

## BOROUGH OF KETTERING

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<b>Report Originator</b>	Head of Development Services	Fwd Plan Ref No:	
<b>Wards Affected</b>	All	25 <sup>th</sup> April 2017	
<b>Title</b>	<b>Housing White Paper 2017 (including Consultation)</b>		

### 1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To inform Members of the contents of the Housing White Paper (chapters 1 and 2), and agree comments for submission from Kettering Borough Council to the Housing White Paper consultation.

### 2. **Background**

2.1 The Housing White Paper (HWP) *Fixing our broken housing market* sets out the Government's strategy for building more of the right homes in the right places. It was published on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2017; a simultaneous public consultation on the HWP was launched on the same date with comments to be received by 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2017. A full copy of the HWP is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/housing-white-paper>

2.2 The HWP sets out a number of proposals over four chapters:

*Chapter 1: Planning for the right homes in the right places;*

*Chapter 2: Building homes faster;*

*Chapter 3: Diversifying the market;*

*Chapter 4: Helping people now.*

2.3 In order to implement the vision set out in the HWP, the Government is also consulting on a range of specific planning proposals, many of which involve amendments to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Government intends to publish a revised NPPF later this year, which will consolidate the outcomes from previous and current consultations. It will also incorporate amendments that reflect changes made to NPPF through Written Ministerial Statements (WMS) since March 2012.

2.4 The current consultation document poses 38 specific questions which are limited to chapters 1 and 2 of the HWP; a separate simultaneous consultation on 'planning and affordable housing for Build to Rent takes forwards proposals set out in chapter 3 which the Council's Housing Services is taking forwards. A summary of the key issues contained within the chapters 1 and 2 of the HWP are set out below, within section 3 of this report. Appendix 1 to this report contains the recommended response to the consultation questions set out within the HWP consultation.

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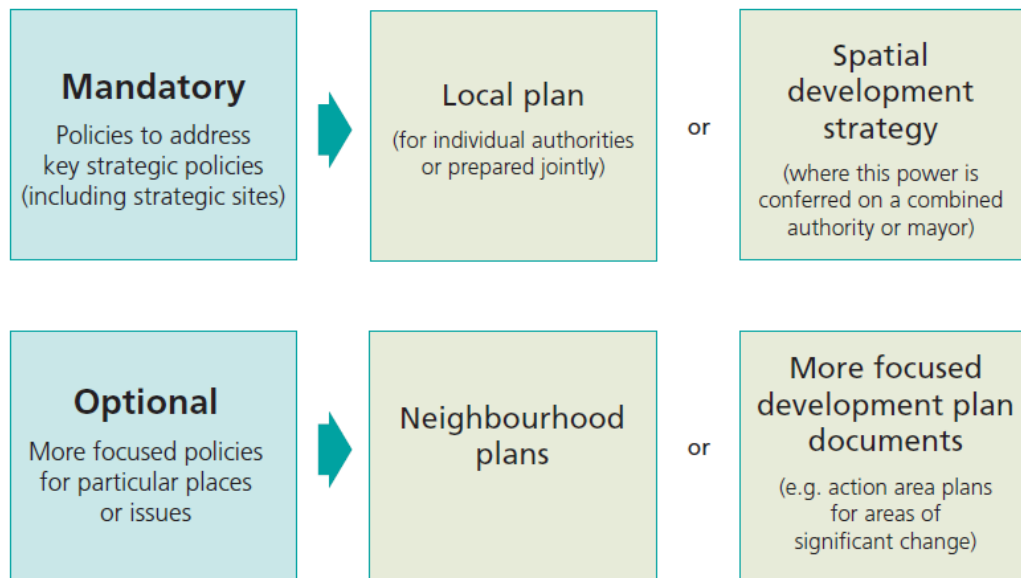
### 3. PROPOSALS IN THE HOUSING WHITE PAPER

#### Chapter 1: Planning for the right homes in the right places.

#### 3.1 Flexibility on Plan Structure

The government is legislating through the Neighbourhood Planning Bill to provide greater flexibility to authorities by removing the expectation that individual areas should be covered by a single local plan (see Box 1) but also put beyond doubt a requirement for all areas to be covered by a Plan. This opens up opportunities for combined authorities / local authority partnerships to produce a strategic plan together which covers their overall area.

