

# North Somerset Core Strategy Consequential Changes Examination

Inspector: Jonathan Bore BA MRTPI DipUD

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Ref:

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North Somerset CS Consequential Changes Examination

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Dear Sir

## **EXAMINATION INTO THE SOUNDNESS OF NORTH SOMERSET CONSEQUENTIAL CHANGES TO POLICIES CS6, CS14, CS19, CS28, CS30, CS31, CS32 and CS33**

As you know, I have been appointed to hold the above-named examination. I am required to prepare a binding report for North Somerset Council in which I will determine whether the Local Plan is sound, having regard to the purposes of the examination as set out in section 20(5) of the 2004 Act.

I have begun the examination by going through the material supplied to the examination by the Council, including Inspector Mr Punshon's report on remitted Policy CS13, and the representations on the proposed remitted policies.

The remitted policies have been adjusted to take into account the figure of 20,985 homes to 2026 which is now adopted under Policy CS13. They include increases in the housing requirement compared with the originally submitted plan of over 3,000 dwellings in the Weston urban area, 1,000 in Weston Villages, 1,200 in Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead and over 1,000 in the Service Villages. However, the remitted policies have otherwise not been subject to substantive revision, so the spatial strategy represented by the remitted policies remains unchanged.

Consultation on the remitted policies has, as you know, raised a number of concerns and there are several common themes arising from many of the representations. These include (among other things) questions over:

- whether the unchanged terms of the remitted policies – in effect the unchanged spatial strategy – is fit for purpose to deliver the revised housing numbers, or whether it would present such constraints that the plan would fail to deliver the number of homes now proposed;

- if the remitted policies can be shown to cause uncertainty over the ability to deliver the revised housing target, whether reasonable alternatives to those policies ought to be investigated;
- queries over the substantial variations between the proportion of the additional homes allocated to the different settlements;
- compatibility with non-remitted employment policies;
- whether the Council's calculation of the number remaining to be allocated (1,715) is soundly based; and
- whether an SA is required.

As an important part of my examination of the remitted policies, I will need to be satisfied that they are capable of delivering the full housing requirement over the plan period, that the distribution is sound, that they remain consistent with other policies in the plan and that the calculation of the remaining requirement to be allocated is clearly justified by evidence. There is also the question of whether an addendum to the SA is required, bearing in mind the legal requirements. I would very much welcome your comment on the issues that have been raised, pointing in particular to the relevant parts of the evidence base that address these issues. It would be helpful to have your reply by Monday 14 March in order that I can consider how to progress the examination as effectively as possible.

Yours sincerely

*Jonathan Bore*

Inspector