

# Empowering Rural Communities

## Supporting rural business, services and facilities

### Introduction

1. Planning applications in the rural area<sup>1</sup> of the County are determined in accordance with the development plan<sup>2</sup>. Currently this is primarily<sup>3</sup> the Wiltshire Core Strategy and in, an increasing number of places, a neighbourhood plan provides greater local detail.
2. The Wiltshire Core Strategy (the current plan) is being reviewed (the Local Plan Review). This document looks at ways the Council's planning policies and proposals might be changed and invites views on those ideas.

### Empowering rural communities

3. Planning controls protect the attractiveness of Wiltshire's open countryside. They prevent sporadic development and manage widespread speculative pressures for new buildings. There is a presumption against granting planning permission outside designated settlements<sup>4</sup> in all but a limited range of circumstances. Nearly all circumstances revolve around meeting local needs; such as to provide affordable homes and for local jobs and services.
4. A particular effect of strict controls and constraining development is that they generally lower landowner expectations of their land's value. A lower land price can be an important component for schemes that can meet a local need. Planning controls leverage land for community facilities that might not otherwise be considered viable.
5. Too often however planning is seen as an obstacle. Gaining planning permission for schemes that benefit a local community can be perceived as too difficult and time consuming. This is because proposals need to be on land already identified in the development plan, and allocation can take years to achieve; or, when not in a plan, a planning application requires lengthy and involved justification to demonstrate that a scheme meets the purpose for which it is intended.
6. Whilst it is right there are these checks and controls to maintain the integrity of the planning system, communities working together need a clearer set of rules and requirements. The Local Plan Review is looking at ways it can empower and not

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<sup>1</sup> The rural area of the county is used here to mean everywhere outside its main settlements: Chippenham, Trowbridge, Salisbury and all the smaller market towns, as defined in the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

<sup>2</sup> 'Unless material considerations indicate otherwise', in accordance with s38 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

<sup>3</sup> Other parts of the development plan include the Chippenham Site Allocations Plan and Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan.

<sup>4</sup> Designated settlements are Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages as defined in the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

frustrate local initiatives and facilitate meeting needs whilst continuing to protect the countryside. The Council is suggesting a range of new measures and is inviting views.

## Supporting rural business, services and facilities

7. Most services upon which communities rely are found in rural settlements. Large Villages and Local Service Centres are rural settlements designated in the current plan that contain services and facilities that also serve a much wider local catchment. They support many jobs and businesses as well as often providing local goods and services vital, of course, to those sections of the community unable to travel easily.
8. It is vital that planning supports the role of these settlements; that they grow in ways that sustain them. This means they should continue to accommodate new homes both on a scale that matches their size and importance and in ways that best meet each community's needs.
9. The role of the Local Plan Review is to set an appropriate scale of housing growth for Large Villages and Local Service Centres over the plan period (2016-2036). Experience has shown that some villages have been challenged by disproportionate growth, whilst others have seen relatively little in recent years. By setting out a scale of development, there will be certainty for local communities. Neighbourhood planning will be able to allocate the land they want to see built on rather than feel under threat from market pressure. The Council is suggesting those scales of housing growth and will finalise them responding to comments received.
10. Wherever possible, local communities should determine how their areas change. Neighbourhood Plans are the main vehicle for communities to allocate land for new housing development, but the Council also wants to try and ensure that new homes are built to match local needs as far as possible. This is not just about securing affordable dwellings but also about retaining a good range and mix of house types in the local stock. The Local Plan Review aims to set a framework that can support neighbourhood planning in doing so.

## Empowering Rural Communities

### Assessing local housing need

11. To understand local housing needs, individual communities are encouraged to carry out a Rural Housing Needs Survey to assess their needs for affordable housing. Questionnaire design and analysis can be carried out by the Council, while the local community administer the survey. A standard approach, with the flexibility to include bespoke local questions, allows trends to be detected and comparisons with other parts of Wiltshire.
12. An assessment of local housing needs is central to determining what scale of housing should be planned for over the plan period and the types of new homes that may be needed.
13. Currently, surveys can take some considerable time and resource to undertake. The process can be improved and speeded up by quickening the shift from paper to online responses. Online evidence gathering provides scope for a quicker turnaround of

analysis and less delay. Communities would be relieved of some of the burden involved and able to concentrate on progressing their plans.

14. The focus of evidence gathering may also extend to other areas of interest to the community. As well as affordable housing the Council will extend needs assessment to include market sectors such as homes for the elderly, entry level homes, key workers, sheltered accommodation or smaller dwellings.

## Meeting Local Needs

15. The Council is proposing several means to simplify the planning process and better help local communities looking to meet local needs.
16. There are a number of potentially confusing means by which a community can deliver the homes it seeks. As well as the conventional market these can include Community Land Trusts (CLTs), Co-housing, Housing Co-operatives, Self and Custom Build, Self-help housing, and Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs), amongst others. Planning terms like affordable housing, its different forms, community led housing and exception sites can also be part of the complexity.

## Market housing

17. The Council prefers sites for market housing to be identified by communities themselves through neighbourhood planning. These sites will be generally at Local Service Centres and at Large Villages. A proportion of the dwellings will be affordable homes. At present the amount varies. 40% of homes can be sought in some cases and 30% in others<sup>5</sup>. In some parts of the County affordable homes can only be sought through schemes of more than ten dwellings in others five.
18. The Council intends to simplify the situation by seeking 40% on all schemes of more than five dwellings<sup>6</sup>. To help support neighbourhood planning work the Council is preparing guidance on how to select the most appropriate sites for development and how to frame plan proposals to help ensure the community obtain the development it envisages.

