

Interim Planning Policies: Housing

1 Preamble

- 1.1 These Interim Planning Policies set out the criteria for the consideration of new residential development. In bringing forward sufficient large sites in an orderly fashion, the Council will have identified at least a 5 year supply of housing land. On this basis, the Council intends to control speculative development applications coming forward randomly, particularly for smaller sites. The Council may look favourably at smaller brownfield sites that deliver demonstrable benefits to the local community, and satisfy high design standards that respect the local distinctiveness and character of the area.
- 1.2 The policies refer to a series of material considerations which the Council will have regard to alongside the saved policies of the Local Plan in determining planning applications for residential development, and in giving advice prior to submission of a formal planning application. The relevant saved policies in the Council's Local Plan are: H1 (Allocation of Housing Land), and QD1 (Design Criteria for New Development). This statement should be considered alongside the suite of other Interim Planning Statements, such as those for affordable housing and open space.
- 1.3 It is considered the policies promote an active and flexible approach to managing the supply of housing land and will be informed by ongoing and regular monitoring of the Borough's supply of housing land.
- 1.4 The policies reflect updated regional, local and national planning policy and they will apply until the Council adopts the Central Lancashire Local Development Framework (LDF) in conjunction with Preston and Chorley Local Planning Authorities. The Core Strategy of the Central Lancashire Local Development Framework is expected to be adopted in 2010.

2 Interim Planning Policies: Housing

POLICY H1 R

As an interim measure, until the Council is able to pursue a plan led approach to accommodating new development as part of the Regional Spatial Strategy, planning permission for residential development will usually be permitted in order to maintain a 5 year housing land supply.

At times when the Council can demonstrate an oversupply of housing of up to 20% over the strategic housing requirement, as identified in the 5 year supply report, the release of further housing land will be restricted to sites which make an essential contribution to the supply of affordable or special needs housing or help achieve the regeneration objectives of the local authority.

Reasoned Justification

- 2.1 Government guidance in PPS3 requires Local Planning Authorities to identify and maintain a rolling 5 year supply of deliverable land for housing. As a result, there should be a reasonable prospect that housing will be delivered on the sites within five years. The Council intends to manage the release of land carefully. Residential development will be permitted up to 20% over the strategic requirement, providing that a significant oversupply is not created.
- 2.2 According to recent investigation, the housing requirement to March 2013 is 1,851 dwellings. The identified supply to 2013 is 2,083 dwellings which leaves an over supply of 232 dwellings. The table below shows a breakdown of the housing land supply position at 31st March 2008.

Deliverable Sites	Net completions expected in 5 years
Allocated sites without planning permission	558
Sites with outstanding permission (and under construction at 1 April 2008)	461
Sites with outstanding permission (not yet started at 1 April 08 but considered achievable within 5 years)	326
Unallocated brownfield sites that are considered deliverable	328
Other sites	410
Total deliverable sites at 31 st March 2008	2,083
5 Year Requirement	1,851
Oversupply at 31 st March 2008	232

(Source: South Ribble 5 year Supply Position at 31st March 2008)

- 2.3 Sites that make an essential contribution to the supply of affordable or special needs housing are a priority. A number of households in the Borough are living in accommodation beyond their means indicating more affordable provision is required within the Borough. In relation to special needs housing, the Housing Needs Assessment identified that there are gaps in the current service provision for special needs accommodation within the Borough.
- 2.4 The release of housing to help achieve the regeneration objectives of the Local Authority is another important consideration for the Council. The Council's regeneration initiatives designed to boost the appeal and vitality of the local area by delivering a number of improvements in and around Tardy Gate, Leyland Town Centre, Bamber Bridge and Higher Penwortham over the next few years.

POLICY H2 R

Sites of over 0.4 hectares should be on previously developed land within the existing built up area as defined by policy D3 of the Local Plan, and, exceptionally, on greenfield sites allocated in the Local Plan – both of which should be in sustainable locations. Residential development will not be permitted on other greenfield sites allocated for other uses in the Local Plan, for example safeguarded land, countryside, green wedge and open space.

