

**Kirdford Parish Council
Matter 4C – Housing**

ISSUE – Is the proposed approach to housing development positively prepared, justified, effective, and consistent with national policy?

Local Housing Need

Q.60 Is there any substantive evidence to demonstrate that it would be appropriate to plan for a higher housing need figure than the standard method indicates in this case as per advice set out in the PPG (Paragraph: 010 Reference ID: 2a-010-20201216)?

KPC Response:

1. This is a question for CDC to answer.

Unmet needs of neighbouring areas

Q.61 Is there any substantive evidence that the Plan should be accommodating unmet need from neighbours, and if so, would it be sound to do so?

KPC Response:

2. Given the environmental constraints facing the district it would seem inappropriate for CDC to accommodate unmet needs from neighbours.

**Policy H1 Meeting Housing Needs
The housing requirement**

Q.64 Policy H1 Meeting Housing Needs sets a housing requirement for the full plan period 2021 – 2039 of at least 10,350 dwellings. This is below the local housing need for the area as determined by the standard method.

The justification for the proposed provision of 535 dpa in the southern area has been considered under Matter 4A Transport. Is the proposed figure of 40 dpa in the northern part of the plan area justified?

KPC Response:

3. The proposed figure of 40 dpa in the North of the Plan Area is not sufficiently justified.

4. The supporting text to Policy H1 (paragraph 5.1) states that the *“Preferred Approach consultation on the Local Plan was based on meeting the identified objectively assessed housing needs of the plan area of 638 dwellings per annum (dpa) plus an allowance for accommodating unmet need arising from the Chichester District part of the South Downs National Park”*. However, pointing to constraints *“particularly the capacity of the A27”* CDC explains that this had led to a housing requirement below the need derived from the standard method of 535 dpa in the southern plan area and a further 40 dpa in the northern plan area. However, CDC does not explain what other constraints that has led to this reduction in housing or specifically the decrease of housing in the southern plan area and the increase of housing in the North of the Plan Area.
5. CDC does not justify why the Proposed Submission Local Plan significantly reduced the housing planned for the East-West Corridor Sub Area by 1,339 dwellings, for the Manhood Peninsula by the decrease is 970 dwellings compared with the distribution proposed in the Preferred Approach Local Plan. However, for the North of the Plan Area this trend was reversed whereby the amount of housing was increased from 489 dwellings to 679 dwellings.
6. CDC simply does not justify its approach to the spatial distribution of housing or why it is proposing a significant decrease of 20% in the southern area of the District that is the most sustainable in terms of population, facilities, services and sustainable transportation. Nor does CDC provide justification for an increase of 20% in housing distributed to the North of the Plan Area which is the least sustainable, lacking in services, facilities and sustainable transport.
7. CDC fails to explain the serious Water Neutrality issues facing the North of the Plan Area due to the groundwater abstraction from Pulborough, a primary source of water within the Sussex North Water Resource Zone (WRZ) impacting on designated wetland and riverine habitats along the Arun Valley, which is a real constraint that CDC and the Local Plan must acknowledge in its policies. To clarify, Natural England has advised that all new developments within the WRZ must demonstrate water neutrality via a combination of water efficiency and offsetting, and that this advice is likely to stand until a strategic solution is found, which is not likely to be before 2030.
8. To summarise, CDC has failed to explain this very important matter regarding Water Neutrality issues in the North and has overstated the constraints in the South by relying entirely on an argument about the A27 which it has not been clearly explained.
9. The A27 is claimed by CDC to be an overriding constraint to development in the South when the Local Plan’s Objective 1 (Climate Change) is focused on new development being located in accessible locations, designed to reduce reliance on the private car with convenient walking and cycling routes and public

transport to access local facilities and open spaces. If development were actually planned this way, in areas served by rail and bus services, where active travel routes are feasible and uses, facilities and services in close proximity, then there would not be claimed constraints on the A27.

Q.65 Would the adverse impacts of the Plan not providing for objectively assessed housing needs significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of doing so when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole? That is to say is the overall housing requirement justified?

