

## **INTERIM POLICY GUIDANCE**

**Small scale housing development will be supported in villages where it contributes towards achieving sustainable development by maintaining or enhancing the vitality of the local community AND where it meets ALL of the following criteria:**

- 1. Development should be located where it will support local services including services in a village nearby.**
- 2. Development must be small in scale, reflecting the existing built form and character of the village.**
- 3. Development must not have a detrimental impact on the natural, built and historic environment.**
- 4. Development should have no detrimental impact on the open character and appearance of the surrounding countryside or lead to the coalescence of settlements.**
- 5. Development must be capable of being accommodated within the capacity of existing or planned infrastructure.**
- 6. Development must conform with all other relevant LDF policies.**

### **Achieving Sustainable Development**

Paragraph 55 of the NPPF states that housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. For example, it states that where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby. However, it remains the Governments policy that local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances.

Core Policy CP4 does not allow for new general market housing development in settlements outside of the Settlement Hierarchy and therefore the approach has been adjusted in order to give more to support the sustainability of rural communities. Core Policy CP4 does, however, contain clear exceptions for allowing new homes in the countryside in special circumstances, which remain applicable.

Therefore, this Note sets out the Councils' approach to housing development outside of Development Limits and within the villages which fall outside of the defined Settlement Hierarchy. This Note also updates the Settlement Hierarchy in the table that accompanies LDF Core Policy CP4, based on the 2014 Audit of Village Services Review (see **Annex C**). This will be kept under regular review through the annual Authority Monitoring Report.

## 1. Supporting Services

The approach to the consideration of new housing development should depend in the first instance on the nature and number of services within the village where the development is proposed. Service Villages and Secondary Villages are considered 'sustainable settlements'. Other Locations (Other Settlements) may also meet the sustainability requirements particularly when considered as a cluster with other villages.

Housing in locations outside of the updated Settlement Hierarchy will not be supported as this would result in isolated dwellings in the countryside, contrary to the NPPF concept of sustainability. This includes very small 'settlements' with a dispersed loose knit form and where there are very few residential buildings, such as a cluster of farmsteads. Only development which meets the exceptions criteria of Core Policy CP4 will be acceptable in such locations. A list of 'settlements' can be found in the Settlement Hierarchy table at Annex C.

NPPF paragraph 55 states that "where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby". Therefore, the concept of Cluster Villages will be used to identify those circumstances where villages have a long association and are linked economically and socially e.g. through the use of primary schools, shops and community facilities and can work together to promote more sustainable living. It is not the intention of this guidance to provide a definitive list of those villages to be considered as Cluster Villages, this will be developed through application of the policy, however the following should be used to guide decision making.

"Cluster Villages should be comprised of nearby settlements, one of which may be a Service or Secondary Village, given the wider level of services available. If Other Settlements are to form a cluster, these must have a good collective level of shared service provision. Settlements should be linked to each other by convenient public transport, walking or cycling, where the combined settlements offer a range of services contributing to a sustainable community. This could include the sharing of facilities such as a school, post office, health facility or village shop. However it is unlikely to constitute a sustainable community if there are very few services or if there are significant distances (approximately 2km) or barriers between settlements (e.g. rivers with no crossing)".

Examples of Cluster Villages include:

Alne & Alne Station  
Borrowby & Knayton  
Burneston & Carthorpe  
Great Broughton & Kirkby in Cleveland  
Huby and Sutton on the Forest  
Hutton Rudby & Rudby

Ingleby Arncliffe & Ingleby Cross  
Kirkby Fleetham & Great/Little Fencote  
Leeming & Leeming Bar  
Linton on Ouse & Newton on Ouse  
Morton on Swale, Ainderby Steeple & Thrintoft  
South Otterington & Newby Wiske

Development in villages with no or few services or without convenient access to services in a nearby settlement will not be considered sustainable. With settlements on the edge of the Local Planning Authority area, consideration will be given to their relationship to settlements in neighbouring Districts and the National Park.

## **2. Scale**

Villages within Hambleton are rural in nature, often centred around a Parish Church or green space. Others may be more linear in nature, but all have an historic core around which development has gradually and organically grown to form the villages we see today. This cumulative increase generally results in the creation of unique character and helps contribute towards a sense of place. This is how we envisage further housing growth to occur in Hambleton, being small scale and gradual, reflecting that special character of our historic rural villages.

Therefore, small scale development adjacent to the main built form of a settlement will be supported where it results in incremental and organic growth. As a guide, small scale would normally be considered to comprise up to 5 dwellings. However, each development must be considered on its own merits taking into the account the scale and unique character and appearance of the settlement.

## **3. Built Form**

Proposals which are small in scale and which provide a natural infill or extension to an existing settlement will be considered favourably where they also conform with other relevant LDF policies.

Proposals will be assessed for their impact on the form and character of a settlement. Consideration should be given to the built form of a settlement, its historical evolution and its logical future growth and how the proposal relates to this. Where proposals do not adjoin a settlement then wider consideration must be given to the special physical characteristics of the surrounding area as well as the settlement which sets it apart from its surroundings and contributes to its individuality (e.g. architecture, landscaping, setting, natural features, open space, types and styles of housing, number and size of roads and footpaths) and how the proposal addresses this. Small gaps between buildings should be retained where these provide important glimpses to open countryside beyond and contribute to the character and appearance of the area.

Development which results in ribbon development or has a poor relationship with the built form will not be acceptable. The coalescence of settlements, where two or more settlements are situated in close proximity of each other, should be avoided to protect their individual character and identity. Proposals should not reduce the level of physical separation between them in order to retain the distinct form and character of those settlements.

#### **4. Character and Appearance of the Countryside**

Any detrimental impact on the character, appearance and environmental quality of the surrounding area should be avoided and development should not compromise the open and rural character of the countryside. Environmental quality can be assessed by using a set of characteristics that relate to the natural and built environment (e.g. activity, noise, air quality, landscape, water quality, density, design, diversity and distance to accessible services).

#### **5. Infrastructure.**

Infrastructure relates to the facilities and resources needed to support communities and can take many forms. Infrastructure is traditionally associated with transport facilities, utilities, sewers, drainage and waste disposal, but also environmental infrastructure which includes open spaces, provision for biodiversity, flooding prevention and social infrastructure (e.g. education, health, culture, leisure).

New development must be capable of being accommodated within existing or proposed infrastructure. This means that there must be no adverse impact upon any of the above unless the development proposes mitigation measures or improvements to the infrastructure as appropriate.

#### **6. Conform with all other relevant LDF policies.**

The Guidance Note relates only to development which is within or adjoins the built form of a settlement identified within Annex C of this document. The first paragraph of Core Policy CP4 does not apply to housing proposals where they comply with the criteria of this Guidance Note. For proposals outside of defined settlements, these will be considered 'isolated dwellings in the countryside' and Core Policy CP4 will still apply.

The Guidance Note does not carry as much weight as adopted Local Plan policy, however it will be a material consideration in the planning process. The Guidance Note has been subject to consultation and is fully in accordance with NPPF.

#### **Rural Exception Sites**

Sites for 100% affordable housing will, as a result of this Note be acceptable on sites which do not directly adjoin the built form, but where they comply with the other criteria of Core Policy CP9A and other relevant LDF policies.