as the Scheme would discourage rat running on local roads such as Wolvershill Road south of the Banwell Bypass and address existing issues associated with high levels of congestion through residential areas.

Open Space Tests and Compliance

5.2.20 With regards to open space, Paragraph 99(b) advises that 'loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location'. This is consistent with the Sport England Playing Fields Policy where its Exception 4 provides that it may not raise an objection to a proposed development where:

"The area of playing field to be lost as a result of the proposed development will be replaced, prior to the commencement of development, by a new area of playing field:

- a) of equivalent or better quality, and
- b) of equivalent or greater quantity, and
- c) in a suitable location, and
- d) subject to equivalent or better accessibility and management arrangements."

5.2.21 In accordance with the above national policy and responding to NSC policy DM68 and associated open space guidance (as addressed in the next section of this report considering local policy and guidance) an Open Space Assessment has been undertaken as part of the design development work, which has involved engagement with Banwell FC. Appropriate options for replacement playing fields have been identified and assessed, with a preferred option being identified that meets the above tests.

5.2.22 The replacement land is located directly east of Banwell FC, and:

- is at least equivalent in area than the land being acquired by the Scheme;
- is at least as accessible to pedestrians, cyclists, and motor vehicles;
- is at least equivalent in terms of usefulness, attractiveness, and quality to the facility it replaces; and
- the replacement will be available for use before use of the existing facility is lost.

5.2.23 The Scheme is therefore considered to comply with planning policy for promoting healthy and safe communities.

Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport

5.2.24 Section 9 of the NPPF sets out the requirement to consider and promote sustainable transport at the earliest stage of development proposals. Paragraph 104 states that transport proposals should identify opportunities from existing and proposed transport infrastructure, promote walking, cycling and public transport and identify opportunities to avoid and mitigate adverse effects and for environmental net gains.

5.2.25 ES Volume 1 - Chapter 3 – Alternatives Considered and the Design and Access Statement submitted with this planning application identifies how NSC has considered sustainable transport alternatives to the Scheme early in the design development process.

5.2.26 Whilst it was ultimately concluded that a road Scheme was required to deliver the objectives and requirements of the Scheme, NSC has continued to seek opportunities within the design to promote walking, cycling and horse riding through improved access and facilities.

5.2.27 ES Volume Chapter 3 summarises the proposals for the PRoW and active travel network in the Scheme and demonstrates how this would enhance overall connectivity and encourage active travel across the network.

5.2.28 The Scheme is therefore considered to comply with planning policy for promoting sustainable transport.

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

5.2.29 Paragraph 126 states that: “Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.”

5.2.30 The significant reduction of traffic through the centre of Banwell provides the opportunity for placemaking improvements, these are detailed in ES Volume 1 - Chapter 2 Scheme Description. This will improve the sense of place in Banwell village which will make Banwell a better place to work and live.

5.2.31 As described in the Design and Access Statement submitted with this application, the Scheme is ‘carbon-led’ which means carbon consideration being at the forefront of all decision making. This is further considered in section 4.5 of this Statement. The Scheme objectives have been created to help deliver a safe and resilient free-flowing road while ensuring carbon impacts are minimised as far as possible; conserving the environment, improving quality of life for local communities, and contributing to the health of the economy and local businesses.

5.2.32 The Design and Access Statement in support of this application demonstrates how the carbon-led approach has been integrated into the Scheme’s design and how this meets the requirements for good design as reflected in the NPPF.

5.2.33 The Scheme is therefore considered to comply with planning policy for good design.

Section 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

5.2.34 The NPPF places great importance on the protection of water quality and the protection of existing and future environment from flood risk.

Flood Risk Tests and Compliance

5.2.35 A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and drainage strategy have been undertaken for the Scheme, provided in ES Volume 3 - Appendix 13.B in support of this application.

5.2.36 Section 14 of the NPPF sets out a number of tests and requirements, which are significant material considerations which weight in the balance of the application's determination. This includes a risk-based Sequential Test and Exception Test.

5.2.37 The route alignment is considered to satisfy the requirements of the Sequential Test approach as the route is protected for planning purposes within the NSC Local Plan, the precise alignment has been the subject of a route Options Assessment (as per ES Volume 3 - Appendix 3.A – Options Appraisal Report) and will be elevated above the design flood level.

5.2.38 The development has been justified as providing sustainable benefits to the wider community as set out in Section 6 of the FRA, therefore adhering to the requirements of the exceptions test as set out in the NPPF. These benefits include less congestion in the village of Banwell. This in turn provides local and wider benefits to the social and economic environment.

5.2.39 The impacts of the development have been quantified, informed by hydraulic modelling of the Scheme. The modelling has shown benefits, as well as detriment in two areas namely at the caravan site at Stonebridge Farm and between Moor Road and an unnamed rhyne connected to the Wallymead Rhyne. Without mitigation there would also be detriment in and around the Old Yeo Rhyne.

5.2.40 In summary, as a result of the proposed embedded mitigation of culverts and Flood Compensation Areas, the Scheme would not have any significant effects on costal, fluvial and reservoir flooding.

5.2.41 However, some areas of farmland will experience a decrease in flood levels of up to 25 mm, while other areas would experience an increase in flood levels of up to 20 mm.

5.2.42 Similarly with the embedded mitigation comprising of the drainage design and measures set out in the CEMP (Volume 3, Appendix 16.A) there will be a slight adverse but not significant effect on surface water, groundwater and hydromorphology of surface waters. No significant effects upon the water environment due to the Scheme have been identified.

5.2.43 Paragraph 152 of the NPPF states that the planning system

“...should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change.”

5.2.44 As set out in ES Volume 1 - Chapter 14 - Climate, the Scheme has been designed taking into account climate change such that any risks to the proposed infrastructure due to a changing climate have been identified and mitigated for.

5.2.45 Climate assessments including greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions assessment and climate change resilience (CCR) assessment have been undertaken and it is concluded that the Scheme would not have a material impact on the ability of Government to meet its carbon reduction targets.

5.2.46 In relation to flood risk, ES Volume 3 - Appendix 13.D identifies that there is a low risk of flooding.

5.2.47 The assessment reported in ES Volume 1 - Chapter 13 Road Drainage and the Water Environment concludes that there are no significant effects of flood risk resulting from the Scheme.

5.2.48 The Scheme is therefore considered to comply with planning policy for climate change and flooding.

Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

5.2.49 Section 15 ensures that development should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Paragraph 176 states that: “Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in national Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.” The paragraph outlines that the “scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas”

AONB Tests and Compliance

5.2.50 Paragraph 177 states “When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and Areas of

Outstanding Natural Beauty, permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest”.

5.2.51 The Southern Link part of the Scheme would be located within the Mendip Hills AONB only, notwithstanding potential indirect effects from the wider Bypass and associated development.

5.2.52 As set out in paragraph 177 of the NPPF, the key tests when considering development within the AONB include:

- a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;
- b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
- c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

5.2.53 Addressing these in turn:

- a) The need for the development in the public interest is set out in the case for Scheme found in chapter 4 of this document. In particular the benefits on the local economy have been assessed and section 4.3 of this document sets out the economic case of the Scheme. In summary, there is a strong need for the development in economic terms with the benefits outweighing the costs by 2.83:1, representing high value for money.
- b) The nature of this linear Scheme and its design is set out and prescribed in ES Volume 1 - Chapter 2 – Scheme Description, whilst alternatives have been carefully considered in ES Volume 1 - Chapter 3 – Alternatives Considered. In summary, the need for the Southern Link part of the Scheme has been strongly justified in order to address the identified problems and achieve the objectives for the Scheme, and there is no scope for meeting the need for it in some other way. The Scheme could not be delivered without the Southern Link within the AONB. The Southern Link could not be located outside the AONB, and in no other location within the AONB which could cause less harm.
- c) The effects on the environment when considering the landscape, including the characteristics of the AONB and the extent to which they could be moderated, are set out in ES Volume 1 - Chapter 7. In short:

- a) The Southern Link lies within the AONB leaving the existing A368 on the outskirts of Banwell and following a natural break in the landform between Banwell Hill and Banwell Woods.
- b) This section of the Scheme is relatively self-contained within an enclosed landscape unit truncating any further long distance views from within the AONB.
- c) Reinstatement of landscape planting together with further extended mitigation and retention of existing vegetation wherever possible would reinforce the existing landscape framework.
- d) The Southern Link would sit within landscape screening providing a good degree of integration with the adjacent wooded hill slopes.
- e) The nature and scale of the changes are small in comparison to the existing development and size of the AONB.
- f) The Scheme has slight adverse potential to affect the character or special qualities of the AONB in the early years of the Scheme, but these would reduce as mitigation planting matures and creates a good level of landscape integration with the surrounding settlement edge and wooded hill slopes at Banwell hillfort.
- g) Table 7.9.1 of ES Volume 1 - Chapter 7 - Landscape concludes magnitude following completion is considered to be minor at the local scale ranging to negligible at the AONB regional scale.

5.2.54 As such, the Scheme complies with paragraph 177 of the NPPF.

BNG Tests and Compliance

5.2.55 When considering biodiversity, the NPPF places particular emphasis on the provision of net gain in terms of conservation and enhancement of the natural environment (Paragraph 179 (b)), with requirements for measurable net gains for biodiversity.

5.2.56 Paragraph 180 states that “development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists”.

5.2.57 Addressing the paragraph 179 (b) of the NPPF, the proposals would promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and

recovery of priority species through providing mitigation measures recommended in ES Volume 1 - Chapter 8 - Biodiversity and the following measures:

- a) There would be a residual impact on the Banwell woods due to an increase in air pollutants as a result of the Scheme, but this impact is of negligible magnitude and slight significance. The loss of 6 hybrid black poplar would be replaced by new planting, but this impact would remain significant until the replacements have matured.
- b) The Scheme is in close proximity to the North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC. Works adjacent to designated sites will be mitigated for by general construction measures and a preferred method of works as outlined in the CEMP (ES Volume 3 - Appendix 16.A). No direct impact to the SAC is anticipated. The HRA has not identified any significant effect when taking into account identified mitigation measures.
- c) Trees lost to the Scheme would be replaced through new planting along the Scheme (as shown on Planning Document - Environmental Masterplan (EMP) Drawings (Sheets 1-5)). The area of woodland to be created under the proposals would comprise a total area equating to twice the area to be lost during the site clearance phase. Therefore, mitigation would be above a 'like for like' compensation.
- d) Additionally, it is considered that the landscape and ecological mitigation strategy would achieve a net gain for biodiversity on the whole. This would include retention of features such as hedges, replacing and replanting hedges, woodland and woodland edge planting and enhancements through increasing floristic diversity within the Scheme. The landscaping proposals have been designed to benefit both visual amenity and biodiversity.
- e) A main badger sett would be lost to the Scheme and its removal would be carried out under licence from Natural England, with exclusion carried out during the period July to November inclusive to avoid the main badger breeding season. However, an artificial badger sett would be constructed six months prior to the exclusion.

- 5.2.58 As such, the Scheme complies with paragraph 179 of the NPPF.
- 5.2.59 Detailed mitigation measures would be specified within a CEMP for the Scheme. Setting out detailed measures to control impacts upon species and habitats of high nature conservation value, such as the River Banwell.
- 5.2.60 Monitoring of the effectiveness of mitigation measures would

also be carried out and the methods for monitoring would be detailed within the LEMP (ES Volume 3 - Appendix 16.C).

- 5.2.61 The assessments have been undertaken with consultation with stakeholders including Natural England (NE).
- 5.2.62 The identified measures outlined above and others within ES Volume 1 - Chapter 8 - Biodiversity secure measurable net gains for biodiversity. The Scheme would meet the requirement of biodiversity net gain over the long-term resulting in over 40% BNG and exceeding the identified Scheme objective.
- 5.2.63 The replacement habitats for those lost to the Scheme would be larger in extent and more species-rich than those which they are replacing.
- 5.2.64 A number of attenuation basins are being used to create a mosaic of wetland habitats which is in keeping with the nature of the area and 10no culverts are being installed to facilitate bat, dormouse, otter, and other protected species' use of the wider habitats surrounding the new road. These will be further enhanced by sensitive planting and through the acquisition of areas wider than the road footprint.
- 5.2.65 Overall, the Scheme has sought to maximise biodiversity delivery through its design, taking advantage of all opportunities to enhance biodiversity value within the land to be acquired for the Scheme.
- 5.2.66 The Scheme is therefore considered to comply with planning policy for conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

Noise

- 5.2.67 NPPF paragraph 185 sets out that new development should avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life. The Scheme has sought to mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise through appropriate design and mitigation measures where practicable. These are set out in the noise and vibration assessment (ES Volume 1 - Chapter 11 – Noise and Vibration).
- 5.2.68 Significant adverse impacts from construction noise and vibration would be avoided through construction Best Practicable Means (BPM), mitigation, and noise insulation where established

thresholds are exceeded.

