

Park & Ride to the East of Bath

Vision

'Bath and North East Somerset will be internationally renowned as a beautifully inventive and entrepreneurial 21st century place with a strong social purpose and a spirit of wellbeing, where everyone is invited to think big – a 'connected' area ready to create an extraordinary legacy for future generations'

The Council's 'Getting Around Bath' Transport Strategy links into the above vision by identifying a number of proposals to accommodate the growth in travel expected within the City of Bath over the next 20 years. A key recommendation is to create a Park and Ride site to the East of the City. A Park and Ride will help to reduce traffic levels in the central area by offering motorists a simple and easy parking opportunity on the edge of the city.

This consultation seeks your views on where to locate a Park and Ride to the East of the City.

Why a new Park & Ride?

Bath is embarking on the next stage of its development legacy with the recent adoption of the Bath Riverside Masterplan. Key to its success will be effective connectivity and access. The existing Park and Ride sites are very popular with the public and have recently been expanded. But people from the east have limited choices about where to park and face long queues especially along London Road. We therefore have to address this gap in provision to ensure that Bath's growth is sustainable by providing good accessibility; a key component being a new Park and Ride to the East.

Development Opportunities within Bath

A number of development opportunities currently exist within Bath, including:

- Major employment and housing growth within Bath Riverside
- Bath Enterprise Area (9,000 new jobs and 2,000 new homes)
- Expansion of Bath's two top Universities
- Electrification of the Great Western Main Railway Line
- New Metro West rail service opportunities
- Park & Ride to the East of Bath
- Improvements to walking and cycling provision

Issues to be Addressed

As the above development opportunities are implemented, it is important that we also address a number of transport related issues, including:

- Congestion on key corridors within the city and at off-street car parks.
- Increased journey times and poor journey reliability.
- Poor air quality
- Adverse impact on the World Heritage Site and the tourism economy

The 'Getting Around Bath' Transport Strategy states that:

A park and ride site to the east would complete the picture, allowing people to choose not to drive into the centre and thus contribute to a better city environment.

And recommends: That further work is required to establish the need for increased Park and Ride capacity as part of a wider parking strategy and to undertake a detailed assessment of sites to the East of the City

This consultation forms part of the assessment process.

The Benefits of Park and Ride

Park and Ride provides motorists with an efficient public transport offer at the edge of the city which reduces traffic in the historic central area. In doing so, the poor air quality from vehicle emissions can be reduced. The Park and Ride buses would use the existing bus lane on London Road to ensure the reliability of Park and Ride services and make Park and Ride use attractive when compared with completing journeys by car.

Demand for Park and Ride

Bath's three established Park and Ride facilities have shown how commuters and visitors welcome the opportunity for easy parking with demand frequently exceeding supply. All three of the existing sites have been expanded with an additional 230 spaces at Odd Down (completed in November 2012), an additional 390 spaces at Lansdown (completed February 2013) and a further 248 spaces at Newbridge (additional facilities now being completed) to provide a total of 2,860 Park and Ride spaces.

Objectives for a Park and Ride Scheme

The proposed Park and Ride scheme has been considered in the context of the wider strategy to address the problems indicated above. While a Park and Ride would, at least initially, be bus-based, the scope to include rail services has been considered. In addition, the Park and Ride proposals have been considered against a set of objectives:

- To reduce congestion within the city and around our off-street car parking sites
- To improve the city's environment
- To reduce car use into the city centre and improve the proportion of journeys made by public transport
- To reduce carbon emissions from transport
- To support the city's economic development and Enterprise Area
- To improve connectivity to support business and growth of the wider region

