

Examination of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan (2011-2031)
Examination hearing sessions
Statement of North Hertfordshire District Council

Matter 21 – the objective assessment of housing need ('the OAN')

21.1 a) Have the 'alternative OAN' figures been arrived at correctly/on a robust basis?

1. Yes, for the reasons set out in Paragraphs 7 to 16 and Appendix 2 of [ED171](#). The figures have been calculated using recognised sources and a robust methodology.
2. The approach taken is consistent with methodology employed in *Updating the Overall Housing Need (HOU3)*. This was the basis for the original Matter 3 hearing session in November 2017. The Council presented a robust explanation of the methodology of this document in its [Matter 3 hearing statement](#) in response to the Inspector's questions under Matter 3.3.
3. There has been no suggestion in any correspondence from the Inspector either that the overall methodology of HOU3 is unsound or that he is dissatisfied with any of the constituent parts of that methodology as outlined at the original Matter 3 hearing. The need to consider revised figures arises solely from the passage of time since that first hearing and the release of more recent, 2016-based, Government population and household projections in that period.

b) In the light of the 'alternative OAN' figures, has there been a 'meaningful change in the housing situation'?

4. No, for the reasons set out in Paragraphs 23 to 25 and Appendix 2 of ED171. The latest OAN figures represent a reduction of only 6.3% against the figures previously examined in HOU3. This does not represent a meaningful change.

c) If there has been a 'meaningful change in the housing situation', should the Local Plan be modified to reflect it and, if so, how?

5. Not applicable given the answers above. There is no need to modify the Local Plan in response to the 'alternative OAN' figures. The Council considers it will be necessary to make amendments to the Plan in relation to housing delivery (and the extent to which that OAN figure can now realistically be expected to be addressed). However, this is a distinct matter addressed under Matter 22.