

PLANNING AND HOUSING POLICY ADVISORY PANEL

30 APRIL 2013

Subject: **Methodology for the identification of Local Service Villages**

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**Lead Member/
Portfolio Holder:** **Councillor C Saint**

Summary

To consider the methodology for identifying the Local Service Village category of settlements in the Core Strategy and the basis for apportioning an appropriate scale of housing development in them.

Recommendation

That the methodology set out in the report be supported as the basis for identifying the Local Service Villages in the Core Strategy and the scale of housing development that should be provided in them.

1 Background

- 1.1 The LSV category of settlement is an integral part of the proposed distribution of housing development in the emerging Core Strategy. As things stand, the role of these settlements would be greater than that set out in the current Local Centre Villages in the District Local Plan. In the Local Plan, only housing development to meet a proven local need would be appropriate, through the operation of the 'local choice' policy (COM.1). In the Core Strategy, in order to achieve the scale of development envisaged, their role would be to meet local need and also an element of demand for market housing from new households.
- 1.2 As a means of applying the 'wider dispersal' approach to future housing development, a methodology was devised to define a wider range of settlements as LSVs, compared with the LCV category in the District Local Plan. In the Draft Core Strategy 2012, 39 such settlements were identified, whereas there are only 20 LCVs.
- 1.3 Some concern has been expressed that certain settlements are unsuitable to be LSVs due to their relatively small size or lack of facilities. It has also been suggested that the methodology has not been applied accurately in respect of certain settlements, or that circumstances have changed since it was initially devised and applied in 2010.

2 Evidence Base

- 2.1 There is clearly an interrelationship between the overall scale of housing development envisaged for LSVs, the number of settlements to be identified in this category, and the number of dwellings that each settlement might be expected to provide in order to achieve the 'wider dispersal' strategy.
- 2.2 In purely mathematical terms, the 2,240 dwellings apportioned to the 39 LSVs identified in the Draft Core Strategy 2012 (see Table 1 and para. 9.07, page 80), equates to approximately 57 dwellings in each settlement over the twenty year plan period. This may be a sustainable scale of development in the larger LSVs but might be considered too much for many of the smaller ones.
- 2.3 There are three key issues that need to be addressed:
 - (i) How might the methodology for identifying LSVs be adjusted?
- 2.4 The methodology originally used was not a particularly detailed approach. It was based on three criteria: a size threshold of more than 100 dwellings, the presence of key facilities (eg. general store, primary school, pub), and the availability of a frequent public transport service. A settlement had to satisfy at least two of these criteria to be a LSV.
- 2.5 A number of objections have been made that specific settlements should be deleted from the list of LSVs, eg. Alveston, Bearley, Earlswood, Long Compton, Pillerton Priors. On the other hand, suggestions have been made for including other settlements as LSVs, eg. Broom, Dunnington, Temple Grafton.
- 2.6 Some objections were received on the Draft Core Strategy suggesting a more detailed approach to defining LSVs. However, there is a risk that this would make the methodology even more prone to criticism. An alternative approach would be to assess each settlement for its particular characteristics, rather than base it on the presence or otherwise of a specific level of service provision.
 - (ii) How much overall housing development would be appropriate in LSVs?
- 2.7 The 2,240 dwelling requirement proposed for LSVs in the Draft Core Strategy equated to 40% of the remaining number of dwellings to be provided in the District at that time (ie. as at 1 April 2011).
- 2.8 The SHLAA Review assesses the availability and suitability of sites within and on the edges of LSVs. It indicates that these settlements may only be able to accommodate approximately 1,000 dwellings. Although further sites may come forward through the process of preparing the Site Allocations DPD and Neighbourhood Plans, current evidence suggests that an overall requirement for LSVs to provide 2,240 dwellings is too high.
 - (iii) How much housing development would be suitable in each LSV?
- 2.9 Given the wide range of settlements in the LSV category, in terms of size and character, it would be inappropriate to assume that each one should take a similar (average) amount of housing development. To avoid this

misinterpretation, it would be helpful to provide an indication of the scale of development that might be suitable for each settlement. Two approaches to doing this are:

- Set a %age increase in dwellings that would be applied to each LSV regardless of the level of facilities and accessibility.
- Identify bands of settlements to which a different scale of housing development would be applied, according to the range of facilities available in the settlement and accessibility to larger centres.

