



The Planning Inspectorate

Report to North Somerset Council

by **Jonathan Bore MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Date 8 November 2016

PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004 (AS AMENDED)

SECTION 20

**REPORT 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**

Document submitted for examination on 8 January 2016

Examination hearings held between 21 and 23 June 2016

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Glossary

CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
DPD	Development Plan Document
The Framework	The National Planning Policy Framework
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
LDS	Local Development Scheme
LP	Local Plan
MM	Main Modification
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
The Plan	The North Somerset Core Strategy
Remitted policies	Policies CS6, CS14, CS19, CS28, CS30, CS31, CS32 and CS33 of the North Somerset Core Strategy 2012 that were remitted by the Court for further consideration
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
Submitted policies	Policies CS6, CS14, CS19, CS28, CS30, CS31, CS32 and CS33 as revised by the Council and submitted for this Examination

Non-Technical Summary

The North Somerset Core Strategy was originally adopted by the North Somerset Council in April 2012 with a housing requirement of a minimum of 14,000 dwellings for the District between 2006 and 2026, as set out in Policy CS13. Following a legal challenge, Policy CS13 was remitted by the Court for reconsideration. Following further examination, the housing requirement was raised to a minimum of 20,985 dwellings. Policy CS13 has now been adopted with that housing requirement.

At the same time as remitting Policy CS13, the Court remitted a number of other policies for further consideration on the basis that any change to Policy CS13 could have consequential changes for those policies. They are Policies CS6, CS14, CS19, CS28, CS30, CS31, CS32 and CS33.

The Council has proposed modifications to those policies and they – the “submitted policies” – are the subject of this report. They include changes to reflect the increased housing numbers, but are otherwise largely unchanged from the remitted policies.

The Council has specifically requested me to recommend any modifications necessary to make the policies sound and enable them to be adopted. These modifications were proposed by the Council and I have recommended their inclusion after considering the representations from other parties on these issues. This report concludes that, provided that the Main Modifications are made, the submitted policies will be sound and will provide an appropriate basis for the planning of the District.

The Main Modifications are explained in the body of this report and are set out in the Appendix. They can be summarised as:

- **MM01 – Policy CS14: Distribution of New Housing.** The minimum housing requirements are adjusted and rounded off, restrictive wording is removed, and an explanation is provided of the purpose of settlement boundaries and the circumstances in which development may be acceptable outside them.
- **MM02 – Policy CS28: Weston-super-Mare.** The housing requirement is adjusted and rounded off and expressed as a minimum, allowance is made for unallocated housing schemes of up to about 75 dwellings outside but adjoining the settlement boundary, and objectives are set for the town, to which development should have regard.
- **MM03 – Policy CS30: Weston Villages.** The reference to strategic gaps between the Weston Villages and Hutton and Locking is deleted, since any such gaps and their boundaries are to be defined in the Sites and Policies DPD, but a reference to green corridors is added.
- **MM04 – Policy CS31: Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead.** The housing requirement is altered and rounded, restrictive wording is removed and the facility is provided to allow unallocated development outside but adjoining the settlement boundary of up to around 50 dwellings.
- **MM05 – Policy CS32: Service villages.** The modification allows for new development within the settlement boundary, and allows for unallocated sites to come forward adjoining the settlement boundary up to about 25

dwellings. The unduly restrictive criteria in the submitted policy are deleted and a clearer, bulleted set is introduced to help guide development.

- **MM06 – Policy CS33: Infill villages, smaller settlements and countryside.** The specific size restrictions and the references to community-led schemes and community and environmental benefits are removed.

Finally, a word of clarification. In this report, the term '*remitted policies*' is used to mean the versions of Policies CS6, CS14, CS19, CS28, CS30, CS31, CS32 and CS33 of the North Somerset Core Strategy 2012 that were remitted by the Court for further consideration; the term '*submitted policies*' is used to mean the versions of those Policies as revised by the Council and submitted to this Examination, which are the subject of this report. '*Main Modifications*' are the changes needed to make the submitted policies sound. This is also explained in the Glossary.

Introduction

1. This report contains my assessment of the following submitted policies of the North Somerset Core Strategy in terms of Section 20(5) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended): Policy CS6: North Somerset's 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: Infill villages, smaller settlements and countryside. The report considers whether these policies are sound, having particular regard to the overall Core Strategy and its adopted housing requirement, and to the National Planning Policy Framework; and whether the policies are compliant with the legal requirements. The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 182) makes clear that to be sound, a Local Plan should be positively prepared; justified; effective and consistent with national policy.
2. The North Somerset Core Strategy was submitted for Examination in July 2011 and was adopted by the Council in April 2012. However, the adoption of the Core Strategy was challenged and the Court judged that Policy CS13, which set out the housing requirement, should be remitted to an earlier stage of the plan preparation process. The Court also remitted the policies which are now the subject of this report; these were confirmed as lawful, but it was considered that the re-examination of Policy CS13 could result in consequential alterations to them.
3. Following a further Examination into Policy CS13, a modification was made to that policy raising the housing requirement to a minimum of 20,985 homes (or 1,049 dwellings per annum). The Inspector at the time recognised the limitations of the evidence base but found Policy CS13, as modified, sound subject to there being a review in the short term based on an up-to-date full objectively assessed need for housing. Paragraph 3.190 of the Core Strategy contains a commitment to review Policy CS13 by the production of a joint development plan by the West of England authorities with adoption by the end of 2018. Policy CS13 was adopted following the Secretary of State's letter to the Council of 18 September 2015. Its housing requirement has the full weight of an adopted development plan policy.
4. Submitted Policies CS14, CS28, CS30 and CS31 contain the Council's proposed modifications to seek to accommodate the new housing requirement contained in Policy CS13, but otherwise their wording has not much changed from the remitted versions. These submitted policies are the subject of this report.
5. The starting point for the Examination is the assumption that the local authority has submitted what it considers to be a set of sound policies.
6. In accordance with section 20(7C) of the 2004 Act, the Council requested that I should make any modifications needed to rectify matters that make the submitted policies unsound or not legally compliant and thus incapable of being adopted. These Main Modifications are set out in the Appendix and are discussed in this report.
7. The Main Modifications that are necessary for soundness all relate to matters that were discussed at the Examination hearings. Following these discussions,

the Council prepared a schedule of proposed Main Modifications and this schedule has been subject to public consultation for six weeks. I have taken account of the consultation responses in coming to my conclusions in this report.

8. The 'Duty to Cooperate' does not apply to this Core Strategy, or to the policies which are the subject of this report, because the Plan was formally submitted before the relevant date set by legislation. Paragraph 25 of the Inspector's report on the Examination into Policy CS13 (Document CC/04) explains this in more detail. The matter was not disputed during the course of this Examination and it is not necessary to go further into the subject here.

Assessment of Soundness

Main Issues

9. Taking account of all the representations, written evidence and the discussions that took place at the examination hearings, the main issues are as follows.
 - Soundness of process: whether the submitted policies have been prepared in accordance with a sound process; in particular, whether an appropriate approach was taken to sustainability appraisal and whether alternative strategies should have been investigated for the distribution of development
 - Soundness of content: whether the submitted policies are capable of delivering the housing requirement established in Policy CS13 of the adopted Core Strategy whilst remaining consistent with the Core Strategy's other policies, its overall strategy and with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Soundness of process

10. The Sustainability Appraisal which was prepared for the originally submitted Core Strategy (Document SD/07) assessed a range of housing delivery options in relation to Policy CS13 including a Regional Strategy (RS)-derived figure much higher than that now adopted in Policy CS13. It also assessed approaches towards the spatial strategy set out in Policy CS14. The original policies which contained the spatial strategy were therefore formulated through a process that included sustainability appraisal. The SA process was not found defective by the Inspector at that time. A further supplementary SA was produced during the formulation of modified Policy CS13 (Document RED/09) and that policy was found sound by the Inspector who examined it. During the course of the current Examination the Council prepared a Sustainability Appraisal Supplementary Report (Document CC/28). The consultation period for this document closed during the hearings.
11. The submitted policies with their increased housing requirement have not altered the essence of the spatial strategy of the originally submitted Core Strategy (see Paragraph 34) which was subject to adequate SA during the course of the plan's preparation. The spatial strategy remains in accordance with the Core Strategy's Priority Objectives and the National Planning Policy Framework. The Supplementary Appraisal Sustainability Report (CC/28)

highlights some potential effects arising from the increase in the housing numbers, notably the greater challenge to the objective towards greater self-containment at Weston-super-Mare and Nailsea, traffic movements, loss of agricultural land and tensions between the definition of settlement boundaries and the greater need for peripheral development to meet housing requirements. However, these identified effects fall far short of indicating that the spatial strategy embodied in the remitted policies would no longer be sound, effective, or consistent with the remainder of the plan.

12. Therefore SA had already been carried out in relation to the original Core Strategy and was still valid. National Planning Practice Guidance advises that modifications to the SA should be considered only where appropriate and proportionate to the level of change being made to the Local Plan. A change is likely to be significant if it substantially alters the Plan and/or is likely to give rise to significant effects. In this case the change has not significantly altered the plan spatially and the Council's response has been proportionate. It can be concluded that both in terms of numbers and distribution the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy represented by the submitted policies have been properly evaluated through the process of SA.
13. The Sustainability Appraisal Supplementary Report rightly came to the conclusion that there was no reasonable alternative to the approach taken by the submitted policies. The Core Strategy is already half way through its plan period of 2006 to 2026 and a significant proportion of the housing requirement is already committed through the grant of planning permissions. The plan's strategy as established by the remitted policies has been followed by the Council for a number of years and it is worth recalling that those policies were not found unsound by the Court; they were considered perfectly lawful. It is neither reasonable nor realistic to think that, at this advanced stage in the life of the plan, alternatives might be devised to take the settlement strategy in a different direction. The additional housing provision required to reach the requirement is a small proportion of the total so any alternative strategy could only have an effect at the margin.
14. To conclude, the Council's approach to the preparation of the submitted policies has been sound. It was neither necessary nor appropriate to go through an exercise of evaluating reasonable alternatives at this stage.

Soundness of content

Housing provision

15. To be sound, the submitted policies must be capable of delivering the housing requirement set out in Policy CS13 of a minimum of 20,985 dwellings from 2006 to 2026. The policies must also play their part in helping to maintain a 5 year supply of housing land in the district. The purpose of considering housing supply in this Examination is to make sure that these aims can be achieved through the submitted policies. This report does not look in detail at sites, or go into detail on site availability, because that is the job of the forthcoming Site Allocations Plan. Rather, it looks at the broad issues concerning the achievement of the overall requirement and considers whether the policies are fit to deliver it.

