

Appendix D

CHANGES TO THE CURRENT PLANNING SYSTEM

Standard Methodology for Assessing Housing Numbers in Strategic Plans

Q1: Do you agree that planning practice guidance should be amended to specify that the appropriate baseline for the standard method is whichever is the higher of the level of 0.5% of housing stock in each local authority area OR the latest household projections averaged over a 10-year period?

No Comment

Q2: In the stock element of the baseline, do you agree that 0.5% of existing stock for the standard method is appropriate? If not, please explain why.

No Comment

Q3: Do you agree that using the workplace-based median house price to median earnings ratio from the most recent year for which data is available to adjust the standard method's baseline is appropriate? If not, please explain why.

Yes

Q4: Do you agree that incorporating an adjustment for the change of affordability over 10 years is a positive way to look at whether affordability has improved? If not, please explain why.

No. There is a real danger that this approach will simply inflate need beyond what is actually deliverable. If standard methodology simply dials up housing figures that are not actually deliverable, because developers are not going to precipitate market saturation or ignores the availability of deliverable sites, it will not deliver additional houses - just additional housing figures.

Q5: Do you agree that affordability is given an appropriate weighting within the standard method? If not, please explain why.

The District Council believes that the current approach to affordability appropriately weights this factor.

Do you agree that authorities should be planning having regard to their revised standard method need figure, from the publication date of the revised guidance, with the exception of:

Q6: Authorities which are already at the second stage of the strategic plan consultation process (Regulation 19), which should be given 6 months to submit their plan to the Planning Inspectorate for examination?

Yes

Q7: Authorities close to publishing their second stage consultation (Regulation 19), which should be given 3 months from the publication date of the revised guidance to publish

their Regulation 19 plan, and a further 6 months to submit their plan to the Planning Inspectorate?

If not, please explain why. Are there particular circumstances which need to be catered for?

Yes

First Homes

Q8: The Government is proposing policy compliant planning applications will deliver a minimum of 25% of onsite affordable housing as First Homes, and a minimum of 25% of offsite contributions towards First Homes where appropriate. Which do you think is the most appropriate option for the remaining 75% of affordable housing secured through developer contributions? Please provide reasons and / or evidence for your views (if possible):

i) Prioritising the replacement of affordable home ownership tenures, and delivering rental tenures in the ratio set out in the local plan policy.

ii) Negotiation between a local authority and developer.

iii) Other (please specify)

With regards to current exemptions from delivery of affordable home ownership products:

Q9: Should the existing exemptions from the requirement for affordable home ownership products (e.g. for build to rent) also apply to this First Homes requirement?

Q10: Are any existing exemptions not required? If not, please set out which exemptions and why.

Q11: Are any other exemptions needed? If so, please provide reasons and /or evidence for your views.

Q12: Do you agree with the proposed approach to transitional arrangements set out above?

Q13: Do you agree with the proposed approach to different levels of discount?

Q14: Do you agree with the approach of allowing a small proportion of market housing on First Homes exception sites, in order to ensure site viability?

Q15: Do you agree with the removal of the site size threshold set out in the National Planning Policy Framework?

Object– it has the potential to see large sites come forward in inappropriate locations at odds with the existing nature of development. A definite size threshold provides certainty to the local community, developers and the LPA about what is appropriate. Removing it will see endless arguments about what constitutes ‘proportionate in size to the existing settlement’ with regard to individual development.

Q16: Do you agree that the First Homes exception sites policy should not apply in designated rural areas?

The First Homes exceptions sites policy should not apply to designated rural areas. The Council believes that this should not only apply to those areas designated as 'rural' under Section 157 of the Housing Act 1985 which are currently identified in the NPPF but also those areas that are defined under Section 17 of the Housing Act 1996. It is under this particular Act that Newark & Sherwood have defined their rural areas.

Supporting small and medium-sized developers

For each of these questions, please provide reasons and / or evidence for your views (if possible):

Q17: Do you agree with the proposed approach to raise the small sites threshold for a time-limited period?

No – this proposal will result in the District Council not being able to secure affordable housing on a range of relatively large sites in the District; including a number of allocated sites. At a time when housing affordability is reducing it is just as important to secure affordable rent and home ownership products on new developments as to deliver market houses. In any event on many sites developer contributions for open space community facilities, Education Libraries will still be sort to mitigate the impact of new development; therefore it is unlikely to negate the need to negotiate S106 contributions.

