



ENGLISH HERITAGE

Affordable Rural Housing and the Historic Environment

REVISION NOTE

June 2012

On 27 March 2012, the Government published the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF). This document contains references to: [Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development](#); [Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing](#); [Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment](#) (PPG15); [Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning](#) (PPG16) (PPGs 15 and 16 were subsequently replaced by [Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment](#) (PPS5) in 2010). These have been superseded by the NPPF as Government Policy on the management of change to the Natural and Historic Environment in England.

Whilst some of the references in this document may now be out-of-date, English Heritage believes that it does still contain useful advice, guidance and case studies. We are in the process of revising this publication:

- **to reflect changes resulting from the NPPF and other Government initiatives**

For further enquiries, please email policy@english-heritage.org.uk

www.english-heritage.org.uk



Affordable Rural Housing and the Historic Environment



ENGLISH HERITAGE

English Heritage is the Government's lead advisory body for the historic environment. Our responsibilities include the understanding and conservation of historic buildings, sites and areas; designed landscapes; archaeology on land and under water; and the historic aspects of the wider landscape. Central to our role in the planning system is the advice we give to local planning authorities and government departments on development proposals affecting the historic environment.

This statement gives guidance on delivering successful affordable rural housing projects in historic hamlets, villages and market towns. It is aimed at those involved in enabling or providing affordable housing and at local authority planning and specialist historic environment staff.

More detailed versions of some case studies contained in this document, together with other examples of good practice, are available on the *Historic Environment – Local Management* (HELM) website (www.helm.org.uk/affordable-rural-housing).

INTRODUCTION

High house prices in recent years have made it increasingly difficult for people to get on the housing ladder or to rent a home at a market rent.■ In rural areas, where house prices had risen been rising faster and higher than in urban areas, this has become a particularly acute problem for the young and others on low incomes. Similarly, professional 'key workers' such as nurses, police officers and teachers, as well as those engaged in managing the land or other essential rural occupations, are often unable to afford a home in rural areas where they would wish to live or work. Research undertaken for the Barker Review (2004) and the Affordable Rural Housing Commission (2006) has shown that a large proportion (45% in 2006) of newly formed households in rural areas cannot afford to set up home in the ward where they currently live. As the countryside often appears to be prosperous, housing problems can be less visible than in towns and cities, but rural incomes are on average lower than urban incomes and only 5% of homes in rural areas are affordable compared to the national average of 23%.

The Government acknowledges this shortfall and has set out its vision for 'everyone to have access to a decent home at a price they can afford, in a place where they want to live and work' (CLG 2007). It is committed to increasing affordable housing provision to meet the needs of a wide sector of the population and has sought views on the delivery of rural affordable housing through the Affordable Rural Housing Commission and the Taylor Review of Rural Economy and Affordable Housing. These reported in May 2006 and July 2008 respectively.

The Affordable Rural Housing Commission concluded that, to maintain local communities, retain key workers within the countryside and support the rural economy, at least 11,000 affordable homes need to be built annually across settlements with a population of less than 10,000 (ARHC 2006). The Taylor Review (2008) considered how the planning system could give better support to rural communities and made a number of recommendations to Government on how the shortfall in affordable rural housing provision can be addressed. This could mean considering development in areas that are environmentally sensitive, including historic settlements.

English Heritage supports the Government's aim to increase affordable housing in rural areas and this guidance is intended to help schemes to complement and enhance the historic character of our market towns, villages, hamlets and farmsteads. In order to inform its production, English Heritage commissioned a survey to examine the implications for the historic environment of the provision of affordable rural housing (Forum Heritage Services 2008). Evidence was gathered from housing associations, rural housing enablers, local authorities and others which demonstrated that heritage considerations – archaeology and new build in historic areas – are not seen as a major impediment by the affordable rural housing sector. Key areas of concern were the design quality of schemes in historic areas and the need to use materials that maintain local character and distinctiveness. A copy of the survey report is available on the *Historic Environment – Local Management* (HELM) website (www.helm.org.uk/affordable-rural-housing).

■ While the implications of the current economic downturn for the affordable housing sector are far from clear, the Taylor Review (2008) concluded that, notwithstanding short to medium term price fluctuations, the long term problem of housing supply and affordability in rural areas will remain.

PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK: SELECTED POLICIES ON DESIGN QUALITY, CHARACTER AND THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

The need for high quality design in new buildings that responds to local distinctiveness and character is firmly established in national Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Guidance Notes (PPG), particularly *PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development* (ODPM 2005), which is supported by the supplement *Better Places to Live by Design* (CABE 2001).

PPS1: DELIVERING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

5. Planning should facilitate and promote sustainable and inclusive patterns of urban and rural development by... protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, the quality and character of the countryside, and existing communities.
13. (iv) Planning policies should promote high quality inclusive design in the layout of new developments and individual buildings in terms of function and impact, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development. Design which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area should not be accepted.

The policies of *PPS1* relating to the need for good design are reflected in *PPS3 Housing* (CLG 2006a) and *PPS7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas* (ODPM 2004).

