

## 5 Core Policies

### Section 5 Core Policies

## Delivering New Homes and Retaining the Housing Stock

### Policy CS 1

#### Delivering New Homes and Retaining the Housing Stock

Provision will be made for the delivery of at least 10,500 net additional dwellings and associated infrastructure over the period 2006 to 2026. Delivery will be phased and managed in order to meet at least an annual average net additional dwelling requirement of 525 dwellings per annum and to maintain a rolling five year supply of housing land.

An update of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (so that it accords with the requirements of National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 159) will be undertaken within 3 years of the adoption of the Core Strategy. This will be carried out in co-operation with neighbouring authorities within the Housing Market Area. If the updated SHMA indicates that housing provision within the District needs to be greater than currently planned, a review of the scale of housing provision in the Core Strategy will be undertaken.

New homes will be located in accordance with the settlement hierarchy outlined in the Spatial Strategy and Area Delivery Plan Policies.

New homes will be primarily developed on

- Suitable previously developed land within settlement boundaries.
- Other suitable land within settlement boundaries.
- Strategic sites and broad locations identified on the Core Strategy Key Diagram.
- Land allocated for residential development in subsequent Development Plan Documents.

The Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document will identify specific sites to accommodate the broad distribution of housing set out in the Area Delivery Plan policies. Greenfield sites will need to be allocated adjoining settlements in all four of the spatial areas to accommodate the required housing. Taking into account the SHLAA, updated by any further evidence, such sites will be selected to achieve the most sustainable pattern of development consistent with the other policies in the Core Strategy.

All settlement boundaries will be reviewed in the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.

There should be no net losses from the existing stock of homes in West Berkshire. Existing homes should be retained in residential use (or replaced at least in equal numbers, normally on the proposal site), unless there is a reasoned justification in the form of a benefit to the wider community for a change of use. Developments should utilise opportunities to make better use of the existing housing stock.

#### Explanation of the Policy

**5.1** The Core Strategy needs to demonstrate how the housing required to meet household growth and support the local economy can be accommodated in West Berkshire. The amount of new homes which the Core Strategy plans to provide is set out in Policy H1 of the South East Plan<sup>(43)</sup>. This

requires provision for 10,500 net additional dwellings over the period 2006 - 2026. The Government intends to abolish all Regional Strategies, but the South East Plan currently remains part of the Development Plan. The Core Strategy is required to be in general conformity with the RSS.

**5.2** National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 159) requires local planning authorities to have a clear understanding of housing needs in their area through the preparation of a SHMA. The Berkshire Housing Market Assessment 2007 (BHMA) does not fully meet the requirements of the NPPF, but it does demonstrate a high level of affordable need which is not being met. More recent evidence indicates that housing provision may need to be higher than currently planned. For example, the most recent household projections (2008-based, DCLG 2010) project an increase of 16,000 households in the District between 2006 and 2026.

**5.3** In the light of the above, the Council will undertake an update of the SHMA so that it accords with the requirements of National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 159. This will be carried out in co-operation with neighbouring authorities within the Housing Market Area. This work will be completed within 3 years of the adoption of the plan. If the updated SHMA indicates that housing provision within the District needs to be greater than currently planned, a review of the scale of housing provision in the Core Strategy will be undertaken. Such a review will need to take into account the South East Plan if it has not been revoked.

**5.4** The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) has indicated that, though sufficient sites can be identified to more than meet the 10,500 requirement, the potential cumulative impacts need careful consideration.

**5.5** The current situation with regard to housing supply is set out in the Annual Monitoring Report 2011<sup>(44)</sup>, and is summarised in Appendix B. The 2011 AMR reports that a five year housing supply can be demonstrated, and that commitments and identified developable sites, including the proposed strategic sites, should be sufficient to meet the housing requirements at least until 2017. Further supply will come from sites to be allocated in the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD. This document will allocate sufficient non-strategic sites to meet the housing requirements of the District in accordance with the principles established in the Core Strategy.

**5.6** The Development Plan should be drawn up over an appropriate time scale, preferably a 15-year time horizon, taking account of longer term requirements, and be kept up to date. Policy CS1 states that a rolling five year supply of housing land will be maintained. Pending any review of housing numbers, an annual average net additional dwelling requirement of 525 dwellings per annum will be carried forward beyond 2026.

**5.7** The indicative housing trajectory does not include an allowance for “windfall” development in the first 10 years but this type of housing will contribute towards meeting the overall housing land requirements when permitted. The Council will monitor the amount of housing that is built on these “windfall” sites and will use this evidence to justify any inclusion of a windfall allowance in the five year supply of deliverable housing sites, as required in paragraph 48 of the NPPF. This contribution to the housing land supply will introduce some flexibility as it will reduce the residual land requirement over the period to 2026. It will influence the rate at which land allocated in the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD will need to be developed in order to demonstrate an adequate housing supply, and may help to meet any future higher housing requirement without the need to change the Spatial Strategy.

**5.8** The policy also aims to retain the existing stock of dwellings to avoid a net loss of existing homes as a result of redevelopment or change of use, and so minimise the need to build additional dwellings to meet housing requirements.