2.10 Of these two approaches, it is suggested that the latter would, on balance, be the more appropriate to use as it takes into account other factors, not just the current size of the settlement.

2.11 The original methodology was a reasonable approach in that it was neither too simple, nor too complicated. However, its downside was that it did not assess the quality of a particular service, eg. size and opening hours of general store, frequency of bus service.

2.12 The approach set out below has sought to apply this qualitative assessment for three key services: general store, primary school and public transport, together with the existing size of the settlement.

The following scoring system has been used:

Size of settlement: Large (600-1000 dwellings) = 3 points

Medium (250-600 dwellings) = 2 points

Small (100-250 dwellings) = 1 point

General Store: Large/long opening hours = 3 points

Small/long opening hours = 2 points

Small/short opening hours = 1 point

Primary School: Large (>200 pupils) = 3 points

Medium (100-200 pupils) = 2 points

Small (<100 pupils or only infant or junior) = 1 point

Public Transport: Very good (at least hourly Mon-Sat) = 3 points

Good (at least two hourly Mon-Sat) = 2 points

Fair (less than two hour) = 1 point

2.13 The table below provides the scores based on this approach. It should be noted that the information about service provision will need to be checked and updated on a regular basis.

Settlement	Size	Shop	School	Public Tr	Total
Alderminster	1	0	0	2	3
Alveston	1	0	0	3	4
Aston Cantlow	1	0	0	0	1
Bearley	2	0	0	2	4

Settlement	Size	Shop	School	Public Tr	Total
Binton	1	0	0	0	1
Bishops Itchington	3	3	3	2	11
Brailes	2	3	2	2	9
Broom	1	0	0	0	1
Butlers Marston	1	0	0	0	1
Cherington/Stourton	1	0	0	0	1
Claverdon	2	2	3	0	7
Clifford Chambers	1	0	0	3	4
Earlswood	2	2	0	3	7
Ettington	2	2	2	2	8
Farnborough	1	0	0	0	1
Fenny Compton	2	2	3	2	9
Forshaw Heath	1	0	0	0	1
Gaydon	1	2	0	2	5
Great Alne	1	0	2	3	6
Halford	1	1	0	0	2
Hampton Lucy	1	0	2	0	3
Harbury	3	3	3	3	12
Ilmington	2	2	2	1	7
Kings Coughton	1	0	0	3	4
Ladbroke	1	0	0	1	2
Lighthorne	1	0	0	0	1
Lighthorne Heath	2	2	1	2	7
Little Compton	1	0	0	0	1
Little Kineton	1	0	0	0	1
Long Compton	2	2	1	1	6
Long Itchington	3	3	2	3	11
Long Marston	1	1	0	2	4
Loxley	1	0	1	0	2
Mappleborough Gr.	1	0	1	0	2
Moreton Morrell	1	0	2	0	3
Napton-on-the-Hill	2	2	2	1	7
Newbold-on-Stour	1	2	1	3	7
Northend	1	0	0	2	3

Settlement	Size	Shop	School	Public Tr	Total
Oxhill	1	0	0	1	2
Pillerton Priors	1	1	0	1	3
Priors Marston	1	0	1	0	2
Quinton	3	2	2	3	10
Radway	1	0	0	0	1
Ratley	1	0	0	0	1
Salford Priors	2	2	1	3	8
Sambourne	1	0	0	0	1
Shotteswell	1	0	0	0	1
Snitterfield	2	2	2	2	8
Stockton	2	2	2	3	9
Stretton-on-Fosse	1	0	0	1	2
Tanworth-in-Arden	1	0	3	1	5
Temple Grafton	1	0	2	0	3
Temple Herdewycke	2	0	1	2	5
Tiddington	3	3	2	3	11
Tredington	1	0	1	3	5
Tysoe	2	2	3	1	8
Ullenhall	1	0	0	0	1
Warmington	1	0	0	0	1
Welford-on-Avon	2	2	3	2	9
Whichford	1	0	0	0	1
Wilmcote	2	2	2	3	9
Wood End	1	0	0	3	4
Wootton Wawen	2	2	2	3	9

2.14 This methodology would lead to a small number of additional settlements being defined as LSVs, ie. Temple Herdwycke, Ladbroke, Kings Coughton, Stretton-on-Fosse, Temple Grafton and Wood End.

