



**Horsham
District
Council**

PLANNING
FOR OUR FUTURE



HORSHAM DISTRICT
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Reserve Housing Sites



HORSHAM DISTRICT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Issues and Options

October 2007

Free of charge



Reserve Housing Sites Issues and Options

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Issues and Options document sets out the Council's intention to identify a number of 'reserve' housing sites and the methodology for their release. The Council will identify certain sites suitable for residential development and hold these in reserve; it may need to bring forward these sites if the rates of development drop off compared to our requirements to provide housing as set out in Policies CP4, Housing Provision and CP9, Managing the Release of Housing Land, in the Core Strategy (2007).
- 1.2 This document will stop short of the assessment of particular sites; identification of suitable sites will begin following the response to the proposed methodology set out in this document and will be put forward at the Preferred Options stage.



CHAPTER 2 ISSUES AND POTENTIAL APPROACH

Triggers for release: Timing

- 2.1 It is the Council's preliminary view that a shortfall of completions in a single year alone should not be enough to trigger the release of the reserve sites. Previously net completion figures (included in the Figure 4.2 Housing Trajectory in the AMR 2005/6) over the last five years show a consistent high year followed by a low year. It would, therefore, be inappropriate to release substantial amounts of land for housing on the basis of one year figures alone, as this may prove premature, particularly if windfall sites continue to come forward. A bi-annual approach would give a greater certainty that housing delivery was not being achieved and would allow more flexibility in the size of sites to be released. A longer period, over 3 years, even up to the full 5 year period, would ensure that sites were not released before it was shown that the Council had failed to deliver the homes forecast; however, this could be viewed as moving away from the 5 year rolling supply of housing land as required by PPS3.

Issue 1

Triggers for release: Timing

Option A: on an annual basis;

Option B: over a two year period;

Option C: over a three to five year period

Triggers for release: Numbers

- 2.2 It is questionable whether the amount of 'shortfall' should act as a specific trigger; the existence of a marginal shortfall (or small surplus) may not in itself be sufficient and it could be argued that a bi-annual shortfall should be significant (at least 100 dwellings) if this is the basis upon which land is to be released.



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Issue 2

Triggers for release : Numbers

Option A: Supply of housing is equal to requirement;

Option B: Marginal shortfall (or small surplus) in net completions rate;

Option C: Shortfall in net completions rate of at least 100 dwellings

Triggers for release: Assessing Shortfall

- 2.3 It is suggested that the shortfall in net completions would be assessed against the cumulative position as set out in the District's housing trajectory in the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) and not the fixed annualised net strategic allocation. This would allow the Council properly to manage the release of housing sites.

Issue 3

Assessing Shortfall

Option A: Comparison against anticipated cumulative completion rate shown in AMR;

Option B: Comparison against annualised required completion rate

Monitoring

- 2.4 The Council will continue to monitor the supply of housing through its AMR, published in December each year. It is acknowledged that there is a delay between the end of the monitoring year and the production of the report, which may lead to a delay in the release of any reserve sites. The figures will, however, show if there is an actual shortfall in the net completions and it is this figure which is required before the Council could release any further housing land. It may be that further information and analysis is required. It is, therefore, suggested that, in parallel with the production of the AMR, further work is carried out to test the projections of future supply, in order that any indicated shortfall for the following year can be considered, particularly as any trends or downturns in the market occur. An additional Annual Monitoring Paper could be produced on this basis, in order to provide an 'early warning' of possible land supply problems.



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Issue 4

Monitoring requirement

Option A: Actual shortfall identified by monitoring through the AMR

Option B: Option A plus produce additional annual monitoring information in the form of an Annual Monitoring Paper which will help to identify future shortfalls

Numbers of homes to be released

- 2.5 In light of the current information available (in the form of housing trajectories for the District) it would seem sensible that providing a number and range of size of sites, up to a maximum of 500 homes, in any five year period would be logical. By limiting the figure at this stage to a maximum of 500 up to 2012/13, and again if necessary up to 2018 (after monitoring, although it is anticipated that this period will be overtaken by the review of the Core Strategy), this would ensure that the amount of reserve housing sites identified at this stage is not excessive or that sites are not unnecessarily held back as 'in reserve'. It may also be wise to consider capping the amount of housing on an annual basis should the proposed trigger which would allow for the release of a reserve housing site be reached. It is suggested that a maximum of 100 homes per year would be appropriate (approximately 20% of the annualised net strategic allocation), in direct response to any monitoring requirement. This would give a degree of flexibility on the nature of the sites to be released and at the same time provide a brake to ensure that overprovision does not occur.

Issue 5

The number of homes to be released

Option A: Release maximum of 100 homes per annum;

Option B: Option A plus release maximum of 500 homes over a 5 year period



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Nature of sites to be released: Location

- 2.6 The intention is to identify sites which accord with the spatial objectives of the Core Strategy and its policies. Reserve housing sites will, therefore, be limited to Category 1 settlement locations, including previously developed land (PDL) within them.