PPS3: HOUSING

30. In providing for affordable housing in rural communities, where opportunities for delivering affordable housing tend to be more limited, the aim should be to deliver high quality housing that contributes to the creation and maintenance of sustainable rural communities in market towns and villages. This requires planning at local and regional level adopting a positive and pro-active approach which is informed by evidence.

PPS7: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AREAS

1. (vi) All development in rural areas should be well designed and inclusive, in keeping and scale with its location and sensitive to the character of the countryside and local distinctiveness.

Complementary policies relating to the historic environment are contained in *PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment* (DoE and DNH 1994) and *PPG16 Archaeology and Planning* (DoE 1990)*:

PPG15: PLANNING AND THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

- 2.14 The design of new buildings intended to stand alongside historic buildings needs very careful consideration. In general it is better that old buildings are not set apart, but are woven into the fabric of the living and working community. This can be done, provided that the new buildings are carefully designed to respect their setting, follow fundamental architectural principles of scale, height, massing and alignment, and use appropriate materials. This does not mean that new buildings have to copy their older neighbours in detail: some of the most interesting streets in our towns and villages include a variety of building styles, materials, and forms of construction, of many different periods, but together forming a harmonious group.

PPG16: ARCHAEOLOGY AND PLANNING

6. Archaeological remains should be seen as a finite and non-renewable resource... Appropriate management is therefore essential to ensure that they survive in good condition. In particular, care must be taken to ensure that archaeological remains are not needlessly or thoughtlessly destroyed.

* During 2009, Government will consult on draft Planning Policy Statement 15: Planning for the Historic Environment, which will replace PPGs 15 and 16.

THE ENGLISH HERITAGE POSITION

The provision of affordable housing is fundamental to the future sustainability of rural communities, which will need a diverse mix of people in terms of income, age, skills and background if they are to flourish. The provision of affordable housing can make a practical contribution to maintaining and enhancing the character of historic rural settlements and their surrounding landscapes – helping key workers and people with land-management or craft skills to live and work locally, as they have done throughout history. A vigorous and diverse population can also help support local services, such as shops, pubs, schools and places of worship, many of which provide active uses for historic buildings and contribute to the cherished local scene.

The historic character of market towns, villages and hamlets, or even individual farmsteads, need not be an impediment to delivering affordable housing, provided that high standards of planning, design and implementation are adopted. Quality of design will also promote greater community acceptance of affordable housing schemes, ensuring these homes are fit to sit at the heart of our most historic rural settlements. English Heritage would like to see the affordable homes of today making a truly positive contribution to the valued historic places of tomorrow.

We believe that every developer, whether public, private or in partnership, should meet the same standard in the provision of affordable rural housing in terms of layout, design and materials. We do, however, recognise that the need to deliver high quality outcomes in sensitive locations – particularly where development sites have the capacity for fewer units – may need to be reflected in the budget provision made to local scheme providers by the Homes and Communities Agency.² The Affordable Rural Housing Commission recognised these higher costs in their recommendation to Government that 'the Housing Corporation identifies the additional costs of rural development and adjusts its allocations so as not to penalise rural schemes' (ARHC 2006, p. 4).

HISTORIC AFFORDABLE HOUSING

There is a long tradition of affordable housing in rural areas. Many of England's villages, hamlets and farmsteads include examples of historic 'affordable housing', such as the cottage of the farm labourer, typically built in the local vernacular, or the small houses constructed by an estate. Our market towns often contain historic almshouses dating from the 16th century onwards (many still maintained by charities and fulfilling the aims of the original benefactors) and the 18th and 19th century terraced housing of workers employed in local trades or industries. These are often now regarded as desirable homes and are highly valued for the contribution they make to the character of the countryside.

The inter-war period saw many affordable homes built, in some cases using the local vernacular in their design. Following the Second World War there was an expansion of council house building in rural areas, although this often involved developing detached or edge of village sites set apart from the older core and using standard designs that are instantly recognisable as social housing.

The tradition of providing homes for local people in rural areas has a long pedigree which, whilst not always successful, provides many of today's valued historic buildings and exemplars from which we can still learn.

DELIVERING AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN HISTORIC SETTLEMENTS

Evidence of the past is all around us – most obviously in historic buildings, but also in the character, layout and location of settlements (whether market towns, villages, hamlets or scattered farmsteads) and in the boundaries of property plots and fields. Buried archaeological remains, although not readily visible, contain valuable and irreplaceable clues to the past and will be present in most settlements. All of these elements make a major contribution to the character of the landscape – helping to define 'sense of place' or 'local distinctiveness'.

² The Homes and Communities Agency became operational on 1 December 2008. The Agency has assumed responsibility for the National Affordable Housing Programme from the Housing Corporation and now acts as the principle funder for Housing Associations in England. The National Affordable Housing Programme is due to invest £8.4bn in affordable housing by 2011.

This heritage is an important asset in the economic development and regeneration of rural areas. It can attract businesses, create jobs and it underpins the tourism industry, which is a significant contributor to rural economies.