KPC Response:

10. This is a question for CDC to answer.

Q.66 Paragraph 5.2 of the Plan sets out that the housing requirement would be made up of 535 dpa in the southern area and 40 dpa in the northern area. These figures are not included in Policy H1. Is this effective?

KPC Response:

11. KPC questions whether an annualised housing requirement for the northern and southern area is required to make this policy effective. It could very well be the case that housing delivery accelerates more quickly in the southern area due to its better accessibility and the water neutrality issues in the northern area

Q.67 Are the suggested MMs necessary for soundness?

KPC Response:

12. CM159 (Policy H1) is required to reflect the latest monitoring data / position.

Housing land supply

Policy Meeting Housing Needs sets out the broad sources of supply to meet the housing requirement. Housing land supply will be provided by the Plan, the existing site allocation DPD, a new DPD and Neighbourhood Plans. The Plan therefore is not singly providing for all the supply in the plan period, though it is setting the overall housing requirement.

**Q.68 Are the components of the overall housing land supply set out in Policy H1 (as updated in BP07 Housing supply background paper) justified?
Specially:**

Is footnote 29 as set out in the submitted Plan regarding Site Allocation DPD allocations correct given that policies of that plan are not to be superseded by this Plan?

What is the compelling evidence that windfall sites will make the anticipated contribution to housing land supply over the plan period?

KPC Response:

13. In relation to the windfall sites, KPC is concerned that this could lead to additional speculative housing being located in unsustainable locations such as Kirdford which would be in addition to any housing requirement. The Council's Background Paper does not specify the locations of the historic windfall delivery and this would be quite helpful to understand trends on where in the District windfalls are typically realised. This could help the policy be more specific on where in the District CDC expects windfall to be delivered.

Q.69 Will there be a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites on adoption of the Plan?

KPC Response:

14. This is a question for CDC to answer.

Q.70 Would at least 10% of the housing requirement be accommodated on sites no larger than one hectare to be consistent with NPPF 69?

KPC Response:

15. This is a question for CDC to answer. However, if there are more opportunities to deliver housing on smaller sites in sustainably located sites in the south of the District then CDC should explore this further placing less reliance on development in the North.

Policy H3 Non-Strategic Parish Housing Requirements 2021 – 2039

Q.73 What is the justification for the parish housing requirements set out in Policy H3?

KPC Response:

16. As KPC has set out in its responses to the Sustainability Appraisal, there is no justification provided by CDC for the overall and individual parish housing

requirements. One could surmise that the figures are based solely on sites being promoted for development. In the case of Kirdford the evidence does not support 50 dwellings in terms of housing demand or in terms of the sustainability of the village to accommodate additional growth given that its existing housing commitments from the previous plan were excessive.

Q.74 Is the statement in the last paragraph of the policy concerning what the Council would do in the event of demonstrable progress not being made in providing for the minimum housing numbers effective?

KPC Response:

17. The last paragraph of Policy H3 states that the Council will allocate sites within a development plan document (where demonstrable progress has not been made by a neighbourhood plan) however KPC questions whether this is realistic and whether it is effective and unambiguous.
18. Policy H3 refers to 'demonstrable progress' of draft neighbourhood plans, but this leads to ambiguity in its interpretation and uncertainty of compliance with Policy H3: what does CDC consider 'demonstrable progress'? Is this also a Regulation 14 neighbourhood plan? If it is then why does the policy need to use the word 'draft' and 'demonstrable progress' – it creates considerable confusion and ambiguity for the reader and decision maker.
19. Given that neighbourhood plans will be progressing at various paces and timetables does this mean that CDC will prepare separate DPDs for each neighbourhood area where 'demonstrable progress' has not been made? Surely such an approach would be more time consuming and resource intensive than a neighbourhood plan going through the required stages. In any case, this clause of Policy H3 appears to be more of a 'threat' to Qualifying Bodies that CDC will take over the process if they do not move quickly enough despite CDC providing no clear guidance for the neighbourhood plan groups.
20. KPC consider the last paragraph of Policy H3 is ineffective as it would lead to ambiguity in its interpretation and does not clearly identify a period of time or targets for neighbourhood plans to progress and to be made before CDC decides allocating sites in a DPD. This leads to the question of whether the spatial strategy and housing numbers proposed by CDC within the plan period are capable of being delivered in time.

