

**RED/23**

**North Somerset Core Strategy  
Re-examination of remitted policies**

**NSC suggested re-wording of submitted policy CS13**

**28 March 2014**

Introduction

At the re-examination hearings the Council agreed to provide the Inspector with a suggested re-wording of Policy CS13 to take account of the need for plan review and any other amendments. For reference, the submitted (June 2011) and adopted (April 2012) versions of Policy CS13 are attached at Appendices 1 and 2 respectively.

The new paragraph relating to plan review follows the approach set out at paragraph 10.10 of the South Gloucestershire Core Strategy Policy CS15.

(This supersedes previous versions of the proposed re-wording circulated at RED/4 and RED/22).

Proposed revised Policy CS13 (March 2014)

**CS13: Scale of new housing**

**A supply of deliverable and developable land will be identified to secure the delivery of a minimum of 17,130 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 has taken 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.

Government advice is that plans should meet objectively assessed needs with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change unless adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. Within North Somerset an uncritical application of pre-recession trends would simply replicate the unsustainable development patterns of the past and fail to address the Core

Strategy objectives, particularly Weston-super-Mare regeneration and the creation of a better balance between jobs and homes.

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.

North Somerset is part of the wider West of England housing market area for which a new joint Strategic Housing Market Area assessment is being prepared. As the new evidence base was not available to inform the re-examination process, Policy CS13 includes a specific reference to a review by the end of 2018.

### **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 much 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. The recommended requirement of 17,130 dwellings 2006-2026 is one of these objectively assessed scenarios and is consistent with the wider plan objectives of meeting housing needs whilst securing a better balance between homes and jobs, particularly at Weston-super-Mare.

Between 2006 and 2026 provision will be made for 17,130 new dwellings. As at April 2013 5,992 dwellings had been completed leaving 11,138 dwellings to be delivered 2013-2026. The Council will seek to achieve an annualised rate of housing delivery over the remaining 13 years of the plan period which equates to 857 dwellings pa. 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 of 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.

### **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 the settlement strategy and the strategic allocation at Weston. Policy CS14 sets out the distribution of the proposed housing supply.

The 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.

To ensure sufficient land is made available to meet housing needs to the end of the plan period the Council will undertake a review of the Core Strategy to be completed before the end of 2018. This should be based on a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment undertaken in conjunction with other relevant authorities in the West of England region. Regard will also be had to all available evidence sources including demographic evidence, economic conditions and forecasts. If the evidence suggests that additional strategic provision is required, then its delivery will be determined on a West of England-wide basis through the duty to cooperate.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **SUBMITTED NORTH SOMERSET CORE STRATEGY POLICY CS13 (JULY 2011)**

#### **CS13: Scale of new housing**

A supply of deliverable and developable land will be identified to secure the delivery of a minimum of 13,400 dwellings within North Somerset 2006–2026.

*This policy contributes towards achieving Priority Objective 1.*

#### **Background**

3.178 Given the government's intention to revoke the Regional Spatial Strategy decisions on housing supply will rest with local planning authorities without the framework of regional numbers and plans. While the housing requirement must be evidence-based and consistent with national advice, there will no longer be a requirement to conform to a top-down regional target. In order to identify a North Somerset-wide housing requirement, the Council commissioned technical advice to assess the evidence, and to recommend an appropriate level of growth over the plan period.

#### **The Core Strategy approach**

3.179 The Core Strategy housing requirement is based on the recommendations of the independent study 'North Somerset Council: Determining a locally derived district Core Strategy housing requirement to 2026' (October 2010). This study provided evidence-based guidance on the future level housing in the light of changing economic and social trends, assessed alternative methodologies and recommended an approach based on realistic economic growth forecasts over the plan period.

3.180 The key issues considered by the study were:

- Population growth and declining household size;
- The effect of, and prospects for, economic growth;
- The dynamics of the local housing market.

3.181 North Somerset has experienced relatively high levels of housing demand but low levels of economic growth. It is pressure from the more economically buoyant parts of the sub-region, particularly Bristol and Bath, coupled with relatively low house prices which are the major determining factors driving housing growth pressures, and contributing to relatively low job growth and high levels of out-commuting. The Core Strategy approach is to ensure that housing growth is much more closely linked to employment growth (employment-led) than in the past and that housing supply is better managed in order to provide sufficient housing to meet locally arising needs without attracting inappropriate levels of in-migration.

