

5 HOUSING

Introduction

- 5.1** Housing is the main land use in the Borough and consequently is an important feature of the Borough's character. Access to a choice of good quality housing is a key factor in improving the quality of life for Gosport's residents. This Plan aims to provide for the housing needs of the Borough's residents now and in the future.
- 5.2** The demographic profile of the Borough is changing and the Local Plan Review needs to take account of these changes. The 2001 Census results indicate that the population of Gosport in 2001 was 76,415, and the number of households was 31,337. Hampshire County Council have produced long term projections (2004 based-Chelmer Model) which indicate that the population will rise to 81,706 by 2016, an increase of 6.9% from 2001. The same projections indicate that the number of households will rise to 35,847 by 2016, an increase of 12.6%.
- 5.3** Change in household size has led to a greater demand for smaller housing units and this is expected to continue in line with national trends. This change needs to be reflected in the provision of a variety of new housing, by either new construction or conversion of suitable residential or non-residential buildings, to meet the needs of the Borough's residents, including importantly, affordable housing and housing suitable for people with special needs.

Policy Background

- 5.4** The Government's policies on planning for housing are set out in Planning Policy Guidance 3: *Housing* (PPG3) published in March 2000. This guidance expects local authorities to prepare local plans which aim to provide sufficient housing to meet the local housing requirements. These requirements are determined through the strategic planning process with the allocation for Gosport Borough set in the Structure Plan.
- 5.5** In July 2003 the Minister of State for Housing and Planning announced in a Planning Statement accompanying the proposed revision to PPG3 that local authorities should provide for at least a ten year potential supply of housing. Accordingly, given the likely date of adoption of the Plan it is considered necessary to make provision for housing up to the period 2016.
- 5.6** The Hampshire County Structure Plan 1996–2011 (Review) indicates that there is a requirement for 94,290 additional dwellings in Hampshire between 1996 and 2011. However, in line with the Government's 'Plan, Monitor and Manage' approach to housing provision, the Structure Plan proposes that the Districts should initially provide for a baseline figure of 80,290 additional dwellings. The housing allocation for Gosport Borough is for 2,980 additional dwellings in the

Borough in the period from April 1996 to March 2011.

- 5.7** The Structure Plan Review has set out a reserve provision whereby a further 14,000 additional dwellings have been identified. The County Council has produced a background paper supporting the Structure Plan, *Implementing Policy H4*, which indicates in which Districts this additional provision should be made. This paper states that Gosport is not required to identify any additional sites to meet the reserve provision. Accordingly the Structure Plan housing allocation for Gosport Borough remains that an additional 2,980 dwellings should be provided between 1996 and 2011.
- 5.8** Until the Regional Spatial Strategy is adopted there will be no Borough level housing requirement set for the period beyond 2011. Nevertheless, the Borough Council has estimated that its requirement would be 1,700 additional dwellings between 2011 and 2016. This figure was derived from an evidence based assessment of potential sites identified in the latest Urban Capacity Study that could be developed within this timescale given the infrastructure constraints that exist in the Borough. Account has also been taken of ongoing work being undertaken by the Hampshire Authorities to investigate the housing requirement for this five year period for the whole of Hampshire and Kate Barker's *Review of Housing Supply: Delivering Stability: Securing our Future Housing Needs* (2004). It is therefore considered that this is a realistic figure to achieve.
- 5.9** The strategy of the Structure Plan Review emphasises the need to optimise the re-use of urban land to minimise the development of greenfield sites, to reduce the need to travel and to maximise the use of existing and planned infrastructure. Importantly, the Structure Plan also states that future development should not be at the expense of the quality of urban life. Regional Planning Guidance emphasises this issue. Policy Q2 of RPG9 places importance on raising the quality of urban life through improvement to the urban environment. Gosport Borough Council is committed to improving the quality of life of residents through the implementation of its Community Strategy. The themes of that Strategy are fed into this Local Plan Review and are reflected in the policies. In particular well designed mixed-use developments are encouraged in order to make places more attractive in which to live, work, shop and spend leisure time. The Community Strategy for Gosport 2003-2006 has a vision statement "To improve the quality of life in Gosport, by developing a healthy, safe and prosperous community where everyone is able to participate in decisions that affect their lives". The Community Strategy includes an Action Plan which has been produced to demonstrate how the Council will seek to achieve this vision. In particular the Community Strategy Action Plan contains several actions to address the goal of providing adequate and appropriate homes to suit the means and hopes of the Gosport community. These actions deal with specific targets and identify the Key Partners involved in their implementation.
- 5.10** The Government has set a national target that by 2008, 60% of new housing should result from the development of previously developed land and through the conversion of existing buildings. It considers that this may be achieved through higher density housing reflecting the needs of smaller households and where appropriate lower car parking provision. PPG3 suggests that local authorities should undertake an urban capacity study to establish how much additional housing can be accommodated within urban areas.

