

Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**



Affordable Housing Policy

April 2011

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Draft Affordable Housing Policy

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Įperkamo būsto politikos

JEI TURITE KLAUSIMŲ, LIEČIANČIŲ ŠĮ PROJEKTĄ, BET KURIA KITA KALBA AR REIKIA PAGALBOS, NORINT SUPRASTI ŠĮ DOKUMENTĄ, KREIPKITĖS Į "PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT UNIT" ("VEIKLOS TOBULINIMO SKYRIŲ" TELEFONU 01553 616364

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Plano da Política de Habitação Aceitável

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Проект программы развития доступного жилья

ЕСЛИ ВАМ НЕОБХОДИМО ПОЛУЧИТЬ ДАННЫЙ ДОКУМЕНТ НА ДРУГОМ ЯЗЫКЕ ИЛИ НУЖНА ПОМОЩЬ В ЕГО ЧТЕНИИ ИЛИ РАЗЪЯСНЕНИИ, ПОЖАЛУЙСТА, ОБРАЩАЙТЕСЬ В ОТДЕЛ ПЛАНИРОВАНИЯ И РАЗВИТИЯ ПО ТЕЛ. 01553 616364

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's existing Affordable Housing Policy was agreed by full Council in January 2006. It is now necessary to update the Council's policy regarding affordable housing provision.

It is a time of significant change in this area of the Council's work following some key proposals on housing and planning reforms from the new coalition government. The Localism Bill sets out some desired changes to social housing. Proposals at the time of writing exist for new fixed term tenancies and for new 'affordable rents'. Affordable Rents are to be rents up to 80% of market rent. It is very likely that a new requirement will be created for local councils to create a strategic policy on social housing tenure in the context of the new reforms.

At the time of writing the Council is developing its Local Development Framework (LDF). This suite of documents provides the local spatial vision as well as detailed policy plans for the borough. This new affordable housing policy incorporates changes necessary from 2006, and particularly details changes relating to affordable housing requirements sought as part of Section 106 development agreements as outlined in the Council's LDF Core Strategy document.

In December 2009 the Council agreed a policy via CS09 draft Core Strategy Document that introduced revised thresholds (the level of development that triggers an affordable housing contribution) and proportions of affordable housing sought via section 106 development. These proportions are currently 15% in King's Lynn and 20% elsewhere in the borough.

The Core Strategy introduces a new approach to setting proportions that can be varied based on viability. This approach allows proportions to be reviewed yearly and changed where appropriate based on established criteria. The changes mean that where market conditions permit a greater proportion can be sought and in worsening market conditions affordable housing contributions can be reduced.

There are new duties upon local authorities to undertake accommodation needs assessments for Gypsies and Travellers. There is a requirement to have in place plans to address any such identified needs.

2. Purpose of the Policy

- 2.1 This document:

- Sets out policy objectives in relation to affordable housing.
- Sets targets for the overall amount of affordable housing and the distribution of this in terms of tenure and type.

- 2.2 The Council commenced a programme of widespread consultation on the LDF in 2008. At the same time consultation has been running on the evolving Sustainable

Communities Strategy. This plan sets out the vision and priorities of the area, and has been agreed by the Local Strategic Partnership.

2.3 The Council's existing Corporate Strategy - Objective 13 states that it will 'use the powers available to us to enable the provision of affordable housing where it is most needed including rural areas'.

2.4 The provision of affordable housing is a complex area of work for the Council and requires effective relationships, particularly between Housing, Planning, and Legal departments. The Council faces a number of challenges in meeting the housing needs of the borough, and they include:

- Increasing number of households in housing need and seeking advice from the Council in relation their housing circumstances.
- The differing problems of urban areas, rural areas and the coastal strip where the number of second homes places particular pressure on the housing market.
- The complexity of funding for affordable housing including Homes & Communities' Agency Grant, developer contributions, private finance, the resources of Registered Social Landlords, and Council assistance.
- Changes to national planning policy guidance.
- In-migration and an ageing population.

2.5

3. National and Regional Policy Context

3.1 At the time of writing the new coalition government is in the process of shaping its policy approach. There is a clear message on localism which includes returning decision making powers on housing and planning to local councils.

The Regional Spatial Strategy target figures for housing and Gypsy and Traveller pitches is planned to be abolished with the emphasis on matters of delivery being dealt with locally.

A revised Planning Policy Statement (PPS 3) was published in June 2010. PPS3 remains the starting point in respect of national guidance on planning for the provision of new affordable housing.

One key theme of PPS 3 is that of 'Sustainable' and 'Mixed Communities'. The government wishes to ensure that new housing development helps to secure a better social mix by avoiding the concentration of large areas of housing of similar characteristics.

3.2 A definition of affordable housing is provided in PPS3; 'Housing at prices and rents above those of social rent, but below market price or rents, and which meet the criteria set out above. These can include shared equity products,

other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent'. There is a further revision to PPS 3 currently subject to consultation that incorporates the 'affordable rent' tenure into the definition of affordable housing.

4. Housing Market and Housing needs research base

- 4.1 It is important that housing and planning policies are founded on a robust evidence base. The last Housing Market Assessment and Housing Needs Survey was completed in 2007 by Fordham research Ltd and is consistent with government guidance and established methodology.
- 4.2 The Housing Needs Survey (HNS) 2007 identified a need for 797 new affordable homes per annum. The report covering the findings of the research states that this level of need could justify 40% of all new housing in urban areas and 50% in rural areas being affordable, split 75:25 between rented to shared ownership. Whilst the research showed high levels of need delivery of this level of affordable housing is not realistic, and proposed targets of affordable housing reflect levels of likely delivery given all the relevant constraints.
- 4.3 The Council maintains a housing register, and operates a Choice Based Lettings Scheme. The housing register offers another source of evidence of housing need across the borough. The number of people on the Housing Register was 4,940 in June 2010.
- 4.4 The Council undertook a study on affordable housing viability in 2008. This study assessed the levels of affordable housing proportions that it was economically viable to require from Section 106 development agreements. Given the impact of the recession a further study was undertaken in 2009. This is an important area of work and it informed the development of policy CS09 in the Core Strategy Document.

