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nsc171215repsc



Planning Policy Team  
North Somerset District Council  
Town Hall  
Walliscote Grove Road  
Weston-super-Mare  
BS23 1UJ

Chloë Clark BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI  
E: cclark@savills.com  
DL: +44 (0) 117 910 0303  
F: +44 (0) 117 910 0399

Embassy House  
Queens Avenue  
Bristol BS8 1SB  
T: +44 (0) 1179 100 300  
savills.com

Dear Sir / Madam

## **Representations** **North Somerset Core Strategy Consequential Changes to Remitted Policies Consultation**

These representations have been prepared by Savills on behalf of Taylor Wimpey in response to the consultation on consequential changes to remitted North Somerset Core Strategy (NSCS) policies CS6, CS14, CS19, CS28, CS30, CS31, CS32 and CS33. Savills, on behalf of Taylor Wimpey, has been involved in the examination of the NSCS and participated in relevant hearing sessions with regard to remitted Policy CS13 (Scale of New Housing). These representations are submitted having regard to previous engagement.

### **Background**

NSCS Policy CS13 (Scale of New Housing) sets out the housing requirement for North Somerset and has been amended at various points during the examination process to the final position at a minimum of 20,985 dwellings. It is only the housing requirement that has been amended. The objectives and overall vision of the NSCS have not changed.

Having now established the housing requirement, the Council must consider whether further amendments are required to the policies remitted by the High Court and this forms the basis of the Consultation. The remitted policies include:

- Policy CS6 – Green Belt
- Policy CS14 – Distribution of new housing
- Policy CS19 – Strategic gaps
- Policy CS28 – Weston-super-mare
- Policy CS30 – Weston villages
- Policy CS31 – Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead
- Policy CS32 – Service villages; and
- Policy CS33 – Smaller settlements and countryside

### **Consideration of Remitted Policies and Recommendations**

The adopted position with regards to the Core Strategy is clear and this is not being challenged. The key factor for consideration is how the increased housing requirement will be dealt with within the established spatial strategy.



Policy CS14 (Distribution of New Homes) maintains the settlement hierarchy and seeks to increase dwelling numbers in Service Villages by circa 1,000 to 1,861, in line with the overall housing requirement. Accordingly, there is a clear role for Service Villages to contribute to the identified housing requirement.

Yatton is one of the largest Service Villages. It supports a range of facilities including shops, banks, a Post Office, GP and dental practices, opticians, infant and junior schools, a village hall and library, cafes, pubs and restaurants as well as churches and a recreation ground. It has a good level of accessibility by a range of travel modes including regular train and bus services. As such, it is capable of accommodating a high proportion of growth directed as the Service Villages.

#### Scale of Development

Both Policy CS14 and Policy CS32 (Service Villages) support development within settlement boundaries or through site allocations; however they are both unnecessarily restrictive in their approach and will not assist in delivering the boost to housing delivery sought by the NPPF. The policies state, inter alia:

Policy CS14:

*'[...] In the rural areas new residential development will be strictly controlled although at service villages there will be opportunities for small-scale development either within settlement boundaries or through site allocations. In infill villages limited infilling will be acceptable within settlement boundaries.[...]*

Policy CS32

*'[...] Proposals for small scale development appropriate to the size and character of the village which respects the character of the village and supports or enhances the village's role as a local hub for community facilities and services, employment and affordable housing, including public transport will be supported.[...]*

Policy CS32 states that new development should be 'small scale' and 'appropriate to the size and character of the village', as well as services and facilities available. It is not necessary for the policy to stipulate two parameters for new development; indeed, it is somewhat contradictory. In order to allow a degree of flexibility and ensure that settlements take a commensurate scale of new development, it is recommended that the policy wording is revised to remove 'small scale'.

Policy CS14 should be amended in the same manner to ensure consistency.

#### Five Year Land Supply

At the time of writing the Council is unable to demonstrate a deliverable supply of housing land for the next five years and, as a result, it recognises that the presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged. The Council has been pragmatic and sought to establish how planning applications should be dealt with in this context and its recommendations are set out in its report entitled 'Core Strategy Examination of Remitted Policies, Local Development Scheme and Delivery of Housing Shortfall'. Paragraph 3.19 of the report states:

*'Given the specific pressures in relation to the plan-making process, the Council will have to consider approving planning applications for sustainable developments in parallel with the plan-making process. In dealing with these applications, the following criteria will be particularly relevant:*

*The sites are necessary to contribute to any 5 year supply shortfall and will be delivered within 5 years.*

*They are located at settlements which perform well in relation to sustainability criteria and where the necessary supporting infrastructure already exists or can be provided.*

*They are not in the Green Belt.'*

This approach represents a reasonable basis upon which the Council will consider planning applications in North Somerset where there is a housing land supply shortfall. As such, in order to give the approach statutory weight as part of the Development Plan the above criteria should be incorporated into the revised remitted policies.

In summary, the above proposed changes to Policy CS14 and Policy CS32 removes an unnecessary restriction and ensure that service villages take a commensurate scale of new development. It also establishes an approach which allows the Council to respond to planning applications where a land supply shortfall exists.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require anything further.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chloë Clark". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'C'.

**Chloë Clark BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI**  
**Senior Planner**