5.11 Given the mainly urban nature of the Borough, the Council considers it important to retain green areas and accordingly will aim to achieve more than 90% of all new housing developments on previously developed sites during the Plan period. The Council has undertaken a second urban capacity study in accordance with guidelines agreed by all Hampshire Authorities. This was published as a separate document in 2004, and has identified sufficient sites to meet the Structure Plan requirement and provision to the year 2016. The Study also demonstrates how the Council's target of providing more than 90% of new housing development on previously developed land will be achieved. As part of the continuing monitoring process the Borough Council will undertake further urban housing capacity studies as and when necessary.

Objectives for Housing

5.12 The housing objectives below have been derived from the Plan's overall strategy set out in Chapter 2. In meeting the housing needs of the Borough, the Council will:

- identify a 10 year supply of land for residential development to meet the housing needs of the Borough to the year 2016, particularly by the re-use of derelict or vacant urban sites which are well related to public transport and community facilities;
- make provision for a range of dwelling types and sizes to meet the needs of the Borough's residents;
- make provision for affordable housing and special needs housing where appropriate;
- recognise the opportunities for quality higher density development where sites are accessible to public transport corridors and/or to take advantage of the close proximity of community facilities and services;
- retain and encourage the improvement of the existing housing stock, particularly at the lower end of the market, and in locations close to public transport corridors, community facilities and services;
- facilitate the conversion to residential use of appropriate properties; and
- ensure that new residential development incorporates design features that encourage biodiversity as well as ensuring provision is made for a range of quality open spaces including areas that preserve and enhance important nature conservation features.

Policies and Proposals

Allocation of Land for Housing

Policy R/H1

The Borough Council will make provision for approximately 4,680 additional dwellings in the period from April 1996 to March 2016.

- 5.13** A continuing supply of suitable land with sufficient choice of sites is essential to meet the housing needs of the Borough. Almost all of the new housing development will be concentrated within the urban areas of the Borough in Gosport and Lee-on-the-Solent. The Local Plan Review, in line with the guidance established in PPG3: *Housing*, will adopt a systematic approach to deciding which sites are most suitable for development and the sequence in which development will take place.
- 5.14** The 1995 Gosport Borough Local Plan allocated land for residential development to the east of Cherque Farm and at Priddy's Hard in accordance with this principle. 708 dwellings have been built at Priddy's Hard and the development on this site is complete. The site at Cherque Farm was granted planning permission for 1,050 dwellings and 675 had been built by April 2005. Details of new major allocations are set out in Policies R/H2 and R/H3.
- 5.15** A few sites suitable for housing may also come forward on an unplanned basis, either by the redevelopment of a site or by infill development, although the number of occasions should be less following the undertaking of an urban capacity study. It is anticipated that generally these will be small sites potentially accommodating less than 10 dwellings.
- 5.16** The Borough Council expects all significant housing sites, including the proposed allocations, to provide a variety of house types to meet the needs of the Borough's residents. New development should take into account the character of its surroundings and reflect this in its design and use of materials (see Policy R/DP1). Through careful design these developments will be expected to create an attractive, high quality living environment. The Borough Council's requirements in terms of density are set out in Policy R/H4.
- 5.17** The effectiveness of the housing policies of the Local Plan Review in maintaining an acceptable level of provision will be assessed, and if necessary reviewed, in the light of the continued monitoring of housing land availability within the Borough. They will also be assessed in terms of meeting the needs of Gosport's residents requiring homes and the need to promote a balanced and sustainable community in terms of the provision of employment opportunities and the impact on the infrastructure.
- 5.18** In line with Government Guidance it is necessary to provide a 10 year supply of land for housing development. Accordingly the Local Plan Review period extends to 2016. However, as the Structure Plan Review only includes housing requirements between 1996-2011 it has been necessary for the Borough Council to set out a requirement for housing provision for the period 2011-2016. The 2004 Urban Capacity Study provided evidence of future supply from which it was determined that an additional 1,700 dwellings could be built between 2011 and 2016. Adding this figure to the Structure Plan requirement gives a total figure for Gosport of 4,680 dwellings. Table 5.1 sets out how this Plan intends to meet its housing requirement to 2016 of an additional 4,680 dwellings. The total provision figure in this Table setting out the position at April 2005 clearly shows that there is sufficient supply to meet the housing allocation.

