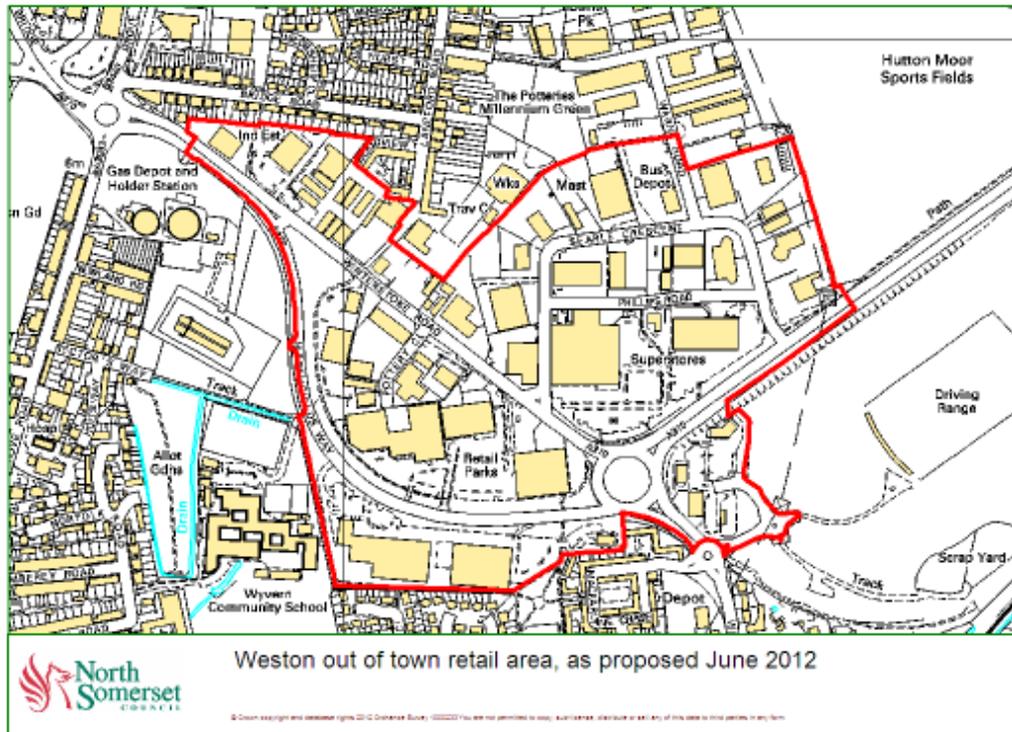


**North Somerset Council
Local Development Framework**

**Sites and Policies
Development Plan Document**

**Evidence Paper
Land Uses in Weston Out of Town
Retail Park**

An audit was undertaken in June 2012 of all commercial premises within the area proposed to be designated as the Weston out of town retail area. The map below shows the proposed boundary.



A brief summary has been written to explain the nature of the area at present, the mix and type of the buildings, age, character, parking issues, occupancy rates, clusters of different types of uses and any other factors that may be relevant to the emerging policy.

Summary

The scale of the area is large with several segregated sections broken up by heavily used roads. Highway safety for pedestrians and cyclists is low and permeability between plots is poor causing them to travel long stretches between shops and to access safe crossing points. Car users are encouraged to use their vehicle between units.

The area is not very attractive, looking quite tired and being saturated in signage (particularly towards the north) indicating the various plots and construction is largely out of cheap materials.

Noise levels towards Winterstoke Road and Marchfields Way are exceptionally high and constant.

Most units are occupied although some large and small unit vacancies exist.

The area has four natures of occupancy. Firstly, large retail units which are ideal for large bulky goods generally concentrated in the centre and southern parts. Secondly, food services/ restaurants. Thirdly, smaller units for workshop (including car maintenance garages), office and small sales counter operations - these are concentrated in the north of the area. Some of these businesses have taken additional adjacent or nearby units also. Lastly, car sales showrooms; largely clustered near the junction onto A370.

The nature of the area is therefore different to that of the central high street.

Conclusions

The area is in need of a comprehensive redevelopment that brings the segregated areas together, is more shopper friendly, is a more attractive environment and has more freedom for pedestrians.

Although it will be necessary for the majority to use the private car to access the site and transport the large bulky goods time spent and units visited could be increased by better pedestrian schemes helping to drive up economic growth.

Such a scheme would drastically improve the image of the area as a gateway and could be a catalyst further along the road closer to the centre.

A supportive policy for small businesses and managed expansion for some (consolidation might be more cost effective and free up units for other small businesses) would be beneficial in the North. Redevelopment should be sensitive to their business needs to prolong the life and increase chances of success.

The relationship to the surrounding residential area (primarily access) and the impact of convenience that could be made to them (as potential high users) should be considered in the improvement plan.



For further information please contact

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