(see question 18 for comments on level of threshold)

Q18: What is the appropriate level of small sites threshold?

i) Up to 40 homes

ii) Up to 50 homes

iii) Other – 10 dwellings and above in urban areas and 5 and above in rural areas.

Q19: Do you agree with the proposed approach to the site size threshold?

No comment

Q20: Do you agree with linking the time-limited period to economic recovery and raising the threshold for an initial period of 18 months?

The District Council objects to the proposal therefore it follows that the shorter period of time that the government raises the threshold the better.

Q21: Do you agree with the proposed approach to minimising threshold effects?

The District Council welcomes the Government's proposals to ensure that developers do not avoid providing affordable housing contributions by developing sites in a piecemeal fashion.

Q22: Do you agree with the Government's proposed approach to setting thresholds in rural areas?

The Council believes that this should not only apply to those areas designated as 'rural' under Section 157 of the Housing Act 1985 which are currently identified in the NPPF but also those areas that are defined under Section 17 of the Housing Act 1996. It is under this particular Act that Newark & Sherwood have defined their rural areas.

Q23: Are there any other ways in which the Government can support SME builders to deliver new homes during the economic recovery period?

The Government could provide grant to SME Builders to deliver affordable housing thus negating the need to raise the threshold.

Extension of the Permission in Principle consent regime

Q24: Do you agree that the new Permission in Principle should remove the restriction on major development?

No – significant site in the 10-150 category may well be in principal fine but on assessment of the technical detail not be developable in the way envisaged when a full appraisal has been undertaken.

Q25: Should the new Permission in Principle for major development set any limit on the amount of commercial development (providing housing still occupies the majority of the floorspace of the overall scheme)? Please provide any comments in support of your views.

In these circumstances relatively large developments could come forward with significant elements of non-residential development, which may not be appropriate in largely residential areas. A limit on commercial floor space should continue to be set.

Q26: Do you agree with our proposal that information requirements for Permission in Principle by application for major development should broadly remain unchanged? If you disagree, what changes would you suggest and why?

Given the size of the developments proposals should indicate a movement strategy setting out how pedestrians, cyclists and cars will access the site and link into the existing network.

Q27: Should there be an additional height parameter for Permission in Principle? Please provide comments in support of your views.

The Council supports a height threshold given the potential to develop relatively high density development on smaller sites. This would provide comfort to local residents about what could be developed and certainty to the end developer about what would or would not be acceptable as part of any technical consent application.

Q28: Do you agree that publicity arrangements for Permission in Principle by application should be extended for large developments? If so, should local planning authorities be subject to a general requirement to publicise the application or

Q29: Do you agree with our proposal for a banded fee structure based on a flat fee per hectare, with a maximum fee cap?

Yes

Q30: What level of flat fee do you consider appropriate, and why?

£10,000. A development of 150 dwellings would be up to around 5 hectares. On the basis of 1 hectare costing £4000, 5 hectares would equate to £20,000. Not all developments would be of this scale and therefore a midway charge has been chosen.

Q31: Do you agree that any brownfield site that is granted Permission in Principle through the application process should be included in Part 2 of the Brownfield Land Register? If you disagree, please state why.

Yes

Q32: What guidance would help support applicants and local planning authorities to make decisions about Permission in Principle? Where possible, please set out any areas of guidance you consider are currently lacking and would assist stakeholders.

Guidance is currently unclear in terms of what considerations can be taken of constraints outside of a site. For example, if a development is likely to lead to unacceptable highway impacts that cannot be mitigated, permission in principle is granted when the Technical details are likely going to be refused. Clarity regarding such matters should be given.

Q33: What costs and benefits do you envisage the proposed scheme would cause? Where you have identified drawbacks, how might these be overcome?

This would not give developers the certainty regarding planning obligations that might be payable on a scheme. Granting of Permission in Principle does not guarantee the Technical Details will be approved and could lead developers into additional costs in the longer term.

Q34: To what extent do you consider landowners and developers are likely to use the proposed measure? Please provide evidence where possible.

The District Council has seen limited take up of the permission in principle approach however the recycling of brownfield land continues within the District. In 2018/19 21% of completions and 45% of commitments were on brownfield land. This would suggest that local market circumstances do not require this particular measure to recycle land.