5.2.69 For operational noise, 16 residential properties are predicted to be subject to significant adverse effects above the SOAEL. Screening and other potential mitigation measures have been considered where effective to practicably, and sustainably, avoid these impacts. Noise insulation measures will be offered where appropriate (see paragraph 11.10.15 of ES Volume 1 - Chapter 11 – Noise and Vibration).

5.2.70 134 residential properties and one non-residential property are predicted to experience significant beneficial effects above the SOAEL.

5.2.71 Some significant adverse effects for operational noise between the LOAEL and SOAEL are reported in the assessment. These would not exceed the SOAEL in noise policy terms. All appropriate measures will be applied in these cases as far as it is practicable and sustainable to do so, to mitigate and minimise these effects.

5.2.72 Overall there is a benefit in terms of noise as a result of the Scheme. This is due to the removal of traffic through Banwell village. The Scheme complies with policy objectives, this has been achieved by means of mitigation measures. This includes scheme alignment and noise screening. The mitigation would minimise noise impacts at residential communities and sensitive non-residential receptors. Where significant adverse effects would remain, all appropriate measures have been applied as far as it is practicable and sustainable to do so to avoid, mitigate and reduce these effects. Overall, there is more benefit than harm as a result of the Scheme.

5.2.73 The Scheme is therefore considered to comply with planning policy for noise.

Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

5.2.74 The planning application is accompanied by a historic environment assessment in ES Volume 1 - Chapter 6 Cultural Heritage, the contents which is summarised in this section.

Heritage Assets Tests and Compliance

5.2.75 Paragraph 200 goes on to state any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

5.2.76 NPPF paragraph 202 states 'where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'

5.2.77 Paragraph 203 goes onto state 'The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.'

5.2.78 Local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss.

5.2.79 The cultural heritage assessment is based on the concept that the environmental effect of the proposals, in relation to an individual asset, is determined by identifying the asset's value and then assessing the impact that the proposal would have on the significance of the asset.

5.2.80 This accords with the provisions of the NPPF and Historic England's guidance, in *The Setting of Heritage Assets*⁵, used in conjunction with the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), National Highways⁶ and other relevant guidance⁷.

5.2.81 The study area for cultural heritage comprises all known heritage assets in the search radius c.1km of the Banwell Bypass. Consideration has been given to the wider locality to provide archaeological and historical context. The scope of assessment for the area beyond the 1km study area is outlined in ES Volume 3 – Appendix 6.L – Wider Mitigations Scope.

5.2.82 Within the 1km study area there are 37 Listed buildings (see ES

Volume 3 - Appendix 6.B Table 2, and ES Volume 3 - Appendix 6.D Figures 23-24). Most of these are located within the village of Banwell itself. There are numerous undesignated structures in the village comparable to the Listed examples. The Banwell Conservation Area is within the study area. There are four Scheduled Monuments within c.1km of the Bypass (see ES Volume 3 - Appendix 6.B Table 2, and ES Volume 3 - Appendix 6.D Figures 23-24).

- 5.2.83 The cultural heritage assessment concludes only a limited number of archaeological features have been clearly identified on or close to the Scheme.
- 5.2.84 The geophysical survey has indicated that some areas along the route have archaeological potential and the wetland-dryland interface would appear to be one of the most significant archaeological features.
- 5.2.85 It is considered that the Scheme will have an overall beneficial effect on the setting of much of the Banwell Conservation Area and many of the Listed Buildings within the historic core of the settlement of Banwell due to the reduced traffic through the village.
- 5.2.86 The exception to this is the Southern Link element of the Scheme, which will have a greater aural and visual intrusion into the higher parts of the village e.g., High Street.
- 5.2.87 As such, while there would be beneficial impacts to many parts of village of Banwell from the Scheme it would also have an adverse effect on some parts of the village where the visual link between the settlement and the level would be impacted. There may be a slight increase in the visual impact of the Scheme given features designed to provide environmental net gain but this would not have an adverse impact on the heritage assets.
- 5.2.88 It is considered that overall, there would be a net benefit for the built heritage of Banwell as a result of the Scheme. This would come at a cost to the buried archaeological remains, although this can be mitigated for. Also, there would be an impact on wider views and the landscape setting of the village, which would to an extent be visually separated from its historic, largely undisturbed, rural settling.

5.2.89 Taking the Scheme as a whole, it is considered that the Scheme design and mitigation measures reduces adverse effects on the historic environment and provides beneficial effects on heritage assets.

5.2.90 There is a net heritage benefit which complies with paragraph 202 of the NPPF, if the LPA found consider some net harm this would be outweighed by the significant benefits of the Scheme and therefore the policy test would still be complied with.

5.2.91 In relation to paragraph 203 of the NPPF, there is a direct impact on 3 non-designated archaeological sites. The significance of each of these assets is determined to be medium – high, but with appropriate mitigation in place all 3 sites would be subject to a slight residual adverse effect.

5.2.92 The Scheme is therefore considered to comply with planning policy for conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

5.3 Summary

5.3.1 This section demonstrates that the Scheme complies with the relevant policy considerations of the NPPF in so far as they are important and relevant.

5.4 National Policy Statement for National Networks in the context of climate

5.4.1 Regarding the assessment of carbon emissions for road schemes and following on from the conclusions on carbon effects based on the carbon budget, this approach is supported in clear terms by recent case law and decisions and is considered legally robust.

5.4.2 In *Goesa Limited v Eastleigh Borough Council [2022] EWHC 1221 (Admin)*, the High Court accepted the approach taken by the applicant to assess the project carbon budget in line with Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (IEMA) guidance on assessing GHG emissions. It was accepted that the quantified carbon budget should then be assessed against an existing carbon budget (global, national, sectoral, regional, or

local – as available) to identify the percentage impact that the project will contribute to climate change and reaching net zero targets. The greater the project's carbon budget, the greater its significance. It is then down to the practitioner's professional judgement how best to contextualise the project's GHG emissions against those budgets. In that case, the applicant relied upon the national carbon budgets set through the Climate Change Act 2008 and sectoral aviation targets (see paras [103] to [105] of the judgment).

5.4.3 The Judge acknowledged that the IEMA guidelines do not set criteria or thresholds by which to measure the 'significance' of GHG emissions for a particular proposal. There is also no guidance for assessing the acceptability of the impact against national budgets or targets. This is a matter for the judgement of the decision-maker. There is nothing unlawful about using benchmarks considered to be appropriate by the practitioner (and decision-maker) in order to arrive at a position on acceptability. The statutory carbon budgets were expressly considered to be an example of such a benchmark. On the basis of current law and policy, it is acceptable for the decision-maker to look at the scale of GHG emissions relative to a national target and to reach a judgement about the likelihood of the proposal harming the achievement of that target, even though this may inevitably be of a generalised nature (see paras [120] to [123] of the judgment).

5.4.4 In the context of the Scheme, in accordance with the National Policy Statement for National Networks (NPSNN) it is permissible to rely upon professional judgement to reach a conclusion on the likely effect of the project against the national carbon budgets. This is the approach which has been adopted for the Scheme, and it is the correct approach for a project of this nature.

5.4.5 An additional assessment has also been undertaken against local aim of achieving net zero for transport by 2030 within the West of England Combined Authority area. This approach is also acceptable under the IEMA guidelines, which allow a decision-maker to assess significance of impact against local targets where available, although this is a separate exercise to that required by the NPSNN.

5.4.6 In line with the decision in Goesa, the approach taken to assess the likely significant effects of the Scheme is also supported by the recent decision of the Secretary of State (SoS) to grant the M54 to M6 Link Road Development Consent Order.

5.4.7 That project identified that carbon emissions would equate to 0.0048% of the UK's carbon budget for the fourth carbon budget period and 0.0043% of the UK's carbon budget for the fifth carbon budget period. As a result, it was concluded that there would be no material impact on carbon reduction targets set by the UK Government. The Secretary of State acknowledged that there is no set significance threshold for carbon.

5.4.8 In terms of cumulative impact assessment, the applicant for the M54 to M6 scheme had submitted that, because the carbon emission assessment is based on results from the traffic model, the assessment is inherently cumulative as the traffic model includes data across the vicinity of the scheme, including all likely developments and traffic growth factors. With regards to operational carbon, the applicant's approach was to compare carbon emissions in a "with scheme" and "without scheme" scenario, with the former providing the baseline for the assessment.

5.4.9 At paragraph 45 of the decision letter, the SoS acknowledged that "...there is no single prescribed approach to assessing the cumulative impacts of carbon emissions, there are a number of ways such an assessment can acceptably be undertaken...". He found that the approach adopted by the applicant was acceptable and proportionate.

5.4.10 The SoS accepted (at paragraph 46) that "...the only statutory carbon targets are those at a national level and notes that neither the Applicant nor any other party has suggested that there are non-statutory carbon targets at any other level that may need to be considered".

5.4.11 In the context of the Scheme, the conclusion that the estimated contributions of approximately 0.0036% of the fourth carbon budget, 0.0041% of the fifth carbon budget and 0.0073% of the sixth carbon budget do not represent a significant effect are in line with the assessment approved in the M54 to M6 Link Road decision. The same approach has also been taken to assess cumulative impacts.

6 Local policy context and assessment

6.1 Relevant local policy context

6.1.1 Local plans are the policy basis against which the Scheme are considered and are material to decision making.

6.1.2 It should be acknowledged that the NPPF, considered in Chapter 5 of this Planning Statement, sets the direction for local planning policy and decision making. As such, the assessment against national planning policy will clearly be pertinent when considering how the proposed development accords with local planning policy. Where appropriate, this Chapter 6 seeks to avoid duplication and considers the extent of relevant local plans and any policies of relevance.

Development plans

6.1.3 At the local level, the Scheme has been considered against the following adopted development plans:

- North Somerset Council Core Strategy (2017)
- North Somerset Council Site and Policies Plan Part 1: Development Management Policies (July 2016)
- North Somerset Council Site and Policies Plan Part 2: Site Allocations Plan (2018)
- North Somerset Council Draft Local Plan (2028)
- Biodiversity and Trees Supplementary Planning Document (2005);
- Landscape Character Assessment (2018); and
- North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Guidance on Development: Supplementary Planning Document (January 2018).
- Joint Local Transport Plan 4 2020-2036 (March 2020)

6.1.4 Appendix A of this statement contains a review of the Scheme against the local plan policies set out below:

North Somerset Council Core Strategy (2017)

- a) Policy CS1 - Addressing climate change and carbon reduction
- b) Policy CS2 – Delivering sustainable design and construction
- c) Policy CS3 - Environmental impacts and flood risk assessment
- d) Policy CS4 – Nature Conservation
- e) Policy CS5 – Landscape and the historic environment
- f) Policy CS7 – Planning for waste
- g) Policy CS9 – Green infrastructure
- h) Policy CS10 – Transportation and movement
- i) Policy CS12 – Achieving high quality design and placemaking
- j) Policy CS13 – Scale of new housing
- k) Policy CS14 – Distribution of new housing
- l) Policy CS15 – Mixed and balanced communities
- m) Policy CS16 – Affordable housing
- n) Policy CS26 – Ensuring safe and healthy communities
- o) Policy CS27 – Sport, recreation, and community facilities
- p) Policy CS32 – Service villages
- q) Policy CS34 – Infrastructure delivery and development contributions

Site and Policies Plan Part 1: Development Management Policies (July 2016)

- a) Policy DM1 – Flooding and drainage
- b) Policy DM3 – Conservation Areas
- c) Policy DM4 – Listed Buildings
- d) Policy DM6 - Archaeology
- e) Policy DM7 – Non-designated heritage assets
- f) Policy DM8 – Nature Conservation
- g) Policy DM9 – Trees and Woodlands
- h) Policy DM10 – Landscape
- i) Policy DM11 – Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- j) Policy DM19 – Green Infrastructure
- k) Policy DM20 – Major Transport Schemes
- l) Policy DM24 – Safety, traffic, and provision of infrastructure, etc. associated with development

- m) Policy DM25 – Public rights of way, pedestrian, and cycle access
- n) Policy DM26 – Travel Plans
- o) Policy DM28 – Parking Standards
- p) Policy DM29 – Car Parks
- q) Policy DM32 – High quality design and place making
- r) Policy DM33 – Inclusive access into non-residential buildings and spaces
- s) Policy DM52 – Equestrian Development
- t) Policy DM68 – Protection of sporting, cultural and community facilities
- u) Policy DM70 – Development infrastructure
- v) Policy DM71 – Development contributions, Community Infrastructure Levy, and viability

Sites and Policies Plan Part 2: Site Allocations Plan (2018)

- a) Policy SA1 – Housing Allocations
- b) Policy SA2 – Settlement Boundaries
- c) Policy SA4 – Employment Allocations
- d) Policy SA5 – Local Green Space
- e) Policy SA6 – Undesignated Green Space
- f) Policy SA8 – Community Use Allocations

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- a) Biodiversity and Trees Supplementary Planning Document (2005)
- b) Landscape Character Assessment (2018)
- c) North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Guidance on Development: Supplementary Planning Document (January 2018)

6.2 Neighbourhood plans

6.2.1 There are no relevant adopted neighbourhood plans located within the red line boundary.

6.3 Emerging policy

6.3.1 The Scheme has considered the emerging North Somerset Council Draft Local Plan (2038).

6.4 Planning guidance

6.4.1 Other relevant planning guidance is identified and considered in the ES on a topic basis.

6.5 Local Policy Context

6.5.1 Appendix A sets out relevant local policies for the assessment of transport schemes.

6.6 Local planning policy assessment

6.6.1 An assessment of the Scheme against adopted and emerging local planning policy documents has been undertaken and is provided in Appendix B of this statement.