## QUESTIONS

**Do you agree there should be a target of 40% affordable homes on all new schemes of more than five dwellings? What other approaches might there be?**

## Community led housing and affordable homes

19. Most communities do not imagine local housing needs solely in terms of affordable homes. Communities may wish to respond to needs identified for sheltered

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<sup>5</sup> Core Policy 43 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, Wiltshire Council (2015)

<sup>6</sup> A 40% target is subject to more detailed viability testing housing delivery. This figure matches assessed need. A five dwelling threshold currently applies to rural areas described under section 157(1) of the Housing Act 1985, which includes National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Designated Rural Areas. The Council is proposing to apply for this designation to extend to all qualifying rural areas of the county i.e. parish must have fewer than 3,000 people and population density must normally be two people or less per hectare.

accommodation, first homes or possibly key workers. The distinction in planning terms between affordable and market housing can sometimes be an obstacle.

20. The Council proposes to have just one policy and therefore one point of reference for assessing planning proposals to meet local housing needs at rural settlements (including Small Villages, Large Villages and Local Services). This will allow for both affordable housing and community led initiatives; the latter of which might include market dwellings, community buildings or other uses.

#### **Amended Core Policy 44**

#### **Rural Exceptions Sites and Community Led Housing**

##### **Rural exceptions sites**

At rural settlements, development proposals will be supported where their primary purpose is to provide affordable housing to meet local needs, provided:

- i. It has clear support from the local community through evidenced consultation.
- ii. The number, type, size and tenure of the affordable dwellings should reflect identified and genuine local needs as evidenced on the Homes4Wiltshire register and/or through a local housing needs survey
- iii. The proposal is within, adjoining or well related to the existing settlement without reliance on travel by private car
- iv. Environmental and landscape considerations will not be compromised
- v. The proposal consists of 20 dwellings or fewer and will be no greater than 5% of the size of the settlement
- vi. Its scale and type is appropriate to the nature of the settlement and will respect the character and setting of that settlement
- vii. The affordable housing provided will always be available for defined local needs, both initially and on subsequent change of occupant.

Proposals which include plots for self and custom build affordable homes will be supported where they meet the above criteria.

##### **Cross-subsidy/Market Housing**

Rural exception sites must primarily be led by an affordable housing proposal. The inclusion of up to 25% open market housing will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that the site would be unviable as an exception site without cross-subsidy, and/or where it is proven essential to provide a balanced and sustainable community, with evidence of support from a Community Land Trust or other community representation.

For rural exceptions site and community led housing developments, the number, type and size of open market homes will reflect the proven needs, and will be integrated throughout the development so as to be indistinguishable from the affordable housing.

##### **Community Led Housing**

At rural settlements, proposals brought forward by a Community Land Trust will be supported, provided Criteria (i) - (vii) above are complied with. The inclusion of up to 50% open market housing will be considered for this type of Community Led Housing, where it can be demonstrated that it would meet an identified local need.

The Council will secure nomination rights to the affordable homes in line with its adopted Allocations Policy.

21. It is proposed to amend the current Core Policy 44 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy as set out above. The wording has been amended to focus on and clarify the essential requirements. It results from discussions with Parish Councils and other stakeholders. Views and comments are now invited more widely as part of this consultation.
22. The Council, in partnership with others, would also prepare guidance to illustrate how the policy requirements would be met by evidence and material either in support of a planning application or plan allocation.

## QUESTIONS

**Do you agree with the approach set out in the suggested policy? If not, why not? How could it be improved?**

### **Community needs and dwelling size**

23. The vitality of rural communities, like any other, relies on a variety of households of differing sizes and ages. Communities with a better mix provide greater resilience. They can provide informal support networks or by having a range of different needs, be it for schools, bus services or medical care, the future prospects for these services and facilities are improved.
24. There is a tendency for dwelling occupants to extend their homes and for replacement dwellings to be larger, in terms of number of bedrooms, than the homes they are replacing. Over time a village can lose the range of dwellings sizes that help to maintain a good social mix. It is difficult, once lost, to replace a supply of smaller dwellings and doing so may also involve building into the countryside.
25. It may be in the wider public interest to prevent such change continuing. The Council is considering ways in which this can be achieved by planning controls. Permitted development rights (automatic permission for house extensions) might be withdrawn on new small homes. Set against this, permitted development rights are enshrined in law and a compelling case is needed to withdraw them. The Council, however, is inviting views on whether it is right to identify this as an issue to address and if so by what means.

## QUESTIONS

**Do you think this approach is worth pursuing? What local evidence would be needed to justify applying restrictions like these?**

# Supporting Rural Business, Services and Facilities

## The role of local service centres, large and small villages

26. The County's main rural settlements are designated as Local Service Centres, Large and Small Villages. Each community area's designated settlements are listed in the Wiltshire Core Strategy<sup>7</sup>. Together, to differing degrees, they are the location for services, business and facilities that serve a local community's vital needs and, in so doing, also serve an immediate catchment around them.
27. Core Policy 1 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy describes the role and function of Local Service Centres. They are defined as smaller towns and larger villages which serve a surrounding rural hinterland and possess a level of facilities and services that, together with improved local employment, provide the best opportunities outside the Market Towns for greater self-containment.
28. Local Service Centres are intended to provide for modest levels of development in order to safeguard their role and to deliver affordable housing. The Local Service Centres are: Pewsey, Market Lavington, Cricklade, Tisbury, Mere, Downton and Wilton. It is not proposed to change these designations.
29. Large Villages are defined as settlements with a more limited range of employment, services and facilities. Development will be limited to that needed to help meet their housing needs and improve employment opportunities, services and facilities. In response to consultation feedback, it is proposed to add Bulford and Durrington to those settlements already designated which enables these distinctive communities to plan for their own future<sup>8</sup>.
30. Small Villages have a low level of services and facilities, and few employment opportunities. Some modest development may be appropriate to respond to local needs and contribute to the vitality of rural communities but generally limited to infill. Scales of development are much less than large villages and should meet a local need. Schemes that are not small infill plots for market housing would be permitted in accordance with Core Policy 44 (see above)
31. The Council does not propose to change those settlements designated as Small Villages. It is proposed however for neighbourhood planning bodies to designate additional Small Villages, should they wish or, indeed, remove a designation that is no longer appropriate<sup>9</sup>.
32. The Local Plan Review intends to draw a distinction between local service centres and large villages, that each have a marked strategic role sustaining jobs, services and facilities, and small villages that do not. Small villages may accommodate small-scale

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<sup>7</sup> Core Policy 1 lists local service centres; large and small villages are listed in policies for each community area Core Policies 4 to 33.

