

Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard

Review of ongoing schemes in North Hertfordshire



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Executive Summary

This report reviews the Government’s technical housing standards against ten ongoing schemes in North Hertfordshire.

Introduction

The Government has undertaken some steps in order to streamline housing standards. The introduction of these standards saw the rest of the UK adopt similar standards to those previously in place in London.

The planning written ministerial statement released by the Secretary of State (Eric Pickles) on 25 March 2015, advised local planning authorities to set out how existing policies relating to housing standards will be applied in light of the statement.

New nationally described space standards have been introduced. Paragraph 007 of the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) provides guidance on how local authorities should assess the need to set these optional standards.

Explanation

The standard deals with internal space within new dwellings and is suitable for application across all tenures. It sets out requirements for the Gross Internal (floor) Area of new dwellings at a defined level of occupancy as well as floor areas and dimensions for key

Planning applications reviewed



1. 12/01988/1
2. 14/02010/1
3. 13/01992/1
4. 15/00047/1
5. 13/01022/1
6. 12/02079/1
7. 14/00336/1
8. 14/01754/1
9. 14/00747/1
10. 14/00263/1



parts of the home, notably bedrooms, storage and floor to ceiling height.

The requirements of this standard for bedrooms, storage and internal areas are relevant only in determining compliance with this standard in new dwellings and have no other statutory meaning or use.

Space Standards

The Government’s nationally described space standard cannot automatically be used by Councils but needs to be included in a local policy taking account of need and viability. A Council cannot produce its own space standards that are different to the national ones.

Requirements contained within the standards

Minimum gross internal floor areas and storage (m²)

Number of bedrooms(b)	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built-in storage
1b	1p	39 (37) ²			1.0
	2p	50	58		1.5
2b	3p	61	70		2.0
	4p	70	79		
3b	4p	74	84	90	2.5
	5p	86	93	99	
	6p	95	102	108	
4b	5p	90	97	103	3.0
	6p	99	106	112	
	7p	108	115	121	
	8p	117	124	130	
5b	6p	103	110	116	3.5
	7p	112	119	125	
	8p	121	128	134	
6b	7p	116	123	129	4.0
	8p	125	132	138	

- Two-bedroom homes must have at least one double bedroom
- Single bedrooms should have a minimum floor area of 7.5m²
- A double bedroom should have minimum floor area of 11.5m²
- Areas with less than 1.5m headroom will not be counted in the gross internal area unless used solely for storage



- Minimum floor to ceiling height is 2.3m

Review of ongoing schemes in North Hertfordshire

Below is a review of ten ongoing schemes in North Hertfordshire. This review has been undertaken by North Hertfordshire District Council as a result of the introduction of the nationally described space standard, in order to evaluate whether schemes within the District are largely compliant with the standard already, and to determine if it would be appropriate to introduce the standards in North Herts to ensure that schemes meet the standard going forward. Each scheme is assessed against the Government’s technical housing standards. The use of three colours (red, orange and green) indicates whether a dwelling within a scheme satisfies the standards.

The review assesses the internal space within new dwellings (the gross internal floor area).

1. Application reference: 12/01988/1

Address: 43-44 Bancroft, Hitchin

Description: Change of use from offices to flats. The development consists of four flats with each flat containing 2 bedrooms.

Type	Number of bedrooms(b)	Number of storeys	Internal floor area	Assessment	Fully met	Partially met	Not met
Flat 1	2	1	72.23m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Flat 2	2	1	68.33m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom flat with three bed spaces (persons) only. It falls short of the requirements for a two bedroom flat with four bed spaces (persons).		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

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Flat 3	2	1	73.93m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Flat 4	2	1	101.35m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

2. Application reference: 14/02010/1

Address: The North Star, Old North Road, Royston

Description: Conversion of former public house and erection of part 2, part 3 storey apartment block comprising nineteen apartments, associated amenity space, parking and access.