6.6.2 The assessment demonstrates that the Scheme complies with local planning policy and the Scheme should be permitted.

6.7 Summary

6.7.1 Appendix B demonstrates that the Scheme complies with the relevant policy considerations of local planning policy in so far as they are important and relevant.

7 Conclusion

Overview

7.1.1 NSC have worked closely with transport providers, local groups, and stakeholders to bring forward viable infrastructure necessary to improve the local road network, improve and enhance Banwell's public spaces, provide the opportunity to increase active and sustainable travel and enable housing development (subject to Local Plan adoption and delivery). The delivery of the Scheme is central to helping achieve those ambitions.

7.1.2 National planning policy directs that development that accords with an up-to-date development plan should be approved⁸, and the proposed development accords with the NSC Development Plan in accordance with policy DM20 (Major Transport Schemes), which safeguards land for the Banwell Bypass and its associated Southern Link connecting road. This clearly supports the principle of the development that is proposed as part of this planning application.

7.1.3 This Planning Statement has sought to further demonstrate why the proposed development forming the Scheme should proceed.

7.1.4 Chapter 1 of this Planning Statement outlines the need for intervention, identifying the existing and anticipated future transport related problems in Banwell and surrounding areas. Chapter 1 also sets out the Scheme objectives, which NSC seeks to achieve with the Scheme, in support of sustainable development.

7.1.5 Chapter 2 sets out the planning framework relevant to the Scheme including pertinent legislation, consents, plans and policy.

7.1.6 Chapter 3 provides an overview of the Scheme for which planning permission is being sought. This includes a description of the Scheme, a summary of the pre-application process and provides a list of plans and documents submitted in support of this application.

7.1.7 As set out in Chapter 4 of this report, a strong case for the Scheme has been presented, which illustrates how the objectives would be met, and how its costs will be far outweighed by the benefits of the Scheme, and in the public interest. The transport, economic and environmental case for the Scheme is summarised below.

The Transport Case

7.1.8 The existing traffic situation results in significant congestion and delay, particularly on the narrow sections of the A371 within Banwell, where traffic is forecasted to increase in the future.

7.1.9 With the Scheme in place by 2039 there would be a ~70% reduction in traffic through Banwell and journey times are forecasted to decrease by ~45%.

7.1.10 Wider mitigation measures would reduce the potential impacts of the Banwell Bypass in local areas such as Churchill, Sandford and Winscombe, but they would experience increases in traffic as a result of the Scheme.

The Economic Case

7.1.11 The economic case for the Scheme is very strong, with every £1 spent on the Scheme to result in a £2.83 return for the economy. This represents high value for money. This is independent of any wider economic impacts that the Scheme may generate.

7.1.12 As a result of the Scheme there would also be an additional net land value uplift of around £81.9m, acknowledging that this would in turn result in increased traffic, which has been considered as part of the Scheme's assessments.

The Environmental Case

7.1.13 Overall, there would be a range of positive and adverse environmental impacts, which are summarised below.

7.1.14 The location of the proposed route outside of Banwell would have a significant beneficial impact to air quality for those living in Banwell village given the significant reduction in traffic which would travel through the village.

7.1.15 Whilst some local properties would experience significant noise and vibration disbenefits, there would overall be a significant beneficial impact for those living in Banwell given the significant reduction in traffic which would travel through the village. All practicable mitigation measures have been identified to avoid or reduce significant adverse impacts, whilst there would be a greater number of properties benefiting from the Scheme.

7.1.16 There would be a net benefit to the built heritage of Banwell due to the reduced traffic through the village.

7.1.17 The impact on views in the landscape will be variable, and there will be a residual effect on some, in particular those near the proposed Banwell River Bridge. In general, the proposed embedded mitigation measures would reduce the visual impact on the AONB to be acceptable over time and even enhance the integration of the Scheme into the landscape.

7.1.18 The Scheme would maximise benefits to habitats and meet the requirement of biodiversity net gain (BNG) over the long-term resulting in over 40% BNG and far exceeding the identified Scheme objective of 10% BNG.

7.1.19 With appropriate mitigation as identified and assessed as part of the Scheme, it would not delay or interrupt progress towards achieving the conservation objectives of local protected sites, including the North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC.

7.1.20 There would be the permanent loss of soil resources as a result of the Scheme being built along its proposed alignment.

7.1.21 There are unlikely to be any significant effects on land use and accessibility, as well as human health, due to the Scheme. Proposed improvements to PRoW will provide safe walking, cycling and horse-riding routes as well as infrastructure to

encourage these forms of sustainable transport and better links to the wider public rights of way network.

7.1.22 With all proposed mitigation measures in place there are no predicted significant impacts during operation.

7.1.23 ES Volume 1 - Chapter 8 - Biodiversity identifies a number of adverse effects during construction, including severance to commuting lines or foraging areas for Bats (the qualifying feature of the SAC), impacts from dust and other forms of airborne pollutants, loss of habitat including habitat adjacent to the AONB, loss of agricultural lays habitat during site clearance, loss of hedgerows, partial closure of a badger sett, disturbance from artificial light and noise levels. These would be mitigated for through the granting and compliance with dormouse, bat and badger protected species licences, relevant method statements and mitigation strategies.

7.1.24 As part of the Scheme, 2.57ha of playing fields at Banwell FC will be replaced to mitigate for the direct impact of the Bypass that is unavoidable. The replacement is appropriate because it is at least equivalent in area, at least as accessible to pedestrians, cyclists, and motor vehicles, at least equivalent in terms of usefulness, attractiveness, and quality. The replacement will be available for use before use of the existing facility is lost.

7.1.25 Overall, no significant effects upon the water environment due to the Scheme have been identified.

7.1.26 The GHG emissions caused by the Scheme have been assessed against the ability of the UK Government to meet its legislated carbon budgets and the effect is considered to be not significant. The assessment is inherently cumulative and so the Scheme, together with other committed development that has been included within the traffic model on which this assessment is based, also does not result in a significant effect. In addition to assessing the impacts of the Scheme against national statutory targets, it is noted that there are local and regional aspirations for transport to be carbon neutral by 2030. Whilst it is not a statutory requirement to consider the impact of the Scheme against these local and regional aspirations, these aspirations have been considered within ES Volume 1 - Chapter 14.

7.1.27 The GHG emissions caused by this scheme will not cause a

significant effect to the UK Government's ability to adhere to the Carbon Budgets when considered as an individual scheme and its cumulative impacts with the ARN. The Scheme does affect the ability of NSC to achieve the West of England's Combined Authority's aspiration of net zero for transport by 2030 however the extent of this is considered to be insignificant.

National planning policy

7.1.28 Chapter 5 of this Planning Statement outlines how the Scheme aligns with the aims of the NPPF, notably key policy tests relevant to the Scheme. The Scheme supports the delivery of the NPPF's core land-use planning principles, by providing infrastructure to provide improvements to the road network, support economic growth and the delivery of housing (subject to the Local Plan) within the region.

7.1.29 Development within the AONB, impact to the historic environment, biodiversity net gain, flood risk and the acquisition of land defined as Open Space are key issues within the NPPF that are pertinent to this Scheme. A full assessment of the Scheme against the relevant policy tests has been carried out in Chapter 5, demonstrating the Scheme complies with the relevant policy considerations of national planning policy in so far as they are important and relevant.

Local planning policy

7.1.30 The relevant local planning policy and guidance is set out in Chapter 6 and Appendix A to this Planning Statement. Chapter 6 and Appendix B then help demonstrate how the Scheme complies with the relevant policy considerations of local planning policy in so far as they are important and relevant.

Planning Balance

7.1.31 NSC considers that the benefits of the Scheme will significantly outweigh any harm predicted.

7.1.32 The Scheme has been designed to high standards as is detailed in the Design and Access Statement in support of this application.

7.1.33 Mitigation and enhancement measures have been identified as

set out in the ES, seeking to protect and enhance the natural and built environment.

7.1.34 Having weighed up each of the elements assessed in respect of the ES and their compliance with national and local planning policy, aligned to the transport, economic and environmental case for the scheme, it is considered that the policy tests have been met.

7.1.35 Accordingly, the policy presumption in favour of the Scheme and the overall planning balance lie strongly in favour of planning permission being granted.

Appendix A

A.1 Local Policy Context

A.1.1.1 The following section sets out relevant local policies for the assessment of transport schemes.

North Somerset Council Core Strategy (2017)

A.1.1.2 NSC's Core Strategy was published in January 2017 and sets the broad long-term vision, objectives, and strategic planning policies for North Somerset up to 2026.

A.1.1.3 The Core Strategy has developed a number of strategic and local visions. The visions of most relevance to the Banwell Bypass include:

Vision 1 North Somerset Vision:

“By 2026 North Somerset will be a more prosperous district, with reduced inequalities throughout. Its coastal and rural setting underpinned by a rich heritage will strongly influence new development. Development will respond to the challenge of climate change, the move to more sustainable energy use and be characterised by high quality design that contributes to creating successful, thriving places.

Weston-super-Mare will be established as a major economic centre catering for the employment, retail, social and leisure needs of its population whilst attracting visitors to support this role. New development areas will be established, creating mixed-use communities with a distinct sense of place valued for their high standards of sustainability, quality of life and inspired design.

Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead will increasingly support their populations and play less of a dormitory role. The villages will cater for rural needs with their character and that of the open countryside protected from intrusive development.

The future planning of Royal Portbury Dock and Bristol Airport will be guided by the need to balance the advantages of economic growth with the need to control the impacts on those who live nearby and on the natural environment.”

Vision 6 Service Villages Vision⁹

“By 2026 the Service Villages will become thriving rural communities and a focal point for local housing needs, services and community facilities. They will become more self-contained in terms of providing jobs and serving the local and surrounding community for all their day-to-day needs, whilst protecting their individual character.”

A.1.1.4 A review of the associated Policies Map has identified the following key policy considerations for the Banwell Bypass¹⁰:

- a) Banwell settlement boundary.
- b) Allocation for a principal strategic development area to comprise proposed Weston Villages, as part of the Draft Weston Villages Masterplan-framework - 2.45km to the north-west of Banwell.
- c) Potential area for residual waste treatment facilities, as part of the West of England Joint Waste Core Strategy – 2.1km to the north-west of Banwell.
- d) Banwell Bypass – to the north of Banwell and between East Street and Castle Hill.
- e) Wolvershill Road Banwell Widening – 1.3km north-west of Banwell.
- f) Yatton/Congresbury/Churchill/Winscombe & Sandford: Cheddar Valley Railway Route (PROW, pedestrians and cyclists) -1.8km to the north-east of Banwell.
- g) Banwell Retail Local Centre – within Banwell.
- h) Banwell Recreation Ground, Local Green Space – within Banwell.
- i) Riverside Green, Local Green Space – adjacent to Banwell.
- j) Proposed sites for new residential development:
 - East of Wolvershill Lane – adjacent to Banwell.

Status April 2017 – outline planning consent subject to legal agreement, capacity remaining: 44

- F Sweeting and Son site, Station Road, Sandford – 1.6km north-east of Banwell.

Status April 2017 – no current consent, capacity remaining: 16

- Broadleaze Farm, Winscombe – 1.9km south-east of Banwell.

Status April 2017 – no current consent, capacity remaining: 74

- Land at Shiphams Lane, Winscombe – 2.1km south-east of Banwell

Status April 2017 – no current consent, capacity remaining: 28

- Land at Coombe Farm, Winscombe – 2.2km south-east of Banwell

Status April 2017 – no current consent, capacity remaining: 28

- Woodborough Farm, Winscombe – 2.3km south-east of Banwell

Status April 2017 – outline planning consent subject to legal agreement, remaining capacity: 175

- The Chestnuts, south of Sidcot Lane, Winscombe – 2.9km south-east of Banwell.

Status April 2017 – full planning permission, capacity remaining: 24

- Land north of Greenhill Road, Sandford – 2.5km north-east of Banwell.

Status April 2017 – outline planning permission, capacity remaining: 118

- Parklands Village (former RAF Locking site) – 2.4km north-west of Banwell.

