

**Site Allocations Plan (SAP)
Examination Hearing Statement on
behalf of Taylor Wimpey**

Matter 2 (Housing)

Representation Number: 14828865//2

24 April 2017

Turley

2.1 Would the scale of housing to be delivered on allocated sites in the Site Allocations Plan (SAP) provide for new housing in accordance with the requirements of the CS in relation to:

i The scale of development identified in Policy CS13.

1. Policy CS13 states that “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”.
2. The SAP consequential changes Table 1 states that taking account of completions, existing planning permissions, existing allocations, proposed allocations and an allowance for windfalls, the Council expect a delivery of 21,281 dwellings. This is 296 dwellings over the minimum requirement set out in the Core Strategy. It should be noted that these figures are different to those referenced in the Council’s response to the Inspector’s matters and issues for examination (CD1c). Taking the April 2016 quoted position, the Council expect delivery of 21,160 dwellings, which is 175 dwellings over the minimum housing requirement.
3. Through representations to the SAP and evidence submitted as part of s78 appeals, the Inspector will be aware that many parties have highlighted that the provisions made within the SAP are not sufficient to meet the minimum requirement within the Core Strategy. As requested, we will not seek to re-iterate these concerns but we would like to summarise some of the key concerns.
4. Based on the Council’s figures alone, the suggested potential over supply above the minimum Core Strategy housing requirement is not considered to be sufficient and does not suitably provide a sufficient buffer, enough flexibility to ensure even the minimum housing requirement would be delivered, taking account of matters such as non or slow delivery.
5. It is appreciated that the NPPF and PPG allows for windfalls to be taken account of, based upon historic evidence. However, we suggest that to plan positively to ensure that the housing requirement is met, the residual housing requirement should be appropriately planned for through site allocations and windfalls should not be relied upon. The delivery of windfall sites should be regarded as a boost to supply over and beyond allocations that plan appropriately to deliver the housing requirement. As such, the Council’s reliance on 897 dwellings (as quoted in the consequential changes document (SD20) or 1,095 dwellings (as referenced in CD1c) to be delivered through windfalls, is not considered to be sound or reliable source of supply. That element of contribution towards meeting the housing requirement should be removed and replaced by planned site allocations.
6. Schedule 1 of the SAP also includes several sites, without a current consent, carried over from the North Somerset Replacement Local Plan. These sites make a substantial contribution to the Council’s claimed supply, for instance, Westacres Caravan Park is stated as having capacity of 130 units; Land north of the A370 with a capacity of 89 units; and Bridge Farm, Bristol Road with a capacity of 73 units. These sites have been carried over from the previous Local Plan which was adopted nearly 10 years ago, in 2007. Given that these sites have been allocated for a significant amount of time with no development coming forward, the Council should not be continuing to rely on their contribution to its overall housing needs

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without clear evidence to show why they can reasonably be expected to come forward. These concerns have also been recently raised by the Inspectors dealing with the Examination of the consequential changes to remitted policies and Section 78 appeals.

ii The distribution of development in accordance with Policy CS14.

7. As stated above, if it is considered that a windfall allowance should not be relied upon to deliver the minimum Core Strategy housing requirement. The allowance that the Council has made for windfalls across the settlement hierarchy should be removed and as a result, the requirements set out in Policy CS14 would not be met. As such, further allocations need to be made across the settlement hierarchy to make up the shortfall.

2.2 In terms of the delivery of the housing sites allocated in the SAP and by the Council in the proposed further amendments of February 2017 (SD20), taking each of the following settlements in turn:

- a) Weston-super-Mare
- b) Clevedon
- c) Nailsea
- d) Portishead
- e) Winscombe
- f) Yatton
- g) Backwell
- h) Congresbury
- i) Churchill
- j) Banwell
- k) Bleadon
- l) Uphill
- m) Barrow Gurney
- n) Failand
- o) Sandford
- p) Tickenham

i Are there any sites which should be excluded from the list of sites identified in Schedule 1 to the SAP and by the Council in the proposed further amendments of February 2017 (SD20) in order for the SAP to be sound?

8. As stated above, the following proposed allocations which have been bought forward from the Local Plan as they haven't been delivered over the Local Plan period. There is no evidence to suggest that they are deliverable over the Core Strategy Plan period. If they are carried

forward, they certainly shouldn't be relied on to deliver the Council's minimum housing requirement as there are clear uncertainties over their delivery.

Weston Super Mare

- *Westacres Caravan Park (Weston Super mare)*
- *Land north of the A370*
- *Bridge Farm, Bristol Road*

ii Having regard to additional information supplied with examination document CD1 and Appendices, how likely is it that the sites allocated in Schedule 1 and the proposed amendments will deliver the housing requirement of the CS within the Plan period 2006 –2026?