16. The Council states that the residual requirement – that is, the number of additional dwellings that need to be made provision for as a result of the increase in the housing requirement to 20,985, taking into account completions and commitments – was 1,715 dwellings using figures at the base date of April 2015. It adds that sufficient sites will be proposed as allocations in the forthcoming Site Allocations Plan to deliver that residual requirement. However, there are a number of factors that put the strategy at risk.
17. The distribution of development is weighted heavily towards Weston-super-Mare and Weston Villages. Submitted Policies CS14 and CS28 increase the minimum requirement by some 3,000 dwellings in comparison with the remitted policies, so delivery here is critical to the success of the spatial strategy and the delivery of the overall requirement. The emphasis in Weston-super-Mare is on regeneration. With the Council owning key sites and the Homes and Communities Agency involved, the probability is that the bulk of the overall housing requirement can be delivered within the plan period. But some of the sites in Weston-super-Mare will be complicated to develop, with demolition, piling and remediation involved in certain cases. There is potential for slippage, as is often the case with complicated urban sites.
18. Weston Villages also account for a substantial part of the District's housing requirement, with submitted Policies CS14 and CS30 now allocating 1,000 more dwellings to these locations compared with the remitted policies. The development trajectory is set out in Chart 3 of Document CC-CS/2 and in Document CC/24. The anticipated build rate grows rapidly in 2017-18 and continues at a high level throughout the remainder of the plan period. But there are risks to delivery at the anticipated rates from three potential factors. Firstly, there is the employment-led approach set out in Policy CS20 of 1.5 jobs per dwelling. The Council is taking various pragmatic measures such as flexibility over employment uses and contributions towards floorspace delivery to bring forward both housing and employment, as is evident from the Weston Villages SPD and other documentation and, at present, there is no strong evidence to show that the former is being held back by the latter. But the Council have accepted a lower target in the early stages with the anticipation that, to deliver the overall employment target of 1.5 jobs per dwelling, job provision will ratchet up later. It will be a challenge to raise employment provision to the planned level. Secondly, projects of this size inevitably encounter practical obstacles to implementation. Significant progress has been made towards infrastructure provision (as recorded in CC/27 of April 2016) but there is a lot more to do. Thirdly, build rates can vary according to the prevailing economic climate. Just a modest slippage in delivery against the indicated trajectory would diminish the contribution of this source towards the total requirement.
19. There is also uncertainty over planning permission lapse rates. The Council has applied a lapse rate of 9% to small site permissions which reflects the average lapse rate for the three years up to 2011, a figure derived from research for the 2011 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It has not applied a lapse rate to larger sites because it says the average lapse rate between 2006 and 2011 was 0.73% of the total dwelling stock. But some objectors argue that the lapse rate is higher – based on their calculations, around 2% on large sites and 24% based on historic rates on small sites. In reality neither

approach is especially reliable because the data from both calculations is derived from a short period which included both economic growth and recession and may not be indicative of future lapse rates, which could increase or decrease in response to economic prospects. The information supplied by the parties reinforces rather than dispels the uncertainty around this matter. There is a possibility that higher lapse rates than allowed for by the Council could occur in the next few years with a negative effect on housing supply if adequate flexibility is not built into the policies.

20. In addition, the Council factors in a number of old allocations that have not come forward for development; it says that these will be included as allocations in the Site Allocations Plan. There are 372 units on 9 sites that previously were allocated for development in the North Somerset Replacement Local Plan (2007). In the Examination the Council indicated that 8 of these sites were still considered suitable, totalling 332 units. The fact that proposals have not come forward suggests in certain cases either unwillingness to develop or impediments to development. Some sites now have development interest but others have active uses and there is no certainty that all these sites will come forward.
21. The Council also relies on draft allocations in the consultation draft of the Sites and Policies Plan, which includes sites in Weston-super-Mare and one site in north-west Nailsea. The expected contribution from these sites is substantial but, as with other old allocations there is potential for slippage. Moreover, some caution needs to be exercised regarding delivery from sites identified in the draft Site Allocations Plan, which at the time of writing is at an early stage in the process towards adoption.
22. The conclusion to be drawn from the foregoing is that, whilst there is no reason to anticipate the failure of the strategy, there is potential for slippage and under-delivery. The Council has been optimistic in its approach to the residual requirement that needs to be provided for through the Site Allocations Plan. The wording of the submitted policies is in many cases too restrictive to provide the flexibility necessary to ensure the delivery of sufficient homes.
23. The 5 year housing land supply was not interrogated in detail during the Examination, as this is not an Examination into a complete plan but concerns the spatial distribution of a previously-adopted housing requirement. However, the submitted policies should be capable of supporting the maintenance of a 5 year supply of deliverable land and there will be something of a gap before the Site Allocations Plan is adopted. I was specifically asked by Examination participants to give a view on the methodology for calculating the 5 year supply in the light of evidence before the Examination to assist the Council in the next stage of its work on the Site Allocations Plan. I did so, but the following comments come with a major qualification: the 5 year housing land supply position can change quite quickly and it is important that the Council keeps under continuous review all the information on the subject.
24. I reached the conclusion by the last day of the hearings that the appropriate methodology was the Sedgfield approach to the shortfall plus a buffer of 5% brought forward from later in the plan period. This was communicated to the Council and the parties then present, and was my view at the time based on

the evidence.

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.
26. As regards the buffer, I came to the conclusion (having regard to *Cotswold District Council v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and Fay and Son and Hannick Homes and Development Limited* [2013] EWHC 3719 (Admin), and to the Planning Practice Guidance) that there is no record of persistent under-delivery in the District over the whole economic cycle. The Council's record of delivery (Document CC-CS/2, Chart 5) was acceptable during the period from 2000 until the recession beginning in 2008. The Joint Replacement Structure Plan required delivery of 14,900 dwellings, equating to 993 per annum. This was in fact almost the same as the number delivered. The number of homes delivered dropped significantly from 2008/9 and since then it has been well below the revised Core Strategy requirement of 1,049 dwellings per annum, but until quite recently the housing market and the wider economy were in severe recession. Moreover, the Council believed for much of this time that it was seeking to deliver against a lower target. Having regard to all the evidence over the economic cycle, I considered that there was no record of *persistent* under-delivery and a buffer of 5% is appropriate.
27. At April 2016, on the Council's calculation, there was a 5.12 year supply of deliverable housing land in the District based on a 5% buffer and the Sedgefield methodology. This was not tested at Examination but it is clear that there is a very small comfort margin and the 5 year supply could easily be jeopardised by adverse combinations of circumstances described above. For example, slippage at Weston Villages in the early stages would diminish the contribution of these sites to the 5 year supply of deliverable land, since the sites are expected to deliver 3,061 dwellings from April 2016 to April 2021 (CC-CS/2 Chart 4). Obviously it will be important for enough land to be allocated in the Site Allocations Plan (submitted in draft as Document CC/10). The difficulty is that there is an acknowledged shortfall in housing provision which needs to be addressed over the next 5 years and the Site Allocations Plan is some way from adoption. Moreover, it cannot be expected to identify or cover all the sites coming forward.
28. Although the submitted policies which are the subject of this report have been changed to take into account the increased housing requirement, their wording is otherwise largely unchanged and this is the main factor that makes them unsound in the circumstances. Policies relating to development in settlements are couched in restrictive terms and there is insistence on development within settlement boundaries, which the Council has indicated will not (on the whole) be changed within the life of the plan. This would make it very difficult in practice to meet the raised housing requirement. It is necessary therefore to introduce some additional flexibility into the submitted policies. This must be enough to give the plan greater resilience and ensure that the housing

requirement is met and a 5 year housing land supply is maintained, without substantially altering the nature of the spatial strategy embodied in the policies.

29. This will involve being more positive about sustainable development at each of the settlements, with less restrictive and more positive wording. It will also involve accepting a certain amount of development of an appropriate scale outside, but adjoining, the settlement boundaries which can come forward not only from plan-led site allocations but also through planning applications for sustainable housing development on unallocated sites. This is what in effect the Council is putting forward through its MMs. While this may be a challenging prospect for some, it will enable the local planning authority to maintain influence over the location of new housing development. If such flexibility is not built in to the plan, the outcome, less attractive from the Council's perspective, will be a series of appeal decisions based around housing land supply arguments, with a consequent loss of local planning authority control.
30. This report will now go on to look at the individual policies.

Policy CS6: North Somerset's Green Belt

31. The submitted policy is unchanged from the remitted version. Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan. This is not the preparation of a whole Local Plan, nor is it a review of the Local Plan; it is the resubmission of a small number of policies and it is clear that, subject to Main Modifications, the increased housing requirement of this plan can be satisfactorily accommodated through the submitted policies without requiring a review of the Green Belt. There are no exceptional circumstances to justify a Green Belt review in this context. For the future, it is intended to carry out a review of the Green Belt across the West of England as part of the process of producing the Joint Spatial Plan.
32. The policy states that the Green Belt boundaries will be unchanged during the plan period. That will not preclude any subsequent plan from reviewing those boundaries. Any subsequent local plan review, taken through the appropriate route to adoption, is capable of superseding the current plan and all the wording within it.

Policy CS14: Distribution of New Housing

33. The remitted policy contained the numbers of dwellings allocated to the various categories of settlement in the settlement hierarchy under the former Policy CS13 housing requirement of a minimum of 14,000. The submitted policy changes the number to reflect the change to 20,985 dwellings in adopted Policy CS13. **MM01** rounds those figures up or down to reflect the latest assessments of developable land and planning permissions, as shown in the following table. It does not reflect a change in the approach to the spatial strategy, nor does it alter the approach that would be taken to sustainable sites at settlements within the hierarchy.

Area	Net additional dwellings Original Core Strategy Policy CS14	Net additional dwellings Submitted Policy CS14	Net additional dwellings As per modification MM01
Weston urban area	3,458	6,459	6,300
Weston Villages	5,500	6,500	6,500
Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead	3,715	4,976	5,100
Service Villages	805	1,861	2,100
Other settlements and countryside	522	1,189	985
Total	14,000	20,985	20,985

34. Despite the increase in the housing requirement, neither the submitted policies nor the main modifications have changed the spatial strategy. The increased housing requirement has been distributed among the towns and villages in such a way as to reflect and support the previously-identified hierarchy and support the Priority Objectives, notably concentration at Weston-super-Mare, enhancements and regeneration in North Somerset's towns and support for the existing Green Belt. Weston-super-Mare and Weston Villages continue to take the largest number of dwellings, which is right because this approach reflects the need to create more sustainable settlements in locations well served by a range of facilities and with a good choice of transport. A substantial increase in the number of dwellings is also allocated to the second tier settlements, with more of the growth arising from the revision to Policy CS13 going to Nailsea because it has fewer constraints than Clevedon and Portishead. Increases have also been allocated to Service Villages, but these villages are still allocated a considerably smaller proportion of the overall total. Again, this is right, because they are notably smaller with lower order facilities.
35. However, as discussed in Paragraph 28 above, the wording of the submitted policy is not sound because it would be an impediment to the achievement of the housing requirement. It refers to most development outside Weston taking place *in* Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead, and smaller scale development *in* service villages, within settlement boundaries or through site allocations. This highlights the tension between the need to increase housing supply to meet the requirement and the restrictions imposed by the settlement boundaries. The policy would especially work against sustainable smaller sites coming forward adjacent to the settlement boundary. **MM01** achieves greater flexibility in housing supply by removing some of the restrictive wording. It refers to development of a suitable scale taking place *at* these settlements.

