

Examination of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan (2011 to 2029)

MF15 – Statement on Policy SS5 – Neighbourhood Planning

- 1.1 At the hearing session held on the 14 October 2015 on neighbourhood planning, the Inspector asked for further clarification to be added to Policy SS5. This was particularly in relation to when the trigger point outlined in the draft policy would be actioned and also how the ‘further 150 homes’ referred to in the policy should be distributed. The Inspector was of the view that changes were required in relation to these points to improve the clarity of the policy. The suitability of changing the housing figures from approximate to minimum requirements was also discussed.
- 1.2 In light of the discussions that took place, the council suggests the following modifications to the draft policy and its supporting text at this stage, for the purposes of the examination. The suggested changes have not, as yet, been subject to Sustainability Appraisal, the outcomes of which will need to be considered in advance of the publication of the formal proposed modifications for consultation.
- 1.3 The following three main changes are proposed at this stage:
 - The introduction of ‘at least’ into the policy to promote flexibility and ensure that the figures are not considered as a ceiling for development levels by Neighbourhood Planning Groups ;
 - The introduction of further clarity on the distribution of the 150 figure to provide greater clarity for smaller parishes undertaking neighbourhood planning and also to ensure the delivery of the overall requirement. The policy is not intended to restrict the development of homes in and around settlements which do not have a defined Settlement Policy Boundary, but rather complement Policy SS6: New Housing in the Countryside which provides a suitable policy framework for the delivery of suitable housing in the borough’s rural areas;
 - The provision of further clarity on the suitable trigger point for the council to step in and identify opportunities for meeting the policy requirement, if needed. A specific date has been included for the five named settlements, reflecting both progress being made on such Neighbourhood Plans and also the importance of the delivery of these units to the overall housing land supply. A more flexible approach is proposed for the remaining settlements, with progress being monitored on an annual basis.

1.4 Suggested changes to the policy and supporting text are shown below as tracked changes:

Draft Policy SS5 – Neighbourhood Planning

The council will support parish/town council and other representatives from local communities in non-parished areas, through the Neighbourhood Planning process.

In the settlements listed below, it will be necessary to identify sites/opportunities to meet the following levels of development, generally in and around defined Settlement Policy Boundaries:

- a) Bramley – ~~approximately~~ at least 200 homes*
- b) Kingsclere – ~~approximately~~ at least 50 homes*
- c) Oakley – ~~approximately~~ at least 150 homes*
- d) Overton – ~~approximately~~ at least 150 homes*
- e) Whitchurch – ~~approximately~~ at least 200 homes*

A further 150 homes will need to be identified through neighbourhood plans/ neighbourhood development orders in areas outside of those listed above and it will be necessary to identify sites/opportunities to deliver at least 10 homes in and around each of the settlements with defined Settlement Policy Boundaries¹.

The council will support the relevant parish/town council and other representatives from local communities to identify the most appropriate means of meeting this requirement, through Neighbourhood Planning, rural exceptions schemes, or a review of Settlement Policy Boundaries.

The delivery of housing which meets the requirements of this policy will be monitored annually by the council to ensure the housing requirement is met and the council reserves the right to identify opportunities to address any shortfall through the DPD process. For the 5 named settlements, if a neighbourhood plan/ neighbourhood development order (Regulation 16) has not been submitted by April 2017, the council will consider the need to allocate additional sites. ~~unities have been identified by 2017 the council reserves the right to identify the right to identify opportunities to address any shortfall through the DPD process.~~

4.49 The council strongly supports the principle of Neighbourhood Planning, which includes the development of Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders, including Community Right to Build Orders.

¹ Excluding Basingstoke and Tadley.

Neighbourhood Planning offers local communities the opportunity to come together and agree on joint aspirations for their area, and consequently guide future development decisions. A number of local guides have been developed by the council to assist local communities through this process, including the Neighbourhood Planning Protocol (2013).

4.50 The council continues to support the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans across the borough, and 12 13 neighbourhood areas have been designated in the borough at time of publication. This includes parished areas where development levels have been set by the above policy. The council will work with these local communities to identify the most appropriate means of delivering the identified levels of development. The council will also support the development of suitable Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders which relate to a specific area of land.

4.51 Each of the policies in the Local Plan are strategic in nature and therefore all Neighbourhood Plans need to be in conformity with them, unless there is an agreed and significant local justification for an amended approach.

4.52 The delivery of housing in each of the settlements named in Policy SS5 will be monitored annually to ensure the requirements of the policy will be met within the plan period. If no opportunities have been identified by 2017 the council will assess the need for it to identify sites through appropriate means such as the adoption of suitable DPDs. At least 750 homes will be delivered at the five named settlements through this policy, reflecting the size, characteristics, needs and sustainability credentials of these settlements. An additional 150 homes are expected to be delivered through Neighbourhood Planning across the remainder of the borough, outside of those settlements listed in the policy, Basingstoke Town and Tadley. At least ten homes will be delivered primarily within or adjacent to settlements with defined Settlement Policy Boundaries, in addition to other development outside of these areas where growth will reflect local needs and ambitions. This approach is based upon the ambitions of those parish and town councils who responded to a consultation exercise in 2011 and also the number of areas designated for neighbourhood planning purposes outside of those parishes where specific number allocations have been made.

4.53 Small residential developments of less than ten units (net gain of nine units or less) within the defined Settlement Policy Boundaries of the settlements listed will not qualify towards the targets outlined in the policy. Outside of these Settlement Policy Boundaries, developments of less than five units (net gain of 4 or less) will not qualify. If developments of a qualifying size come forward within or adjacent to the named settlements via alternative means to neighbourhood planning, for example via a planning application, this will contribute towards the targets set out within the policy.

4.53 ~~An additional 150 homes are expected to be delivered through Neighbourhood Planning across the borough, outside of those settlements listed in the policy. Such developments are generally expected to be provided within or adjacent to~~

~~smaller settlements within the borough. This approach is based upon the ambitions of those parish and town councils who responded to a consultation exercise in 2011 and also the number of areas designated for neighbourhood planning purposes outside of those parishes where specific number allocations have been made. If no opportunities have been identified by 2017 the council will assess the need for it to identify sites through appropriate means such as the adoption of a suitable DPD. Progress towards meeting the requirements set out in the policy will be monitored annually as part of the Authority Monitoring Report to ensure the requirements of the policy will be met within the plan period. The council reserves the right to identify opportunities to address any shortfall through appropriate means such as the adoption of suitable Development Plan Documents. For the 5 settlements named in the policy, the council will consider the need to allocate additional sites if no opportunities have been identified through a Submission neighbourhood plan/ neighbourhood development order (Regulation 16) by April 2017.~~