<sup>8</sup> Further explanation for this proposal is given in the Planning for Amesbury consultation document that accompanies this [\(link needed\)](#)

<sup>9</sup> This would be carried out through the preparation of a neighbourhood plan. A basic condition required of plans is they are in general conformity with the Local Plan. The Local Plan might set out guidance to ensure Small Villages meet minimum criteria

development that responds to local needs and they therefore do not have such a wider role. This affects how the Local Plan approaches proposals for new housing in rural areas.

## Proposals for new housing

33. The Local Plan Review should support the role of large villages and local service centres by limited development. The National Planning Policy Framework says:
- “Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services.”<sup>10</sup>**
34. NPPF also says that:
- “...strategic policies should also set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations.”<sup>11</sup>**
35. Many communities have taken up the opportunity to develop their own neighbourhood plans. The Local Plan must provide the number of additional homes each one must plan to accommodate.
36. An emerging spatial strategy proposes a distribution of growth over the plan period in terms of additional new homes and land for employment development. The focus for the bulk of growth will continue to be the County’s main settlements.
37. In rural areas, the Local Plan spatial strategy will set an appropriate more modest scale of growth overall and set out housing requirements for Local Service Centres and Large Villages.
38. These housing requirements may be met over the plan period by several means. By:
- Existing planning permissions and plan allocations that have not yet been implemented
  - New homes on sites within settlement boundaries<sup>12</sup>
  - Schemes permitted in accordance with Core Policy 44 (above)
  - Site allocations in plans
39. The general presumption against speculative housing proposals outside a settlement will apply<sup>13</sup>. Site allocations will generally be carried out by neighbourhood plans. Where this is not the case, it may be necessary for the Council to allocate sites. This may be achieved by a review of the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan.
40. Where there is or will be a neighbourhood plan this will be the housing requirement for the neighbourhood area designation. The requirement, by supporting the strategic role of these rural settlements, supports the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development in the County.

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<sup>10</sup> Paragraph 78, NPPF, MHCLG (Feb 2019)

<sup>11</sup> Paragraph 65, NPPF, MHCLG (Feb 2019)

<sup>12</sup> Generally, these will be opportunities for small infill plots and conversions, but may also occasionally involve the re-use of larger brownfield sites.

<sup>13</sup> See Core Policy 2 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, Wiltshire Council (2015)



41. Neighbourhood plans will need to have regard to the requirements that apply. The plan's policies and proposals need to be in general conformity with the Local Plan. This is a basic condition required to be met by all neighbourhood plans. What new homes each community plans for will need to take account of evidence of local need and what opportunities exist. Requirements give an indication of the levels necessary to support the role of the settlement. Actual levels determined by each community may be less or more depending on local evidence.
42. Elsewhere in the countryside, including areas where neighbourhood designations do not include a Large Village or Local Service Centre, local communities will determine themselves, without a requirement, what housing proposals are appropriate for their area, so long as they are in general conformity with the Local Plan. A community may wish to bring forward a housing scheme without preparing a neighbourhood plan. In these circumstances a neighbourhood development order or planning application would be considered solely against policies contained in the Local Plan.

### Calculating the requirement

43. Appendix One shows the Council's draft housing requirements for Local Service Centres and Large Villages over the plan period. It also explains how these figures have been arrived at. Planning policy seeks to ensure that housing in rural areas is constrained to preserve the countryside.
44. Historic delivery of homes in these areas has largely been through small-scale windfall planning permissions. Local Plan allocations have usually been focussed on the Local Service Centres but more recently the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan has also facilitated supply at some of the Large Villages.
45. The emerging Local Plan proposes that a significant proportion of the housing requirement for each of the housing market areas will continue to be met through local plan allocations at the main settlements (Principal Settlements and Market Towns). A more modest scale is proposed to support the role of rural settlements and to meet needs in the rural areas the 'rest of the HMA'<sup>14</sup>.

Housing Market Area	No. of homes at Main Settlements (2016 to 2036)			No. of homes in Rural Areas (2016 to 2036)	
	Principal Settlements	Market Towns	Local Service Centres	Large Villages	Elsewhere
<b>Chippenham</b>	9,225	8,370	100	1,435	1,265
<b>Salisbury</b>	5,240	3,190	1,070	880	190
<b>Swindon</b>	n/a	1,935 <sup>15</sup>	530	540	10
<b>Trowbridge</b>	5,830	4,220	0	655	295

<sup>14</sup> See the 'Emerging Strategy' Consultation Paper for a more detailed explanation

