

## **Guidance and Clarification Note about Policy LP4 Part B – Criteria for Assessing Housing Development Proposals (Non-allocated sites policy) – January 2015**

### **Introduction**

This note seeks to clarify how Policy LP4 Part (B) - Criteria for Assessing Housing Development Proposals in the Fenland Local Plan should be interpreted to provide guidance and clarification about the way planning proposals are considered. For a copy of the Fenland Local Plan please refer to the following link: <http://www.fenland.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=10010&p=0>

The policy states:

**“For housing proposals in the specific and broad locations for growth, see, in particular, Policy LP7. For housing proposals in or around villages, see, in particular, Policy LP12. For small scale housing proposals on the edge of market towns, or any housing proposals within market towns, see, in particular, Policy LP16.**

**Large scale housing proposals (i.e. 250 dwellings or more) on the edge of market towns are directed to the identified specific or broad locations for sustainable growth. Any other large scale housing proposals on the edge of market towns away from these areas will be refused.”**

### **Background**

The adopted Fenland Local Plan is by design a pro-growth and flexible plan to encourage development in the district. The plan no longer relies on Development Area Boundaries (DABs) to set the development limits for settlements (both villages & market towns), and does not allocate a large number of new (relatively small) sites for development, as is the traditional approach in plan making. Rather, in order to establish which sites would be acceptable for development new planning proposals are assessed against a range of criteria set out in a number of policies.

This radical and flexible approach to planning means that only large scale sites in the form of Strategic Allocations and Broad Locations for Growth around the four market towns have been specifically allocated for development in the Local Plan. A large scale site is considered to be 250 dwellings or more.

The Local Plan sets out (in the Housing Trajectory section on pages 93 & 94) that 11,000 dwellings are to be built over the plan period from 2011 to 2031. The Strategic Allocations and Broad Locations are to provide for about 6,440 dwellings. The remaining 4,560 are to be provided from existing planning permissions (2,035) and those already completed since 2011 (528), with the remaining 2,005 being provided in the form of proposals which are assessed against specific criteria.

### **New development in Strategic Allocations and Broad Locations for Growth**

The Key Diagrams in the Local Plan specify the locations of the Strategic Allocations and Broad Locations around the market towns. For proposals in these areas the reader is referred to Policy LP7 – Urban Areas for guidance and the specific policy criteria that would need to be addressed. Proposals which are more than 249 dwellings should only be provided in the Strategic Allocations or

Broad Locations for Growth; outside these areas proposals of this scale will be refused planning permission.

### **New development in Market Towns other than Strategic Allocations and Broad Locations for Growth (Non-allocated sites)**

For proposals for fewer than 250 dwellings (small scale sites) which are either in or adjacent to a market town and not within a Strategic Allocation or Broad Location, the reader is referred in the first instance to the criteria in Policy LP16 - Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments across the District. Under Policy LP4 Part B any site for between 1 to 249 dwellings may be considered as having potential for development.

### **New development in Villages (Non-allocated sites)**

The Local Plan expects about 1,200 dwellings to be built in villages over the plan period. For development in villages Policy LP4 Part B directs the reader to Policy LP12 – Rural Areas, which sets out eleven criteria (a - k) that any planning proposal would need to satisfy. Each village has the potential to increase by up to 10% (15% in the case of Growth Villages) with this limit only exceeded where there is demonstrable support from the local community through either a proportionate pre-application community consultation or a Neighbourhood Plan exercise.

### **Policies to Consider**

Planning law requires that Policy LP4 Part B should be read in conjunction with the development plan as a whole. Depending on the type of development and its location all relevant policies in the development plan need to be satisfied before planning permission can be granted. **Part B of LP4 advises the reader about which particular policies should be referred to in the first instance, but all other relevant policies would still need to be satisfied for a proposal to be approved.**

In addition when determining a planning application any other material considerations would need to be assessed. These may be particularly relevant in certain circumstances. For example, a proposal to build on an area of public open space would need to satisfy policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) on the loss of open space as this matter is not directly addressed in the Local Plan. In this instance NPPF policy would be a material consideration (and carry significant weight if not addressed in the Local Plan) in the determination of that proposal.