

WORKING DOCUMENT NOT FOR PUBLICATION

**West Northamptonshire
Joint Strategic Planning Unit**

**Draft Supplementary Planning Document for Consultation
Affordable Housing**

West Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit

Northampton Borough Council

Daventry District council

South Northamptonshire Council

Statement of Adoption, Consultation and Sustainability Appraisal

- (i) This draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been produced by the West Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit. The Unit is responsible for planning policy in West Northamptonshire, which covers the areas administered by Northampton Borough Council, Daventry District Council and South Northamptonshire Council.
- (ii) The draft is published for public consultation purposes. The consultation period for both documents starts XX April 2009 and will run for 6 weeks ending on XX May 2009.
- (iii) The consultation will be undertaken in accordance with the Councils' Statements of Community Involvement and will include:
 - A Press Notice and Press Release
 - Copies being made available for public viewing at the council offices, local libraries, council websites, West Northants Joint Planning Unit website and West Northamptonshire Development Corporation website.
 - Letters to stakeholders informing them of the draft document and where it is available
 - A sustainability appraisal of this supplementary planning document published concurrently for public consultation.
 - a facility enabling the public to respond on-line.
- (iv) The sustainability appraisal is reproduced in Appendix G. The sustainable appraisal will be assessed by an organization independent of the Joint Planning Unit.
- (v) Following the consultation period the comments received will be taken into account by the West Northamptonshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee when drawing up the final version of this document for adoption as the Affordable Housing SPD applying to West Northamptonshire.
- (vi) Once adopted the SPD will be used by the Councils in West Northamptonshire, and West Northamptonshire Development Corporation, when deciding relevant planning applications and at Local Planning Inquiries.

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1 **Introduction: Aims & Objectives**

- 1.1 This document applies to the area of West Northamptonshire which, covers the administrative areas of Daventry District Council, Northampton Borough Council and South Northamptonshire Council.
- 1.2 Northampton is the largest settlement in West Northamptonshire with a population of 200,100 (Mid Year Estimates 2007 OPCS). Daventry and South Northamptonshire Councils are essentially rural authorities adjacent to Northampton on its north, west and southern boundaries. Those districts contain the towns of Daventry, Towcester and Brackley.
- 1.3 This supplementary planning document (SPD) will provide detail and enlarge on policies in existing adopted Local Plans and take account of the East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy, the emerging East Midlands Regional Plan and Government Policy guidance and statements. It also follows Government regulations regarding the drafting of SPDs.
- 1.4 It also relates to relevant local authority housing strategies, housing market intelligence and other relevant housing guidance. It will provide clear guiding procedures and contain practical advice for all those involved in the provision of affordable housing in West Northamptonshire.
- 1.5 The SPD covers:
 - Definition of affordable housing
 - Calculation of mix and type of affordable housing
 - Funding arrangements
 - Financial viability assessments
 - Exceptions sites
 - Integration of tenure blind design
- 1.6 The Joint Strategic Planning Committee and the other planning authorities across West Northamptonshire, including West Northamptonshire Development Corporation, are strongly committed to the:
 - provision of affordable housing to meet identified housing needs,
 - creation of a balanced housing market and sustainable communities.
- 1.7 The SPD draws on and sets out to deliver the priorities in the countywide Local Area Agreement and the local authorities' Community Strategies and housing strategies.
- 1.8 This SPD will form a material consideration in the determining of relevant planning applications and where relevant will be used at Local Planning Inquiries.

2 Policy Framework

2.1 This SPD draws, principally, upon the following policies and strategies:

- National planning and housing policy
- Regional planning and housing policy
- Local and Structure Plan Saved Policies
- Local Development Framework
- Strategic Housing Market Assessments
- Housing Strategies
- Local market and needs assessments and
- Other supporting documents and information

2.2 The Local Development Framework is a new type of plan which is replacing old style local plans. Saved policies are those policies from the old plans which are being kept while documents making up the Local Development Framework (LDF) are being drawn up. None of the saved County Structure Plan policies apply to this SPD. Relevant policies are laid out in Appendix C.

2.3 Together the regional plan or regional spatial strategy and the local plan (while saved policies apply) and emerging documents forming part of the LDF make up the development plan. This is the plan which is referred to when deciding planning applications and at planning appeals into refused applications.

2.4 In the case of West Northamptonshire each authority has its own local plan which address local issues. These are being replaced by local development documents including a joint core strategy which will cover the whole of West Northamptonshire.

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy

2.5 National policy on housing provision, including affordable housing, is expressed in the Government's Planning Policy Statement 3 Housing (PPS3) published in November 2006. In the statement the Government indicates that it is committed to improving affordability. A key policy goal is to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent home in a community where they want to live. Also it seeks to ensure high quality housing for those who cannot afford market housing and the creation of sustainable and mixed communities.

2.6 Planning Policy Statement 1 Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1) sets the wider planning objectives of the Government among which is the

development of sustainable communities, that is, communities that will stand the test of time, where people want to live, and which will enable people to meet their aspirations and potential. It also seeks high quality inclusive design in the layout of new developments and individual buildings over the lifetime of the development. Sustainable economic development includes sufficient new homes, including affordable homes to ensure everyone has the opportunity to have a decent home in locations that reduce the need to travel.

- 2.7 In PPS3 the Government states that it is committed to improving the affordability and supply of housing in all communities. Among the objectives is the creation of sustainable, inclusive, mixed communities in all areas, both urban and rural. In rural areas high quality housing should be delivered to contribute to the creation and maintenance of sustainable rural communities in market towns and villages. A mix of housing, both market and affordable, should be provided in terms of tenure and price, supporting a wide variety of households.
- 2.8 To meet these strategic objectives local development documents are to set plan wide targets for the amount of affordable housing for both social rented and intermediate housing. Viability assessments and the amount of housing need are to be considered when setting the targets. Site thresholds, that is, the level at which affordable housing is to be provided in terms of dwellings are to be set out. A national minimum threshold of 15 dwellings is given in the PPS 3 but planning authorities can require lower thresholds if this can be justified
- 2.9 In rural areas, the use of rural exception site policies are encouraged to create and sustain communities in market towns and villages. These are intended to allow affordable housing development in places where housing would not be normally allowed on planning grounds.

Regional Policy

- 2.10 At the regional level, the regional planning guidance adopted in March 2005,, the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands (RSS8), supports the building of sustainable communities. This includes a well integrated mix of decent homes of different types and tenures to support a range of household sizes, ages and incomes. The provision of affordable housing will be a key element in the development of sustainable communities.
- 2.11 The emerging regional spatial strategy, the East Midlands Regional Plan, which is expected to be published early in 2009, seeks the provision of a mix of dwellings in terms of size, type, affordability and location. Interim targets for the provision of affordable housing are given but these are to be superseded by the results of housing market assessments (HMA). An HMA has been undertaken for West Northamptonshire (June 2007) and the information it contains has been used in this document, see Section 4.2. Where an updated HMA is available this will be used by the planning authorities when considering the provision of affordable housing.

Local Plans and Development Documents

2.12 The policies within the local plans and local development documents on affordable housing allow for the provision of this type of housing in two circumstances:

- i. as part of a larger residential development of market housing where affordable housing is provided by means of a planning agreement
- ii. on exception sites. These are sites in or adjacent to rural settlements of less than 3000 people that would **not normally allowed to be developed for residential use**. They may be planned for or brought forward by land owners or developers independently of the planning process.

2.13 Local Plan policies are as follows:

- iii. Daventry Local Plan, adopted 1997, Policies HS25, HS26 and HS27
- iv. Northampton Local Plan, adopted 1997, Policies H32 and H33.
- v. South Northamptonshire Local Plan, adopted 1997, Policies H7 and H8

2.14 The full policies are reproduced in Appendix C. The above policies are those relating directly to the provision of affordable housing, and reference should be made to other policies in the local plans and elsewhere.

Housing Strategies

2.15 The East Midlands Regional Housing Strategy 2004-2010 establishes a policy framework designed to deliver balance, inclusion and co-ordination to guide sub-regions and local authorities. Key policies include increasing the quantity and improving the quality and choice of new affordable housing, promoting eco-efficient homes, achieving sustainable growth in the MKSM area and meeting housing needs in rural areas and market towns.