Box 1. The new framework for planning



This area currently deals with strategic issues covering the North Northamptonshire Plan Area (which includes Kettering Borough) through the Joint Core Strategy, leaving local issues to be dealt with through Part 2 Local Plans, Neighbourhood Plans, and other Development Plan Documents. As a result, this proposal will not significantly alter the way the North Northamptonshire Authorities currently prepare the Development Plan.

#### 3.2 New Requirement to Update the Plan

The government wants to strengthen expectations about keeping plans up-to-date. *‘Plans should be reviewed regularly, and are likely to require updating in whole or in part at least every five years’*. The Neighbourhood Planning Bill proposes to allow the Secretary of State to require local planning authorities to review local plans and other local development documents at prescribed intervals and intervene accordingly where progress is not being made. At present, there is no specified timeframe for updating a

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Development Plan, although regular update is encouraged to ensure it remains current and robust.

### **3.3 Proposed National Planning Policy Framework Amendments: Chapter 1**

A number of amendments to the NPPF are proposed in order to accommodate proposals set out within the HWP. The key areas for change to the NPPF included in Chapter 1 of the HWP are set out below.

#### **3.3.1 New Requirement for Statement of Common Ground**

Where an authority is unable to meet its entire housing requirement the Government will seek for those authorities to demonstrate that it is working constructively with neighbouring authorities. There is already a 'duty to co-operate', which already places a legal requirement on local planning authorities to collaborate where cross boundary issues arise. A new requirement is being proposed which will require Local Authorities to prepare a '*Statement of Common Ground*' which sets out and demonstrates how they will work together to meet housing requirements and other issues that cut across authority boundaries.

3.3.2 This new requirement will not change the existing duty on local authorities, but will require the Council to formally agree the '*Statement of Common Ground*', which will need regularly updating as the Plan is updated.

#### **3.3.3 New Standardised approach for Assessing Housing Requirements**

The Government will consult on options for introducing a standardised approach to assessing housing requirement. Councils will be expected to use the new approach and justify to the Planning Inspectorate the methodology they have adopted in their area if they choose to apply a different methodology. By April 2018, the new methodology will apply as the baseline for assessing five-year housing land supply and housing delivery.

3.3.4 The current objectively assessed housing need for Kettering area was informed by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) prepared by the Joint Planning Unit in co-ordination with Kettering Borough Council. Until consultation on the new standardised methodology is carried out and amendments are made to the NPPF, the implications of this proposal cannot be confirmed. In the event that the Council's current methodology is not accepted, there may be a requirement to revise existing housing requirement figures and housing allocations necessary to meet this need if this changes the current identified housing need figures.

#### **3.3.5 Addressing the housing requirements of specific groups**

The HWP proposes to strengthen national planning policy so that local planning authorities have clear policies for addressing the housing requirements of groups with particular needs, such as older and disabled people.

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- 3.3.6 Policy 30 (Joint Core Strategy) already sets out support for housing proposals, which meet requirements for specialised housing needs for older households. Separate accessibility standards are also set out within the policy to address the needs of disabled persons. However, the policy falls short of addressing wider disability issues, which could include visual, hearing or mental impairment, and will need to be taken forwards through the emerging Part 2 Local Plan.
- 3.3.7 Maximising land use  
The Government proposes that when preparing plans, local authorities should have a clear strategy to maximise the use of suitable land in their area to accommodate their identified housing requirement, unless there are policies elsewhere in the NPPF that provide strong reason for restricting development, or the adverse impacts of meeting this requirement would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. With this in mind, great weight will also be applied to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for new homes.
- 3.3.8 It is unlikely that Kettering Borough will be unable to accommodate its own housing requirements, although pressure may come from neighbouring authorities to take some of their housing requirements if they are unable to accommodate these themselves. This matter will need to be taken forwards through a 'Statement of Common Ground' referred to in paragraph 3.3.1 – 3.3.2 of this report.
- 3.3.9 Estate Regeneration  
Local planning authorities will be encouraged to consider the social and economic benefits of estate regeneration, and use their planning powers to help deliver this to a high standard. It is considered that where suitable schemes are identified, Kettering Borough Council is already doing this.
- 3.3.10 Requirement for Windfall Site Policy  
The Government is keen to support small to medium enterprise builders (SME's) and speed up housing delivery, increase competition and assist with the delivery of sensitive housing within smaller settlements through the development of smaller sites. As a result, local planning authorities will be expected to have policies that support the development of small '*windfall*' sites. The NPPF will indicate that great weight should be given to using small undeveloped sites within settlements for homes, with additional weight attached to the benefits of developing brownfield land.
- 3.3.11 The new requirement for a windfall policy will need to be addressed through the emerging Part 2 Local Plan. The application for applying great weight to housing proposals within settlements will reinforce the current '*presumption in favour of sustainable development*' for housing applications already contained within the NPPF, but will place greater emphasis on this material consideration when planning application are determined through the

