



## South Gloucestershire Council Local Plan Topic Paper

Introduction on behalf of the South Gloucestershire Partnership to the Council's strategy concerning ensuring adequacy of its own housing land supply and whether it can assist with Bristol City Council's unmet housing need.

Consultation July 2024

## **New Local Plan – Additional Regulation 18 consultation**

Welcome to the next stage of developing a new Local Plan for South Gloucestershire.

When complete, the new Local Plan will establish the number of homes and jobs that are needed, where these should be built, and the infrastructure that will be needed to go alongside them. Really importantly, it will also set out how we will preserve and protect our climate and local natural world.

Our aim is to plan for a South Gloucestershire where:

- everyone is able to live in decent, affordable, secure homes
- we can get about to work, health, education and to live our lives
- we tackle the challenges of the climate and nature emergency together

### **Why are we undertaking further public consultation now?**

Following the close of the Regulation 18 Local Plan Phase 3 consultation in February, the Council has reviewed all the representations received. Having considered these and to ensure the council addresses the legal and procedural requirements necessary for preparing the new Local Plan, we would like to consult on the following matters prior to publishing its Regulation 19 Publication Plan.

1. Further clarification on the process for how the lenses used to apportion site locations were chosen, and the process of site selection to form part of the Emerging Spatial Strategy.
2. Provision of additional supply to provide greater flexibility to meet South Gloucestershire's housing needs in order to ensure the Council can provide a sufficient amount and variety of both deliverable land for housing (sites for the five years following the adoption of the Local Plan, and developable land for housing (sites for the subsequent years 6-10 and 11-15 of the remaining plan period).
3. The Council's approach to considering whether it can meet any of Bristol City Council's (BCC) unmet housing need to ensure the Council continues to discharge the duty to co-operate under s.33 A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 on the cross-boundary strategic issue of BCC's unmet housing need.

### **Council's preferred strategy concerning ensuring flexibility of its own housing land supply and assisting with Bristol's unmet housing need**

As the topic paper explains, we consider it is important to highlight that the Council considers its first priority is to meet its own district's housing needs, and that this is a policy objective that is given significant weight when considering if the Council can assist with Bristol's needs, under the 'Duty to Cooperate.'

Since the previous consultation, a number of additional sites for new homes have also been proposed and considered alongside a review of sites previously not included in the emerging strategy.

Having considered these through the methodology explained in Section 10 of the Topic Paper, we are consulting on whether an additional 17 sites have the potential to provide a further 1,751 homes, (an increase of 8.86% on top of our housing target), could be included in our new Local Plan.

To demonstrate our commitment to reducing the impact on having to allocate additional greenfield sites, 6 of these sites (815 homes) are identified to be delivered on brownfield sites and for a further 6 sites (572 homes) the principle of development has already been accepted. This is almost double the number of sites the new Local Plan previously included from these types of sources. Indeed, it is important to remember that for every home we build on a brownfield or redevelopment site, that's another home that won't need to be built on a green field or new site.

Through our consultations and conversations with residents, we have heard strong views and feelings about the importance of protecting peoples' existing communities. We agree that development should enhance not damage our existing communities, which is why the Local Plan proposes new homes are spread across South Gloucestershire, with everyone taking a share, rather than concentrating all new home building in a few massive developments.

We have also been able to correct some disinformation and allay some people's fears about what new homebuilding, to provide a safe place to live for current and future generations will really mean. We can say categorically that the green belt won't be 'destroyed'. At most, around two per cent could be released.

Taking all this into account, what the paper also concludes is that recognising we are closely connected to Bristol and what each authority does impacts on the other, means we do need to consider Bristol City Council's request for us to find space for more new homes to help meet their projected needs. What we have concluded to this point, examining possible places to build, tells us that we don't have room for any more new homes than those that will meet our own needs. We promised we would take an evidence-based approach and have reached this conclusion after looking very carefully at sites across the district. **This is further explained at Section 12 of the Topic Paper which makes the conclusion that South Gloucestershire Council is not able to address BCC unmet needs, either wholly or in part.**

**The Council is inviting comments on this Topic Paper.**

### **What happens next?**

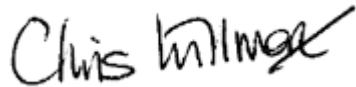
It should be noted the Council has not yet reached a final view in relation to the sites set out in the earlier Regulation 18 consultation. However, now we want to hear from local people about their thoughts, so we can respond with those views in mind as work continues on the next stage of our new Local Plan.

The Council is inviting comments on this Topic Paper for a period of 8 weeks from 19<sup>th</sup> July to 13<sup>th</sup> September.

**Comments should be received by 5pm on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2024.**

We look forward to hearing your views.

Cllr Chris Willmore – Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration and Infrastructure

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Willmore". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Cllr Matt Palmer – Labour lead for Planning, Regeneration and Infrastructure

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matt Palmer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "M".