

Area policies

CS33: Infill villages, smaller settlements and countryside

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.

Residential development at Infill villages

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:

- 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.

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.

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

4.91 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

4.92 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.

4.93 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.

4.94 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.

4.95 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.

How and where the policy will be delivered

4.96 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.

Monitoring and review

4.97 Measured against individual policy targets.