Type	Number of bedrooms(b)	Number of storeys	Internal floor area	Assessment	Fully met	Partially met	Not met
Flat 1	2	1	88m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Flat 2	1	1	45m2	Space standards satisfied for a one bedroom flat with one bed space only. It falls short of the requirements for a one bedroom flat with two bed spaces (persons).		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

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Flat 3	2	1	88m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Flat 4	1	1	45m2	Space standards satisfied for a one bedroom flat with one bed space only. It falls short of the requirements for a one bedroom flat with two bed spaces (persons).		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Flat 5	2	1	88m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Flat 6	1	1	50m2	Space standards satisfied for a one bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the one and two bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Flat 7	2	1	53m2	Space standards not satisfied.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Flat 8	2	1	65m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom flat with three bed spaces (persons) only. It falls short of the requirements for a two bedroom flat with four bed spaces (persons).		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Flat 9	2	1	43m2	Space standards not satisfied.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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Flat 10	1	1	45m2	Space standards satisfied for a one bedroom flat with one bed space only. It falls short of the requirements for a one bedroom flat with two bed spaces (persons).		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Flat 11	2	1	45m2	Space standards not satisfied.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Flat 12	1	1	45m2	Space standards satisfied for a one bedroom flat with one bed space only. It falls short of the requirements for a one bedroom flat with two bed spaces (persons).		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Flat 13	2	1	88m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Flat 14	1	1	43m2	Space standards satisfied for a one bedroom flat with one bed space only. It falls short of the requirements for a one bedroom flat with two bed spaces (persons).		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Flat 15	2	1	46m2	Space standards not satisfied.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Flat 16	2	1	65m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom flat with 3 bed spaces (persons) only. It falls short of the requirements for a two bedroom flat with four bed spaces (persons).		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Flat 17	2	1	43m2	Space standards not satisfied.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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Flat 18	1	1	45m2	Space standards satisfied for a one bedroom flat with one bed space only. It falls short of the requirements for a one bedroom flat with two bed spaces (persons).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Flat 19	1	1	45m2	Space standards satisfied for a one bedroom flat with one bed space only. It falls short of the requirements for a one bedroom flat with two bed spaces (persons).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

3. Application reference: 13/01992/1

Address: The Node Conference and Training Centre, Hitchin Road, Codicote

Description: Conversion of main house to ten apartments including extensions and alterations.

Type	Number of bedrooms(b)	Number of storeys	Internal floor area	Assessment	Fully met	Partially met	Not met
Plot 1	2	1	248m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Plot 2	2	1	171m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

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Plot 3	2	1	136m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Plot 4	2	1	177m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Plot 5	2	1	171m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Plot 6	2	1	138m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Plot 7	3	1	241m2	Space standards satisfied for a three bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for four, five and six bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Plot 8	2	1	134m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

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Plot 9	2	1	134m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Plot 10	2	1	134m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

4. Application reference: 15/00047/1

Address: 12 Angel Pavement, Royston

Description: Change of Use of first floor from A1 (retail) to C3 (residential) and first floor rear extension to facilitate 2 x one bed flats.

Type	Number of bedrooms(b)	Number of storeys	Internal floor area	Assessment	Fully met	Partially met	Not met
Flat 1	1	1	72.23m2	Space standards satisfied for a one bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the one and two bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Flat 2	1	1	68.33m2	Space standards satisfied for a one bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the one and two bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		



5. Application reference: 13/01022/1

Address: 28 High Street, Royston

Description: Demolition of two storey rear extension and construction of spiral staircase housing to provide access to second floor to facilitate change of use of second floor from offices to two 1 bedroom flats (to be converted under 'permitted development'). Enlargement of cellar and internal alterations to ground, first and second floor. Replacement windows to first and second floor.

Type	Number of bedrooms(b)	Number of storeys	Internal floor area	Assessment	Fully met	Partially met	Not met
Flat 1	1	1	29.98m ²	Space standards not satisfied.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Flat 2	1	1	41.80m ²	Space standards satisfied for a one bedroom flat with one bed space only. It falls short of the requirements for a one bedroom flat with two bed spaces (persons).		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

6. Application reference: 12/02079/1

Address: 61 Station Road, Ashwell

Description: Erection of 20 dwellings consisting of 15 three bed dwellings and 5 two bed dwellings.

