

any site over 0.4 hectares. This will make more efficient use of land and in particular encourage a greater density of development around District Shopping Centres and major public transport nodes on public transport corridors. A variety of densities will be permitted within each site, so long as the average density meets the required density criterion for the whole site. It is recognised that it may not always be possible or appropriate to achieve the minimum density requirements. Densities of 30 dwellings per hectare or over may not be compatible with a site or its surroundings. This may for instance include the presence of physical constraints such as site topography and landscape features or capacity constraints such as vehicular access and drainage. A lower density may also be more appropriate to accord with a particular character of an area such as a village or conservation area. There may also be cases where it is appropriate to allow development at a lower density to contribute towards providing a range and choice of house types in accordance with PPG3. Proposals which significantly exceed the density requirements in the policy may also be appropriate where design solutions can be demonstrated within the scope of residential design standards.

- 5.66 Walking distances in the two density zones have been established at 400 metres within which it is likely that many people will choose to walk to District Shopping Centres and rail stops, and 1 kilometre within which a smaller but still significant number of people are likely to choose to walk. The 1 kilometre zone is also considered to be the principle catchment of the Public Transport Corridor. Outside of these two zones a higher proportion of people are likely to use a private car rather than walk and as such a lower target density is appropriate.
- 5.67 Walking distance should be measured as the shortest route on paths/footways with public access between the proposed residential development site and District Shopping Centres or existing or proposed rail stops. Proposed sites which do not fall wholly within the distance criteria specified will be considered according to the size of the site and the proportion of the site falling within the zone and the compatibility of the site with the general objectives of the policy.
- 5.68 Density levels for the two zones have been established through surveys of recent developments in Ashfield and reviews of best practice elsewhere. The lower density target figure of 30 dwellings per hectare is advised in PPG3. These have been set at a level which when implemented with other policies in the Ashfield Local Plan Review and supplementary guidance will ensure acceptable residential design standards are capable of being achieved without detriment to the environment.
- 5.69 Net residential density is measured as the number of individual dwelling units per hectare of land developed specifically for housing and directly associated uses. This includes access roads within the site, private garden space, car parking and incidental open space/landscaping. It does not include distributor roads, open space serving a wider area, significant landscape buffer areas and other facilities such as schools, shops and community buildings.
- 5.70 The increase in density resulting from the policy will require careful design. In some cases it may be appropriate to incorporate conditions removing the usual permitted development rights enjoyed by households in order to prevent over-development, or unsympathetic extensions.
- 5.71 Appendix 5 lists housing land allocations from policy HG1 and identifies the number of dwellings for each site, this information is then added in Table 5.1 to show the total supply of housing as opposed to Structure Plan Review land requirements. The dwelling totals in Appendix 5 either reflect the number of dwellings with planning permission or the expected number of dwellings following application of density requirements and targets on each site from policy HG3 as appropriate.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

POLICY HG4

ON HOUSING DEVELOPMENT SITES OF ONE HECTARE OR MORE, OR 25 DWELLINGS OR MORE, THE COUNCIL WILL NEGOTIATE THE PROVISION OF A PROPORTION OF AFFORDABLE DWELLINGS ON THE SITE TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THE OVERALL TARGETS FOR THE AREAS

SPECIFIED BELOW

**In Hucknall (South Notts. Sub Area)
18.5% OF DWELLINGS**

**In the Rest of the District (West Notts. Sub Area)
6% OF DWELLINGS**

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING WILL CONSIST OF THE FOLLOWING
IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE:**

- a) **DEVELOPMENT OF DWELLINGS IN CONJUNCTION WITH A REGISTERED SOCIAL LANDLORD OR THE COUNCIL.**
- b) **SHARED OWNERSHIP SCHEMES.**
- c) **PROPERTIES FOR SALE OR RENTAL AT AN AGREED SIZE MEASURED BY FLOORSPACE.**
- d) **A FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION NEGOTIATED AND SECURED BY A PLANNING OBLIGATION TOWARDS THE OFF SITE PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING AT AN AGREED LOCATION.**

5.72 PPG3 'Housing' sets out the Government's policy on how the planning system can contribute to the overall supply of affordable housing. This is further amplified in Circular 6/98 which provides a clearer framework for preparing local plan policies and practical advice on how affordable housing may be provided through negotiation with developers and others. Affordable housing encompasses both subsidised and open market housing designed for those whose incomes generally deny them the opportunity to purchase houses on the open market due to the local relationship between income and market price.