<sup>15</sup> This doesn't include 435 homes at West of Swindon



46. The 'rest of the HMA' requirement has then been disaggregated to the Local Service Centres, Large Villages and Elsewhere in proportion to the past pattern of development<sup>16</sup> This reflects each HMAs different geography and settlement pattern.
47. In keeping with their role and status in the settlement hierarchy, a Local Service Centre is expected to accommodate more growth than a Large Village. A further disaggregation of the housing requirement takes into account the size and population of the village and the extent that it is affected by constraints to development listed in the NPPF<sup>17</sup>. This ensures that the larger, least constrained settlements are allocated a proportionately greater share of the housing requirement than smaller, more constrained settlements.
48. Two exceptions have been made to reflect the unique circumstances for those settlements:
  - In recognition of its close proximity to Trowbridge and the limitations that this relationship with the Principal Settlement puts on the capacity of the village to grow, the housing requirement for Hilperton has therefore been set to match existing commitments.
  - The Large Village of Durrington has also been set to match the commitments to reflect the significant number of homes to be provided.
49. Existing commitments, in the form of allocations and planning permissions, have also been taken into account. It is also expected that a proportion of overall housing delivery will continue to come forward through small site and infill windfall development within the built-up area of Local Service Centres and Large Villages<sup>18</sup>. These two sources of supply reduce the amount of additional land that will need to be planned for at Local Service Centres and Large Villages.
50. Overall, housing requirements are an increase compared to the scales of growth in the current plan. This reflects increased need. Past rates of housing development have, however, already exceeded those envisaged in the current plan.
51. Several workshops with Parish Councils have informed the Council's approach. This consultation allows everyone to comment and housing requirements will be amended in response to responses received and further discussions with Parish Councils.

### **Delivering the requirement**

52. It is suggested that housing requirements should be accommodated in accordance with the following policy:

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<sup>16</sup> Housing completions from 2006 to 2016

<sup>17</sup> This full list of constraints taken into account is provides in the appendix to this paper

<sup>18</sup> This source of supply, because the scale of growth is much smaller, can therefore be a main source of new homes and it is appropriate to make an allowance. This contrasts to main settlements where it is a small component of overall supply that is appropriate to see simply as providing flexibility, choice and some contingency.

Core Policy

**Housing Requirements for Neighbourhood Area Designations in the Rural Area**

Meeting the needs of Local Service Centres and Large Villages Housing, housing requirements for neighbourhood area designations will be met by:

- Existing planning permissions and plan allocations that have not yet been implemented
- Small sites within settlement boundaries
- Exception and Community-led Schemes accordance with Core Policy 44
- Site allocations in the development plan

The general presumption against housing proposals outside a settlement will apply in accordance with Core Policy 2.

Site allocations will generally be made in neighbourhood plans. Where this is not the case, it may be necessary for the Council to allocate sites. This may be achieved by a review of the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan.

53. A proportion of housing requirements are already met by homes completed or in the pipeline in terms of having planning permission or allocations in the development plan. Ongoing monitoring will need to consider whether these sites remain likely to be delivered within the plan period. For example, there may be obstacles to building on a plot of land that have only come to light since a plan was prepared.
54. Many additional homes in rural settlements have been built in small schemes, on infill plots and by the conversion of existing buildings. This will continue to be the case. Supply from this source has been quite consistent over the years but, by their nature as 'windfall' and because of their size, they are impossible to identify individually when preparing a plan. A proportion of the requirement, depending on local evidence such as past completions, will be met by these means and will not therefore need to be planned for by land allocation.
55. Once existing commitments and an allowance for small site completions have been deducted, communities may consider how they meet the remainder of the homes required. They should do so based on as good an understanding of local needs as possible. They are encouraged to carry out a local housing needs survey to inform their work.
56. An understanding of local housing needs will help to decide what should be pursued to meet local needs and may be accommodated as an exception to planning controls on greenfield land adjoining a settlements, usually as a community-led project and what should be identified as open market homes that might include an element of affordable dwellings.
57. What course to follow, and sometime in what balance, will vary from place to place depending upon local need, but also such other matters as what land is available and well-located for the purpose, as well as an appetite to take on the task. This is a matter for local decision by local communities.

58. A new or review of an existing neighbourhood plan can be a good way forward. The Council supports communities' neighbourhood planning and will provide further guidance on site allocation and other aspects to help them prepare or review their plans.

## QUESTIONS

**What do you think to the housing requirements for Local Service Centres and Large Villages? Should requirements be higher or lower? If so which ones and why?**

### The role of neighbourhood plans

59. Neighbourhood plans will need to have regard to the requirements that apply. The plan's policies and proposals need to be in general conformity with the Local Plan. This is a basic condition required to be met by all neighbourhood plans.
60. What new homes each community plans for will need to take account of evidence of local need and what opportunities exist. Requirements provide the level of new homes considered appropriate to support the role of the settlement. Actual levels determined by each community may exceptionally be less (where justified) or sometimes more depending upon local evidence.

### New neighbourhood plans

61. Once the Local Plan Review has been formally adopted and a community then starts work on a new neighbourhood plan, each plan will need to show how their area expects to accommodate its housing requirements.
62. The Council provides support to communities preparing their plans. This includes guidance on how to select and allocate land for development.
63. Once a plan is complete ('made') and where it contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement, the area can gain additional protection against speculative housing proposals, should the Council fail to be able to demonstrate a sufficient supply of deliverable land for housing development<sup>19</sup>.

### Existing neighbourhood plans

64. Just because a new Local Plan has been adopted does not mean in itself that a made neighbourhood plan will be out of date. Housing need is usually just one element of a community's vision and housing requirements one aspect.
65. No matter what the time horizon of their plan, communities may wish to review their plans so that they are in line with the Local Plan.
66. Communities should monitor the effectiveness of their existing neighbourhood plans. This may suggest areas of the plan that may need to be reviewed. Changes will be needed to keep each plan relevant and up to date and changes can be required by changing circumstance. One circumstance is the revised Local Plan.

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<sup>19</sup> See paragraph 14 of the NPPF, (MHCLG (Feb 2019)), for a fuller explanation

67. A review of a neighbourhood plan involves determining what sections of the plan, policies and proposals must be retained unchanged, and what other parts need changing. It also involves considering what new policies and proposals may be needed and what existing ones, having served their purpose, can be deleted.
68. Where a neighbourhood plan area has a housing requirement, each community should consider what proposals they might wish to introduce in order to meet it. A focussed review of an existing neighbourhood plan can extend protection against speculative development and allows the community to decide where development takes place. This gives greater certainty to everyone.
69. Neighbourhood plan areas, however, do not benefit from the additional protection against speculative development if their neighbourhood plans are more than two years old, as is prescribed in the National Planning Policy Framework.