Type	Number of bedrooms(b)	Number of storeys	Internal floor area	Assessment	Fully met	Partially met	Not met
House 1/2	3	2	88m ²	Space standards satisfied for a three bedroom house with four bed spaces (persons) only. It falls short of the requirements for a three bedroom house with five or six bed spaces (persons).		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

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House 3/4	3	2	88m2	Space standards satisfied for a three bedroom house with four bed spaces (persons) only. It falls short of the requirements for a three bedroom house with five or six bed spaces (persons).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
House 5	3	2	88m2	Space standards satisfied for a three bedroom house with four bed spaces (persons) only. It falls short of the requirements for a three bedroom house with five or six bed spaces (persons).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
House 6	3	2	79m2	Space standards not satisfied.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
House 7/8	3	2	88m2	Space standards satisfied for a three bedroom house with four bed spaces (persons) only. It falls short of the requirements for a three bedroom house with five or six bed spaces (persons).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
House 9/10	3	2	88m2	Space standards satisfied for a three bedroom house with four bed spaces (persons) only. It falls short of the requirements for a three bedroom house with five or six bed spaces (persons).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	



House 11/12	3	2	88m2	Space standards satisfied for a three bedroom house with four bed spaces (persons) only. It falls short of the requirements for a three bedroom house with five or six bed spaces (persons).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
House 13/14/15	3	2	88m2	Space standards satisfied for a three bedroom house with four bed spaces (persons) only. It falls short of the requirements for a three bedroom house with five or six bed spaces (persons).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
House 16/17	2	2	77.1m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom house with 3 bed spaces (persons) only. It falls short of the requirements for a two bedroom house with four bed spaces (persons).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

7. Application reference: 14/00336/1

Address: Land adjacent to Walkdens, Ashwell

Description: Change of use of land from agricultural to residential and erection of 15 dwellings.

Type	Number of bedrooms(b)	Number of storeys	Internal floor area	Assessment	Fully met	Partially met	Not met
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Plot 1	2	2	86.5m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom house as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Plot 2	2	2	86.5m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom house as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Plot 3	2	2	84.4m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom house as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Plot 4	2	2	84.4m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom house as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Plot 5	2	2	86.5m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom house as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Plot 6	2	2	86.5m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom house as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

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Plot 7	3	2	104.0m ²	Space standards satisfied for a three bedroom house as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for the four, five and six bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Plot 8	2	2	84.4m ²	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom house as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Plot 9	2	2	84.4m ²	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom house as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the three and four bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Plot 10	1	1	52.8m ²	Space standards satisfied for a one bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the one and two bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Plot 11	1	1	52.8m ²	Space standards satisfied for a one bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the one and two bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Plot 12	1	1	52.8m ²	Space standards satisfied for a one bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the one and two bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

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Plot 13	1	1	52.8m2	Space standards satisfied for a one bedroom flat as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for both the one and two bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Plot 14	3	2	104.0m2	Space standards satisfied for a three bedroom house as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for the four, five and six bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Plot 15	3	2	104.0m2	Space standards satisfied for a three bedroom house as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for the four, five and six bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

8. Application reference: 14/01754/1

Address: Land at Ivy Farm, Baldock Road, Royston

Description: Application for approval of reserved matters comprising landscaping, layout (including arrangement and number of dwellings), scale and appearance of the development (pursuant to Outline application 13/00700/1 granted 07.11.2013) (as amended by plans received 26th and 29th September and 8th October), Land at Ivy Farm, Baldock Road, Royston.

Type	Number of bedrooms(b)	Number of storeys	Internal floor area	Assessment	Fully met	Partially met	Not met
Dwelling 1	1	1	46m2	Space standards satisfied for a one bedroom flat with 1 bed space only. It falls short of the requirements for a one bedroom flat with two bed spaces (persons).		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

