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4. HOUSING



Housing development, Brambleside, Kettering

Introduction

- 4.1 Housing is the major user of developed land. The Local Plan is concerned to ensure that the best locations for new housing are selected and that there is provision of land for the variety of different needs evident in the Borough. The Plan also sets a framework for the selective redevelopment of in-town sites and the improvement of older housing areas.
- 4.2 Needs range from those of the existing population for new types of housing to meeting changing circumstances (e.g. retirement) through those of local new households (e.g. single persons/young married couples) to those created by newcomers to the area (e.g. commuters, workers/executives to local industry).
- 4.3 In response, there should be provided a range of sites in a variety of locations to ensure a range of housing opportunities - of tenure, type and price. The policies recognise the special needs of certain groups, such as those on low income, the elderly and the disabled as well as those in the community in need of care. However, the limitations of this Plan and the planning process in general in relation to housing provision must be recognised. There are in particular, limitations as to the extent of guidance that can be given in relation to type and tenure.

Issues

- 4.4 The main issues for the Plan in relation to housing development are:
 - i the scale and location of new housing development within the Structure Plan context, including consideration of a new settlement;
 - ii the provision of affordable housing and housing for people with disabilities;
 - iii the provision of residential accommodation to cater those in the community in need of care; and
 - iv the density and character of new development and the protection of existing residential amenity from inappropriate, high density infilling.

Structure Plan context

- 4.5 The approved replacement County Structure Plan, which was operative from 1st March, 1989, envisaged that 46,300 dwellings would be required in the County between 1983-2001, of which 5,850 dwellings (12.6%) would be located in Kettering Borough. They were to be distributed throughout the Borough with the majority - 4,000 - allocated for Kettering Town itself.
- 4.6 In approving the replacement County Structure Plan, the Secretary of State for the Environment suggested that the County Council should undertake an early review of the housing and employment policies. Alteration No. 1 to the County Structure Plan was approved by the Secretary of State in January, 1992.
- 4.7 The Alteration proposes a continuation of the strategy of urban concentration and rural restraint. In view of the rapidly changing market situation in the Kettering area and to acknowledge the influence of the A14 and existing commitments, Alteration No. 1 requires 7,250 dwellings to be provided over the period 1988-2006 (mid year) in Kettering Borough, although this is a split between 6,000 to be allocated in urban areas and 1,250 to be accommodated in the rural areas. The total represents 12.6% of the dwelling allocation for the County. Alteration No. 1 also allows for consideration to be given to new settlements to assist in providing for housing requirements in the rural areas.
- 4.8 This provision reflects expected changes in population and household formation over the Plan period. The population is expected to rise from 74,440 at mid 1988 to 80,300 by mid 2001 and to 81,000 by 2006. Households are expected to increase from 28,800 in mid 1988 to 33,900 by mid 2001. This accords with an approximate annual building rate of 400 dwellings per annum which is anticipated to satisfy market demand during the Plan period.

Housing land requirements

- 4.9 Substantial commitments to meet the dwelling requirement identified in Alteration No. 1 to the Structure Plan have already been made in the form of planning permissions for housing development. These are

regarded as commitments against the provision required in Alteration No. 1. Figure 4.1 summarises the requirements for new dwellings over the 1988-2006 period, bearing in mind the commitments made.

Housing for the urban areas

4.10 Within the urban areas of the Borough and particularly in Kettering, there are a substantial number of housing commitments. Whilst it is highly probable that a proportion of these commitments will not be implemented, this stock is of such a scale as to minimise the need to release further greenfield sites. Nevertheless, in order to meet the Structure Plan allocation and to take account of the likelihood of the failure of some of the existing housing commitments to be realised, it is necessary to release some new greenfield sites for which planning permission for residential development will be granted.

4.11 The distribution of the new greenfield sites between the Borough's four towns was formerly determined by the provisions of the Structure Plan. However, Alteration No. 1 of the County Structure Plan now allows local plans to determine the balance of housing to be allocated to each town. The Local Planning Authority has considered the allocation of new housing for each town in the light of:

- i the scale and location of existing commitments;
- ii the extent and pace of new development experienced in recent years;
- iii the environmental, transportation and other constraints limiting the capacity of the town to absorb new developments;
- iv the availability and ability of services to cater for new development; and
- v the need to ensure an adequate supply of land for housing in each town.