9. Please see the response to Question 2.1.

iii Is it appropriate to include an allowance for windfall development within the calculation of housing provision in Table 1 to the SAP?

10. No, this does not support a plan led approach and does not help to effectively demonstrate that the minimum housing requirement can be delivered in a sound manner. Please also see comments under Question 2.1.

2.3 In terms of providing for a five year housing land supply (HLS):

i What is the most up to date calculation of delivery in the period since the start of the Plan period in 2006?

11. Based upon AMRs it appears that between 2006 and 2016 there has been 7,995 completions.

ii What is the level of shortfall in provision against the CS requirement for the first part of the Plan period?

12. Based upon the Core Strategy minimum housing requirement of 20,985, the requirement from 2006 to 2016 would equate to 10,493 (20,985/20) x 10). Setting the completions data against the Core Strategy Requirement to date the shortfall would be 2,498 (10,493- 7,995). This shortfall is clearly serious and significant, and represents over 2 years of the Council's annual housing requirement.

iii Does the Sedgfield approach to the calculation of HLS with a 5% buffer as identified by the Inspector in his report on the Core Strategy remain the most appropriate methodology for delivery?

13. The Sedgfield approach remains the most appropriate method for dealing with the under delivery to date. A 20% buffer is now appropriate, as a result of a persistent under delivery in North Somerset since the Core Strategy Inspector's report.

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Sedgefield Method

14. The Planning Practice Guidance supports the Sedgefield approach at Paragraph: 035 (Reference ID: 3-035-20140306). It states “Local planning authorities should aim to deal with any undersupply within the first 5 years of the plan period where possible. Where this cannot be met in the first 5 years, local planning authorities will need to work with neighbouring authorities under the duty to cooperate.” It is therefore clear from the PPG that is not a choice between Sedegfield and Liverpool, it is the Sedgefield method or distributing need to other authorities.
15. There is no prospect here that the shortfall will be made up by neighbouring authorities who have their own issues with delivery. It is only logical that any shortfall should be made up as soon as possible to prevent any significant accumulation and risk not delivering the much needed and required homes within the Plan period.
16. Inspector Bore who reported on the Examination into the Soundness of the Consequential Changes to Policies CS6, CS14, CS19, CS28, CS30, CS31, CS32 and CS33 of the North Somerset Core Strategy, concluded that “*the appropriate methodology was the Sedgefield approach to the shortfall*” (Paragraph 24 of the Inspector’s Report 8th November 2016). He went on to say:-
17. “25. *Regarding the Sedgefield approach, the plan period is already at its halfway point and the Weston Villages are shortly expected to make a significant contribution to housing supply. It is important that the under-supply that has arisen as a result of the increase in the housing requirement through modified Policy CS13 is remedied as soon as is practicable. The Sedgefield methodology, which corrects the accumulated backlog within the first 5 years, is therefore the appropriate approach.*”
18. In CD1 the Council state that they agree with Inspector Bore.
19. In the Banwell appeal, parties agreed that there was a significant shortfall land that it must be addressed within dealt within the next five years (Paragraph 31 of APP/D0121/W/15/3138816 Appeal Decision). This was also agreed in the Sandford Appeal (Paragraph 23 of APP/D0121/W/15/3139633 Appeal Decision) and the Wentwood Drive, Bleadon Hill and Oldmixon Road appeals.
20. In CD1c the Council are now arguing that the Liverpool method should be used which is inconsistent with what they have said in CD1 and agreed within s78 appeals.
21. Taking into account the above, it is extremely difficult to understand how the Council is trying to alter their position in relation to the appropriate method to be used.

Persistent Under Delivery

22. As stated within the Core Strategy, the house requirement is for 20,985 dwellings between 2006-2026, which equates to an average of 1,049 per annum.

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23. To review whether there is a persistent under delivery, the annual housing completions should be reviewed against the 1,049 annual requirement. Using housing completion from the Council, the annual and total oversupply/undersupply is summarised in the table below:-

Year	Housing Completions	Annual Requirement	Difference
2006/07	1,132	1,049	83
2007/08	1,474	1,049	425
2008/09	935	1,049	-114
2009/10	772	1,049	-277
2010/11	637	1,049	-412
2011/12	515	1,049	-534
2012/13	527	1,049	-522
2013/14	760	1,049	-289
2014/15	674	1,049	-375
2015/16	569	1,049	-480
Total (2006-2015/16)	7,995	10,493	-2,498