5. General Policy Principles

- 5.1 The Council working with partner organisations will aim to ensure that an appropriate balance of new housing is affordable housing. The starting point for the Council's policy is Planning Policy Statement 3.
- 5.2 In encouraging and facilitating the provision of affordable housing on major development sites, the Council will ensure balanced communities providing a mix of tenure, household and property type. Affordable housing provided as part of planning obligations by market housing developers shall be fully integrated with market housing for sale in order to achieve a mixed and balanced community.
- 5.3 The mix of tenures in affordable housing schemes will reflect housing need, adjusted where necessary to ensure scheme viability. 'Intermediate housing' such as shared ownership dwellings are recognised as providing opportunities for those aspiring to own or part own their homes who can not afford to do so on the open market.

- 5.4 Planning Policy Statement 3 expands on the role of intermediate housing and states; “A sufficient supply of intermediate affordable housing can help address the needs of key workers and those seeking to gain a first step on the housing ladder, reduce the call on social-rented housing, free up existing social-rented homes, provide wider choice for households and ensure that sites have a mix of tenures”.

The Council acknowledges that the new rent regime ‘affordable rent’ for newly built properties and a proportion of existing stock at re-let (conversions) is important in maximising the financial capacity of social landlords and ultimately increasing investment in affordable housing. The Council does not see that it has a role in seeking to determine specifically the levels of rent charged by its housing association partners. The decision on rents and rates of conversions of existing stock will generally be a matter for each individual landlord. However, the Council will work with partners on assessing through any appropriate research the impacts of the new rent regime in the local area. It is proposed under the Localism Bill that the Council will be required to produce a tenancy strategy for its area.

The Council will approach its role in supporting the provision of new affordable housing in a flexible way to respond to the new reforms. Any ‘affordable’ rented home irrespective of the prevailing rent regime needs to be at a price that is affordable to households in the Borough whose housing needs cannot be met by the market either renting or purchase.

- 5.5 The most common form of Intermediate housing developed in the borough has been shared ownership. The intermediate housing targets will be based on shared ownership as this is the most appropriate intermediate product to meet need. However, while shared ownership will continue to be the preferred intermediate tenure. The Council will consider proposals for other forms of intermediate tenure on a case by case basis, provided they meet the government’s definition of affordable housing and was considered favourable in to shared ownership. In considering such proposals affordability for households in the locality will be the starting point.
- 5.6 The main route for delivery of affordable housing in rural areas is the ‘exceptions policy’ that allows for small scale development outside of a village’s development boundary. Such schemes aim to meet the identified needs of households with a connection to the village. The aim is to meet rural need and help sustain communities by giving preference through the allocation of those homes to those with established local connections.
- 5.7 Whilst it is recognised that Registered Social Landlords (RSL) will develop standalone schemes in urban areas – particularly on brown field sites - it is likely that the majority of new affordable housing in urban areas will be delivered through Section 106 development agreements. There are, therefore, particular proposals for this key area detailed in the next section, regarding the amount, location and mix of affordable housing to be developed.
- 5.8 The Council will seek to maximise the availability of funding from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and achieve maximum value for money. Working with The HCA the Council will support developing RSL partners in their bids for capital resources. All RSL partners will be required to join the West Norfolk Homechoice Partnership (Choice-based lettings scheme) in order to obtain

support for development and will be required to demonstrate they have the resources to deliver effective housing management to their stock in the Borough.

5.9 The Council acknowledges that in light of reforms to social housing new models of investment and management of housing may emerge. With new flexible tenancies and affordable rents the conditions can be created to attract private investment into the sector. The Council will encourage its RSL partners to innovate and adapt to the changing environment, which could mean that some RSLs take on the management and maintenance of affordable housing on behalf of investment owners, moving away from their traditional model of ownership and management.

6. Affordable Housing Delivered through Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990

Policy on section 106 sites

6.1 S.106 development agreements, where applicable, place an obligation on the developer to deliver a specified proportion of affordable dwellings as part of a housing development. The developer must commonly ensure these dwellings are transferred to a Registered Social Landlord as completed units at a price agreed with the RSL, reflecting what the RSL can pay for the dwellings without the need for other public subsidy. New models of ownership when agreed by the Council may mean that in some circumstances the RSL will manage affordable housing as an agent for another owner.

6.2 The Homes and Communities Agency have generally not provided grant funding for section 106 sites in the borough. It is expected such sites that should be developed without public subsidy with the developer making a contribution by selling the affordable housing required to an RSL at a price the RSL can afford to pay based on the income stream derived from the rents it will charge for the affordable homes. The circumstances in which grant may be considered are where 'additionality' can be demonstrated i.e. something additional to the requirement normally expected. This means either more affordable homes than is required under the policy can be delivered, a different and more preferable mix (for example a higher proportion of rented to shared ownership, or more larger family dwellings) can be achieved, or where housing of a higher quality may be developed.

6.2 Intermediate Housing

6.2.1 A target for shared ownership or other affordable 'intermediate' tenure is important in the requirements of S106 agreements. The tenure make up is important as it affects the price that an RSL can pay for the affordable units. The tenure split between rented and shared ownership units is a matter that is prescribed later in this document.

6.2.2 The Council's approach to affordable housing will be influenced by the national reforms to social housing tenure and the emergence of new 'affordable rents' at 80% of market rents. The normal approach will be that rents will be at affordable rents, although a flexible approach will be taken whereby 'social

rent' tenure can be sought through Section 106 development agreements when there is a compelling case to do so, based on local evidence.

6.2.3 If shared ownership is going to help meet housing need and aspirations it needs to be priced appropriately. It is important that the overall price made up of the percentage share purchased and the rent charged on the unsold equity is affordable to those households who cannot afford a market solution.

6.2.4 It is important that such housing is affordable, and careful consideration is given to earnings and income data when schemes are being worked up. The standard approach will seek a shared ownership product on the basis of offering an initial minimum share of 25% and rent based on 2.75% of unsold equity. This model was assumed for the purposes of work on viability.

In adopting a flexible approach the Council will consider options that involve shared equity schemes. This type of affordable housing could be used in some circumstances as an alternative to shared ownership on Section 106 sites (where the developer requirement would be broadly comparable to that normally sought). Shared equity could involve equity on re-sale returning to the Council and potentially being used to support future affordable housing investment. Shared equity products and other low cost housing may be considered as an alternative to shared ownership where such products meet the definition of affordable housing under PPS 3 and where it can be demonstrated that such products are preferable to shared ownership.

6.3 Viability Assessment

6.3.1 In determining policy in relation to the delivery of affordable housing via section 106 development agreements it is necessary to look at both affordable housing needs as well as factors affecting the economics of development . The Council commissioned Fordham Research to carry out an economic viability assessment for the delivery of affordable housing via S106 agreements.