4.12 Burton Latimer and Rothwell are small towns, of similar size. New housing development is limited in these towns, given the substantial

34. HOUSING: NEW SITES - URBAN AREAS

Within, or adjacent to, the urban areas of Kettering Borough (comprising the towns of Burton Latimer, Desborough, Kettering and Rothwell) provision will be made for 6000 new dwellings between 1988 and 2006. Such new residential development will be provided accordingly through:

- i existing commitments as at end of June 1994, (comprising completions, units under construction and otherwise extant planning permissions) at:**

Burton Latimer	528	dwellings
Desborough	498	dwellings
Kettering	3704	dwellings
Rothwell	298	dwellings

Figure 4.1

HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS KETTERING BOROUGH, 1988-2006

Figures in dwellings

Location	Approved Structure Plan Alteration 1988-2006	No. of Plots with Outline Planning Permission	No. of Plots with detailed Planning Permission	No. of Plots Under Construction	No. of Plots Completed	Total*	Requirements	Allocations in this Plan
Burton Latimer	} 6,000	63	106	0	359	528	} 972	125
Desborough		30	236	47	185	498		450
Kettering		1,149	745	206	1,604	3,704		303
Rothwell Rural		0	156	27	115	298		166
Areas	1,250	57	130	28	179	394	856	795
Allowance for windfalls								400
Borough	7,250	1,299	1,373	308	2,442	5,422	1,828	2,239

* Data covers period mid 1988 - end of June 1994

Note: Data for Urban Areas based on sites of five units and over

Data for Rural Areas based upon all units

ii **the granting of planning permission for new residential development at:**

Burton Latimer	125	 dwellings
Desborough	450	 dwellings
Kettering	303	 dwellings
Rothwell	166	 dwellings

**35. HOUSING:
WITHIN TOWNS**

Planning permission will normally be granted for proposals for residential development within the towns, defined by the Town Inset boundaries shown on the Proposals Map, where the proposal is compatible with other policies and proposals in this Plan.

development that has taken place in recent years and the scale of existing commitments. The importance of preserving the historic character of Rothwell, together with the traffic problems it experiences, imposes further constraints upon the release of new sites for housing development. The environmental constraints upon Desborough are such as to allow a greater extent of development to be identified in this Plan. Kettering, as the largest town in the Borough, offers the greatest capacity to cater for new development and this is reflected in the scale of existing commitments. The new A14 around Kettering has created new opportunities for growth on all sides, except to the east and this is reflected in the extent of new development proposed. Policy 34 sets out the distribution of new housing development between the Borough's towns and the Proposals Map identifies the sites for which planning permission will be granted for residential development.

4.13 Applications for the development of other sites outside the main built-up areas defined by the town inset boundaries shown on the Proposals Map, will not normally be granted planning permission and will be considered against open countryside and other relevant policies in this Plan. This technique, similar to that proposed for the villages, provides greater clarity in defining where open countryside policies apply and so gives greater certainty to developers and residents alike. It has been supported at appeal.

4.14 Within the urban areas, opportunities will occur for housing development. These may occur on land currently vacant, under-used or in other marginal uses, through the sub division of a curtilage or through redevelopment. They will often be relatively small sites, though this may not be exclusively the case, especially where opportunities for redevelopment occur. It is not possible to foresee all of these opportunities. However, where there is no conflict with other policies or proposals, (e.g. a highway reservation or allocation for another land use) then residential development will normally be appropriate, subject to detailed matters being resolved. In particular, the Local Planning Authority will ensure that development takes place in accordance with Policy 35.

