

Breckland Local Plan Examination

Matter 7:

Other Housing Types and Related Policies

Breckland District Council

Inspector's Questions on the Additional Work and related Proposed Modifications

August 2018



C2 Dwellings

1.26 Are the Council's suggested modifications to Policy HOU 09 and its supporting text justified?

- 1 The suggested modifications from the Council seek to embed the quantum of C2 dwellings within the supporting text of the policy. This has been taken from the requirements defined within the Central Norfolk Strategic Housing Market Assessment. The modifications to the policy seek to clarify the support for C2 residential institutions within Breckland. Furthermore they also seek to protect existing facilities from change of use.
- 2 The modifications are considered to strengthen the interpretation of the policy and represent an appropriate option for the delivery of C2 residential care. The modifications proposed to HOU09 seek to address the discussions at the hearing sessions, through providing certainty on the level of provision required. The inclusion of the quantum of bedspaces to be delivered will enable the monitoring of the effectiveness of the policy.

1.27 Is a largely criteria based approach to the delivery of the identified need for C2 bed spaces justified?

- 3 The Council considers that the approach set out towards the provision of C2 bedspaces to be justified. The Council's proposed modifications set out the level of C2 dwellings required in accordance with the recommendations of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment. As set out in response to issue 1.26, this is considered to improve the effectiveness of the policy.
- 4 The Council is not seeking to solely rely on a criteria based policy to provide C2. A range of approaches to meeting the requirement for C2 bedspaces were set out in the Council's previous matter statement (CS.7). The specialist housing policy is supportive of new applications for C2 bedspaces, in addition to this the plan seeks to allocate a site within Watton for a 60 bed care home. The Local Plan also includes policies to allow people to remain within their own homes for longer (Policy HOU 10). Policy HOU06 Principles of New Housing requires all applications for housing to take appropriate account of need identified in the most up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment. This includes the needs of older people. Further to this, the affordable housing exception site policy HOU14 includes a requirement for new schemes to include an element of the site as specialist housing. It is important to note that none of the policies within the plan including HOU09 prohibit specialist C2 dwellings coming forward

- 5 As part of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment no preferred locations for the delivery of C2 were identified. The spatial distribution for additional C2 bedspaces is promoted largely through market requirements. There is no current evidence setting out a locational preference. Through the call for sites over 600 sites were promoted to the Council. No proposals were made for C2 dwellings as a preferred use of the site. One site was promoted for sheltered housing as an alternative use, however it had a preference for residential development. The site was assessed as an unreasonable alternative and was not taken forward due to its location in Mundford. The site was located entirely within the special protection area 1500m buffer zone, impact on adjacent listed buildings and location within a source protection zone. The assessment is included at page 90 of the regulation 18 emerging site options (LP/S/9).
- 6 The Planning Practice Guidance sets out in relation to the need for older people's housing that *'where local planning authorities do not consider it appropriate to allocate such sites, they should ensure that there are sufficiently robust criteria in place to set out when such homes will be permitted. This might be supplemented by setting appropriate targets for the number of these homes to be built'* (Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 12-006-20150320). Policy HOU9 provides the supportive policy approach for the delivery of C2 bedspaces in Breckland. The modifications also seek to prevent the loss of existing C2 bedspaces when there is an identified need.
- 7 Across Norfolk there is a growing desire to move away from solely seeking to provide care in an institutional setting, which is traditional of C2, and instead support people to remain in their own homes for longer. This is why Policy HOU10 seeks to introduce the optional standards around accessibility of homes. Should the quantum of C2 bedspaces not be met through the Policy HOU09 there would be an implication on the OAN as there would not be people moving out of C3 dwelling houses into C2 institutions. As set out in Policy HOU02, the Council is planning for above housing (8.7%) and this buffer can be used to assist people remaining in their own homes for longer, without preventing the need for new housing as defined through the SHMA being met. This would accord with Policy HOU06 Principles of New Housing, which requires development proposals to take appropriate account of need identified in the most up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment.
- 8 Policy HOU09 represents a supportive criteria based approach to the delivery of C2 bedspaces within Breckland. The Council will seek to monitor the delivery of C2 bedspaces in Breckland to establish the effectiveness of Policy HOU09 through the Authorities Monitoring Report.