The historic environment can usually be integrated in a positive way when it is carefully considered in the development of proposals. By understanding the character of the area, its sensitivity and its capacity to accommodate change, the proposed development can meet the needs of the local community whilst still protecting and enhancing sense of place and the environment. Getting the right information and advice at an *early* stage in the process is particularly important to ensure that any issues are effectively identified and managed.

IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITES

Affordable housing need is currently addressed by allocating sites for development in the Local Development Framework (or Local Plan, where still current) and/or through “exception sites” policies. **3** A significant proportion of affordable homes are delivered by private developers meeting specified thresholds and quotas on market housing schemes.

Although there continues to be debate on the merits of exception site policies, there is broad agreement that much of the required affordable housing stock should be met through sites allocated in the Local Development Framework and based on evidence of need. English Heritage commends a plan-led approach, particularly as this will enable local authority historic environment specialists (historic buildings/conservation officer and archaeological officer) to comment and provide advice before development sites are selected. However, we recognise that exception sites will still have a role to play and recommend that local authorities seek advice from their historic environment specialists (or, where appropriate, English Heritage) on the suitability of these sites as they come forward. This will help to ensure that schemes enhance local historic character and avoid problems (such as having to deal with important archaeological remains) at a late stage in the process. A formal approach to the selection of exception sites (such as that adopted by the Hampshire Alliance for Rural Affordable Housing <http://www.harrah.org.uk>) can help to ensure this advice is sought at an early stage.

A Milton Abbas, Dorset, is famous as an 18th century planned village. It was created when the town was moved from its medieval site to make space for a lake in the grounds of Milton Abbey. These picturesque cob and thatch cottages were built for estate workers and are now much cherished ‘affordable housing’.
© Bob Edwards

B Many historic market towns have examples of 19th century terraced housing built for local workers. Wilton, Wiltshire, is famous for carpet-making and has several terraces including this row built by the Weaver’s Guild.
© Bob Edwards



3 Exception sites are sites brought forward solely for affordable housing that are not allocated for development in the Local Development Framework and where open market housing would not be granted planning permission. In order to get planning permission there has to be evidence of the need for affordable housing.

UNDERSTANDING AND DEFINING CHARACTER AND SIGNIFICANCE

When a potential development site within an historic settlement is identified, it is important that the character, significance and sensitivity of the place is understood *before* the design process begins. This will result in better outcomes, more likely to be acceptable to local communities, and will also substantially reduce the risk of delay and additional cost at a later stage.

Historic character

Detailed information on the historic character of individual settlements can be obtained from conservation area appraisals, village design statements, parish plans and other characterisation studies where they exist.

- If a site is within or adjacent to a conservation area, the conservation area appraisal may provide useful information on the character and development of the settlement. It should describe areas of distinctive character within the conservation area, the quality of its buildings, materials and local details. It might also contain management proposals for the conservation area including guidance on planning applications, the design of new buildings and the treatment of public spaces.
- Parish plans and village design statements may also provide useful advice and guidance on the character of the settlement, the sensitive design of new buildings and future community priorities.
- Historic landscape and urban characterisation studies often give helpful information on how the historic environment has shaped, informed and is reflected in the present day settlement pattern.

Information on conservation areas, parish plans and village design statements will be available from the local planning authority. In some local authority areas, conservation area appraisals and village design statements may have been adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents.

Historic Buildings

The re-use of historic buildings can provide homes at the heart of a community that are both affordable and accessible and the conversion of empty or redundant historic buildings (whether listed or unlisted) usually makes a positive contribution to the local environment. While historic buildings may sometimes present particular challenges, the result can provide homes of distinct character that people enjoy living in.

The re-use of under-utilised upper floor space over shops and commercial premises, for example, creates ideal small units.

Access to historic buildings for people with disabilities can often be overcome through careful design and English Heritage has published guidance to help those involved in managing historic buildings and planning alterations in order to comply with the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (English Heritage 2004).

Most historic buildings can also be adapted to improve their energy efficiency and sustainability and to comply with Decent Homes Standards (CLG 2006b) whilst retaining their character and significance. English Heritage advice on enhancing the energy efficiency of traditional buildings and improving their resilience to climate change is available at <http://www.climatechangeandyourhome.org.uk>.

Where there are listed buildings within or adjacent to a site identified for affordable housing development, the impact of the development on the setting of the listed building is a material factor that must be considered.

Archaeology

Most small rural settlements and market towns will contain fragile and irreplaceable archaeological remains and where these are of national importance there is a planning presumption in favour of their physical preservation. However, the needs of archaeology and development can often be reconciled if developers consider the potential effects of development at an early stage in the preparation of a scheme. The principal aim should be to identify whether there are any known archaeological remains within or adjacent to the development site. Early identification of the need to undertake archaeological work will assist with project planning and budgeting and can be a factor in the price paid for land if undertaken before purchase.

Historic Environment Record

Information on the local historic environment including archaeological remains, historic buildings, historic landscape and urban characterisation studies, is available from the Historic Environment Record. This is maintained by the local authority at county, unitary or district level. Details on the location of the local Historic Environment Record can be obtained through the Heritage Gateway (www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway).

