

Housing topic: A good home for everyone

(3054 words incl. appendix)

A. Identifying issues and themes

Why is this topic important?

Access to decent and adequate housing is critically important for health and wellbeing, especially for the very young and very old. In general, The Deepings presents a range of popular housing forms but principally of a type and size that benefits families (as detached houses dominate provision). Greater provision is needed of accessible and adaptable dwellings, affordable housing, and smaller forms of housing to suit the growing number of small households particularly for an ageing population. This aim will result in a greater proportion of new housing being either bungalows, or as flats in the case of specialist form of housing.

What are the local challenges?

The present type and amount of housing does not offer a mix that is needed.

Evidence points to local people broadly accepting that housing in The Deepings should continue to grow. This is tempered by continuing deep concern that growth has not been matched by infrastructure - a subject that is addressed elsewhere in this Plan.

Detached housing is the most prominent housing type for The Deepings (54% of all houses), the England average is 22%. Terraced properties and flats are far lower in proportion than the England average. Increased densities secured with good design will aid the greater provision of more varied house forms and efficiency in land use.

Most of the housing is owner occupied (78%). There is a very low number of social rented homes (10%) compared to the national average (18%). Private rented property is also low (10% against the national 15%). A lack of affordable and rented housing in The Deepings may compromise the health of low-income residents as choice is limited and they are likely to spend more on housing costs and less on other health needs.

The demand for affordable homes is strong irrespective of size. There are (at the end of 2017) about 300 applicant households in The Deepings on the SKDC waiting list (all with local connections). Market provision is unlikely to redress the inadequate supply of affordable units as houses cost nearly 15 times the average annual earnings of low paid workers. Although this is the same as the England average, policies that promote housing growth will seek to rebalance provision.

Opportunities are presented by large new housing areas. Growth is across the town but mostly to be at the east and north at Towngate West and Linchfield Road through proposed allocations in the emerging local Plan. The growth up to 2036 includes these large sites but also permitted smaller development elsewhere, and this will all add a further 20% or so to the existing 5550 households. The geographical concentration of growth is thereby on the northern and north-eastern sectors of the town. Growth will include land uses other than housing in new mixed-use developments. New character areas will arise and could provide or assist the provision of additional facilities with economic, environmental and social value.

Design of housing.

Much of our present housing is pleasant, popular, but looks the same as developments elsewhere in the country. Too often new developments are dominated by the similar designs that do very little to enhance local character. We can do so much better.

Policies in this plan expects all development to contribute positively to the creation of well-designed buildings and spaces. Through good design we want to maintain and enhance the individual character of our parish and create places that work well for both occupants and users and are built to last.

Place shaping.

Policies promoted in this NP and in the SKDC Local plan will test new development with questions such as : does it fit into the character of the Deepings, or otherwise enhance it? Does it help to ensure the viability and sustainability of the town, and is it well connected to services and local facilities with barrier free routes?

Who are the local partners and stakeholders?

The plan is driven by several active parties. This section addresses the question of ‘who is interested?’. The primary drivers of new housing development are private developers ranging from small custom and self-builders, to larger volume house builders. Those who live or work in the area need to be assured that The Deepings community provides conditions matching homes and jobs to needs. Those parties taking an active part in addressing this question and promoting the application and evolution of policy are:

- South Kesteven District council, Planning and Housing
- Registered Social Landlords (list)
- Tenants’ associations (list)
- Tenants Management Organisations (list)
- Health authorities/ education sector.

The process of allocating social housing is a matter for housing management and not planning policy but frameworks are commonly managed by a planning legal agreement.

The two Parish Councils are not housing agencies but offer a key role in developing policy through this plan and monitoring its application.

(809words)

B. Summarising the existing information available

What other previous research/maps/surveys are available?

- SKDC Housing Strategy 2017-2021
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update, March 2017
<http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=20273&p=0>
- Custom and Self Build register
<http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=10296>
- Three Dragons Research paper: Self-Build and Custom Build Housing, November 2016
- Small-is-beautiful -Jan 2017 -Federation of master Builders and Local Govt. Info. Unit
- Build to rent: www.gov.uk/guidance/build-to-rent

Specialist housing

Discussion with SDKDC Housing Strategy Manager. An identified need exists for increase in the need for specialist extra care/mental health/physical disability accommodation.

What other information can shed some light on this topic?

Affordable housing

Local demands for affordable housing are known but delivery of different housing types will continue to be promoted to broaden the local offer. Demands for specialist forms of housing for the elderly are not being met as evidenced by the insufficient supply of houses (*more research needed*) and possibly prices.

Concealed households

Site allocations made by the 2018 Draft Local Plan are, in SKDC's view, enough to meet general numerical need, and these are supported. There are however several concealed households within their modelling (SHMA 2017, para 23) who are not picked up by demographic projections and may be without housing. There is merit in considering these households as an additional need (*further research is needed*)

Self and custom builders (SCB's).