Table 5.1: Gosport Borough Housing Allocation 1996-2016

	Number of Dwellings
Actual Completions (1/4/1996-31/3/2005)	2,646
Policies R/H2 and R/H3 Permissions (1/4/2005)	1,443
Other Outstanding Permissions (1/4/2005)	139
Outstanding Permissions – Total (1/4/2005)	1,582
Proposed New Allocations – Policy R/H3	252
Windfalls (1/4/2005 –31/3/2016)	468
Total provision	4,948

Note:

1. Outstanding permissions include permissions subject to the signing of a legal agreement.
2. Other outstanding permission refers to sites with less than 10 units (net).
3. Windfalls comprise potential sites (10 or over) identified in the Urban Capacity Study 2004 and a projected baseline of small windfall sites (under 10).

5.19 The Borough Council recognises that housing provision can be met from schemes for predominantly residential uses and from schemes where residential use is a component of a mixed-use development. Policy R/H2 identifies allocations for residential use whilst Policy R/H3 identifies allocations for the residential element of a mixed-use development. The sites identified in both these policies are reflected in the figures in Table 5.1.



Major Housing Proposals

Policy R/H2

The following sites (as shown on the Proposals Map) are allocated for new residential development:

Site	Planning permission at 1/4/05	Allocation Net No. of units
Cherque Farm	Y	375
Fort Gilkicker	Y	17
Adj. 15 St Thomas's Road	Y	10
Rear of Keys Road	Y	10
4/6 Brockhurst Road	Y	14
268 Forton Road	Y	22
Ferry Garage, Mumby Road	Y	12
The Dolphin, 178 Clayhall Road	Y	13
2-4 Jamaica Place	Y	20
137 Privett Road	Y	10
Land at James Road	Y	38
54 Military Road	Y	11

Note: The Net number of units column in the above table relates to those units which have planning permission but are not yet completed.

5.20 The sites listed above are allocated for housing development for 10 (net) and above additional residential units. The Structure Plan housing requirement figures are based on net figures so whilst recognising that some of these allocations might result in a higher gross figure with some demolitions it is considered more appropriate to monitor housing allocations in terms of net figures. There is one site that provides over 100 units and more detailed information about this site is provided below.

Cherque Farm

5.21 The Cherque Farm site is located between the eastern boundary of the Gosport/Lee-on-the-Solent Strategic Gap, which will be delineated by the final alignment of the proposed Gosport to Fareham Link Road (see Policy R/T8) and the existing residential development at Cherque Farm. The 1995 Gosport Borough Local Plan considered approximately 900 dwellings could be provided on the

Cherque Farm site up to 2001 in accordance with policy H1.4 of the South Hampshire Structure Plan First Alteration. The Borough Council subsequently prepared a Development Brief for the whole site, which indicated that some 1,050 dwellings could be built on this site. The Borough Council requires development at Cherque Farm to be integrated with the existing community in Lee-on-the-Solent and to provide a comprehensive development with a variety of residential accommodation, open spaces, community facilities and improved pedestrian and cycle access. Planning permission has now been granted for 1,050 dwellings and construction is underway with 675 units completed by April 2005.

Major housing proposals as part of a mixed-use development

Policy R/H3

The following sites are allocated for new residential development as part of a mixed-use development:

Site	With planning permission at 1/4/05	Without planning permission
Daedalus	300*	200
Royal Clarence Yard	187	0
St George Barracks South	97	0
Coldharbour, Mumby Road	109	50
Priddy's Hard Heritage Area	198	2

*Includes 300 Married Quarters for Ministry of Defence

Note: The net number of units in the column 'With planning permission' in the above table relates to those units which have planning permission but are not yet completed.

Daedalus

- 5.22** The former airfield at Daedalus lies to the north and north west of Lee-on-the-Solent. The site covers a total area of approximately 200 hectares (495 acres). The majority of the site (160 hectares, 395 acres), comprising the runways and some isolated airfield buildings, lies within the Fareham Borough Council administrative area and proposals for this area are set out in the Fareham Borough Local Plan Review. The remainder of the site (40 hectares, 100 acres) lies within the Borough of Gosport; this area contains most of the airfield buildings and accommodation blocks (sometimes referred to as the technical site) which are adjacent to Lee-on-the-Solent.