C Converting these former stables and outbuildings in the White Hart Yard, Penrith, Cumbria has regenerated a neglected group of historic buildings into homes of character. These now feature in the Penrith Town Trail.
 © Eden Housing Association



D Where a conservation area has an up to date appraisal an analysis of the townscape, identifying important buildings (listed and unlisted), important structures (such as boundary walls), trees and views in and out of the conservation area should be included. The character of distinct parts of the area, based on factors such as building form, scale, materials and uses, should also be described.
 © Salisbury District Council

D



DESIGN IN A RURAL CONTEXT

This section should be read in conjunction with the publication *Building in Context: New Development in Historic Areas* (English Heritage and CABE 2001). Further useful design information is contained in *Creating a Sense of Place: A Design Guide* (Business in the Community and The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment 2006).

For any affordable housing scheme proposed in a sensitive historic location, a good understanding of the local context of the development will be fundamental to ensuring its success in design terms. This, in turn, can make an important contribution to ensuring a scheme's acceptance by the local community.

In a rural settlement the local context of the built environment is often (but not invariably) intimate or disparate in character with buildings that are modest in scale and architectural pretension. Streets tend to be narrower and the pattern of settlement development more organic. Plots can be irregular and tightly constrained, particularly in terms of access. These characteristics and their combination will vary between farmsteads, hamlets, villages and market towns as well as between and within regions but in all rural areas it is particularly important to avoid development with an urban or suburban character or detailing.

Planning applications for schemes in sensitive locations should demonstrate that an appraisal of local context has been carried out. They should also show, with annotated maps, sketches, historic maps and supporting information, how it has influenced the design process. The use of an architect with experience of working in historic areas, will often pay dividends in the successful delivery of such a scheme.

Six issues that need to be addressed in order to achieve a successful scheme, having particular regard to the rural character of settlements, are:

Grain and Density

Grain relates to the size and pattern of plots and the density and positioning of buildings within the plots. This shows the historic development of the settlement and, in some small historic settlements (e.g. Cornish fishing villages), density can be very high.

- What is the typical plot shape and size and density of the buildings in the village or town?
- Are the plots planned and regular or irregular?
- How do buildings relate to the street or path and to each other?
- Are buildings detached, in small formal or informal groups (e.g. farmstead groups) or rows?
- Do these characteristics vary from one part of the settlement to another?

Scale and Suitability

Scale is related to the grain and form of the surrounding settlement. Height is only one factor. It is also about bulk and massing and may include division between uses, such as small shops with accommodation above or agricultural buildings.

- Are existing buildings generally polite in a recognised architectural style or vernacular?
- How do they relate to the street or lane?
- Have changes in height between existing and proposed buildings been handled sensitively?
- Are the number of units required appropriate for the site?

Building Form and Composition

Historic settlements will include a variety of historic building forms – houses, farm buildings or industrial buildings which may inform the design process. Detailed design considerations must be based on the character of local buildings and include the style and proportions of windows and doors. Roof type and pitch must be examined as this is crucial in reflecting scale and local vernacular:

- What are the characteristic building forms?
- How do existing buildings address the street or lane?
- Is there a strongly defined roof ridgeline (parallel to the street or at right angles) and do the roof spans vary in width?
- Is there an established way of linking buildings in the area, for example, with boundary walls or hedges?

Whether a design solution is contemporary or based closely on local historic character, it should be derived from a comprehensive understanding based on appraisal of the site.

Materials and Detailing

Building materials and their use on different building types, or in their immediate surroundings, are an essential element of vernacular architecture. In sensitive locations, proposed materials should, wherever possible, respect the local palette.

Careful thought should be given to the weathering characteristics of new materials, although the use of materials that attempt to mimic the patina of age should be avoided.

- Is the quality and character of materials comparable to that seen on adjacent buildings, boundaries, surfaces, roads and walkways?
- Do the contrasts between materials reflect those in the local vernacular?
- Is the colour, texture and finish appropriate for the context?
- Are local details such as barge boards, window proportions or brick patterns reflected, where appropriate?

Quality of Streets and Spaces, Vistas and Views

A clear hierarchy of public and private spaces is important in delivering successful rural place-making. Boundaries are important in defining spaces but are often over-looked in development proposals. Opportunities should be taken to create views and juxtapositions between buildings that add to the interest of the historic village or town.

Trees, hedges and other planting should be used in a positive way especially adjoining open countryside and in settlements where there is an historic tradition of formal planting in gardens and around public spaces.

Schemes should consider car, cycle and pedestrian movements around and adjacent to the site. Road widths and edging treatment should reflect the precedents of nearby roads and lanes. Surfaces should be shared with an emphasis on the pedestrian. Parking areas should be in parking courts with passive overlooking. It is rarely acceptable (other than on-street parking) to provide parking in front of properties fronting a highway. Particular attention should be paid to the entrance into a scheme. It may be appropriate to create a traditional crossover feature local to the area. ⁴

- Are access routes convenient and existing routes respected?
- In the case of new open space, is it useable and will it provide tangible positive benefits to users of all age groups and the wider community?

