Matter 2 – Housing

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

1. It is the council’s current position that the housing requirement can be met over the plan period, and that a marginal five year supply can be demonstrated.

2. It is clear that participants have concerns over the quantity of deliverable supply that is available to meet the residual requirement and address the shortfall accrued to date in the immediate five year period.

3. Figure 1 below sets out past completions (up to 2016) and the residual requirement, taking account of the identified shortfall within the next five years.

Figure 1: completions and requirement using Sedgefield methodology

4. It is acknowledged that meeting the requirement and addressing the shortfall up front is challenging. Figure 1 uses April 2016 figures, and it is
acknowledged that the April 2017 completion figure will not have met the requirement.

5. One way to address the issue and ensure that the trajectory is achievable is to spread the accrued shortfall across the remainder of the plan period.

6. This would have the effect of reducing the requirement within the immediate five year period, but would still achieve delivery of the requirement over the plan period as a whole. This is set out below in Figure 2.

Figure 2: completions and requirement using Liverpool methodology

7. It must be noted that neither figure 1 or 2 include the required land supply buffer.

8. The Site Allocations Plan identifies sufficient sites across the district (in accordance with the hierarchy) to deliver the requirement over the plan period.

9. To address the shortfall within the immediate five year period and maintain a five year supply has required the release of additional sites in settlements further down the spatial hierarchy. To continue to identify additional sites in less sustainable places could undermine the principles of Policy CS14.

10. The broad distribution of dwellings set out in Policy CS14 attributes 61% of the plan period total requirement to Weston-super-Mare and the Weston Villages development.

11. Weston-super-Mare is the principal town within North Somerset, and the most sustainable settlement within the district.
12. Weston Town Centre is identified as a broad location for growth within the council’s plans and strategies. In addition to the specific deliverable sites that already benefit from permission or have proposed allocation status, it is the council’s intention to deliver additional residential opportunities on as yet unidentified redevelopment and regeneration sites. The vision is for the town centre to be a strategic delivery location for housing, with aims to improve the quantity and quality of properties and create opportunities for living, learning and better lifestyles. This is supported by the Weston Town Centre Regeneration Supplementary Planning Document, which was adopted by the council on 21 February 2017.

13. The area has been awarded housing zone status, bringing with it £700,000 of funding to unlock and deliver sites. Housing zones are a key part of the government’s ambitions to boost housing supply and deliver much needed new housing.

14. The council are also working with Weston College to deliver accommodation for students, in line with their recently awarded university campus status.

15. The Homes and Communities Agency are a key partner organisation, taking an active development interest with the council, precisely to counter the apparent market failure within the town. A number of key sites have been acquired by the council and the HCA. This initiative will ensure early delivery of development.

16. A bid to the government’s Starter Homes Land Fund was made last year to support this ambitious programme. On the 3rd January this was confirmed as successful, with further details to follow.

17. A number of the previously developed sites within Weston-super-Mare are complex, some with remediation issues to address, which has prevented early release of the sites.

18. The Core Strategy allocated a major mixed use strategic development on the outskirts of Weston-super-Mare, known as the Weston Villages.

19. Given the scale of the Weston Villages development (6,500 dwellings in total) it is appropriate to assess delivery on the sites which comprise this development separately and take account of the proposed phasing.

20. The first completions at Weston Villages were recorded in the 2011/12 monitoring year. The peak in delivery is not expected until 2019/20, once all of the necessary consents and infrastructure is in place and the phases are all delivering at full capacity.
21. The draft 2017 based trajectory for the Weston Villages, set out at Figure 3 below, is in the process of being agreed with the developers and landowners (Persimmon Homes, Mead Realisations, St Modwen and North Somerset Council). The Joint Delivery Review Board and Junction 21 Enterprise Area Marketing meeting was held on 6 April 2017 and the draft figures below were tabled. Comments have been sought from all parties and a final version will be agreed in advance of the hearings.

Figure 3: Draft Weston Villages trajectory

22. One way to take account of the Weston Villages lead in times and infrastructure requirements would be to re-profile the residual trajectory, taking account of the agreed anticipated rate of delivery at Weston Villages, and annualise the remainder of the housing requirement. This is set out below at Figure 4.

Figure 4: Completions and residual requirement, taking account of Weston Villages Trajectory
23. In addition to the Weston Villages development, a proportion of the Weston urban area sites have lead in times and up front infrastructure requirements and remediation works that mean they are not immediately available. This is accounted for in the trajectory already provided to the examination in Document CD1a.

24. Figure 5 below sets out a stepped trajectory on the basis of the agreed Weston Villages trajectory, the anticipated rate of delivery for the Weston urban area sites, and the remainder annualised evenly over the rest of the plan period.

Figure 5: Completions and residual requirement, taking account of Weston Villages and Weston Urban Area trajectories

25. For ease of reference the requirement figures from each scenario discussed above are set out in Table 1 below, and are presented in Figure 6 for comparative purposes.

Table 1: Comparison of annual requirements depending on methodology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sedgefield Requirement</th>
<th>Liverpool requirement</th>
<th>Weston Villages led requirement</th>
<th>Weston Villages and urban area led Requirement</th>
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<td>1,299</td>
<td>936</td>
<td>765</td>
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<td>1,381</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>2022/23</td>
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<td>2025/26</td>
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</table>

Figure 6: Comparison of annual requirements depending on methodology

26. As can be seen, each of the scenarios delivers the residual requirement of 12,990 dwellings over the plan period. It is acknowledged that all scenarios require challenging completion rates, and that in addition to delivering the requirements, the appropriate buffer will need to be identified.

27. The Weston Villages alone will deliver a third of the overall housing requirement. Given that the anticipated rate of development for this area has been agreed between all of the parties, the council consider it would be appropriate to use this as the basis for a re-profiled trajectory, along with the remainder of the requirement evenly annualised. This preferred scenario is presented as Figure 7.

Figure 7: Proposed annual requirement, taking account of the Weston Villages trajectory
28. As an illustration, figure 8 shows the Weston Villages led requirement, against the anticipated delivery figures from the trajectory in Document CD1a.

Figure 8: Suggest annual requirement against anticipated annual delivery

29. Setting out the residual requirement in a stepped way, taking account of the agreed phasing at Weston Villages, will ensure that the annual rate is achievable, and restore certainty for the purposes of decision making.

30. April 2017 land supply figures will be available in advance of the hearing sessions. As soon as is possible the council will prepare each scenario in full at the updated base date, for discussion at the examination.