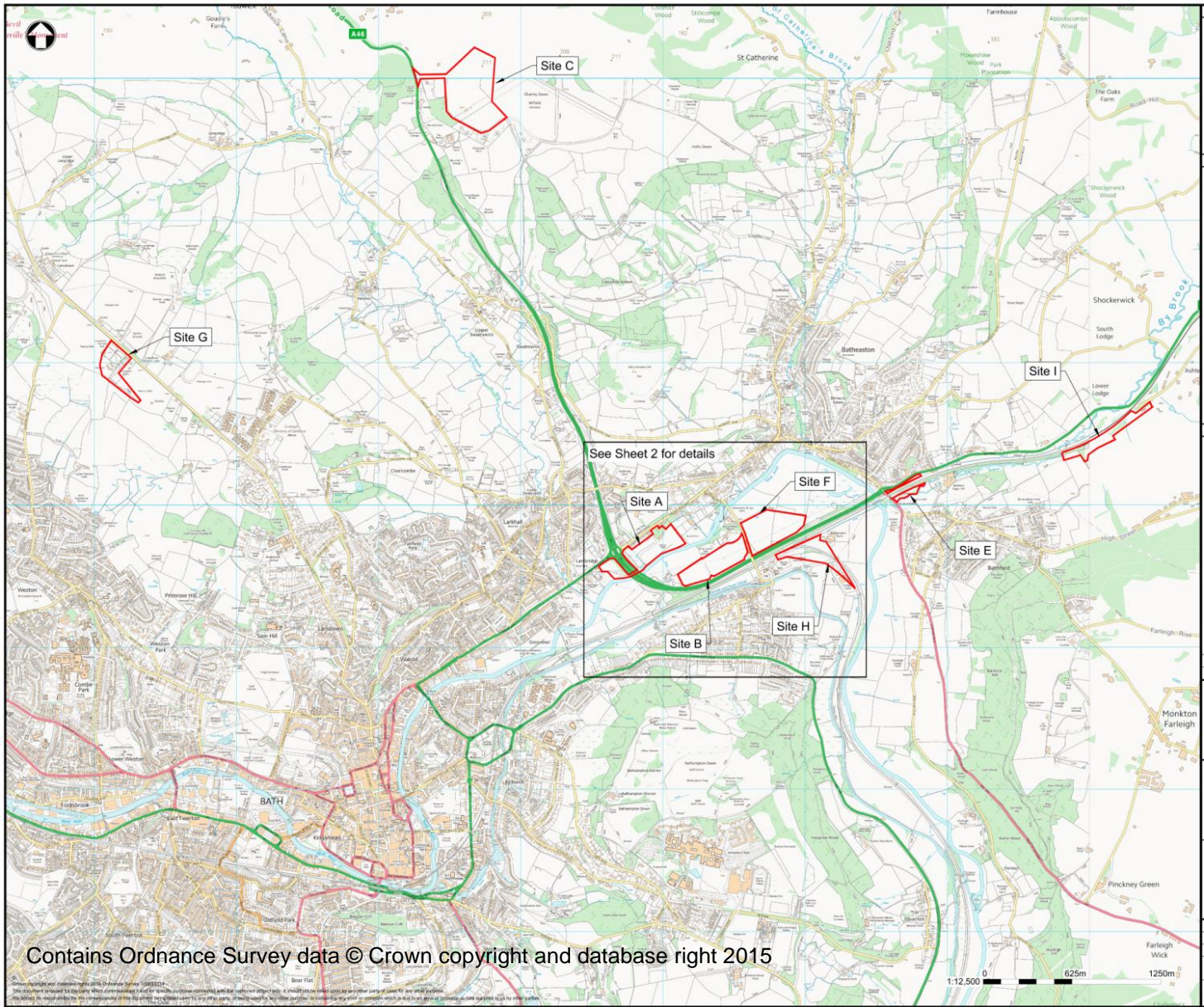
It is important that any proposal is considered against these objectives to ensure that the solutions address the problems based on robust evidence.

Previous Consideration of Park and Ride Sites

A Park and Ride site to the east of the city has been established in Council policy for many years. A report outlining the possibilities for this facility which considered the relative advantages and disadvantages of each site was prepared some years ago.

The locations considered are shown below. For more detail on the complete list of sites, please refer to our supporting information leaflet.

Potential location	Reasons for not taking forward
Site C – Charmy Down	Too far from Bath, misses key routes and has difficult access
Site E - Bathford	Lack of capacity – site too small to accommodate assessed demand for Park & Ride
Site G – Lansdown Park and Ride	Misses key routes from the east
Site H – Bathampton Junction	Too expensive and not supported by rail industry. Impact of moving the railway line on listed buildings and SSSI and adjoining homes. Considerable visual impact of a multi-storey car park.
Site I – Land south of Box Bridge	Lack of capacity – site too small to accommodate assessed demand for Park & Ride



Source: Mott MacDonald from Halcrow 2013.

Identifying an appropriate site

Park and Ride facilities need to be:

1. Well located for main roads to capture car drivers entering the City from the East.
2. Near to the city to reduce travel time from the P&R.
3. Near to the city to reduce running costs.
4. Large enough to support the expected demand.