2.16 The delivery of affordable housing is a corporate priority for all of the local authorities in West Northamptonshire. Increasing the supply of affordable housing is also a key priority within each local authority's housing strategy.

Other Relevant Local Policies and Strategies

2.17 In addition to the national, regional and local guidance outlined above, other local policies also identify a lack of affordable housing as a key issue.

2.18 The Local Area Agreement for Northamptonshire identifies the need for the provision of sufficient housing which is both affordable and of a quality which meets the needs of Northamptonshire.

2.19 The Countywide Sustainable Communities Strategy 2008 (draft) identifies making affordable housing available as a key factor in achieving a sustainable community. Appropriate affordable housing needs to be available more widely

across the population, not least to avoid any perceived unfairness in its allocation.

- 2.20 The Community Strategy for Northamptonshire 2004 – 2013 identifies the need for good quality affordable housing across the County. The three local authorities in West Northamptonshire also include the provision of this as a priority within their respective Community Strategies.

Future Changes

- 2.21 It should be noted that the Joint Planning Unit and local Councils will apply the latest government statements and development plan policies when considering development proposals. Up-to-date housing strategies and housing market intelligence will also apply.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEED IN WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

East Midlands Regional Plan

3.1 The emerging draft regional spatial strategy, the East Midlands Regional Plan, (Secretary of State Proposed Changes July 2008) sets an overall target of 62,150 properties to be provided within West Northamptonshire over the plan period 2001-2026. The plan also sets a specific minimum target of 21,800 affordable dwellings for West Northamptonshire but states that Local Development Frameworks should adopt affordable housing targets in line with the conclusions of the most upto date Housing Market Assessment. Table 4.1 reflects the position of the Housing Market Assessment published in June 2007 for West Northamptonshire. A review of the HMA is underway and its findings will be referred to when considering affordable housing when it becomes available.

West Northamptonshire Housing Market Assessment (HMA) 2007

3.2 The West Northamptonshire HMA considers affordability and housing need. It shows that between 2002 and 2004 the rise in lower quartile house prices (34%) was far greater than the rise in lower quartile incomes (6%), suggesting a decline in affordability over the period. It also drew on the latest local housing requirement/need studies at the time to show there was an annual shortfall of 2,240 affordable units across the West Northamptonshire area. A review of the HMA is being undertaken and its findings will be used when they become available.

Local Housing Market Intelligence

3.3 All three local authorities in West Northamptonshire have completed housing requirements/needs studies. These show a shortfall of affordable housing in West Northamptonshire, as outlined in Table 3.1. The levels of provision shown in the right hand column are taken from Table 5.1 and the housing figures come from the emerging East Midlands Regional Plan, Secretary's of State Proposed Changes July 2008, annual monitoring figures and the Housing and Market Needs Study update 2008.

Table 3.1: Allocations and Need

Local Authority Area	Need for affordable dwellings, annual average 2004 – 7 (i)	Annual average allocation all dwellings 2001 to 2026 (ii) (iv)	Annual average completions all dwellings 2001-2007 (iii)	Affordable Housing Yield assuming 35% or 40% provision of annual allocation 2001 to 2026
West Northamptonshire	1167	2486	2036	966
Northampton Borough Council	623	1616	1395	565

Daventry District Council	353	540	347	269
South Northamptonshire	191	330	341	132

(i) Housing and Market Needs Study date 2008

(ii) Emerging East Midlands Regional Plan, Secretary's of State Proposed Changes July 2008

(iii) Annual Monitoring Reports 2001 to 2007.

(iv) all figures averaged 2001 to 2006

3.4 As needs would generally take a high proportion of the overall housing supply the Councils will take every opportunity to maximise the provision of affordable housing on suitable sites and where viability shows no exceptional reason for not doing so. The 2008 Update of the Housing Market and Needs Study 2006, covering West Northamptonshire, indicates that the planning authorities covering Daventry and South Northamptonshire should seek a level of affordable provision of 40% and in the case of Northampton 35%. Figure 4.2 shows the levels of provision found in the 2007 West Northamptonshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment as applied to the various parts of West Northamptonshire. The Assessment made further recommendations regarding the split between social rented and intermediate housing. These are reproduced in Table 5.1.

Table 3.2 Provision of Affordable Housing

Affordable Housing as a % of all housing	Daventry Town	Daventry rural	Northampton Implementation Area (i)	South Northants Towcester Brackley	South Northants rural
Affordable housing provision %	35	40	35	40	50

(i) Includes Northampton Borough and parts of Daventry and South Northamptonshire Districts yet to be identified, refer MKSM Sub Regional Strategy.

Source: Housing Market and Needs Study 2006, 2008 Update.

3.5 The 2008 Update of the Housing Market and Needs Study 2006 indicates that the higher levels of provision should be justified by needs evidence but could create problems of site viability. They may also be counter to the creation of sustainable communities.

3.6 As well as the housing requirement and needs surveys, other sources of housing market intelligence will be considered including:

- Northamptonshire: Study of Black and Minority Ethnic Housing and Support Needs report 2006
- Northamptonshire Key Worker Housing Needs Report 2005
- Northamptonshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2007
- Village/Parish Housing Need Surveys
- Local authority housing register information

3.7 The Councils, and West Northamptonshire Development Corporation, when considering planning applications will use the latest housing requirement and need surveys, subsequent updates and other relevant housing market intelligence to demonstrate the need for affordable housing. This includes the levels of provision shown in Table 4.2 which may change in the light of new evidence.

4 **Definition of Affordable Housing?**

- 4.1 The definition of affordable housing to be used in this SPD is provided by Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (November 2006).

“Affordable housing is:

Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Affordable housing should:

- *Meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a cost low enough for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices*
- *Include provision for the home to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or, if these restrictions are lifted, for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.*

Social rented housing is:

“Rented housing owned and managed by local authorities and registered social landlords, for which guideline rents are determined through the national rent regime. The proposals set out in the Three Year Review of Rent Restructuring (July 2004) were implemented as policy in April 2006. It may also include rented housing owned or managed by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Community Agency as a condition of grant.

Intermediate affordable housing is:

Housing at prices and rents above those of social rent but below market price or rents and which meet the criteria set out above. These can include shared equity products (e.g. Homebuy) and other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent.”

- 4.2 “The definition does not exclude homes provided by private sector bodies or provided without grant funding. Where such homes meet the definition above, they may be considered for planning purposes, as affordable housing. Whereas, those homes that do not meet the definition, for example, ‘low cost market’ housing, may not be considered, for planning purposes, as affordable housing.”
- 4.3 The affordability of intermediate affordable housing will be based on the upto date relationship between incomes and house prices. The Councils in West Northamptonshire monitor the relationship between incomes and house prices and will apply the findings when assessing the housing mix of schemes coming forward for planning permission.

5 THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING REQUIREMENT

Thresholds for providing affordable housing

- 5.1 To ensure that as much new affordable housing as possible is provided to reflect the needs in West Northamptonshire reference will be made to the national minimum threshold laid out in Planning Policy Statement 3, that is 15 dwellings. This will apply to all the local authority areas within West Northamptonshire.
- 5.2 The thresholds for the provision of affordable housing will apply to conversions of buildings, whether or not they are already in residential use. When considering whether a development meets the thresholds for the provision of affordable housing the planning authorities will consider the gross number of proposed dwellings, not net increases. Planning applications should not try to artificially subdivide or phase sites so as to avoid or minimise the provision of affordable housing. The full requirement of affordable housing policy will be required in any event in such circumstances.

Provision, social rented, intermediate housing and viability

- 5.3 The indicative proportions of affordable housing required on those sites that meet the threshold level are outlined in Table 3.2 and the tenure split is given in Table 5.1. The proportion of affordable housing sought is based on information contained in the 2008 update of the Housing and Market Needs originally dated 2006. Where developers propose less affordable housing than the specified levels or a different tenure split they will be required to provide auditable evidence of lack of viability to support their case, see paragraph 5.8. It is recognised that the tenure split may be affected by market conditions. The local authorities scrutinise each case thoroughly. Low cost market housing in the market sector will not be considered as part of the intermediate housing provision as it falls outside the definition of affordability.

