

PSM20

**South Gloucestershire
Core Strategy
Examination**

**Position Statement
for
Matter 20: Density/Diversity**

May 2012

Matter 20 – Density/Diversity

Q1 Is there sufficient detail contained in policy CS16 to clarify the Council’s approach to housing density?

Council response – Yes

- 1.1 In Policy CS16, the Council is continuing the approach in Policy H2 of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan of seeking the efficient use of land and linking the achievement of good design with housing density, recognising that higher densities should be achieved in more sustainable locations. However, Policy CS16 also includes the objectives of providing a mix of housing to support a wide variety of households and maintaining a pattern of green and open space.
- 1.2 In order to support these several objectives housing densities must be capable of being applied flexibly and it is not appropriate, therefore, to prescribe housing density levels. This approach is consistent with the NPPF, which requires local planning authorities to:

‘set out their own approach to housing density to reflect local circumstances’ (para 47)

- 1.3 The latest Annual Monitoring Report (Examination Document Ref: EB5/1, pages 26 and 27) demonstrates the correlation between housing densities achieved in recent years and the types of housing developed. Therefore, to improve the mix of housing type in a local area, a flexible approach to housing density is required. Further, by relating density to the character of an area, it is considered that over or under intensification of development can also be controlled. The Council is therefore of the view that Policy CS16 contains sufficient detail to clarify the approach to housing density.

Q2 How crucial is viability in determining the mix of housing to be provided on a site and is it essential to reference this as factor when considering development proposals?

Council response

- 2.1 The Council recognises that viability may be a determining factor in establishing the appropriate mix of housing to be provided on a site. Policy CS18 indicates that the Council will have regard to the economic viability of site development in negotiating affordable housing provision. However, other than in Policy CS18, there is no policy reference in the Core Strategy to the consideration of viability in development proposals. For consistency with the NPPF, therefore, a number of amendments to Policy CS6 (Infrastructure and Developer Contributions) and the supporting text are proposed (see Matter 16 Question 2). It is not considered necessary to add viability as a factor to other policies, including Policy CS17, as Policy CS6 will apply given that the plan should be read as a whole.