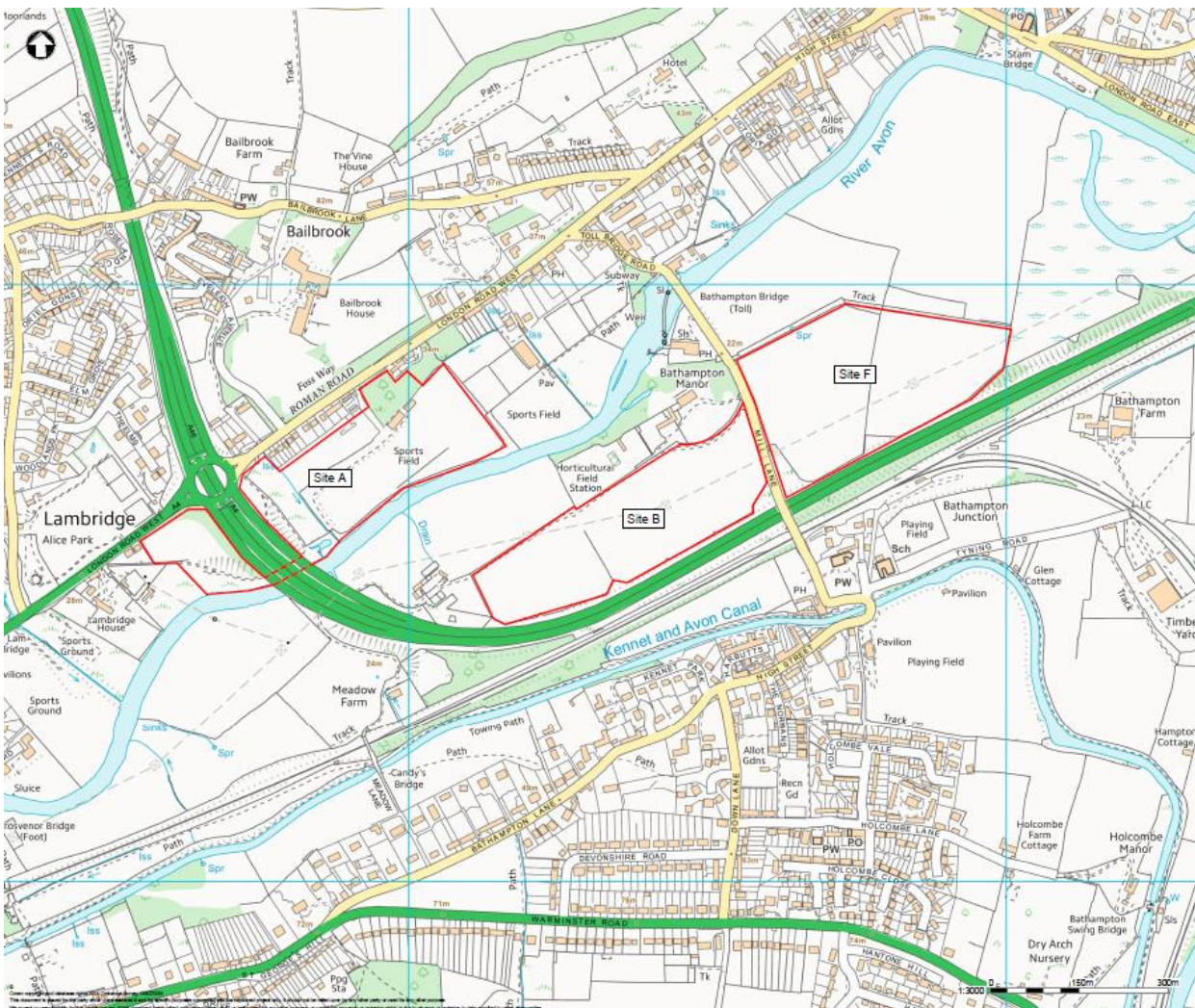
These considerations suggest that the sites set out below are viable for this facility.

The shortlisted site options were included in the previous review although further analysis has been undertaken subsequently so that comparisons can be made.

The Three Potential Sites

For the proposed Park and Ride facility on the eastern side of the city, primarily aimed at motorists using the A4 corridor, demand forecasts from the recently updated Bath Transport Model indicate that daily demand is in the order of 1,400 vehicles.

The three shortlisted sites are shown below:



Source: Mott MacDonald

Site East of A4/A46 Junction

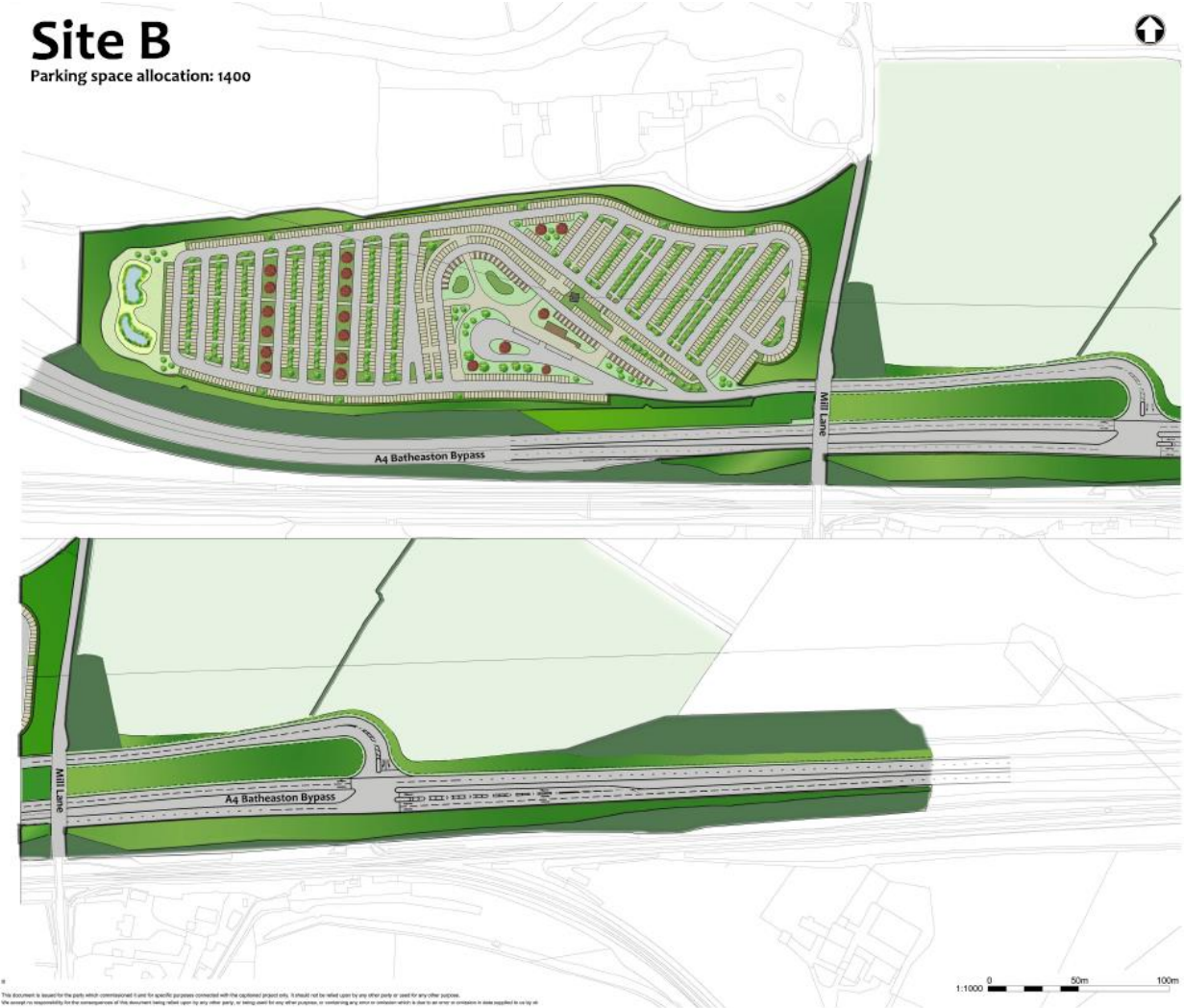
This site is closest to the city with access from London Road West, with the majority of the site being to the east of the London Road roundabout.



Source: Mott MacDonald

Site West of Mill Lane

The site is located adjacent to the A4 Batheaston Bypass to the west of Mill Lane with access via a new junction from the existing A4 dual carriageway.



Source: Mott MacDonald

Site East of Mill Lane

This site is located adjacent to the A4 Batheaston Bypass to the east of Mill Lane. Planning permission for this site was granted in May 2009 with access via a new junction from the existing A4 dual carriageway. This site was not progressed further in 2009 and the planning approval has subsequently lapsed. The site is owned by Bath and North East Somerset Council.



Source: Mott MacDonald

Site Requirements – Environmental Considerations

- **Flood risk and water environment**

- A full Flood Risk Assessment will be required to assess the potential risks and propose the best ways to reduce flooding. Where possible, proposals should not be located within Flood Zone 3.
- The use of Sustainable Drainage Systems should be included in the site design, which would minimise flood risk and may serve a dual purpose of enhancing biodiversity and the landscape setting.

- **Cultural heritage**

- Proposals should avoid direct and indirect adverse effects upon heritage assets.
- Opportunities to enhance cultural heritage assets within the vicinity of the proposals should be considered, such as from the provision of screening vegetation.