The true self-builder is believed to be rare; this topic is seen to be about small builders buying and selling for a custom market. However, evidence suggests that the scale of self and custom build is much larger than evidence from the local authority very limited register. Taking all the evidence into account it seems that the majority of SCBs applicants engage with landowners directly. They have no need of the local authority register.

However, the register is regarded as a significant evidence base to support planning policy to assist SCBs. Its development may succeed in both aiding and encouraging self-builders.

Sites for SCB's are however limited and contribution to increasing housing supply is also likely to be limited. Large house builders will be encouraged to offer SCB sites as part of larger schemes to increase diversity in the house construction market.

356 words

C. Community Engagement and Consultation

Over what sort of timescale have the activities been undertaken? What strategies have been used to engage with all groups?

July – August 2016, Deeping First initial consultation. Key responses shown as Appendix 1. Discussion and emails with Housing Strategy officer at South Kesteven District Council. Email contact with planning department to harvest information

Who has been involved in gathering information?

NP Steering Group & Housing Topic representative on Deeping First

70 words

D. Building the Evidence Base

What responses have we had to surveys/consultation events? What new information has been gathered from each activity?

See Appendix 1 -0summary of June 2016 'have your say' survey. One of the most important factors that concerned local people about their area included securing a 'peaceful and safe neighbourhood' (67.9% of all respondents cited this).

The most important home types sought from new developments were:

- Affordable homes for sale or rent
- Starter homes
- Homes for the elderly

What difficulties or issues did we encounter and overcome?

Further surveys are needed to target those groups that may be concealed from survey activity. This would include concealed households such as adult young people living with parents, people living in rented property, or transient residents who, for example, may be living with their work (care home staff) .

139 words

E. Priorities arising from the evidence

What do we make of all the new information gathered? How does this inform us about the issues to be addressed? How can our NP Aim/Vision/Objectives be developed as a result?

Much of the housing planning policies will be addressed by the emerging new Local plan, and to avoid duplication the NP housing policies are only focussed on those areas best focussed on and applied at a local level. The NP vision as presently expressed may be further developed but still appears fit for purpose in that part relevant to housing:

“The housing needs of present and future residents will have been better met with a supply that recognises local needs –particularly historic unmet needs of single people and the elderly. Affordability issues will be a central issue for every new major development. Healthier and mixed communities will have been created.”

147 words

F. Implications for the future 20yrs

What national and local policies are relevant to this topic? What can we conclude overall from reflecting on the evidence?

National Policies

National Planning Policy Framework 2018 (NPPF)

The NPPF requires that a sufficient amount and variety of land should be brought forward (in this case through the South Kesteven Local Plan) to address the needs of groups with specific housing requirements (paragraph 59), and that the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups of the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policy (paragraph 61), in order to create inclusive and mixed communities.

The SKDC Local Plan sets out the strategic approach to providing for a mix of dwelling sizes and tenures in order to meet the needs of the wider community. The NP policies highlight the need to provide for specialist forms of housing, particularly those relevant to older persons. It builds on the requirements set out in the NPPF that support strong, vibrant and healthy communities by providing enough houses to meet the needs of both present and future generations.

Other references are:

Housing, section 5, page 17

- Overall national policy aims to boost the supply of homes
- Paragraph 64 allows for variation to affordable housing requirements for certain types of build to rent, specialist housing, or self-build
- Para 68 encourages more small and medium sites to come forward (including from Neighbourhood Plans) with 10% of the district's housing requirement come from sites no larger than 1 hectare.

Well-designed places, section 12

- Promotes good design.

- Neighbourhood Plans can play an important part in identifying the special qualities of an area. And explaining how this should be reflected in development.
- Ensure that the quality of approved development is not diminished between permission and completion.

What Local Policies are relevant to this topic?

The NP must be compliant with the adopted Local Plan. However, that is due to be replaced shortly. In anticipation that the Draft Local Plan 2018 version will be adopted in an amended form in 2019, consistency is sought with that more up to date document. (the policies quoted below are in any event not too dissimilar to policies in the adopted plans: Core Strategy 2010, and the Site Allocations and Policies, 2014).

Draft Local Plan 2018 version.

- H2 promotes a 30% affordable housing provision on sites of 11 units and above.
- Paragraph 2.39 presents targets for appropriate housing mix
- Policy H3 promotes Self and custom build housing of larger sites of 400+ (note: the NP departs from this with a lower threshold in Draft policy #) .
- Policy H4, major schemes (i.e. of 10 units or more) require older peoples' housing, specialist housing, build to rent.
- Policy DE1 promotes good design.

What other previous research/maps/surveys are available?

Already covered under C & D (evidence base).

What policies can we recommend based on the evidence?

Desired outcomes:

- Housing mix. The Local plan promoted by SKDC and the NP plan will together identify the quality and mix of housing needed to meet needs. It will also set out a framework for good place-shaping, with successful, safe and spirited communities. More homes and more varied homes are encouraged with greater innovation and choice.
- Broaden the number of housing providers or tenures. This will include encouraging more rented housing, direct development by councils and social providers, encouragement for smaller builders, and self-build and custom-build.
- Good design of houses and places (note: expand this)

Policy: Supporting Smaller house builders

Policy to be drafted.