Table 5.1: Affordable Housing Tenure Split

Tenure splits as a % of all affordable housing.	Daventry urban	Daventry rural	Northampton Implementation Area (i)	South Northants urban	South Northants rural
% social rented	70	62.5	70	62.5	60
% Intermediate	30	37.5	30	37.5	40

(i) Includes Northampton Borough and parts of Daventry and South Northamptonshire Districts yet to be identified, refer MKSM Sub Regional Strategy

Table derived from tenure split in West Northamptonshire Market Housing Assessment DTZ June 2007.

- 5.4 Should an applicant consider they are unable to provide the required proportion of affordable housing or tenure split due to viability issues they must support their case with financial evidence, which they should submit with the planning application. On larger sites where phasing is required (50 or more dwellings) viability will be reviewed in respect of phases following the initial development to take account of changes (up or down) in market conditions and other viability factors. The evidence will be provided on an open book basis for consideration by the relevant planning authority and if necessary audited by external experts.
- 5.5 The relevant Council will make available a copy of the economic viability toolkit for their area and the viability appraisal should be submitted in this format. Guidance and a specimen calculation will be provided on request.
- 5.6 When applicants submit evidence of non-viability, the planning authority will expect to see the calculations for the important factors set out in enough detail for viability to be properly assessed, audited and tested.
- 5.7 This information will be assessed on whether the figures show satisfactorily that the scheme would be unviable with the required proportion of affordable housing.
- 5.8 The planning authorities will expect development proposals to adhere to the levels of provision, tenure, housing mix and type as laid out in this SPD. If the planning authority is satisfied that the financial appraisal confirms the affordable housing requirement cannot be provided it will consider altering the tenure split, mix or type of dwellings, to achieve viability, (see paragraph 7.5 regarding Section 106 cascades). Developers will be expected to optimise proposals across the development site, including market housing where appropriate, to achieve the levels of provision, tenure split and affordable housing mix and type as laid out in this SPD

Specialist Provision

- 5.9 The requirement for affordable housing extends to all types of residential development including specialist accommodation such as retirement homes and “villages”. A retirement home falls into the same use class as residential and is therefore expected to contribute to provision of affordable housing. In these cases it may be more appropriate for the provision to be affordable retirement housing. Care homes and nursing homes that are not self-contained and do not offer an independent life style are not required to provide affordable housing.

The Size and Mix of Affordable Housing

- 5.10 Alongside requirements regarding the amount and proportion of affordable housing, the planning authority will also require that any affordable housing provision proposed be of a suitable size and mix to satisfy known needs. Developers will need to satisfy the Council that the mix or unit types proposed

address the local housing need based on up-to-date housing market intelligence.

- 5.11 Although many sites might be suited to different densities, it is important that the development contains a mix of dwelling sizes that reflects the relevant authority's strategic mix or housing needs evident at the time. On smaller sites developments may contribute towards the overall mix, that is they may be developed with a reduced range of house types and sizes within the context of the overall mix required. That is, there may be a need to meet particular demands not addressed at the time. This will be considered against prevailing viability conditions.

Location & Phasing of Affordable Housing

- 5.12 The planning authority will expect affordable housing to be integrated in modest groups throughout a development site, rather than concentrated in one particular area. Grouping of affordable housing should not generally exceed 6 dwellings. In the case of flats the local authorities will be prepared to consider arrangements in consultation with social landlords. The aim is to create "tenure blind" development to move towards mixed and sustainable communities.
- 5.13 Normally planning conditions or agreements will be used to ensure that the affordable housing is built out alongside, and proportionately, to the amount of market housing at any one time. This will be required or managed by condition or through legal agreement.
- 5.14 As a general indication proposed development areas which comprise one land holding will be treated as a single site in planning terms. Outline applications for large areas of land setting an overall level of provision for affordable housing are welcomed. These applications should specify the proportions of both market and affordable dwellings, the latter split between social rented and intermediate. Phases built under subsequent detailed permissions should provide proportionate numbers of affordable housing. This criteria will be strictly adhered to by the local planning authorities, and managed through the terms of any permission or legal agreement. However each phase will be assessed on the viability conditions prevailing at the time of the planning application.

Planning Proposals

- 5.15 The provision of affordable housing should not only conform with this SPD but also take into account of policies contained in the development plan and national guidance, particularly those relating to amenity, environmental impacts and sustainable development. Providing affordable housing, including rural exception housing, does not mean that less attention should be paid to other planning matters.

Efficient Use of Land

- 5.15 Across West Northamptonshire there is a pressing need for affordable housing, but only limited amount of opportunities for provision. The authorities

therefore, expect land to be developed efficiently. Developments should generally achieve a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare. In urban areas where there is easy access to shops, other amenities and frequent bus services densities can be higher, say 50 or more dwellings per hectare. However, account should be taken of the impact of higher density on the surrounding areas and whether or not higher densities would be appropriate.

- 5.16 When considering applications the planning authorities will carefully examine applications which are below the relevant density threshold or below densities considered appropriate to the relevant area, especially where these are part of larger land holdings. Subdivision of sites to avoid the provision of affordable housing by circumventing density levels will not be permitted. Where the authorities consider that a site has been artificially subdivided in order to avoid the application of the affordable housing policies, the entire area will be used to assess the provision of affordable housing.

Design of Affordable Housing

- 5.17 The Councils will expect developers to submit high quality schemes in terms of layouts and building design. Consideration should be given to the guidance contained in Building for Life published by CABI. The housing layout, external design, materials and finishes used for affordable housing should follow closely those of nearby market housing. Internally layouts should meet the standards set by the Homes and Communities Agency. A reference guide to the relevant documents can be found at Appendix D, see also Appendix F.
- 5.18 The Authorities would expect all affordable dwellings to meet the appropriate standards regardless of whether Social Housing Grant funding has been allocated or not.
- 5.19 Affordable housing should meet or exceed the following

Internal Environment

- i. Homes and Community Agency's Design & Quality Standards, The Design and Quality Standards set out the Agency's requirements and recommendations for all new homes which receive Social Housing Grant. The Homes and Community Agency expect all affordable dwellings to be well designed and to provide good quality housing to meet identified needs in places where people want to live. Three core performance standards: Internal Environment, Sustainability and External Environment underpin this expectation.
- ii. Housing Quality Indicators (HQIs) - All affordable housing must meet the minimum Homes and Community Agency Indicators for internal, sustainability and external environments.
- iii. Building for Life published by the Commission for Architecture and Built Environment (CABI) seeks good quality housing design to improve social wellbeing and the quality of life by reducing crime, improving public health, easing transport problems and increasing property

values. Building for Life promotes design excellence and celebrates best practice in the house building industry. The 20 Building for Life criteria embody a vision of functional, attractive and sustainable housing. New housing developments are scored against the criteria to assess the quality of their design. See Appendix F.

- iv. The Lifetime Homes Standard lays down 16 design criteria for the provision of flexible designs that provide primarily for wheelchair access either at the time of construction or for adaption later. Wheelchair access is not the only consideration but is the main means of incorporating design features in dwellings which make them more adaptable to meet the varying needs of different occupiers through their lifetime, and the life of the building. The Lifetime Homes Standard is incorporated in the Department's of Community and Local Government publication Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods, February 2008. The Standard will be incorporated into the Code for Sustainable Homes in 2011. All publically funded housing will be built to the Standard at this date. See Appendix D for references.

External Environment

- i. Building for Life (BFL), CABE - All affordable developments must show that they meet the criteria for BFL. The responses to this criteria must be provided as part of the planning application and will be used to assess the suitability of the scheme. All new affordable housing provided both through market housing developments and on rural exception site should take account of the 20 criteria which make up the Building for Life package.

Sustainability

- 5.20 The Code for Sustainable Homes, (Department for Communities and Local Government December 2006) – This is a single national standard to guide the housing industry in the design and construction of sustainable dwellings. Since May 2008 all social housing should be built to the Code Level 3. By 2016 all housing, market and social, will have to be built to Code Level 6, the most sustainable level. This will be achieved through progressive tightening of the building regulations.
- 5.21 Secured by Design Certification - Secured by Design is the UK Police flagship initiative supporting the principles of "designing out crime" by use of effective crime prevention and security standards for a range of applications. Developers should ensure that the scheme design reflects advice provided from the local Police Crime Prevention Officer and the Northamptonshire Planning Out Crime supplementary planning guidance 2003.