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development management process. The existing weight attached to the development of brownfield land will be preserved.

### 3.3.12 Small Site Housing Allocation Preference

The Government intends to give stronger support for sites that provide affordable homes for local people, and highlights opportunities that neighbourhood plans offer for identifying and allocating sites that are suitable for housing. Local Planning Authorities will be expected to identify opportunities for villages to thrive.

3.3.13 To complement the windfall policy requirement, at least 10% of the sites allocated for residential development in local plans should be on sites of half a hectare or less. Local authorities will also be expected to work with developers to encourage the sub-division of large sites. The greater use of Local Development Orders (LDO's) and area wide design codes will also be encouraged so that small sites may be delivered more quickly.

3.3.14 It is considered that the 10% minimum threshold proposed fails to take account of sustainability assessment conclusions, and may by default, result in less sustainable sites being allocated. The use of LDO's and design coding has previously been possible, and will be a matter for this authority to consider in the future, should it wish to facilitate housing delivery through this course of action. It is considered that facilitating the sub-division of large sites will require additional support in terms of funding and expertise in order to realise these aims. With respect of this, the Council has already formally expressed its intention to raise planning fees by 20% as supported elsewhere within the HWP.

### 3.3.15 Support for Neighbourhood Plans

In recognising the contribution Neighbourhood Plans make towards the overall national housing supply, the Government proposes further funding for Neighbourhood Planning groups over the period 2018-2020. The NPPF will be amended to enable these Neighbourhood Plan groups to obtain a housing requirement figure from the local planning authority.

3.3.16 The additional funding is a positive signal for Neighbourhood Planning Groups. The requirement to provide additional information to these groups to facilitate their plan making process should fall within existing duties of Local Authorities to provide support for these groups and should not result in significant change.

### 3.3.17 Front loading design

The NPPF will place an expectation on local and neighbourhood plans and more detailed development plan documents to set out clear design expectations informed by community consultation, which shall feed in to early pre-application discussions with all stakeholder groups. The use of widely accepted design standards such as Building For Life is encouraged. More importantly however, the NPPF will make clear that design should not

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be used as a valid reason to object to development where it accords with clear design expectations set out in statutory plans.

3.3.18 Front loading design requirements through the development management processes are encouraged, but this needs to be underpinned by clear and robust adopted design guidance. Through the emerging Part 2 Local Plan, development principles and design guidelines will need to be applied to address local circumstances. The emerging North Northamptonshire Place Making Supplementary Planning Document will also deal with strategic level design guidance.

3.3.19 Delivering high density housing

The UK Government proposes to make it clear that plans and individual development proposals should make efficient use of land and avoid building homes at low densities where there is a shortage of land for meeting identified housing requirements. The scope for higher density housing in urban locations that are well served by public transport should be addressed. At the same time, the density and form of development should reflect the character and accessibility and infrastructure capacity of an area, whilst taking a flexible approach in adopting and applying policy and guidance that could inhibit these objectives.

3.3.20 The general concept of making best use of available land should be supported, subject to good design and other material considerations being acceptable. However, it is unclear whether the government defines 'land shortage' as not being able to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply (with or without a specified buffer), or whether it means being reliant on neighbouring authorities to deliver their identified housing need. The latter is unlikely to give rise to significant concern to Kettering Borough at present, however, if land shortage is based on a failure to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply, then this approach could result in Neighbourhood Plans as well as the wider Development Plan being given less weight in the decision making process where a 5 year housing land supply cannot be demonstrated.

