

HO2 Affordable housing - 'windfall' sites

Where a proposal is made for residential development, capable of producing 10 or more dwellings, the local planning authority will negotiate with developers to secure a 40% element of affordable housing (in accordance with the definition of affordable housing set out above).

The policy will apply to all proposed residential development, including conversions and changes of use.

In assessing the appropriate level and type of provision, consideration will be given to:

- i. local need in respect of the mix of dwelling types and sizes, assessed in the context of policy HO3 - 'Dwelling type and size';
- ii. the accessibility of the sites to local services and facilities and public transport;
- iii. the particular costs associated with the development of the site;
- iv. the extent to which the provision of affordable housing would prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives; and
- v. the need to achieve a successful housing development

4.28 In the light of an overriding level of housing need, it is an imperative that the Local Plan adopts an approach based upon maximising the amount of new housing that is genuinely affordable. This approach is consistent with government advice.

4.29 The council's affordable housing policy is based on substantial evidence regarding housing need, a lack of medium to large development sites coming forward for development, the relatively small stock of existing social housing in the City and the high price commanded for dwellings on residential/mixed use sites within the City. The policy is also supported by independent research on development viability (June 2004). All these factors will be subject to ongoing monitoring, which will be used to elaborate and clarify policies during the life of the Local Plan.

4.30 Fundamental to the policy approach is an overall shortage of land free from other policy constraints and which is available to meet local housing needs. The council does not have a significant land 'bank' with which to enable housing association development and the majority of development opportunities are on privately owned sites.

4.31 Policy HO2 will apply to all suitable residential sites coming forward for development as set out in the policy. A target proportion of 40% affordable housing will be sought on all residential development proposals of 10 or more dwelling units. These thresholds are supported by independent research on development viability. Negotiations will take place on each site and developers will be asked to justify any proposals which do not meet the policy requirements.