

**NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
PLANNING POLICY AND PROJECTS**



Supplementary Planning Guidance No. 8

**Urban Regeneration
September 1997**

Supplementary Guidance

On 30 September 1997 the Council adopted the following Supplementary Planning Guidance (Policy Committee Minute 346(c(i))). This will be used for interpreting the land use consideration of development proposals on employment and other non-residential land in the North Hertfordshire District Local Plan No. 2 with alterations.

In order to maximise urban regeneration and provision of new housing in urban areas, the Council may grant permission for residential development, if the land is not required to meet future identified employment requirements and business and community needs, whether or not the site is identified for residential use. Regard will continue to be given to the other policies of the Plan.

Background information

1. The Conservative Government raised the issue of the national projected housing requirement. This has fuelled debate and the emergence of national political support and policy for seeking regeneration as a means of providing a significant proportion of future housing. Indeed, the role of using urban areas for housing provision is flagged up in Government guidance: PPG3 on Housing and PPG1 on General Policy and Principles. The current Government supports this approach, even if the proportion of new building expected in urban areas is to be reviewed.
2. It will be clear from previous reports and the Structure Plan that North Hertfordshire District is expected to contribute significantly towards the housing provision for the County to 2011. Specifically, this Council is expected, assuming the County Council accepts the Panel's conclusions:
 - (i) to actively promote regeneration opportunities in addition to sites already with permission or known to be potential housing;
 - (ii) to provide for an additional 300 dwellings because the rate of development west of Stevenage will not meet the 5000 dwellings required before 2011; and
 - (iii) to also provide for a number of dwellings contingent upon a possible shortfall at west of Stevenage.
3. Regeneration development is not new and arises often when buildings become unusable or circumstances change. In the past, housing development on such sites has been termed 'windfall' and there are many built examples in our four towns and some in the larger villages.
4. It is also evident that North Hertfordshire District has now been identified as having capacity greater than that in the previous capacity-led Structure Plan. Consequently, as part of the move to policy-led regeneration and consideration of identifiable sites in Local Plan No.3, this Council could promote more immediate policy changes.
5. In response, this Council could adopt a local policy that signifies the changing emphasis towards regeneration. Such a policy would seek to reflect the wider changes and bring an important part of the current Local Plan into line with those changes. The intention would be to promote residential opportunities when they

arise, always subject to other normal planning considerations. Anticipating windfall sites is difficult and dependant upon the processes of business and the commercial property market. Nevertheless, I believe that it is appropriate and necessary to be proactive if regeneration is going to be achieved.

6. In the light of Government advice and the preferred strategy for future housing in the County Structure Plan, it is appropriate to adopt, for Development Control purposes, the following supplementary planning guidance:

To achieve regeneration and maximise housing provision in urban areas, North Hertfordshire District Council will grant planning permission for only residential use on sites on which the previous uses were non-residential. In considering such proposals regard will be had to environmental and amenity issues, as well as existing and potential surrounding land uses.

7. In making such decisions, the Council would not be seeking to delete employment land within large employment areas. Moreover, it will want to ensure there is adequate land for other uses. However, applicants will need to demonstrate why a site is inappropriate for housing in the face of government's policy direction and the emerging Structure Plan, and the demonstrated County anticipation of a lesser need for employment land.