

Bath & North East Somerset Placemaking Plan

Somer Valley (Part 4)

COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO ID/3: MATTER 19 - Housing in Somer Valley

Issue 1: Whether the policies contained in the Placemaking Plan would meet the housing requirement for Somer Valley of 2470 new homes to be built at Midsomer Norton, Radstock, Westfield, Paulton and Peasedown St John?

Q1. Is CS Policy SV1, as amended to restrict development within the housing development boundary (unless identified in a neighbourhood plan), positively prepared and justified?

1. The Core Strategy original text states 'Enable around 2,470 new homes to be built at Midsomer Norton, Radstock, Westfield, Paulton and Peasedown St John by amending the housing development boundary as necessary and to reflect existing commitments.' Since the adoption of the Core Strategy and during the preparation of the Placemaking Plan (PMP), housing numbers were monitored and reviewed.
2. The housing development boundaries (HDB) are the main tools for directing where housing development should take place. Therefore, it is appropriate to be reviewed through the PMP Development Plan process. The PMP has reviewed the HDB to enable delivery of the around 2,470 homes required by the Core Strategy and the SHLAA housing trajectory (CD/PMP/S3) shows that 2,488 units are expected to be delivered within the Plan period.
3. The Strategy for the Somer Valley is addressing the imbalance between jobs and homes and prioritises use of previously developed land. Having reviewed the HDB as set out above the wording of Policy SV1 proposed in the PMP gives clarity to the policy framework and for the decision maker in considering housing proposals in the Somer Valley. Greenfield development outside the HDB is not required to meet the Core Strategy requirement. However, large brownfield windfalls sites not currently identified or included in the trajectory could come forward. Therefore, the 2,488 identified in the trajectory could be exceeded. This is in accordance with the spatial strategy established in the Core Strategy.
4. Therefore the Council considers Policy SV1 is positively prepared and justified.

Q2. Are sufficient housing allocations made to achieve the housing requirement?

5. Yes, as explained above, the SHLAA housing trajectory (CD/PMP/S3) shows that 2,488 units are expected to be delivered within the Plan period. The trajectory also includes an allowance for small windfall sites within the HDB.

Issue 2 – whether the site allocations are the most appropriate when considered against the reasonable alternatives, having regard to the evidence to support the selection of allocated sites?

Q1. Does the evidence support the selection of the allocated sites, when considered against any reasonable alternatives and having regard to deliverability considerations?

6. The selection of the allocated sites was informed by a variety of evidence including the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Nov 2013 (CD/PMP/S4/1-6) and update (CD/PMP/S3), Sustainability Appraisals undertaken through the selection process, engagement with internal experts and public consultation. As part of deliverability considerations, the landowners/agents were contacted to ensure deliverability. Through this process reasonable alternatives were considered and the most suitable/sustainable and deliverable sites have been allocated for development.
7. The sites allocated for development are deliverable and this is demonstrated by the progress being made through the Development Management process for some sites since the Draft Plan was submitted for Examination. An update is given below.
8. **SSV 4 Former Welton Manufacturing Site:** The outline application (16/02607/OUT) for a mixed use scheme has been submitted in late May following a pre-application consultation (16/00018/PADEV). It includes approx. 200 dwellings and associated car parking, landscaping and road links. Business mixed-use redevelopment of approx. 3,730 sq. metres to include offices (B1), light industrial (B2), convenience store and public house (A1, A3, A4 and A5, C1, Sui generis), elderly care facility (C2, D1) and change of use from B1, B2, B8 to residential (C3), retail (A1, A3, A4, A5/C1/Sui generis) and community facilities (C2/D1). It is due to be determined in September 2016.
9. **SSV3 Midsomer Norton Town Park:** The outline application (14/00649/OUT) for 35 dwellings was approved in Oct 2015.

10. **SSV17 Former Radstock County Infants:** The land is currently own by the Council and discussions regarding disposal of the site are ongoing.
11. **SSV20 Former St Nicholas School:** Policy SSV 20 facilitates the conservation and reuse of the 19th century buildings as part of a residential development and/or community use. The Council acknowledges not only the opportunities the site offers from its location close to the Town Centre, but also that site constraints exist given that is an important heritage asset. Therefore Policy SSV20 allows some flexibility in the use of the buildings. The SHLAA trajectory figure of 2,488 dwellings does not include any allowance for housing contributions from this site.
12. **SSV11 St Peter's Factory:** The outline application (14/04003/OUT) for 81 dwellings was approved in March 2016.