

ED194

22.1 As mentioned above, the Council proposes to reduce that overall housing requirement to 13,000

dwellings - 11,600 to meet North Hertfordshire's housing need and 1,400 to help address Luton's unmet housing need. As I understand it, this is coupled with a commitment previously put forward by the Council to an early review of the Local Plan. The Council anticipates the delivery of 14,650 dwellings over the plan period. It does not propose to delete from the Local Plan any of the housing sites included within it, and argues that the difference between anticipated delivery above the requirement represents a appropriate 'buffer' (of around 13% of the overall housing requirement). In arriving at these views, the Council has considered a number of alternative options, which are set out in its previous note and in ED191B.

a) Is reducing the overall housing requirement to 13,000 and undertaking an early review of the Local Plan, the most appropriate way forward? If not, why not?

b) If the housing requirement should be modified to 13,000 dwellings, should the supply of housing sites proposed in the Local Plan also be reduced? If so, how?

c) Is a 'buffer' or around 13% an appropriate approach? If not, why not?

d) If there is a 'buffer' of around 13%, do the exceptional circumstances required for the 'release' of land from the Green Belt for housing development exist?

NHDC intend to introduce 5 villages including Little Wymondley into the "Villages for growth" category. (Policy 5 - Excluded villages. Within the excluded villages of Codicote, Ickleford, Kimpton, Knebworth and Little Wymondley, the Council will normally permit development for housing, employment, service and community facilities only if the development proposed is compatible with the maintenance and enhancement of village character, and the maintenance of Green Belt boundaries as shown on the Proposals Map.) The decision to grant a "Buffer" would automatically grant planning permission to WY1 in Little Wymondley which is currently Green Belt. See newspaper article below.

The land "Buffer" enables NHDC to categorise Little Wymondley as a Growth village and remove the Green belt for WY1 to be developed.

NHDC already acknowledged that they have overestimated the housing need for the NHDC area. I believe the Green Belt development proposals (especially WY1) should be removed from the NHDC local Plan.

I believe that the NHDC local plan and any proposed development on WY1 should be tested against the Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan.

For the reasons above I believe NHDC local plan to be unsound.

For the reasons about I believe NHDC proposal to introduce a "Buffer" would enable NHDC to categorise the 5 villages as growth villages and allow NHDC to remove the Green Belt for development, this is unsound.

Note: this question relates solely and explicitly to the effect of introducing a 'buffer' of housing land supply on the existence or otherwise of exceptional circumstances – responses must address this point only, as the wider question of exceptional circumstances has already been explored at

length through the examination.

Newspaper article.

A "new planning system" that will see new **housing**, hospitals, schools, shops and **offices** on land designated for growth automatically granted planning permission in England has been announced by UK housing secretary Robert Jenrick.

Under the new regulations, described by Jenrick as a "once in a generation reform", land will be divided into three categories "for growth, for renewal or for protection".

Planning permission will be granted "automatically" in growth areas, with "permission in principle" given in renewal areas.

"Land designated for growth will empower development – new homes, hospitals, schools, shops and offices will be allowed automatically," **Jenrick wrote in the Sunday Telegraph**.

"Renewal areas will enable much quicker development with a 'permission in principle' approach to balance speed while ensuring appropriate checks are carried out."