

Housing

- 3.1 This section of the Local Plan sets out the approach that the Council will expect applicants to adopt in relation to the mix and type of new homes to be provided on development sites within the District. It also sets the site thresholds above which proposals will need to make provision for affordable housing and how the Council will assess proposals for rural affordable housing which would normally be considered as being contrary to policy (known as rural exception sites).

Housing Mix and Accommodation Types

- 3.2 The Council, in its role as local housing authority, has a duty under Section 8 of the Housing Act 1985 (as amended) to consider the needs of people residing in, or resorting to their district, with respect to the provision of sites on which caravans can be stationed or places on inland waterways where houseboat can be moored. It is also important to consider, as set out in national planning guidance, the housing needs of other different sectors within the community. This is to ensure that the right size and type of new homes is provided across the District to meet the needs of existing and future residents and to ensure the creation of mixed and balanced communities. This includes those with specialist housing requirements or who have a desire to build their own homes.

Key Evidence

- Housing Implementation Strategy (Epping Forest District Council, 2017);
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment (Opinion Research Services, 2015);
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment Establishing the OAN (ORS, 2017); and
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment Affordable Housing Update (ORS, 2017);

Approach

- 3.3 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2015 and updates are the latest published housing needs evidence which set

out the quantum, type, and size and tenure of new market housing homes needed both across the SHMA area and within the District over the Plan period. However, there is also a need to consider the most appropriate location for new market housing, and the type and size of properties to be provided in different areas. This must take into account the desire for some to build their own homes and to address specialist housing needs where the evidence exists to support this. The Council will seek to make the best use of land, and take account of the existing stock of homes within the locality to achieve the objective of mixed and balanced communities. Information regarding, amongst other things, the profile of housing and population characteristics in a local area can be found by using the Local Area Reports facility on the Office of National Statistics 'nomis official labour market statistics' website, or such other replacement source.

- 3.4 It is important that a proportion of new homes can provide for the needs of those with, or who may develop, accessibility needs through the design of those homes. This reflects the evidence as set out in the SHMA and the 2017 update that there is an existing need for accessible housing in the District that will continue taking into account the ageing profile of the District's population over the period of the Local Plan. Improving housing standards to strengthen local communities and reduce the need for residential care by enabling vulnerable people to remain in their homes, or be able to have the choice to be able to move into a new home, is important as part of improving the overall housing mix within the District. Consequently, the Council's approach is that all new homes should be built to ~~Category 2:~~ Building Regulations Requirement M4(2) (a) Accessible and (a) Adaptable Homes dwellings standards, in order to maximise choice in the type, size and location of new homes available. The Building Regulations M4 (2) require step free access. In non-lift serviced multi-storey development where step free access is not viable, assessments should be submitted to demonstrate that the inclusion of a lift would make the scheme unviable or mean that service

charges are not affordable for intended residents. If this is satisfactorily evidenced, then the units above or below the ground floor that cannot provide step free access would only need to satisfy the requirements of M4 (1) of the Building Regulations.

- 3.5 The needs of those with accessibility needs, including older people can be supported by bungalow accommodation. Recent information contained in the Council's Authority Monitoring Report shows that there has been a gradual erosion of the District's existing stock of bungalows. The Council considers that bungalows can play an important role because of their potential ease of adaptation such that they can provide choice for people with accessibility needs, including the current and future needs of older people.
- 3.6 Specialist accommodation for those with support needs, ~~including for older people,~~ will continue to play an important role in providing for those residents who currently, or will, need assistance. The term "specialist accommodation" is defined in the Glossary (Appendix 1). Consequently, the loss of existing specialist accommodation will be resisted and new provision will normally be supported where appropriately located and designed. The management of any specialist accommodation proposed will be required to be undertaken by a provider registered with the Care Quality Commission (or any subsequent national registration authority) and the proposed provider should be identified as part of any planning application.
- 3.7 The Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 placed an obligation on local authorities to maintain a register of people and groups interested in building their own homes. A detailed definition of self-build and custom housebuilding is set out in the Housing and Planning Act 2016. The Council will work with landowners and developers to deliver its obligations with respect to self-build and custom housebuilding.
- 3.8 The Council is also supportive of community-led housing. Community-led schemes are those that are driven by local communities, rather than local authorities or developers.

Policy H 1 Housing Mix and Accommodation Types

- A. Development will be permitted where the mix of new homes:
- (i) includes a range of house types, tenure and sizes to address local need including for 'down-sizing' and specialist housing as appropriate;
 - (ii) is appropriate to the size, location and characteristics of the site and its surroundings;
 - (iii) takes into account the existing housing stock in the settlement or neighbourhood in order to avoid any over-concentration of a single type or size of homes, or specialist accommodation, where this would undermine the achievement of mixed and balanced communities; and
 - (iv) allows for community-led approaches such as co-housing and co-operatives where appropriate;
 - (v) provides for all new homes to be accessible and adaptable as defined by the Building Regulations in effect at the time of the application.
- B. Planning applications will be required to be supported by evidence, proportionate to the nature and scale of development proposed, to justify the mix of new homes to be provided. Such evidence will also need to reflect latest housing needs evidence published by the Council.
- C. ~~Proposals for housing, requiring specialist accommodation, self-build/custom build housing, sites upon which caravans can be stationed, or locations for mooring houseboats,~~
- specialist accommodation,
 - self-build/custom build housing,
 - sites upon which caravans can be stationed;
or
 - locations for mooring houseboats.
- will be supported where:
- (i) they meet an proven identified need;
 - (ii) the location is appropriate in terms of access to facilities, services and public transport and;
 - (iii) It can be demonstrated that the development is designed and managed

to provide the most appropriate types and levels of support to the proposed occupier and adequately caters for the needs of support staff.

- ~~D. The Council will require all New Housing Development to include affordable housing in accordance with Policy H 2 (Affordable Housing).~~
- E. Where there is evidence of an identified unmet need in the local area and the location is appropriate in terms of access to existing or proposed facilities, services and public transport, larger scale new residential developments should incorporate specially designed housing/specialist accommodation for people with support needs (including for older people and housing with care).
- F. The loss of bungalows and specialist accommodation will be resisted.
- G. The Council will support the development of self-build homes on appropriately sized, serviced sites in the first instance or on appropriately sized sites that are capable of being serviced. The provision of such will be encouraged as part of larger development schemes.