Status April 2017 – part full consent, part outline, part no consent, capacity remaining: 2,679

- Junction 21 Enterprise Area – 2.1km west of Banwell.
- Employment and residential sites in Weston Villages – 2.2km west of Banwell.

k) Environmental constraints

- Greater Horseshoe Bats Habitat, North Somerset & Mendip Bats - encompassing Banwell and surrounding area.
- Banwell Conservation Area – within Banwell.
- Scheduled Monument, Romano – British villa – within Banwell.
- Scheduled Monument, a Roman Camp, with later pillow mound of post medieval date, in Banwell Woods – 455m south-east of Banwell.
- Scheduled Monument, Banwell Camp: a large multivallate hillfort on Banwell plain – 860m east of Banwell.

- Scheduled Monument, Roman Building – Roman settlement and associated industrial remains and field system north east of Winthill Farm – 550m south-west of Banwell.
- Wildlife Site, River Banwell – within Banwell.
- Wildlife Site, Banwell Wood – 320m to the south-east of Banwell.
- Wildlife Site, Fields from Whitley Head to Winthill House – 580m southwest of Banwell.
- Wildlife Site, Banwell Hill – 650m south-west of Banwell.
- Wildlife Site, Towerhead Brook (part of) and adjacent land – 1.7km north-east of Banwell.
- Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – south of Banwell.
- Wildlife Site of International Importance, Special Area of Conservation – 660m to the east of Banwell.
- Wildlife Site of International Importance (Special Area of Conservation) – 1.5km south-west of Banwell.
- Banwell Ochre Caves, Site of Special Scientific Interest – 660m to the east of Banwell.
- Banwell Caves, Site of Special Scientific Interest – 1.5km south-west of Banwell.
- Banwell Castle, Unregistered Historic Park or Garden – 420m to the south-east of Banwell.
- Banwell Caves, Unregistered Historic Park or Garden – 950m south-west of Banwell.
- Regionally Important Geological Site, Great Maple Mine and Banwell Levy – 950m south-west of Banwell.

A.1.1.5 Those policies of particular relevance to the Scheme are shown in Table 9.

Table 9 Summary of adopted policies from the North Somerset Core Strategy

Policy Reference	Key Considerations
CS1: Addressing climate change and carbon reduction	<p>Policy CS1 focuses on NCC's commitment to reducing carbon emissions and tackling climate change. Development should demonstrate a commitment to reducing carbon emissions.</p> <p>Biodiversity should be protected and enhanced including species and habitats that are characteristic of the area, in order to support adaptation to climate change. This should be achieved through on and off-site measures, as well as the reduction or preferably elimination of any adverse impacts.</p> <p>Waste should be minimised by reduction, re-use and recycling waste.</p> <p>Areas will be enhanced to be resilient to the impacts of climate change including flood defence and public realm enhancements including the integration of effective shading through, for example, tree planting.</p> <p>Development should demonstrate water efficiency measures to reduce demand on water resources.</p> <p>A network of green space for wildlife and habitat protection, recreation and environmental reasons should be actively enhanced through new development.</p>
CS2: Delivering sustainable design and construction	<p>Policy CS2 focusses on NSC's commitment to sustainable design and construction, increasing energy efficiency through design and prioritising the use of sustainable low or zero carbon forms of renewable energy generation in order to increase the sustainability of the building stock across North Somerset.</p> <p>The greatest potential for energy saving opportunities is likely to be at larger scale developments particularly at the Weston Villages and Weston town centre. In addition these areas are expected to demonstrate exemplar environmental standards contributing to the objectives of Policy CS1 and adding value to the local economy.</p> <p>Development requires the application of best practice in Sustainable Drainage Systems to reduce the impact of additional surface water run-off from new development. Such environmental infrastructure should be integrated into the design of the scheme and into landscaping features and be easily maintained.</p> <p>In moving towards zero carbon development, applicants will ensure that sustainable principles are established in the new proposals from the outset.</p>

Policy Reference	Key Considerations
CS3: Environmental impacts and flood risk assessment	<p>Individual or cumulative development that would result in air, water, or other environmental pollution of harm to amenity, health or safety will only be permitted if the potential adverse effects would be mitigated to an acceptable level.</p> <p>Development in Zones 2 or 3 of the Environment Agency Flood Map will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that it complies with the sequential test set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and associated technical guidance and, where applicable, Exceptions Test, unless it is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a category for which National Planning Policy Framework and associated technical guidance makes specific alternative provision; or Development of the same or a similar character and scale as that for which the site is allocated, subject to demonstrating that it will be safe from flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall. <p>The Environment Agency Flood Map places small areas around Banwell in Flood Zone 2.</p> <p>A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will be required for planning applications proposing development in flood zone 2. Developers should have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework, accompanying Technical Guidance and the Environment Agency's Policy and Practice for the Protection of Flood Plains. Information contained in the North Somerset Strategic Flood Risk Assessment should be the starting point.</p>
CS4: Nature Conservation	<p>Biodiversity will be maintained and enhanced in North Somerset. New development will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeking to meet local and national Biodiversity Action Plan targets taking account of climate change and the need for habitats and species to adapt to it. Maximising benefits to biodiversity, incorporating, safeguarding, and enhancing natural habitats and features and adding to them where possible. A net loss of biodiversity should be avoided, and a net gain achieved where possible. Protect, connect, and enhance important habitats, particularly designated sites, ancient woodlands, and veteran trees. Promoting the enhancement of existing and provision of new green infrastructure of value to wildlife. Promoting native tree planting and well targeted woodland creation and encouraging retention of trees. Natura 2000 sites are statutorily protected under the Habitats Regulations. Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) is required to investigate whether proposals, alone or in combination, are likely to have a significant effect on Natura 2000 sites. Ecological surveys will need to be carried out, and the planning application should include the submission of a biodiversity impact assessment.

Policy Reference	Key Considerations
CS5: Landscape and the historic environment	<p>North Somerset Council will protect and enhance the landscape and historic environment. Close regard will be paid to the character of National Character Areas and particularly the landscape types and character areas identified in the North Somerset Landscape Character Assessment.</p> <p>The Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), to the south of Banwell, 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.</p> <p>Particular attention will be given to aspects of the historic environment which contribute to the distinctive character of North Somerset.</p>
CS7: Planning for waste	<p>Policy CS7 supports NSC's commitment to the prevention and minimisation of waste and the sustainable management of waste, reducing reliance on landfill. That includes reduction, re-use, recycling and composting of waste, and recovery of materials and energy from waste, in line with the Joint Waste Core Strategy for the West of England.</p> <p>Proposals for waste-related development and the location of waste management facilities will be subject to policies in the Joint Waste Core Strategy and detailed development management policies to be established in the Sites and Policies Development Plan Document.</p>
CS9: Green Infrastructure	<p>Policy CS9 states that the existing network of green infrastructure will be safeguarded, improved, and enhanced by further provision. North Somerset Council will give priority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The protection and planting of trees. The promotion of the north slopes of the Mendip Hills AONB as sub-regional corridors for biodiversity, recreation, and landscape retention. The promotion of the River Banwell as a local corridor for biodiversity and landscape enhancement. The connection of disjointed woodlands, particularly ancient and semi-natural woodland. The continued development of a network of green spaces, water bodies, paths and cycleways and bridleways in and around the urban areas. The management, maintenance, upgrading and extension of the public rights of way network.

Policy Reference	Key Considerations
CS10: Transportation and movement	<p>Development proposals that encourage an improved an integrated transport network and allow for a wide choice of mode of transport as a means of access to jobs, homes, services, and facilities will be encouraged and supported.</p> <p>Transport schemes should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance facilities for pedestrians, including those with reduced mobility, and other users such as cyclists. Deliver better local bus, rail, and rapid transit services in partnership with operators. Develop innovative and adaptable approaches to public transport in the rural areas of the district. Improve road and personal safety and environmental conditions. Reduce the adverse environmental impacts of transport and contribute towards carbon reduction. Mitigate against increased traffic congestion. Improve connectivity within and between major towns both within and beyond North Somerset Support the movement of freight by rail. <p>Banwell Bypass is identified as a proposal within the policy.</p> <p>North Somerset Council state that while it is recognised that car use will remain a convenient, attractive and in many areas, essential mode of travel, the approach seeks ways to minimise harm to the environment through good quality design and to encourage alternatives to single occupancy car commuting.</p>
CS12: Achieving high quality design and placemaking	<p>New development should function well, support sustainable land uses and seek to improve the image of the area.</p> <p>Development proposals will be required to demonstrate sensitivity to the existing local character and should take the opportunity to enhance the sense of place and local identity. Where existing design characteristics are not considered of high quality, new development should enhance the area.</p> <p>Development proposals should maintain and enhance the historic environment.</p> <p>Creation of safe environments by designing out crime – natural surveillance, visible streets, and open spaces, lighting, and other security measures. Achieving Secured by Design certification will help to demonstrate how designing out crime has been taken into account.</p> <p>Proposals will be required to demonstrate quality design through a Design and Access Statement including the process of design thinking from concept to final scheme.</p>
CS13: Scale of new housing	<p>Policy CS13 states that a supply of deliverable and developable land will be identified to secure the delivery of a minimum of 20,985 dwellings within North Somerset 2006-2026, with the appropriate level of new homes reviewed by 2018.</p>

Policy Reference	Key Considerations
CS14: Distribution of new housing	Policy CS14 states that at service villages, there will be opportunities for small-scale development of an appropriate scale either within or abutting settlement boundaries or through site allocations.
CS15: Mixed and balanced communities	Policy CS15 focuses on the provision of mixed and balanced communities through a range of new housing.
CS16: Affordable housing	Policy CS16 states that on-site affordable housing provision will be sought to meet local needs on all residential developments of 10 dwellings or more (on sites of 0.3 hectare or above).
CS26: Ensuring safe and healthy communities	<p>A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) will be required for all large scale developments, to assess how the development will contribute to improving the health and well-being of the local population.</p> <p>Development proposals should promote active living through creating places that are easily accessible, attractive, and safe to move around by walking or cycling.</p>
CS27: Sport, recreation, and community 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.
CS32: Service villages	<p>New development within or adjoining the settlement boundary of Banwell which enhances the overall sustainability of the settlement will be supported where:</p> <p>The design is high quality, respects and enhances the local character, contributes to place making and the reinforcement of local distinctiveness, and can be readily assimilated into the village.</p> <p>It is appropriate to its context and makes a positive contribution to the local environment and landscape setting.</p> <p>The location of development maximises opportunities to reduce the need to travel and encourages active travel modes and public transport.</p> <p>It demonstrates safe and attractive pedestrian routes to facilities within the settlement within reasonable walking distance.</p>
CS34: Infrastructure delivery and development contributions	Policy CS34 deals with the contributions required toward the cost of infrastructure from developers.

Sites and Policies Plan Part 1: Development Management Policies (July 2016)

A.1.1.6 The development management policies are used when assessing a range of planning applications and development proposals. The document does not contain site allocations, which are detailed in Part 2, but instead focuses on a broad range of development issues such as major transport schemes, development in the countryside and environmental.

A.1.1.7 The plan was adopted by full Council on 19 July 2016. Those policies of particular relevance are shown in Table 10.