5.23 The two Borough Councils have prepared a joint Daedalus Development Strategy in co-operation with Hampshire County Council and Defence Estates to guide the future development of the site. The objectives of the Strategy are still applicable although it will be necessary to produce an updated planning framework for the site to take into account changes since 1997. The Strategy has divided the site into a series of areas and considers them suitable for a mixture of uses. In particular it identified parts of the technical site adjacent to Lee-on-the-Solent as suitable for housing purposes. A significant area to the east of the site is now needed to provide Service Married Quarters and planning permission has been granted for 300 units. It is estimated that the remainder of the site could accommodate up to 200 dwellings (including the conversion of existing buildings). (See Policies R/DP4, R/EMP3).

Royal Clarence Yard

5.24 Royal Clarence Yard is the site of a former victualling depot for the Royal Navy. This site is within a Conservation Area and contains many significant buildings and structures, some of which have been designated as Scheduled Ancient Monuments or Listed Buildings and act as a constraint on future development. The site has been identified as being suitable for a mixed-use development to include residential use. The adjoining St. George Barracks North site was allocated for housing development which is now complete. Much of the Royal Clarence Yard site's redevelopment will involve the refurbishment of existing buildings, but new development will be permitted where this takes into account and enhances the historic environment of the site. The Borough Council has prepared a Development Brief to provide more detailed guidance on the development of the site. Planning permission was granted for a mixed-use development for 380 dwellings (including 160 on the adjoining St George Barracks North site in November 2001). As at April 2005 193 dwellings had been completed (including all of the St George Barracks North site) leaving a balance of 187 dwellings. However, following an Appeal the First Secretary of State on 2 February 2006 granted planning permission for a revised scheme for the whole site. The revised scheme is for 698 dwellings in total. This represents a net increase of 318 dwellings. As the appeal decision was issued after the base date for housing figures of April 2005 the 318 dwellings have not been included in the housing supply figures. (See Policies R/DP4, R/EMP3).

St George Barracks South

5.25 St. George Barracks South has been released as being surplus to requirements by the Ministry of Defence. This site is within a Conservation Area and contains several buildings of historic interest. This site has been identified as being suitable for mixed-use development. Proposals for development will be expected to include refurbishment of several existing buildings, while any proposals for new development will need to take into account the historic setting of the site. A Development Brief has been prepared to provide more detailed guidance on the development of the site. Planning permission has now been granted for 183 dwellings as part of a mixed-use development with construction and refurbishment underway. 86 units were completed and occupied at April 2005. (See Policies R/DP4, R/H3).

Priddy's Hard Heritage Area

- 5.26** The Priddy's Hard Heritage Area is bounded by the old Rampart Fortifications to the north and west, Portsmouth Harbour to the east and Forton Lake to the south. The Borough Council acquired the site from the Ministry of Defence in 1994. The site is within a Conservation Area and contains several Listed Buildings with the ramparts being scheduled as an Ancient Monument. A Development Brief was prepared in 1999 indicating the range of uses that may be acceptable on this site. A museum has already been completed. As part of a mixed-use development residential uses can be accommodated on this site. Given the sensitive nature of the site the Borough Council considered that about 200 dwellings could be provided and planning permission has now been granted for 198 dwellings. Additional uses could include business conferencing facilities, a specialist market/exhibition hall, food and drink outlets, managed workspace/craft workshops together with the provision of open space. (See Policies R/DP4, R/EMP3).

Coldharbour

- 5.27** The Coldharbour area north of Mumby Road has been identified as an area with potential for a mixed-use development, particularly due to its waterfront location. Whilst the majority of the site is seen as an opportunity to provide for commercial (including marine related proposals), leisure and retail development it is considered residential development would also be appropriate. The southern part of the site has already been developed for residential flats and there is planning permission for further flats on the northern part of the site. There may be scope for some residential development elsewhere within the site as part of a comprehensive scheme. (See Policies R/DP4, R/EMP3).

Housing Densities

Policy R/H4

Development proposals for housing should be provided at a density between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare. Proposals for higher density housing development may be permitted in locations that are close to principal or district centres or are in areas with good access to public transport. Development proposals for housing at a density lower than 30 dwellings per hectare will not be permitted unless there are special circumstances.

Proposals for residential development should provide a mix of dwelling sizes and types to reflect the needs of those seeking housing in the Borough.

- 5.28** The Borough Council will expect that most residential development in the Plan Area will have a net density within the range of 30–50 dwellings per hectare in accordance with PPG3: *Housing*.