6.3.2 In developing policy it is necessary to balance the need to maximise the provision of affordable housing through section 106 agreements, and minimise the risks of these requirements stifling development. The viability assessment was produced in 2008. The report considered a number of variables and is explicit that its assumptions and findings were cautious and the researcher anticipated a downturn in the housing market.

6.3.3 Fordham Research revisited the viability assessment in December 2009 following significant turbulence in housing markets. The re-visited assessment concluded that viability on the majority of sites sampled could not be achieved with more than 20% affordable housing, with no more than 15% in King's Lynn. The assessment is based on thresholds for the delivery of affordable housing being 10 units in King's Lynn, Downham Market and Hunstanton and 5 units elsewhere. The findings of this research can be viewed on the Council's website. The findings reflect a significant change in housing markets and factors affecting development economics..

Fordham Research recommended that the Council adopt a dynamic approach to viability assessment giving the flexibility to vary the proportion of affordable housing required by way of an annual review. The detailed mechanism for this

review is set out in **Appendix A**. The findings of this work informed policy CS09.

Affordable Housing – CS09

The following text is a section from CS09:-

The Council will work with partner organisations to ensure there is an appropriate supply of good quality affordable housing distributed throughout the borough. This will be achieved by having regard to up to date strategic housing market assessments and affordable housing needs viability studies.

The overall target for affordable housing in the borough during the plan period will be related to the ability to deliver in the market conditions that prevail at the time a planning application is made. At the present time the percentage which will be sought for affordable housing provision on qualifying sites is:

- 15% within the built up area of King's Lynn;
- 20% in all other areas.

The thresholds over which affordable housing provision will be sought are:

- King's Lynn, Downham Market and Hunstanton - Sites of 0.33 ha or 10 or more dwellings;
- Rural areas - Sites of 0.165 ha or 5 or more dwellings.

The Borough Council will vary this percentage and/or threshold(s) in line with a model of dynamic viability. The levels will be reviewed annually in consultation with a stakeholder group informed by the following factors:

- Market land values;
- House prices;
- Level of contributions sought overall;
- Index of build costs.

(The detailed mechanisms for assessing the factors will be considered as part of the Supplementary Planning Document referred to in Policy CS14, the policy relating to developer contributions for infrastructure, which is also to be reviewed annually).

6.4 Pepper-potting

6.4.1 The Affordable Housing Policy 2006 states that "Affordable housing should be fully integrated with general market housing on new developments in order to achieve a mixed and balanced community." Further it states that "Where practicable, this means that affordable housing should be in groups of not more than 4 houses together". This approach is known as 'pepper-potting'.

6.4.2 The overriding purpose of pepper-potting is to ensure affordable housing is fully integrated within market housing. This principle is now embedded, although there have been some difficulties with the approach reported by Registered Social in connection with multi-tenure. Whilst the principle will remain, there are some modifications required to the approach.

- 6.4.3 Specifying a single number of affordable homes together can be inflexible. For example, a site of say 20 homes could give rise to a requirement for 4 of them to be affordable. To be fully integrated and not located in a single part of the site it would probably be appropriate for these homes to be in pairs in separate locations.
- 6.4.4 The principle of pepper potting should be adhered to in order to avoid large concentrations of single tenure dwellings and to achieve mixed and sustainable communities in which the accommodation is tenure-blind. However the determination of where affordable housing units are located and the cluster sizes should be more flexible. In order to give developers and RSLs some guidance on this the following matrix gives indicative cluster sizes depending on the scale of development.

Development Size	Number of affordable units (assuming 15%)	Maximum affordable cluster size
Up to 29	1-4	2
30-56	5-8	4
57-83	9-12	6
84-109	13-16	8
110-136	17-20	10
137+	21+	12

Development Size	Number of affordable units (assuming 20%)	Maximum affordable cluster size
Up to 22	1-4	2
23-42	5-8	4
43-62	9-12	6
63-82	13-16	8
83-102	17-20	10
103+	21+	12

6.5 Phasing or ‘Trigger Points’

- 6.5.1 Section 106 agreements should incorporate trigger points so for example, if there were a development of 40 dwellings, no more than 20 market dwellings could be built until half the requirement of affordable dwellings on the site were completed and transferred to an RSL. This will be determined on a case by case basis depending on the overall size of the development.

6.6 Thresholds

- 6.6.1 The thresholds set out in policy CS09 are based on the recommendations of the Fordham research study on viability. Under the stated ‘Dynamic Viability’

approach the thresholds for urban and rural areas can be reviewed annually as can the proportions.

Tenure split

The tenure split of affordable housing sought as a requirement of S.106 agreements will be 70:30 rent to shared ownership . The need for rented to shared ownership in this proportion has been established through research evidenced in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

- 6.6.2 That shared ownership will be offered at an initial share of minimum 25% with rent charged at 2.75% of the unsold equity. .

Flexibility

- 6.6.3 The approach of the Council has been, and will continue to be flexible. Where a developer can show to the satisfaction of the Council that the inclusion of an affordable housing requirement would compromise economic viability the Council may negotiate a variation to the requirement. An open book approach to the development appraisal will be necessary in these circumstances. Information will be sought on the development value and development costs.

Schemes will normally be assessed in house by the Council, however, complex schemes or schemes where the developer requests an independent assessment, may be referred at the Developers cost to the District Valuer or any other independent assessor.

6.7 Section 106 guidance

- 6.7.1 The Council will indicate to prospective developers the types of affordable housing required. This guidance will reflect the most up to date assessments of housing need and housing markets. Further details relating to the Councils approach to seeking affordable housing contributions are contained within **Appendix B – Guidance notes**

6.8 Off-site delivery and commuted sums

- 6.8.1 In seeking developer contributions the presumption is that affordable housing will be provided on the application site so that it contributes towards creating a mix of housing.

In exceptional circumstances the Council may deem the inclusion of affordable housing on a particular site not appropriate or desirable. In these circumstances the approach will be in the first instance to look for an alternative site for the developer to deliver the required contribution of affordable housing; giving regard to the general principles of ensuring affordable housing is dispersed amongst market housing on 'section 106' sites.

- 6.8.2 In some circumstances where this is not possible it may be appropriate for the Council to agree a commuted sum from the developer in lieu of completed units on site. This would then be used to help support the development of affordable housing on another site.