Table 10 Summary of adopted policies from the Sites and Policies Plan Part 1: Development Management Policies (July 2016)

Policy Reference	Key Considerations
DM1: Flooding and drainage	Aims to discourage inappropriate development in flood risk areas and to ensure that the impact of new development on flooding is fully taken into account. SuDS are expected for all major developments; alternatives will only be permitted where SuDS are impractical or would compromise the scheme viability and the alternative does not conflict with national planning policy.
DM3: Conservation Areas	Seeks to protect conservation areas and their setting from inappropriate development.
DM4: Listed Buildings	Seeks to protect listed buildings and their setting from inappropriate development.
DM6: Archaeology	Seeks to ensure that new development will not significantly impact on archaeological remains or their setting.
DM7: Non-designated heritage assets	Seeks to protect non-designated heritage assets and their setting from inappropriate development.
DM8: Nature Conservation	Seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity, particularly on sites of recognised nature conservation interest. To protect trees, hedges, and other landscape features of amenity value and to secure suitable replacements in instances where their loss is justified.
DM9: Trees and Woodlands	This policy seeks to incorporate existing trees and wooded areas into design proposals where practical and ensure that the planting of new trees is properly designed and adequately maintained in the longer term and recognise the place-making quality of trees.
DM10: Landscape	Includes provisions to ensure that development proposals will not adversely affect designated landscape character within the district including both nationally registered and unregistered Historic Parks and Gardens. Development will also be required to be carefully integrated into the environment, conserve and enhance vegetation characteristic, respect the historic landscape, and include appropriate landscaping and boundary treatments

Policy Reference	Key Considerations
DM11: Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	Seeks to conserve and, where possible, enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB. Development which would have an adverse impact on the landscape, setting and scenic beauty of the Mendip Hills AONB, including views into and out of the AONB, will not be permitted unless in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated that it is in the public interest. All development will be controlled and conditioned to ensure it would minimise the harm to the natural beauty of the AONB. Outdoor lighting schemes will not be permitted in the AONB unless it has been demonstrated that there will be no adverse impact from obtrusive light. Particular care will be taken in those parts of the AONB where dark skies are an important feature of the area. Wherever possible new roads and major infrastructure proposals should be kept away from the AONB and, where they would be likely to affect it, proposals should demonstrate the need for development and that the siting and design would do as little damage to the environment as practicable.
DM19: Green Infrastructure	Seeks to provide Green Infrastructure for large-scale proposals in locations where there is a local of green infrastructure or opportunities to create or improve green networks, will be required to contribute to the quality of the environment, through the creation of high quality well designed and accessible green infrastructure.
DM20: Major Transport Schemes	Seeks to protect proposed major transport schemes from inappropriate development and show the safeguarded areas on the Policies Map. Including Banwell Bypass.
DM24: Safety, traffic, and provision of infrastructure, etc. associated with development	Seeks to ensure that new development will not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or inhibit necessary access for emergency, public transport, service or waste collection vehicles. Development proposals will need to incorporate measures to mitigate the impact of development which would give rise to a significant detrimental impact on travel patterns or exacerbates existing transport problems.
DM25: Public rights of way, pedestrian and cycle access	Seeks to protect and enhance the existing public rights of way network and strategic cycle routes and ensure the provision of new and improved multi-user routes connecting with new developments.
DM26: Travel Plans	Seeks to encourage the preparation and effective implementation of travel plans to improve the sustainability of development proposals. Travel Plans will be required for all developments which generate significant amounts of movement.
DM28: Parking Standards	Identifies that development proposals should meet the Council's standards for the parking of motor vehicles and bicycles. Where development is not covered by these standards, assessment will be carried out according to individual circumstances with regard being given to the provisions of any submitted Travel Plan.
DM29: Car Parks	Aims to ensure that new development is provided with adequate parking, which meets the needs of intended users and that parking problems are not created or exacerbated in the surrounding area.

Policy Reference	Key Considerations
DM32: High quality design and place making	<p>Policy DM32 seeks to ensure the design of new development should contribute to the creation of high quality, distinctive, functional, and sustainable places.</p> <p>The design and planning of development proposals should demonstrate sensitivity to the local character, including the setting, and enhance the area taking into consideration any specific opportunities present. Design solutions should seek to enhance local distinctiveness and contribute to the creation of a sense of place and identity.</p> <p>Proposals that reflect community aspirations and values will be encouraged. Proposals which cause unacceptable harm to the character or appearance of the area will not be permitted. The council will seek to maximise the economic use of current or former publicly-owned land.</p> <p>The design should take account of the siting, soft and hard landscaping, levels, density, form, scale, height, massing, detailing, colour, and materials are appropriate and respect the characteristics of the site and surroundings and are appropriate to its use and position within the landscape and/or townscape.</p> <p>The site must integrate with the surrounding fabric including streets, paths, and cycle ways, continuing successful local development patterns and creating an interconnected public realm.</p> <p>The design and layout should not prejudice the living conditions for the occupiers of the proposal or that of adjoining occupiers through loss of privacy, overlooking, overshadowing, or overbearing impact.</p> <p>The design should help to reduce water and energy consumption. The design facilitates inclusive access to all and the need to deter crime and enhance security. Where relevant, recommendations of a Design Review Panel have been taken into consideration.</p> <p>Account should be taken of potential adverse weather conditions particularly in relation to the likely impacts of future climate change. Provision is made for the storage of waste and recycling materials in locations that would not harm local amenity and that enable collection from the public highway. Management plans should be submitted for the long-term maintenance of all shared public and private spaces and facilities.</p> <p>Proposals for lighting schemes should not be obtrusive. They should not have a demonstrably harmful impact on the living conditions of neighbours, significantly increase sky glow, cause glare or light trespass or impact on biodiversity.</p>
DM33: Inclusive access into non-residential buildings and spaces	<p>Policy DM33 focusses on the design of buildings and spaces which must provide access for everyone who may wish to use a building, facility, or area of open space on an inclusive basis. Designs should make no physical distinction between the people who are able to use them.</p> <p>Where there are genuine barriers to designs incorporating a group of people's needs specific alternatives must be put in place. Alternatives must maintain an equal standard of service in a dignified and appropriate manner.</p> <p>It must be demonstrated in supporting documents such as the Design and Access Statement that inclusive access arrangements have been taken into account and included in the design solution.</p>

Policy Reference	Key Considerations
DM52: Equestrian Development	Seeks equestrian development to protect the distinctive landscape, heritage and wildlife assets of North Somerset and ensuring that any new building which is permitted meets very high design standards and respects the landscape and its rural setting.
DM68: Protection of sporting, cultural and community facilities	Protection of existing land and sites and development only allowed where certain conditions apply. Designated community assets shall be retained in community use.
DM70: Development infrastructure	Policy DM70 ensures the design and implementation of development infrastructure including highways, street lighting, flood management, play areas and green infrastructure will take into account its long-term maintenance and associated costs.
DM71: Development contributions, Community Infrastructure Levy, and viability	<p>Policy DM71 focusses on planning obligations, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and viability. Planning obligations will be entered into in order to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal. These obligations will be formalised through a Section 106 Agreement forming part of a planning approval, are legally binding and may include financial and/or non-financial obligations that bind on a specific parcel of land.</p> <p>Section 106 Agreements will be sought in line with the appropriate regulations and will seek to deliver or address matters that are necessary to make the development proposal acceptable in planning terms and to ensure that new development is supported by the necessary investment in and/or provision of infrastructure and services to meet any additional demand.</p> <p>A CIL Charging Schedule will be prepared separately, and this will detail the breakdown of charges applied across North Somerset. These charges will be separate to Section 106 Agreements and will be pursued in relation to the relevant regulations.</p> <p>Development viability is a material consideration that can be considered in assessing development proposals. In some circumstances, requirements for planning obligations may render a development at the margins of financial viability. Where it is demonstrated using an agreed methodology (e.g. through residual valuation appraisal prepared to an agreed format and agreed assumptions), that the development proposal is unviable given the level of contributions sought, the council may enter into negotiations on such contributions in order to facilitate deliverable development that is in conformity with the Local Plan for the area. This will be at the discretion of the council and applied on a case by case basis taking into consideration the wider material considerations present.</p> <p>Where a development site is formed by more than one ownership the council will seek to ensure that effective collaborative procedures are in place in the planning and delivery of development. A lack of effective collaboration, particularly on larger more complex schemes may be a reason for refusal.</p>

Sites and policies plan part 2: Site allocations plan (2018)

A.1.1.8 The Sites and Policies Plan presents the detailed allocations that will deliver the requirements of the Core Strategy up to 2026. It includes provision for new residential, employment and community facility sites, sets the settlement boundaries of towns and villages, and designates local green spaces and strategic gaps.

A.1.1.9 The plan was subject to examination by an independent Inspector in April 2017 and several modifications were subsequently made to the October 2016 Publication Version of the Plan. The Plan was adopted formally in April 2018. Those policies of particular relevance are shown in Table 11.

Table 11 Summary of adopted policies from the Sites and policies plan part 2: Site allocations plan (2018)

Policy Reference	Key Considerations
SA1: Housing Allocations	This policy identifies land that has been safeguarded for future housing development for ten or more units.
SA2: Settlement Boundaries	This policy defines settlement boundaries around towns and villages, within which development may be acceptable subject to the detailed policies of the Core Strategy, Sites and Policies Plan, Part 1, Development Management Policies and Neighbourhood Plans.
SA4: Employment Allocations	This policy identifies land that has been safeguarded for future employment development.
SA5: Local Green Space	This policy aims to protect amenity areas of public value from unacceptable harm or loss.
SA6: Undesignated Green Space	This policy aims to protect areas of undesignated green space (those not identified as Local Green Space under policy SA 7) within settlements with defined settlement limits, which are considered to be of value in making a worthwhile contribution to the townscape, character, setting and visual attractiveness of the settlement.
SA8: Community Use Allocations	This policy aims to safeguard sites that the Council has identified for community development, or that are included within other agencies' plans, and not develop them for other purposes.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

A.1.1.10 Supplementary planning documents (SPD) provide more detail on policies in local plan documents and on support decisions for planning applications. The relevant documents are included below in Table 12.

Table 12 Summary of NSC Supplementary Planning Guidance

Supplementary Planning Document	Key Considerations
Biodiversity and Trees Supplementary Planning Document	The purpose of this SPD is to guide those submitting planning applications by supplementing the policies and proposals relating to biodiversity in the adopted North Somerset Local Plan, the Joint Replacement Structure Plan, and the emerging North Somerset Replacement Local Plan.
Landscape Character Assessment	The main purpose of this assessment is to document the current status of the North Somerset landscape, furthering the understanding of the landscape resource available in the area and giving an indication of areas in need of enhancement and of conservation. This informs decisions to be made on the future management of the landscape.
North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC Guidance Supplementary Planning Document	This SPD contains guidance on development regarding impacts on the North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC), one of four European sites (sites of international importance for wildlife) in North Somerset. It was designated because of its importance for Greater and Lesser Horseshoe Bats.

Joint Local Transport Plan 4 2020-2036 (March 2020)

- A.1.1.11 The Joint Local Transport Plan 4 (JLTP4) was led by the West of England Combined Authority, working with Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset, and South Gloucestershire councils. It looks at transport up to 2036.
- A.1.1.12 It sets out how to achieve a well-connected sustainable transport network that works for residents, businesses, and visitors across the region; a network that offers greater, realistic travel choices and makes walking, cycling and public transport the natural way to travel.
- A.1.1.13 The plan identifies the Banwell Bypass to provide numerous benefits, including providing significant improvements to air quality and public realm in the centre of the village, improved access to the residential and employment growth to the north-west of the village, supporting the delivery of Weston Villages; and improving local and regional connectivity for longer trips. The bypass will also enable pedestrian improvements in the centre of the village, helping to promote more sustainable modes of transport wherever possible, improving accessibility and the quality of life for Banwell residents.

North Somerset Council Emerging Local Plan (2023-2038)

A.1.1.14 NSC is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan which will provide a positive vision for the future of North Somerset. The Local Plan will provide a framework for addressing housing needs, employment requirements and other priorities, and a mechanism through which local communities can help shape their surroundings. The plan period covers 15 years between 2023 and 2038.

A.1.1.15 The emerging Local Plan will continue to safeguard the Bypass route (as is currently the case in the adopted Local Plan Policy DM20). The current design of the Bypass has been provided to the Local Plan team to support the inclusion of a safeguarded corridor and discussions are ongoing to agree the safeguarded area to be shown in the draft Local Plan.

A.1.1.16 Broad locations and indicative capacity for further testing and assessment have been identified in the area to the east of Weston-super-Mare near the Scheme for up to around 3,000 new dwellings. The main opportunity is a potential growth location north of the A371 and east of the M5 linked to the delivery of the Scheme.

A.1.1.17 NSC's Executive Committee approved a draft Preferred Options Local Plan on Wednesday 2 February 2022. The draft Preferred Options Local Plan is a full draft Plan. Policy LP1 (Strategic location: Wolvershill (north of Banwell)) identifies a new mixed use strategic growth location at Wolvershill to accommodate 2,800 dwellings, 11ha of employment land and at least three primary schools. This is the area north of Banwell linked to the delivery of the Scheme. This area is referred to as the "Strategic Growth Area" in this Statement. Also, policy LP10 (Transport infrastructure allocations and safeguarding) safeguards the Banwell Bypass. The housing allocations hold more weight than the policies. Further smaller sites are also identified in the emerging local plan to accommodate the remaining housing allocations.

A.1.1.18 The intended approximate timeframes for the preparation of the emerging Local Plan to adoption are set out below:

- a) Spring 2022: consultation on draft Local Plan policies
- b) November 2022: Consultation on pre-submission Local Plan
- c) January 2023: submission of publication version of the plan to the Secretary of State for examination
- d) October 2023: Inspector's Report
- e) December 2023: adoption

A.1.1.19 In the context of the Scheme, the emerging Local Plan policies are, in general, anticipated to have limited weight on the basis that the new plan will not yet have gone through examination in public.

A.1.1.20 However, certain policies may have more weight. For example, the allocation of approx. 2,800 homes at Wolvershill village has been considered and endorsed by NSC's Executive, and the need for housing in the area around the Scheme is already well-established. It is considered that a more than limited degree of weight can therefore be attributed to draft allocations for housing in this area, even though there will remain some uncertainty about the specific location and number of dwellings up until the Local Plan is adopted.

Appendix B

B.1 Overview

B.1.1.1 This section provides an assessment of the compliance of the Scheme with relevant local policies and guidance identified in section 7 of this report. Table 13 is organised to consider accordance with policies relevant to the pertinent Chapters of the ES (on a topic basis).

