

Housing Note

General

Neighbourhood plans, when brought into force, become part of the development plan for the neighbourhood area. They can be developed before or at the same time as the local planning authority is producing its local plan. Although a draft neighbourhood plan is not tested against the policies in an emerging local plan the reasoning and evidence informing the local plan process is likely to be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested. For example, up-to-date housing need evidence is relevant to the question of whether a housing supply policy in a neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.

Where neighbourhood planning bodies have decided to make provision for housing in their plan, the housing requirement figure and its origin are expected to be set out in the neighbourhood plan as a basis for their housing policies and any allocations that they wish to make. A neighbourhood plan can allocate sites for development, including housing.

Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy

The Stoke Golding Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan and it should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies.

The Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy identifies Stoke Golding as a Key Rural Centre and allocates land for the development of a minimum of 60 new homes over the period 2006 - 2026. This minimum housing requirement was exceeded by the recently completed Bosworth Manor development of 83 dwellings and the Convent Drive development containing 59 dwellings. Both developments are now complete.

New Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan

Preparation of the new Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan began in 2017. The new Local Plan will set out the overall development strategy for Hinckley & Bosworth Borough for the period 2020 to 2039. The new Local Plan will not be finalised until 2022 at the earliest, but in the meantime the Borough Council is encouraging qualifying bodies preparing neighbourhood plans to plan for the period 2020 to 2039 to align with the new Local Plan.

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 66, the Borough Council was approached to provide an indicative housing provision for Stoke Golding Neighbourhood Area. However, the Borough Council was unable to do so as the housing requirement for the Borough has not yet been determined. Therefore, the Stoke Golding Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee has determined a housing requirement figure itself taking account of relevant policies, the existing and emerging spatial strategy, and characteristics of the neighbourhood area.

Under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, the Borough Council is currently consulting residents, community groups, businesses on what the Local Plan ought to contain. The consultation period is 30 June to 27 August 2021. At the present time, the new Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan 2020-39 carries little weight.

Standard Method

On 6 August 2020, the government published ‘Changes to the current planning system’. The consultation paper set out four policy proposals to improve the effectiveness of the current system including changing the standard method for assessing local housing need.

Having taken the responses into account, the Government has decided the most appropriate approach is to retain the standard method in its current form (using 2014-based household projections). However, it will apply a 35 per cent uplift to the post-cap number generated by the standard method to Greater London and the other 19 most populated cities and urban centres in England, including Leicester. This increase in the number of homes to be delivered is expected to be met by the cities and urban centres themselves, rather than the surrounding areas.

Based on the standard method, the minimum housing need figure for Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council is now 444 dwellings per annum (at June 2021¹). This annual housing requirement is very similar to both the current Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan Core Strategy requirement of 450 dwellings per annum (2006-2026) and the requirement of 454 dwellings per annum (2011-36) set out in the Leicester and Leicestershire [Strategic Growth Plan](#).

Housing Distribution

In Hinckley and Bosworth Borough, there have been two different approaches to determining a housing requirement figure for neighbourhood

¹ See paragraph 4.4 of [Draft Local Plan 2020-2039](#)

planning in the absence of an indicative figure provided by the local planning authority:

Distribution using Core Strategy

The [Report on the Examination of the Sheepy Neighbourhood Plan](#) used the number of dwellings allocated to the neighbourhood area by the Core Strategy and increased this proportionately to cover the revised plan period. For Stoke Golding, the Core Strategy requirement of 60 new homes over the period 2006-2026 equates to 3 dwellings per year or 57 homes over the period 2020-2039.

Distribution using population

As an alternative, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council has highlighted a simple approach of apportioning the overall borough housing need to parishes based on the share of population in those parishes. This approach is similar to that proposed by the Government in its 'Planning for the right homes in the right places' 2017 consultation document. It should be noted that, this methodology was [rejected](#) and the Government decided not to take forward a simple formula-based approach to apportion housing need to neighbourhood areas.

Nonetheless, based on population (2017 mid-year estimates) Stoke Golding parish accounts for 1.7% of the total borough population. Based on this share Stoke Golding would have a housing requirement of 143 dwellings between 2020 and 2039.

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council has indicated that it is likely to identify sufficient land for an additional 10% on top of our housing need figure to allow for sites that do not come forward for development etc. It has recommended that neighbourhood plans plan for flexibility too as this will reduce the chance of plans becoming out of date quickly. A housing requirement figure for Stoke Golding, including a 10% additional buffer, would be 158 houses between 2020 and 2039.

Stoke Golding Housing Requirement

The housing requirement for Stoke Golding for the period 2020 to 2039 is 57 dwellings (Policy SG1). This reflects the distribution using the Core Strategy methodology used by the Sheepy Neighbourhood Plan Examiner.

However, even if the alternative methodology was used, a housing requirement of 158 dwellings can be met with some modifications.

Housing Supply

In Stoke Golding parish, there were 9 dwellings in the pipeline (with planning permission at 1 April 2020) that will contribute to meeting the housing requirement.

