



Newark and Sherwood Amended Core Strategy DPD

MATTER 7 – Rural Areas

**Statement on behalf of Newark and
Sherwood District Council**

January 2018

Question 7: Does Spatial Policy 3 work effectively in the context of 4 above?

- 7.01 In the review of the Spatial Strategy the District Council wanted to ensure that a sustainable but flexible approach to new development was in place. In particular in relation to Spatial Policy 3 the Council recognised that the policy needed to evolve to reflect a desire on the part of many rural communities to see small scale sustainable growth. Increasing flexibility will also provide more opportunity for rural communities to contribute towards meeting our overall housing requirements. Future development which takes place in the Rural Areas is not specifically identified or allocated but a modest allowance for windfall development is included within the latter years of the Five Year Housing Land Supply (see Matter 6 – Appendix 5).
- 7.02 The District Council was keen to ensure that any review of Spatial Policy 3 was supported by the affected rural communities. The District’s rural areas are diverse and no clear views on a way forward were suggested as to the best approach by the various Parish Councils; never the less few communities wanted to be named in a hierarchy. This is at odds with the more definite approach of naming settlements and giving them village envelopes which existed in the 1999 Local Plan; something which is advocated by a number of representors [11, 16, 39]. Whilst the Council does understand the benefits of this approach and have considered this as part of the consultation (CS/8 & CS/11) there are a number of significant drawbacks:
- The level of service provision and accessibility are dynamic – and therefore identifying a settlement because of its service provision may quickly be overtaken by events on the ground e.g. the closure of the local school or the cancellation of a once regular bus route.
 - A prescriptive approach may restrict communities from producing locally specific Neighbourhood Plans.

Therefore to reflect local diversity and reflect local preference the District Council believes the best approach is to continue with a criteria based policy to manage development in rural areas.

- 7.03 The amendments to the policy set out in CS/01-02 are intended to make clear the circumstances upon which new development is acceptable. In the most part the objections raised relate to the Policy’s impact on residential development. These fall into three broad areas:
- Scale
 - Definition of the main built up area
 - Need
- 7.04 In relation to the definition of small scale it is not possible to provide an absolute definition for all settlements because this policy covers a large number of accessible

villages with local services, some large, some small, therefore an arbitrary definition is not thought to be appropriate. For those settlements which are ‘well related’ to accessible villages we have defined new small scale residential development as up to two dwellings because they are much smaller settlements.

- 7.05 A number of representors [11, 14, 16, 30, 38, 47] feel that seeking to focus residential development in the main built up areas of villages is restrictive and that development should be allowed beyond that. The District Council believes that as currently written the policy provides the right balance for small scale development whilst addressing local concerns. As the supporting text makes clear, if Parish Councils want to define a main-built up area this can be done as part of the production of a Neighbourhood Plan. The District Council is of the view that such decisions should rightly be left to Neighbourhood Plan’s to determine if they wish to define a more flexible main built up area or allocate sites for development.
- 7.06 A number of representors [11, 25, 39, 47] questioned the detailed wording of the need criterion. The District Council has attempted to refine the policy so that it is not necessary for applicants to demonstrate ‘need’ as had previously been the case. The Council accepts that these amendments have not successfully achieved this and therefore a main modification for the policy wording and supporting text is proposed to clarify what is required from applicants. The proposed modification will make it clear that apart from demonstrating the positive impact that the development will have on sustaining existing facilities, the District Council will expect applications to reflect the mix and type of dwelling requirements in line with Core Policy 3 as all relevant development has to do, not specifically address need in a locality, unless of course Neighbourhood Plan policies do so. The main modifications are included in Appendix A.

Conclusions

- 7.07 It should be noted that Spatial Policy 3 allows for residential development in the following locations and circumstances;
- In villages which have sustainable access to named settlements in the Settlement Hierarchy and have a range of local facilities and services.
 - As part of environmental enhancements by the re-use of former farm buildings and by the removal of businesses where the operation leads to amenity issues.
 - In settlements which do not meet the locational criteria but which are well located to ones that do limited infill development is acceptable.

Furthermore *Core Policy 2* allows for Rural Exceptions sites adjacent to villages and it should be noted that *Policy DM8 Development in the Open Countryside* in the

Allocations & Development Management DPD [CS/05] further facilitates rural workers dwellings, replacement dwellings, the conversion of rural buildings to dwellings and new dwellings in line with paragraph 55 of the NPPF.

- 7.08 It is also important to note that Spatial Policy 3 is written in a flexible way to allow Parish Councils to formulate Neighbourhood Plans which can accommodate locally determined development which is in general conformity with it.
- 7.09 The District Council sets out in its Matter 5 statement that sufficient land is provided to more than meet the housing requirement set out in Amended Core Strategy (CS/01-02) and therefore Spatial Policy 3 – with the proposed main modifications - is properly constituted with reference to Spatial Policy 1 and 2.

Appendix 1 Proposed Main Modifications

Main Modification 1 (MM1) Spatial Policy 3

Need - Employment and tourism which ~~requires a rural/village location~~ are sustainable and meet the requirements of the relevant Core Policies. New or replacement facilities to support the local community. Development which supports local agriculture and farm diversification. New housing where it helps to ~~meet identified proven local need~~ support community facilities and local services. Neighbourhood Plans may set detailed policies reflecting local housing need, elsewhere housing schemes of 3 dwellings or more should meet the mix and type requirements of Core Policy 3. and reflects local need in terms of both tenure and house types;

Main Modification 2 (MM2)

4.26 The Council considers that in locations with local facilities and services, additional development can support their continued existence. Limited Development within the setting of this policy requires applicants to demonstrate the services it will support. The policy makes provision for detailed policies in Neighbourhood Plans to set policies on local housing need (including mix and type) elsewhere for larger schemes (i.e. for those of 3 or more dwellings) the Council expects new development to satisfy the mix and type requirements of Core Policy 3. It is recognised that for schemes of one or two dwellings it will not be possible to require a particular type or mix of dwellings.

~~and the housing need within the area. As with all planning policy, Spatial Policy 3 is intended to serve the public interest rather than that of individuals and consequently the requirement to reflect local need in relation to new dwellings to which it refers must be that of the community rather than the applicant. It is accepted that the two may align where, for example, a lack of a particular type of housing in a community also reflects the needs of an applicant. The Policy is not intended to cater for individuals desire to live in particular locations or in particular types of accommodation, beyond those exceptions identified in national and local planning policy. The Council has conducted a detailed assessment of the types of housing needed within different parts of the district and applicants should refer to this for guidance. Neighbourhood Plans may also set out more detailed policies on local housing requirements.~~