B.2 Local Policy Assessment

Table 13 Local Policy Assessment

Air quality (Chapter 5 of the ES)		
Policy document	Policy reference	Assessment
North Somerset Council Core Strategy (2017)	Policy CS3 - Environmental impacts and flood risk assessment	The Banwell Bypass EIA Combined Screen and Scoping Report (see ES Volume 3 - Appendix 1.B) determined that a detailed level of assessment is required for the EIA as there is potential for significant impacts to air

North Somerset Emerging Local Plan (2023 – 2038)	Policy SP2 - Climate change	<p>quality at sensitive human and ecological receptors. The detailed assessment includes construction and operational phase impacts.</p> <p>ES Volume 1 – Chapter 5 – Air Quality provides an assessment of the Scheme in accordance with DMRB LA105 Air Quality and the Defra Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance (LAQM TG.16).</p> <p>It describes existing air quality levels and provides forecasts of air quality at time of the scheme opening in scenarios with and without the scheme.</p> <p>The Scheme has been designed to avoid and prevent adverse environmental effects on air quality through the process of design development and consideration of good design principles. This has sought to move traffic away from local sensitive receptors. Embedded mitigation measures are reported as part of the Scheme description in ES Volume 1 – Chapter 2 – Scheme Description.</p> <p>Best practice construction mitigation measures to reduce effects from construction dust are incorporated into the Construction Environmental Management Plan (see ES Volume 3 – Appendix 16A). Relevant commitments include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Develop and implement a stakeholder communications plan;b) Develop and implement a Dust Management Plan (DMP);c) Record all dust and air quality complaints, identify cause(s), take appropriate measures to reduce emissions in a timely manner, and record the measures taken;d) Undertake daily on site and off site inspection, where receptors (including roads) are nearby, to monitor dust, record inspection results;e) Ensure appropriate operating of vehicle and machinery and the implementation of a Travel Plan;f) Using suitable dust suppression techniques, ensure adequate water supply on site, enclosed chutes, conveyors, and covered skips. Minimise drop heights and ensure equipment is readily available on site for spillages;
--	-----------------------------	--

		<p>g) Avoid bonfires and burning of waste materials;</p> <p>h) Ensure effective water suppression is used during demolition operations, avoid explosive blasting and appropriate removal of biological debris;</p> <p>i) Re-vegetate earthworks and exposed areas/ soil stockpiles to stabilise surfaces as soon as possible as practicable; and</p> <p>j) Appropriate construction methods to avoid scabbling, effective storage of sand and other aggregates; and</p> <p>k) Appropriate use of Trackout methods.</p> <p>As identified in section 5.6 of ES Volume 1 – Chapter 5 – Air Quality, there are no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) designated for an exceedance of UK AQOs and LV thresholds in the study area.</p> <p>ES Volume 1 – Chapter 5 – Air Quality concludes that the Scheme during construction there would be a neutral and not significant effect on human health and designated habitats. During operation, there would be a neutral and not significant effect on human health.</p> <p>The Scheme improves air quality through Banwell Village and does not result in any exceedances of the relevant air quality objectives at sensitive receptor locations.</p> <p>During the operational phase there would not be a significant effect on designated habitats.</p> <p>On the basis of the above and the assessment contained in ES Volume 1 – Chapter 5 – Air Quality, the Scheme is considered to accord with the requirements of identified local planning policy pertinent to air quality.</p>
Cultural Heritage (Chapter 6 of the ES)		
Policy document	Policy reference	Assessment

North Somerset Council Core Strategy (2017)	Policy CS5 – Landscape and the Historic Environment	ES Volume 1 – Chapter 6 – Cultural Heritage provides an assessment of the Scheme in accordance with DMRB LA104. ES Volume 1 – Chapter 6 – Cultural Heritage sets out that identification of these heritage assets has been through the North Somerset Historic Environment Register (HER), Historic England databases, non-intrusive archaeological investigations, walkover surveys, aerial photography, and archaeological evaluation through a programme of trial trenching.
	Policy DM3 – Conservation Areas	
North Somerset Council Development Management Policies: Sites and Polices Plan Part 1 (2016)	Policy DM4 – Listed Buildings	ES Volume 1 – Chapter 6 – Cultural Heritage identifies that the Scheme has the potential to create both beneficial and adverse impacts upon cultural heritage resources. It is considered that the proposed development would have an overall beneficial effect on the setting of much of the Banwell Conservation Area and many of the Listed Buildings within the historic core of the settlement of Banwell. The Scheme has the potential for adverse impacts including:
	Policy DM6 – Archaeology	
	Policy DM7 – Non-designated Heritage Assets	
North Somerset Emerging Local Plan (2023-2038)	Policy DP35 – Landscape	
	Policy DP38 – Built Heritage	

	<p>Policy DP39 – Archaeology and non-designated heritage assets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) the Southern Link element of the proposed development would have a greater aural and visual intrusion into the higher parts of the Banwell village e.g. High Street;b) where the visual link between the settlement and the level would be impacted; andc) net gains in terms of the impact of the proposed Scheme on the built heritage of Banwell at a cost to the buried archaeological remains, although this can largely be mitigated, and to the wider views and landscape setting of the village which would to an extent be separated from its historic, largely undisturbed, rural setting. <p>The Scheme has been designed, as far as possible, to avoid or prevent impacts on heritage resources through the process of design development and consideration of good design principles.</p> <p>Mitigation during construction of the Scheme includes evaluation trenching, watching brief or targeted excavation, paleo-environmental sampling and analysis, ongoing water monitoring, screening, resistance surveys, test-pitting exercise, placemaking improvements in Banwell, more details Conservation Area, reassessment of Listings and programme of historic building recording.</p> <p>The assessment concludes only a limited number of archaeological features have been clearly identified on or close to the Scheme.</p> <p>The geophysical survey has indicated that some areas along the route have archaeological potential and the wetland-dryland interface would appear to be one of the most significant archaeological features.</p> <p>It is considered that the Scheme will have an overall beneficial effect on the setting of much of the Banwell Conservation Area and many of the Listed Buildings within the historic core of the settlement of Banwell due to the reduced traffic through the village.</p> <p>In summary, the Scheme would not result in the total or partial loss of any designated or non-designated heritage asset. Taking into account the substantial public benefits of the Scheme and the evidenced case for</p>
--	---	--

		the Scheme, as set out in Chapter 4 of this Statement, it is considered that the Scheme is compliant with local planning policy requirements pertinent to cultural heritage, as there would be net benefit to the significance of heritage assets. However even if there was net harm identified, this would be outweighed by the benefits of the Scheme.
Landscape (Chapter 7 of the ES)		
Policy document	Policy reference	Assessment
North Somerset Council Core Strategy (2017)	Policy CS2 – Delivering sustainable design and construction	ES Volume 1 – Chapter 7 – Landscape assesses the potential effects from the construction and operation of the Scheme, following the methodology set out in DMRB LA107, DMRB LA104 and follows guidance from the Landscape Institute and Natural England.
	Policy CS3 – Environmental impacts and Flood Risk Management	The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) undertaken has taken account of landscape character assessments and relevant local policies. It includes an assessment of the Scheme's effects on landscape character related to local and regional distinctiveness and the extent to which the proposals would alter the character and quality of landscape as a resource. The scheme passes through a short discrete section of the Mendip Hills AONB and the landscape through which it passes provides the setting to the special characteristics of the Mendip Hills AONB (including dark skies, tranquillity, sense of remoteness, naturalness of the area, Somerset Levels and Moors, and views toward the Mendip Hills); and views and visual amenity, including on recreational and community.
	Policy CS4 – Nature Conservation	
	Policy CS5 – Landscape and the Historic Environment	
	Policy CS9 – Green Infrastructure	
	Policy CS10 – Transportation and Movement	

	Policy CS12 – Achieving High Quality Design and Place Making	In recognition of the Scheme's attractive location, characterised by its rural nature, distinctive landscape framework and partial location within the Mendip Hills AONB, the Scheme has been developed to minimise impact to the landscape including mitigation and enhancement measures. During construction, mitigation measures include careful siting, rendering, and screening of construction compounds, sensitive design and placing of site signage, best practice site management, limiting crane use, maintaining access, minimise light spill, re-vegetate exposed earthworks, protection of soil structures and protection of trees in accordance with an arboricultural method statement, early planting wherever possible.
	Policy CS32 – Service villages	During operation, measures are proposed such as restoration of land returned to land owners, retained habitats to include rectilinear fields and field boundaries, translocation of hedgerows, propagation of black poplars, planting of trees, hedgerows and species rich grassland, a landscape and ecological management plan, planting species mix with the inclusion of heritage apple and pear varieties in plant mixes, sustainability of the roadside landscape, well integrated slope profiles such as the River Banwell Bridge, flood compensation areas to maximise biodiversity and landscape benefits, lighting design and natural finishes to noise screening.
North Somerset Council Development Management Policies: Sites and Polices Plan Part 1 (2016)	Policy DM9 – Trees and Woodlands	The impact on views within the study area would be quite variable, influenced by a range of factors. However, there would be residual effects on a number of representative views, particularly those that would be in close proximity to elevated bridge structure and those where the affected view is of a previously unspoilt rural scene.
	Policy DM10 – Landscape	Whilst the proposed Southern Link lies within the Mendip Hills AONB, it is a discrete section and has been designed to minimise any wider impacts on landscape or visual setting, the need for the Scheme in the public interest is set out in Planning Document - Planning Statement
	Policy DM11 – Mendip Hills AONB	
	Policy DM19 – Green Infrastructure	
	Policy DM20 – Major Transport Schemes	
	Policy DM32 – High quality design and place making	

	Policy DM33 – Inclusive access into non-residential buildings and spaces	Chapter 4. In summary, there is a strong need for the Scheme with the benefits outweighing the costs. The need for the Southern Link part of the Scheme within the AONB has been strongly justified in order to address the identified problems and achieve the objectives for the Scheme, and there is no scope for meeting the need for it in some other way.
Sites and Policies Plan Part 2: Site Allocations Plan (2018)	Policy SA2 – Settlement boundaries	The proposed mitigation measures would enhance the integration of the Scheme into the landscape through manipulation of the landform and the provision of extensive planting. However significant changes in the landscape and its appearance would be unavoidable and therefore in many cases the mitigation would achieve a reduction in adverse effects rather than their removal.
	Policy SA5 – Local green space	
	Policy SA6 – Undesignated green space	
Joint Local Transport Plan 4 (2020-2036)	Plan supports the Banwell Bypass	Overall, it is considered that the Scheme is compliant with local planning policy requirements pertinent to the landscape.
North Somerset Emerging Local Plan (2023-2038)	Policy DP35 – Landscape	
NSC Supplementary Planning Guidance	Landscape Character Assessment	
Biodiversity (Chapter 8 of the ES)		
Policy document	Policy reference	Assessment
North Somerset Council Core Strategy (2017)	Policy CS1 – Addressing climate change and carbon reduction	ES Volume 1 - Chapter 8 - Biodiversity assesses the potential impacts from the construction and operation of the Scheme, in accordance with DMRB LA 108 Biodiversity, DMRB LA 104 Environmental Assessment and Monitoring.
	Policy CS2 – Delivering sustainable design and construction	A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Statement (see ES Volume 3 – Appendix 8.C) has been carried out accordance Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and DMRB LA 115 Habitats Regulations assessment to help inform ES Volume 1 - Chapter 8 - Biodiversity and the application.
	Policy CS4 – Nature Conservation	
	Policy CS7 – Planning for waste	

	Policy CS9 – Green Infrastructure	Section 8.9 of the ES Volume 1 - Chapter 8 - Biodiversity identifies how mitigation for biodiversity has been embedded in the Scheme design to avoid or reduce the impacts of habitat loss, habitat fragmentation, habitat degradation and species disturbance and mortality and thus avoid or reduce significant adverse environmental effects. The landscape design shown in Environmental Masterplan Drawings (See Planning Documents – Environmental Masterplans) shows the proposed and replaced priority habitats.
North Somerset Council Development Management Policies: Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 (2016)	Policy DM8 – Nature Conservation	During construction, best practice working methods would be implemented to avoid or reduce impacts through pollution and dust or through habitat loss, severance, disturbance, and species mortality. During operation, measures would include oversized culverts, mammal and other specific fencing, attenuation basins, swales and rhynes to provide biodiverse habitats, carefully placed and reduction in overall street lighting and inclusion of Environmental Management Plans.
	Policy DM9 – Trees and Woodlands	ES Volume 1 - Chapter 8 - Biodiversity identifies a number of adverse effects during construction, including severance to commuting lines or foraging areas for Bats (the qualifying feature of the SAC), impacts from dust and other forms of airborne pollutants, loss of habitat including habitat adjacent to the AONB, loss of agricultural lags habitat during site clearance, loss of hedgerows, partial closure of a badger sett, disturbance from artificial light and noise levels. These would be mitigated for through the granting and compliance with dormouse, bat and badger protected species licences, relevant method statements and mitigation strategies.
North Somerset Emerging Local Plan (2023-2038)	Policy DP32 – Nature conservation	
	Policy DP33 – Biodiversity Net Gain	
NSC Supplementary Planning Guidance	Biodiversity and Trees Supplementary Planning Document	

