

## AHR1 – Affordable Housing Threshold

### Planning Policy's Response –

The **Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted on 30 January 2013**. This means that the Core Strategy now forms part of the development plan and will be used in determining planning applications.

From June 2010, the policy on affordable housing used a threshold of 15 or more units at a rate of 35%. Today however, post the Core Strategy adoption, the Council is seeking 35% affordable housing on major schemes of 10 or more units. Proportions of the affordable housing are now seeking 20% social rent; 65% affordable rent; and 15% shared ownership/intermediate housing.

The new Policy HS3 has only been applied since the Inspector's report on the Core Strategy at the end of September 2012. Up until this point it was not considered to be a material consideration. Therefore Policy HS3 has only been used for under a year and in that period the level of major applications (over 10 units) has been minimal.

The figures from the draft Annual Monitoring Report 2013 shows that there have been a total of 184 affordable homes delivered during 2012/13, across 5 sites. This was based on the previous threshold of 15 units.

In addition to 350 affordable homes with planning permission there are also currently (as at 31 March 2013) another 916 affordable homes anticipated to come forward, some of which have been identified through pre-application discussions or form part of identified development schemes, such as Watford Junction.

This makes a current total of 1266 affordable homes anticipated to come forward over the period 2012/13 to 2030/31, 31% of the estimated total 4073 housing commitments outstanding.

There is no apparent evidence that the current policy approach is deterring residential investment in Watford.