E & F The late 19th century plan of the village of Slayley, County Durham (F), shows an irregular row plan. Houses and farms were set along a single street in irregularly spaced groups, mostly close to the frontage. Modern development had in-filled many of the gaps, but largely preserved the linear character of the village.

In order to use the full depth of a plot, an affordable housing scheme has built two-storey houses to the street frontage and single-storey buildings to the rear (E). This retains the historic hierarchy of principal buildings to the front with smaller farm and out-buildings to the rear. © Bob Edwards

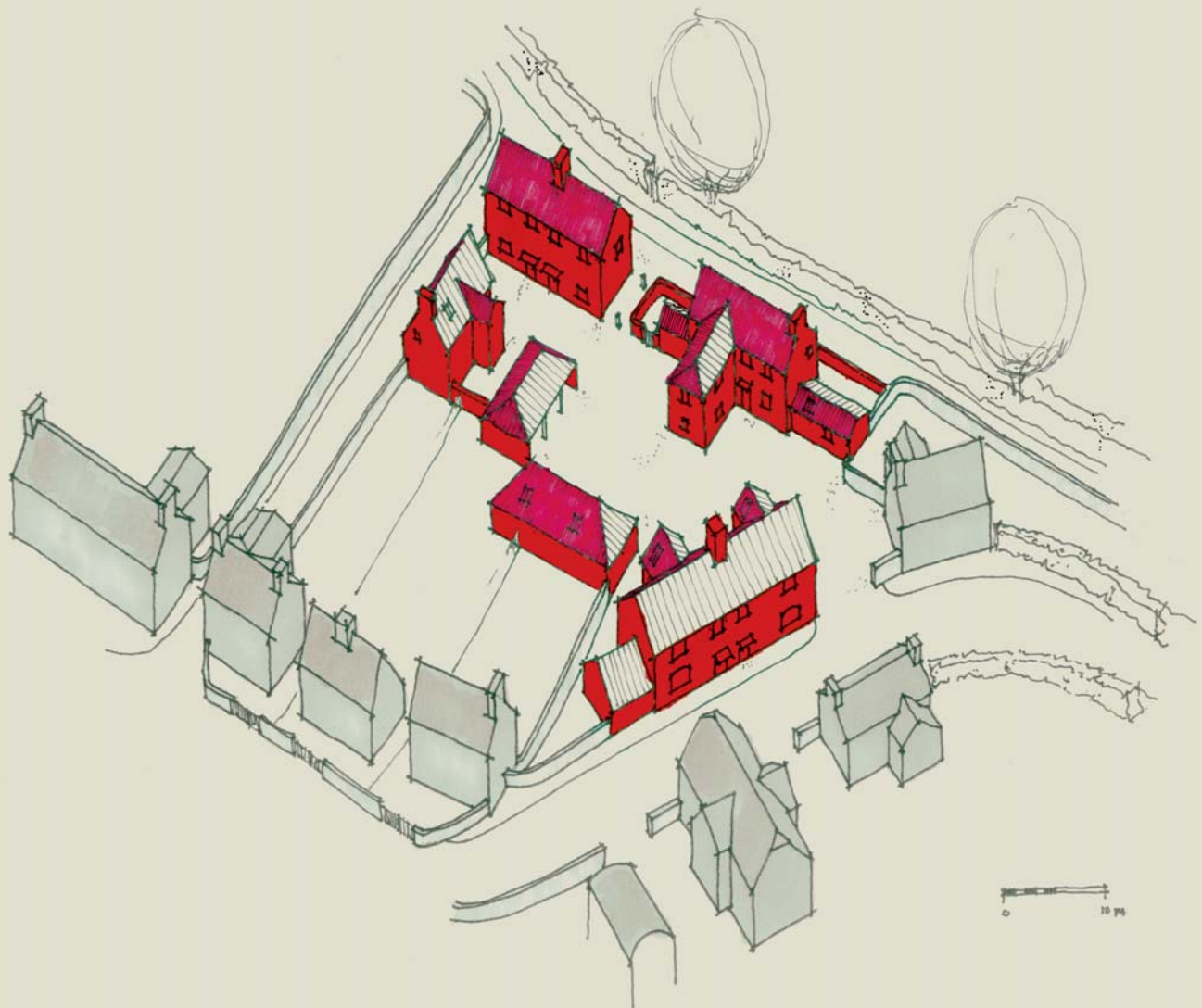


⁴ English Heritage regional guidance *Streets for All* (EH 2005) and *Streets for All Practical Case Studies* (EH 2008a) can provide valuable advice as to the use of locally distinctive materials and methods to achieve a successful finish.

This sketch shows a proposed development on a typical edge-of-village site creating a cluster of houses and larger buildings with a distinct pattern of development relating to the roads and lanes – the buildings shown coloured grey are existing. It illustrates a suggested scheme for a site which avoids creating a modern ‘cul-de-sac’ development. The example demonstrates how new buildings can be integrated into a sensitive historic rural site by maintaining some key principles of design.

- Maintaining the street line with active frontages – main rooms and front doors to the road and lane.
- Giving parking and access areas a yard character rather than a road.