**36. HOUSING:
NEW SITES IN THE RURAL AREA**

Within the rural areas of Kettering Borough provision shall be made for 1250 new dwellings between 1988 and 2006. The new residential development shall be provided through:

- i existing commitments as at the end of June 1994 units under construction and otherwise extant planning permissions) of 393 dwellings;**
- ii the granting of planning permission for a new village totalling 750 dwellings at the Cransley Lodge site, in accordance with Policy RA2; and**
- iii the granting of planning permission for residential development in accordance with Policies RA3 and RA4.**

**37. HOUSING:
DENSITY AND SITE LAYOUT**

Planning permission will be granted for residential development where:

- i the proposed density is compatible with the characteristics of the site or its surroundings and in relation to the ability to be effectively served by public transport and a wide range of locally available community services (eg shops);**
- ii there is adequate space about buildings, private space, car parking, open space and landscaping;**

Housing for the rural areas

- 4.15 The Borough's rural area is sensitive to change in environmental terms. The need to cater for development in the rural area is recognised but the environmental capacity of the Borough's villages has clearly been reached. Accommodating the additional number of dwellings required by Alteration No. 1 of the Structure Plan in those villages would result in substantial environmental harm.
- 4.16 Given this significant constraint, the Local Planning Authority has developed a rural housing strategy, following extensive public consultation and a rigorous procedure of assessment which is explained more fully in Chapter 15. This strategy is based upon the implementation of existing commitments, the construction of a new village and some minor incremental growth in the existing villages. Policy 36 sets out the distribution of new housing development between the three strands of the rural housing strategy outlined above. The site for the new village at Cransley Lodge is shown on the Proposals Map.

New housing

- 4.17 The sites identified for housing development are considered to provide sufficient opportunities for a range of development types and densities (see Policies B4, D4, K12 and R5). Within the larger sites it may be desirable to incorporate a variety of densities on different parts of the site and the provision of housing for lower income groups will be sought from all allocated sites and others of above a certain size. On the question of density, consideration of planning applications will take account of the character of the site and its surroundings, together with the design and layout of the proposed development and the marketing possibilities.
- 4.18 Evidence from recent development in the Borough suggests that, in efforts to maximise the development value of land, there is a danger that the resulting development presents potentially serious problems of residential amenity in terms of overlooking, private space provision and general

- iii **the proposal takes proper account of the need to conserve energy in terms of layout, building design and the use of appropriate materials;**
- iv **the proposal sufficiently incorporates crime prevention measures;**
- v **the proposal is laid out and designed to give priority to pedestrians in accordance with Policy 81; and**
- vi **facilities for cyclists and access to public transport and other amenities are provided.**

appearance. Density control is one of the few tools available to local planning authorities to address these problems.

4.19 In the interests of amenity and the well-being of new residents, new housing layouts must incorporate adequate space about buildings and private space. They must meet appropriate layout and design criteria. Private amenity space must include areas not directly overlooked by other properties. It is recognised that different densities may be appropriate for different forms of development, but good standards of neighbourliness must be observed. Guidance on standards for housing layout and design is published with this Plan (*Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 6, Housing Layout and Design Criteria*).

4.20 The preceding paragraphs have indicated some of the difficulties associated with high density schemes. However, there may be some circumstances in which, depending on the incorporation of appropriate safeguards, high density schemes can be worthy of support. Such schemes can be beneficial in terms of reducing the pressure on greenfield sites. They can also be more energy efficient, if designed correctly.

4.21 The potential for developing schemes of a high density will be dictated by the character and nature of the site and its surroundings. High density schemes may be appropriate in locations where there is, or will be, access to an effective public transport service. Similarly, sites which are close to a wide range of facilities for community use, such as those in or near to town centres, may also be appropriate for high density schemes. In this context, closeness is taken to mean, within a very short walking distance. In all of these circumstances other criteria will still need to be met.

4.22 Awareness of wider environmental issues, such as the need for energy conservation, the use of materials and the protection and creation of wildlife habitats is increasing. These factors need to be considered alongside those of visual amenity and private space provision, in the design of residential development. Consideration must also be given to minimising opportunities for crime (*DoE Circular 5/94 Planning out Crime*). The Local Planning Authority supports the police in seeking the implementation of the "Secured by Design" concept within new developments. The Local Planning Authority will continue to develop consultation procedures to keep the police informed of new development

proposals. Crime prevention requirements will need to be balanced along with other important considerations.