### 3.4 Other Housing White Paper Proposals

In addition to proposed amendments to the NPPF, a number of other proposals have been set out within Chapter 1 of the HWP. These are summarised below:

3.4.1 Land Release Fund

The Government is providing support to local authorities by launching a new £45 million Land Release Fund, and will ensure all authorities can dispose of land with the benefit of planning permission which they have granted to themselves. Government will consult on extending their flexibility to dispose of land at less than best consideration, and is seeking views on what additional powers or capacity is required to play a more active role in assembling land for development. Kettering Borough Council has

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established an Asset Management Board responsible for the strategic management of all assets under its control. This proposal has the potential to offer greater freedoms in terms of realising the potential of existing assets, although further details are required on how this will work to ensure that it does not undermine competing objectives for this authority.

### 3.4.2 Review of National Space Standards

The Government proposes to review the Nationally Described Space Standards to ensure greater local housing choice, whilst ensuring that there is not a race to the bottom in the size of homes on offer.

3.4.3 There is no specific HWP consultation question covering this point, with a focus instead on minimum density standards. Policy 30 (JCS) refers to National Space Standards as a minimum standard to ensure that residents of new properties have adequate space for basic furnishings, storage and activities. Any weakening of this standard is a concern. In the event that the space standards review is subject to consultation, it is recommended that this authority make comment.

### Chapter 2: Building homes faster.

**3.5 Proposed National Planning Policy Framework Amendments: Chapter 2**  
Chapter 2 of the Housing White Paper also sets out a number of proposed amendments to the NPPF in order to accommodate proposals set out within. The key areas for change to the NPPF are set out below.

### 3.5.1 Testing the 5 year Housing Land Supply

The Government recognises that the issue of 5 year housing land supply can occupy considerable time and expense at appeal, undermining Neighbourhood and Local Plans, and create uncertainty for applicants and communities alike. The Government has therefore proposed to amend the NPPF to give local authorities the opportunity to have their housing land supply agreed on an annual basis with the Secretary of State, which if agreed, will be fixed for a one year period. However, in order to agree an annual figure, local authorities will be required to provide a 10% buffer to the proposed housing land supply figure.

3.5.2 In addition, where communities plan for housing through a neighbourhood plan, these should not be deemed out-of-date unless there is a *significant lack of land supply for housing* in the wider local authority area, in accordance with the Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) of 12<sup>th</sup> December 2016. Neighbourhoods will need to demonstrate that their site allocations and housing supply policies meet their share of housing need. Protection to Neighbourhood Plans will not apply where a local planning authority delivers less than 65% from year 2020 (25% in 2018; 45% in 2019) as measured by the proposed housing delivery test.

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- 3.5.3 The offer to test local authority 5 year housing land supply is welcomed, although the application of a 10% buffer is not supported, and is contrary to para 47 of the NPPF which stipulates a 5% buffer. It is recommended that this is highlighted through consultation comment.
- 3.5.4 The Housing White Paper also states that Neighbourhood Plans will not benefit from protection, either where there is a significant lack of land supply for housing in the wider local authority area, or where housing delivery is below specified targets. Clarification will be sought through the Council's consultation response regarding what is meant by '*significant lack of land supply*', as well as how a Neighbourhood Plan's share of housing may be calculated as housing need figures are not currently broken down to neighbourhood area level.
- 3.5.5 Ensuring timely infrastructure provision  
Delays in delivery of infrastructure have been identified as a cause for delay in housing delivery. The Government will target the £2.3 billion Housing Infrastructure Fund at the areas of greatest housing need, where this will unlock the delivery of new homes and enable economic development across the area. Joint bids from across local authority boundaries are being encouraged. The Housing White Paper also places focus on facilitating the timely delivery of digital infrastructure and utilities.
- 3.5.6 The NPPF will be amended so that planning authorities are expected to identify the development opportunities that such investment offers at the time funding is committed.
- 3.5.7 As part of the North Northamptonshire area, Kettering Borough has a strong record of joint working to plan and deliver growth in the area with partnership authorities through the Joint Planning Unit (including the Joint Delivery Committee and Joint Delivery Unit). This proposal is welcomed, although it will be highlighted that infrastructure is required in the right locations in order to ensure that identified housing need maintains the lead for the location of development.
- 3.5.8 Boosting local authority capacity  
Government proposes to allow local authorities to increase fees by 20% from July 2017 if they commit to invest the additional fee income in their planning department. A further 20% increase may be allowed for those authorities that are delivering the homes their communities need. The government will consult on this shortly.
- 3.5.9 The Government also proposes to make available a new £25 million fund to help ambitious authorities in high housing need to plan for new homes and infrastructure.
- 3.5.10 As stated in paragraph 3.3.14 of this report, this authority has notified DCLG of its intention to benefit from an increase in planning application fees, and