Further detail on the level of contribution and the way 'fractions' of affordable housing requirements are dealt with is contained within the **Appendix B – Guidance notes**

7. Rural Delivery

- 7.1 High demand for housing in some rural areas has pushed the price of housing out of the reach of many local people. In some areas, particularly in the northern parts of the borough, there have been additional pressures because of the demand for second homes.
- 7.2 There are very limited opportunities for RSLs to compete with private developers and acquire development land in rural areas because the price of land would normally make an affordable housing scheme unviable.
- 7.3 It is possible to develop housing in small rural settlements (with populations of 3,000 or under as designated in S17 of the 1996 Housing Act and various statutory instruments) under a Rural Exceptions Sites policy. Policy CS06 of the Core Strategy Document sets out the principle whereby affordable housing can be developed on land outside the development boundary which would not normally be used for housing. As such developments are exceptional and only for affordable housing, the value of the land is much lower in value and viable for an RSL to develop.

Housing developed under these policies must meet local identified need with local people given preference for these homes. The dwellings must remain affordable in perpetuity, with rented properties being exempt from the 'right to acquire'. Any purchaser of shared ownership 'shares' or other intermediate products are limited to an 80% stake in the property. Future allocations of rented accommodation and sales of shared ownership properties must be in accordance with the local connection criteria.

7.1 Small Rural Settlements (3,000 and below) – Exception Site policy

- 7.1.1 Under PPS3 there is a requirement that evidence of housing need be provided before planning permission can be granted for rural exception site development and that any proposed development will 'address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection whilst also ensuring that rural communities continue to develop as sustainable, mixed and inclusive communities'.
- 7.1.2 The borough-wide Housing Needs Survey 2007 demonstrated that housing need exists throughout the area. In many cases the Housing Register can provide a detailed indication of need and demand for affordable housing in specific parishes.
- 7.1.3 It is important to give regard to the sustainability of developing in a small rural community. It is not desirable to develop affordable housing in locations without reasonable access to some amenities and services. For this reason and for others mentioned above support for new exception site developments will be focussed in those settlements that are within either the Key Rural Service Centre or Rural Villages category of the Core Strategy Settlement

Hierarchy. In determining which settlements to concentrate on within these categories priority will be given to those settlements that have a high housing need and have not benefited from an existing exception site scheme.

- 7.1.4 The local connection criteria applied to exceptions sites are attached in **Appendix C**. Whilst it is desirable to have a common 'local connection criteria' there may be exceptional circumstances where the criteria can be varied to reflect local circumstances.
- 7.1.5 It must be recognised that the costs of development in rural areas are often higher because of the small scale of development, and often the required design features reflecting the vernacular and traditional materials. It is important that if such schemes are to attract Homes & Communities Agency Grant funding, additional funding maybe required from the Council's available resources. Decisions on funding priorities will be made in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder with responsibility for housing.
- 7.1.6 'Rural Exceptions' sites will be small in scale. They will normally be restricted to a maximum of 15 dwellings.
- 7.1.7 Where affordable housing is a requirement of S106 agreements in small rural settlements, local connection criteria can where appropriate be applied in the same way as for rural exception sites. This additional measure in relation to S106 dwellings, (agreed by Cabinet in 2007) maximises the opportunities for young people to stay in villages and sustain rural communities.

7.2 Large Rural Settlements (over 3,000 settlement size)

- 7.2.1 It is clear that the Council should not rely solely on exceptions site development as the principal means of addressing rural affordable housing needs, and so the Council through the site specific allocation process will consider allocating sites purely for affordable housing.
- 7.2.2 It is recognised that many of the same demand and affordability pressures exist in larger villages. Any protection that sustains the affordable housing stock is desirable in large villages as well as small rural communities. The Council, in supporting the provision of affordable housing in large rural communities, will seek to ensure safeguards are applied where possible to achieve 'affordability in perpetuity'. These safeguards can include buy-back or re-purchase commitments from the RSL involved.
- 7.2.3 In accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's approach outlined in the consultation paper 'Shared Ownership and Leasehold Enfranchisement' it is recommended that S106 Agreements include the provisions that housing associations should have the right of first refusal of shared ownership and right to acquire properties when owners come to sell. Landlords will also be able to nominate the next purchaser when the existing purchaser wishes to sell their share through the arrangements of the Council's HomeChoice (choice based lettings) scheme.

8. Council-Owned Land

- 8.1 The Council's policy is that where an affordable housing development scheme is proposed on Council-owned land the sale should be treated in the same way as it would if being sold to a private developer.
- 8.2 The Council's approach has not been to dispose of its land for the purposes of affordable housing at less than open market value. Where specific Council-owned sites have been identified, as being suited to affordable housing development, the Council will consider offering the site directly to an RSL(s) where appropriate before openly marketing the site.
- 8.3 The Council will continue to bring forward any land that it owns that may be suitable for affordable housing development and consider where appropriate offering it for sale to partner RSLs.

9. Council Financial Support for affordable housing

- 9.1 The Council will make available subsidy from any commuted sums received to facilitate the development of new affordable housing by supplementing HCA investment, subject to the funding principles as detailed below. This will include developments on Council-owned land on a case by case basis and as resources allow.
- 9.2 In line with a Cabinet decision of 10 July 2006 (allocating capital resources for affordable housing) the following funding principles were established:
- 9.3 These funds will normally be used to help 'pump prime' schemes seeking grant from the HCA. In practice the level of support will depend upon the characteristics of the scheme. Support for exception sites has generally been in the form of covering the purchase price of land.
- 9.4 In determining decisions on allocating funds, priority will be given to schemes where high need has been demonstrated. Proposals will be considered against the following criteria:-

The extent to which the proposed scheme will meet identified housing needs

Value for money comparisons – comparing build cost data, and the level of HCA grant required. Acknowledging the different costs associated with the scale of the development, and the differences between urban and rural scheme costs.

Regard to targets for affordable housing in terms of location, type and tenure, and the objectives of the Housing Strategy.

Any restrictions on the use of commuted sums set out in S106 agreements.

In previous periods the decisions on allocating available capital resources has been delegated to the appropriate Executive Director in consultation with Portfolio Holder Community. The HCA have published a framework for investment "2011-2015 Affordable Homes Programme – Framework". It is proposed that decisions relating to the allocation of capital to support affordable housing provision for this period is delegated in the normal way.

