

Appendix 1 Policy Context

Introduction

The relevant planning policy context for this statement is provided by national planning policy and the North West of England Plan - Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 [RS]. Whilst the RS is to be rescinded as a consequence of the Localism Act 2011, it currently remains part of the statutory development plan. The key policy context points are briefly summarised below.

PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development

PPS1 states that in preparing spatial plans, LPAs should:

- 1 Set a clear vision for, and guide future patterns of development, with clear objectives for achieving the vision, with strategies for delivery and implementation.
- 2 Consider the needs and priorities of communities, and relate them to the use and development of land; and,
- 3 Seek to integrate the wide range of activities relating to development and take account of other relevant strategies including the RS [¶32].

PPS3: Housing

LPAs should set out in LDDs their strategy for the planned location of new housing, setting out the criteria to be used for identifying broad locations and specific sites, taking into account evidence of current and future levels of need and demand [¶38]. Policies for delivering housing should take into account the level prescribed in the RS, identifying broad locations and specific sites that will enable continuous delivery of housing for at least 15 years. LPAs should also identify sufficient specific deliverable sites that are available, suitable and achievable, to deliver housing in the first five years [¶54], and identify a further supply of specific, developable sites for years 6-10 and where possible years 11-15.

PPS12: Local Spatial Planning

PPS12 confirms that the CS should include an overall vision and strategic objectives, with a delivery strategy setting out how much development is intended to happen where, when and by what means; and a clear monitoring and implementation framework [¶4.1]. The CS should be in general conformity with the RS [¶4.32]; it may also allocate strategic sites for development, which are considered central to the achievement of the strategy [¶4.6].

The CS should be supported by evidence of what physical, social and green infrastructure is needed to enable the amount of development proposed for the area, taking account of its type and distribution [¶4.8]. CSs are intended to *'endure and give a degree of certainty to communities and investors...the need for frequent updating may be reduced by taking a long term view and providing some flexibility'* [¶4.14]. They should provide a framework for development over a timeframe of 15 years or more [¶4.46].

In addition to being legally compliant, PPS12 states that for a CS to be found 'sound', it should be justified, effective and consistent with national policy [¶4.52]. In order to be justifiable, a CS must be founded on a robust and credible evidence base and represent the most appropriate strategy when considered against reasonable alternatives [¶4.36]. For a CS to be effective, it must be deliverable; flexible; and able to be monitored [¶4.44].

North West Regional Strategy

The North West RS [Policy RDF1] identifies Wigan as an area for growth and development in the Manchester City Region. The RS [Policy MCR1] seeks to accommodate housing development in accessible locations and provide high quality housing to attract and retain new population and support economic growth. The RS [Policy L3] makes clear that plans should respond to and restructure housing markets to address identified needs.

The RS [Policy L4] sets a minimum housing requirement of 978 dwellings per annum (net of clearance replacement) for 2003-2021.

Draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The Government published the draft NPPF in July 2011. The guidance is a material consideration in the making of planning decisions. The NPPF articulates the Government's commitment to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support economic growth. The guidance [¶14] establishes a "presumption in favour of sustainable development", which should be taken as a golden thread running through the plan making process.

The NPPF adopts a pro-growth stance. A key objective of the guidance is to significantly increase the delivery of new homes by increasing the supply of housing and widening opportunities for home ownership. To boost the supply of housing, the DNPPF requires that LPAs should (inter alia):

'Use an evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full requirements for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, including identifying key sites which are critical to the delivery of the housing strategy over the plan period;

Identify and maintain a rolling supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against their housing requirements. The supply should include an additional allowance of at least 20% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land' [¶109].