All sites must conform to saved Local Plan policy QD1 – Design Criteria for New Development and respect the character of the local area and have regard to any traffic impacts. Developments must also conform to all other relevant Local Plan policies.

Reasoned Justification

- 2.5 The Council will give preference to sites on previously developed land (brownfield land) within settlements where this is well-located in relation to housing, jobs, other services and infrastructure. The release of previously developed land over greenfield land is in line with the Government's national target that at least sixty per cent of new housing is to be built on previously developed land (PPS3), and the indicative target in the Draft RSS that seventy per cent of development is on previously developed land. The need to ensure housing developments are accessible to existing local community facilities, infrastructure and services, including public transport is highlighted in PPS3.
- 2.6 The importance of good design and the need for new developments to consider their context is discussed in National Planning Policy Statements PPS1 and PPS3. PPS3 states that good [housing] design should contribute positively to making places better for people. It also states that "Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted." The Council will follow these principles in assessing the merits of development proposals by rigorously applying policy QD1.

POLICY H3 R

For existing employment sites, the applicant should demonstrate that the site is not suitable for employment uses by providing evidence that the site has been actively marketed for employment for a minimum of a year for small sites, and three years for large sites, unless the development would help achieve the specific regeneration objectives of the Council. The Council will seek evidence of marketing processes, including details of values and asking prices.

Sites identified as 'Best Urban' and 'Good Urban' in the Preston/South Ribble/Chorley Employment Land Review will be protected for employment use.

Reasoned Justification

- 2.7 A review undertaken for Preston, South Ribble and Chorley Councils, identified that overall there is a very generous quantity of employment land supply within the Central Lancashire Area when compared against forecast requirements. The report concludes that there is scope to release the poorest performing sites from the employment portfolio. As such, the Council will consider releasing existing employment sites for housing where the sites are located within settlement boundaries, well-located in relation to housing, jobs, other services and infrastructure and the applicant can provide evidence that the site has been actively marketed. Small employment sites must be actively marketed for a minimum of a year, whilst large sites must be marketed for three years. An existing employment use is defined as any land or buildings, located anywhere in the Borough, that is currently used for employment purposes.

POLICY H4 R

Development on small sites (0.4ha or less) should be on previously developed land, within the existing built up area as defined by policy D3 of the Local Plan, and add value to the local community.

Development on garden sites, or redevelopment of sites with existing dwellings, will normally be refused, unless the applicant can demonstrate it will not cause inappropriate intensification of the urban fabric, or not be over-development of the site, and not cause overlooking and loss of privacy into adjacent gardens. Proposals which undermine and harm the distinctive characteristics of an area will be refused.

All sites must conform to saved Local Plan policy QD1 and respect the character of the local area. When assessing applications for small sites, the Council will have regard to the following criteria:

- **Layout , design and intensity of development**
- **Relationship of development to the surrounding area, including density and character**
- **Parking provision and traffic impact**
- **Access**
- **Public realm**
- **Cumulative impact of such developments**
- **Amenity**
- **Inappropriate piecemeal development**

Developments must also conform to all other relevant Local Plan policies.

Reasoned Justification

- 2.8 Major housing developments are now permitted through this IPS and it is important to avoid oversupply and to protect the local distinctiveness and the character of the existing area. To control the development of land the Council will give preference to proposals that demonstrate clear benefits for the local community, such as development of derelict, underused and untidy land and problem sites as identified by the local community.
- 2.9 In order to safeguard the local distinctiveness and the character of existing residential areas, planning applications for small residential developments will be refused if they do not accord with Policy QD1, and other relevant Local Plan Policies. A new development within a residential area can easily appear unrelated to that area. It is therefore important to ensure that development does not harm the character and identity of an area. Applicants for new residential development on small infill sites and gardens should pay particular attention to the following issues:
- Layout, design and intensity of development – new buildings should respect established building lines and setbacks from highways. Separation distances between buildings should also respect the general distances, which help characterise the area. Layouts should take account of the pattern and arrangement of surrounding streets, spaces and buildings, to ensure integration into the street scene.

