

Matter 21 – Yate and Chipping Sodbury**1. How likely is it that the range of measures in policy CS30 will address the deficiencies in the Yate/Chipping Sodbury area identified by the Council?**

The first issue that is raised in the Core Strategy relating to deficiencies in the Yate/Chipping Sodbury area is the changing population profile of the town, resulting in an increase in elderly residents and a drop in the number of children of school age.

Policy CS30 states as its first measure, that it will “provide for the development of housing, employment and associated local facilities in accordance with the Strategy for Development, Housing Policy CS15, Employment Policy CS11 and the north Yate New Neighbourhood Policy CS31”.

The resolution to the issue of an aging population is clearly to provide new opportunities to live and work in Yate. Whilst the measure in Policy CS30 identified above suggests this approach, the effectiveness of the policy will be limited as Policy CS15 unnecessarily delays the phasing of the delivery of the NYNN until after 2016. This in turn delays investment in the town, the generation of new jobs and improvement of services and facilities, all of which are identified as issues that need to be addressed through the Core Strategy.

The lead in times for large developments is very long. Delaying commencement of development of houses until after 2016 requires building at an average of 240 dwellings per annum for 10 years. This is a difficult target to achieve and development should start as soon as possible to maximise the possibility of achieving this.

The Council's housing strategy relies on a few large sites. In these circumstances it is important to make a start on these as soon as possible and not to create artificial delays that would jeopardise the entire strategy.

To positively address these issues, development at Yate should be encouraged now and not delayed until post 2016.

2. Is the Council's strategy for development to the north of Yate the most appropriate one?

Yes.

Yate is the largest and most sustainable settlement in South Gloucestershire, aside from the areas of South Gloucestershire which fall within the urban fringe of Bristol. It is therefore an appropriate and sustainable location to accommodate significant growth to assist in meeting the housing needs of the District.

The strategy for development of land north of Yate is the most appropriate option for accommodating development at the town. Land to the south of Yate is defined by the defensible boundary of the railway line, as well as being green belt. Land to the west of Yate also falls in the greenbelt and performs a role in separating Yate from the settlement of Coalpit Heath and Bristol beyond.

Alternative options for accommodating growth at Yate were explored through the preparation of the RSS and it was determined that land north of Yate was the most suitable location for growth.

Whilst there are clear benefits of delivering a large mixed use urban extension to Yate, that will assist in increasing self-containment, providing new and improved opportunities for businesses and increasing the supply of housing stock in the town, the assumptions surrounding the expected build rates are overly optimistic and considered to be unachievable. This puts the delivery of the NYNN at risk. The proposed strategy allocates the delivery of housing to the later part of the plan period (2016-2026+), requiring 1,890 dwellings to be delivered in the last 6 years of the Plan Period (2021-2027). In order to meet this level of provision, it would require an annual delivery rate of 300 dwellings per annum.

It is widely acknowledged from experience within the house building industry that at maximum capacity any one developer is unlikely to deliver more than 40 dwellings per site, per annum. Assuming three to four developers building at the North Yate New Neighbourhood, (which appears reasonable based on location, scale and road infrastructure surrounding the site), it is therefore considered that a maximum of 120-160 dwellings per annum are likely to be delivered at the North Yate New Neighbourhood in any one year. This is significantly short of the rate of delivery that would be required to meet the level of housing proposed to be delivered in Yate over the Plan period. It should also be borne in mind that it will take several years following grant of planning permission to achieve this rate of building because of the need to obtain approval of reserved matters, building regulation approval sale of land to other developers, contracts with RSLs, infrastructure design, tender process and implementation, show homes to be completed etc. before houses can be completed for sale.

For this reason the Plan is unlikely to be able to deliver the level of housing it aims to deliver at NYNN under the current phasing proposed.

There is however an opportunity to deliver part of the North Yate New Neighbourhood in the early part of the plan period. This could assist in meeting part of the immediate housing land supply in the early part of the plan period, but at present this opportunity has been missed.

Land at Peg Hill falls within the area identified as the North Yate New Neighbourhood and comprises 8.99ha of agricultural land that immediately adjoins the existing urban edge of Yate. The site has been subject to a planning application and will shortly be subject to a planning appeal on the grounds of non-determination. The application was for outline planning permission and sought planning permission for up to 250 dwellings, with full details provided for access. A wide range of technical studies were undertaken to inform the application and ensure that the development proposals are deliverable.