Q.75 What account was made of designated landscapes in determining the parish housing requirements?

KPC Response:

21. Insufficient account has been made of designated landscapes in determining the parish housing requirements.
22. The South Downs National Park Authority signed a Statement of Common Ground with Chichester DC in June 2024, which highlighted the SDNPA's concern with Policy H3 as *"several settlements around the SDNP have been given a housing figure to be identified through either Neighbourhood Development Plans or a potential future Site Allocations DPD. Raise concern about these figures and challenge neighbourhood planning groups may have as many potential sites in these areas are likely to be in the setting of the SDNP. Important that attempts to meet these target figures address the requirements of NPPF paragraph 176 on setting."* This issue raised by the SDNPA was merely noted by CDC, who did not respond. The Statement of Common Ground only referred to the Council's suggestion to modify Policy NE2, which relates to Natural Landscape.
23. The proposed modification of Policy NE2, as the only response to the SDNPA's concern with proposed housing figures in the setting of the National Park, evidences the limited consideration to the setting of the National Park, which, according to the proposed NE2 modifications, only refer to views. 1/3 of Kirdford Parish is located within the National Park and many areas of the remaining 2/3 of the Parish are within the setting of the National Park.
24. National Parks have the highest status of protection in the planning system and the NPPF (182) requires giving great weight to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty. It also follows to say that *"development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas."*
25. 50 dwellings are proposed in the parish of Kirdford, but no connection has been made between the proposed location (parish) and the number (50 dwellings) with the Landscape Capacity Study (March 2019), a document that is part of the evidence base for this Local Plan. Furthermore, no consideration is given to the National Park's 7 special qualities, which go beyond of a landscape and views assessment. These special qualities reflect both the engagement with stakeholders of the National Park and technical evidence, relating to cultural heritage, tranquillity, farming, recreation and learning, as well as towns and villages.

26. All the above should have been considered in the determination of parish housing requirements, as these would have an impact on the setting of the National Park, and as the SDNPA noted, and the NPPF requires at paragraph 182.

Policy H5 Housing Mix

Q.78 Policy wording appears to be set out in footnote 34. Is that effective?

KPC Response:

27. Footnote 34 should be incorporated in the text of the policy and to be amended to clearly reference neighbourhood development plans. The Policy does not include reference to the ability of neighbourhood plans to be supported by Housing Needs Assessments to provide neighbourhood plan area / parish level evidence base to inform the housing mix for the neighbourhood plan.

28. KPC considers that the text to this effect should be included in this Policy given that many neighbourhood plans are now supported by such evidence and use this to inform neighbourhood plan policies on Housing Mix. This is of especial importance considering that the Local Plan proposes a number of dwellings to be allocated through neighbourhood development plan to Kirdford (amongst other parishes).

Policy H7 Rural and First Homes Exception Sites

Q.82 What is the justification for the site limit of 30 dwellings in Policy H7 part 2?

KPC Response:

29. It is not clear where the justification for 30 dwellings comes from. The supporting text (paragraph 5.37) refers to “large scale development of 30 homes” but this seems to conflict CDC’s interpretation of the size of sites, as Policy H3 referred to small-scale housing sites and expected 50 dwellings in Kirdford and 75 dwellings in Wisborough Green, which could be allocated on a single site, as this is delegated to the neighborhood plan. How is a 50 dwellings site in Kirdford small-scale but a 30 dwellings rural exception site be considered large scale? How has 30 dwellings been decided as the upper threshold? The key policy requirement would be to be proportionate to the size of the settlement rather than setting out a specific threshold that is not informed by context.

Q.83 Are the suggested MMs necessary for soundness?

KPC Response:

30. KPC is satisfied with the deletion of the 30 dwellings threshold in policy H7 and the clarification in the policy and supporting text that the size of the development should be proportionate to the size of the settlement. This amendment was necessary.
31. KPC considers that the policy and supporting text should define the term 'local connection' for an effective and unambiguous interpretation of the policy.
32. KPC remains concerned with the use of 'adjacent' settlement and would recommend referring to sites that adjoin the settlement boundary instead.