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welcomes this proposal so that the Council's planning service is better placed to facilitate delivery throughout the Borough. If a focused effort is made to encourage SME's to increase their market share in new developments, it is considered that further examination of the existing fee structure is also required. It is observed that the current fee thresholds for major developments are more cost effective, price per housing unit, than for smaller developments. The Council will comment on the HWP consultation accordingly.

### 3.5.11 Holding developers to account

The Government will require more information to be provided from developers about the timing and pace of delivery DCLG will increase transparency on the quality of data it publishes on delivery against planned targets, as well as development in the pipeline using 'open data'. Subject to further consultation, the Government proposes to require large housebuilders to publish aggregate information on build out rates to assist local authorities with monitoring their own anticipated delivery rates.

3.5.12 It appears that the Government is proposing to amend the NPPF to include the 'likelihood of development delivery' as a consideration when determining planning applications for housing development, where previous permissions have not been implemented in order to encourage delivery of sites. The HWP Consultation seeks views on whether an applicant's track record of previous delivery on similar housing schemes should be taken into account when determining planning applications.

3.5.13 Government is also seeking to simplify the 'completion notice process' so that approval by the Secretary of State is not required prior to serving a notice, which can be used to withdraw planning permission for a site within a specified timeframe if the stalled development is not completed. Together with Compulsory Purchase powers (which are also being reformed) the government is encouraging the more active use of these powers to enable land assembly and the delivery of housing. Following separate consultation, new guidance for local planning authorities is being prepared covering these matters. Government also intends for the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to take a proactive role on Compulsory Purchase..

3.5.14 It is considered that some of these measures will be useful (e.g. information on estimated build out rate data), but other measures lack sufficient teeth to remain useful (e.g. completion notice reform), or require additional resources and expertise in order to be delivered (e.g. compulsory purchase to facilitate land assembly). The Council will comment on the HWP consultation accordingly.

### 3.6 **Other Housing White Paper Proposals**

In addition to proposed amendments to the NPPF, a number of other proposals have been set out within the HWP, which are summarised below:

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### 3.6.1 Deterring unnecessary appeals

The government proposes to undertake further consultation regarding the introduction of planning appeal fees. Currently, anyone can make an appeal without paying a fee, other than for a ground A appeal against an enforcement notice (equal to the relevant planning application fee). The HWP suggests a sliding scale approach to appeal fees, which may reflect the complexity of applications, possibly with a view to refunding fees where appeals are successful. The aim is to create a fair system, which does not discourage legitimate appeals, but reduces planning by appeal.

3.6.2 The introduction of appeal fees is encouraging, as a lot of officer time and resources are currently used defending the council's decisions and/or Development Plan as a result of the appeal process. It is unclear however, who would benefit from the appeal fee. It is anticipated that the Secretary of State will be the beneficiary, although if there is scope for all or part of this fee to be retained by the authority, this will be beneficial and help offset the costs of defending decisions. This view will be expressed in the recommended consultation response.

### 3.6.3 Tackling Unnecessary Delays

The Housing White Paper highlights a range of measures already introduced through the Neighbourhood Planning Bill, including prohibition of conditions that do not meet the national policy tests; a requirement for pre-commencement conditions to only be applied to planning permissions with agreement of the applicant; and a new deemed discharge mechanism for planning conditions which took effect from 15<sup>th</sup> April 2015. A new streamlined licensing system for managing great crested newts will be rolled out to speed up the delivery of housing and other development. The Government is also undertaking an independent review of the system of developer contributions, seeking reforms which may include community and direct beneficiaries, and standardised open book S106 agreements. The Housing Planning Act 2016 includes provision for a S106 dispute resolution process. An announcement of this review will be included in the Autumn 2017 budget. Government is also considering shortening the timescale for developers to implement permission from 3 years to 2 years (unless this affects viability).