- Introducing permeability and passive surveillance with pedestrian links through the site and buildings looking on to parking areas and semi-public areas.
- Maintaining and respecting the scale and grain of the existing buildings in the immediate surroundings.
- Keeping the form and massing of buildings to a traditional footprint to ensure, in particular, the depth of buildings and their roof-forms are not seen as alien in a traditional historic context.
- Creating interest with new views and terminated vistas and juxtapositions of building and a variation of building types.
- Facing gardens to receive morning and/ or evening sun.



- Have alternatives to tarmac, more in keeping with surrounding treatments, been considered for shared surfaces?
- Is the use of street furniture necessary and of appropriate quality?
- Has the design of ancillary structures (e.g. for household waste bins) been adequately considered?
- Are arrangements for lighting in keeping with a rural location?

Site Management

Proposed schemes should have a clear management regime defined to ensure that appropriate standards are maintained after construction. Particular attention should be paid to any public realm elements.

- Has the future management of the public spaces been considered?
- Is there a clear understanding of who is responsible for what?

DELIVERING PLANNING APPLICATIONS

PPSI (ODPM 2005) highlights the importance and benefits of pre-application discussions between developers and local planning authorities. Through pre-application consultation, the local planning authority will be able to provide advice on the historic sensitivity of any proposed development site and the information requirements needed for any future proposal. The local authority Historic Environment Record should always be consulted and advice sought from local authority historic environment specialists including both the archaeological officer and historic buildings/conservation officer. They will be able to identify any additional information that might be needed including an historic environment assessment or character appraisal and provide guidance on how to undertake and commission this work. The information should always reflect the importance of the place and the impact of the proposed change. It must also be relevant to the scheme, reasonable, appropriate and justifiable.

Circular 01/2006 (CLG 2006d) requires Design and Access Statements to accompany most planning and listed building applications. Both the design and access components should be worked on from the earliest stages of the development proposal and informed by an understanding of the character of the site.

The Circular recommends that the Statement should explain the design and access rationale, how this has been influenced by the local context and whether the findings from any consultation have been considered and reflected in the proposal. It also describes specific requirements for Design and Access Statements relating to proposals which require listed building consent. The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment has prepared guidance on Design and Access Statements (CABE 2007).

Many rural settlements and market towns have important heritage values. For all planning, listed building consent or conservation area consent applications for development that are likely to affect these values, English Heritage advises applicants to provide the following information in support of their proposals.

- Statement of Significance – that demonstrates an understanding of the heritage values of the place. English Heritage promotes a values-based approach to significance as set out in *Conservation Principles* (2008b).
- Justification Statement – explaining why the works are desirable or necessary.
- Impact Assessment and Mitigation Strategy – an assessment of the impact of the proposal on the significance of the place and the steps that have been taken to avoid or minimise possible harm.

In most cases the local authority historic environment specialist (historic buildings/conservation officer or archaeological officer) will be the first point of contact for advice on proposals for change in sensitive historic areas.

English Heritage will normally get involved only where schemes have the potential for major change or damage to the significance of nationally important historic buildings, sites or places. The circumstances in which English Heritage is notified and consulted upon applications affecting the historic environment are set out in its Charter (English Heritage 2009).

G The design for these affordable houses in Orford, Suffolk, was amended after English Heritage suggested that the layout and massing be reconfigured to relate more strongly to the street and to protect long glimpses of the castle at this the main entrance to the village. Influences from local 19th century estate cottages are reflected in the Flemish bond red brickwork and clay pan tiles alongside traditional details such as painted casement windows, substantial bargeboards and open porches.

© Michael Munt, English Heritage

H Affordable housing in historic market towns and rural areas can follow traditional lines. At Miracle Court, Bakewell, Derbyshire, a terrace of affordable houses closely follows the form and scale of local historic terraced houses. The materials and details, such as windows, show a good understanding of the local vernacular.

© Ovi Rominger

I Building materials are one of the most important elements in local character. Weobley, Herefordshire, is well-known as a timber-framed village and fitting new affordable homes into a settlement with such distinct character presents a challenge. Unicorn Court uses some traditional framing and local stone, but most of the walls are rendered to create a development that fits comfortably with its late-medieval neighbours.

© Bob Edwards

J Redevelopment of St James's United Reformed Church and its hall in the market town of Alnwick, Northumberland, which were in urgent need of renovation, not only provided the congregation with a church suitable for the 21st century, but also created community facilities and nine affordable housing units. The scheme, completed in 2008, was part funded by the purchase of the hall by a developer in order to use it to offset its quota share requirement for nine affordable homes on a nearby open-market development. The remaining costs were met by fund-raising and grant aid. See *Faith in Affordable Housing – a practical guide to using church land and property for affordable housing* www.fiah.org.uk

© John Spence,
St James's Church, Alnwick

K The North Nottinghamshire village of Laxton is a nationally important historic settlement and well known for the survival of the system of open field farming. Laxton Parish Council and the Court Leet, which administers the system, were concerned that the lack of affordable housing could ultimately threaten the open field system. In 1993 a local farmer with a local housing association identified a site and produced a scheme for a terrace of five two bedroom cottages. The cottages were built on a narrow plot of land that a 1635 map showed had been built on before. In 1996 the scheme won the Harry Johnson Award sponsored by the Nottinghamshire Building Preservation Trust for the best new build scheme in a village setting.