- 5.29** In order to minimise the need to travel and to encourage the use of public transport higher density residential development with a net density above 50 dwellings per hectare will be permitted in locations which are close to Gosport Town Centre, District Centres or within 200 metres of a public transport corridor. In these cases there may be the opportunity to apply a more flexible approach towards the provision of car parking. Schemes that would result in town cramming and a poor quality of environment for existing and proposed residents will not be acceptable. In seeking to achieve good design developers are recommended to consult the Government's documents *By Design* published in 2000 and *Better Places to Live* published in 2001. Schemes that pay attention to high quality design and which reflect the character of the local environment and contribute to urban renaissance will be encouraged. Higher density schemes will also provide opportunities for integrating more energy efficient measures into the design and layout of the development.
- 5.30** In contrast, low density development is generally unlikely to sustain local services or public transport so that access to jobs, shops, education, health, leisure and social facilities is more likely to be dependent on car use. Proposals resulting in net residential densities below 30 dwellings per hectare will not be permitted unless there are special circumstances such as where a higher density development would harm the setting of Listed Buildings or Ancient Monuments, landscape or other features of interest, nature conservation issues or other constraining factors on site, for example a trunk sewer.
- 5.31** The Council wishes to achieve a range of accommodation within the Borough, to provide a social mix and to allow for changing accommodation needs at different stages of life. Proposals for large scale developments in particular should therefore provide a variety of dwelling sizes to enable a choice of accommodation to achieve a balanced community.

Affordable Housing

Policy R/H5

The Borough Council will seek the provision of 40% affordable housing on suitable sites where proposals for residential development are either 0.5 hectare or more in area or 15 dwellings or more in total.

- 5.32** The Borough Council defines 'affordable housing' as housing intended to meet the needs of people whose incomes are insufficient to enable them to buy or rent suitable housing, without subsidy, on the open market. Increases in house prices have resulted in a significant number of local households being prevented from being able to buy and rent homes within the Borough. Reductions in stocks of Council and other rented accommodation have restricted the opportunities for local people to be able to rent homes.
- 5.33** In order to establish the scale of housing need within the Borough the Council has commissioned a series of Housing Needs Surveys and will continue to monitor the situation. The Survey undertaken in 1998 indicated that between 1998–2003 some 4,250 households would need to be housed. This figure comprises households already registered (1,050), households accepted as homeless (1,000) and new households likely to be formed (2,200). The survey showed that 75% of these households are likely to have incomes that would preclude them accessing the open housing market, therefore the survey concluded that 3,190 households would be in need of affordable housing.
- 5.34** A consortium of four local authorities in South East Hampshire: Gosport, Portsmouth, Fareham and Havant, jointly commissioned a Housing Market Study from LSE Enterprise and Cambridge University in September 2001 in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of how the housing market operates across the sub region and to identify the implications for each of the partner Councils. The results of this study were published in September 2002. The study looked at the relationship between house prices and rents and incomes and made an assessment of housing affordability. The assessment involved both a top down and bottom up approach. The top down approach looked at projections of population and household growth and concluded that there would be an annual requirement of 130 affordable dwellings. The bottom up approach was based on a housing needs survey and concluded that there would be an annual requirement of 585 dwellings. The study recognised that it may be difficult to achieve even the lower of these figures but advocated that in order to achieve a realistic figure of affordable housing a target should be set so that 40% of new housing should be affordable.
- 5.35** A further Housing Needs Survey was undertaken in 2003 by DCA to inform housing, planning and care strategies. This study was carried out with regard to current Government Guidance and good practice. The assessment of affordable housing need requirements is calculated on an annual

basis. The need requirement calculation is structured from survey data to take account of the key demand sources: households requiring subsidised housing; homeless households not assessed in the survey; households living in unsuitable housing whose needs can only be resolved in a different dwelling; and concealed household formation emanating from demographic change. A key finding of the study was that 87% of new forming households cannot afford to buy or rent market housing comparing their incomes against the purchase or rental cost of housing units they require. The study found that the total affordable housing need is for 587 units annually. Net re-lets of the existing social stock will partially address this issue. Average net re-lets are 275 per annum. However, after allowing for existing stock re-lets there will still be an annual affordable shortfall of 312 units which projected over an eight year period to 2011 would be a total of 2,496 units.