36. MM01 also contains a useful explanation of the purpose of settlement boundaries and allows for development on unallocated sites outside but abutting settlement boundaries in particular categories of settlement subject to certain size limitations.
37. The provision contained within MM01 regarding development outside settlement boundaries is essential to ensure that the appropriate amount of housing is delivered. Moreover, the approximate limits to such developments contained within **MM02** (policy CS28: Weston super Mare), **MM04** (Policy CS31: Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead) and **MM05** (Policy CS32: Service Villages) of about 75, 50 and 25 dwellings respectively are justified. It is true that some schemes in excess of these figures have in the past been granted permission on sites in Yatton and elsewhere, but the Council is perfectly within its rights, in the interests of the proper planning of the area, to put a figure on the maximum size for individual developments on unallocated sites that it considers compatible with the settlement hierarchy and spatial strategy. The policy wording will enable additional housing land to be brought forward on smaller sites immediately adjacent to settlements, which will improve the flexibility of the plan and reduce the risk of housing under-supply whilst remaining consistent with the spatial strategy. The word "abutting" is appropriate because it is normally in the interests of good planning and design to ensure that new development adjoins and integrates with the settlement and does not intrude excessively into open countryside.
38. The size limitations have the advantage of providing greater certainty, and they are approximate so can be flexed in accordance with local circumstances. Larger unallocated developments would present a significant risk to the spatial strategy. It is entirely appropriate in accordance with the plan-led system that larger sites should be brought forward in local plan or neighbourhood plan allocations.
39. The categorisation of service and infill villages has been the subject of analysis by the Council in "Assessing the Sustainability and Settlement Hierarchy of Rural Settlements in North Somerset" (Doc CC/15) and the hierarchy is set out in Vision 6 and Vision 7 of the Plan. Settlements vary widely, the identification of a settlement hierarchy inevitably raises issues of consistency, and studies such as CC/15 are often criticised for reductionist analysis. Nonetheless, CC/15 does contain a substantial amount of survey data and it is clear from evidence and on the ground that the classification is a reasonable reflection of the size and range of services of the various settlements.
40. Yatton is served by rail, it is a large service village, and a substantial amount of housing development is under way. On the other hand it is clear from any inspection that Yatton is substantially smaller and of a lower order in terms of services than Clevedon, Portishead and Nailsea, which are small towns. It is appropriately categorised. Policy CS32 as modified by MM05 allows for development on unallocated sites adjoining but beyond the settlement boundary of up to 25 dwellings and larger sites may be allocated as appropriate so the categorisation of Yatton as a Service Village does not prevent sustainable development from coming forward on suitable sites. The reasons for this modification are set out in paragraphs 67 to 70 of this report.
41. Sandford is not included as a Service Village primarily on access to key

services within the village: neighbouring Winscombe has a wider range. The Council's evidence base is not defective, and the categorisation is not unreasonable. Whilst arguments can be made that the wider group of villages in the locality together contain a broader range of facilities, the fact is that neither the re-categorisation of Sandford as a Service Village, nor the relaxation of Policy CS33 to allow more development there, are required to make the policy sound.

42. The policy states that priority will be given to the re-use of previously-developed land. This does not represent a sequential approach; it is in step with the Framework, which indicates that planning policies should encourage the re-use of such land. As regards the remainder of this part of the policy, it is not necessary to require compliance with other policies of the plan, because the plan is read as a whole, but the inclusion of this sentence does not make the policy unsound. It is not necessary for the policy to require contributions towards rail infrastructure or to include additional wording in respect of drainage; delivery policy is set out in Core Strategy Policy CS34.
43. The projected housing trajectory which was included at paragraph 3.197 of the reasoned justification has apparently been omitted from the modified version. Whilst it is not a matter of soundness to include such a table, it would be a useful addition to the plan.
44. The policy as proposed to be modified would provide an appropriate degree of flexibility to enable the housing requirements of the plan to be met within an appropriate settlement hierarchy. MM01 is required to make the policy sound.

Policy CS19: Strategic Gaps

45. It is not proposed to change this policy from the remitted version. The plan does not set the boundaries of strategic gaps; that is the job of the subsequent Sites and Policies DPD. The reference in Policy CS30 to strategic gaps between Weston Villages and Hutton and Locking is dealt with under that policy (see paragraph 52). There is no need to revisit Policy CS19 to accommodate the housing requirement of the Plan.

Policy CS28: Weston-super-Mare

46. The submitted policy increases the overall number of homes for Weston-super-Mare and Weston Villages together to 10,914. However, Policy CS28 does not reflect the concept of a minimum housing requirement as set out in Policy CS14 and it talks about focusing new development *in* the town. This does not recognise the reality that much of the growth will be at Weston Villages outside the current urban area and that other sustainable sites could come forward to help meet the substantially increased housing requirement. Moreover, the policy requires development to meet a set of wide ranging criteria which, self-evidently, not every development can meet, particularly during a period of substantial housing expansion. These are unnecessarily restrictive. The policy as submitted is therefore not sound.
47. **MM02** raises the overall number of homes in Weston-super-Mare including Weston Villages to 12,800. The evidence indicates that the town and its extensions are capable of accommodating this increased housing requirement,

subject to the concerns expressed in Paragraphs 28 and 29 which point to the need for greater flexibility in the Plan. In this regard, MM02 expresses the housing figure as a minimum, refers to development at rather than in the town, and sets out objectives for the town to which development should have regard, rather than a set of requirements for every development. It also allows for housing sites adjoining the settlement boundary but indicates that those in excess of about 75 dwellings must be brought forward as allocations. These changes make the policy more realistic and flexible.

48. The appropriateness of the limitation in MM02 of about 75 dwellings imposed on unallocated sites outside the settlement boundary is discussed in Paragraph 37 above. The limit will allow modest developments to come forward to assist in meeting the housing requirements. It does not put a brake on larger schemes but recognises that, in a plan-led system, it is appropriate for such sites to be brought forward as allocations. It would ensure that the larger sites had the benefit of full assessment and public involvement through the plan-making process. The Council says it has selected the figure on the basis that it is appropriate in relation to the size of the settlement. The approach provides an appropriate balance between encouraging growth and maintaining the role of the plan-led system. Those landowners or developers who have larger sites have a clear route for taking them forward (if they are appropriate) in future local plan documents.
49. There is nothing unsound in the Council resisting strategic development east of the M5 as part of its spatial plan for the area.
50. MM02 is required to make the policy sound.

Policy CS30: Weston Villages

51. The submitted policy indicates that about 6,500 new homes will be accommodated at Weston Villages, an increase from the 5,500 homes referred to in the remitted policy. The Council has demonstrated the ability of the site to accommodate this scale of development. This is a policy in which the Council does not wish to set the requirement as a "minimum", preferring the word "about". In the context of large strategic allocations of a finite nature, defined by masterplans, this is reasonable.
52. The submitted policy makes it a requirement of the Weston Villages development to have strategic gaps between the Weston Villages and Hutton and Locking to protect their character and identity. The Council also proposes a modification to add a reference to green corridors. It is entirely sound for the Council, in the interests of the proper planning of the Weston Villages developments, to seek the provision of green corridors as part of the overall masterplan to contain the spread of the development and provide visual relief and green infrastructure within reach of the new residents. The actual extent of the green corridors has been identified in the Weston Villages SPD Masterplan. The picture is different as regards strategic gaps. According to Policy CS19, these will be identified through the Sites and Policies Development Plan Document, so the reference to the gaps in Policy CS30 should be deleted, but the explanatory text may refer to the intention to define such gaps in the forthcoming Sites and Policies DPD. **MM03** incorporates these changes.

53. It is not the role of this report to judge whether extensions to Weston Villages outside the masterplan development area are appropriate; that is a matter that should be raised with the Council in respect of the Site Allocations Plan or any future plan review but it is not necessary to change either Policy CS30 or indeed Policy CS33 below to facilitate it or to make the policies sound.
54. Whilst the Council has demonstrated a flexible approach towards employment provision in relation to its requirement for 1.5 jobs per dwelling, it is reasonable to continue to require 37.7 ha of B class employment land within the allocated employment sites rather than simply employment land, which might include a range of uses other than business.
55. It is reasonable to include a reference to a Junction 21 relief road or alternative given the scale of the development, even if the precise details are not known at this stage; this is included in the Joint Local Transport Plan (2011).
56. It is not necessary to include additional policy wording to protect the motte and bailey adjacent to Locking Head Farm, which is a scheduled monument, or the Grade II listed Locking Farmhouse, because Policy CS5 protects heritage assets and there is no need to repeat the requirement in individual policies.
57. The Council should give consideration to updating the reasoned justification to this policy, notably by ensuring consistency of approach with the policy and by deleting the references to RPG10. This is not however a main modification.
58. MM03 is required to make the policy sound.

Policy CS31: Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead

59. Remitted Policy CS31 indicates that provision will be made for 454 houses at Clevedon, 210 at Nailsea and 3,051 at Portishead. This is changed by the submitted policy to 812, 917 and 3,247 respectively. The changes in respect of Clevedon and Portishead largely reflect existing commitments so the largest change is at Nailsea.
60. Unfortunately the policy wording does not reflect the way that the District's overall housing requirement in CS13 is expressed as a minimum. Moreover the wording of the submitted policy is too restrictive. It allows for development "within the settlement boundaries" at Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead, and it allows for mixed use schemes adjacent to the boundary in Nailsea where it meets identified local needs, is supported by the community and changes to the settlement boundary have been addressed in a separate DPD. There are further caveats: development (even within the boundary) should increase self-containment, ensure the availability of jobs for the town and catchment and improve the town's role as a service centre. There are other difficulties with the policy wording. It is not clear what is meant by community support; it is generally acknowledged that housing development, even where sustainable, does not necessarily attract local support. Similarly there is a lack of clarity about what constitutes local need and the position regarding wider market need. It is unlikely that all developments would be able to meet the requirements of Policy CS31; instead, these requirements would be likely to act as a brake on housing development contrary to the Framework's objective

of boosting the supply of housing.

