

Appendix 1: Advice to Neighbourhood Plans – Proposed Methodology for the Provision of Indicative Housing Requirements pending the production of a new Local Plan

Background

1. The NPPF sets out that “66. Strategic policy-making authorities should establish a housing requirement figure for their whole area, which shows the extent to which their identified housing need (and any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas) can be met over the plan period. Within this overall requirement, 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. Once the strategic policies have been adopted, these figures should not need retesting at the neighbourhood plan examination, unless there has been a significant change in circumstances that affects the requirement.
2. “67. Where it is not possible to provide a requirement figure for a neighbourhood area, the local planning authority should provide an indicative figure, if requested to do so by the neighbourhood planning body. This figure should take into account factors such as the latest evidence of local housing need, the population of the neighbourhood area and the most recently available planning strategy of the local planning authority.”
3. This note sets out the basis of how the Council as the local planning authority should provide the indicative figure required in line with paragraph 67 should this be requested. At present, there are two “made” Neighbourhood Plans with allocations which are being reviewed – Uppingham and Langham - where it is likely to be a request to the County Council to provide an indicative figure.
4. The policy basis for setting indicative figures will be the NPPF and national guidance alongside the Council’s current adopted strategic planning policies. The withdrawn Local Plan no longer provides an appropriate policy basis to use for this purpose.
5. Despite and in addition, the evidence base of the withdrawn Local Plan evidence base does provide robust and more up to date information on the sustainability of settlements within the County, particularly those with sufficient services and facilities in order to be defined as Local Service Centres and where it would be appropriate to encourage allocations for new housing.
6. The Core Strategy identifies Cottesmore, Edith Weston, Empingham, Greetham, Ketton, Market Overton, and Ryhall as Local Service Centres on the basis of the largest villages with a range of facilities and access to public transport.
7. As the Core Strategy was adopted by the County Council in 2011, more up to date evidence on services, facilities and access to these has been compiled for the submitted and now withdrawn Local Plan. This indicates a list of ten of the largest villages – namely: Cottesmore, Edith Weston, Empingham, Great Casterton, Greetham, Ketton, Langham, Market Overton, Ryhall and

Whissendine – where it would be appropriate to set a housing requirement figure if this is requested by a Neighbourhood Plan body.

8. Below these in the settlement hierarchy are a number of villages spread across the County with fewer local services and facilities and/or poorer accessibility to higher order centres. Promoting development in these villages would not encourage sustainable patterns of growth. These are designated as Smaller Villages, where development is expected to be limited to small scale infill development on windfall sites within the defined planned limits of development, the conversion of buildings and development which can be demonstrated necessary to support the maintenance or enhancement of local community facilities. Any settlements or groups of villages not listed in the settlement hierarchy are considered to be “countryside” where development will be restricted.
9. In all of the settlements set out in the above paragraph, it is considered that it would not be appropriate for the County Council as the Local Planning Authority to set an indicative housing requirement figure for any Neighbourhood Plan. Notwithstanding this, it would still be possible for Neighbourhood Plans in these settlements to allocate small sites for development without an indicative housing figure being provided by the County Council.

Setting an Indicative Housing Figure

10. It is considered that to determine the minimum number of homes needed for the County as a whole, the local housing need (LHN) assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance (in line with paragraph 61 of the NPPF) is used. It is not considered that there are any exceptional circumstances which would justify an alternative approach, reflecting any current and future demographic trends and market signals.
11. The latest LHN calculation for Rutland (February 2021) is 129 dwellings per annum, rounded to 130 dwellings per annum.
12. Reflecting paragraph 22 of the NPPF, we would recommend that new or reviewed Neighbourhood Plans should look forward for at least a 15 year period in order to set a long term vision for their communities and respond to long-term requirements and opportunities.
13. As such it is considered that new or reviewed Neighbourhood Plans should potentially plan for a period up to 2041, allowing for the time it will take for a plan to be made. The indicative housing requirement figure will need to be proportionately reduced if a Neighbourhood Plan requests this figure and sets a shorter plan period.
14. The Council’s current adopted strategic planning policies with respect to the spatial distribution of housing are contained within the adopted Core Strategy. This sets out a distribution of 70% of housing taking place in Oakham and Uppingham and 30% taking place across the villages of Rutland (on the basis of 20% in the larger villages defined as LSCs and 10% elsewhere). Additionally, it proposes that the distribution in the two towns would be on the basis of 80% in Oakham and 20% in Uppingham.