- 5.36** These figures have been supplemented by an analysis of the Borough Council's Joint Housing Register which shows that at March 2006 there were 1,765 households on the waiting list, 346 homeless households, 467 households seeking transfers and 464 households seeking shared ownership.
- 5.37** The Housing Needs Surveys and the supplementary information clearly show that there is a proven need for affordable housing. The Borough Council therefore considers that whilst there remains a proven need, it is appropriate that developers proposing residential development within the Borough should contribute towards meeting the needs of those households unable to afford adequate housing locally on the open housing market. As at April 2005 some 345 affordable homes have been built since 1996, these include those created as a result of affordable housing planning policies. In addition a further 111 affordable dwellings have planning permission.
- 5.38** Circular 6/98 *Planning and Affordable Housing* sets out criteria that should be taken into account when assessing the suitability of sites that should provide affordable housing. These include:
- the proximity of local services and facilities and access to public transport;
 - whether there will be particular or exceptional costs associated with development of the site;
 - whether the provision of affordable housing would prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives that need to be given priority in development of the site; and
 - the need to achieve a successful housing development.
- 5.39** The Circular also states that housing development of 25 or more dwellings or residential sites of 1 hectare or more should be considered in terms of providing affordable housing and in exceptional circumstances it states that a local authority can adopt a lower threshold. The Housing Needs Survey indicates that there is a great need to provide affordable housing for the local community. This is demonstrated by comparing the 2003 Survey results indicating that there are 2,496 households seeking affordable housing between 2003 and 2011 and the Structure Plan requirement to provide 2,980 dwellings between 1996 and 2011. This is supported by the 2002 South East Hampshire Study which indicated that between 130 and 585 affordable dwellings were required each year.

- 5.40** Most of the sites identified in the Local Plan Review Policies R/H1, R/H2 and R/H3 have been granted planning permission and it is not anticipated that any other large sites will come forward during the Plan Review period. Therefore the likelihood is that most future housing sites will be small brownfield windfall sites and in order to achieve an affordable housing element it is necessary to set a lower threshold. Accordingly in line with Government guidance contained in PPG3 the Borough Council will require the provision of an element of affordable housing where proposals are submitted for housing development of 15 or more dwellings or on residential sites in excess of 0.5 hectare, irrespective of the number of dwellings. Policy H4 of Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9) refers to the adoption of lower thresholds and states that local authorities should consider whether there is a need to seek lower thresholds (i.e. down to developments of 15 dwellings in urban areas). The Consultation Paper: *Planning for Mixed Communities (2005)* on a Proposed Change to PPG3 specifically allows local authorities to seek affordable housing on sites of 0.5 hectare or developments of 15 or more dwellings.
- 5.41** The most recent housing needs surveys indicate that in order to meet the identified demand for affordable homes, based on current and projected completion rates, all new housing development would be required to be provided as affordable housing. The Borough Council recognises that this is not practicable or desirable. In line with the consultants' recommendations, on sites meeting the criteria as defined in the above paragraphs, the Council will, as a priority, seek 40% of the proposed residential development to be provided as affordable housing. Only in exceptional circumstances will the Council negotiate a reduced proportion of affordable housing where an applicant can demonstrate to the Council's satisfaction that due to the abnormally high costs associated with developing the site it is no longer economically viable. These circumstances could include the need to remediate contaminated land or the constraints placed on a site by the presence of listed buildings or its Conservation Area setting or where in a particular case the provision of key infrastructure works are considered to be a higher priority. This percentage will be reviewed through the Local Development Framework having regard to the Borough Council's current Housing Strategy.
- 5.42** The Borough Council will require in the first instance the provision of affordable housing to be made within the development (on-site). However, in exceptional circumstances it may be preferable to contribute to the establishment of affordable housing at other locations within the Borough (off-site) or to make a financial contribution in lieu of on site provision. This arrangement will require agreement between the Council and the developer and could include the following where:
- the affordable housing is more effectively secured by bringing existing housing back into active use; or
 - management of the affordable housing on site cannot be secured effectively; or
 - providing the affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough is more likely to widen housing choice and encourage a better social mix.
- 5.43** As demonstrated in paragraph 5.35 there is a critical link between the cost of accommodation and the level of local incomes which prevents a number of people entering the housing market. They,

therefore, are likely to require assistance in the form of affordable housing. The Borough Council recognises that affordable housing can be provided in a variety of formats including low cost market homes, fixed equity, shared ownership, social rented and sub-market rented. All the low cost market housing will need to be subsidised to bring the cost below the prevalent local housing market figure. The Council recognises the value of providing a variety of types of affordable housing in line with Government Guidance with a view to creating mixed tenure developments. However, whilst there is a need for all these types of housing in Gosport there is a critical need for social rented accommodation. Further details on the ways in which developers can make a contribution to the provision of affordable housing are included in Appendix F: Provision of Affordable Housing.