61. Given the considerable increase in the housing requirement allocated to these towns and the need for greater flexibility discussed in this report, the policy needs to avoid setting so many hurdles that are not only difficult to achieve but are capable of misinterpretation, and it needs to allow the opportunity for sustainable housing development of an appropriate size to come forward outside the settlement boundaries. Nailsea Town Council and some others point out the need to provide a better range of homes in the town to encourage a more balanced community to develop. This is an important objective but its achievement is likely to be impeded by the policy wording as submitted.
62. **MM04** updates the housing requirements with a proposed 700 homes at Clevedon, 1,100 at Nailsea and 3,300 at Portishead, and indicates that it is a minimum delivery figure. It allows for housing development within and adjoining the settlement boundaries subject to a number of relevant considerations including design, scale and infrastructure. The local support requirement is omitted and the issue of local housing need is changed to require a broad range of housing types to meet all requirements. Residential proposals in excess of about 50 dwellings outside the settlement boundary should be brought forward as allocations. These limits are discussed in Paragraph 37 but the amount indicated is reasonable, proportionate to the size of the settlements and their infrastructure, and important as a means of ensuring that the spatial strategy is not jeopardised by large schemes brought forward outside the plan-led process. The supporting text needs to be brought into line with the policy by making it clear that the 50 dwelling limit applies to development beyond, not inside, the settlement boundary. This change is included within MM04. The reference to “development of an appropriate scale” relates to design rather than size of development, and is acceptable. The words “enhance overall sustainability” are perhaps superfluous given the approach in the Framework and the Council should either consider omitting them or adding some explanation in the reasoned justification, but they do not make the policy unsound.
63. MM04 also removes the indicative number of jobs from the policy, instead indicating that employment uses should be appropriate in scale to the role and function of the town in accordance with Core Strategy CS20, with support for the regeneration of previously developed land.
64. Nailsea might or might not have a greater capacity than 1,100 dwellings but the figure is expressed as a minimum so the flexibility exists to bring forward other sustainable proposals. The policy as modified does not preclude sites coming forward through the plan process or smaller sites abutting the settlement boundary being brought forward as planning applications.
65. It is not appropriate to review the extent of Green Belt around Nailsea as part of the work on the submitted policies since those policies (subject to the MMs) deliver a sound spatial strategy and are likely to meet the development needs of the District. The exceptional circumstances do not exist for a review in this context. The opportunity will exist to review the Green Belt through a future plan review.

66. MM04 is required to make the policy sound.

Policy CS32: Service Villages

67. The submitted policy allows for small scale development appropriate to the size and character of the village, and allows residential development within settlement boundaries. Development providing local benefits and supported by the local community that cannot be accommodated within settlement boundaries must be brought forward as an allocation.
68. Given that modified Policy CS14 increases the housing requirement in service villages from 805 to a minimum of 1,861, and that there are questions over the ability of the existing commitments within the District to deliver both the overall and the 5 year requirement, this very restrictive approach is unsound because it would act as an impediment to the achievement of the housing requirement. Moreover, there are other difficulties with the submitted policy. It would not be appropriate, and would be potentially unlawful, to seek undefined "local benefits"; the term is imprecise and if these did not relate fairly to the development they would not meet the legal tests in the CIL Regulations. Comments regarding community support are as discussed in Paragraph 60 above. It is evident that, as it stands, this is a policy which would generally restrict housing development to a few small sites within the settlements. Additional flexibility is required in order to bring forward housing land to meet the requirement.
69. Neither significant restrictions on housing development, nor substantial amounts of additional housing, represent a sound or balanced approach towards settlements which contain a range of services and facilities but which are, in essence, still villages. Service villages are quite capable of handling, without harm, a range of smaller schemes within or adjoining their settlement boundaries, designed in keeping with their surroundings. There will be opportunities to make a contribution to the overall housing requirement whilst meeting some local needs and helping to support local facilities. There is no reason why development of a relatively modest scale adjoining settlement boundaries should threaten the character of the villages. However, larger-scale schemes, or substantial cumulative growth, would be more likely to alter the character of the villages, place undue burdens on infrastructure and the road network, and threaten the spatial strategy; it is not without reason that these concerns have been raised by a number of communities.
70. **MM05** strikes the right balance by supporting new development within or adjoining the settlement boundaries, whilst ensuring that the form, design and scale of development respects the local character and reinforces local distinctiveness, has regard to housing requirements and does not have significant adverse impacts on infrastructure. It also aims to limit cumulative impacts and indicates that sites in excess of about 25 dwellings outside the settlement boundaries must be brought forward as allocations. This is neither too restrictive nor too liberal; it is a sound modification that allows the service villages to contribute more to the overall requirement whilst avoiding development of an excessive scale with the negative impacts described above. MM05 is required to make the policy sound.

Policy CS33: Infill villages, smaller settlements and countryside

71. Submitted Policy CS33 allows for development within the infill villages of one or two dwellings as infill, or small-scale community-led residential redevelopment with environmental and community benefits. It also allows for affordable housing and small scale sympathetic employment development.
72. It is reasonable for the policy to take a more tightly controlled approach towards infill villages; they are less well served by community and transport infrastructure and their small size means that larger scale residential development is much more likely to be out of character and more likely to erode their identity, as well as harming the spatial strategy. For these reasons, and given the important relationship between the settlements and the surrounding countryside, the requirement for development to be confined within settlement boundaries is sound in respect of infill villages.
73. However, as with some other policies, Policy CS33 is unnecessarily restrictive towards development within such villages and likely to create unnecessary impediments to sustainable development. The villages take different forms and there will be many sustainable development and redevelopment opportunities which do not fit into the category of infill comprising one or two dwellings. These can be brought forward by the market and do not need to be community-led, which in any case is not a clearly defined term. In addition, it is unclear what the requirement for environmental and community “benefits” would entail in practice and demands for such benefits could be in conflict with the legal requirements of the CIL regulations if they were unnecessary for the development to go ahead.
74. The policy requires additional flexibility and clarity to enable sustainable development to be brought forward. Such development should support the villages and contribute to meeting local and wider housing needs without harming the character of the villages, the countryside and the spatial strategy. **MM06** achieves this. It requires new housing development (not “redevelopment” as in the published modification, which was a typographical error) to respect the scale and character of infill villages, have regard to local needs, and avoid significant adverse impacts on services and infrastructure, but it removes the specific size restrictions and the references to community-led schemes, and community and environmental benefits. Unlike MMs 02, 04 and 05 it does not allow for residential development beyond settlement boundaries other than rural exception sites for affordable housing and, in certain circumstances, community facilities, but for the reasons given in Paragraph 72 this is a sound approach. The requirement for size, type, tenure and range of housing to “have regard to” local needs is acceptable; it would be difficult for the Plan to define them since they can vary over time but it is perfectly reasonable to expect developers to discuss the mix with the Council when formulating proposals.
75. In respect of smaller settlements and the countryside, the text is clarified but is basically unchanged in meaning from earlier versions. It allows for replacement dwellings, residential conversions and subdivisions and dwellings for essential rural workers. This is acceptable as a means of conserving the character of the countryside. The Plan must be read as a whole and the policies, as proposed to be modified, allow for development opportunities up to

a certain size adjoining the settlement boundaries of Weston-super-Mare, Clevedon, Portishead and Nailsea, and the service villages; and they also allow for local plan and neighbourhood plan allocations to be made beyond settlement boundaries above these limits.

76. Policy CS33 is consistent with the Framework as regards affordable housing in the Green Belt. Paragraph 89 of the Framework says that the construction of new buildings is inappropriate in the Green Belt, but exceptions to this include limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the local plan. Hence such development can be an exception in the Green Belt if local plan policies allow for it. Policy CS33 chooses not to allow for it but adequate provision is made for affordable housing within settlement boundaries and on rural exception sites. This is an acceptable and sound approach.
77. MM06 is required to make the Plan sound.

Consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework

78. Submitted policies CS14, CS28, CS30, CS31, CS32 and CS33 are not consistent with the Framework. Their restrictive wording indicates that they are not positively prepared, and they are likely to hinder the Framework objective of delivering the housing requirement and boosting significantly the supply of housing. The main modifications ensure that they are framed in a more positive manner and provide the policies with enough flexibility to help deliver the housing requirement.

Conclusion on the submitted policies and main modifications

79. The submitted policies with the exception of Policies CS6 and CS19 are not sound for the reasons given. The main modifications listed in the Appendix are necessary to make the policies sound.

Assessment of Legal Compliance

80. My examination of the compliance of submitted Policies with the legal requirements is summarised in the table below. I conclude that the Policies meet them all.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS	
Local Development Scheme (LDS)	The Core Strategy has long been included in the LDS. The examination of the remitted policies is referred to in the latest version of the LDS approved on 20 October 2015.
Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and relevant regulations	The SCI was adopted in March 2015 and consultation has been compliant with the requirements therein, including the consultation on the proposed 'main modification' changes (MMs).
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	Sustainability Appraisal was prepared for the originally submitted Core Strategy which assessed a

	range of housing delivery options and approaches towards the spatial strategy. A supplementary SA was produced during the formulation of modified Policy CS13 (Document RED/09) and that policy was found sound by the Inspector who examined it. During the course of the Examination the Council prepared a further Sustainability Appraisal Supplementary Report (Document CC/28) in respect of the currently submitted policies. This is adequate.
Appropriate Assessment (AA)	The North Somerset Core Strategy was adopted in April 2012 and was subject to a high level HRA assessment, which was later updated to take account of the increased housing requirement in policy CS13 of 20,985 dwellings for 2006-2026.
National Policy	The submitted policies comply with national policy except where modifications are recommended.
2004 Act (as amended) and 2012 Regulations.	The submitted policies comply with the Act and the Regulations.

Overall Conclusion and Recommendation

- 1. The Council's submitted policies with the exception of Policies CS6 and CS19 have deficiencies in relation to soundness for the reasons set out above which mean that I recommend non-adoption of those policies as they stand, in accordance with Section 20(7A) of the 2004 Act. These deficiencies have been discussed in the main issues set out above.**
- 2. The Council has requested that I recommend main modifications to make those policies sound and/or legally compliant and capable of adoption. I conclude that with the recommended main modifications set out in the Appendix, the submitted policies satisfy the requirements of Section 20(5) of the 2004 Act and meet the criteria for soundness in the National Planning Policy Framework.**

Jonathan Bore

Inspector

This report is accompanied by the Appendix containing the Main Modifications.