10. The accommodation Needs of Gypsy and Traveller and Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities

- 10.1 Planning Applications for new or existing unauthorised sites will be dealt with in accordance with ODPM Circular 01/2006 or its proposed replacement. The government started a consultation process on a new Planning Policy Statement for Traveller sites in April 2011. . In line with the requirements of the Housing Act 2004 the Council will ensure that Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAA) are undertaken periodically.
- 10.2 An assessment of existing tolerated sites carried out in 2009/2010 revealed a number of new residential pitches which had not been accounted for in the past. At the time of writing a new GTAA is being undertaken in conjunction with Cambridgeshire County Council.
- 10.3 A survey of existing authorised sites was also carried out by the Borough Council to identify the scope for increasing the utilisation of those sites and, where appropriate take enforcement action to ensure they are available for Gypsies and Travellers. Once these assessments have been concluded it will be possible to determine if there is a net need for new provision.
- 10.4 Work in relation to the accommodation needs of Gypsy and Traveller Communities will be consistent with the 'Strategy for Gypsies and Travellers in Norfolk'.
- 10.5 If a net need for new pitches has been established, further consultation with local representatives of the Gypsy and Traveller community will take place to identify the optimum location of any new provision, including a breakdown of need for new residential, transit, rented and shared ownership pitches. The Council will work with RSLs in respect of any identified need for social sites (run by public bodies / RSLs). The views of the Gypsy and Traveller community in respect of location, size and design of sites will be taken into account.
- 10.6 The Council will support bids for Gypsy and Traveller Site grant to refurbish and extend existing sites and provide new sites, subject to Planning considerations. The extract below

Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Provision will be made for a minimum of 146 permanent pitches identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy as being needed in the borough between 2006 and 2011 for gypsies and travellers.

Any deficit will be addressed through working with Registered Social Landlords and additionally with the gypsy and traveller communities to bring forward applications on suitable sites.

In addition the Borough Council will review by survey the need for additional pitches on an annual basis and judge this against the 3% annual compound increase indicated in Regional policy for the period 2011 - 2021.

Provision for transit sites and additional provision of permanent sites for gypsies and travellers above the 146 pitches will be considered where additional need is demonstrated. The Borough Council will work with partners in county groupings to establish a network of transit sites and appropriate provision for travelling show people across the county.

Sites for gypsies, travellers (or travelling show people) will be given permission where they:

- are capable of being serviced by basic utilities;
- meet an identified need;
- avoid environmentally sensitive areas and areas at risk from flooding;
- afford good access to main routes (including the A47(T); A17; A10; A148/9; and A134); and
- are located within a reasonable distance of facilities and supporting services (such as schools or health provision).

- 10.7 A study completed in September 2007 examined the 'Housing and Support Needs of Black and Minority Ethnic Communities in Norfolk and Waveney'. The work which was commissioned by the seven Housing Authorities and Norfolk County Council concluded there was no need to develop specialist accommodation targeted at any other BME community in Norfolk, and that the housing needs of these communities should be addressed within the context of general housing policy.
- 10.8 The research did highlight a number of issues that could be viewed as barriers to appropriate housing for BME households. In particular, was the low level of awareness of the services provided, and the regulatory role of local housing authorities.

11. Supported Housing

- 11.1 The Council, following member endorsement in 2007, will work with partner agencies on the plans outlined in the Norfolk Offenders, Mental Health and Housing, and Learning Difficulties Housing Strategies.
- 11.2 The Council has participated in a county wide review of sheltered housing and a more local review of hostel accommodation. The findings of these reviews will help to inform the approach to prioritising future supported housing development in the Borough.
- 11.3 In November 2008 Norfolk County Council completed a strategic review of residential care and commissioning proposals for future services for older people. The Housing Needs Survey demonstrated that numbers of older people in King's Lynn and West Norfolk are set to increase significantly. Recent work undertaken by Supporting People has identified the need to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the development of specialist housing for older people, incorporating the remodelling or redevelopment of some sheltered housing and residential care provision.
- 11.4 The Council will help identify sites that would be suitable for the development of mixed tenure supported housing for older people.
- 11.5 The hostels review identified a number of gaps in service, the most pressing of which is the lack of provision for young homeless people with complex needs. A new 7-bed service has been developed in a property leased from the Council which has recently undergone major refurbishment having previously used by another hostel provider. This is an interim service pending the development of a purpose-built hostel to modern specifications in the town centre.
- 11.6 Additionally approaches from Adult Social Services and the Primary Care Trust have highlighted a need for the development of a 15-20 unit supported housing scheme for people with severe and enduring mental health problems, a number of supported housing units for people with learning difficulties and a scheme for people with spinal injuries and acquired brain injury.
- 11.7 At the time of writing the development of a supported housing scheme for people with mental health problems in King's Lynn has been completed and the scheme for young homeless people has commenced on site..

12. Wheelchair accessibility, Mobility Needs, Lifetime Homes accommodation

12.1 A further issue relates to the provision of accommodation for people with physical disabilities. The Housing Needs Survey shows that nearly 23% of people with physical disabilities in the Borough are living in unsuitable housing. The Council commits capital to fund its statutory responsibilities with regard to disabled adaptations through the Disabled Facilities Grant programme. In order to manage the demands on these resources it is important that new affordable housing provision helps meet the needs of disabled households.

12.2 In order to redress the historic shortage of accessible housing a more positive approach is required. Evidence from the housing register suggests that approximately 1% of housing applicants are in need of wheelchair accessible accommodation. The Council will therefore seek to ensure that at least 1% of all new affordable homes developed will be to full wheelchair standard, applicable to all property types and sizes.

13. The Amount of Affordable Housing size, type, tenure

13.1 Planning Policy Statement 3 (revised June 2010) recommends Local Planning Authorities to set an overall (plan-wide) target for affordable housing.

In setting a target for affordable housing it is important to consider housing needs along with other relevant factors including the economic factors of development that determine viable levels of affordable housing through development agreements; affordable housing opportunities on sites purely for affordable housing; and the likely level of subsidy by way of a grant from the Homes and Communities Agency for sites of affordable housing only.

In addition to affordable housing delivered through development agreements, affordable housing will also be delivered via schemes purely for affordable housing (including exception sites). The target stated reflects the likely limited funds available in terms of grant for new affordable housing from The Homes and Communities Agency over the medium term.

The target for affordable housing will be 30% of all new housing or broadly 200 new affordable homes each year. The tenure mix is likely to initially be 75% : 25% social rented to intermediate tenure in line with the Housing Needs Assessment/ Strategic Housing Market Assessment. The tenure mix may be subject to change following the proposed new social housing tenancy reforms.

