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## Topic Paper 5 Housing

Crawley Borough Council adopted its Core Strategy back in November 2007, providing the spatial vision, objectives and development strategy for Crawley up to 2016. The Council has now begun preparing the successor to the Core Strategy – the Core Strategy Review – which will cover a much longer period up to 2026. Although there are aspects of the original Core Strategy that can be retained there are other areas where significant change has occurred in the intervening years and this will need to be reflected in the new document.

This consultation period is the first of the Review and further consultation stages are planned before the document is adopted in early 2012. This is your opportunity to shape the way the town develops over the next 20 years and the Council would appreciate and value any comments you have on this Topic Paper or any of the others that form part of this consultation.

### Summary of the Current Context

To accord with the South East Plan Proposed Modifications, Crawley should accommodate 7,500 dwellings from 2006 to 2026 (375 dwellings per annum).

Government planning policy requires that the housing land supply for the early years of the plan period should meet the test of being achievable, available and deliverable. Contingency should also exist in the housing land supply, to accommodate and address changes in circumstances. There also continues to be a focus on the delivery of affordable housing.

### Indication of the Key Issues Relating to Housing

- The fundamental issue is whether the Council will be able to accommodate and demonstrate a housing land supply against the South East Plan Proposed Modifications requirement (7,500 dwellings 2006 – 2026) within the Borough boundary, particularly in accordance with the neighbourhood principle, which has facilitated the sustainable development of the town. The Council continues to advocate the neighbourhood approach.

The Borough is tasked with accommodating 7,500 dwellings 2006 – 2026, which equates to 375 dwellings per annum. In addition, PPS12 stresses the importance of plans having the ability to demonstrate contingency; therefore, approximately 10% should be added to the 7,500 figure to represent contingency. This is compounded by the South East Plan Proposed Modifications stating that housing requirements are minimum not maximum figures. On this basis, the figure being considered, not



necessarily planned for, is 8,250 dwellings.

In the period 2006 – 2008, 1,147 dwellings were completed within the Borough.

Notwithstanding that the Core Strategy identifies a housing land supply to 2012, the Council considers a housing land supply of approximately 3,862 dwellings exists from 2006 to 2026. This housing land supply comprises the 2006 – 2008 completions (1,147 dwellings), Core Strategy allocations and outstanding planning permissions (these two sources equate to approximately 2,715 dwellings). This represents a residual requirement of approximately 3,638 dwellings, which is required to be planned through the Core Strategy Review. In terms of the five year housing land supply, for the period 2009 to 2014, the 2007/08 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) outlines a surplus of 7 dwellings for this period.

- There remains a question over the role the North East Sector should play in helping to provide for new housing. This is particularly in light of the continued uncertainty regarding the availability of the North East Sector, which arises from the potential noise implications on the site from a possible second runway at Gatwick. This uncertainty should be resolved by the end of 2009, pending the outcome of the Inquiry that reopens in June 2009. The related issues are:
  - The Inquiry should confirm whether the site is available in the context of the Core Strategy Review. If the Council were to lose the Inquiry (current application for 1,900 dwellings), should the Council retain the Core Strategy allocation for the North East Sector for up to 2,700

dwellings, which it is considered the site could accommodate?

- Development of the North East Sector for 2,700 dwellings before 2026 should mean the residual requirement for housing could be met within the Borough boundary.
- In the absence of the North East Sector it will be exceptionally challenging for the requirement to be met within the Borough boundary, which would require the employment of contingency, including exploring strategic development opportunities beyond the Borough boundary.
- To what extent would development of partial neighbourhoods and/or land not forming part of a logical extension to existing neighbourhoods be acceptable in order to maximise development within the Borough boundary?
- With regard to future housing land supply and having regard to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), it is considered that development of three partial neighbourhoods could yield up to 2,500 dwellings. However, it would be difficult to provide full infrastructure provision and community facilities etc through partial neighbourhoods, large greenfield sites (200 dwellings) and large previously developed sites (615 dwellings). Large sites are currently defined as larger than 50 dwellings. This equates to a theoretical housing land supply of 3,315 dwellings.
- Anticipated pressure/proposals of neighbouring authorities to accommodate development at Crawley (adjacent to Crawley, but beyond the Borough boundary).
- Although reliant on continued joint

working and agreement with neighbouring authorities, development at Crawley in the form of further strategic development locations could make a contribution towards the Borough's requirement. Typically, development would be in the form of a strategic development location of 2500 dwellings, adhering to the neighbourhood principle.