© Anthony Streeten,
English Heritage

L National Parks or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty often present the greatest problems for affordable housing. House prices tend to be very high and there are few properties available for rent. Development in these areas must meet particularly high design and quality standards and there is often considerable resistance to new development. This scheme in the Peak District National Park reflects local character in its use of materials, form and the layout of the site.

© Bob Edwards

M At Haydon Bridge, Northumberland, the site of a former iron works was developed for affordable housing. The scheme uses locally characteristic materials – sandstone, buff-coloured bricks and slate and maintains the scale of the older buildings along Church Street.

© Bob Edwards

N Development at Shaldon, Devon, occupies a prominent position at the mouth of the River Teign. It includes a mixture of private and affordable housing and had a strong community involvement in the design process. The layout reflects the character of the settlement and the scheme remains subservient to the adjacent Grade II* listed church of St. Peter. Detailing faithfully evokes local vernacular and was particularly informed by existing characteristics, including the separation of car parking from housing, which over time has helped generate contact between residents and fostered a strong sense of community spirit. Importantly, a consistent approach to the design process was maintained throughout the development.

© Harrison Sutton Partnership



K



N



REFERENCES AND KEY SOURCES

ARHC 2006. *Affordable Rural Housing Commission Final Report* (Goodman). London: Affordable Rural Housing Commission

Barker, K 2004. *Review of Housing Supply Delivering Stability: Securing our Future Housing Needs*. London: Affordable Rural Housing Commission

Business in the Community 2005. HRH The Prince of Wales's Affordable Rural Housing Initiative *Making use of empty space for affordable rural housing*. London: Business in the Community

Business in the Community and The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment 2006. HRH The Prince of Wales's Affordable Rural Housing Initiative *Creating a Sense of Place: A Design Guide*. London: Business in the Community

CABE 2000. *By Design. Urban design in the planning system: towards better practice*. London: Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment and Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions

CABE 2001. *Better Places to Live by Design: a companion guide to PPG3*. London: Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment and Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions

CABE 2007. *Design and Access Statements: How to write, read and use them*. London: Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment

Clark, K 2001. *Informed Conservation*. London: English Heritage

CLG 2006a. *Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing*. London: Communities and Local Government

CLG 2006b. *A Decent Home: Definition and guidance for implementation*. London: Communities and Local Government

CLG 2006c. *Delivering Affordable Housing*. London: Communities and Local Government

CLG 2006d. *Circular 01/2006: Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System*. London: Communities and Local Government

CLG 2007. *Homes for the Future: More affordable, more sustainable* (Housing Green Paper). London: Communities and Local Government

CLG/DfT 2007. *Manual for Streets*. London: Communities and Local Government and Department for Transport

CPRE and NHF 2008. *Save Rural England – Build Affordable Homes*, Campaign to Protect Rural England and National Housing Federation

CRC 2007. *Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities: A New Agenda?* Cheltenham: Commission for Rural Communities

CRC 2007. *Making It Happen: Working, Learning & Building Together – Timber Frame, Straw Bale Housing Project, Buckland Newton, Dorset*. Cheltenham: Commission for Rural Communities

CRC 2007. *Making It Happen: Housing Our People project (HOPe) Wealden District Council*. Cheltenham: Commission for Rural Communities

DoE 1990. *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning*. London: Department of the Environment

DoE/DNH 1994. *Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment*. London: Department of the Environment and Department for National Heritage

EH/CABE 2001. *Building in Context: New Development in Historic Areas*. London: English Heritage and Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment

EH 2004. *Easy Access to Historic Buildings*. London: English Heritage

EH 2005. *Streets for All*. London: English Heritage

EH 2006. *Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas*. London: English Heritage

EH 2006. *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals*. London: English Heritage

EH/CABE 2006. *Building in Context: Toolkit*. London: English Heritage and Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment

EH 2008a. *Streets for All Practical Case Studies*. London: English Heritage

EH 2008b. *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*. London: English Heritage

EH 2009. *A Charter for English Heritage Planning and Development Advisory Services Third Edition*. London: English Heritage

Forum Heritage Services 2008. *Affordable Rural Housing and the Historic Environment Project Report*. Typescript report prepared for English Heritage

Housing Justice et al 2009: *Faith in Affordable Housing: Using Church Land and Property for Affordable Housing*. www.fiah.org.uk

IFA 2003. *Homes with History*. Institute of Field Archaeologists, English Heritage and The Housing Corporation

Llewelyn-Davies, 2000. *The Urban Design Compendium*. English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation

ODPM 2004. *Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas*. London: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

ODPM 2005. *Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development*. London: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

Taylor, M 2008. *Living Working Countryside: The Taylor Review of Rural Economy and Affordable Housing*. London: Communities and Local Government

Further English Heritage advice and guidance that has been produced to support local authorities and others in caring for the historic environment can be found on the Historic Environment Local Management (HELM) website (www.helm.org.uk). Publications which may be of particular interest include:

- *Regeneration and the Historic Environment: Heritage as a catalyst for better social and economic regeneration*
- *Low Demand Housing and the Historic Environment*
- *Suburbs and the Historic Environment*
- *Regeneration in Historic Coastal Towns*
- *Understanding Historic Buildings: Policy and Guidance for Local Planning Authorities*
- *Streets for All*
- *Climate Change and the Historic Environment*

These publications, as well as many others, are accessible via the Guidance Library section of the site. You can also access a number of local authority related case studies, which may also be of interest, from the HELM website.