24. It can be seen that for 8 of the last 10 years there has been an under delivery when assessed against the annual Core Strategy housing requirement, and those 8 years have been consecutive.
25. Overall there is a significant shortfall of 2,498 dwellings between the start of the Plan period (2006) to the latest monitoring data year of 2015/2016.
26. It is abundantly clear on the highlighted facts and figures above that there is a record of persistent under delivery of housing, as per Paragraph 47 of the NPPF. Notwithstanding the facts above, this matter has been debated at a number of North Somerset s78 planning appeals in recent times (namely the Banwell appeal (PINS Ref: APP/D0121/W/15/3138816), Sandford appeal (PINS Ref: APP/D0121/W/15/3139633) and the Wentwood Drive appeal (PINS Ref: APP/D0121/W/16/3151660), Bleadon Hill appeal (PINS Ref: APP/D0121/W/16/3142927) and Oldmixon Road appeal (PINS Ref: APP/D0121/W/16/3150985).
27. In the Banwell appeal the Inspector concluded that a 20% buffer should be applied and that the LPA's relevant witness accepted that in the last 10 years there had been persistent under delivery against the adopted Core Strategy housing requirement.
28. In the Sandford appeal the Inspector said at Paragraph 27 *"The CS annual requirement has not been met for 8 out of the last 10 years. While some fluctuation over the economic cycle is*

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to be expected, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that this represents persistent under delivery and that a buffer of 20% is applicable”.

29. Based on the clear figures there is an obvious record of persistent under delivery and this has been agreed by the Council in a number of recent s78 and explicitly endorsed by Inspectors. As such, it is clear that 20% buffer is appropriate.

iv Having regard to the evidence on the delivery of allocated sites under Question 2.2, how likely is it that the SAP would deliver a five year supply of housing at the time of adoption in accordance with either:

- The Sedgfield approach with a 5% buffer.
- The Sedgfield approach with a 20% buffer.

30. As detailed above, the Sedgfield approach with a 5% buffer should not be used. It has been demonstrated through the various quoted s78 appeals and decisions that a five year housing land supply will not be delivered at the time of adoption, based on the SAP.
31. The latest North Somerset s78 decision is the Old Mixon decision (dated 10th April 2017) where the Inspector said at Paragraph 99 that “*whether or not one takes the deliverable supply of housing land to be no more than 4.2 years or no more than 2.3 years, the inevitable and common conclusion is that the shortfall is very serious, significant and is a matter of substantial weight*”. However, the Inspector did say at Paragraph 90 that “*From my part, having been presented with the appellant’s comprehensive evidence and, in the absence of serious contradiction on the matters of substance, I would regard the overall exercise to be broadly credible and indicative that the shortfall in the five year-supply of housing land may well be greater than the Council’s concession*”. In the Old Mixon appeal, the Council’s position on housing supply followed from the Banwell decision, where the inspector concluded that the Council was only able to demonstrate about 4.2 years supply. The Appellant’s position was that the Council could only demonstrate a 2.3 year supply.
32. Even using the Council’s figures within CD1c and applying a 20% buffer instead of a 5% buffer, the five year housing land supply position would be 4.48 years, as detailed below:

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1,049 annual requirement
x 5 years
5,245 five year housing requirement

5,245
+ 2,495 backlog
7,740

7,740
+ 20%
9,288 Total Supply Requirement, including 20% buffer

Council's suggested supply figure as of April 2016 = 8,327

Five year housing land supply calculation = $(8,327/9288) \times 5 = 4.48$ years

33. Given the Council's inability to demonstrate a five year housing land supply, further short term deliverable sites need to be identified to address the shortfall.

2.4 What provision could be made if the evidence suggests that the submitted SAP would not be able to deliver a five year supply at the time of adoption?

34. So not to undermine the plan led approach, the SAP should not be adopted unless suitable provision of allocations is made to ensure a five year housing land supply can be demonstrated. This effectively means allocating further deliverable sites at this time, which there are many available in suitable, sustainable locations. Not only will this assist in meeting the adopted housing requirement, which should not be forgotten as being a minimum figure, but also help will North Somerset get closer to meeting the emerging annual housing requirement, which is likely to be greater than that which is already adopted.

2.5 Having regard to the distribution of new housing in CS Policy CS14 with its concentration in the Weston urban area and Weston Villages, how appropriate would it be to consider a stepped trajectory for the delivery of new housing over the Plan period?

35. It is not considered appropriate to allow a stepped trajectory. There is already an existing shortfall of 2,498 dwellings to date and allowing a stepped trajectory would exacerbate this issue. To not address needs now means that there is a real danger that there will be substantial shortfall in meeting even that minimum housing requirement. There is an urgent need for housing and the Council should proactively deal with the housing crisis in a positive, plan led approach.

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