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# Appendix One: Housing Requirements for Local Service Centres and Large Villages

## Introduction

70. This appendix explains how we propose to establish housing requirements for neighbourhood plans in rural areas, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework, and explores how planning policies can continue to support development that meets the needs of local communities.
71. For the purpose of this paper rural areas are considered to be those that are located outside of Principal Settlements and Market Towns.

*[Insert image of rural part of Wiltshire]*

## Housing Requirements for Local Service Centre and Large Villages

### What does National Planning Policy and Guidance say?

72. The NPPF<sup>20</sup> now requires local planning authorities to include housing requirements in their Local Plans for every neighbourhood area designation within their plan area. Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the Local Plan and so these housing requirements will need to be incorporated into new neighbourhood plans that are being prepared or reviewed.
73. Where it is not possible for a local authority to provide a designated neighbourhood area with a housing requirement they should provide neighbourhood plan groups with an indicative requirement on request. This is very much an interim position and therefore subject to change as emerging local plans progress towards becoming finalised and adopted.
74. Planning Practice Guidance, published to accompany national planning policy, confirms that there is no set method for determining housing requirements for designated neighbourhood areas. However, it does say that “in setting requirements... plan-making authorities should consider the areas or assets of particular importance... which may restrict the scale, type or distribution of development.”<sup>21</sup>
75. The NPPF also says “*to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially*

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<sup>20</sup> Specifically, February 2019 NPPF Paragraphs 65 and 66

<sup>21</sup> PPG Paragraph: 101 [Reference ID: 41-101-20190509](#). A list of the assets of particular importance, as described in the NPPF has been provided in Appendix 1 to this paper.

*where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.”* In meeting this requirement, it will be important to strike an appropriate balance between the role of strategic policies set out in the Local Plan and policies in neighbourhood plans.

## **What does current Local Plan policy say?**

76. The Wiltshire Core Strategy establishes housing requirements for the county and three defined housing market areas (East Wiltshire, North & West Wiltshire and South Wiltshire). Community areas, Principal Settlements, Market Towns and some Local Service Centres are each allocated indicative housing requirements, as are the ‘community area remainders’ which are, essentially, the rural parts of the community area outside of their main settlements.
77. Because the NPPF introduced this requirement after the adoption of the Wiltshire Core Strategy there are currently no policies setting out housing requirements for designated neighbourhood areas in Wiltshire.
78. The Local Plan Review must therefore first establish a method for providing designated neighbourhood areas with housing requirements which are presented in this paper as ‘indicative’ requirements for a rural settlement, rather than designated neighbourhood area, basis. The reason for this approach is explained in more detail below. Policies for Principal Settlements and Market Towns will address their neighbourhood plan housing requirements separately.

## **What you have told us?**

79. As a first step towards the provision of neighbourhood plan housing requirements, initial baseline indicative housing requirements for neighbourhood plans with Local Service Centres and Large Villages were presented to representatives of town and parish councils (and neighbourhood plan groups) at workshops in Autumn 2019.
80. The indicative requirements were based on the size of settlements. The larger the settlement the higher the growth proposed; the assumptions being that larger settlements tend to have more facilities as well as a greater capacity for growth, for example, by having more extensive brownfield opportunities for development.
81. Using the highest figure of the range in the assessment of housing need and rolling forward the proportion of homes for the rural area contained in the current Local Plan strategy, each settlement was provided with its individual housing requirements proportionate to its size.
82. The baseline indicative neighbourhood plan housing requirements were calculated for rural settlements with defined limits of development, rather than for designated neighbourhood areas because:
  - It reflects the sustainable strategy for the rural areas in Wiltshire established in Wiltshire Core Strategy Core policies 1 and 2; and the role of Local Service Centres and Large Villages
  - It provides a clear framework for managed growth in rural areas to be delivered through neighbourhood plans, neighbourhood development orders or, where necessary, through site allocations in the local plan.

- It allows flexibility for designated neighbourhood areas where more than one parish work together to prepare a neighbourhood plan.
  - It ensures that those rural parishes that abut urban areas such as principal settlements and market towns, have their own clearly defined housing requirement for the settlement, or settlements, that lie at the heart of their neighbourhood area<sup>22</sup>
  - It allows for infill development to continue to be delivered at Small Villages, in line with the Wiltshire Core Strategy, without having to meet a prescribed target<sup>23</sup>
83. Attendees of the workshops were broadly supportive of the principles behind the approach. It was acknowledged at the time that the initial baseline figures did not, however, take into account significant constraints and therefore some of the indicative requirements may not be appropriate for settlements in constrained areas. Feedback from consultees confirmed that this was indeed the case, highlighting that the figures for Box and Colerne were too high given that they are located within Green Belt and an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Others expressed concerns that the data used to determine the size of settlements actually showed the number of existing homes for the parishes. It was also recognised that for some parishes once the number of existing completions and commitments for new homes had been taken off that this would indicate that no further growth would be needed.
84. We were also told that, for the smaller rural settlements, there are concerns about one and two bed properties, often bungalows, being demolished and replaced by four or five bed houses. This effectively reduces the availability of smaller homes for first time buyers and those households in the community looking to down-size.
85. In response to this feedback, the method for determining the neighbourhood area housing requirements has been further reviewed and refined to take into account:
- The actual size of the settlement both geographically and number of dwellings<sup>24</sup>;
  - The proximity of settlements to other nearby built up areas which have their own housing requirements such as Principal Settlements; and
  - The extent that the settlement and immediate surrounds are constrained by
    - Flood Zones 2 and 3
    - Green Belt
    - World Heritage Site
    - Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs)

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<sup>22</sup> For example, previous strategic developments on the edge of Trowbridge have fallen within the adjacent parishes of Hilperton and Staverton and these homes were counted against the Trowbridge housing requirement. The same principle will apply to the neighbourhood plan housing requirements. Homes built within the designated neighbourhood area but associated with Trowbridge will not be deducted from the neighbourhood plan housing requirements and vice versa.