APPENDIX

SCHEDULE OF MAIN MODIFICATIONS

Main Modification	Section	Proposed text
CC-MM01	Policy CS14 Distribution of new housing	<p>New housing development 2006–2026 will be accommodated in accordance with the following hierarchy:</p> <p>Weston-super-Mare will be the focus for new residential development within North Somerset, including the strategic allocation at Weston Villages. Development at Weston will be employment-led.</p> <p>Outside Weston, most additional development will take place at the towns of Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead on sites within or abutting settlement boundaries, but outside the Green Belt.</p> <p>At service villages there will be opportunities for small-scale development of an appropriate scale either within or abutting settlement boundaries or through site allocations. Elsewhere development will be more strictly controlled although appropriate development will be acceptable within the settlement boundaries of infill villages.</p> <p>Settlement boundaries define the area within which residential development is acceptable in principle, subject to compliance with other policies in the plan. Development outside the settlement boundaries will only be acceptable where a site is allocated in a Local Plan or where it comprises sustainable development which accords with the criteria set out in the relevant settlement policies (CS28, CS31, CS32 and CS33).</p> <p>Priority will be given to the re-use of previously developed land. In all cases, new housing development must not conflict with environmental protection, Green Belt, nature conservation or any other relevant policies of the Development Plan and should provide any necessary mitigating or compensatory measures to address any adverse implications.</p>

Residential density will be determined primarily by local character and good quality design. The target net density across North Somerset is 40 dwellings per hectare, although this may be higher at highly accessible locations, and less in sensitive areas or where lower density development is positively encouraged.

The broad distribution of new dwellings will be a minimum of:

Area	Net additional dwellings 2006–2026
Weston urban area (excluding Weston Villages)	6,300
Weston Villages	6,500
Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead	5,100
Service villages	2,100
Other settlements and countryside	985
Total	20,985

This policy contributes towards achieving Priority Objectives 1 and 5.

Background

The distribution of new residential development in the Core Strategy reflects a broad settlement hierarchy based on well-established national, sub-regional and sustainability principles. It seeks to steer development to those locations where there are most opportunities for employment, services and transport accessibility.

The Core Strategy approach

Weston-super-Mare is the principal town within North Somerset and because of its size and range of functions and services, has the potential to be the most sustainable location for new residential development. Weston is therefore the focus for development within the district, provided that development is employment-led to secure regeneration and greater self-

		<p>containment.</p> <p>A significant proportion of the overall requirement will be met at the Weston Villages strategic allocation (see Policy CS30). Its detailed implementation is being guided by the Weston Villages Supplementary Planning Document. Elsewhere in the Weston urban area the majority of new residential development over and above existing commitments is likely to be delivered through town centre/gateway regeneration opportunities. Development at Weston will be employment-led in order to secure improved self-containment and reduced out-commuting.</p> <p>Elsewhere in North Somerset the scope for significant development is more limited resulting in a scale of development that is more clearly aligned to supporting the role and function of places in their individual localities. The three towns of Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead act as service centres for their surrounding areas and will be the focal points for locally significant scales of development, including provision for the majority of district housing provision outside of Weston. It is considered that these towns offer the range of services, facilities and employment which could contribute to reduced trip generation and increased self containment.</p> <p>In the three towns most of the growth is or has taken place at Portishead. Flexibility is introduced into the policy approach to support a suitable scale of development being delivered adjoining settlement boundaries of these towns. Clevedon and Portishead are both highly constrained by Green Belt and flood constraints, although there may be opportunities at Nailsea outside the Green Belt.</p> <p>In the rural areas the Core Strategy approach is to support an appropriate level of small scale growth which reflects the function and character of individual villages. Nine of the larger villages which support a wider range of facilities and act as a hub for surrounding areas are identified as Service Villages. Within and adjoining the settlement boundaries of the Service Villages small scale development may be appropriate subject to the criteria set out in Policy CS32. Proposals of a larger scale outside settlement boundaries must come forward as part of a formal site allocation with revision to the settlement boundary through the Local Plan or Neighbourhood Development Plan. In those other villages with a settlement boundary, development of an appropriate scale and character within settlement boundaries will be acceptable. Elsewhere, in order to reduce unsustainable sporadic or piecemeal development, new housing will be very strictly controlled.</p>
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		<p>Settlement boundaries for Weston-super-Mare, Clevedon, Nailsea, Portishead, the service villages and infilling villages will remain as defined in the Replacement Local Plan pending any alterations as part of any future Local Plan or Neighbourhood Development Plan. All other settlement boundaries will be deleted.</p> <p><u>How and where the policy will be delivered</u> There are existing site allocations in the Replacement Local Plan and these will be supplemented by additional sites in detailed Local Plans or Neighbourhood Development Plans as appropriate.</p> <p>Settlement boundaries as defined in the Replacement Local Plan will indicate the locations where new residential development is acceptable in principle. Settlement boundaries for those places outside Weston, Clevedon, Nailsea, Portishead, the Service Villages and the Infill Villages have been deleted. Amendments to settlement boundaries will be addressed through detailed Local Plans or Neighbourhood Development Plans.</p> <p>New housing will be primarily delivered by the private sector, but with a significant role from the Registered Providers in respect of affordable housing, and the Homes and Communities Agency and other organisations in the case of regeneration and redevelopment proposals in Weston-super-Mare.</p> <p>New housing must be seen as part of an overall approach towards increased sustainability, particularly where the emphasis is on increased self-containment. There is therefore an important role to be played by a range of partners working with housing providers.</p> <p><u>Monitoring and review</u> Housing supply is monitored annually and assessed in relation to the four five year tranches in order to ensure that there remains a flexible supply of available and deliverable land for housing, across the district.</p>
CC-MM02	Policy CS28 Weston-super-Mare	<p>Weston-super-Mare will be the primary focus for development within North Somerset. A minimum of 12,800 dwellings will be delivered over the plan period at Weston-super-Mare and the sustainable new communities, together with approximately 10,500 jobs as part of an employment-led strategy to deliver improved self-containment and reduced out-commuting during the plan period.</p>