- 4.23 Within residential areas in particular, it is becoming increasingly important to ensure the safety of pedestrians in relation to road traffic. Proposals for residential development should, therefore, be based upon the principle of pedestrian priority. This will involve ensuring that new housing areas are effectively traffic "calmed" from the date of occupation. It will, however, be necessary to ensure that where traffic calming involves existing or proposed bus routes the design allows for safe, comfortable and convenient access.
- 4.24 Site development principles have been prepared which set out in outline the Local Planning Authority's view on the development of individual sites. This supplementary guidance will form an important material consideration in the determination of applications for planning permission for residential development of these sites and is published with this Plan (*Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 7, Housing Site Development Principles*). Density in the range of 8-14 dwellings per acre (20-35 per hectare) can usually be anticipated on large sites, to take advantage of site characteristics and marketing conditions.
- 4.25 Tree and shrub planting, associated landscaping works, the imaginative use of existing features and public open space provision have rightly assumed a central position in successful examples of recent residential development. Such consciousness has become a common feature of new development proposals and is supported by good developers, house buyers and local authorities alike. The Local Planning Authority regard such an approach as essential for the new housing developments in its area. These aspects of housing development are, therefore, considered in the relevant Chapters of the Plan.
- 4.26 The design of buildings in new developments is significant in many areas. The Local Planning Authority is particularly anxious to retain and develop a sense of place in respect of its settlements and is consequently concerned about the erosion of the local identity through the implementation of what might be termed "could be anywhere" housing. New housing should assist in the maintenance and development of the Borough's settlements through the careful use of materials, colour of materials, elevational treatment and

through the use of more specifically non-standard house types. Policies 31 and 32 regarding Gateway and Sensitive Sites relate to most of the sites allocated for housing in this Plan. They seek to engender a sense of distinctiveness and are regarded as important considerations to the determination of planning applications.

- 4.27 The new village proposal at Cransley Lodge will require particular attention to design and to the need to create a sense of place. For it to fulfil its strategic purpose it must provide a quality of environment which will be as enjoyable as that presently experienced in the existing villages. Design principles will need to be prepared to guide carefully development in the new village. Such guidance will be expected to form part of the material to accompany the outline planning application for the new village.

Affordable housing

- 4.28 Until recently, planning for housing was largely a question of ensuring an adequate overall supply of land. However, in recognition of the difficulty certain sections of the community have had in obtaining housing at an affordable cost in recent years, planning has also focused on the need for lower cost, affordable housing.

- 4.29 To meet the range of housing needs that exist, the Government encourages Local Planning Authorities, to:
- i seek a mix of house types and sizes within new housing development;
 - ii assess the need for affordable housing;
 - iii use Development Plans to set out the approach to tackling that need;
 - iv set an overall target for affordable housing and targets for individual sites which should be used as the basis for negotiation with landowners/developers; and
 - v indicate the arrangements to be used to reserve this housing for those who need it.

38. HOUSING: RANGE OF HOUSING

To meet the range of housing needs in the Borough, the Local Planning Authority will seek the inclusion of a mix of house types and sizes within new residential development.

Housing Needs Study

- 4.30 In July 1993 the Borough Council commissioned David Couttie Associates, to carry out a Borough wide study of housing need. The study involved:
- i a postal survey of 50% of the Borough's households seeking information on people's house type, tenure and amenities; household characteristics; the adequacy of people's housing; people's perception of the Borough's housing need; people's plans to move home; the tenure, type and preferred location of new homes; and people's income and housing costs;
 - ii an affordability analysis, involving a survey of house purchases and applications for mortgages over the period June 1992 to June 1993, via the Halifax Building Society;
 - iii population and household formation estimates; and
 - iv consultation with delivery agencies.

