



SMARTER DEVELOPMENT

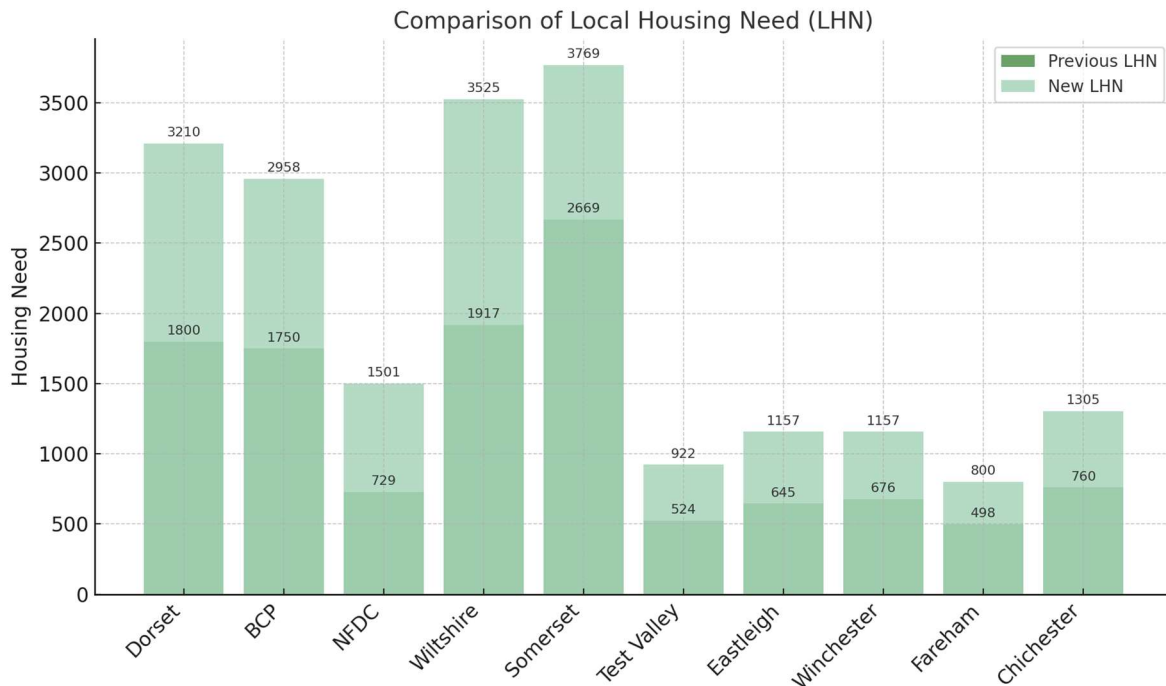
Briefing Note

Synopsis of Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The Government has unveiled a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), accompanied by updated guidance aimed at bolstering housing supply and part of its get Britain Building objective. The revisions largely reflect previously proposed changes, with a few notable adjustments, and reverse several measures introduced by the previous administration. Here's a breakdown of the key changes:

Housing Targets

- The **1.5 million homes** target and annual build rate of **370,000 homes** is confirmed through the NPPF and revised Standard Method
- The targets are mandatory and aim to increase housebuilding
- The change to NPPF paragraph 61 made in the December 2023 version is reversed removing the reference to “the exceptional circumstances in which the use of alternative approaches to assess housing need may be appropriate” although it is recognised that there may be local constraints which could restrict supply
- The new Standard Method adopts the existing housing stock as the baseline for calculating local housing need (LHN), replacing the demographic forecasts used previously (2014 household projections). A default of 0.8% of existing stock is the starting point for calculating and then an adjustment factor is applied. The threshold from which the adjustment applies increases from a factor of 4 to 5 reflecting changes in the housing market. The affordability adjustment increases from a multiplier of 0.6 to 0.95
- The urban uplift has been removed as has the cap limiting the amount of housing to be planned for
- The overall effect of these changes is that housing need is reduced in more affordable areas and increased in those where it is more acute
- The impact of the new standard method on Intelligent Land's core operating area is set out in the graph below



N.B. Figures for other local authorities can be provided on request.

Strategic Housing Supply Changes

- **Duty to Accommodate Unmet Need:** Local planning authorities must collaborate with neighbouring councils to accommodate unmet housing needs as far as possible.
- **Return of the Five-Year Housing Land Supply (5YHLS):** The transitional four-year requirement has been scrapped. Additionally, a **20% buffer** has been introduced for councils with plans not based on the updated standard method figures by July 2026, effectively creating a **six-year housing land supply (6YHLS)** requirement.
- **Annual Position Statements Discontinued:** These have been removed, although existing statements will remain valid until their expiry. For example, Dorset's current position of 5.02 years will remain in place until October 2025.

Design and Sustainability

- **Focus on Well-Designed Places:** Paragraph 11d(ii) has been expanded to stress the importance of development in **sustainable locations**, aligning with the Government's broader push for quality design.
- **Green Belt Reviews:** Local authorities are encouraged to review Green Belt land to support housing delivery. However, "Grey Belt" sites—land that does not strongly contribute to Green Belt purposes or comprises previously developed land—are prioritised after previously developed land elsewhere.

- Any development on Green Belt land must promote sustainable growth patterns.
 - Proposals will still be assessed against existing criteria for inappropriate development, but exceptions apply where the following can be met:
 - Grey Belt land is utilised,
 - There is an unmet housing need,
 - The location is sustainable,
 - And the proposal meets the **golden rules**.
-

Golden Rules for Green Belt Development

Proposals meeting the following criteria will carry **significant weight** in favour of approval:

- Affordable housing provision of at least **50%**, or **15% higher** than existing local policy requirements (capped at 50%), subject to viability.
 - **Infrastructure improvements** and provision of green spaces.
 - Development adhering to the **golden rules** can help unlock sensitive areas for housing while balancing social and environmental priorities.
-

Definition of Grey Belt

The NPPF introduces "Grey Belt" as Green Belt land that:

- Is previously developed, or
 - Does not strongly contribute to the three Green Belt purposes of preventing urban sprawl, stopping neighbouring towns from merging, or protecting historic town settings.
-

Implications for Landowners and Developers

- These changes aim to strike a balance between housing delivery and sustainable development. Developers working on **Grey Belt** land, particularly with high affordable housing contributions and sustainability-focused designs, may see increased opportunities.
- The revised framework ensures that housing supply targets remain central while integrating enhanced infrastructure, environmental benefits, and social equity into the planning process.
- Inevitably, the only way to increase housing delivery will be to **increase housing supply**. The NPPF reinforces a brownfield first approach, this on its own will not deliver the number of homes required. Well located land will be needed whether this is Green Belt or greenfield to deliver 1.5 million homes.

- The reinforcement of Plan-making to identify such locations is likely to be slower than the Government intends, and the scale of need will inevitably weaken Local Authorities housing land supply positions. Opportunities therefore exist now to both **promote land and/or submit planning applications** with local authorities on the back foot when it comes housing supply.
-

Conclusion

The revised NPPF underscores the Government's commitment to increased housing targets, encouraging collaborative planning, and ensuring that sustainable and well-designed developments play a pivotal role in future growth. While some areas see reduced housing need from the previous standard method calculation, others face considerably higher targets. Meeting these targets will be challenging and the importance of plan-making and 'real' strategic planning will be critical to how close the government get to meeting its 1.5million home target in five years.

Contact

To discuss any aspect of the Government's changes to the NPPF or how we can assist in delivering your project and contributing to the country's housing need then please get in touch at enquiries@intel-land.com or 01202 570471

www.Intel-land.com