- Relationship of development to the surrounding area – the appearance of proposed development and its relationship to its surroundings are material planning considerations. The Council attaches great importance to the good design of proposals to ensure that buildings contribute positively to the environment and to ensure that the amenity of neighbouring dwellings is safeguarded.
- Parking provision and traffic impact – in relation to having regard to traffic impact, Government guidance including PPS1 and PPS3 encourage patterns of development that reduce the need to travel by private car. Residential development should therefore be easily accessible and well-connected to public transport and community facilities and services wherever possible.
- Access - particularly in relation to classified roads - piecemeal development that results in multiple junctions on classified roads is unlikely to be acceptable.
- Public realm – any development which will have a detrimental impact will be resisted. Developments should seek to contribute to an overall improvement to the public realm.
- Cumulative impact of such developments – a succession of developments with negative impacts can severely harm the character of an area, and result in the erosion of high quality environments in the Borough. The Council will therefore take account of any potential precedent set by proposals.
- Amenity – the orientation and spacing distances between residential properties should respect privacy and residential amenity. Proposals should accord with adopted interface standards, unless the privacy of existing and future occupiers can be adequately safeguarded by other means.
- Inappropriate piecemeal development – development that compromises the future use of other adjoining land, or does not respect the existing site will be considered piecemeal development that is contrary to the good planning of the area and design principles as set out in PPS3.

POLICY H5 R

The Council encourages all new homes to achieve high environmental standards under the Code for Sustainable Homes 2008. All new dwellings will be required to meet Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes by 2010, Level 4 by 2013 and Level 6 by 2016.

The Council will encourage developments to meet the following criteria:

- **The design and layout should minimise energy use and maximise energy efficiency**
- **Appropriate energy sources should be installed and implemented to reduce carbon emissions**

In relation to waste recycling facilities, the Council requires all new housing developments to incorporate adequate indoor and outdoor storage space for non-recyclable waste and recyclable household waste.

Reasoned Justification

- 2.10 By encouraging all new homes to achieve high standards of sustainable design and construction in accordance with PPS1 and the Code for Sustainable Homes, the Council seeks to improve environmental standards. Where new homes cannot achieve high environmental standards under the Code for Sustainable Homes, the Council will require evidence to demonstrate why this has not been feasible.

- 2.11 In the Code, the sustainability of a home is measured against nine design categories including energy, water efficiency, materials, surface water run-off, waste, pollution, health and wellbeing, management and ecology. A rating of one star is the entry level and above the level of the Building Regulations and six stars is the highest level reflecting exemplar development in sustainability terms.
- 2.12 Compliance with the Code is currently voluntary however, from May 2008 those selling new homes will be required to provide information to any prospective purchaser on the sustainability of the home. Further information on the Code for Sustainable Homes can be found at the Planning Portal website¹.
- 2.13 The Council expects all new housing developments to incorporate adequate indoor and outdoor storage space for non-recyclable waste and recyclable household waste in line with Government guidance in Planning Policy Statement 10 'Planning for Sustainable Waste Management'. The type of facility proposed will vary according to the scale and type of development.

3 Implementation, Monitoring and Review

- 3.1 Following the adoption of the Interim Planning Policy Statement, it will be implemented primarily through the development control process and the determination of applications for planning permission or prior approval. The IPS does not have the status of the development plan, but will be an important material consideration in determining applications for planning permission.
- 3.2 The effectiveness of this IPS will be monitored. The key indicators will be:
- % of affordable housing provided
 - % of special needs housing provided
 - % of housing developed on previous employment sites
 - % of housing built on previously developed land
 - % of sites granted planning permission which have been delivered within a 5 year period
- 3.3 The Council's 5 year supply document will be updated on a regular basis to ensure the careful release of land within the Borough.
- 3.4 The IPS is expected to be replaced by the Central Lancashire Core Strategy in December 2010.