<sup>23</sup> It is accepted that some infill homes will be delivered at Small Villages in line with the Wiltshire Core Strategy but that a housing requirement should not be prescribed for such areas because infill, by its very nature, is a form of windfall development.

<sup>24</sup> Local Land and Property Gazetteer address data has been used to ensure that the number of dwellings relate to the defined settlement rather than the parish.



- Habitat Sites<sup>25</sup>
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)
- Scheduled Monuments
- Ancient Woodland and Aged and Veteran Trees
- World Heritage Sites
- Local Green Space (designated in Neighbourhood Plans)
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Registered Battlefields
- Conservation Areas
- Listed Buildings
- National Parks
- Other Heritage Assets<sup>26</sup>

## How does the approach work?

86. The calculation of the housing requirements are still presented for each settlement. The figures are now also presented on an annualised, as well as 20 year, basis to allow flexibility for neighbourhood plans to adopt plan periods that differ from the Local Plan.
87. A 100m buffer has now been added to each settlement boundary to ensure that their relationship with constraints in the immediate surrounds are also captured in case it is appropriate to consider greenfield sites adjacent to settlements for development when planning for growth. This does not, however, mean that development in these areas outside of the defined limits of development are automatically considered acceptable.
88. Various scenarios for growth across each of the four housing market areas have been assessed through the Local Plan Review. The scenarios explored the options for growth for the rural parts of the housing market areas as well as the Principal Settlements and Market Towns. The starting point for the calculations in this paper are derived from the emerging preferred scenario. These figures are shown in table 2.1.
89. The residual housing requirement for the rest of the housing market areas are also shown. These are, essentially, the expected level of windfall development (e.g. infill, rural exception sites, community led schemes) that could be met at Small Villages and other smaller settlements across the rural parts of each HMA..
90. **Table 2.1 Emerging Rural Housing Requirements (2016 to 2036)**

HMA	Alternative Development Strategy (max)	Total for LSCs in HMA	Total for Large Villages in HMA	Residual requirement for rest of HMA (Elsewhere)
Chippenham	2,840	100	1,435	1,265

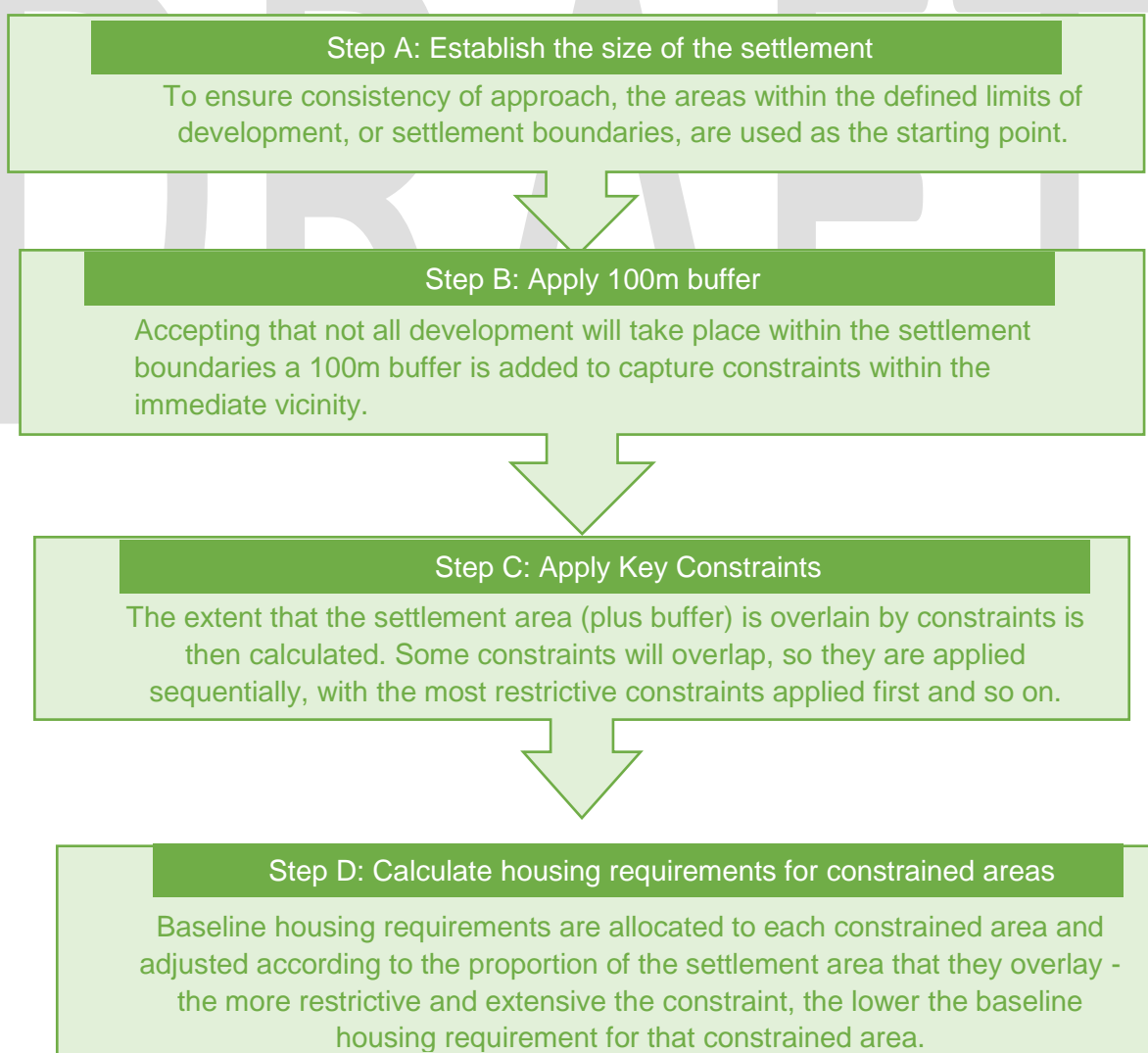
<sup>25</sup> European designated sites i.e. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites.