Mobility

- 5.22 While affordable dwellings will meet the Homes and Community Agency Design and Quality Standards, the individual authority will negotiate the provision of units to a fully wheelchair accessible standard as and when a

need is identified. These will be provided according to Building Regulation requirements.

Rural Areas

- 5.23 In rural areas affordable housing can be delivered in two ways, either on developer sites along with market housing by Section 106 agreements or on exception sites. In the case of provision on rural developer sites the planning authorities will apply lower thresholds than 15 dwellings to address the smaller developments coming forward in rural areas. Rural thresholds start at 4 dwellings with a target provision of 25%, and at 10 to 14 dwellings the target provision is 40%. These are both subject to viability testing.
- 5.24 Exception sites are only intended to provide affordable housing sites in smaller rural settlements of less than 3000 people. The emerging East Midlands Regional Plan encourages the creation of sustainable communities that can flourish and thrive, and where people can work and live in the areas where they were brought up. It also encourages the creation of Community Land Trusts to retain affordable housing in perpetuity in rural areas. However unsustainable patterns of development involving more and longer journeys should be avoided.
- 5.25 Exception sites are developed on land adjacent to or in settlements that would not otherwise be permitted for development, i.e. planning applications involving open market accommodation would be refused. A mix of market and affordable housing, or market housing alone, is not acceptable on exception sites. Proposals on exception sites should still take full account of planning considerations, such as site access, accessibility to the settlement, impact on the settlement and the surrounding countryside and other environmental considerations. Identified sites must form suitable extensions to the villages, that is, be set in appropriate locations in planning terms and have a character and appearance which matches the existing settlement.
- 5.26 Local need with the relevant settlement must be established. Numbers of properties must be limited, and exception sites should be used for affordable housing in perpetuity, restricting the Right to Acquire with staircasing limited to 80%.
- 5.27 In rural areas, parish level housing need surveys are the required method for the assessment of local housing needs and will be expected to support any exceptions development. Such surveys should be upto date and reviewed by the parishes, developers, or others, every three to five years. The information may be complemented by data from the Councils' Housing Register.
- 5.28 In the case of affordable housing provided through Section 106 agreements development sites rural thresholds will be applied at a level of four units. For between four and 14 units the level of provision is set at 25%.

6 ON-SITE PROVISION, OFF-SITE PROVISION, & FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

- 6.1 Developers will be required to provide the evidence that affordable housing cannot be provided on-site. If it can be demonstrated, as an exception, that off-site provision is the only way of providing affordable housing then this may be considered. It will be necessary for both the planning authority and the developer to agree that it is more expedient for the affordable element to be provided on a site elsewhere. In the last resort the planning authorities may accept a financial contribution instead of built development. This will be used to provide or support affordable housing provision elsewhere within West Northamptonshire.
- 6.2 In line with the emerging East Midlands Regional Plan arrangements will be investigated for delivery of affordable housing across boundaries, this includes off site provision and financial contributions.
- 6.3 Given a target for the provision of affordable housing of say 40% it would mean that for the construction of every 60 market houses above the appropriate threshold 40 affordable houses shall be built. This applies whether provision is on or off site. This will ensure that the supply of affordable houses keeps step with the supply of market houses and that the proportion of affordable houses in relation to strategic allocations is maintained.
- 6.4 Developers should complete a proportionate amount of affordable houses to market houses each year to provide a continuing supply of affordable houses across West Northamptonshire. This will also help to ensure that affordable housing is distributed evenly throughout the site both over time and physically. Developers should demonstrate that they will achieve the build rate of affordable houses to achieve this objective when they submit their planning applications. Where sites or dwelling types, such as flats, present difficulties the Councils will consider alternative proposals but in any case overall target levels shall be achieved.

Off-site provision

- 6.5 In the case of off-site development developers should ensure that they are able to fulfil the full complement of affordable dwellings in relation to market houses. For instance with a provision of 40% affordable on an on-site development would produce a build of 40 affordable and 60 market houses. In an off-site development the same proportions should be maintained, the off-site affordable should not produce 24 affordable off-site dwellings (the equivalent of 29% provision). It should be complemented by 40 affordable houses as it would with on-site provision. This achieves the delivery of affordable housing and the achievement of mixed and sustainable communities, and ensures equity between developers in the market place in meeting the overall market/affordable mix.
- 6.6 Arrangements for off-site provision will need to be recorded within the Section 106 Agreement and will normally include a trigger mechanism (e.g. off-site

provision will be required to have commenced on completion of market X units and all affordable housing should be provided on completion of market Y units).

Financial contributions

- 6.7 Financial contributions will be used:
- i. To support the provision of additional affordable housing on alternative sites.
 - ii. To support the provision of larger affordable housing units on alternative sites
 - iii. To support the provision of a higher proportion of social rented units than would otherwise be achievable
 - iv. To support the renovation or refurbishment of existing housing for affordable purposes.

This list is not to be taken as exhaustive.

- 6.8 Any financial contribution should be of broadly equivalent value to the cost of on-site provision, but at all times must be sufficient to deliver the right number and sizes of affordable housing. .
- 6.9 Arrangements for payment of the developer contribution will need to be recorded within the S106 Agreement and will normally include a trigger mechanism (e.g. staged payment will be required on completion of X or Y units). Where development takes place over several years developers will be required to submit a revised financial appraisal based on indexing at each trigger point in order to assess what the cost of providing affordable housing on site would have been at that time. The viability of each phase of development will be assessed at the time it comes forward for development.
- 6.10 The S106 Agreement will also (as appropriate) indicate the time period within which any financial contribution must be spent, this is usually 10 years.
- 6.11 Financial contributions received and spent will be recorded in the Annual Monitoring Report and will count towards the achievement of the local authority's annual affordable housing target.

When will developer contributions be considered?

- 6.13 The exceptional circumstances in which off-site provision or financial contributions will be considered in lieu of on site provision include:
- i. Where development is taking place in an area where in the view of the planning authority there is already a high proportion of affordable housing, and to require more would work against the development of a balance community.
 - ii. If the development is on a site which is particularly suited to flats and the local authority's requirement or evidenced need is for family houses

- iii. If the authority considers the proposed development is in a high cost development area and better value could be achieved through the procurement of affordable housing elsewhere in West Northamptonshire. However enclaves of expensive housing should be avoided to maintain mixed communities. Decisions on housing mix will consider the views of the housing authorities.
 - iv. With small sites, where, if the affordable housing was provided on-site, the number of affordable homes provided would be too few to be economic to manage.
 - v. Where the Council considers the affordable housing would be very expensive for occupiers. This situation often arises with apartment blocks with high service charges which apply equally to purchasers and occupiers of affordable housing.
- 6.14 The above will be considered within the context of creating mixed and sustainable communities and the reasonable prospect of alternative sites or land being readily available to deliver the affordable housing requirement.
- 6.15 Off-site provision or financial contributions will not be accepted simply because this is the developer's preference, or the preference of local communities.

7 DELIVERING AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Funding

- 7.1 Affordable housing provided on development sites is secured through legal agreements under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Acts. Under these arrangements developers are to provide serviced plots for the development of affordable dwellings free of charge and free of all further financial and other incumbrances. Developers should not expect as a matter of course grant financing from the Homes and Community Agency unless added value is included and can be demonstrated. This applies to social rented and intermediate housing. Added value can include such things as higher standards of development, unusually high elements of social rented development and extra energy efficiency measure. Other matters may fall for consideration. Cascade agreements may be used to attract grant to achieve a mix or tenure split as near as possible to the preferred levels laid out by the planning authorities.
- 7.2 Should an applicant consider they are unable to provide the required proportion or mix of affordable housing due to non-viability without Homes and Community Agency grant they must support their case with financial evidence. Before developers seek a revised housing mix or tenure split without grant they should make all reasonable endeavours to secure grant before the authorities agree to a revised mix.
- 7.3 When applicants submit evidence of non-viability the planning authority will expect to see the calculations for the relevant factors set out in enough detail for viability to be properly assessed. The planning authority will process the information submitted using their own economic appraisal model to assess whether the figures show satisfactorily that the scheme would be unviable with the required proportion or mix of affordable housing. The evidence will where necessary be audited by external experts.
- 7.4 If the planning authority is satisfied that the financial appraisal confirms the affordable housing requirement cannot be provided it will consider altering the proportion, tenure split or mix of dwellings to achieve viability.