5.73 This local plan identifies in policy HG1 the sites suitable to meet the projected overall housing needs of the District arising from the Structure Plan Review to 2011. It therefore follows that the future needs for affordable housing in the District must be provided on these sites as they arise for development. One exception to this requirement relates to developments which are specifically being built to meet a recognised specialised housing need, such as sheltered housing for the elderly, where the Council will take into account the fact that such sites are usually small in size and unlikely to be appropriate for a mix of affordable and general sheltered housing units. Policy HG4 above provides the criteria against which the Council will negotiate for the provision of an element of affordable dwellings on new housing sites. There are a number of ways in which affordable housing can be achieved. In each case the Council will wish to explore the potential for provision in the priority order listed in the policy. Since the main requirement for affordable housing arises from lower income groups the need to provide housing for rent or shared ownership through Registered Social Landlords will be greater than through private sales of lower cost housing.

Affordable Housing Needs

5.74 In conjunction with the other Districts within the South Notts. Sub-Area the Council has undertaken detailed research into the need for affordable housing within the Nottingham conurbation. This work has been undertaken jointly with District planning and housing officers and the methodology has been endorsed by the Authorities involved. A predictive model has been developed to determine affordable housing needs based on the projected incomes of the new households likely to arise within the period to 2011 and taking into account current housing costs, the estimated costs of home ownership in relation to income and the amount of social and private rented housing stock likely to become available within the Plan period.

5.75 The model has indicated a 'residual' number of households who will be unable to afford the purchase of new houses on the open market or find sufficient alternative accommodation within current stock. This represents a need for about 7309 new affordable dwellings, across the whole conurbation, amounting to about 24% of outstanding new dwellings required by the

Structure Plan Review from 1996-2011. An apportionment within the Ashfield part of the South Notts. Sub-Area (Hucknall) indicates that about 479 (18.5%) of the new dwellings should be affordable. Application of the same model to the West Notts. Sub-Area indicates that for the Rest of Ashfield about 228 (6%) of the unbuilt dwellings should be affordable. Details of the affordable housing model and of typical affordable housing already provided within the District is contained in a Technical Paper No. 3 : 'Affordable Housing'.

Individual Sites Requirements and Future Monitoring

- 5.76 Policy HG4 provides an overall target figure for affordable housing need within each of the Structure Plan Review sub areas, but does not attempt to allocate a specific proportion of dwellings for any one site. This will be a matter for negotiation with individual developers on sites above the threshold size specified. However it is clear that all developments over the threshold size, with the exception of specialised housing needs referred to in paragraph 5.84, must provide an element of affordable housing if the overall target is to be achieved. A simple method would be to aim for each site to provide the % equivalent to the overall target figure. However on some sites, particularly those at a higher density, it is likely that a proportion of dwellings regarded as affordable may be in excess of the target figure and this may be offset by those sites which provide a lesser number of affordable dwellings. Equally on sites developed by Registered Social Landlords or the Council it is likely that all properties will be affordable.
- 5.77 The tables contained within Technical Paper No. 3 indicate the average build rate per annum for each of the two areas to meet the affordable housing targets. Annual house building monitoring will in future include an assessment of the number of properties built that are regarded as affordable from all sources to ensure that targets are being met. These figures will assist in an assessment of the need for affordable housing provision at regular intervals throughout the Plan period.

Rural Exceptions

- 5.78 No parts of the District have been identified as being sufficiently isolated from the Main Urban Areas and Named Settlements to be likely to justify the need for affordable housing in such locations. In general terms the need for specific housing provision outside these areas will be dealt with under the provisions of Policies EV1 and EV2.

