

Development Management Guidance Housing in the Countryside

Following publication of NPF4 and specifically alignment with NPF4 Policy 17 Rural Homes and Orkney Local Development Plan 2017

1. Introduction

This DMG has been put together to give advice on housing in the countryside and how NPF4 rural homes policy 17 can be applied alongside Orkney Local Development Plan 2017 (OLDP2017).

NPF4 policy 17 sets out that the Local Development Plan should set out a tailored approach to rural housing and reflect locally appropriate delivery approaches. The Council's current 'tailored approach' is based on Policy 5 – Housing, Section E: Single houses and new Housing Clusters in the Countryside with associated Supplementary Guidance. This reflects the local context of Orkney and is considered to be a sustainable approach directing growth to the most appropriate areas in the Orkney context.

The Scottish Government's Chief Planner's Letter on Transitional Arrangements notes that "NPF4 will form part of the statutory development plan, along with the Local Development Plan (LDP) applicable to the area at that time and its supplementary guidance LDPs already adopted will continue to be part of the development plan." For avoidance of doubt, existing LDP land allocations will be maintained. However the Chief Planners Letter also states that "whether an LDP has been adopted prior to or after the adoption and publication of NPF4, legislation states that in the event of any incompatibility between a provision of NPF and a provision of an LDP, whichever of them is the later in date is to prevail (Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 ("the 1997 Act"); section 24(3)).

The review of OLDP2017 is now underway and this DMG is an interim piece of guidance to aid development management until the new Orkney Local Development Plan is in place. It aims to show where there is alignment and where there is any incompatibility.

2. Rural Homes Policy 17 NPF4 compared with OLDP2017

Rural Homes Policy 17 within NPF4 has been reviewed to check for alignment with OLDP 2017. The review has concluded that the provisions of NPF4 allows for the continued application of policy provisions we have in Policy 5 – Housing, part E – Single Houses and new Housing Clusters in the Countryside of the OLDP2017.

The exception to that is infill development within existing housing groups in the countryside. There is no provision in the list of criteria in Policy 17 of NPF4 for its support. However, NPF4 allows within the text of Rural Homes for LDPs to set out tailored approaches to rural housing and where relevant include proposals for future population growth – including provision for small-scale housing and highlights that Plans should reflect locally appropriate delivery approaches and the NPF4 should be read as a whole. Whilst there is no explicit reference in Policy 17 to infill development within existing building groups it is considered sufficient weight

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can be placed in the NPF4 supporting text to have a tailored approach of supporting infill development within building groups.

To aid policy application a quick guide for where there is common alignment for different policy provisions is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1 showing NPF4 Policy 17 compared with Policy 5 Housing, Section E OLDP 2017

NPF4 Policy 17 Rural Homes	Policy 5 – Housing, Section E OLDP 2017 and associated Supplementary Guidance: Housing in the Countryside
i. is on a site allocated for housing within the LDP;	N/A in the countryside
ii. reuses brownfield land where a return to a natural state has not or will not happen without intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Re-Use of Brownfield Land Policy 5E (iv) • The replacement of an existing building or structure Policy 5E (iii) (No architectural and/or historic merit)
iii. reuses a redundant or unused building;	The Conversion of a Redundant Building or Structure Policy 5E (ii)
iv. is an appropriate use of a historic environment asset or is appropriate enabling development to secure the future of historic environment assets;	The Conversion of a Redundant Building or Structure Policy 5E (iii) [where a building of 'historic merit']
v. is demonstrated to be necessary to support the sustainable management of a viable rural business or croft, and there is an essential need for a worker (including those taking majority control of a farm business) to live permanently at or near their place of work;	The Provision of a Single Dwelling House for a Rural Business Policy 5E (vii)
vi. is for a single home for the retirement succession of a viable farm holding;	The Provision of a Single Dwelling House to allow for Retirement and Succession of a Farm Policy 5E (viii)
vii. is for the subdivision of an existing residential dwelling; the scale of which is in keeping with the character and infrastructure provision in the area;	The Subdivision of a Dwelling House or its Residential Curtilage Policy 5E (v)
viii. reinstates a former dwelling house	The reinstatement of a Former Dwelling House Policy 5E (i)
viii or is a one-for-one replacement of an existing permanent house.	The Replacement of an existing building or structure Policy 5E (iii) in particular para 3.08 where 'existing house that has no historic or architectural merit, which provides a sub-standard level of living accommodation that is unsuitable for renovation
No specific NPF4 support in Rural Homes Policy 17 for infill in existing housing groups however NPF4 allows for LDPs to set out tailored approaches to rural housing and where relevant include proposals for future population growth – including provision for small-scale housing and highlights that plans should reflect locally appropriate delivery approaches so gives flexibility to support OLDP approach.	Single House In-Fill Development within Existing Housing Groups Policy 5E (vi)

3. Conclusion

Table 1 above shows the relevant NPF4 policy 17 criteria and highlights where there is the complimentary alignment with the OLDP 2017. For most of these there is a complimentary alignment. The exception to this being Policy 5E (vi) Single House In-Fill Development within Existing Housing Groups which NPF4 does not explicitly support however the text within the Rural homes sets out LDPs should set out tailored approaches to rural housing and these should reflect locally appropriate delivery approaches which gives some flexibility to continue to support the current OLDP approach.

Given the extensive overlap and the policy hooks in NPF4 Rural Homes Policy 17 when viewed against OLDP 2017 it is reasonable to continue to use and apply the detailed interpretation of each of the current OLDP housing in the countryside policies using the existing Supplementary Guidance.

For more information on this planning document, please contact Development Management by email at planning@orkney.gov.uk or by calling 01856 873535.

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