3.182 The study identified principles to help guide the process of identifying an appropriate level of housing development, together with possible policy options in order to test the results. Economic scenarios were then applied relating to different rates of national economic performance.

3.183 The assessment and testing concluded that housing delivery for North Somerset 2006–2026 should be a minimum of 13,400 dwellings (670 per annum).

3.184 As at 1 April 2010 the housing land supply situation was as follows:

Completions 2006–2010	4,313 dwellings
Remaining Local Plan allocations	642 dwellings
Planning permissions	2,398 dwellings
Total	7,353 dwellings

3.185 Based on a North Somerset housing requirement of 13,400 dwellings this leaves 6,047 dwellings to be identified to 2026 (although it cannot be assumed that all permissions will be implemented).

### **How and where the policy will be delivered?**

3.186 The Core Strategy will identify the policy context for the delivery of the residual housing requirement over the remainder of the plan period through the settlement strategy and the strategic allocation at Weston. Policy CS14 sets out the distribution of the proposed housing supply.

3.187 The 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**

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

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **ADOPTED NORTH SOMERSET CORE STRATEGY POLICY CS13 (APRIL 2012)**

#### **CS13: Scale of new housing**

A supply of deliverable and developable land will be identified to secure the delivery of a minimum of 14,000 dwellings within North Somerset 2006–2026. The appropriate level of new homes will be reviewed in 2016 and 2021.

*This policy contributes towards achieving Priority Objective 1.*

#### **Background**

3.179 Given the government's intention to revoke the Regional Spatial Strategy decisions on housing supply will rest with local planning authorities without the framework of regional numbers and plans. While the housing requirement must be evidence-based and consistent with national advice, there will no longer be a requirement to conform to a top-down regional target. In order to identify a North Somerset-wide housing requirement, the council commissioned technical advice to assess the evidence, and to recommend an appropriate level of growth over the plan period.

#### **The Core Strategy approach**

3.180 The Core Strategy housing requirement is based on the recommendations of the independent study 'North Somerset Council: Determining a locally derived district Core Strategy housing requirement to 2026' (October 2010). This study provided evidence-based guidance on the future level housing in the light of changing economic and social trends, assessed alternative methodologies and recommended an approach based on realistic economic growth forecasts over the plan period.

3.181 The key issues considered by the study were:

- Population growth and declining household size;
- The effect of, and prospects for, economic growth;
- The dynamics of the local housing market.

3.182 North Somerset has experienced relatively high levels of housing demand but low levels of economic growth. It is pressure from the more economically buoyant parts of the sub-region, particularly Bristol and Bath, coupled with relatively low house prices which are the major determining factors driving housing growth pressures, and contributing to relatively low job growth and high levels of out-commuting. The Core Strategy approach is to ensure that housing growth is much more closely linked to employment growth (employment-led) than in the past and that housing supply is better managed in order to provide sufficient housing to meet locally arising needs without attracting inappropriate levels of in-migration.

3.183 The study identified principles to help guide the process of identifying an appropriate level of housing development, together with possible policy options in order to test the results. Economic scenarios were then applied relating to different rates of national economic performance.

3.184 The assessment and testing concluded that housing delivery for North Somerset 2006–2026 should be a minimum of 14,000 dwellings (700 per annum).

3.185 As at 1 April 2011 the housing land supply situation was as follows:

Completions 2006–2011	4,950 dwellings
Remaining Local Plan allocations	591 dwellings
Planning permissions	3,200 dwellings
Total	8,741 dwellings

3.186 Based on a North Somerset housing requirement of 14,000 dwellings this leaves 5,259 dwellings to be identified to 2026 (although it cannot be assumed that all permissions will be implemented).

### **How and where the policy will be delivered?**

3.187 The Core Strategy will identify the policy context for the delivery of the residual housing requirement over the remainder of the plan period through the settlement strategy and the strategic allocation at Weston. Policy CS14 sets out the distribution of the proposed housing supply.

3.188 The 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**

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

3.190 The council will review the appropriate level of new homes in 2016 and 2021. It will examine all available evidence sources including demographic evidence, economic conditions and forecasts. If evidence suggests that additional provision of homes will be required the review will consider the appropriate response. If additional strategic provision is required its delivery will be determined on a West of England-wide basis through the duty to co-operate.