		<p>New development at Weston-super-Mare will be focused on two key locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Town centre and gateway where the emphasis is on the regeneration of a range of key sites to stimulate investment, and will include residential, retail, employment and leisure opportunities (see Policy CS29).• Weston Villages where the emphasis is on comprehensive development to create two sustainable new communities linked to the delivery of employment (see Policy CS30). <p>Residential development will be delivered in accordance with the employment-led strategy (see policies CS20 and CS30 for more detail).</p> <p>No strategic development will be permitted to the east of the M5 motorway. The settlement boundary of Weston-super-Mare will be amended to incorporate the new Weston Villages.</p> <p>New development proposals at Weston-super-Mare within or adjoining the settlement boundary should take into account the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• support the focus of the town centre as the location for higher order facilities and services, including retail, tourism and leisure opportunities;• support existing community hubs of local retailing and other services located within the town;• respect the characteristic heritage of Weston-super-Mare;• provide high quality design;• support the enhancement of its green infrastructure and biodiversity, including the ridges and hinterland to the north and south, the woodland areas, the rhynes network, and the seafront;• improve accessibility within Weston-super-Mare by walking, cycling and public transport, particularly where they enhance connectivity with, for example, local facilities, service centres, the town centre and sea front
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		<p>and do not lead to significant adverse impacts on the transport network; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that services and infrastructure are adequate to support the development. <p>Housing sites outside the settlement boundary in excess of about 75 dwellings must be brought forward as allocations through Local Plans or Neighbourhood Development Plans.</p> <p>This policy contributes towards achieving Priority Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9 and 10.</p> <p><u>Background</u> Weston-super-Mare will continue to be the primary focus for development in the district and provision will be made to maintain and enhance the town's sub-regionally significant role and function for housing, employment, cultural, education, retail, health and other services and facilities.</p> <p><u>The Core Strategy approach to Weston-super-Mare</u> The purpose of this policy is to provide a set of objectives for all development at Weston-super-Mare to take into account and to ensure a comprehensive approach to development which results in a co-ordinated process of town-wide regeneration.</p> <p>The policy also seeks to contain development of the town within the clear physical boundary of the M5 motorway. The town has sufficient land to the west of the M5 to deliver the required growth. Locating future development to the west of the M5 will consolidate the town ensuring sustainable new urban development that is well linked to the town centre by sustainable modes of transport, minimising car trips and ensuring that the future population of the town will support and sustain the regeneration of the town centre. Development to the east of the M5 is inappropriate as it would result in developing greenfield land in a less sustainable location effectively dispersing the development of the town further along the A370, potentially resulting in more car trips and increased congestion.</p> <p>The economic regeneration of Weston is a key strategic aim of North Somerset Council to be</p>
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		<p>achieved through the promotion of a more sustainable balance between employment and housing. The primary objective of this policy approach is to rebalance the jobs to homes ratio in the town by strengthening the B use class employment sectors, in addition to employment that will be provided from non B use classes.</p> <p>The delivery of jobs in the town will be subject to a 'plan, monitor and manage' approach particularly given the uncertainty of future economic activity and economic growth, with the potential for review of the specific delivery mechanisms in the future.</p> <p>Weston-super-Mare town centre has been identified as a focus for higher order facilities and services. The town centre area (as identified in Policy CS29) includes the seafront and gateway area (from the train station extending along the A370 to just beyond Winterstoke Road roundabout). The focus will be on providing a significant increase in the town's retail offer over the next twenty years focused on redevelopment opportunities within the retail core; creating an office quarter close to the railway station on vacant or under used sites; and focusing on the town's role as a tourist destination by concentrating leisure, hotel and tourist uses along the seafront and in the town centre.</p> <p>At Weston-super-Mare, to ensure a sustainable approach to development, the priority for housing development will be on previously developed land. This includes the phasing for the new development area at Weston Villages as identified in Policy CS30.</p> <p>Although the majority of new development within the town will be focused in the town centre and Weston Villages, it is important to support existing communities and local centres as the town grows and develops up to 2026 and beyond. The council will resist the loss of small-scale shops outside the town and district centres that meet the requirements of local communities. Policy CS21 sets out the Core Strategy approach to supporting local centres.</p> <p>Weston has a strong identity as a Victorian seaside town and the town centre and seafront contains five conservation areas and numerous listed buildings. This policy seeks to reflect and enhance this setting to reinforce the character and identity of the town.</p> <p>Green infrastructure consists of strategic networks of accessible, multifunctional sites such as parks, woodland, informal open spaces, nature reserves, wildlife corridors such as rhynes and hedgerows and historic sites. Green infrastructure serves a number of important uses and the emphasis within this policy is on enhancing existing provision and ensuring that new</p>
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		<p>development makes a positive contribution towards the provision of new green infrastructure.</p> <p>The growth and development of Weston-super-Mare up to 2026 has an important role to play in helping to deliver on a range of regeneration issues including providing a broader range of jobs, provision of training and helping to improve the range of local skills. South and Central Wards in Weston-super-Mare have been identified as being in the top 2% most deprived wards in the country and there exists a range of social, environmental and economic issues that need to be addressed as part of the regeneration of the town, especially in terms of access to employment and training opportunities.</p> <p>Weston-super-Mare has the benefit of being a predominantly flat town which lends itself to the promotion of walking and cycling as sustainable modes of transport. Any new development should consider how it integrates and connects with the rest of the town in terms of accessibility by foot and bicycle. Development of the urban extension must ensure that direct, safe pedestrian and cycle routes are provided to the town centre and seafront to ensure its integration with the rest of the town.</p> <p>At Weston-super-Mare the main approaches to the town centre and seafront create a boulevard effect of direct routes, rather than through routes or ring roads that may be found in other towns. These routes create the first impressions of Weston-super-Mare and therefore any development along these approaches will be of an exceptional design to enhance their appearance. Public realm improvements, tree planting, public art and landscaping will also be sought along these routes.</p> <p><u>How and where the policy will be delivered</u></p> <p>In assessing the suitability of development proposals the Council will assess the economic, social and environmental dimensions. The policy applies to development within and adjoining the settlement boundary of Weston-super-Mare. Flexibility is introduced to permit new sustainable development of up to around 75 units on sites adjacent to the settlement boundary of Weston-super-Mare. Sites of up to about 75 dwellings will generally be able to be assimilated into the existing urban framework and are unlikely to result in the infrastructure and environmental impacts generated by larger developments which need to be properly assessed through a development plan. Larger sites must come forward as allocations so that they can be consulted upon as part of the plan process, their impacts can be assessed in advance and any necessary mitigation measures identified at the outset.</p>
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		<p>Further planning policy guidance including a master plan framework and delivery plan for Weston Villages, and Local Plans will provide detailed guidance to deliver this strategy. Development will primarily be delivered through private investment. As a landowner the council will ensure that its land is used effectively to meet the wider Core Strategy objectives and will, where appropriate, work closely with other landowning interests and developers.</p> <p>The council will work in conjunction with the landowners, developers, the Homes and Communities Agency, the main service providers, the local community and other key stakeholders to deliver this strategy.</p> <p><u>Monitoring and review</u> Key monitoring indicators will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of new employment development completed and occupied. • Amount of new retail floor space. • Amount of new leisure development within the town. • Percentage of new development on previously developed land. • ‘Health checks’ on local centres in terms of monitoring loss or gain of retail units/services. • Levels of unemployment particularly in South and Central Wards. • Jobs to homes ratio in the town as a whole.
CC-MM03	Policy CS30 Weston Villages	<p>To the south east of Weston-super-Mare two mixed-use, employment-led, socially, economically and environmentally sustainable new communities will be developed. A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) including a Masterplanning Framework and delivery plan provides the detailed guidance to support implementation. The Key Diagram Inset 2: Weston Villages sets out the indicative strategic development framework.</p> <p>The development of the Weston Villages must satisfy the following key requirements:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development will be employment-led and should provide for 1.5 jobs per dwelling over the plan period. Detailed mechanisms for delivering employment-led development including the quantum, thresholds and phased release of land in each village will be determined through a combination of masterplanning, a Supplementary Planning Document, and through a Section 106 planning agreement that would accompany any such approval for development at each village.• Provide about 6,500 new homes in a mix of housing types, tenures, sizes and styles of which a target of 30% should be affordable. An average density of 40dph should be achieved across the area, with higher densities surrounding the local centres and, where appropriate, the inclusion of lower density areas.• Provide at least 37.7 ha of B Use Class employment land located within allocated employment sites, mixed-use development areas and at local and district centres. If provision of strategic infrastructure is dependent on development on greenfield land then this will be taken into consideration as part of the phasing strategy. In addition phasing will take into account sustainability and viability issues.• Each village will be anchored by a local centre which will provide necessary retail, health, children’s services and educational and community facilities to serve local needs. The location, type and mix of such uses will be agreed through the Weston Villages SPD.• Site(s) for on-site renewable or low carbon energy production including associated infrastructure to facilitate site-wide renewable energy solutions will be provided; such infrastructure should be planned with energy providers and developers including long term management and maintenance. Such provision could include a waste to energy plant. The Weston Villages area has been identified as being suitable for such waste treatment facilities in the West of England Joint Waste Core Strategy.• Provision of a network of green infrastructure across the whole Weston Villages including playing fields, allotments, play areas, pocket and community parks, and green corridors. This should be linked through
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		<p>development allowing wildlife movement and access to open space, wetlands and water corridors linking through development, including the retention and enhancement of existing rhynes where appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver integrated strategic transport infrastructure including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- the Cross Airfield Link at Winterstoke Village;- the Airfield Bridge Link linking Winterstoke Village to land to the north across the railway line;- Junction 21 Relief Road or alternative;- A371 to Wolvershill Road/Churchland Way Link;- potential park and ride subject to feasibility studies;- convenient and accessible bus routes;- accessible and safe cycle routes and public footpaths;- rail and bus improvements.• Deliver a clear hierarchy of roads (from distributor to home zones) producing discernible and distinctive neighbourhoods which are integrated and linked to existing areas.• The delivery of the strategic flood solution plus onsite flood mitigation measures, such as sustainable drainage systems, must be delivered as part of any development proposal in addition to long term maintenance details. This is required in order to facilitate the development of the Weston Villages. Any development within the Weston Villages will be required to contribute towards these flood mitigation measures.• Any proposed development will need to be supported by a flood risk assessment which will include a surface water drainage strategy.• Facilitate and recognise the realignment and safeguarding of safety and noise corridors associated with the helicopter flights linked with the Helicopter Museum in line with specialist advice. Employment, open-space and uses that are least sensitive to helicopter disturbance will be located around the museum.• Development proposals within the Weston Villages area will be expected to contribute to identified strategic infrastructure requirements in order to deliver a comprehensive and sustainable development.
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- **Development must be of a high quality and locally distinctive to Weston enhancing the existing character and qualities that contribute to the town's identity. This should include a comprehensive approach to placemaking including all the elements that make up an area including land uses, parking, movement and green spaces.**
- **Maintain green corridors around the Weston Villages to protect the individual characters and identities of the new development and of Hutton and Locking.**
- **Development must include a comprehensive approach to community building in respect of measures and facilities to support social interaction and community engagement throughout the life of the proposal.**

This policy contributes towards achieving Priority Objective 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9 and 10.

Background

It is essential for Weston-super-Mare to secure employment-led regeneration by significantly improving the employment offer of the town, reducing the impacts of car-based commuting, whilst requiring housing growth to be phased and linked directly to employment growth. It proposes two well planned, mixed use villages to the south east of Weston-super-Mare to accommodate about 6,500 new homes. The Weston Villages will be developed with an emphasis on placemaking and community building as the key determining principles in order to create two new villages, each with their own character and sense of community. In addition, the provision of at least 37.7ha of B Class employment land should be provided to accommodate employment development in the period to 2026, and to facilitate the employment-led strategy.

The Core Strategy approach to Weston Villages

The Site

Weston Villages includes a total of approximately 245 hectares of land surrounded by the A370 to the north, the A371 and open land to the Cross Rhyne to the south, the M5 motorway to the east and Winterstoke Road to the west. It comprises of two main areas:

- the disused Weston Airfield which forms the Winterstoke Village.

- RAF Locking which was in operation until 1998 as an RAF training facility and has now been cleared although some former features remain. This includes Flowerdown Park which is an area of housing at the former RAF Locking which is now in private ownership. RAF Locking in addition to land to the north forms the Parklands Village.

Also within the Weston Villages area is the industrial estate on Winterstoke Road which contains a large number of former airfield buildings and is currently used for a variety of vehicle, transport and storage uses, and the Helicopter Museum which is an important tourist attraction for the town.

Urban design

The aim is to achieve a development that is exemplar in its design and based on key sustainability principles such as being low carbon, less reliant on the car and incorporates a full range of local services, facilities and employment opportunities. The completed development must be an area which residents are proud of and respect and which will meet most of their day to day needs. More detailed design guidance will be set out as part of the Weston Villages SPD, through masterplanning and design codes.

Connection to existing town

While the Weston Villages will create individual distinct communities, they will function within the wider urban area and therefore need to be integrated with the existing town and other developed areas. This can be achieved through a series of direct and safe pedestrian/cycle routes as well as better road and public transport connections to Weston town centre, local facilities and adjacent communities. Notwithstanding this, the new development will be as self-contained as possible with key community facilities within walking distance of most dwellings.

Open space

The main open space areas will be:

- Open space link on the line of the Hutton Moor Lane.
- Green corridor based on the Grumblepill Rhyne north of Locking Parklands.
- Open space focussed on the motte and bailey west of Locking Parklands.

Development should front onto these areas as much as possible so as to improve its setting and provide public surveillance. The green corridors around Weston Villages are defined in the Weston Villages SPD. Strategic Gaps between Weston Villages, Hutton and Locking will

