

Recommended Main Modification: MD6(a) version of Policy CS13 and supporting text.

Delete Policy CS13 and paragraphs 3.178 to 3.188 of the text in the Publication version of the Core Strategy and replace by the following policy and text:

CS13: Scale of new housing

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. The appropriate level of new homes will be reviewed by 2018.

This policy contributes towards achieving Priority Objective 1.

Background

Plan preparation and the determination of the appropriate level for the district housing requirement took place against an uncertain planning context in terms of regional planning, the localism agenda, and the introduction of the NPPF, as well as a severe economic downturn which raised doubts about the robustness of trend-based projections and economic growth assumptions.

The North Somerset housing requirement as set out in the April 2012 adopted Core Strategy was challenged in the courts and remitted back to the Planning Inspectorate for re-examination. As part of the re-assessment of the housing requirement the Council undertook a fresh assessment of housing needs within the district.

A new joint Strategic Housing Market Area assessment for the wider housing market area was being carried out at the time that Policy CS13 was being examined. Until this work is completed the Council cannot move forward on the basis of a full objective assessment of housing need as required by the NPPF.

The provisions of this policy should therefore be seen as an interim position pending a review of housing requirements and provision which will be based on the findings of the new SHMA. The policy includes a specific reference to this review.

Other local authorities in the West of England are already committed to a similar approach. To reach a co-ordinated position between the West of England authorities based on the duty to co-operate, it is intended that the new SHMA will be published in June 2015. The processes are already in train to produce a Joint Strategic Planning Strategy by early 2017. This will be a formal development plan document and will, amongst other things, allocate housing provision between the West of England

authorities. By early 2017 therefore the Council will be able to plan for a fully NPPF compliant and West of England agreed housing provision. Policy CS13 will be applied on the basis of that revised figure once it has been adopted. The Council will then need to review and have adopted a replacement plan, whether this be a Local Plan or a review of this Core Strategy, in order to put the requirements of the adopted JSPS into local effect.

If for any reason the JSPS has not been finalised the Council will move ahead with a review of the document on the basis of the best information available to it (including the NPPF compliant SHMA). In either case the review will be completed by the end of 2018 with a replacement for this policy being adopted by that time.

The Core Strategy approach

Within North Somerset over the plan period the Core Strategy seeks to create a better, more sustainable balance between housing and employment whilst making appropriate provision to meet housing needs. North Somerset has historically experienced relatively high levels of housing demand but low levels of economic growth. The Core Strategy approach is to ensure that housing growth is better related to employment growth (employment-led) than in the past, and which will support a relative improvement in self-containment and overall benefits in terms of Weston-super Mare regeneration.

The primary evidence base for the revised housing requirement was the Edge Analytics 'Demographic Analysis and Forecasts' September 2013. This recommended a range of 'current growth scenarios' as the basis for the review of future housing provision from 17,130 – 20,220 dwellings. The recommended requirement of 20,985 dwellings 2006-2026 comprises the maximum forecast of objectively assessed needs for North Somerset identified in the Edge Analytics report plus a further allowance of 5% to boost housing supply and provide a contingency to support the employment-led objective. The housing target is consistent with both meeting objectively assessed needs and the wider plan objective of securing a better balance between homes and jobs, particularly at Weston-super-Mare.

Between 2006 and 2026 provision will be made for 20,985 new dwellings. As at April 2014 6,752 dwellings had been completed leaving 14,233 dwellings to be delivered 2014-2026. To comply with the requirements of the NPPF the Council will identify sufficient sites to provide five years worth of housing with an additional buffer to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. Any underprovision in delivery arising at the time of plan review will be taken into account to ensure that any backlog that has arisen is addressed.

How and where the policy will be delivered

The Core Strategy will identify the policy context for the delivery of the residual housing requirement over the remainder of the plan period through Policy CS14.

This policy will be delivered primarily through private development, but there will be considerable partnership working involved, particularly in relation to infrastructure provision, ensuring employment-led development and affordable housing.

Monitoring and review

Housing supply is monitored annually in order to ensure that there remains a flexible supply of deliverable and developable land for housing.

Policy CS13 is an interim position which will be reviewed through the duty to co-operate by the production of a joint development plan, the JSPS, by the West of England authorities and with a replacement policy adopted by the end of 2018.