- 5.44** The Borough Council will need to be satisfied that appropriate arrangements are in place to secure the future benefit of the affordable housing is passed on to subsequent occupiers in line with Circular 6/98 or its replacement guidance. Developers will be expected to enter into an Agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to ensure the required provision and retention of on-site or off-site affordable housing or a financial contribution in lieu thereof is implemented. The arrangements made in any Agreement will depend upon the type of affordable housing to be provided and where appropriate they should take into account the statutory provisions of the Housing Acts.
- 5.45** The 2003 Housing Needs Survey undertaken by DCA considered the needs of key workers. Whilst acknowledging that some key workers have difficulty in obtaining satisfactory accommodation it is not considered to be such a significant issue that warrants specific provision under this policy. The Borough Council already participates in a range of key worker initiatives outside of the Local Plan process and in addition key workers are entitled to join the Joint Housing Register and seek to qualify for the range of affordable housing that will be provided under this Policy.

Change of use of Existing Dwellings

Policy R/H6

Proposals for the change of use of existing residential accommodation to non residential use will be permitted provided that:

- i. the new use is for the establishment of a small business, a medical or dental practice or another community facility to serve the wider residential area;
- ii. there would not be an adverse effect on the character of the area or residential amenity.

- 5.46** The Borough Council wishes to maintain a wide variety of residential accommodation to meet the needs of its residents. It will encourage the efficient use of existing housing in the Borough,

particularly the reuse of empty properties. In commercial areas residential accommodation, often in the form of flats and bedsits, can provide a valuable source of low cost accommodation.

- 5.47** It is also recognised that it is important to make provision for a mixture of uses to provide for a sustainable pattern of development. The Council will therefore encourage mixed-use areas, particularly in or close to existing centres, where appropriate uses can be located to serve the wider residential areas and thus minimise the need to travel. Such uses include doctor's and dentist's surgeries, together with certain businesses and community facilities, which would be appropriate in a residential area. However, the Council will only permit such uses if it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse effect on the character of the area or on the amenity of residents.

Conversion and Sub-division of Properties to provide Residential Accommodation or Residential Institutions

Policy R/H7

Proposals for the conversion or sub-division of properties to flats, any other form of residential multiple occupation or residential institutions will be permitted provided that:

- i. such conversions will not be detrimental to the amenities of adjoining residents;
- ii. any alterations and/or extensions to the building are compatible with its design;
- iii. such conversions would not result in an unacceptable change to the established pattern of residential development and/or the character of an area.

- 5.48** In aiming to retain a variety of housing types the Borough Council recognises that adequate opportunities must remain for those households that wish to live in larger properties. However, large residential properties may often present significant running costs and maintenance problems to their owners. They may also be too large and no longer suitable for occupation by a single household. Larger properties no longer required by single households may present opportunities to provide accommodation for residential care for the elderly or infirm and can result in the release of housing units that are better suited to use by other households. This strategy is in accordance with the Borough Council's aim to increase the variety of available accommodation in terms of both its size and tenure.
- 5.49** In appropriate locations such as Gosport Town Centre and local shopping centres there may be opportunities to convert space above shops into residential accommodation. These conversions, either into self-contained flats or to multiple occupation, can provide an important source of additional units of residential accommodation, particularly for single people and smaller households.



- 5.50** When considering proposals for the sub-division of larger residential properties to flats, multiple occupation or to an institutional use such as a nursing home, the Council will take into account the existing disposition of such dwellings within the area. Such uses should not have a detrimental effect on the character of the area, nor adversely affect the amenities of occupants and neighbouring properties. All proposals for the subdivision, conversion or construction of properties intended for multiple occupation will be required to comply with the Borough Council's standards for such properties.

Accommodation for the Elderly

Policy R/H8

Development proposals for accommodation designed specially for the elderly will be permitted provided that:

- i. they are accessible by public transport or a level walk to facilities such as shops, medical services, places of worship, public open space and other community facilities;
- ii. sufficient gardens and/or private amenity space which have level access are provided to meet the needs of residents;
- iii. due regard is given to the privacy and convenience of prospective residents in terms of layout and views from habitable rooms.

- 5.51** The 2001 Census indicates that approximately 20% of the Borough's population are over the age of 60. Long-term population projections (HCC: 2004 based) show that in 2016 this percentage will

rise to 23%. This factor together with the attractiveness of the south coast for retirement will increase the demand for developments that provide accommodation for the elderly. These types of development have specific requirements in order to provide a pleasant environment and readily available facilities and local services for the elderly, who generally are less mobile and have particular needs. A flexible approach towards car parking provision will be considered in assessing the suitability of these types of development.