		<p>be defined in the Site Allocations Plan.</p> <p>The design of the road layout within the area should aim to eliminate ‘rat running’ and allow for safe and direct cycle/pedestrian access to key community facilities and employment areas. Densities will be varied throughout the development with a wide range of heights and styles. Key gateway sites at junctions, district centres and entrances will need to be occupied by landmark buildings that will act as focal points and generate a sense of identity for each neighbourhood area.</p> <p>Hedgerows, trees and important viewpoints should be retained and enhanced as central elements of the character of the area. The character and identity of the surrounding villages of Hutton and Locking should be protected by appropriate green buffers and sensitive design of the edges of new development.</p> <p><u>Employment</u></p> <p>The delivery of an employment-led strategy to the future strategic development of Weston-super-Mare is founded on a significant body of evidence and policy. Regional Planning Guidance 10 (RPG 10) includes a policy SS10 that seeks to ‘limit further housing growth (in WsM) until employment is more closely in balance with housing’, and this fundamental starting point was supported through the Replacement Local Plan Inquiry (Paragraph 4.5 of the Inspectors Report).</p> <p>The approach advocated and engrained within the Replacement Local Plan (2007) was to deliver significant employment development up to 2011 and thus achieve a better job to homes ratio, and then to allow for strategic growth of new communities balanced with employment opportunities. This approach is not solely based on sustainability but also due to concerns from the Highways Agency on impacts of further unchecked residential growth in particular on out-commuting.</p> <p>This policy recommends a linked mechanism between housing and employment which was again supported through the Inquiry into the RLP due to the serious imbalance between jobs and homes exacerbated by recent housing growth in the town, and the failure of the market to maintain a balance of uses. The mechanism will seek to achieve 1.5 jobs per dwelling at Weston Villages over the plan period. B class employment will be prioritised as a primary driver of the local economy, a stimulus to the creation of an office market in the town, and the</p>
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		<p>delivery of these types of jobs as part of the new communities.</p> <p>To support this strategy, the following minimum land requirements are proposed within the Weston Villages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Class B1 Offices = 25hectares- Class B2 General Industrial and B8 Distribution/Warehousing = 12.7hectares <p>This results in a total of at least 37.7ha of land to be allocated for B Class employment uses. The employment uses will be identified as specific allocations at Winterstoke and Parklands Villages. This will be aligned to ongoing work on the Weston Villages as part of the Supplementary Planning Document.</p> <p>It is envisaged that this could provide for around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 7,810 B1 use jobs.- 910 B2/B8 (industrial and warehousing) jobs. <p>It is recognised that achieving the employment-led strategy relies on the timely delivery of infrastructure to ‘unlock’ employment potential; the enhancing of the image of the town through recognising and building upon the characteristics and qualities that underpin the town; delivering high quality building and urban design and addressing skills and training.</p> <p>In the Weston Villages the emphasis is on a comprehensive development. The mechanisms for delivering the employment-led strategy will be set out in detail within the Supplementary Planning Document and/or other planning policy documents and guidance. LDF Documents. It will also set out a mechanism for monitoring and reviewing the employment-led strategy throughout the plan period.</p> <p>In releasing residential development, employment opportunities will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• delivered in a phased approach with quantities and thresholds to be agreed. In all cases deliverability will be key to this but in all cases residential will need to be led by employment to ensure the principal policy objectives are met;• planned as part of a comprehensive, masterplan-led approach guided by the Weston Villages SPD which provides the framework for bringing forward an appropriate range of employment opportunities.• provided in addition to wider measures to stimulate employment creation.
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		<p>In assessing the amount of employment potential from a proposal, standard employment densities will be used for given employment types.</p> <p><u>Residential</u> Capacity studies indicate that the new development will deliver about 6,500 dwellings. Each Weston Village will be planned with the objective of integrating employment and facilities so as to maximise their sustainability.</p> <p>As part of the detailed delivery mechanisms applied through the employment-led approach, residential development will be released in 250 unit tranches with each tranche being supported with necessary employment provision. This will be subject to a review mechanism to ensure adequate employment is being provided to balance the residential and will form part of a planning condition attached to any planning approval.</p> <p><u>Strategic infrastructure requirements</u> The following categories identify the specific strategic infrastructure requirements. These are further explored as part of the Weston Villages SPD and other documents.</p> <p><i>Highways/transportation</i></p> <p>In terms of essential infrastructure required within the new development area there are four main transport routes. These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Cross Airfield Link connecting Winterstoke Road with the A371.2) A371 to Wolvershill Road/Churchland Way Link.3) Airfield Bridge Link from Weston Airfield to Winterstoke Road roundabout.4) Junction 21 Relief Road.5) Contributions to rail and bus improvements. <p>The exact alignment of these routes will be fixed through detailed masterplanning at the two villages, in line with the Masterplan Framework set out in the Weston Villages SPD.</p> <p>The Cross Airfield Link has a dual purpose. It not only gives access to Winterstoke Village but will improve traffic circulation around the town by giving relief to Herluin Way and Winterstoke</p>
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		<p>Road. In the first instance the road will be a single carriageway but with a land reservation that can accommodate a dual carriageway if this is justified by projected traffic flows. In designing the road, regard will need to be had to its route through a residential area and the need to facilitate safe crossings by pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>In addition there may be a longer term requirement for a Park and Ride facility. A site to the north of the Helicopter Museum meets all the requirements in terms of accessibility, but its detailed implementation will be subject to feasibility studies. The exact requirement for and location of a Park and Ride facility will be identified following modelling work. A flexible approach is considered appropriate at this stage to allow for such a facility if deemed necessary.</p> <p><i>Flood mitigation</i></p> <p>As parts of Weston Villages are within the Environment Agency flood zones, the focus is on avoiding development areas most liable to flooding. The Environment Agency has confirmed that no development would be allowed in the functional floodplain (flood zone 3b) between the Weston Villages on the corner of A370 and the A371. Given the development requirements for the Weston Villages, it is clear that the majority of the remaining land is in flood zones 2 and 3a, and mitigation measures would be necessary and agreed by all parties including the Environment Agency.</p> <p>Given the flood risk issues relevant to Weston-super-Mare as a town, a holistic approach has been advocated by the Environment Agency to promote a comprehensive flood management scheme. North Somerset Council commissioned a Weston-super-Mare Flood Management Study for the area which was completed in March 2007. The study recommended the creation of a lake and wetland area to the south of the Weston Airfield, and improvements to the River Banwell, and this is the agreed flood management solution to development at the Weston Villages. Any proposed development will need to be supported by a Flood Risk Assessment which will include a surface water drainage strategy.</p> <p><i>Renewable energy</i></p> <p>On site energy generation is anticipated to be required in order to meet the aspirations of a low carbon development. Site wide solutions will be encouraged with necessary infrastructure</p>
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masterplanned in and delivered from the outset. Specific solutions should be negotiated between the interested parties to ensure as high a standard as possible is achieved.

Parks/green spaces/allotments

There is a requirement for green infrastructure within the Weston Villages. These include formal parks and gardens, community parks and neighbourhood parks as well as allotments. Detailed green infrastructure requirements will be set out in the Weston Villages SPD.

Children's services

Schools will play a vital role and be a key focus of the community. Having regard to the population created by the new development it is anticipated that five 420 place primary schools, one 1500 place secondary school and one special school will be needed to serve the new population.

Retail

The assumptions for retail provision within the Weston Villages will be based upon the conclusions of the North Somerset Retail Study 2011. It is assumed that the majority of this need will be met in the local centres proposed in the Weston Villages.

Community facilities

There is a requirement for a number of community facilities within the Weston Villages to cater for a range of community use, including community halls, library provision and health centres. Some of these community facilities, particularly community halls, could be co-located on the primary school sites and a land allowance should be made for this dual use within the allocation for the primary schools. Alternative mechanisms for delivery and ongoing maintenance will be explored.

Sports and recreation

The key sports and recreation requirements for the Weston Villages are currently expected to include a leisure facility at Parklands. There is also a requirement for a range of sports pitch

provision including adult grass pitches, rugby pitches, cricket pitches and junior/mini football pitches. It is assumed that these will all be provided at the proposed leisure facility, primary schools, secondary schools and parks and therefore additional land would not be required. Alternative mechanisms for delivery and ongoing maintenance will be explored.

Helicopter flights

The policy approach makes provision for safe take-off and landing corridors to and from the Helicopter Museum. In respect of noise, land uses that are least sensitive to helicopter disturbance will be located nearest to the museum. The helicopter flights and the impact of new development on helicopter flights will be kept under review in relation to noise and safety considerations.

How and where the policy will be delivered

The Weston Villages Key Diagram Inset 2 sets out the approach to development. This was refined as part of the Masterplan Framework through the Weston Villages Supplementary Planning Document. This will guide development, set out the exact requirements for social infrastructure and put forward mechanisms for the contributions to strategic infrastructure. It is then envisaged that more detailed sub-area masterplans will be created for each village by promoting land interests in collaboration with North Somerset Council, local communities and other relevant interests. It is envisaged that these will then become binding through Section 106 agreements and guide the ongoing development of the Weston Villages.

The Weston Villages is a strategic requirement and North Somerset Council is actively working with key partners and landowners to ensure its delivery. This includes key landowners and other partners such as the Environment Agency, Highways Agency, Primary Care Trust, Weston College, Homes and Communities Agency, as well as other local stakeholders.

Land adjacent to the Weston Villages may also be required for strategic infrastructure. In particular land south of Weston Airfield and land east of the M5 may be required for flood mitigation measures as part of a recommended strategic flood solution. Additionally land east of the M5 may be required for the junction 21 bypass and part of the Avoncrest site north-west of the Weston Airfield will be needed for the Airfield Bridge Link Road which will connect the new development area to the town centre.

		<p><u>Monitoring and review</u> The principal objective of the monitoring strategy is to ensure that the employment-led strategy is effective, and that a range of job opportunities are delivered and that self-containment is enhanced. If not, then the strategy may need to be adjusted in the future. The Core Strategy will be reviewed by the end of 2018 and if job creation is faster or slower than anticipated across the town as a whole then this may lead to possible adjustments to the employment-led policy approach at Weston Villages. Monitoring will also need to ensure that the identified infrastructure, particularly for transport and flood mitigation, is sufficiently funded and delivered in step with development.</p>
CC-MM04	Policy CS31 Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead	<p>Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead will maintain and enhance their roles in providing facilities, employment opportunities and services for their populations and local catchments. At these towns, new housing development within and adjoining settlement boundaries which is of an appropriate scale and of a high quality design that respects each town’s distinctive character and local environment, delivers necessary infrastructure improvements and enhances overall sustainability will be supported. Residential proposals must have regard to local housing needs.</p> <p>Proposals must be capable of being integrated into the existing fabric of the settlement and not create significant adverse impacts in relation to services, facilities and infrastructure including any cumulatively significant adverse impacts. New development must have safe and convenient walking routes to schools and other services and facilities within the town within a reasonable walking distance.</p> <p>At Nailsea proposals should provide a broad range of housing types to cater for all housing requirements.</p> <p>Residential proposals outside the settlement boundaries in excess of about 50 dwellings must be brought forward as allocations through Local Plans or Neighbourhood Development Plans.</p>

Within the three towns a minimum number of dwellings will be delivered as follows.

	Houses (2006–2026)
Clevedon	700
Nailsea	1,100
Portishead	3,300

In all three towns employment proposals will be supported that ensure the regeneration of previously developed land, or conversion and/or refurbishment of existing premises.

Employment uses should be appropriate in scale to the role and function of the town in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS20. Alternative uses, including mixed use schemes on existing employment sites will only be considered where they are shown to address other identified community benefits and do not have an adverse impact on the quality and range of sites and premises available for business use.

Shopping and town centre uses will be supported within the town centres which improve the town centre environment and the retail, leisure, and employment offer. The removal of town centre uses will only be permitted in accordance with policy CS21. Proposals for the regeneration of existing centres such as at Nailsea and Clevedon, or the enhancement of specialist areas such as Hill Road, Clevedon will be encouraged.

Other services and community facilities will be encouraged within the urban areas, in locations accessible to the community which they are intended to serve.