### 3.6.4 New housing delivery test

Strong local leadership is vital if the homes that local areas have planned for are to be built. Having taken into account representations received on its consultation on the principle of a housing delivery test the Government will introduce a new housing delivery test through changes to the NPPF and associated guidance. This will highlight whether the number of homes being built is below target, provide a mechanism for establishing the reasons why, and where necessary trigger policy responses that will ensure that further land comes forward.

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- 3.6.5 To transition to a housing delivery test the Government proposes to use an area's local plan (or, where relevant a statutory Spatial Development Strategy) where it is up-to-date (less than 5 years old) to establish the appropriate baseline for assessing delivery. If there is no up-to-date plan the Government proposes using published household projections for the years leading up to, and including, April 2017 – March 2018 and from the financial year April 2018 – March 2019, subject to consultation, the new standard methodology for assessing household need.
- 3.6.6 The Government is proposing to measure housing delivery using net annual housing additions (which are the national statistic used for monitoring housing delivery). These are published in November covering the previous financial year (April – March).
- 3.6.7 The Government also proposes that the rate of housing delivery for a local authority area would be assessed as the average over a three-year rolling period (to even out peaks and troughs in build rates from one year to the next), and that the first assessment period will be for financial years April 2014 – March 2015 to April 2016 – March 2017.

The new housing delivery test proposes a number of sanctions, where housing delivery has stalled. These are set out in table 1 below.

Table 1. Proposed sanctions of the new Housing Delivery Test

<b>Application of Proposed Housing Delivery Test</b>		
<b>Assessment Period</b>	<b>Trigger</b>	<b>Sanction</b>
1*	November 2017 (Housing delivery below 95% of Annual Requirement*)	Action Plan Required
1*	November 2017 (Housing delivery below 85% of Annual Requirement*)	Plan for 20% Buffer for 5 Year Housing Land Supply
2	November 2018 (Housing Delivery Below 25% of Annual Requirement)	Automatic Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
3	November 2019 (Housing Delivery Below 45% of Annual Requirement)	Automatic Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
4	November 2020 (Housing Delivery Below 65% of Annual Requirement)	Automatic Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

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- 3.6.8 This Council's annual requirement is currently set through the Joint Core Strategy at 520 per annum for the plan period leading up to 2031. In terms of the proposed sanctions, based on emerging draft annual monitoring information, this council should be in a relatively strong position during the first and second assessment period, with historic shortfall largely made up by more recent housing delivery. In order to maintain this position, the Council will need to remain focused on delivering its projected annual housing requirements.
- 3.6.9 The general principle of a standardised housing delivery test is supported as it will strengthen plan monitoring and provide a consistent approach where plans are challenged at appeal. However, the proposed monitoring baseline period gives local authorities no time to react to proposed sanctions, as this period has now passed. Although it is anticipated that this authority will not be affected by sanctions during assessment period 1 and 2, this point is raised within the formal response to the Housing White Paper consultation. In addition, it will be highlighted that where local authorities can demonstrate that a shortfall in housing delivery is due to circumstances outside their control (e.g. a national or international economic downturn), and they have made every positive effort to ensure that housing in their area is delivered, then the presumption in favour of sustainable development should not be applied. Recommendation will be made that Government reserves the power to suspend/modify the proposed triggers in order to take account of national and local circumstances to ensure the primacy of the plan-led system (e.g. during recession).
- 3.6.10 It is noted that under-delivery is usually assessed over a longer baseline period (approximately 10 years) in order to even out the impact of economic peaks and troughs. However, a 10 year housing delivery baseline period will be less responsive to issues of under-delivery over the plan period. It is therefore recommended that a mid-term baseline period of 5 years is proposed in response to the HWP consultation, in order to optimise responsiveness of the Development Plan and dampen the effects of annual over/under delivery. A 5 year baseline period is also more in line with the review cycle requirement for Neighbourhood Plans and Development Plans.
- 3.7 Proposals falling outside of chapters 1 and 2  
A specific set of questions set out in the Housing White Paper Consultation relate to changes to the definition of affordable housing, although chapter's 1 and 2 of the HWP do not specifically cover this.
- 3.7.1 Increasing delivery of Affordable Home ownership products  
The HWP proposes to widen the definition of affordable homes to include starter homes, discounted market sales housing and affordable private rent housing (the latter being more suited to 'build to rent' schemes).
- 3.7.2 Following any proposed change to the definition of affordable housing, local planning authorities will have to consider the broadened definition of affordable housing in their evidence base for plan-making. To promote delivery of affordable homes to buy, the Government proposes to make it clear in national