Section 106 cascade

- 7.5 The planning authorities may consider changes to proposals where viability proves to be an issue. They will take into account factors such as location, type of site and the size, density and long term sustainability of the scheme along with any contamination issues. In drawing up the relevant Section 106 agreement a cascade of tenure mixes will be set out and proposals may be amended on a stage by stage basis to achieve affordability. The application of grant to improve the 'mix' will be seen as added value. However the planning authorities will seek to retain the overall level of provision of affordable housing and examine the tenure mix and other factors such as housing mix, type and density in the first instance. Account will be taken of the availability or non-availability of grant.

- 7.6 The alterations will take into account factors such as location, type of site and the size, density and long term sustainability of the scheme.

Involvement of Registered Social Landlords (RSL)

- 7.7 The councils expect developers to arrange to make their affordable housing available for those in housing need in perpetuity. RSLs are the recommended agency to achieve this end. The councils will encourage the setting up of community land trusts to manage affordable housing in the same way as a RSL.

RSL Partners

- 7.8 The councils have identified preferred partner RSLs for the management of all new affordable housing development in their districts. The preferred partner RSLs selected are provided in Appendix E. The authorities request applicants to use one of their preferred partner RSLs to manage new affordable housing delivered. This is because the councils are satisfied that these RSLs can deliver their affordable housing management obligation efficiently and effectively and work with the councils to meet shared objectives for sustainable communities. Developers should contact the authorities' strategic housing staff to discuss the most appropriate RSL for their particular site
- 7.9 Further advice on the information required should be sought from the councils' strategic housing staff (see Appendix H).
- 7.10 The involvement of an RSL at an early stage of the design process is strongly recommended.

Protocol for delivery of affordable housing

- 7.11 Pre-application discussions are greatly encouraged. Early negotiation, resolution and drafting of legal agreements is also encouraged

Legal Agreements

- 7.12 Section 106 agreements will normally specify:
- i. Provision of serviced land at nil cost
 - ii. Cascades relating to tenure mix and the mix of house
 - iii. The number and type of affordable homes to be included on the site;
 - iv. The control and management of the housing which will usually be by the transfer of the affordable homes to a RSL or other agency, and hand over arrangements
 - v. The offering of affordable dwellings to initial and subsequent occupiers and the formula used to calculate this;
 - vi. The occupancy of the housing which will be reserved for people in housing need according to local housing authority nomination preferences and letting arrangements.;

- vii. The location and phasing of affordable housing provision in relation to the development of the site and any trigger points when affordable housing must be provided;
- viii. The affordability in rental levels of the affordable housing to be provided for instance in relation to the Homes and Communities Agency target rents.

8 MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 8.1 The delivery of affordable housing will be monitored and reported annually in the councils' Annual Monitoring Report which is submitted to Government.
- 8.2 The councils' will monitor the performance of preferred partner RSLs and will review their preferred partners to ensure high standards of service delivery from time to time.

Appendix A

Glossary

Affordable Housing

'Non market housing provided to those whose needs are not met by the market for example homeless persons and key workers. It can include social rented and intermediate housing' Refer to Section 4 where the definition in PPS3 is reproduced.

Code for Sustainable Homes

Introduced by the Government to improve sustainable building practices. The code is a single national standard that measures the sustainability of buildings/developments in areas such as pollution, waste, CO2 emissions, water usage and ecology and is marked from 1 to 6 (6 being the best)

Financial Contribution

A financial contribution paid by developers to the local authority in lieu of on-site provision. In the case of housing it relates to the provision of social housing, but can also relate to other areas such as education and transport.

Design & Quality Standards

The new minimum standard of design required by the Homes and Community Agency for all new Social Housing Grant funded developments. The standard looks at areas including the internal and external design, density, size, lifetime homes, security and sustainability

Exception Site

A site usually adjacent to or in villages with a population of less than 3,000 inhabitants, where planning approval will be considered for affordable housing on land that would not normally be considered for housing development (often on the edge of villages).

Homebuy/Shared Ownership

Established by the Government in 2006, Homebuy introduced a means of providing low cost home ownership housing products to people on moderate incomes. The two main types of Homebuy are;

- **Open Market Homebuy** – Where individuals and families can buy a home on the open market with the assistance of an equity loan
- **New Build Homebuy** - essentially the same as shared ownership, this applies to properties built specifically for the purpose of providing part purchase (usually a minimum of 50%) and part rent for individuals and families

Homes and Community Agency

The Governing body of Registered Social Landlords (RSL or Housing Associations) responsible for overseeing their activities and providing funding for the development of new social housing built by RSLs and developers.

Housing Market Assessment (HMA)

A local or sub regional study that addresses the main influences on housing in a particular locality now and in the future. Amongst others, it addresses housing need, transport, migration and economic influences on the area.

Local Development Framework (LDF)

New Government planning system introduced through the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 that replaces the Local Plans & Structure Plans. The Local Development Framework is a group of documents (including The Core Strategy, Local Development Documents (LDD) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD), which establish how a given area will be developed in the future.

Local Development Scheme (LDS)

The LDS is a 3 year plan which identifies which Local Development Documents will be produced and when. The LDS sets out designated timescales which should be adhered to as part of the Government performance assessment.

Pepper Potting

The distribution of social housing across developments in order to prevent large concentration of social housing in one area, which can result in the stigmatisation of the properties and or tenants.

Planning Policy Statement 1 Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1)

Government planning statement outlining its overarching policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system.

Planning Policy Statement 3 Housing (PPS3)

A national planning policy document (2006) that sets out the Government's policy and priorities for housing provision in England. It addresses areas including housing quality, affordable housing, levels of housing, providing a mix of housing types and the provision of appropriate land

Preferred Management Partners (RSL)

In response to the Milton Keynes & South Midland Growth Agenda (MKSM), the West Northamptonshire local authorities have identified a number Registered Social Landlords as management partners to ensure that the quality of management of affordable housing is sustained now and in the future.

Recycled Housing Grant

Grants originally provided by the Homes and Community Agency that becomes available through the sale of intermediate housing and is then reinvested into affordable housing in the local area

Registered Social Landlord (RSL)

A housing association or a housing trust or trusts registered with the Homes and Communities Agency (pursuant to the Housing Act 1996).

Saved Local Plan Policies

The Local Plan policies forming part of the plans drawn up before the 2004 Planning and Compensation Act were rendered obsolete after September 2007 in preparation from the new Local Development Framework planning system. Because not all LDFs are in place yet there is a potential policy vacuum. However, under transitional arrangements local authorities can to apply to GOEM for agreement as to which policies can continue to be used post September 2007 upto the adoption of the LDF.

Section 106 Agreement

Legal planning documents that set out details of developments and planning obligations for the developers and RSLs. In the case of affordable housing it relates to the amount of provision, the tenure split, the housing mix and other relevant matters.

Secure by Design

A UK Police initiative supporting the principles of designing out crime through crime prevention and security standards. This relates to both general public security such as security products and through working with local authorities, housing associations and manufactures to help design developments that help stop or minimise crime.

Social Housing Grant

Grant funding provided by the Homes and Community Agency for the provision of affordable housing by housing associations, and to a much lesser degree private developers.

Social Rented

Rented property at affordable rents (determined and monitored by central Government) usually from a local authority or housing association, but can also include other charitable organisations such as cooperatives or community land trusts.

Supplementary Planning Document

A document introduced as part of the Local Development Framework to provide detail on the implementation of policies and proposals in development plan documents and the core strategies.

Tenure, Type & Mix

Housing tenure refers to the type of ownership, social rented, intermediate rented or shared equity or market housing. Type refers to the property itself, whether it's a 2 bed flat, 3 bed house etc and mix refers to the style whether it's a semi detached, flat or detached etc.

Thresholds

A level established by a local authority above which there is a requirement to provide of affordable housing on the site to be developed.

West Northamptonshire Development Corporation (WNDC)

An urban development corporation that has been established to deliver infrastructure and co-ordinate regeneration and development in the specific areas of West

Northamptonshire. The organisation has statutory powers including development control, compulsory purchase, grant awarding and service providing powers.

NB The information in the following appendices indicates the sources that have been used when drawing this SPD. It should not be regarded as the only information that interested parties should take into account when considering the provision of affordable housing.

