

CORE POLICIES

5. CORE POLICIES

C1 SUSTAINABILITY CORE POLICY

Development proposals will be examined for their performance against the sustainable development principles set out below.

Where performance on any sustainable development principle is considered to be low, development proposals will need to demonstrate that the benefits of the development substantially outweigh the disadvantages of not meeting all the criteria.

- i) Promotes or maintains the long term economic health of the local economy**
- ii) Promotes or maintains socially inclusive communities and their access to community infrastructure**
- iii) Promotes or maintains the quality of the natural and the historic environment**
- iv) Demonstrates the prudent use of natural resources and incorporates, where relevant, recycling, renewable energy and energy conservation measures.**

5.1 Sustainability is about making real change on the ground: i.e. change that promotes development that minimises the damage to the environment whilst maximising energy efficiency, recycling and the use of renewable resources. It does not mean no development but it does mean development that is appropriate and sensitive to its surroundings. Development should seek to incorporate all the sustainable principles set out in the policy.

5.2 A judgement on the “high” or “low” performance of proposed developments will differ from proposal to proposal. Detailed help will be available to potential applicants in the form of a Supplementary Planning Document. This will be prepared in the light of emerging policy guidance. There are many Government publications available to assist in this judgement including Planning Policy Statement 1: Creating Sustainable Communities; including its bibliography. However, the following working definitions of “high” and “low” performance are recommended.

5.3 A “high” performance standard is where there is a clear and demonstrable net benefit to the sustainable development principle arising from the development directly. For example, a mixed use development on otherwise economically inactive, previously developed land, bringing benefits to nearby communities will score highly. Its opposite in the shape of a single use, greenfield development, remote from public services will be considered to have a “low” performance standard: i.e. where the development would actively threaten the existence or reduce the potential for improvement of the sustainable development principles.

C2 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE CORE POLICY

Provision for the directly related community infrastructure costs of all major development proposals, appropriate to the scale of that development, will be sought. The local planning authority will examine each major development proposal for its need to contribute to the following community infrastructure

requirements and negotiate to secure planning obligations or by means of other appropriate methods to secure the requirements identified. The community infrastructure requirements are:

- **Affordable housing**
- **Education, skill training provision, and libraries**
- **Travel and transport infrastructure**
- **Community buildings and facilities**
- **Health care provision and social services**
- **New or improved public open spaces**
- **Leisure, sport and recreation provision**
- **Waste management and recycling**
- **Environmental protection and enhancement**
- **Information Communication Technology infrastructure**
- **Art in the community**

5.4 The community infrastructure list has been prepared with regard to the physical, social, cultural, economic and environmental consequences of major development. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that the full consequences are taken into account and, where appropriate, addressed either through integration into the development proposal or by means of a financial contribution.

5.5 The process of negotiating such provision will be guided by national government circulars; particularly circulars 5/2005, "Planning Obligations" and 11/95, "The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions". The policy will also in the future be relevant in compliance with the regulations and guidance arising from the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

5.6 For the purposes of the policy, "major development" is generally defined as that involving 10 or more dwellings, other development 1000 m² in gross floor area or greater, involving land of 0.5 hectares or greater in area or where cumulative developments exceed those limits. Nothing in this policy shall prevent negotiations on smaller developments where the site specific circumstances or other policies within the plan require a contribution to community infrastructure.

5.7 In cases where the viability of a proposed development is claimed to be harmed by the identified requirements for community infrastructure, applicants will be expected to provide detailed financial viability information on that specific proposal as evidence of that harm. The local planning authority will in such cases prioritise the requirements in the order that they appear in the policy after taking into account the relevance of each requirement to the proposal.

C3 DEVELOPMENT CONTROL CORE POLICY

New development will be permitted subject to the following criteria:

- i) Respect for the local character and distinctiveness of the area with regard to the design, size, scale, density, massing, materials, siting and layout of the proposal;**
- ii) Respect for the quality of the natural and built environment, including the historic environment, archaeology and ecology of the locality and where**

- necessary include measures for the preservation or enhancement of such features;
- iii) **Avoid creating developments with unacceptable low levels of privacy and amenities and avoid the unacceptable loss of privacy and amenities to adjacent dwellings or other uses to the detriment of existing occupiers development;**
 - iv) **Ensure access into and within the development is safe, minimises the risk from crime, and is convenient and attractive to pedestrians, cyclists, and people with disabilities;**
 - v) **Incorporate energy conservation features and design principles to promote the use of renewable energy sources and prioritise the use of local, natural and recycled materials, provide satisfactory arrangements for efficient water supply, use and disposal and proposals for the storage, collection and recycling of refuse;**
 - vi) **Promote sustainable patterns of development that will reduce the overall need to travel and support increased use of public transport, cycling and walking;**
 - vii) **Have a satisfactory means of access, turning, car parking and secure cycle storage and not result in a detrimental impact upon highway or pedestrian safety;**
 - viii) **Avoid overloading of existing or proposed services and facilities, the local road network or other infrastructure;**
 - ix) **Avoid locations that would generate, or be subject to, a detrimental effect upon public health or pollution to the environment by the emission or production of excessive noise, light intrusion, smoke, fumes, effluent, vibration, waste or litter.**

5.8 A high standard of design will be expected in new development, whatever its scale. It is the policy of the Local Planning Authority to encourage excellence, innovation and creativity in all development to ensure that schemes are compatible with the scale, character and distinctiveness of the local vernacular and landscape.

5.9 Good design and development is not easy to define, because it is subjective and depends on the value systems being applied. What is of particular importance is that good design is not just a matter of attention to the elevational treatments of individual buildings. Local character, quality and distinctiveness derive from the complex relationships between many elements that make up the built environment.

5.10 All applications for planning permission, listed building and advertisement consent will be expected to be accompanied by a statement setting out the design principles that have been employed. The amount of detail included within the design statement should reflect the nature and scale of the proposal, but, as a minimum should comprise a short written statement and supporting illustrative plans.

5.10a In considering the design principles in criteria (v), there may be opportunities to source building materials locally, from natural sources or through recycling in the interests of minimising unnecessary energy costs of manufacture or transportation.

C4 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORE POLICY

New business development, which promotes a diverse and robust economy, whilst having regard to the environmental impact, will be granted planning permission subject to the following criteria:

- i) Development is concentrated at the Districts larger settlements of Calne, Chippenham, Corsham, Malmesbury, Wootton Bassett and Cricklade so as to reduce out-commuting.**
- ii) Development in all other areas is of a scale which will maintain and improve local services.**
- iii) Proposals in the open countryside, including the re-use of rural buildings, will only be allowed if they are in keeping with the surroundings and exhibit potential to sustain the local rural economy.**

5.11 The business development strategy for the District aims to safeguard and promote employment opportunities within North Wiltshire. New development will be directed towards the larger settlements in the interests of sustainability, to maintain and enhance the range of employment, housing and other facilities and to reduce the need to travel. This includes business development as part of mixed-use developments.

5.12 The strategy further seeks to encourage appropriate job opportunities within the smaller settlements to aid the creation of balanced and sustainable communities and to maintain employment prosperity within the District.