<sup>26</sup> This applies to either designated or non-designated heritage assets. Currently no heritage assets have been included under this heading but suggestions on what this could include would be welcomed.

Salisbury	2,140	1,070	880	190
Swindon	1,080	530	540	10
Trowbridge	950	0	655	295

91. The purpose of the exercise is to disaggregate the housing requirement figures for Local Service Centres and Large Villages, in the second and third columns in table 2.1, to their constituent settlements, using a fair and equitable approach.
92. The method recognises that no two settlements are the same in terms of shape, size, density, or the extent that they are affected by constraints. It also takes into account that some constraints are more restrictive to housing development than others<sup>27</sup>.
93. The method is essentially as follows<sup>28</sup>:

## Method Summary



<sup>27</sup> For example, land within flood zones 2 and 3 has a baseline housing requirement of zero in line with national policy that development should not take place in areas at risk of flooding, whereas some housing would be acceptable in an AONB.

**Step E: Calculate housing requirements for unconstrained area**  
 The housing requirement for the remaining unconstrained area is distributed to each Large Village, based on the size of settlement and number of existing households.



**Step F: Calculate housing requirements for each settlement**  
 The sum of the annualised housing requirements for the constrained and unconstrained areas is then calculated.



94. The constraints have been applied in order, with the most restrictive first, as detailed in the table below. For those constraints where housing should be avoided wherever possible, the housing requirements in these areas has been set to zero. For those less restrictive constraints, such as AONBs for example, a baseline annualised allowance has been applied to reflect the status of the settlements and that it is acceptable to deliver a limited number of homes in these areas.
95. In table 2.2 below, a baseline housing requirement of 1 has been applied for Large Villages in the AONB which equates to 20 homes for the average sized village in the same HMA (with no other constraints), over the course of the plan period. A baseline of 0.5, applied to Green Belt, would equate to 10 homes over the same 20 year period. A smaller than average village in the AONB would therefore receive a housing requirement of fewer than 20 homes. A larger than average village may receive a proportionately higher housing requirement.

**Table 2.2 baseline annualised housing requirements for each constraint**

<b>Asset or Area of Particular Importance</b>	<b>Local Service Centre</b>	<b>Large Village</b>
<b>Settlement baseline value<sup>29</sup></b>	5 dwelling per annum	1 dwelling per annum
<b>Areas at risk of flooding (Zones 2 and 3)</b>	In accordance with NPPF housing is not acceptable in principle. Baseline annualised housing requirement = 0	In accordance with NPPF housing is not acceptable in principle. Baseline

<sup>29</sup> To reflect position in settlement hierarchy

		annualised housing requirement = 0
<b>Green Belt</b>	No – there are no LSCs in or in proximity to Green Belt	Limited housing acceptable in exceptional circumstances. Baseline annualised housing requirement = 0
<b>World Heritage Sites</b>	No – there are no LSCs in or in proximity to World Heritage Sites	No – there are no Large Villages in or in proximity to World Heritage Sites
<b>Scheduled Monuments</b>	In accordance with NPPF housing is not acceptable in principle. Baseline annualised housing requirement = 0	In accordance with NPPF housing is not acceptable in principle. Baseline annualised housing requirement = 0
<b>Listed Buildings</b>	Although enabling development can play a part in the restoration of Listed Buildings, the starting point is that no additional housing development is acceptable at these locations. A 15-metre buffer has been applied to each listed building to capture its immediate setting. Baseline annualised housing requirement = 0	Although enabling development can play a part in the restoration of Listed Buildings, the starting point is that no additional housing development is acceptable at these locations. A 15-metre buffer has been applied to each listed building to capture its immediate setting. Baseline annualised housing requirement = 0
<b>Registered Parks and Gardens</b>	In accordance with NPPF housing is not acceptable in principle. Baseline annualised housing requirement = 0	In accordance with NPPF housing is not acceptable in principle. Baseline annualised housing requirement = 0
<b>Registered Battlefields</b>	In accordance with NPPF housing is not acceptable in principle. Baseline annualised housing requirement = 0	In accordance with NPPF housing is not acceptable in principle. Baseline annualised housing requirement = 0
<b>Conservation Areas</b>	Yes – baseline annualised housing requirement = 1	Yes – baseline annualised housing requirement = 0.5
<b>Ancient Woodland/ Ancient and Veteran Trees</b>	In accordance with NPPF housing is not acceptable in principle. Baseline annualised housing requirement = 0	In accordance with NPPF housing is not acceptable in principle. Baseline

		annualised housing requirement = 0
<b>Habitat sites (SACs, SPAs, Ramsar sites)</b>	In accordance with NPPF housing is not acceptable in principle. Baseline annualised housing requirement = 0	In accordance with NPPF housing is not acceptable in principle. Baseline annualised housing requirement = 0
<b>SSSIs</b>	In accordance with NPPF housing is not acceptable in principle. Baseline annualised housing requirement = 0	In accordance with NPPF housing is not acceptable in principle. Baseline annualised housing requirement = 0
<b>National Parks (New Forest)</b>	No – there are no LSCs in proximity to the National Park	Some housing generally of small scale is acceptable, in principle, at Large Villages within National Parks. Baseline annualised housing requirement = 1
<b>AONBs</b>	Some housing is acceptable, in principle, at LSCs within AONBs. Baseline annualised housing requirement = 3	Some housing generally of small scale is acceptable, in principle, at Large Villages within AONBs. Baseline annualised housing requirement = 1
<b>Local Green Space</b>	It is assumed that LGS is designated in neighbourhood plans in locations that local communities wish to protect from development. Baseline annualised housing requirement = 0	It is assumed that LGS is designated in neighbourhood plans in locations that local communities wish to protect from development. Baseline annualised housing requirement = 0
<b>Other heritage assets</b>	None identified to date.	None identified to date.