	<p>North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC guidance Supplementary Planning Document</p>	<p>With all proposed mitigation measures in place there are no predicted significant impacts during operation. The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) (ES Volume 3 - Appendix 8C) identifies the mitigation required to address any potential impacts on the North Somerset and Mendip Bat SAC.</p> <p>ES Volume 1 - Chapter 8 - Biodiversity includes how the Scheme would provide enhancement to biodiversity (with over 40% BNG) which would deliver benefits over and above those required to mitigate the effects of the Scheme. These include landscaping proposals, enhancement of large trees creating an avenue on Towerhead Road (A368) and compensation for the improved grassland habitat loss. The replacement habitats for those lost to the Scheme would be larger in extent and more species-rich than those which they are replacing.</p> <p>Five attenuation basins are being used to create a mosaic of wetland habitats which is in keeping with the nature of the area and 10 no culverts and a mammal pipe are being installed to facilitate bat, dormouse, otter, and other protected species' use of the wider habitats surrounding the new road. These would be further enhanced by sensitive planting and through the acquisition of areas wider than the road footprint.</p> <p>Overall, the Scheme has sought to maximise biodiversity delivery through its design, taking advantage of all opportunities to enhance biodiversity value within the land to be acquired for the Scheme. The Scheme is therefore considered to comply with local planning policy for conserving and enhancing the natural environment.</p>
--	--	---

Geology and soils (Chapter 9 of the ES)

Policy document	Policy reference	Assessment
North Somerset Council Core Strategy (2017)	Policy CS1 - Addressing climate change and carbon reduction	ES Volume 1 - Chapter 9 - Geology and Soils assesses the potential effects of the construction and operation of the scheme on geology and

	Policy S3 - Environmental impacts and flood risk assessment	soils impacts, following methodology set out in DMRB 104 and DMRB LA109. The effects on agricultural land holdings are described in ES Volume 1 - Chapter 12 - Population and Human Health.
	Policy CS12 - Achieving high quality design and placemaking	The Scheme has been designed, to avoid and prevent adverse effects on the geology and soils environment through the process of design development and consideration of good design principles. Mitigation measures are proposed during construction to reduce, remediate or compensate likely significant adverse environmental effects. Preparation of a soil management plan, restoration of agricultural land, measures to ensure that contamination is addressed during construction, further investigations and specific risk assessments in the vicinity of historical landfill and construction activities to be undertaken in line with current best practice and guidance in accordance with the CEMP.
North Somerset Emerging Local Plan (2023-2038)	Policy SP2 – Climate Change	The permanent loss of soil resources leads to significant effects, which cannot be mitigated due to the location and nature of the Scheme. During operation of the Scheme, the mitigation measures band drains would no longer be required as well as completion of Flood Warning Risk Assessments (FWRA), to prevent the pollution of controlled waters during the Scheme.
Supplementary Planning Guidance	Biodiversity and Trees Supplementary Planning Document	ES Volume 1 - Chapter 9 - Geology Soils concludes that the completed assessments indicate that on application of mitigation measures the Scheme is unlikely to result in significant effects on geology or land contamination. The Scheme is therefore considered to comply with local planning policy pertinent to geology and soils.

Material assets and waste (Chapter 10 of the ES)

Policy document	Policy reference	Assessment
North Somerset Council Core Strategy (2017)	Policy CS7 – Planning for waste	

North Somerset Emerging Local Plan (2023-2038)	Policy CS7 - Planning for waste	ES Volume 1 - Chapter 10 - Material Assets and Waste assesses the potential effects on the environment from the use of material assets and the generation, disposal and recovery of waste resulting from the scheme, following the methodology set out in DMRB LA110.
	Policy CS8 - Minerals planning	
	Policy SP2 – Climate Change	The existing baseline conditions have been identified as the receptors which have the potential to be impacted by the Scheme. This includes the source of materials required for construction of the Scheme, and
	Policy SP12 – Minerals	

		<p>waste management facilities which may be used for the treatment or disposal of waste.</p> <p>ES Volume 1 - Chapter 10 – Materials Assets and Waste, sets out that mitigation measures have been embedded in the design of the scheme to minimise the waste produced. This includes (as set out in ES Volume 1 - Chapter 2 - Scheme Description) minimising imported fill, maximising reuse of site won materials (e.g. topsoil), waste management measures (documented in ES Volume 3 - Appendix 16.A - Outline CEMP) and locating construction compounds to prevent pollution, reduce waste and to encourage ease of use, taking into account environmental considerations including the potential for leakage and contamination. Further mitigation includes management of material resources would be governed by the production of a Material Management Plan (MMP), in accordance with best practice requirements and the controls for material management and storage. A Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) has been prepared in accordance with best practice guidance (Waste and Resource Action Programme (WRAP)).</p> <p>The material assets and waste assessment (ES Volume 1 - Chapter 10 – Material Assets and Waste) concludes that there would be no significant effects from construction of the Scheme. The operation phase effects were scoped out during the EIA scoping stage (ES Volume 3 – Appendix 1.B WSP EIA Combined Scoping and Screening Report). The Scheme is therefore considered to comply with local planning policy pertinent to material assets and waste.</p>
Noise and Vibration (Chapter 11 of the ES)		
Policy document	Policy reference	Assessment

North Somerset Core Strategy (2017)	Policy CS3 – Environmental impacts and Flood Risk Management	ES Volume 1 - Chapter 11 - Noise and Vibration provides an assessment during construction and operation, following the methodology of DMRB LA 111.
North Somerset Council Development Management Policies: Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 (2016)	Policy DM10 – Landscape	A description is given of the baseline noise environment in Section 11.6 of ES Volume 1 - Chapter 11 – Noise and Vibration, where it is identified

North Somerset Emerging Local Plan (2023-2038)	Policy SP3 – Spatial Strategy	<p>that noise or vibration sensitive locations have been identified through surveys whilst baseline noise conditions are determined through a Calculation of Road Traffic Noise (CRTN) noise prediction model. In order to mitigate construction effects of noise and vibration, a commitment is made to the Best Practicable Means (BPM) assumed as embedded mitigation to control construction noise in the form of low noise emission plant and processes. Mitigation during the construction phase would be controlled via the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) (see ES Volume 3 – Appendix 16.1) and Section 61 applications.</p> <p>The Scheme has been designed taking into account low noise emissions could be minimised through layout and the use of measures such as landscaping and noise barriers, as set out in section 11.8 of ES Volume 1 - Chapter 11 – Noise and Vibration. The assessment concludes the principal activities considered with the potential to cause noise effects are site clearance (trees/ shrubs and vegetation), earthworks (cuts/ fills), structures and road construction (surfacing and V-ditches) works.</p> <p>Based on the likely worst-case assessment presented for construction noise, adverse noise effects have been assessed at 11 representative receptor locations during the daytime only. Of these, there are predicted to be major impacts at 44 noise sensitive receptors and moderate impacts at 81 noise sensitive receptors which are assessed as temporary likely significant adverse effects. These are direct effects above the SOAEL threshold, as described in government policy. No predicted significant vibration effects with mitigation measures in place due to short duration near to specific receptors.</p> <p>It is likely that construction vibration levels generated by road surfacing activities and short-duration impact piling at receptor locations close to the scheme would result in moderate adverse impacts above the SOAEL for human annoyance. However, the duration of these impacts is estimated to be less than ten days, hence these effects are assessed as not significant based on the LA 111 assessment criteria (paragraph 11.4.51 of ES Volume 1 - Chapter 11 – Noise and Vibration). The</p>
--	-------------------------------	---

		<p>building damage thresholds are not predicted to be exceeded at any receptors.</p> <p>There are 16 dwellings predicted to experience likely significant adverse effects above the SOAEL. For 12 properties on Summer Lane this would be as a result of traffic increases in the future year scenario on Summer Lane. Five of these properties would be subject to major impacts and seven properties would be subject to moderate impacts. There would be a negligible effect at these properties in the opening year but as a result of the future HIF development, traffic flows are predicted to increase substantially on Summer Lane in the future. Three properties subject to effects above the SOAEL are located on Castle Hill where there would be minor impacts in the opening year. The same impact would apply to one property located on Wolvershill Road close to the Scheme.</p> <p>There are 134 residential receptors together with Banwell Methodist Church which are assessed as being subject to likely beneficial effects above SOAEL where there is at least a 1dB(A) impact as a result of the Scheme. These receptors are mostly situated on East Street, Castle Hill, West Street and Knightcott Road due to reductions in traffic through the centre of Banwell, together with a small number of properties closest to Wolvershill Road.</p> <p>There are 32 residential receptors which would be subject to likely significant adverse effects between the LOAEL and SOAEL. The majority of these are facing Scheme roads, including the eastern edge of Summer Lane Park Homes, properties to the north-east of Wolvershill Road and on Cooks Lane, properties on Moor Road, properties to the north of the Scheme on Riverside and Eastermead Lane.</p> <p>There are 199 residential receptors, including 18 dwellings to be occupied within a committed development on Wolvershill Road, which would be subject to likely significant beneficial effects between the LOAEL and SOAEL. The majority of these are located around East Street, Castle Hill, West Street, Knightcott Road and Wolvershill Road but extend further out where existing noise levels are at a lower level.</p>
--	--	--

		<p>Banwell Methodist church is predicted to experience a likely significant beneficial effect and is currently exceeding the SOAEL as a result of the Scheme.</p> <p>A further three non-residential receptors: Sunshine Smiles Childcare, Banwell Primary School and Banwell village hall would be subject to likely significant beneficial effects between LOAEL and SOAEL.</p> <p>3 residential properties are predicted to exceed the criteria to be eligible for noise insulation under the Noise Insulation Regulations. These are residential dwellings situated on Castle Hill where the Scheme ties in to the existing road.</p> <p>There is one Noise Important Area, (NIA) within the study area, situated on the M5. Properties within this NIA would be subject to negligible impacts as a result of the Scheme.</p> <p>In summary, overall there is a benefit in terms of noise as a result of the Scheme. This is due to the removal of traffic through Banwell village. The Scheme complies with policy objectives, this has been achieved by means of mitigation measures. This includes scheme alignment and noise screening. The mitigation would minimise noise impacts at residential communities and sensitive non-residential receptors. Where significant adverse effects would remain, all appropriate measures have been applied as far as it is practicable and sustainable to do so to avoid, mitigate and reduce these effects. Overall, there is more benefit than harm as a result of the Scheme.</p>
Population and Human Health (Chapter 12 of the ES)		
Policy document	Policy reference	Assessment
North Somerset Core Strategy (2017)	Policy CS15 – Mixed and balanced communities	ES Volume 1 - Chapter 12 - Population and Human Health provides an assessment of the effects during construction and operation, in

North Somerset Council Development Management Policies: Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 (2016)	Policy CS27 – Sport, recreation, and community facilities	accordance with DMRB LA112 and LA104. It considers the effects on various aspects of land use and accessibility and human health. In relation to land use and accessibility, the assessment considers private property and housing, community land and assets, development land and businesses, agricultural land holdings and Walking Cycling and Horse riding (WCH). In relation to human health, it considers health profiles of affected communities, health determinants and likely health outcomes.
	Policy CS26 – Ensuring safe and healthy communities	
	Policy DM24 - Safety, traffic, and provision of infrastructure, etc. associated with development	Section 12.8 of ES Volume 1 - Chapter 12 – Population and Human Health provides proposed mitigation and enhancement measures related to land-use and accessibility, human health, avoidance and prevention, reduction and remediation during both construction and operation of the Scheme.
	Policy DM25 – Public rights of way, pedestrians and cycle access	
	Policy DM26 – Travel plans	Access to open space and opportunities for active travel would be improved as a result of the Scheme. This would bring health benefits to those people who make use of the new and improved assets created, improving the current experience of users of the proposed active travel measures along the A368, with improved footway cycleway access from Churchill and Langford to Churchill Academy. Also, the users of the proposed improvements to existing footways, shared pedestrian, and cycleway.
	Policy DM28 – Parking standards	
	Policy DM29 – Car parks	
	Policy DM52 – Equestrian development	Safety and quality of life for communities in close proximity to the Scheme would also be improved, as the Scheme would discourage rat running on local roads and address existing issues associated with high levels of congestion through residential areas.
	Policy DM68 – Protection of sporting, cultural and community facilities	
Sites and Policies Plan Part 2: Site Allocations Plan (2018)	Policy SA5 – Local green space	In accordance with NSC policy DM68 and associated open space guidance an Open Space Assessment has been undertaken as part of the design development work, which has involved engagement with Banwell Football Club. Appropriate options for replacement playing fields
	Policy SA6 – Undesignated green space	