Lifetime Homes

Policy R/H9

Development proposals for housing will be permitted which encourage the provision of Lifetime Homes.

- 5.52** The 2001 Census indicates that 33% of all households in Gosport contain a person who had a limiting long-term illness. It is likely that many of these people will have mobility impairments. Government guidance in PPG3: Housing requires local authorities to look at the housing needs of specific groups such as the disabled. *The Building Regulations 2000, Approved Document M: Access Facilities for Disabled People* requires the provision of accesses to new dwellings for people with disabilities. However, these standards fall short of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation 'Lifetime Homes' model of mobility housing which introduces additional requirements such as wider corridors.
- 5.53** Lifetime Homes are designed to meet the needs of their occupiers throughout their lifetime. The design features help parents with young children as much as grandparents who come to stay. They are easy to adapt if a member of the household becomes disabled or frail in old age. Research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation indicates that building to Lifetime Home standards does not unduly add to the cost of the development and may have marketing advantages. As a guideline

advocated by the Department of Health at least 15% of all new market housing should be designed to Lifetime Home standards. The Borough Council's Housing Service also currently seeks homes built to Lifetime Standard when in discussion with its Registered Social Landlords.

Residential Caravans and Mobile Homes

Policy R/H10

Within the designated mobile home parks (as defined on the Proposals Map) proposals to replace residential caravans or mobile homes by permanent homes will not be permitted.

- 5.54** The Borough Council recognises that residential caravans and mobile homes can contribute to the variety of residential accommodation available. These properties enable people who either cannot afford to buy or rent a permanent dwelling or do not wish to live in a permanent dwelling to have a home. The Council will therefore seek to ensure that the existing mobile home parks in the Borough are retained and resist the replacement of residential caravans or mobile homes with permanent dwellings. Proposals for the siting of new residential caravans or mobile homes within the designated areas will be subject to the same environmental and infrastructure considerations as permanent residential accommodation.

Sites for Gypsies and Travellers

Policy R/H11

Sites for Gypsies and Travellers will be permitted provided that:

- i. there is a proven need for a site in the locality;
- ii. the site is located within a reasonable distance of local facilities and services;
- iii. the site is capable of accommodating the number of caravans/mobile homes proposed together with any equipment for business activities;
- iv. local agricultural operations and the amenity of existing businesses and residents in the locality would not be adversely affected;
- v. the proposal would not adversely affect the character of the area and the wider landscape or have unacceptable amenity, traffic or other environmental implications.

- 5.55** Any proposal for a residential site for gypsies and travellers within the Borough will be assessed against Policy R/H11. The Borough Council will take into account information from Needs Assessments about the gypsy population and trends in relation to the proven need for additional sites in the area. Although gypsies only make up a very small proportion of the population, they have specific land use needs particularly as many gypsies are self employed, which can result in the need for mixed residential and business sites or separate business sites. Consideration will be given to the number of caravans/mobile homes which can be accommodated on the site and the proposed use, if any, of the site for business activities.
- 5.56** Whilst such sites could exceptionally be located outside existing urban areas they should be located within a reasonable distance of local services and facilities, including schools, medical services and shops. Particular attention will be paid to the need to protect the environment, especially within areas of landscape importance or nature conservation importance. Attention will also need to be paid to the possible adverse impact of a proposal on the amenity of the surrounding area having particular regard to noise and disturbance, especially from vehicle movements and on-site business activities.

Site for Short Stay Travellers

Policy R/H12

A Short Stay Travellers site will be identified as part of the Countywide Site Assessment presently being undertaken by the Hampshire Gypsy & Traveller Panel.

- 5.57** Circular 01/2006 provides new Government guidance on planning for Gypsy and Traveller caravan sites. The Hampshire Local Authorities Gypsy & Traveller Panel has established a series of sub groups charged with identifying suitable locations for the provision of temporary or short-stay sites for gypsies and travellers. Such a requirement has been identified as an urgent priority and Gosport Borough Council is working with other Authorities in South East Hampshire to identify sites.
- 5.58** Given the largely urban nature of the Local Plan Review area, the location for a site is likely to be outside the defined urban area boundary or on land subject to release by the Ministry of Defence, provided that the following criteria are met:
- i the site is in a reasonably sustainable location;
 - ii the site has direct access to the highway network;
 - iii appropriate services can be provided to the site; and
 - iv the site is not subject to constraints such as designation as an SSSI.