Ways of Achieving Affordable Housing

- 5.79 Policy HG4 above indicates four ways in which affordable housing could be provided through negotiation with housing developers. The Council will wish to be satisfied that developers have considered all the options in the order of preference stated in the policy. In this respect the Council will endeavour to introduce, where appropriate, Registered Social Landlords who wish to promote schemes in the area of the proposed development and are willing to work in partnership with developers to achieve this.
- a) Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) represent one of the most important means of providing affordable housing. Councils are usually involved with RSL's by negotiating a % of future tenancies in new schemes to be nominated from the Council's housing register. Partnerships with private house builders can deliver either land, which RSL's can use for their own developments, or can build properties on behalf of RSL's using their funding sources. Land in Council ownership may be sold for private development with agreement for the provision of a proportion of affordable housing on the site. Partnerships are the most effective way of providing affordable housing and are more likely to leave control of the properties in the social housing sector ensuring continuity of provision in the future.
 - b) Shared ownership schemes represent a way of providing affordable housing by offering part of the value of the property for sale and the remaining portion as a 'rented' element. This allows tenants to purchase an element of the property with the prospect of completing a purchase at some future date.

- c) Properties sold or rented by developers at an appropriate price can be regarded as affordable. Technical Paper No.3 provides some examples of recently developed affordable homes within Ashfield. The relationship between the size of property and its sale/rental value is clear. Small dwellings, measured by total floorspace, can be regarded as affordable. The examples in the Technical Paper will be used as guideline to assess which small dwellings can be regarded as affordable within any new developments. In practice the density policy HG3 will ensure the provision of smaller properties on some sites which may be regarded as affordable. Existing properties converted for sale or rent will also be taken into account under this section of the policy. This will include building conversions to residential use and the re-use of former residential space, such as the conversion of space over shops in town centres.
- d) In some cases developers may prefer to contribute a sum, secured through a planning obligation, towards the provision of affordable housing elsewhere. While this is a legitimate means of achieving the overall targets it will clearly not be possible for all developments to use this method simply because no sites would be available for affordable housing. Therefore any agreement to fund "offsite" affordable dwellings must include the identification of the alternative site and the means by which this can be achieved - for example in partnership with the Council or RSL's. The Council does not wish to obtain funding for affordable housing without the agreed means to ensure its delivery.

SITE CONSIDERATION POLICIES

NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

POLICY HG5

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE:

- a) **THE AMENITY OF NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES IS PROTECTED,**
- b) **THE DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF DWELLINGS MINIMISES POTENTIAL OVERLOOKING AND PROVIDES A REASONABLE DEGREE OF PRIVACY AND SECURITY,**
- c) **ADEQUATE PRIVATE GARDEN SPACE IS PROVIDED,**
- d) **BOUNDARY TREATMENT PROVIDES AN ACCEPTABLE STANDARD OF PRIVACY AND VISUAL AMENITY,**
- e) **ACCESS FOR VEHICLES, PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT WHERE APPROPRIATE, IS SAFE AND CONVENIENT AND INTEGRATED WITH EXISTING PROVISION,**
- f) **PARKING FACILITIES ARE PROVIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL STANDARDS, AS OUTLINED IN APPENDIX 7.**
- g) **ITS DESIGN IS ACCEPTABLE IN TERMS OF APPEARANCE, SCALE AND SITING, AND**
- h) **LANDSCAPING COMPLEMENTS AND ENHANCES ITS APPEARANCE.**

- 5.80 Residential development can take many forms, depending upon such issues as the physical and topographical characteristics of the site, its location and the demand for particular dwelling types. In assessing the merits of a particular proposal, the above criteria will need to be satisfied.
- 5.81 It is essential that all new residential developments are designed to protect both those features worthy of retention and the amenity of neighbouring properties. The Authority will resist any development which has a seriously detrimental effect on neighbouring properties by reasons of overlooking, massing or overbearing impact. These effects can normally be overcome by the re-siting, reduction or re-orientation of the development.
- 5.82 The design and layout of dwellings should reduce the likelihood of overlooking, ensure a