APPENDIX B

Sources of National, Regional and Local Planning Policies

NATIONAL POLICIES

Planning Policy Statement 1 Delivering Sustainable Development

Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing

DCLG: Delivering Affordable Housing (Nov. 2006)

Sustainable Communities Plan: Building for the Future (2003)

Planning for Mixed Communities (Jan 2005)

REGIONAL POLICIES

Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands (RSS8)

Emerging East Midlands Regional Strategy, publication expected early 2009

Milton Keynes/South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy 2004

Northamptonshire County Structure Plan 1996-2016

LOCAL POLICIES

Daventry District Council

Daventry District Local Plan 1997

Daventry District Council Community Strategy 2006

Daventry District Council Housing Strategy 2007-10

Northampton Borough Council

Northampton Borough Council Local Plan 1997

Northampton Borough Council Community Strategy 2002 supply and

Northampton Borough Council Housing Strategy 2006-11

South Northamptonshire Council

South Northamptonshire Council Local Plan 1997

South Northamptonshire Council Community Strategy 2004-09

South Northamptonshire Council Housing Strategy 2005-10

APPENDIX C

Local Plan Policies

Daventry District Council Local Plan 1997

Policy HS25

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NORMALLY BE GRANTED FOR LARGE SCALE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDED THAT AFFORDABLE HOUSING IS INCLUDED IN RESPONSE TO A DEMONSTRABLE NEED, AS NECESSARY HAVING REGARD TO: -

- | |
|---|
| <p>A. DISTRICT COUNCIL TARGETS; AND</p> <p>B. DISTRICT COUNCIL APPROVED SURVEYS OF HOUSING NEED IN THE TOWN/PARISH OF, AND PARISHES ADJOINING, THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT THAT IDENTIFY ELIGIBLE PERSONS; AND</p> <p>C. SITE CONDITIONS; AND</p> <p>D. MARKET CONDITIONS; AND</p> <p>E. THE PROXIMITY OF LOCAL SERVICES AND FACILITIES AND ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT</p> |
|---|

Policy HS26

<p>WHERE PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NOT NORMALLY BE GRANTED FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, EXCEPTIONS MAY BE MADE FOR SMALL-SCALE AFFORDABLE HOUSING SCHEMES SOLELY TO MEET PARTICULAR LOCAL HOUSING NEEDS THAT CAN NOT BE ACCOMMODATED IN ANY OTHER WAY, SUBJECT TO: -</p>

- | |
|--|
| <p>A. IDENTIFICATION OF ELIGIBLE PERSONS FROM DISTRICT COUNCIL APPROVED SURVEYS OF HOUSING NEED IN THE PARISH OF, AND PARISHES ADJOINING, THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT; AND</p> <p>B. THE DEVELOPMENT BEING OF A SIZE, SCALE AND TYPE TO MEET THE IDENTIFIED NEED; AND</p> <p>C. PLANNING OBLIGATIONS AND OTHER SECURE ARRANGEMENTS HAVING BEEN MADE TO ENSURE THAT THE BENEFITS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING CAN BE ENJOYED BY SUBSEQUENT AS WELL AS INITIAL OCCUPIERS; AND</p> <p>D. THE SITE BEING ADJACENT TO OR WITHIN AN EXISTING SETTLEMENT AND THE DEVELOPMENT BEING IN KEEPING WITH THE FORM, SCALE AND CHARACTER OF THE SETTLEMENT.</p> |
|--|

Policy HS27

WHERE PLANNING PERMISSION IS GRANTED FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT INVOLVING AFFORDABLE HOUSING OCCUPANCY OF SUCH HOUSING WILL BE RESTRICTED TO INITIAL AND SUCCESSIVE OCCUPIERS WHO CAN NOT AFFORD TO PURCHASE OR RENT A DWELLING AT THE PREVAILING MARKET PRICE AND FOR WHOM A SUITABLE TYPE OF HOUSING IS NOT AVAILABLE, AND: -

- A. WHO NEED SEPARATE ACCOMMODATION; OR
- B. WHOSE WORK PROVIDE IMPORTANT SERVICES AND WHO NEED TO LIVE CLOSER TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY; OR
- C. WHO ARE NOT NECESSARILY RESIDENT LOCALLY BUT HAVE LONG STANDING LINKS WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY; OR
- D. WHO HAVE THE OFFER OF A JOB IN THE LOCALITY AND WHO CAN NOT TAKE UP THE OFFER BECAUSE OF A LACK OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING THERE; OR
- E. WHO LIVE IN SUB-STANDARD ACCOMODATION

Northampton Borough Council Local Plan 1997

POLICY H32 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

IN GRANTING PLANNING PERMISSION FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS OF 40 OR MORE DWELLINGS, THE COUNCIL WILL NEGOTIATE AN ELEMENT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING. THE LEVEL OF PROVISION WILL DEPEND UPON THE IDENTIFIED NEED FOR SUCH HOUSING IN THE VICINITY AND SITE / MARKET CONDITIONS.

POLICY H33 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SITES FOR RESIDENTIAL MOBILE HOMES AS A MEANS OF PROVIDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING ONLY WHERE THERE IS NO OTHER SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE.

South Northamptonshire Council Local Plan 1997

POLICY H7

WHERE THERE IS A DEMONSTRABLE LACK OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR SALE OR RENT TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS, THE COUNCIL WILL NEGOTIATE WITH DEVELOPERS TO SECURE AN ELEMENT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING WITHIN LARGE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES. THE COUNCIL WILL NEED TO BE SATISFIED THAT SUCH AFFORDABLE HOUSING:

- 1) IS ECONOMICALLY VIABLE IN TERMS OF ITS ABILITY TO MEET THE LOCAL NEEDS IDENTIFIED;

II) WILL BE AVAILABLE TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS OVER THE LONG TERM THROUGH SECURE ARRANGEMENTS BEING MADE TO RESTRICT THE OCCUPANCY OF THE DEVELOPMENT.

POLICY H8

IN EXCEPTIONAL CASES PLANNING PERMISSION MAY BE GRANTED FOR THE PROVISION OF A GROUP OF APPROPRIATE DWELLINGS ON A SUITABLE SITE OUTSIDE BUT ADJOINING THE VILLAGE CONFINES PROVIDED THAT CLEAR EVIDENCE OF A LOCAL NEED, WHICH CANNOT OTHERWISE BE MET, HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE COUNCIL.

Appendix D

Design of Affordable Housing – Reference Guide

Building For Life, CABE <http://www.buildingforlife.org/>

Design & Quality Standards, Homes and Community Agency
http://www.housingcorp.gov.uk/upload/pdf/Design_quality_standards.pdf

Housing Quality Indicators, Homes and Community Agency
http://www.housingcorp.gov.uk/upload/pdf/HQIFormv4_Apr_2007.pdf

Lifetime Homes Standard, Homes and Community Agency <http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/>

Secured by Design <http://www.securedbydesign.com/>

[Code for Sustainable Homes](#) Department of Communities and Local Government December 2006 http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/code_for_sust_homes.pdf

Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods, Department for Communities and Local Government February 2008.