- Emerging policy will need to require a reasonable proportion of affordable housing, focused on social rented accommodation. There is an identified affordable housing need of 100 to 250 dwellings per annum to meet the Borough's needs (Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2009) and securing affordable housing remains a policy objective. However, the provision of affordable housing can undermine the viability of housing delivery and therefore impact on overall housing delivery.
- Ensuring an appropriate mix of dwellings is achieved, which supports the findings and recommendations of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).
- Short term, the current economic climate's implications on housing delivery, the type of housing delivery and development viability and its direct influence on the provision of affordable housing.

#### **Indication of the Options for Addressing the Key Issues Outlined Above**

The Council believes at this stage that four options exist for planning for the Borough's housing requirement, including taking into account the need to have regard to contingency. It is important to note that the Council's preferred approach

## Main Issues for Consultation

- At this stage, the Council consider that four options are available in terms of seeking to meet housing requirements. The Council's preferred option would be the development of the North East Sector for 2,700 dwellings. As per option one, do you agree with the potential policy direction of 'ring fencing' / deducting the North East Sector from the housing requirement, until the uncertainty regarding the availability of the North East Sector is resolved, particularly in terms of possible Gatwick expansion and the North East Sector Inquiry?
- If you do not agree with the potential policy direction, which of the three contingency options do you favour?
- Alternatively, if you believe the Council has excluded an option, or the Council should consider a hybrid of the options, please outline these.

would be the comprehensive development of the North East Sector in tandem with other large sites within the Borough boundary to ensure that the South East Plan Proposed Modifications requirement is met within the Borough boundary, which would also meet wider sub regional requirements. As a consequence of the continued uncertainty regarding the availability of the North East Sector, options two, three and four are essentially contingency options to reconcile the current position.

1. Notwithstanding the North East Sector uncertainties, if the North East Sector were to be developed for 2,700 dwellings, against the current understanding of housing land supply there would be a shortfall of 900, before any account is made of sites emerging from the SHLAA, or windfalls. However, currently, the availability of the North East Sector is conditional on the resolution of Gatwick expansion. Therefore, the Council believe policy justification exists to enable the

Council to 'ring fence' / deduct the North East Sector capacity (2700 dwellings) from the 7500 South East Plan Proposed Modifications dwelling requirement and state that meeting the South East Plan Proposed Modifications requirement is dependent on the North East Sector being available, which is conditional on the resolution of Gatwick expansion. This position would reflect the Council's consistent response to the South East Plan that the site is required if the South East Plan Proposed Modifications requirement is to be met within the Borough boundary. Furthermore, the approach would reflect South East Plan Proposed Modifications Policy GAT3, which states development of the North East Sector is subject to resolution of expansion needs at Gatwick. This would leave a requirement of approximately 4800 dwellings.

2. Progress all partial neighbourhood options and all identified sites within

the Borough, leaving an approximate shortfall of 1400 dwellings, which may be met through windfalls.

3. Progress all identified sites within the Borough, except for the 3 partial neighbourhoods meaning the Council would have a housing land supply of about 4200 dwellings and a shortfall of 3300 dwellings. The Council then attempts to secure agreement from neighbouring authorities to meet the shortfall through two new neighbourhoods at Crawley, which contribute to the Council's South East Plan Proposed Modifications requirement as well as the neighbouring authorities.
4. Progress all identified sites within the Borough, except for the 3 partial neighbourhoods resulting in a supply position of about 4200 dwellings and a shortfall of 3300 dwellings. The Council attempt to secure the agreement of a neighbouring authority to support one new neighbourhood at Crawley to



contribute to the shortfall against the Council's South East Plan Proposed Modifications requirement as well as the other neighbouring authorities.

In addition to the spatial and strategic options outlined above, the following wider housing options exist:

- Affordable housing will be sought at 40% for schemes of 15 dwellings, or more and an 80% social rented 20% intermediate tenure split will be applied.
- Affordable housing provision and sustainability measures/requirements will be subject to a viability clause so as not to undermine the delivery of development.
- Affordable housing delivery will be focussed towards smaller dwellings.
- Schemes will be expected to demonstrate a strong housing mix and have a particular focus towards 2, 3 and 4 bed properties.