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Dwelling 2	2	2	75m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom house with three bed spaces (persons) only. It falls short of the requirements for a two bedroom house with four bed spaces (persons).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Dwelling 3	3	3	85m2	Space standards satisfied for a three bedroom house with four bed spaces (persons) only. It falls short of the requirements for a three bedroom house with five or six bed spaces (persons).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Dwelling 4	1	1	45m2	Space standards satisfied for a one bedroom flat with one bed space only. It falls short of the requirements for a one bedroom flat with two bed spaces (persons).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Dwelling 5	2	2	75m2	Space standards satisfied for a two bedroom house with three bed spaces (persons) only. It falls short of the requirements for a two bedroom house with four bed spaces (persons).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Dwelling 6	3	2	85m2	Space standards satisfied for a three bedroom house with four bed spaces (persons) only. It falls short of the requirements for a three bedroom house with five or six bed spaces (persons).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

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Dwelling 7	3	2	89m2	Space standards satisfied for a three bedroom house with four bed spaces (persons) only. It falls short of the requirements for a three bedroom house with five or six bed spaces (persons).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Dwelling 8	4	2	98m2	Space standards satisfied for a four bedroom house with five bed spaces (persons) only. It falls short of the requirements for a four bedroom house with six, seven or eight bed spaces (persons).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

9. Application reference: 14/00747/1

Address: 8 Park Lane, Knebworth

Description: Erection of two pairs of semi-detached dwellings comprising 2 x five bed dwellings, 1 x 4 bed dwelling and 1 x three bed dwelling.

Type	Number of bedrooms(b)	Number of storeys	Internal floor area	Assessment	Fully met	Partially met	Not met
Plots 1 & 2	5	3	186m2	Space standards satisfied for a five bedroom house as outlined by the Technical Housing standards, satisfying the criteria for the six, seven and eight bed spaces (persons) requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Plot 4	4	3	125m2	Space standards satisfied for a four bedroom house with five, six and seven bed spaces (persons) only. It falls short of the		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	



				requirements for a four bedroom house with eight bed spaces (persons).			
Plot 5	3	2	90m2	Space standards satisfied for a three bedroom house with four bed spaces (persons) only. It falls short of the requirements for a three bedroom house with five or six bed spaces (persons).		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

10. Application reference: 14/00263/1

Address: 3 Blackhorse Road, Hitchin

Description: Terrace of 3 x 2 bedroom bungalows following demolition of existing building.

Type	Number of bedrooms(b)	Number of storeys	Internal floor area	Assessment	Fully met	Partially met	Not met
Unit 1	2	1	56m2	Space standards not satisfied.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Unit 2	2	1	59m2	Space standards not satisfied.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Unit 3	2	1	56m2	Space standards not satisfied.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Evaluation

Out of the ten ongoing schemes in North Hertfordshire, three overall schemes fully comply with the Government’s technical housing standards; with the other seven partially meeting or not meeting the standards.



To provide a more thorough assessment, the ten schemes are made up of 75 new dwellings (in the form of a plot/ flat/ or house). From the assessment of these 75 dwellings, 36 fully met the standards; 29 partially met the standards; and 10 did not meet the standards.

Overall, 48% met the standards, 39% partially met the standards and 13% failed to meet the standards. Although 13% of the sample evaluated failed to meet the standards, there are no further implications for those schemes as the standards were not mandatory at the point planning permission was granted. The standards are relatively new, with responsibility of implementation solely with the local authority, where justified by need and subject to viability.

What does this mean for North Hertfordshire's Local Plan?

In March 2015 the Government published nationally described space standards that will largely replace the existing different standards used by local authorities. The nationally described technical housing standards provide the nationally recognised standards for bedrooms, storage and internal areas in new dwellings across all tenures.

The Government is clear that the Optional Technical Standard should only be introduced through development plan policies if they address a clearly evidenced need; if their impact on viability has been considered; and the time of introduction is appropriate, in accordance with the NPPF and NPPG.

Reference to the Government's Technical housing standards is a topic which has been raised at Local Plan Examinations. When adopted, the North Hertfordshire Local Plan (currently being prepared) should reference the recommended nationally described space standards. This review demonstrates that, whilst many new homes were already 'voluntarily' meeting the standards prior to its introduction, others are not or it could not be said for certain without additional information (e.g. upon proposed occupying levels).

It is considered this demonstrates the need for the introduction of the standards in North Herts to ensure future schemes are appropriately designed. The viability implications should be separately tested as part of the wider consideration of proposed policies and standards in the local plan.