It must be stressed that whilst this is a target it should perhaps more accurately be termed a projection. The housing authority will support and encourage the development of new affordable housing, but ultimately the level of delivery will be dependent upon many factors outside the control of the authority.

13.2 The Housing Needs Assessment showed that the greatest shortages of social housing were for one and two-bedroom properties and properties for larger families requiring four or more bedrooms. This is borne out by

evidence from the housing register which shows relatively low demand for three bedroom properties.

Empty Properties

The coalition government The Council will aim to work with housing association partners to operate a scheme(s) to offer the owners of long term empty properties an arrangement where for a period of time the properties are used as affordable housing. In recognising the problems that are associated with empty properties as well as the opportunity they present in increasing the supply of accommodation the Council will support appropriate schemes that involve housing associations managing such accommodation. The Council will consider using affordable housing capital available to fund any required works where appropriate when properties brought back into use will be used as 'affordable' housing. The decision on any schemes design, and the level of funding allocated will in the same way as other affordable housing capital to be delegated to Executive Director Environmental Health and Housing in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.

Appendix A

Dynamic Viability – being responsive to market conditions

Dynamic viability procedure

The targets set out in CS09 will be reviewed annually through the Dynamic viability procedure that is set out below.

The review will use a benchmark site from the published Affordable Housing Viability Study. The mechanism for a yearly review of proportions is set out in the Affordable Housing Site Viability Update Final Report (Fordham Research) December 2009.

The review will enable the targets to be altered upwards or downwards according to market conditions and to ensure that deliverability is maintained.

Viability Study

The Council commissioned a study of affordable housing deliverability through s106 development agreements in 2008. The study was later revisited and a further report produced in December 2009. A full copy of the study can be found on the website.

The viability study proposed thresholds in urban areas of 10 and in rural areas 5. The study proposed proportions of affordable housing of 20% across the borough with the exception of King's Lynn where values lower than the Borough average impacted on viability and where 15% could be justified.

Rather than the proportions for affordable housing remaining the same for the plan period they are reviewed each year through a process termed 'Dynamic Viability'. This produces an array of all future affordable targets linked to particular prices and costs, as measured by published indexes. As the indexes change, so does the target. Movements of the indexes will result in the target moving from one level to another, if the movement of the indexes is sufficiently large.

Information about the results of the review and the targets will be published by the end of July each year on the Council's website.

The targets will only be changed if movements dictated by movement of the indexes require a change at least 5%. This will ensure that the development industry and the market for development land are not subject to unduly frequent changes.

If the 20% target is subject to an upward or downward movement then a corresponding change will be applied to the 15% (King's Lynn) target – however Fordham Research recommended the relationship between the Borough and King's Lynn target should be lagged. In other words until the Dynamic Viability target rose to 30%, no change should be made to the Kings Lynn one. After that they should go in step. Thus if the borough wide target rose, under the index change, to 35% then the Kings Lynn target should rise to 20% (15 + 5) and so on if the movement is upward.

The Dynamic Viability approach requires that a single benchmark site is identified that currently reflects the affordable target level that is deliverable in that area.

Appendix A1 and A2 to follow is extracted from the Affordable Housing Site Viability Update – Final Report December 2009

Appendix A1. Dynamic Viability details for updating

Benchmark site

A1.1 It is proposed that the benchmark site appraisal be based upon an amended version of Site 3, Factory and land, Stoke Ferry. The minimal amendment is necessary to ensure it is just viable at the proposed target level of 20%.

A1.2 The alternative use value for site 3 is as agricultural land.

Updating and index values

A1.3 The periodic review would be initiated by either an annual trigger point or whatever alternative is indicated by the LDF Inspector. It would involve establishing current values of the indices in the table below. For information the table shows the 'starting' values as at September 2009.

Table A1.1 Update indices		
Variable	Proposed index	Starting Value
House Price	Halifax House Price Index (Monthly, Seasonally Adjusted) http://www.lloydsbankinggroup.com/media1/research/halifax_hpi.asp	Sept 2009 = 529.3
Build cost	BCIS General Building Cost Index http://www.bcis.co.uk/online	March 2008 = 274.6
Alternative use value	Valuation Office Agency Property Market Report Value of Industrial Land for Norwich http://www.voa.gov.uk/publications/property_market_report/pmr-jan-2010/index.htm	January 2010 = £425k per ha

Source: Fordham Research AHSV update 2009

Matrix tables

A1.4 The results from the sequence of appraisals were used to construct a Full Matrix which is set out in tables at the end of this Appendix. The Matrix provides for the full range of possible targets against a range of future possible changes in price, cost and Alternative Use Value.

A1.5 Their use in updating the target is described in the Manual in Appendix A2.

Full Matrix tables

A1.6 The Full Matrix is set out as six tables from overleaf.

A1.7 Each price/cost cell in the Full Matrix contains eight different percentage targets. These relate to variations in alternative use value within each price/cost combination. The key below shows the percentage change in alternative use value which corresponds to each of the targets in the cell .

-30%	-20%	-10%
	No Change	+10%
+20%	+30%	+40%

A1.8 The table below shows a summary of the detail that can be found in the Full Matrix. For details of the Full Matrix please click on the below link.

[Affordable Housing Site Viability Update Jan 2011](#)

Figure A1.9 Dynamic Viability: Summary Matrix

Appendix A2 Manual for Updating Dynamic Viability Targets

Updating Dynamic Viability Targets

- A2.1 The Dynamic Viability procedure is designed to permit variations in the affordable target to ensure both that it remains broadly deliverable, and at the same time is adjusted to changing market conditions. It is based on three published indexes of house price, cost and alternative use value. It uses one of the sample sites as a representative benchmark site which provides the base target. This is set within a matrix of possible alternatives, triggered by index value changes.
- A2.2 The three stages set out in Table A1.1, and explained via a worked example overleaf are what is involved in updating Dynamic Viability. The inputs are the Full Matrix tables (set out at the end of Appendix 1), which are derived from analysis of the benchmark site, and the three indexes listed in Table A1.1. Two of the indices are free online and the third, BCIS, is an RICS product available on subscription, though Fordham Research can pass it on, as can most developers.
- A2.3 This description begins by summarising the tabulations. There are two schedules – a Full Matrix, and a Summary version. Each of these schedules contains a series of individual cells representing particular combinations of Price and Cost index values. In each cell there are eight affordable percentage targets, which correspond to eight possible values for the Alternative Use Value.
- A2.4 The **Full Matrix** is the one that is used in practice to update the affordable target. It therefore has to cover the widest range of possible changes in price and cost over the plan period. Furthermore it uses narrow (2%) intervals in the key price and cost indexes, in order to allow reasonably fine variations in the target. Because of this the Full Matrix is an extremely large table. It contains almost 1,500 cells and about 11,800 potential future targets.
- A2.5 The **Summary Matrix** covers the same spread of possible price and cost changes, but in much less detail, with only 10% intervals of price and cost. This allows a much more manageable table since there now only 72 cells and 576 potential future targets.

