

Herefordshire Local Plan – Core Strategy

Main Modifications – Addendum

Explanatory Note

Policy SD3 – Sustainable water management and water resources

Following the publication of a Ministerial Statement on 25th March the Inspector requested that the Council address the implications of the statement by making any necessary additional modifications.

The Ministerial Statement incorporates the Government's new national planning policy on the setting of technical standards for new dwellings. It makes clear that it should be taken into account in applying the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and that local planning authorities and qualifying bodies preparing neighbourhood plans should not set in their emerging Local Plans, neighbourhood plans, or supplementary planning documents, any additional local technical standards or requirements relating to the construction, internal layout or performance of new dwellings. This includes any policy reference to the Code for Sustainable Homes as this has been formally withdrawn by the government, in lieu of the new technical standards. The Ministerial Statement which sets out clearly the approach that Local Planning Authorities should take can be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/planning-update-march-2015>

In criterion 6 of policy SD3 of the submission Core Strategy reference is made to the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 5 for Water Efficiency, as the Code has now been withdrawn it is necessary to amend this reference and update by replacing with the national technical standards.

There are limited optional new national technical standards, including for water efficiency, but these should only be required through any new Local Plan policies if they address a clearly evidenced need, and where their impact on viability has been considered, in accordance with the NPPF and Planning Guidance.

Herefordshire Council has worked closely with the Environment Agency, English Nature and Dwr Cymru - Welsh Water in developing the policies of the Core Strategy and in the preparation of a Nutrient Management Plan to help manage the discharge of phosphate into the River Wye SAC. The agencies and water company have supported the approach to applying the water efficiency target set out in the submitted version of policy SD3. Therefore Herefordshire Council consider there is clear evidence to support the application of the optional national technical target of 110 litres/person/day. The optional standard, although not as high as the Code 5 requirement, if implemented would help to assist the management of nutrients in the River Wye SAC.

In addition, the viability of applying the higher Code 5 target has already been tested as part of preparing the Herefordshire Council – 2014 updated Economic Viability Assessment (May 2014) and the new optional standard will have a lower impact in viability terms. It is therefore appropriate to apply the optional national technical standard in Herefordshire.

An addendum to the Main and Minor Modifications schedule incorporating the proposed changes has been published and a six week consultation, specifically upon these changes, will be undertaken from 7 April until 19 May 2015.

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