- **Nature conservation and biodiversity**

- Proposals should avoid unacceptable adverse effects for nature conservation features.
- Opportunities to promote biodiversity improvements should be considered as part of the site selection process, such as through the opportunity to provide new and connected habitat.
- Where possible, proposals should avoid habitat of suitability for European Protected Species, including great crested newts, dormice and bats.

- **Landscape and visual effects**

- Proposals should avoid adverse visual intrusion for the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); the selection of the preferred site will be informed from an understanding of the likely visual effect of each option, and how the proposals would sit within the local and wider landscape.
- The ability of the site to accommodate landscape proposals such as screening planting and bunds will inform the site selection process.

- **Noise**

- Proposals will include the consideration of nearby residential receptors with respect to potential changes to the noise environment.
- The need and ability for the site to accommodate appropriate noise mitigation measures, such as acoustic fences and/ or noise bunds will inform the site selection process.

- **Air quality**

- One central aim of the proposed Park and Ride is to relieve congestion into the city centre, which may result in reduced vehicle emissions in some locations and will be considered during the site selection process.
- Proposals will also include the consideration of nearby residential and ecological receptors with respect to potential changes to local air quality.

- **Access to and from the road network** – the highway authority for the A4 is Highways England which will need to agree the access arrangements for two of the sites.

- **Potential for a Park and Ride Site to be Linked with a rail service**

- New hourly MetroWest services will be terminating at Bathampton Junction on the Great Western Main Line so there is an opportunity to build a platform so that Park and Ride users, particularly those travelling beyond Bath Spa, could use local rail services; and
- In the longer term, there is the possibility of creating a second platform so that trains using the Trowbridge line could stop nearby. This involves creating new trackwork and signalling so would be costly but would increase the frequency of trains that might serve a Park and Ride function.

(Network Rail as infrastructure provider and First Great Western as the current train operator have been involved in discussions regarding the possibility of Park and Ride having a rail service.)

Considerations

Site	Benefits	Constraints
Land east of A4/A46 junction (Site A)	<p>Close to the city centre</p> <p>The visual impact of Site A could be reduced through successful landscaping and planting</p> <p>The close proximity of the River Avon to Site A may facilitate a ‘Park and Sail’ service</p>	<p>According to the Environment Agency’s flood mapping Site A is considered to have a high risk of flooding and would require additional flood provisions</p> <p>Site A is located within the City of Bath World Heritage Site and Bath Conservation Area</p> <p>The existing topography poses additional construction challenges</p> <p>Would require the relocation of the sports facility to an alternative site</p> <p>Site A cannot be connected to the existing Great Western Railway Line to facilitate a ‘Park and Rail’ service</p> <p>Will attract additional vehicles onto London Road West and the A4/A46 junction</p> <p>The land is currently privately owned</p>
Land west of Mill Lane (Site B)	<p>According to the Environment Agency’s flood mapping Site B is considered to have a low risk of flooding</p> <p>Site B is located outside the City of Bath World Heritage Site</p> <p>The visual impact of Site B could be reduced through successful landscaping and planting</p> <p>The close vicinity of the Site B to the existing Great Western Mainline railway may facilitate a Park and Rail service</p> <p>The close proximity of the River Avon to Site B may facilitate a ‘Park and Sail’ service</p>	<p>Requires access from the existing A4 carriageway</p> <p>It is likely that access to Site B will be required through part of Site F due to the Sight Stopping Distance (SSD) requirements of the A4 carriageway</p> <p>The land is currently privately owned</p>

Land east of Mill Lane (Site F)	<p>According to the Environment Agency’s flood mapping Site F is considered to have a low to moderate risk of flooding</p> <p>Site F is located outside the City of Bath World Heritage Site</p> <p>The visual impact of Site F could be reduced through successful landscaping and planting</p>	<p>Requires access from the existing A4 carriageway</p> <p>Site F cannot be connected to the existing Great Western Railway Line to facilitate a ‘Park and Rail’ service The land is in public ownership</p>
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Next Steps

The results of this consultation will be reported to the Council's Cabinet in November to be considered as part of the Placemaking Plan. There are a number of stages that will need to be addressed to progress the scheme to the implementation stage including:

- Evaluation of consultation feedback
- Council approval of preferred site location (November 2015)
- Develop detailed designs and carry out further consultation
- Planning application process
- Procurement and appointment of contractor
- Construction
- Commissioning and opening

These stages will ensure that all the necessary approvals are in place, that local people have had the opportunity to present their views, the design is developed to a detailed stage and the appropriate analysis has been undertaken to show that the preferred Park and Ride proposal represents good value for money.