Transport proposals which provide opportunities for cycling, walking or increase public transport within the towns will be supported. Proposals to

		<p>improve connectivity by public transport with other towns, Bristol and Weston-super-Mare will also be supported. For Portishead the re-opening of a rail/rapid transit link to Bristol is a priority.</p> <p>Tourism proposals throughout Clevedon and Portishead will be supported with particular emphasis on enhancing the appeal of the seafront/waterfront area to visitors and residents alike, whilst retaining the historic and natural settings.</p> <p>This policy contributes towards achieving Priority Objectives 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10.</p> <p><u>Background</u> The policies provide a link between the visions and the specific subject policies relating to housing, employment, community facilities etc. in the various sections of the Core Strategy.</p> <p><u>The Core Strategy approach to the other main towns</u> Clevedon, Portishead and Nailsea are identified as places which should only consider locally significant development ensuring the availability of jobs and services for themselves and surrounding communities. Due to their close proximity to each other, these three towns have overlapping catchment areas which are perhaps somewhat smaller than would be expected in a rural area and due to their proximity to Bristol and Weston, they are not expected to provide highest order goods and services for their population, but they nevertheless act as local service centres for their populations and adjacent parishes.</p> <p>All of these towns have high out-commuting levels and the emphasis will be on discouraging development which would re-enforce this and on encouraging local employment and service provision which would stem the flow of commuters. Nailsea in particular has suffered from being planned as a dormitory town in the 1960's and there is evidence that the mix and type of housing and lack of job opportunities is having an adverse impact on the community. Proposals at Nailsea should aim to address this and encourage a more balanced age structure.</p> <p>New residential development within the settlement boundaries, and residential development for up to about 50 dwellings adjoining the settlement boundaries, will be supported provided it</p>
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		<p>does not harm the objectives of the plan. Within these towns, developments of more than 50 dwellings have wider infrastructure and environmental impacts which need to be properly considered through a development plan. New development will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that the local infrastructure is sufficient to accommodate the demands of the development (for example, school places, community buildings and foul and storm water drainage systems). Larger sites must come forward as allocations, so that they can be consulted upon as part of the plan process, their impacts can be assessed in advance and any necessary mitigation measures identified at the outset.</p> <p><u>How and where the policy will be delivered</u></p> <p>In assessing the suitability of development proposals the Council will assess the economic, social and environmental dimensions. Within Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead new jobs, dwellings and retail floorspace (2006–2026) will be broadly provided as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="792 667 1973 770"> <thead> <tr> <th><u>Land use</u></th> <th><u>Nailsea</u></th> <th><u>Portishead</u></th> <th><u>Clevedon</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Residential (dwellings)</td> <td>1100</td> <td>3300</td> <td>700</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Retail (m2)</td> <td>0</td> <td>14,096</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The retail floorspace for Portishead includes developments built since 2006, existing commitments and an estimate of additional convenience (1616 m2) and comparison (1826 m2) floorspace requirements contained with the 2011 Study.</p> <p>The future of these towns relies on co-ordination across sectors from transport providers to affordable housing and healthcare providers.</p> <p><u>Monitoring and review</u></p> <p>This will be measured against individual policy targets for each of the towns.</p>	<u>Land use</u>	<u>Nailsea</u>	<u>Portishead</u>	<u>Clevedon</u>	Residential (dwellings)	1100	3300	700	Retail (m2)	0	14,096	0
<u>Land use</u>	<u>Nailsea</u>	<u>Portishead</u>	<u>Clevedon</u>											
Residential (dwellings)	1100	3300	700											
Retail (m2)	0	14,096	0											
CC-MM05	Policy CS32 Service Villages	<p>New development within or adjoining the settlement boundaries of the Service Villages of Backwell, Banwell, Churchill, Congresbury, Easton-in-Gordano/Pill, Long Ashton, Winscombe, Wrington and Yatton which enhances the overall sustainability of the settlement will be supported where:</p>												

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It results in a form, design and scale of development which is high quality, respects and enhances the local character, contributes to place making and the reinforcement of local distinctiveness, and can be readily assimilated into the village; • It has regard to the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required; • It will not cause significant adverse impacts on services and infrastructure and the local infrastructure is sufficient to accommodate the demands of the development • It results in high quality sustainable schemes which is appropriate to its context and makes a positive contribution to the local environment and landscape setting; • It does not result in significant adverse cumulative impacts (such as highway impacts) likely to arise from existing and proposed development within the wider area; • The location of development maximises opportunities to reduce the need to travel and encourages active travel modes and public transport; and • It demonstrates safe and attractive pedestrian routes to facilities within the settlement within reasonable walking distance. <p>Sites outside the settlement boundaries in excess of about 25 dwellings must be brought forward as allocations through Local Plans or Neighbourhood Plans.</p> <p>This policy contributes towards achieving priority objectives 3, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10.</p> <p><u>Background</u> National policy supports a sustainable approach to development in the rural areas with the emphasis being on supporting services, employment and facilities in smaller towns and larger villages, rather than dispersing development throughout smaller villages.</p> <p><u>The Core Strategy approach to the Service Villages</u> Within North Somerset there are a number of villages which carry out the role of Service</p>
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		<p>Villages. They provide a service role function beyond their immediate locality and normally serve the population of one to three parishes. They range in size from 2000 to 5000 population per settlement. However, the final classification has taken account of local circumstances, including their relationship to their hinterlands and local opinion which may mean that in some cases there may be a variation from this list of facilities.</p> <p>New residential development will generally be acceptable in principle within settlement boundaries and appropriate development up to about 25 dwellings adjoining settlement boundaries, provided it respects the scale and character of the village and the site's location, and is not in the Green Belt. The additional flexibility is intended to enable small scale proposals to come forward which will enhance sustainability in its wider sense. The Council will not support proposals which either on their own or in aggregate cause significant adverse impacts on the character or functioning of the village. Developers are encouraged to engage with the local community before drawing up any scheme.</p> <p>With regard to non-housing or mixed uses, the Core Strategy approach provides the opportunity for appropriate new service and employment uses within the settlement boundaries of Service Villages (but not in the Green Belt) in order to support their role as local hubs for community facilities, employment and services, including public transport.</p> <p>The settlement boundaries as defined in the Replacement Local Plan for the Service Villages will remain, although there is scope for these to be reviewed and adjusted via Local Plans or Neighbourhood Development Plans.</p> <p><u>How and where the policy will be delivered</u></p> <p>In assessing the suitability of development proposals the Council will assess the economic, social and environmental dimensions. The policy will apply within the defined Service Villages. Identifying opportunities to enhance the role and function of these places will benefit from close working between developers and landowners, the council, local communities and other partners. Developers are encouraged to engage with the local community before drawing up their schemes.</p> <p>The policy allows for residential schemes to be brought forward adjoining the service village settlement boundaries of up to about 25 dwellings. Larger sites must be brought forward as site allocations to ensure they are brought forward through the plan-led system, subject to</p>
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		<p>appropriate consultation, and infrastructure planning. The purpose of the policy is to allow small scale residential development to come forward within and adjoining the villages where they are in sustainable locations, would not adversely impact on the character, setting or appearance of the village and the local infrastructure is able to support the additional development (for example in respect of school places, community buildings and foul and surface water drainage systems). In this respect the cumulative impact of development will be a significant consideration and a succession of piecemeal developments which individually or taken together have an adverse effect on any individual village are unlikely to be supported.</p> <p><u>Monitoring and review</u> The policy will be measured against individual policy targets.</p>
CC-MM06	CC33 Infill villages, smaller settlements and countryside	<p>Development outside the areas covered by the approaches set out in Policies CS28, CS30, CS31 and CS32 will be strictly controlled in order to protect the character of the rural area and prevent unsustainable development.</p> <p><u>Residential development at Infill villages</u> Within the settlement boundaries of the infill villages of Bleadon, Claverham, Cleeve, Dundry, Felton, Flax Bourton, Hutton, Kenn, Kewstoke, Locking, Sandford, Uphill and Winford, residential development of an appropriate scale which supports sustainable development will be supported providing that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The form of development respects the scale and character of the settlement; • The size, type, tenure and range of housing has regard to local needs; and • There is no significant adverse impact on service delivery and infrastructure provision and the local infrastructure is sufficient to accommodate the demands of the development. <p>In the case of redevelopment proposals within settlement boundaries it must be demonstrated that if the site or premises was last used for an economic use, that continuation in economic use is unsuitable.</p>

Residential development elsewhere

New residential development will be restricted to replacement dwellings, residential subdivision, residential conversion of buildings where alternative economic use is inappropriate, or dwellings for essential rural workers.

Affordable Housing

Affordable housing will be permitted within settlement boundaries or in the form of rural exceptions sites, adjacent to settlements. Affordable housing will not be permitted in the Green Belt.

Employment Development

New small-scale employment development will only be permitted within settlement boundaries provided it is appropriate in scale and character, or involves the sympathetic conversion of a redundant rural building or is necessary for agricultural purposes.

New employment development will not be permitted in the Green Belt except where it involves the reuse of buildings in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Community facilities

Where the need for community facilities cannot be met within or adjacent to settlement boundaries consideration will be given to sites outside where they are well related to the community which they are intended to serve.

This policy contributes towards achieving Priority Objective 7.

Background

National guidance emphasises the importance of ensuring that inappropriate development is not dispersed into rural areas as this will encourage unsustainable patterns of development.

The Core Strategy approach to the Infill Villages, smaller settlements and countryside

		<p>Demand for housing in the countryside has historically been high, with the result that North Somerset villages and hamlets have become dormitory settlements. To avoid perpetuating unsustainable patterns of development and retain the character of our villages and openness of our countryside, development will be strictly controlled. Outside the Service Villages the number of villages with settlement boundaries is therefore limited to Infill Villages. Within these villages only sustainable development in the form of infilling within settlement boundaries will be permitted.</p> <p>The settlement boundaries as defined in the Replacement Local Plan for the infill villages will remain, although there is scope for these to be reviewed and adjusted via the plan making process.</p> <p>Within those smaller settlements and the countryside where there are no residential development boundaries, new housing will be strictly controlled. Where affordable housing exception schemes are proposed in accordance with Policy CS17, these will only be acceptable adjacent to the settlement boundaries of the infill villages, or adjacent to the main body of the settlement. Such schemes will not be appropriate in the Green Belt.</p> <p>Other non-residential uses will also be very carefully controlled within the smaller settlements and countryside. Small scale employment uses, retail or community uses may be permissible within settlement boundaries, subject to considerations relating to scale and impact and Green Belt.</p> <p><u>How and where the policy will be delivered</u> In assessing the suitability of development proposals the Council will assess the economic, social and environmental dimensions. The policy applies to the smaller settlements and countryside. Development will be provided by a number of individuals and bodies, and will require close liaison with local communities.</p> <p><u>Monitoring and review</u> Measured against individual policy targets.</p>
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