Issue 6

The nature of sites to be released

Option A: Deliverable and within Category 1 settlements only;

Option B: Deliverable, within Category 1 settlements and on PDL only;

Option C: Deliverable, within or adjoining Category 1 settlements

Nature of sites to be released: Size

- 2.7 It is the case, however, that the sites, particularly where adjoining the settlement, should not be of such significance in size that they would detract from any future more comprehensive approach relating to the longer term development of those settlements. Moreover, the larger or higher density development sites would only be released if the shortfall reached a hundred in each year, whereas perhaps smaller sites could be released for a slight shortfall.

Issue 7

Size of sites to be released

Option A: Only small sites capable of accommodating up to 50 homes;

Option B: Larger or higher density sites capable of accommodating a maximum of up to 100 or thereabouts to be released if shortfall reaches 100 homes p.a.



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Identification of sites

- 2.8 Following the results of the consultation on this document as to the approach being taken towards reserve housing sites, work will be carried out to identify suitable sites within or adjacent to Category 1 settlements. Each reserve site will then be identified on a Proposals Map so that its impact, infrastructure and facilities requirements can be assessed; and to allow public debate of the suitability of the proposed site. It would be unrealistic to rely on solely finding 'new' sites and, therefore, sites that have previously identified during consideration of the Site Specific Allocations of Land document, although not allocated, may come forward; however, where the evidence has already shown sites to be unsuitable it is unlikely they will be identified as reserve housing sites. The identification of sites will occur at the Preferred Options stage. It will be clear that, until the trigger mechanism releases the reserve site, planning permission for its development will be refused by the Local Planning Authority.

Issue 8

Identification of sites

Option A: Only 'new' sites that fulfil the criteria which have not previously been considered for housing allocation will be considered;

Option B: A mixture of 'new' sites and sites previously considered for housing allocation but only in appropriate locations will be considered;

Option C: Only sites previously considered for housing allocation and in appropriate locations will be considered



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CHAPTER 3 CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1 This document forms part of the LDF documentation and policy. The final Reserve Housing Sites document must be in conformity with the Core Strategy (2007). Policy CP4 of the Core Strategy allows for flexibility through the allocation of reserve sites should the housing delivery identified in the Plan falter, and provides the policy basis for this document. It will set out the agreed policies for the release of reserve housing sites should it be found that the Council is not meeting its housing requirements. It will include the need for appropriate monitoring. It will identify deliverable sites for release. This document has been used to highlight the issues which surround the issue of Reserve Housing Sites within the District and the Council's approach to dealing with this.
- 3.2 This Reserve Housing Sites document has been agreed for publication and 5 weeks of consultation by the Council. Following receipt of comments on the Issues and Options, a Preferred Options document will be published for a further 6 week public consultation period. The Preferred Options document will outline the possible approaches in light of any comments received at the issues and options stage. Finally, the Submission stage document will be published, containing this Council's choice of reserve housing sites and a criteria- based policy which would be used should a housing shortfall be identified through a sequential based approach; a further 6 weeks for formal representations will follow. Representations received at the Submission stage will be considered by the Planning Inspectorate during Public Examination to determine the 'soundness' or correctness the approach proposed.
- 3.3 For a timetable of publication dates and anticipated adoption date of this document, please refer to the latest Local Development Scheme, which sets out the Council's intended timescales for the production of all LDF documents. The latest Local Development Scheme can be viewed on the Council's website at www.horsham.gov.uk/strategic_planning

Issues and Options consultation process

- 3.4 At this stage the Council is aiming to provide an understanding of the issues involved and put forward an appropriate procedure for the release of reserve housing sites. The issues raised aim to stimulate public debate and represent an opportunity for all sectors of the community and stakeholders to respond and constructively direct the contents of the Preferred Options document.
- 3.5 Although not specifically aimed at site identification, for those wishing to submit comments or put a site forward for consideration (sites not previously considered by the Council for housing allocation will need to



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be accompanied by a location map and a map clearly showing the boundaries of the site), a comments form will need to be completed and submitted to the Council. Additional copies of the comments form can be requested from the Council. It would also be helpful for us to know if you have previously been involved in actively promoting a site for housing whether you would wish, or not, for the site to be considered as a reserve housing site in light of the proposed release mechanisms put forward. Comments can also be made online by visiting www.horsham.gov.uk/strategic_planning.

- 3.6 The consultation period will run between 19 October and the 23 November 2007. All representations will be made publicly available and will be viewable on our web site. Hard copies of the representations received will also be available to view at the Council Offices. Forms should be sent to the following address to be received before 23 November 2007:

Head of Strategic and Community Planning
Horsham District Council
Park North, North Street
Horsham
West Sussex, RH12 1RL

Email: strategic.planning@horsham.gov.uk

- 3.7 Please note that those submitting long representations are encouraged to either email their comments to the Council or to submit them online; long representations submitted on paper to the Council will need to be inputted by officers; resource constraints may therefore require long representations to be summarised.

This document can be made available in large print or as
audio tape on request.
Please call (01403) 215549.

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www.horsham.gov.uk/strategic_planning