However, since 1 April 2020 planning permission has been granted for two major housing sites in the village totalling 120 dwellings:

Reference	Address	Proposal	Status	Decision Issued Date
20/00779/OUT	Land East of Roseway, Stoke Golding	Residential development of up to 65 dwellings including public open space, landscaping and associated infrastructure (Outline- access only)	Permitted	23 Jun 2021
19/01324/OUT	Land at Wykin Lane, Stoke Golding	Construction of up to 55 dwellings, all matters reserved, except for access	Appeal allowed	21 May 2021

The Neighbourhood Plan addresses the approval of 65 dwellings on land east of Roseway which was granted permission by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council in December 2020 (subject to a S106 Agreement). In particular, the settlement boundary for Stoke Golding (Map 3 on page 17) has been extended to include the application site. The approval of 55 dwellings at Wykin Lane has not been reflected in the Neighbourhood Plan with the appeal decision having been made after Plan submission.

The reasons for these two permissions vary but has included the situation where the tilted balance applies. In particular, the [Wykin Lane appeal](#) inspector concluded that the Borough Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites.

The current housing supply for Stoke Golding is now at least 129 dwellings.

Housing Reserve Site

Having regard to Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council’s suggestion that neighbourhood plans should incorporate some flexibility in their housing provision, the Neighbourhood Plan allocates a housing reserve site.

The preferred housing reserve site was identified following a detailed site selection process. Basic information was gathered for each of 15 sites and each option was appraised for its suitability, availability and achievability using clearly defined sustainability criteria. Factors such as access to services and facilities, heritage, nature conservation and landscape have

been considered. Details are available on the Stoke Golding Neighbourhood Plan website, <https://www.stokegolding.co.uk/np/evidence>

The preferred housing site is at Mulberry Farm off High Street. Policy SG2: Housing Reserve Site at Mulberry Farm, High Street allocates around 25 dwellings to be developed on some 0.9 hectares of land comprising the existing built-up area of the farm buildings. Redevelopment reflects the local community's preference for new housing development to be focussed on smaller, previously developed sites².

This site will be made available for housing development if it becomes necessary to provide for additional homes in Stoke Golding in accordance with the new Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan.

Stronghold Homes has expressed an interest in developing the Reserve Site. With the site being largely derelict and identified in the Stoke Golding Conservation Area Management Plan as an 'improvement area', there is merit in making the site a full allocation. This would increase the supply of housing by a further 25 dwellings to 154.

It should be noted, that the site excludes the remaining open fields to the north of the existing farm buildings. This follows the advice of the [Borough Council's Conservation Area](#) that '...there would be considerable barriers to developing this site and I do not believe there is any possible mitigation or negotiation to achieve an appropriate development other than focusing solely on redeveloping the 'improvement' area'.

Windfall Housing Development

Neighbourhood Plan Policy SG3 supports infill development in Stoke Golding. To clarify where infill development would be acceptable, the Neighbourhood Plan defines a settlement boundary for Stoke Golding (Map 3 on page 17). This replaces the Settlement Boundaries defined by the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD. Outside the Stoke Golding Settlement Boundary, new build residential development will be limited in accordance with Policy SG3.

The Neighbourhood Plan does not set out a windfall allowance as the housing requirement for Stoke Golding has already been met by committed developments. However, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council calculates that from 2006 to 2020 there were 38 windfall dwellings delivered in Stoke Golding giving 2.7 windfall dwellings a year which would equate to 51 dwellings over the plan period.

With an existing supply of 129 dwellings, increased to 154 with the full allocation of the Mulberry Farm site, it is clear that a minimum housing

² The Qualifying Body is aware that the NPPF definition of previously developed land excludes land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings.

requirement 158 dwellings for the period 2020 to 2039 could be met given the windfall potential.

Conclusions

The Stoke Golding Neighbourhood Plan is empowering local people to shape their surroundings with a plan that sets out a positive vision for the future of the area. The local community, both as individuals and through the Parish Council, has been actively involved in the consultation process.

However, the local community has found itself in a position where, through no fault of its own, its emerging Neighbourhood Plan has been undermined because its local planning authority does not have an up-to-date Local Plan. The granting of planning permission for 120 dwellings on two major sites in the village was very much against the local community's wishes and has rendered futile much of the work done by the Stoke Golding Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee and the contributions made by the local community.

Nonetheless, the Parish Council wishes to be pragmatic and recognises that further, post submission, modifications may be required to reflect the latest housing supply position.

If the Examiner were so minded, the Parish Council would support the following modifications:

1. Increasing the minimum housing requirement in Policy SG1 to 158 dwellings. This will be met by existing commitments, the allocation of 25 dwellings at Mulberry Farm and a windfall allowance. This would meet the housing requirement figure for Stoke Golding, including a 10% additional buffer, using the Borough Council's preferred methodology;
2. Extend the Stoke Golding Settlement Boundary to include the Wykin Lane development (19/01324/OUT);
3. Delete the second sentence of Policy SG2, so that the site at Mulberry Farm becomes a full housing allocation and include the site within the Stoke Golding Settlement Boundary; and
4. Consequential revisions arising from the above modifications.