39. HOUSING: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Local Planning Authority, in conjunction with the Local Housing Authority, will seek the provision of 828 affordable residential dwellings throughout the Borough and during the period of the Plan, by:

- i making Borough Council owned land available to housing associations for development (Policies K13 and R6);**
- ii negotiating for the provision of an element of affordable housing as part of significant new private sector housing development (Policies B5, D5, K14 and RA6); and**
- iii the implementation of an "exception sites" policy in the rural area (Policy RA7).**

- 4.31 The Study found that the Borough's housing stock is similar to the national average, although terraced housing and flats are under represented. Council housing accounts for just over 17% of the housing stock. The vast majority is owner occupied. The housing stock is largely in good repair and there are few houses deficient in basic amenities.
- 4.32 The Study estimates that 5% of the Borough's households contain some type of a concealed household. This approximates to 1,500 concealed households. Most of these households comprise "one or two young adults" pointing to a need for more one or two bedroomed accommodation (houses and flats). There is also a significant need for 3 bedroomed accommodation.
- 4.33 Unsurprisingly, a large proportion of people wish to remain in Kettering or wish to move to the town from elsewhere. The greatest area of demand is, therefore, in Kettering, however, there is still a need for housing in the Borough's other towns and in the rural area.

In considering proposals, the Local Planning Authority will need to be satisfied that secure arrangements are in place to ensure that the housing provided remains affordable for future occupants.

The Local Planning Authority will also encourage ways, other than through new build to provide affordable housing units, such as the conversion of non-residential property to small dwellings and the re-use of space above shops.

4.34 The affordability analysis undertaken as part of the study indicates that some 667 concealed households have incomes of less than £1,000 per month. The analysis of the house transactions that have taken place in the Kettering area in 1992-93 indicate that an income of more than £1,000 per month is needed to be able to afford even the cheapest of the private sector housing. Consequently it is clear that the housing needs of 667 concealed households will not be met by the normal open market for housing. It is also significant that few of these households have registered with the Council.

4.35 Following on from the affordability analysis, the Local Planning Authority in conjunction with the Local Housing Authority, have defined "affordable housing" as:

"Housing that is accessible to households who are unable to resolve their housing needs in the private sector market on the basis of their income"

Accordingly, the Local Planning Authority consider that, given the economics of the local housing market, "affordable housing" should be taken as relating only to rented or shared ownership forms of tenure.

4.36 The Housing Needs Study's estimate of those in need of "affordable housing" represents only a snapshot at one point in time. It does provide a good indication of the type and location of need. However, future needs also have to be considered. This is estimated using information from the Housing Needs Study on population and household formation projections.

4.37 The information from the Housing Needs Study has been incorporated within a forecasting model adapted from the Audit Commission's report "Developing Local Authority Housing Strategies". The forecasting model rests on the following assumptions:

- i there will be 4,460 more households in the Borough by the year 2006 than there will be at the end of 1994;
- ii the Borough has a home ownership rate of 75% which is unlikely to change over the Plan period. This equates to 3,345 dwellings;

- iii there will be an average void rate of 4% in the private sector and 2% in the local authority and housing association stock;
 - iv a rehousing target of 33.3% per annum of those on the Council's register and "in need" is realistic; and
 - v housing association relets will increase to 50 per annum.
- 4.38 The model, based on the above assumptions, is set out in Figure 4.2 It indicates that 828 affordable residential units will be needed over the Plan period and will, therefore, form the Borough-wide target.
- 4.39 Achievement of the target will involve the Council continuing to release land in its ownership. It is also clear that the private sector will have to make a contribution. The potential to achieve provision for affordable housing via either of these means is explored in the following paragraphs.
- 4.40 Based on the identified need, a wish to see viable, balanced communities and taking into account market conditions and the particular circumstances of each site, the Local Planning Authority will negotiate with landowners/developers for an element of affordable housing as part of significant new housing developments. This will include sites allocated for housing in this Plan, on windfall sites and when landowners/developers are seeking a renewal or amendment of planning permission. Significant housing schemes will normally constitute 20 residential units or more in the urban areas and 10 or more in the rural area.
- 4.41 The target percentage the Local Planning Authority will be seeking for the affordable housing element on a site has been identified for each of the towns, and for the rural area. The target percentage has been identified in relation to the level of local need, the level of need of other areas of the Borough and the size of allocated housing sites. The targets will form the basis for negotiations with developers.
- 4.42 Based on the particular circumstances of each town or area, the opportunities offered by Council owned land and the nature of each individual site, a specific number of affordable units has been identified for the housing land allocations in this Plan. These will also form the basis for negotiation and will rise if the total number of dwellings on the