Appendix E

RSL Preferred Management Partners

Daventry District Council

To be inserted

Northampton Borough Council

East Midlands Housing Association (EMHA)

April Knapp
Regional Development Manager
Seymour House
Queen Eleanor Office Park
Newport Pagnell Road
NN4 7JJ

Tel: 01604 826603
FAX: 01604 826606
Email: april.knapp@emha.org

Home Housing Association

Richard Bell
Head of Development
Norfolk House
413/415 Silbury Boulevard
Central Milton Keynes
MK9 2AH

Tel: 01536 311661
Email: Richard.bell@homegroup.org.uk

Leicester Housing Association (LHA-ASRA)

Lisa Culhane
Director of Development
Stonesby House
44 Princess Road East
Leicester
LE1 7DQ

Tel: 0116 2541871
FAX: 0116 2540365
Email: lisa.culhane@lha-asra.org.uk

Orbit Housing Association

Pam Walmsley
5-7 Dormer Place
Leamington Spa
Warwickshire
CV32 5AA

Tel: 02476 438099
Email: pam.walmsley@orbit.org.uk

Metropolitan Housing Partnership (MHP)

Yvonne Harrison

Director of Regeneration and New Business Tel: 020 89761154
Alexander Place Mobile: 07764 237 716
Lower Park Road Email: Yvonne.Harrison@mht.co.uk
New Southgate FAX: 020 8976 1182
London N11 1QD

Midsummer Housing Association

John Kiely or Jo Morphet Tel: 01908 544742/ 01908 544740
Henshaw House Email: joanne.morphet@guinnessmidsummer.org.uk
851 Silbury Boulevard
Central Milton Keynes
MK9 3JZ

Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association (BPHA)

Sue Davis email:sued@bpha.org.uk
Pilgrims House Tel; 01234 791135
Home Lane
Bedford
MK40 1NY

South Northamptonshire Council

Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association

Pilgrims House
Horne Lane
Bedford
MK40 1NY
Tel: 01234 791000
Fax:

Bromford Housing Group

Riverside House
44 Wedgewood Street
Fairford Leys
Aylesbury
Buckinghamshire
HP19 7HL
Tel: 01296 333210
Fax: 01296 333233

East Midlands Housing Association

Jubilee House

Stenson Road
Whitwick Business Park
Coalville
Leicestershire
LE67 4NA
Tel: 01530 276000
Fax: 01530 276006

Grand Union Housing Group

Katherine's House
Dunstable Street
Amphill
Bedfordshire
MK45 2JP
Tel: 01525 844590
Fax: 01525 403682

Midsummer Housing Association

Henshaw House
851 Silbury Boulevard
Milton Keynes
MK9 3JZ
Tel: 01908 609577
Fax: 01908 609558

Northants Rural Housing Association

Whitwick Business Centre
Stenson Road
Whitwick Business Park
Coalville
Leicestershire
LE67 4JP
Tel: 01530 276545
Fax: 01530 276547

APPENDIX F

(i) BUILDING FOR LIFE CRITERIA

Environment and community

01. [Does the development provide \(or is it close to\) community facilities, such as a school, parks, play areas, shops, pubs or cafes?](#)
02. [Is there an accommodation mix that reflects the needs and aspirations of the local community?](#)
03. [Is there a tenure mix that reflects the needs of the local community?](#)
04. [Does the development have easy access to public transport?](#)
05. [Does the development have any features that reduce its environmental impact?](#)

Character

06. [Is the design specific to the scheme?](#)
07. [Does the scheme exploit existing buildings, landscape or topography?](#)
08. [Does the scheme feel like a place with distinctive character?](#)
09. [Do the buildings and layout make it easy to find your way around?](#)
10. [Are streets defined by a well-structured building layout?](#)

Streets, parking and pedestrianisation

11. [Does the building layout take priority over the streets and car parking, so that the highways do not dominate?](#)
12. [Is the car parking well integrated and situated so it supports the street scene?](#)
13. [Are the streets pedestrian, cycle and vehicle friendly?](#)

14. [Does the scheme integrate with existing streets, paths and surrounding development?](#)
15. [Are public spaces and pedestrian routes overlooked and do they feel safe?](#)

Design and construction

16. [Is public space well designed and does it have suitable management arrangements in place?](#)
17. [Do the buildings exhibit architectural quality?](#)
18. [Do internal spaces and layout allow for adaptation, conversion or extension?](#)
19. [Has the scheme made use of advances in construction or technology that enhance its performance, quality and attractiveness?](#)
20. [Do buildings or spaces outperform statutory minima, such as building regulations?](#)

(ii) The Lifetime Homes Standard

LTH Criteria

The Lifetime Homes Standard is the result of careful study and research. The design Criteria forming the Standard relate to interior and exterior features of the home.

There are a total of 16 design Criteria. Each is valuable in itself, but to achieve the Lifetime Homes Standard a dwelling must incorporate all relevant Criteria.

Wheelchair accessibility was chosen as the benchmark for a good space requirement. Good space requirements also help many other people – for example, parents with pushchairs and small children, or people carrying bags of shopping. Good accessibility helps everyone, not just people who use wheelchairs.

- [\(1\) Car Parking Width](#)
- [\(2\) Access From Car Parking](#)
- [\(3\) Approach Gradients](#)
- [\(4\) Entrances](#)
- [\(5\) Communal Stairs & Lifts](#)
- [\(6\) Doorways & Hallways](#)
- [\(7\) Wheelchair Accessibility](#)
- [\(8\) Living Room](#)
- [\(9\) Entrance Level Bedspace](#)
- [\(10\) Entrance Level WC & Shower Drainage](#)
- [\(11\) Bathroom & WC Walls](#)
- [\(12\) Stair Lift/Through-Floor Lift](#)
- [\(13\) Tracking Hoist Route](#)

- [\(14\) Bathroom Layout](#)
 - [\(15\) Window Specification](#)
 - [\(16\) Controls, Fixtures & Fittings](#)
-

APPENDIX G

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

Sustainability appraisals (SA) promote the integration of environmental, economic and social considerations into the plan making process. They seek to show the impacts of planning document in these three areas, both beneficial and adverse. The need for an SA when plan making is enshrined in European Union Directive 2001/42 and national legislation and guidance, including the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and the Planning and Compensation Act 2004. As the provision of affordable housing is likely to have social impacts and impacts in other areas an SA is required.

The Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document aims to increase the amount of affordable housing provided in West Northamptonshire through:

- planning agreements with developers providing market housing, and
- exception housing in rural areas.

This aim can be broken down into the following objectives:

- i. To provide affordable housing to meet the needs of West Northamptonshire by maximizing the opportunities for their provision.
- ii. To create and maintain mixed communities by providing an appropriate mix of tenure and house sizes to meet the needs of the population of West Northamptonshire
- iii. To help meet the provision of a decent home for every one.

These objectives are tested in Table 1 against the Sustainability Objectives contained in the Sustainability Scoping Report carried out for the emerging West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy. In this respect the outcome of this SA will be as compatible as possible with the evolving Local Development Framework. The 23 Sustainability Objectives are fully laid out in Appendix 1. Shortened headings are used in Table 1 which shows the relationship between the Sustainability Objectives and the Affordable Housing objectives.

Table 1 Compatibility Matrix

Sustainability Objectives	Affordable Housing SPD Objectives		
	Objective (i)	Objective (ii)	Objective (iii)
SA1: Reduce the need to travel	↔	○	○
SA2: Sensitive developments	↔	○	○
SA3: Protect historic built	↔	○	○

environment			
SA4:Protect habitats and species	↔	○	○
SA5:Increase area of biodiversity action plan habitats	↔	○	○
SA6:Improve status of nature sites	↔	○	○
SA7:Improve community safety	↑	↑	↑
SA8:Support energy efficiency	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑
SA9:Improve health	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑
SA10:Create high quality employment opportunities	○	○	○
SA11:Conserve special landscapes	↔	○	○
SA12:Enhance the built environment	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑
SA13:Ensure housing meets local needs	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑
SA14:Provide green infrastructure network	↔	○	○
SA15:Maintain a balance population structure	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	○
SA16:Reduced spatial inequalities	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑
SA17:Reduce land contamination	↔	○	○
SA18:Make efficient use of land	↑↑↑	○	○
SA19:Reduce waste generation and disposal	○	○	○

SA20:Improve water quality	↔	○	○
SA21:Reduce risk of flooding	↑		○
SA22:Improve water efficiency	↑↑↑	○	○
SA23:Increase learning opportunities	○	○	○

KEY

	Moderately	Strongly	Very Strongly
Moving towards compatibility/sustainability	↑	↑↑	↑↑↑
Moving away	↓	↓↓	↓↓↓
Mixed effects	↔		
Neutral/no effect	○		

Commentary

In relation to SA1 most affordable housing covered by the SPD will be provided along with market housing. Therefore, reducing the need to travel and facilitating modal shift will depend on the overall approach of the relevant residential development proposals. In most cases any significant residential development should be in a sustainable location. The SPD should support this approach to development, especially as some households may not have the use of a private car. Creating mixed communities, with the provision of affordable housing among other factors, may help reduce travel by providing a mixed pool of employees in larger settlements and towns (SA10). As the development of affordable housing is largely dependant on the location of the main (market housing) proposal, and in other cases exception sites where travel is not the main criterion, its impacts are considered to have mixed effects.