	Policy SA8 – Community use allocation	<p>have been identified and assessed, with a preferred option being identified that meets the above tests. The replacement land is located directly east of Banwell Football Club, and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) is at least equivalent in area than the land being acquired by the Scheme; b) is at least as accessible to pedestrians, cyclists, and motor vehicles; c) is at least equivalent in terms of usefulness, attractiveness, and quality to the facility it replaces; and d) the replacement would be available for use before use of the existing facility is lost. <p>The Scheme is therefore considered to comply with planning policy for promoting healthy and safe communities and policies CS27 and DM68 pertinent to open space including playing fields.</p>
Road drainage and the water environment (Chapter 13 of the ES)		
Policy document	Policy reference	Assessment
North Somerset Core Strategy (2017)	Policy CS3 – Environmental impacts and flood risk management	ES Volume 1 - Chapter 13 - Road Drainage and the Water Environment assesses the impact of the scheme, including the effects on flood risk and water quality and resources, in accordance with DMRB LA113. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been undertaken for the Scheme and is provided in ES Volume 3 - Appendix 13.B - Flood Risk Assessment.
North Somerset Council Development Management Policies: Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 (2016)	Policy DM1 – Flooding and drainage	
North Somerset Emerging Local Plan (2023-2038)	Policy DP1 – High quality design	<i>Flood Risk</i>
	Policy DP5 – Climate change adaptation and resilience	The FRA outlines the fluvial, surface water, groundwater and artificial drainage flood risk in consideration of the Scheme. The FRA identifies that the Scheme is located in Flood Zones 1 and 3. The western section of the Scheme, from the junction with the existing A371 to the east of
	Policy DP9 – Flood risk	

	Policy DP10 – Sustainable drainage	Wolvershill Road, is located within Flood Zone 1. To the east of Wolvershill Road the Scheme passes through an area of Flood Zone 3
--	------------------------------------	---

	Policy DP31 – Green infrastructure	<p>largely associated with tidal flood risk. At the eastern extent of the route where it ties into the existing A368 Towerhead Road and along the southern link, the land is identified as being in Flood Zone 1. Coastal defences (embankments and walls) are provided to the north of the Scheme which mitigate the tidal flood risk.</p> <p>The assessment has quantified the impacts of the development, informed by hydraulic modelling of the Scheme. The modelling has shown benefits as well as detriment in two areas, namely at the caravan site at Stonebridge Farm. Without mitigation there would also be detriment in and around the Old Yeo Rhyne.</p> <p>The provision of compensatory storage and culverts is proposed as mitigation to make up for the loss in floodplain storage caused by the presence of the Scheme. This would provide other biodiversity and amenity benefits by the provision of a combined storage/ wetland feature. Viable locations for the storage locations have been identified that would provide all of the required storage on a volume for volume basis. However, the final form of the storage/ wetland feature and the total volume provided would be confirmed during the detailed design stage of the scheme and agreed with the EA.</p> <p>Surface water run-off from the increased paved area would be managed and attenuated according to the surface water drainage strategy, which is available as a separate document submitted as a part of the planning process.</p> <p>Whilst the sequential test is not required given that the route alignment is protected for planning purposes within the NSC Local Plan, should the sequential test have been required, the process of a route Options Assessment, is considered to satisfy the requirements of the sequential test.</p> <p>Overall, the Scheme would continue to be protected from coastal defences meaning no change in coastal flood risk would occur. The Scheme would also not result in any changes to the extent of area at risk from reservoir flooding. Due to the provision of FCAs and culverts in appropriate places, the effect of fluvial flood risk on receptors has been</p>
--	------------------------------------	---

		<p>assessed to be slight beneficial to slight adverse. Some areas of farmland have been modelled to experience a decrease in flood levels of up to 25 mm, while other areas of farmland would experience an increase in flood levels of up to 20 mm.</p> <p><i>Water environment</i></p> <p>Following the implementation of the Outline CEMP (Volume 3 - Appendix 16.A - Outline CEMP), the significant of effects upon surface waters and groundwater is slight adverse and not significant.</p> <p>The drainage design includes measures to capture and treat pollutants in highway runoff, along with lining of drainage elements in connectivity with groundwater, which results in a significance of effect upon surface water and groundwater quality of slight adverse and not significant.</p> <p>Design mitigation is also proposed to reduce the impact of new culverts or outfalls on the hydromorphology of surface waters. This results in a significance of effect of slight adverse and not significant.</p> <p>The installation of band drains, along with other options for ground improvement, have been assessed to consider potential impacts upon groundwater levels and flows. Design mitigation is proposed to undertake a Foundation Works Risk Assessment (FWRA) to identify and mitigate the risks associated with the selected piling methodology options. This results in a significance of effect of slight adverse and not significant.</p> <p>The assessment has not identified any significant effects upon the water environment as a result of the Scheme. The Scheme is therefore considered to comply with planning policy for road drainage and the water environment.</p>
--	--	---

Climate (Chapter 14 of the ES)

Policy document	Policy reference	Assessment
-----------------	------------------	------------

North Somerset Core Strategy (2017)	Policy CS1 – Living Environmental Limits	ES Volume 1 - Chapter 14 - Climate reports on the potential effects of the scheme in accordance with the DMRB LA 114. It includes an assessment of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, vulnerability of the scheme to climate change (CCR assessment) and an in-combination climate impacts (ICCI) assessment. ES Volume 1 - Chapter 14 - Climate has considered the potential environmental effects associated with the use of material assets and waste, following the methodology in DMRB LA 114.
	Policy CS2 – Delivering sustainable construction and design	
	Policy CS3 – Environmental impacts and flood risk	

	Policy CS9 – Green Infrastructure	<p>As set out in ES Volume 1 - Chapter 14 - Climate, an emissions quantification exercise has been undertaken to calculate the GHG emissions anticipated to be generated or avoided by the scheme during the four life cycle stages of the scheme's construction and operation. GHG emissions associated with the scheme have been compared to the national UK carbon budgets. The UK Government has carbon budgets up to 2030. The construction period for the scheme falls wholly within the fourth carbon budget. Operation of the scheme would commence in 2024 and is assessed against the fourth, fifth and sixth carbon budgets, up to 2037. Operational and maintenance emissions between 2033 and 2037 (the period for the sixth carbon budget) are provided in Table 14-18 of ES Volume 1 - Chapter 14 - Climate.</p> <p>The construction and operation phases of the Scheme which fall within legislated carbon budget periods are expected to have an insignificant impact on the ability of the UK Government to meet its carbon budgets. Construction of the Scheme is estimated to contribute approximately 0.0027% of the fourth carbon budget. Operation of the Scheme is estimated to contribute approximately 0.0036% of the fourth carbon budget, 0.0041% of the fifth carbon budget and 0.0073% of the sixth carbon budget. It is considered that this magnitude of emissions from the Scheme in isolation would not have a material impact on the ability of the UK Government to meet its carbon budgets, and therefore is not anticipated to give rise to a significant effect on climate.</p> <p>The Scheme has been designed to minimise adverse environmental effects on climate through the process of design development and consideration of good design principles.</p> <p>Mitigation measures designed into the Scheme to reduce carbon emissions include the carriageway design being reduced from a dual and 4 lane single carriageway to a 2 lane single carriageway, lane widths reduced from 3.65m to 3.4m, removal of the hard strip 0.5m either side of north and southbound lanes, foot/ cycleway alignment moved reducing earthworks and the need for lighting, steel road restraint system reduced from 3460m to 1310m, effective use of space when designing</p>
--	-----------------------------------	---

		<p>junctions, Riverside Road junction removed, Wolvershill Road junction downgraded from 5 lanes to 3 lanes and speed limit reduced from 50 to 40mph.</p> <p>It is considered that the GHG emissions caused by this Scheme would not cause a significant effect to the UK Government's ability to adhere to the Carbon Budgets when considered as an individual scheme and its cumulative impacts with the ARN. The Scheme does affect the ability for North Somerset Council to achieve the West of England's Combined Authority's target of net zero for transport by 2030 however the extent of this is considered to be insignificant.</p> <p>Climate Risk Assessment: there are medium climate change risks to the Scheme, resulting in a significant effect. This would be reviewed through detailed design.</p>
Cumulative effects (Chapter 15 of the ES)		
Policy document	Policy reference	Assessment
Sites and Policies Plan Part 2: Site Allocations Plan (2018)	Policy SA1 – Housing allocations	ES Volume 1 - Chapter 15 - Cumulative Effects provides an assessment of the Scheme in relation to effects that arise as a result of impacts from more than one project, or element of a single project, combining to have an effect on a receptor, or group of receptors, that may be larger than if the effect were considered separately. This is carried out in consideration of DMRB LA 104. It provides the following assessments:
North Somerset Core Strategy (2017)	Policy CS13 – Scale of new housing	Combined effects assessment: comprising an assessment of the combined impact of a number of different impacts from the Scheme upon a single resource/ receptor, which are individually assessed, and findings reported within each environmental factor Chapter of this ES; and
	Policy CS14 – Distribution of new housing	
	Policy CS15 – Mixed and balanced communities	

	Policy CS16 – Affordable housing	Cumulative effects assessment: comprising an assessment of cumulative impacts of a number of different projects within the vicinity, in combination with the environmental impact of the Scheme on a single resource/ receptor.
Sites and Policies Plan Part 2: Site Allocations Plan (2018)	Policy SA1 – Housing allocations	The in-combination assessment identified the potential for major adverse effects on 6 receptors and moderate adverse effects on 6 receptors during construction. These are all close to the Scheme. During operation with mitigation in place there are no significant adverse effects and there
	Policy SA4 – Employment allocations	

	Policy SA8 – Community use allocation	<p>is the potential for beneficial effects for Landscape and Visual Effects, Noise and Vibration and Population and Human Health but they are generally slight beneficial and not significant.</p> <p>Whilst there is the potential for cumulative effects with proposed developments, with mitigation in place for both Scheme and the proposed developments, the potential for cumulative effects are generally slight adverse or neutral and not significant. The potential is slight adverse with respect to Material Assets and Waste based on the depletion of natural resources. Any small scale developments between the Banwell and the Scheme or large scale developments to the north of the Scheme are considered likely to have significant cumulative impact upon the historic landscape, biodiversity of the area and the landscape and visual effects but given the size and location of developments and with mitigation in place these are considered slight adverse at the small residential developments close to the Scheme. With respect to Population and Human Health there is the potential for a slight adverse effect during operation on the small residential developments close to the Scheme and also construction if they are concurrent with the Scheme construction.</p> <p>When considering the cumulative effects of all development with the Scheme there will unlikely be a cumulative effect during Construction as the larger developments are currently underway and the smaller are unlikely to cause a significant effect. During operation, Air Quality, Noise and Vibration and the Road Drainage and the Water Environment topic chapters have considered the change in traffic due to the developments, so any impacts have been considered as part of the Scheme.</p> <p>Due to the size and proximity of the HIF (a-c) development to the Scheme, its development could cause cumulative effects during construction if they are built concurrently, which is unlikely given the status of the emerging Local Plan and the programme for the Scheme with road opening in 2024. As there is limited information available at this stage operational cumulative effects cannot be assessed, however there is potential for significant effects if the cumulative effects are not</p>
--	---------------------------------------	---

		<p>fully mitigated. At the time planning applications are submitted it is anticipated that the Scheme will form part of the baseline for the environmental assessments. In addition, the mitigation implemented as part of the Scheme should be retained and managed in accordance with the Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) and Maintenance Environmental Management Plan (MEMP) to ensure no reduction in mitigation or double movement of protected species. Therefore, careful consideration of the operational effects will need to be considered by the appropriate developer during the design phases of the HIF development.</p>
--	--	--

8 Reference

8.1.1 ¹ Department for Communities and Local Government. The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/595/contents/made>

8.1.2 ² North Somerset Council. NSC Local List of Planning Application Requirements (PAR) (2019). Available at: <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-04/local%20List%20of%20planning%20application%20requirements%20parts%201%20and%202%20adopted%20April%202019.pdf>

8.1.3 ³ Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. National Planning Policy Framework (2021). Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005759/NPPF_July_2021.pdf

8.1.4 ⁴ North Somerset Council (2016) Policy DM20: Major Transport Schemes, Sites and Policies Plan Part 1: Development Management Policies. Available at: <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-04/sites%20and%20policies%20plan%20part%201%20development%20management%20policies%20July%202016.pdf>

8.1.5 ⁵ GPA3 Historic England 2017: *The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3* (second edition).

8.1.6 ⁶ ICOMOS 2011: *Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties*.

8.1.7 ⁷ Landscape Institute 2013: *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd edition*.

8.1.8 ⁸ NPPF paragraph 11 and 12

8.1.9 ⁹ Banwell is identified as a Service Village within the Core Strategy.

8.1.10 ¹⁰ Where appropriate, distances have been provided from the West Street / High Street / Castle Hill / East Hill junction at 51.327421, -2.864139 unless within Banwell or directly adjacent.