Figure 4.2

FORECASTING MODEL FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN KETTERING BOROUGH 1995 - 2006

Extra demand 1995 - 2006		On Council Register and in Need (including statutory homeless)	1,304
New Households	4,460	One third Assumed Housing Target per annum	434
Total Extra Demand	4,460	New Household Need per annum	110
		Total Needed per annum	544
Extra Supply 1995 - 2006			
Private Sector Stock (75% of total)	3,345		
less 4% voids	134	Supply Side	
Total Extra Supply	3,211	Local Authority Relets per annum	425
		Housing Association Relets per annum	50
		Total Relets per annum	475
Affordable Housing Need 1995 - 2006		Less Total Needed per annum	544
Shortfall in Extra Supply	1,294		
add 2% voids	26		
Total Affordable Housing Need	1,320	Overall Shortfall per annum	69
New Household Need per annum to 2006 (12 Years)	110	Overall Shortfall 1995 - 2006	828

site is going to be more than that forecast in this plan. The target figures can be found in the relevant settlement and rural chapters.

- 4.43 It is expected that this type of housing will be provided in the form of low cost rented accommodation or as part of a shared ownership scheme, both involving a housing association in the ownership and management of the dwellings provided. Planning obligations will be used to secure the provision of affordable housing. The mechanics of implementation may involve the provision of completed housing units to an association or the provision of serviced sites. The Borough Council has 5 Housing Association partners and will encourage developers to work with them. If a Housing Association is not to be involved and the developer proposes to rent the houses directly or to promote a shared ownership scheme, planning conditions or obligations will be used to restrict their occupation to local people in housing need. These people will be identified from the Local Housing Authority's Housing Needs Register.

Housing for people with disabilities

- 4.44 The Borough wide Housing Needs Study indicates that nearly 1.5% of households contain a wheelchair bound person. Half of these people live in dwellings that are not specifically adapted for a wheelchair and over three quarters do not have a stairlift. Over 10% of the Borough's households contain someone with a walking disability. The study also indicates that some of the households intending to move within the next few years require housing that provides for the needs of people with mobility difficulties. Many people with disabilities tend to be elderly. The number of people over retirement age in the Borough is forecast to increase and, therefore, it is not unreasonable to assume that the need for housing suitable for people with disabilities will also increase.
- 4.45 As very little existing housing is suitable for wheelchair users, the Local Planning Authority will seek new housing to be designed to standards that meet the needs of people with disabilities when considering applications for residential development. Such a requirement is commensurate with the objectives of the Access Committee for England (sponsored by the Department of Health) and with this Plan's strategy for equal accessibility. People with disabilities will benefit if an increased

**40. HOUSING:
ACCESSIBLE HOUSING**

Taking into account market and site conditions, the Local Planning Authority will seek to negotiate agreement with developers for a proportion of all new housing to be designed to "accessible housing" standards.

**41. HOUSING:
WHEELCHAIR HOUSING**

Taking into account market and site conditions, the Local Planning Authority will seek to negotiate agreement with developers of housing sites for a small proportion of housing constructed to "wheelchair housing" standards on the following basis:

proportion of the general housing stock is designed for their needs, allowing them the opportunity to lead a more independent life. Furthermore, a greater choice of housing will reduce the need to move or undertake costly adaptations.

- 4.46 Such housing provision includes "accessible housing" which is suitable for visitors in wheelchairs and capable of adaptation to suit most people with disabilities, and also "wheelchair housing" which is specifically designed, without the need for further structural alterations, to meet the housing needs of wheelchair bound people. "Accessible housing" need not cost more to construct than ordinary housing and, in any case, will be suitable for any potential occupant, as indeed "wheelchair housing" would be.
- 4.47 Dwellings constructed to "accessible housing" standards would normally have the following features:
- i a level or gently sloped approach and flush threshold;
 - ii where accessed by a lift, the lift should be accessible and usable by people in wheelchairs;
 - iii a w.c. at ground floor level;
 - iv door widths and circulation spaces suitable for wheelchair manoeuvre;
 - v a staircase capable of allowing the possible future installation of a stairlift; and
 - vi conveniently located car parking spaces.
- 4.48 Dwellings constructed to "wheelchair housing" standards would normally have the following features:
- i a level or slightly ramped approach and flush threshold;
 - ii a design which allows wheelchair manoeuvre into and within all principal rooms;