In the case of noise and air quality (SA2) again affordable housing will generally follow market developments and the SPD should support the principle that residential developments should be created in, or should themselves create, high quality environments (SA12) that support healthy life styles (SA9). Reference should be made to the need to refer to general planning guidance which covers this and other matters

With regard to cultural heritage (SA3), the natural environment (SA4), landscape and townscape (SA11) and the provision of green infrastructure, the provision of

affordable housing in itself is generally not seen as having a detrimental effect. However there may be some proposals which could have adverse impacts, such as intrusiveness and inappropriate design. There is a need for the SPD to highlight this possibility and to state that developers should be aware that normal planning policies will apply in all cases. A similar approach should be taken with SA17, SA19, SA20, SA21 and SA23. This applies to rural exception sites as well as affordable housing provided as part of larger market developments.

As new homes are built to high standards of design to combat crime in terms of layout and the security of each dwelling there is a direct link between the provision of new homes and achieving community safety. This is seen as positive benefit that comes with new dwellings lifting overall local levels of security, helping to achieve SA7. Higher design standards also support SA12.

In a similar way the provision of new affordable housing provides dwellings with high levels of energy efficiency under the Code for Sustainable Homes, Code Level 3 is required by Government regulation for affordable homes, supporting SA8. This level will be introduced for market housing in 2010 by tightening the building regulations, and all new housing will have to achieve Code Level 6 by 2016. Providing energy efficient homes can be closely linked to warmer and therefore healthier homes. The Code for Sustainable Homes also lays down water efficiency requirements (SA22). The Code for Sustainable Homes will incorporate the Lifetime Homes Standards in 2011. All publically funded housing is to meet the Lifetime Home Standard by the same date to provide houses which cater for peoples needs as they grow older and become infirm.

Meeting the needs of local people is an essential objective of the SPD and is identified as a prime factor in considering the provision of affordable housing. The SPD fully acknowledges SA13 as a significant objective. Similarly, SA15 is a core objective with the SPD promoting mixed and sustainable communities.

Benefits of having an SPD

Without an SPD to guide and inform all interested parties the provision of affordable housing in West Northamptonshire in quantities and mix to meet local needs would be at risk. The SPD lays out thresholds at which affordable provision should start, indicates levels of provision in the urban and rural areas and tenure splits. To do nothing would result in patchy and erratic provision in terms of location and over time. The creation of mixed and sustainable communities would be compromised. The SPD provides a context in which development proposals can be assessed to maximize the amount of affordable housing provision given the levels of local need and site viability and the possibility of using cascades in legal agreements to maximize the amount of affordable housing.

By incorporating monitoring requirements the SPD will help keep track of achievement in relation to targets. Suggested indicators are:

- Affordable housing completions
- Completions against permissions
- Financial contributions and their outcomes

- Tenure mix achieved against need
- Housing mix against need
- Affordable housing costs against incomes/affordability
- Market housing costs
- Reduced provision as a result of viability issues

References

Code for Sustainable Homes, Department for Communities and Local Government December 2006.

Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods, Department for Communities and Local Government February 2008.

Appendix 1

Joint Core Strategy Sustainability Assessment Framework February 2009

Air quality and noise	
SA1: Reduce the need to travel, the potential increase in congestion and facilitate modal shift SA2: Avoid sensitive development within areas of high noise levels or poor air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in motor vehicle trips and increased dependence on car use? • Sensitive location of new development in areas of high noise levels or poor air quality? • Support for the objectives of local air quality action plans? • Improvements in existing local public transport infrastructure or access to public transport? • Worsening of existing traffic congestion hotspots or improvements to the current situation?
Archaeology and cultural heritage	
SA3: Protect and where possible enhance the fabric and setting of designated and undesignated archaeological sites, monuments, structures and buildings, recorded Historic Parks and gardens, listed buildings and conservation areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development that affects listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens, and historic battlefields? • Development being steered to where it can be accommodated in less sensitive areas? • Increased awareness and encouragement of the enhancement of the archaeological resource and other aspects of heritage, such as, parks and open spaces, and areas with a particular historical or cultural association? • Improvements in access to townscapes and landscapes of historical and cultural value?
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	
SA4: Maintain and enhance the structure and function of habitats and the populations of species for which the sites have been designated. SA5: Increase the land area of UK Biodiversity Action Plan habitats within the area. SA6: Maintain and improve the conservation status of selected non-designated nature conservation sites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoidance of net loss, damage to, or fragmentation of designated wildlife sites and the populations of qualifying habitats and species? • Opportunities for people to come into contact with robust wildlife places whilst encouraging respect for and raising awareness of the sensitivity of these sites? • Development which includes the integration of ecological conditions?
Crime and community safety	
SA7: Improve community safety, reduce crime and the fear of crime.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in crime levels and fear of crime through improvements to the environment, layouts of streets and public space, passive surveillance, lighting etc? • Leisure facilities for young people at the neighbourhood level including consideration of provision as part of large new residential developments?
Energy and climatic factors	
SA8: Support the provision of development projects and infrastructure which lead to energy efficient buildings, a reduction in carbon emissions and the provision of 'affordable warmth'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developments which are energy efficient in their design and construction? • An increase in the local renewable energy generating capacity? • An increase in infrastructure to provide low carbon, affordable heating?
Health and well being	
SA9: Improve health and reduce health inequalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to existing health services? • Enhanced access to all health services? • Healthier lifestyles? • Improvements in the quality of new homes?
Labour market and economy	
SA10: Create high quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An adequate supply of land and skills to meet the

employment opportunities and develop a strong culture of enterprise and innovation	requirements of growth sectors and fully exploit locational/ economic opportunities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to employment by modes other than the car. • An appropriate range of employment opportunities in rural areas.
Landscape and townscape SA11: Ensure that special and distinctive landscapes, and the features within them, are conserved and enhanced SA12: Enhance the form and design of the built environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection and enhancement of landscape character in line with current Landscape Character Assessments? • Development which considers the existing character, form and pattern of the landscape, buildings and settlements? • Design and construction methods which are sensitive to the local townscape / landscape character?
Material assets	
SA13: Ensure that the housing stock and associated infrastructure meets the needs of the local people. SA14: To provide a strategic network of green infrastructure for West Northamptonshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient affordable housing to meet identified needs? • Well-designed compact communities which are developed at sufficient density to support viable local services and public transport provision and which achieve efficient use of land? • Appropriate community, social and transport infrastructure? • High quality, high value open space • Adequate access to open space, sport and recreational facilities • An appropriate mechanism for the long term management and maintenance of strategic open space
Population	
SA15: To develop and maintain a balanced and sustainable population structure with good access to services and facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development which delivers an appropriate mix of housing for all sectors of the population in locations close to local services/facilities? • Good access to facilities, particularly by public transport, walking and cycling?
Social deprivation	
SA16: To reduce spatial inequalities in social opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved provision of key services in deprived communities? • Reduced spatial inequalities in access to services including healthcare and education and local/community services?
Soils, geology and land use	
SA17: Reduce land contamination, safeguard soil and geological quality and quantity SA18 Make the most efficient use of land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The remediation of contaminated sites? • Sustainable housing densities • Levels of development on brownfield sites that are above the national target of 60%? • Development that protects soil processes and functions? • Development that protects sites valued for their geological characteristics?
Waste	
SA19: Reduce waste generation and disposal, increase reuse and recycling and achieve the sustainable management of waste.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduction in the amount of waste generated by development and land use change? • Development which uses re-cycled materials and makes provision for recycling / composting in all new development? • Positive provision for appropriate sites for waste management facilities including waste to energy generation, with landfill being the least favored option? • A reduction in the production and movement of hazardous waste?
Water	
SA20: Maintain and continue to improve the quality of ground and river water. SA21: Reduce risk of flooding. SA22: Improve efficiency of water use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available? • Water efficient design and reduction in water consumption? • Development which corresponds with EA flood risk and alleviation advice especially as regards building on the floodplain? • Development likely to affect the ecological status of groundwater and surface water?
Education and training	SA23: Increased opportunities to participate in lifelong learning through the provision of appropriate infrastructure and facilitating access to opportunities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate educational infrastructure associated with new residential developments. • New or improved education and training facilities well

	located in relation to walking, cycling and public transport routes.
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APPENDIX H

CONTACT DETAILS FOR EACH LOCAL AUTHORITY

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