### Indication of the Potential Direction at this Stage

- The Council's preferred approach is to develop the North East Sector and a number of large sites within the Borough boundary.
- However, given the uncertainties regarding possible expansion of Gatwick and the North East Sector Inquiry, the Council will continue to work towards contingency option one, as outlined above.
- The Council will continue to lead on work with neighbouring authorities and sub regional partners to ensure the South East Plan's requirements are met,

particularly as the Council has to explore opportunities beyond the Borough boundary, or address the strategic plans of neighbouring authorities.

### Current Context

The policy context influencing the Council's policy formulation is as follows:

#### Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning

- Ability to allocate strategic sites in a Core Strategy.
- Need for infrastructure planning and to demonstrate a deliverable plan.

#### Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing

- Housing land supply periods defined with a particular requirement to demonstrate a housing land supply for the first five and ten years of the plan period.
- Available, achievable and developable – the policy test to demonstrate a housing site is deliverable.
- Appropriate and sustainable site identification, whilst acknowledging reduced prominence of the sequential approach.
- Requirement to demonstrate 10 – 20 % contingency in housing land supply.
- Detailed affordable housing guidance regarding the application of requirements, definition of affordable housing and the role of planning policy.

#### South East Plan Proposed Modifications

- Crawley/Gatwick Sub Regional requirement 36,500 dwellings for the period 2006 to 2026.
- Crawley requirement 7,500 dwellings – 2006 to 2026.
- Development of the North East Sector

acknowledged would be dependent on the resolution of Gatwick expansion (GAT 3).

- Crawley and the other sub regional towns to be the focus for growth and development.
- Sub regional affordable housing requirement of 40%.

#### Crawley Borough Core Strategy

- West Sussex Structure Plan compliant (300 dwellings per annum) to 2012.
- Therefore, adopted housing land supply to 2012, includes eight strategic housing sites allocated in the Core Strategy.
- 40% Affordable Housing requirement with a 70/30% tenure split in favour of social rented over intermediate accommodation.

#### West of Bewbush Joint Area Action Plan

- The Inspector's report was published in April 2009 and concluded the Joint Area Action Plan for a new neighbourhood of 2,500 dwellings to be sound. Adoption of the Joint Area Action Plan anticipated to be July 2009.

#### Evidence Base

The evidence base informing this early stage of the formulation of the Core Strategy Review's housing policy is:

#### Annual Monitoring Report (2007/08)

- Against the Secretary of State's South East Plan Proposed Modifications requirement of 375 dwellings per annum – from 2009/10 the 5 year housing land supply indicates a 9 dwelling oversupply
- In the absence of the Core Strategy Review, beyond 2014/15 limited long

<sup>1</sup> Decibels measured on a sound level meter incorporating a frequency weighting ('A' Weighting) which differentiates between sound of different frequency (pitch).



- term housing land supply exists
- Housing land supply largely dependant on flatted development.

- Publicly owned land opportunities under detailed investigation

#### Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (2009)

- Limited private developer response to Council's 'call for sites'
- Limited sites identified of strategic scale (50 dwellings, or more), which is evident from the table below.

#### Northern West Sussex Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (2009)

- The population of the market area has increased by 20% in the last 20 years. In the future, household sizes will decline due to the increased proportion of retirement households, but the market area will remain dominated by families.

- Housing affordability has deteriorated over the last decade, but was to some degree compensated for by mortgage availability (not the case currently). Despite the current economic climate, housing demand will remain strong in the market area. In terms of market housing, the focus should be on 2,3 and 4 bed houses as part of delivering a good mix of dwellings over the plan period.
- Affordable housing provision should remain a policy focus, with social rented accommodation and smaller dwellings the priority.

Type	Site name	Approximate dwelling capacity
Partial neighbourhoods	North East Sector	600
	East of Brighton Road	1400
	Part of Tilgate Golf Course	500 (approximately)
Large identified greenfield sites / Sport and Recreation	Tinsley Lane	200
Large identified	Queens Square and Parkside Car Park	50
	Broad Walk, Church Walk, Cross Keys and the Broadway South	75
	Crawley Traders Market and Land West of Barclays Bank	50
	Station Way and Friary Way	110
	Crawley College site	100
	Land Adjacent to Belmont House	75
	Fire Station Site, Ifield Avenue	55
	Three Bridges Station	100
Estimated maximum total yield from Crawley large sites (above)		3315

#### At Crawley Study (2009)

- West of Ifield and Crabbett Park (east of Crawley) under detailed consideration and investigation regarding the feasibility and appropriateness of accommodating strategic development (neighbourhood).