ENGLISH HERITAGE REGIONAL OFFICE CONTACTS

North East

Bessie Surtees House
41 – 44 Sandhill
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 3JF
Tel: 0191 269 1200
northeast@english-heritage.org.uk

North West

Suites 3.3 and 3.4
Canada House
3 Chepstow Street
Manchester, M1 5FW
Tel: 0161 242 1400
northwest@english-heritage.org.uk

Yorkshire and the Humber

37 Tanner Row
York, YO1 6WP
Tel: 01904 601901
yorkshire@english-heritage.org.uk

West Midlands

The Axis
10 Holliday Street
Birmingham, B1 1TG
Tel: 0121 625 6820
westmidlands@english-heritage.org.uk

East Midlands

44 Deringate
Northampton
NN1 1UH
Tel: 01604 735400
eastmidlands@english-heritage.org.uk

East of England

Brooklands
24 Brooklands Avenue
Cambridge, CB2 2BU
Tel: 01223 582700
eastofengland@english-heritage.org.uk

London

1 Waterhouse Square
138 – 142 Holborn
London, EC1N 2ST
Tel: 020 7973 3000
london@english-heritage.org.uk

South East

Eastgate Court
195 – 205 High Street
Guildford, GU1 3EH
Tel: 01483 252000
southeast@english-heritage.org.uk

South West

29 Queen Square
Bristol, BS1 4ND
Tel: 0117 975 0700
southwest@english-heritage.org.uk

A CHECKLIST FOR THE DELIVERY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN HISTORIC PLACES

This checklist is intended for local authority planning and specialist historic environment staff as well as those involved in delivering affordable housing projects. English Heritage believes that the provision of affordable housing is fundamental to the future sustainability of rural communities and that the historic character of market towns, villages, hamlets and farmsteads need not be an impediment to its delivery, provided the following principles are considered:

- **Local Development Framework policies on affordable rural housing should be informed by advice on the historic environment.** In allocating sites in the Local Development Framework and considering exception sites, local planning authorities should seek the advice of their historic environment specialists on their suitability. This advice will allow local authorities to bring forward sites that provide much needed homes whilst enhancing local character and sense of place.
- **When a development site in an historic settlement is identified, the character, significance and sensitivity of the place should be understood before the design process begins.** An initial appraisal will help guide the layout, form, massing and height of the development, the protection of views into and out of the site, and the use of appropriate local materials.
- **Through pre-application consultation, the local planning authority will be able to provide advice on the historic sensitivity of any proposed development site and the information required to support a development proposal.** The local authority Historic Environment Record should always be consulted and advice sought from local authority historic environment specialists (historic buildings/conservation officer and archaeological officer) at an early stage in project planning.
- **Design and Access Statements should explain the design rationale and how this has been influenced by the local context.** English Heritage has identified six issues that need to be addressed in delivering a successful affordable housing scheme in a sensitive historic location: grain and density; scale and suitability; building form and composition; materials and detailing; quality of streets and spaces, vistas and views; and site management.
- **For all applications within an historic settlement, applicants are advised to provide a Statement of Significance, Justification Statement, Impact Assessment and Mitigation Strategy.** This will enable the applicant to demonstrate an understanding of the significance of the historic settlement, provide an assessment of the impact of their proposals on that significance, explain the steps that have been taken to avoid harm and demonstrate how the scheme seeks to retain, reinforce or enhance the character of the place.
- **When granting permission for a scheme, the local planning authority should consider the use of conditions for the recording of historical evidence that will be lost.** Conditions will ensure that any evidence lost as a result of the approved scheme is recorded. This may involve an archaeological watching brief, archaeological excavation or historic building record.

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Public bodies are legally required to ensure that their plans, policies and activities do not unfairly discriminate against a group protected by equalities legislation. It is the responsibility of those public bodies for whom we provide advice to ensure that they have conducted any relevant Equalities Impact Assessment that may be required when implementing the advice of English Heritage.

If you would like this document in a different format, please contact our Customer Services Department:

Telephone: 0870 333 1181

Fax: 01793 414926

Textphone: 01793 414878

E-mail: customers@english-heritage.org.uk

You can also download a copy from www.helm.org.uk/affordableruralhousing

This publication has been prepared on behalf of English Heritage by Bob Edwards and James Webb (Forum Heritage Services) and Shane Gould, Stephen Trow and Sarah Tunnicliffe (English Heritage). All photographs and illustrations are individually credited.

Published by English Heritage May 2009.

Product Code: 51487

www.english-heritage.org.uk