15. The following table sets out the implications of applying this approach to Rutland for the period 2021 to 2041. This takes account of current commitments (sites with planning permission and any valid allocations without consent) and completions since April 2021 in order to determine the minimum housing supply to be provided over this period.

	Minimum Requirement 2021-41 (130 dpa)	Core Strategy distribution	Commitments at 1 st April 2021*	Gross Completions from April 2021	Indicative housing supply to deliver the minimum requirement in line with the Core Strategy distribution
Oakham		56% = 1456	313	41	1102
Uppingham		14% = 364	30	0	334
Larger Villages		20% = 520	54	0	466**
Other Villages		10% = 260	106	3	Indicative provision of an additional 151 dwellings assumed to be delivered through infill/windfall in these villages without proposing an indicative housing requirement
County Total	2600	2600	503	44	2053

* This will need to be updated on a regular basis.

** This equates to a rounded average of 47 dwellings per larger villages (based on 10 in line with the withdrawn evidence base). The implications for larger villages are set out in paragraphs 18 and 19 below.

16. It will be for Neighbourhood Plans where proposing to make allocations to consider the scope for “windfalls” to contribute towards the indicative housing supply figure provided by the County Council as Local Planning Authority. Reflecting paragraph 71 of the NPPF, where an allowance is to be made for windfall sites as part of anticipated supply, there should be compelling evidence that they will provide a reliable source of supply. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the strategic housing land availability assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends.

17. It will be for Neighbourhood Plans to consider an appropriate buffer on top of the indicative housing supply figure to ensure choice and competition in the market for land and allow for contingency and any other factors. Again, there should be compelling evidence to justify the scale of any proposed buffer or the non-inclusion of a buffer.
18. As the above analysis provides a total for all larger villages and then sets an average provision based on this, it is recognised that this average indicative supply for individual larger villages should be offset by specific commitments already in place at the time of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan in order to avoid potential “over-development” in these larger villages. The County Council will advise on the specific commitments which would need to be taken into account in determining the indicative housing supply in such circumstances.
19. This would have the effect of a potential minimal under-provision depending on how many Neighbourhood Plans would come forward in the identified Local Service Centres which would wish to make allocations for new housing development. At present there is only one Neighbourhood Plan fulfilling that category and that is at Langham. As set out in the conclusions below then the net effect of this would be a shortfall of 18 dwellings in total across the County for the period 2021-41.

Conclusions for Uppingham and Langham

20. Based on the above, it is proposed to advise the Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan that the indicative housing figure would be **335 dwellings** (rounded from 334), based on a plan period 2021-41. It will be for the Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan to determine any contribution from windfall development and any appropriate buffer on top of the indicative housing figure together with the provision of the compelling evidence to justify such proposals.
21. It is proposed to advise Langham Neighbourhood Plan that the basis of the indicative housing figure would be 47 dwellings, assuming a plan period 2021-41. An outline consent was granted in March 2021 for 18 dwellings on a site to the north of Cold Overton Road in Langham (application reference 2020/0380/OUT). Once the legal agreement is completed and the decision notice issued, it is proposed that this capacity should be deducted from the above figure to give a residual indicative housing figure of **29 dwellings** for the period 2021-41. It will be for the Langham Neighbourhood Plan to determine any contribution from windfall development and any appropriate buffer on top of the indicative housing figure together with the provision of the compelling evidence to justify such proposals.