A2.6 The summary table, provided as Figure 6.1 of this Report, represents a useful overall summary. The additional cells in the Full Matrix simply provide targets for intervening points within the Summary Matrix. This means that the Summary Matrix could be used to represent the Full Matrix in some planning documents where it would be inconvenient or inappropriate to provide the Full Matrix.

Table A2.1 Updating the affordable target

Step 1

The starting point is the Full Matrix table. Ascertain the update values for the HPI and BCIS. Calculate the percentage changes in the HPI and the BCIS. If either or both of these has changed by more than 1%, then the target cell will change.

Find the HPI column that is closest to the change in the HPI, and the BCIS row that is closest to the change in the BCIS. Locate the cell where these intersect. It contains eight potential targets.

Step 2

Consider the percentage change to the Alternative Use Value. If this is greater than 5% then the starting value (% figure in centre of cell, in bold) is no longer correct and one of the other seven target figures in the cell will be closer. Choose the one that is closest.

Step 3

Publish the change in some suitable format such as the Annual Monitoring report.

Source: Fordham Research AHSV update 2009

Worked example: Kings Lynn and West Norfolk

A2.7 This is designed to illustrate the (annual) updating process. The base indexes are shown in revised Appendix 1. The process for a notional future update is described below. It uses only the Full matrix outputs. These are related to the Benchmark site, Site 3: Factory & land at Stoke Ferry.

A2.8 Step 1: Check the HPI and BCIS. The base position for HPI (as at September 2009) is 529.3. The appropriate updating mechanism, as stated in Appendix 1 Table A1.1 is the HPI (Halifax Price Index). The appropriate figure is in the Monthly Seasonally Adjusted time series from the Halifax website

shown. Let us suppose that the update figure as at our future date is 649.6. Price has therefore risen by 22.7% [$649.6/529.3 = 122.7\%$].

A2.9 BCIS base position is 274.6 (as at March 2008, the original study). The update mechanism is BCIS' General Building Cost Index. Figures for the current month will have Forecast status, those for the recent past few months Provisional. Let us suppose that for our future notional update, the appropriate update figure is 319.6. So cost has risen 16.4% [$319.6/274.6 = 116.4\%$].

A2.10 Turning to the Full Matrix, find the Price column which is closest to the price change of +22.7%: it is the +22% column. Find the Cost row nearest to the cost change of +16.4%: it is the +16% row.

A2.11 The Cell at the intersection of the +22% column and +16% row contains eight percentage targets. These are shown below; they range from 30% down to 25%.

30%	29%	29%
	28%	27%
26%	26%	25%

A2.12 The key to the Full Matrix shows that these eight percentage targets correspond to changes in alternative use value as shown below.

-30%	-20%	-10%
	No Change	+10%
+20%	+30%	+40%

A2.13 Step 2: Change to Alternative Use Value. The Alternative Use Value of the site is determined by its main component: industrial land. The value of the Alternative Use Value index as at the base date was taken from the VOA's Property Market Report January 2010. It shows a value for industrial land in Norwich during late 2009 at £425k per ha. Let us suppose the value has risen to £460k per acre at our notional update. It has therefore risen by 8.2% [$£460k/£425k = 108.2\%$].

A2.14 Step 3: Once a formal review point is reached, the target (whether changed or unchanged) should be put into a formal Council document.

Appendix B

Guidance on affordable housing contributions secured through section 106 planning agreements.

Purpose

This guidance seeks to provide additional detail to policy CS09 of the Core Strategy – Proposed Submission Document December 2009 (and subsequent proposed document changes) that sets out principle policies for affordable housing. It is recommended that these notes are read in conjunction with section CS09 (as amended). It is envisaged that these notes will assist developers or their agents in understanding what is expected in relation to affordable housing contributions (**The relevant extract from section CS09 is contained in Appendix 1**) and going on to submit a planning application.

Principle of approach

The principle behind affordable housing contributions (whether commonly provided on site or via a commuted sum payment) are well established nationally in that qualifying residential development must contribute to the provision of new affordable housing in the local authority area to help address the housing need in the area. The costs associated with making this contribution are met from the capital uplift derived from the development process.

The Council will seek an affordable housing contribution by means of an obligation to transfer completed dwellings (the type of which commonly reflect the types being provided as part of the development) to a Private Registered Provider of Social Housing (PRPSH). The approach will seek to ensure that affordable housing is 'mixed' and is dispersed amongst private housing.

Affordable housing will not be sought where it is not economically viable. Affordable housing contributions could be waived or reduced by agreement with the Council if it can be demonstrated via a development appraisal that a proposed development is unviable with an affordable housing contribution.

The values of affordable housing

Affordable housing dwellings will be sold to a PRPSH at a price that reflects a sum that could be raised typically over 30 years given regard to the income stream of the affordable dwellings (subject to prevailing target rents). A developer may seek offers for the affordable housing from a number of PRPSH. The Council keeps a record of indicative values that the PRPSH would pay for different housing types. It is recommended that a developer contacts the Housing Enabling Officer in the Housing Needs section at the earliest opportunity to assist with the engagement of an PRPSH.

Sites capable of development

Policy CS09 refers to threshold sites of 0.33 ha or 10 dwellings in King's Lynn, Hunstanton, and Downham Market and rural thresholds of 0.165 ha or 5 dwellings. An affordable housing contribution will be sought on development sites of these respective sizes where such sites can reasonably accommodate 10 or 5 dwellings respectively. If it can be demonstrated that such a site could not accommodate the 10 or 5 dwellings respectively, because of physical constraints then such a development will not trigger an affordable housing contribution. As an example the site may be constrained for a variety of reasons for example a significant change in

level or a band of TPO trees that could limit the extent to which the site could be developed. In this sense the economic worth of the site is reduced because of site constraints – and this reduced worth is recognised in the Council's approach. The site thresholds are 'trigger points' for an affordable housing contribution. For example for rural sites the threshold is 5 dwellings or sites of 0.165 Ha that are capable of accommodating 5 dwellings. Sites meeting this description will trigger a whole dwelling contribution (or cash equivalent where appropriate). If a developer believes such a contribution would make such a development unviable then a case should be made demonstrating this. An open book approach to the development appraisal will be required and the Council will be flexible in terms of the requirement sought where a standard requirement impacts on viability.