2.15 Based on the total scores in the table, the following groupings of LSVs might be adopted, with an indication of the scale of housing development that might be applied to each during the plan period:

Group 1 (Score 10+)

Bishops Itchington, Harbury, Long Itchington, Quinton, Tiddington

Proposed scale of housing development: 76-100 dwellings

Group 2 (Score 8-9)

Brailes, Ettington, Fenny Compton, Salford Priors, Snitterfield, Stockton, Tysoe, Welford-on-Avon, Wilmcote, Wootton Wawen

Proposed scale of housing development: 51-75 dwellings

Group 3 (Score 5-7)

Claverdon, Earlswood, Gaydon, Great Alne, Ilmington, Lighthorne Heath, Long Compton, Napton-on-the-Hill, Newbold-on-Stour, Tanworth-in-Arden, Temple Herdewycke, Tredington

Proposed scale of housing development: 26-50 dwellings

Group 4 (Score 2-4)

Alderminster, Alveston, Bearley, Clifford Chambers, Halford, Hampton Lucy, Ladbroke, Long Marston, Loxley, Kings Coughton, Mappleborough Green, Moreton Morrell, Northend, Oxhill, Pillerton Priors, Priors Marston, Stretton-on-Fosse, Temple Grafton, Wood End

Proposed scale of housing development: 10-25 dwellings

- 2.16 As identified in paragraph 2.9 above, an alternative methodology for deciding an appropriate scale of development in the LSVs would be to set a standard percentage increase in the existing housing stock that would be applied to all these villages.
- 2.17 This approach provides a simple and consistent basis for apportioning development. However, it does not take into account the fact that villages of similar size do not necessarily have the same level of services or accessibility by public transport.
- 2.18 The capacity of individual villages to take development, and the assessment of specific sites for their suitability for development, will take into account the presence of environmental designations, such as Green Belt, Cotswolds AONB, Special Landscape Areas and Conservation Areas.

3 Options available to the Panel

- 3.1 The following options are available:

Option 1:

- To support a revised methodology for identifying Local Service Villages and the scale of housing development in them (as set out in paragraphs 2.12 to 2.15 above).

Option 2:

- To continue to apply the methodology used in the Draft Core Strategy 2012.

Option 3:

- To identify an alternative approach as a basis for categorising Local Service Villages.

4 Members' Comments

- 4.1 Councillor Saint – insert a reference to environmental designations possibly having a bearing on the capacity of individual villages for future development.

5 Implications of the Proposal

5.1 *Legal/Human Rights Implications*

5.1.1 No specific issues have been identified.

5.2 *Financial*

5.2.1 There are no direct implications.

5.3 *Environmental*

5.3.1 The identification of specific sites for housing development in Local Service Villages will take environmental issues into account.

5.4 *Corporate Strategy*

5.4.1 The provision of new homes in rural communities will help to achieve Aim 1 – addressing local housing need.

5.5 *Analysis of the effects on Equality*

5.5.1 The provision of new homes in villages should seek to provide for the needs of the whole community.

6 Risk Assessment

6.1 It is critical that a robust basis for identifying Local Service Villages is agreed as a matter of urgency as it forms an integral part of the approach to distributing future housing development in the District. Any delay in agreeing the approach to be applied will have a major bearing on the ability to produce the next version of the Core Strategy according to the intended timetable.

7 Conclusion

7.1 It is apparent that the revised approach to identifying Local Service Villages and the scale of housing development in them, as set out in this report, is one that can be applied on a consistent basis. Furthermore, the proposed grouping of LSVs provides a means of giving a clear indication of the number of additional dwellings that would be appropriate in the wide range of settlements involved.

7.2 The provisional indication is that the overall scale of housing development the proposed approach would provide is approximately 1,800 dwellings. This figure is based on new housing being delivered at the mid-point in the ranges proposed in paragraph 2.15. This would require the identification of a greater number of sites than that identified in the SHLAA Review although, as previously noted, it is likely that additional sites will come forward in producing the Site Allocations DPD.

7.3 A point to note, however, is that both figures are considerably lower than the 2,240 dwellings apportioned to the LSVs in the Draft Core Strategy 2012. For this reason, it is apparent that the distribution of housing development between the different categories of settlements will need to be adjusted to some extent in producing the next version of the Core Strategy.

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Background papers: None