The site is deliverable and there are no technical objections to the proposal:

- Flood risk and drainage proposals have been agreed by the Environment Agency and SGC Drainage Officers;
- The site access arrangements, internal road hierarchy and off-site highway improvements have all be agreed by SGC Highways officers;
- The Transport Assessment and Travel Plan Framework have been agreed and accepted by SGC Highways Officers;
- The residential use, design of the layout, building heights and density have all been agreed as appropriate parameters for the development of the site; and
- The ecological value of the site is not significant and the County Ecologist has agreed and accepted the development proposal and proposed mitigation.

We have attached a copy of the Design and Access Statement for land at Peg Hill as Appendix 1 to this Paper in order to demonstrate the considered nature of the proposals and highlight the deliverability of the scheme.

As such, there is no reason to unnecessarily delay the delivery of this site (or other parts of the North Yate New Neighbourhood) that could be delivered prior to 2016.

We consider the proposed development of the NYNN to be the most appropriate strategy for the town, however the policy should be amended to enable the development to commence early in the plan period.

3. Is the scale of development envisaged likely to meet local needs or will it encourage more commuting to other centres?

There is an acute need for housing in South Gloucestershire, evidenced by our response to Matter 8. Whilst a significant proportion of the proposed housing is directed to the urban fringes of Bristol, not all growth can be directed there. South Gloucestershire has a relatively high level of self-containment at present. Any under provision in housing would only serve to increase the number of people commuting and the distance travelled. Therefore it is the right strategy to propose significant development elsewhere within South Gloucestershire, that offer the opportunity to accommodate sustainable development.

At Yate there is an existing and established employment base, with some large employers. Further significant and planned housing growth of the town will act to support and enhance the existing employment base and the additional employment proposed as part of the NYNN will assist in maximising the opportunities to improve the self-containment of the town.

4. Do alternative sites in the Yate/Chipping Sodbury area have discernible advantages over the Council's preferred location and, if so, what are these?

No.

The site of the North Yate New Neighbourhood is the least constrained area surrounding Yate and presents opportunities to integrate successfully into the existing settlement. It should be made clear however that the exact extent of the development of the site should be subject to detailed analysis and should not be constrained to conform to the area shown in Figure 12.

Detailed designs have been prepared for land north of Peg Hill, based on extensive Landscape and Visual Assessment which show that a greater proportion of the site is developable than Figure 12 suggests. Specifically, there is no need for the Green Infrastructure Corridor to sterilize the land to the east of the Local Neighbourhood Access Road.

It would be poor design for the road to form an outer edge of the development and it would act to create a ring road, encouraging travel by car and forming a barrier between the New Neighbourhood and Countryside beyond. In addition there is no justification for the Green Infrastructure Corridor extending so far west into the Peg Hill site.

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Ecological Appraisals undertaken and submitted to South Gloucestershire relating to development proposals for Land at Peg Hill demonstrate that development of the site would sit below the ridgeline; would not negatively impact on long

range views; and that a smaller area of Green Infrastructure could act as a successful wildlife corridor. This evidence supports the proposal that the Green Infrastructure Corridor could be provided through utilising a smaller amount of green space within the New Neighbourhood Development Area.

5. Is there sufficient flexibility in the proposals to cope with changing circumstances?

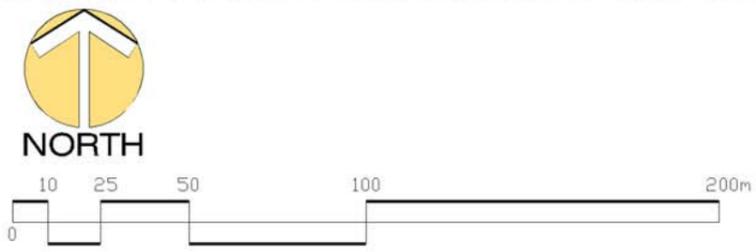
No.

As noted above, we consider the build rates for the end part of plan period (300 per annum) to be over optimistic and therefore in order to add in flexibility, the development should be encouraged to come forward before 2016.

Further flexibility should be added in to the policy in the references to infrastructure required as part of the development. The mix of uses and infrastructure required will need to be determined at the time of the application and at this time, it will need to ensure that the development is viable and deliverable.

Additional flexibility should also be added in relation to the average density of residential development sought, which at present seeks an average density of 45 dph.

An average density of 45 dwellings per hectare means that some areas will be significantly less and therefore some will be significantly greater. To achieve the higher densities would require a high proportion of terraces or apartments which may not be appropriate to a location on the periphery of the town. Density should be informed by the context rather than imposed by a blanket policy.



Project
Land at Peg Hill
Yate
 Drawing Title
Illustrative Masterplan

Date	Scale	Drawn by	Check by
15.09.11	1:2000@A3	MD	PT
Project No	Drawing No	Revision	
17061	9700	B	

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