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planning policy that local authorities should seek to ensure that a minimum of 10% of all homes on individual sites are affordable home ownership products. The Government also proposes that this policy should apply to sites of 10 units or more (or 0.5+ hectares).

- 3.7.3 Changes to this definition will form part of the agreed affordable housing contribution on each site. So, for example, on a proposed development of 100 units, the proposed requirement would expect local planning authorities to seek a minimum of 10 affordable home ownership products. Application of this policy to developments of 10 units or more (or 0.5+ hectares) aligns with the planning definition of 'major development' for development management purposes. A lower threshold would be contrary to existing national planning policy, and could have an adverse impact on the form or viability of such developments. However, as proposed, most rural housing allocations sites will fall below this threshold meaning few affordable houses will be secured in rural locations where housing costs are often significantly higher.
- 3.7.4 It is considered that although changes to the Affordable Housing definition seek to strike a balance between providing affordable homes for rent and helping people into home ownership, there is some concern that the inclusion of starter homes within this definition will fail to help most households who cannot currently afford to buy their own home due to the high level income cap, and shifts focus away from those households most at need (i.e. households that can only afford to rent). Other issues linked to the affordable housing definition are also raised through the Housing White Paper Consultation (questions 31 – 33). The proposed response is attached as appendix 1.

#### **4.0 Conclusion**

- 4.1 The Housing White Paper sets out a number of wide ranging initiatives and changes, which seek to speed up and increase the quantum of housing delivery across the country, with measures to incentivise Local Authorities which rise to that challenge and facilitate housing growth, whilst penalising Local Authorities as well as developers who fail to embrace the proposals set out within the document.
- 4.2 Due to its location within an identified growth area, as well as its proven track record of accepting and delivering housing, Kettering Borough is considered well placed to meet the challenges set out in the Housing White Paper.
- 4.3 In addition, the joint arrangements in North Northamptonshire are well aligned with proposals put forward for consultation, and will allow North Northamptonshire as a whole to respond quickly to awards of funding, ensuring that funding is directed at projects that are primed to deliver accelerated levels of housing development.
- 4.4 It is recognised that the measures set out in the Housing White Paper are all made with an emphasis on increasing housebuilding. Kettering Borough Council, together with the Joint Planning and Development Unit supports efforts

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to increase building where there is an identified need as part of an overall strategy for delivering sustainable communities, and North Northamptonshire as whole is seeking to deliver nationally significant planned growth through the Joint Core Strategy. It is therefore essential that sufficient resources are maintained to unlock barriers to delivery and support the delivery of sustainable growth in North Northamptonshire.

- 4.5 In recognising these opportunities and strengths, the Council has already registered its wish to be one of the authorities seeking to increase planning fees by 20% in line within a recommendation set out within the HWP, to strengthen the planning department's role in facilitating this growth. There are some concerns to some of the changes proposed within the HWP, as well as outstanding questions, which are set out in the recommended consultation comments to the HWP Consultation are set out in Appendix 1 of this report. These comments aim to represent the recommended views of this Council in order to help influence the direction of change coming through the planning system.

### **5. RECOMMENDATION**

That Members note the main contents of the Housing White Paper and endorse the recommended comments to the public consultation to the Housing White Paper Consultation attached as Appendix 1 to this report, for submission to the Department for Communities and Local Government as the formal response for Kettering Borough Council.

#### Previous Reports/Minutes:

None

Contact Officer: Mark Coleman (Development Officer)