Reason: The true self builder is rare relative to the volume of housing produced by the main local volume housebuilders. This topic is supporting about small builders buying and selling for custom market. This evidence suggests that the scale of self and custom build is much larger than evidence from the local authority register. Taking all the evidence into account it seems that the majority of SCBs applicants engage with landowners directly. They have no need of the local authority register.

However, the register is regarded as a significant evidence base to support planning policy to assist SCBs.

Policy: Encourage small sites (less than 1ha) in addition to allocated sites.

Policy to be drafted.

Reason. NPPF68 – 10% sites less than 1ha –monitor this (windfalls probably meet this requirement). This provides further support for the development of smaller sites, as well as encouraging councils and developers to subdivide larger plots to help speed up the delivery of new homes

Policy: Allowing development outside the defined development boundary.

Beyond the defined development boundaries new build residential development will not generally be supported. However, rural diversification, the re-use or conversion of rural buildings, or rural exceptions housing schemes, will be supported where these fulfil the criteria set out in... (GS note: check this).

Reason: Development boundaries are a development management tool. They are to provide a distinction between the built-up area and more sensitive peripheral parts of a settlement.

This policy sets out how development proposals *beyond* a defined settlement boundary should be assessed. The policy is aimed at supporting affordable, or special housing schemes ,as well as aiding rural employment projects (see Employment Policy#) .

Policy: Promoting the provision of self and custom build plots:

Where self and custom build plots are provided as part of larger development sites that are part of the affordable housing element, where the plot has been marketed for 12 months and not sold, then the plot shall be used for build to rent, affordable, or specialist housing.

This contradicts Draft 2018 Plan policy H3. This requires up to 2% of plots to be provided for self and custom build but allows the use of such plots for market housing after only 12 months.

Note: do more to encourage developers to release serviced plots on large sites.

Policy: Build to rent

To increase choice in the housing market, there is a presumption in favour of Build to Rent accommodation.

It is open to developers to offer market versions of this housing or subsidised options as part of an affordable housing package. If the latter then section 106 agreements will be used to introduce clawback mechanisms to recoup the value of affordable housing if affordable private rent homes are converted to another tenure in future. Consideration should be given to a covenant period for the retention of private market rent homes in that tenure and potential compensation mechanisms if private market rent homes are sold before the expiration of an agreed covenant period.

Policy: Care Home Provision.

Proposals for Older Person Care Home provision will be supported and will not be required to apply normal standards of open space provision, parking will only be required for visitors and staff, no occupier parking required for specialist forms of housing.

This policy expresses a presumption in favour of such housing for which there is a clear local need. To encourage its provision, standards applicable to other types of housing will be relaxed

(GS Note : policy should be developed to ensure other forms of specialist housing is covered)

Policy: Design is to protect or enhance valued local characteristics.

All housing proposals shall recognise, sustain and developer those key characteristics identified in the Deepings Character Assessment.

Policy: Lifetime homes (note needs developing, the subject needs to be understood better)

All developments of 10 or more homes shall provide 10% of the houses designed to Lifetime Homes standards

Planning policies in this document and in the Local Plan focus on external environments around houses – the ‘bits in between the buildings’. Internal design and building standards are a matter of the application of building regulations outside the scope of the plan. The exception is for Lifetime Homes where the planning system seeks to require an appropriate portion of adaptable housing.

SKDC draft Local Plan policy DE1 refers in general terms to design requirements, so its terms are not repeated here

1315 words

What funded local projects can we develop to meet local needs

A **Community Trust** established for the benefit of the area, with housing environmental and welfare objectives.

Promote Lifetime Neighbourhoods. Age friendly neighbourhoods.

Housing topic Appendices

Appendix 1 :**Key outcomes from consultation July – September 2016****Extracts relevant to housing topic**

Question 1 Three most important factors from 658 Respondents	Factor	% of respondents selecting this factor
f	Peaceful and safe neighbourhood	67.9
j	Availability of housing for all kinds of or "groups" of people	6.7

Question 2 Most important home types from 658 Respondents	Type	% of respondents selecting this type
i	Affordable homes for sale or rent	40.9
a	Starter homes	38.3
j	Homes for the elderly	32.1
c	Detached Private houses	30.4
g	Bungalows	29.8
d	Private	25.1
h	Eco-Homes	21.0
k	Lifetime homes	17.2
e	Semi detached/terraced homes	15.6
f	Houses with workshops attached for cottage industries	10.1
b	Custom/self build homes	8.7
l	Houses for multip[le occupancy	2.0
m	Holiday accommodation	1.8

Areas needing improvement/criticised	No of respondents		% of respondents
Starter/affordable homes	20	To allow younger people on to the housing ladder and also older people to downsize	1.6