It should be noted that the existing thresholds and proportions are subject to an annual review. This review will be informed by an assessment of a set of key economic variables including house price and build cost indices. Further details of this review process are outlined in the draft affordable housing policy.

However the thresholds and proportions applied at the time planning permission is granted will remain for the duration of permission. If the permission expires or a new planning application is submitted the prevailing proportions and thresholds used by the Council at the time of submission will apply.

Applicable Development

The expectations in relation to affordable housing requirements in respect of existing dwellings or conversions are set out below. The approach is based upon the view that only new development is likely to benefit from the value uplift that can sustain affordable housing contributions. The Council would not wish to create a requirement that could make the renovation, or 're-use' of an existing building unviable. Such an approach could well conflict with other Council priorities and wider amenity issues.

- 1) *Replacement of an existing dwelling* – Where an existing dwelling (or dwellings) is to be demolished and replaced with substantially the same type of dwelling no affordable housing contribution will be sought. Essentially no 'additional' development is being created, and therefore no development uplift will be created.
- 2) *Conversion*-The conversion of an existing building to a dwelling or dwellings will not require an affordable housing contribution where substantial elements of the building remain and are enhanced and/or the internal layout is remodelled.

The type of affordable housing sought

The Council will seek a mix of affordable housing types that reflect the mix on the development site, but also gives regard to current housing need. The tenure will reflect the Council's existing affordable housing policy in seeking a rent to shared ownership (or other intermediate tenure by agreement) ratio of 70:30.

Provision of affordable housing on site or as a cash equivalent

The Council's approach will be in line with national guidance PPS3 "In seeking developer contributions, the presumption is that affordable housing will be provided on the application site so that it contributes towards creating a mix of housing. However, where it can be robustly justified, off-site provision or a financial contribution in lieu of on-site provision (of broadly equivalent value) may be accepted as long as the agreed approach contributes to the creation of mixed communities in the local authority area."

There may be exceptional circumstances where it is considered appropriate to accept a cash equivalent in lieu of affordable housing on site. It is envisaged such circumstances are likely to be very limited.

How we deal with fractions of affordable units

- On sites of 10 dwellings or more the number of dwellings will be rounded up to the nearest whole number e.g. 13.6 becomes 14. In the same way rounding down will apply to fractions of less than a half.
- On sites of less than 10 dwellings any proportions of less than a dwelling can be received as a cash equivalent sum without rounding up or down. e.g. 1.6 dwellings would equate to 1 affordable dwelling and 0.6 dwelling cash sum equivalent. In the case of 0.8 dwelling no on site provision would be required but a cash sum equivalent to 0.8 dwellings would be required.
- **Calculating cash equivalent payments**
National guidance suggests that cash equivalent sums should be broadly equivalent to the cost of providing affordable housing on site. The Council favours a fixed sum as an affordable housing contribution rather than using a formula. The sum sought will be £60,000 per equivalent whole dwelling. This amount will be reviewed annually to coincide with the annual viability review.

Example

A rural site of 8 dwellings would attract a 20% affordable housing contribution (from policy CS09) 20% of 8 is equal to 1.6 units. Therefore one dwelling would be provided plus a fraction of 0.6 of a dwelling would be provided as a cash sum. The cash sum sought would be £36,000 (0.6 of £60,000)

Pre-application discussions

Before submitting a plan for outline or full planning permission it is usual for the architect or agent, in conjunction with their client to discuss the proposal with a Planning Officer. On submission of a formal pre-application request clarification on the affordable housing requirements will be sought from the Enabling Officer by the Planning Officer. This will enable the architect or agent to ensure that the application meets the affordable housing requirements.

Although the Council cannot insist on it, it is recommended that the applicant contacts the Housing Enabling Officer to assist with involving a Registered Provider at the earliest opportunity.

Submission of a Planning Application

When submitting a Planning Application that triggers the affordable housing thresholds a draft S.106 Agreement will be required. Please note that the application will not be validated unless a draft Agreement with agreed heads of terms is submitted. To aid potential applicants a [model agreement](#) is available on the Council's website. The S.106 Agreement must be ready for all parties to sign by the time the application is ready for decision by the Council.

Policy CS09 does provide for viability issues relating to a proposed development to be raised. Should you consider the affordable housing contributions to render the scheme unviable a full development appraisal should be submitted with the application instead of a draft S.106 Agreement. The appraisal will be considered by the Council and discussed in full with the applicant.

Completing the draft S.106 Agreement

When completing the draft please ensure that all relevant schedules and clauses are completed and delete any sections that do not apply. Please also include full contact details of the solicitor who will be dealing with S.106 Agreement. It is recommended that this section is read in conjunction with the [S.106 Contribution Advice Note](#)

Useful links

[Housing Strategy & Enabling](#)

[Housing Research Policies](#)

[Development Control](#)

Contact Us

If you have any queries regarding this guidance please contact:

The Development Control team at the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk on 01553 616314

Alternatively you can email any enquiries to borough.planning@west-norfolk.gov.uk

Appendix C

The Borough Council's allocation policy in relation to exception sites will work as follows:

- *The properties will be advertised through West Norfolk Homechoice, asking people to apply with the stipulation that only those with a local connection will be considered, all applicants must have a housing need as determined by the council.*
- *The properties will then be allocated on a needs basis starting with Local connection criteria 1.*
- *Once all those in housing need in criteria 1 have been housed we then move down to 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6 until the houses are filled.*

This process will be followed on first lets and any subsequent lets.

BC OF KL & WN - Exception Site Local Connection Criteria:

1. Existing residents who have lived in the parish for more than 12 months needing separate or alternative accommodation.
2. Past residents of the parish who lived in the parish for a minimum period of 5 years and who moved away within the last 3 years because no suitable accommodation was available.
3. People who need to live in the parish due to their permanent employment or offer of permanent employment.
4. People who are not resident in the parish that need to live near family members currently residing in the parish.

5. Existing residents of adjoining parishes.
6. Existing residents who have lived in the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk for a period of 5 years or more.