96. Digital mapping (GIS) has been used to calculate the areas affected by each constraint. These are then fed into a spreadsheet where the housing requirements are then calculated. The results are shown in tables 2.3 to 2.7. The tables show the indicative housing requirements and an annualised rate of house building. The final column shows how much of the housing requirement was already in the pipeline in March 2019 and which can be deducted from the amount of land that would need to be planned for. Since March 2019, at most settlements, there will be further planning permissions granted or pending that will reduce the remainder further.

# Housing Requirements

## Outputs for Local Service Centres

Table 2.3: Local Service Centre indicative housing requirements

HMA	Settlement	Baseline indicative housing requirement 2016-2036	Annualised baseline housing requirement in dwellings per annum	Completions (2016-19) & Commitments (1 April 2019)
Swindon	Cricklade	385	19.25	149
	Pewsey	145	7.25	111
Chippenham	Market Lavington	100	5.0	68
	Mere	300	15.0	156
Salisbury	Downton	235	11.75	127
	Tisbury	135	6.75	70
	Wilton	400	20.0	407

## Outputs for Large Villages

Table 2.4: Chippenham HMA Large Village indicative housing requirements

Large Villages Chippenham HMA			
Settlement	Baseline indicative housing requirement 2016-2036 (2020)	Annualised baseline housing requirement in dwellings per annum (2020)	Completions (2016-19) & Commitments (1 April 2019)
Ashton Keynes	35	1.8	31
Atworth	80	4.0	0
Box	25	1.3	10
Bromham	80	4.0	13

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Christian Malford	35	1.8	28
Colerne	40	2.0	5
Crudwell	40	2.0	37
Derry Hill/Studley	80	4.0	2
Great Somerford	35	1.8	36
Hullavington	80	4.0	79
Kington St Michael	40	2.0	9
Oaksey	35	1.8	15
Potterne	85	4.3	24
Rowde	70	3.5	13
Rudloe	250	12.5	250
Seend	30	1.5	2
Shaw/Whitley	95	4.8	6
Sherston	55	2.3	56
Sutton Benger	55	2.8	52
Urchfont	65	3.3	60

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West Lavington/Littleton Pannell	50	2.5	14
Worton	40	2.0	1
Yatton Keynell	35	1.8	4

Table 2.5: Salisbury HMA Large Village indicative housing requirements

<b>Large Villages Salisbury HMA</b>			
<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Baseline indicative housing requirement 2016-2036 (2020)</b>	<b>Annualised baseline housing requirement in dwellings per annum (2020)</b>	<b>Completions (2016-19) &amp; Commitments (1 April 2019)</b>
Alderbury	90	4.5	87
Broad Chalke	25	1.3	13
Bulford	20	1.0	0
Collingbourne Ducis	70	1.5	6
Coombe Bissett	25	1.3	6
Dinton	30	1.5	3
Durrington	85	4.3	84
Fovant	30	1.5	7
Great Wishford	25	1.3	0
Hindon	30	1.5	0
Ludwell	30	1.5	0
Morgan's Vale/Woodfalls	70	3.5	14
Netheravon	35	1.8	3
Pitton	25	1.3	1
Porton	75	3.8	74
Shrewton	70	3.5	15
The Winterbournes	35	1.8	20
Tilshead	25	1.3	3

Whiteparish	40	2.0	9
Winterslows/Middle Winterslow	85	4.3	27

Table 2.6: Swindon HMA Large Village indicative housing requirements

<b>Large Villages Swindon HMA</b>			
<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Baseline indicative housing requirement 2016-2036 (2020)</b>	<b>Annualised baseline housing requirement in dwellings per annum (2020)</b>	<b>Completions (2016-19) &amp; Commitments (1 April 2019)</b>
Aldbourn	40	2.0	4
Baydon	30	1.5	4
Broad Hinton	25	1.3	1
Burbage	85	4.3	84
Great Bedwyn	30	1.5	8
Lyneham	80	4.0	51
Purton	140	7.0	140
Ramsbury	35	1.8	8
Shalbourne	25	1.3	1
Upavon	50	2.5	48

Table 2.7: Trowbridge HMA Large Village indicative housing requirements

<b>Large Villages Trowbridge HMA</b>			
<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Baseline indicative housing requirement 2016-2036 (2020)</b>	<b>Annualised baseline housing requirement in dwellings per annum (2020)</b>	<b>Completions (2016-19) &amp; Commitments (1 April 2019)</b>
Bratton	40	2.0	40
Chapmanslade	45	2.3	43
Codford	30	1.5	10

Corsley	25	1.3	11
Dilton Marsh	85	4.3	14
Heytesbury	25	1.3	3
Hilperton	40	2.0	39
Holt	65	3.3	47
North Bradley	65	3.3	26
Semington	35	1.8	25
Southwick	85	4.3	8
Steeple Ashton	35	1.8	1
Sutton Veny	25	1.3	12
Westwood	30	1.5	3
Winsley	25	1.3	2

97. In some cases, homes built since 2016 and outstanding commitments will already have met the indicative requirements. These commitments will need to be monitored as the local plan review progresses as well as information from neighbourhood plan groups as they develop their own evidence bases. In these circumstances, the housing requirements reflect existing commitments. This does not mean, however, that the other Large Villages in the HMA should see a comparable reduction in their housing requirements. The requirements should not be seen as a ceiling to development. Where neighbourhood plan groups wish to deliver more homes in line with the Local Plan, they will be supported.