- i 1 unit on sites involving between 50 to 200 dwellings; and**
- ii 1% of the total number of dwellings on sites involving over 200 dwellings.**

- iii a ground floor bedroom and bathroom; or, in a two storey house, a ground floor w.c. and a staircase suitable for the installation of a platform or chairlift; or the provision of sufficient space for a through floor lift;
- iv a bathroom and w.c. which permit the lateral transfer from a wheelchair to the w.c. and bath; and
- v a kitchen layout designed for easy access by wheelchair users.

4.49 Policies 40 and 41 are intended to meet the need identified by the Housing Needs Study and will help to rectify the lack of appropriate accommodation for people with disabilities. The target figures in Policies 40 and 41 will form the basis for negotiations with developers. Site conditions such as topography, proximity to amenities and services, as well as to a public transport service, will be taken into account. The proportion of "accessible" and "wheelchair" housing will be secured through the use of planning conditions and obligations.

**42. HOUSING:
CHANGE OF USE TO
RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS**

Planning permission for changes of use of residential property to residential institutions will be granted where the following criteria can be met:

- i the property is suitable in terms of size, layout, private space and amenities;**
- ii the proposal would normally involve the conversion of a detached property and not a terraced or semi-detached property;**
- iii the external residential character of the dwelling is retained;**

Care in the community

4.50 Following changing government policy towards "Care in the Community", including care for the elderly and those with physical or mental disabilities, there has been a growing trend towards the change of use of large residential properties to provide "residential institutions" within the meaning of Class C2 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, as amended. This relates to uses for the provision of residential accommodation and aid to people in need of care as well as a nursing home. Though there continues to be some demand for this type of use, there are now a number of such homes in the Kettering area. Demand may, therefore, tail off during the Plan period. However, this situation will be monitored through the Care in the Community Forum that has been established and which involves all relevant agencies.

- iv **the property would have no significant adverse effect on the character or appearance of the street scene or surrounding locality;**
- v **as a result of the permission there would not be a local concentration of properties involving residential institutional use which, taken together, would have a significant adverse impact on the character and amenities of the area;**
- vi **the proposal has no significant adverse effect on the amenities of neighbouring property;**
- vii **on-site parking and manoeuvring space is provided in accordance with Policy 85;**
- viii **access is provided to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority (Policy 84); and**
- ix **adequate amenities - including bin storage, open space and landscaped areas are provided.**

Planning permission for the change of use of non-residential property to provide accommodation for the elderly will normally be granted where the criteria i-ii and iv-ix are met.

- 4.51 The principal planning concerns are that:
- i properties are selected which are suitable for the proposed use and are in locations which afford reasonable access to community facilities;
 - ii the character and amenities of the area are protected and, in particular, that an over-concentration of such uses does not occur in one locality; and
 - iii normal standards of development are met.

Where the conversion of non-residential property is involved in primarily residential areas, similar considerations will apply.

- 4.52 In the context of Policy 42, an unacceptable level of local concentration would involve:
- i more than 10% of properties being used as residential institutions when taken together with any non-residential uses in any mixed residential or homogeneous area; or
 - ii residential institutions being 10 or less properties away from other existing or approved residential institutional uses on the same side of the street.

- 4.53 The parameters identified above have been established as a consequence of research and upon appeal decisions.

Existing housing

- 4.54 In considering existing housing areas there are two principal factors to take into account. The first is the quality of the housing stock and the changes which are required, or may be expected, to it. The second is the housing environment, covering the issues of amenity and traffic management, particularly in the older areas of the towns.

- 4.55 Generally the existing housing stock is in good condition. There are no statutory existing or proposed clearance areas in the Borough and wholesale demolition and redevelopment proposals do not form part of the housing strategy in this Plan. While there may be occasions when demolition of property is necessary - for instance, to achieve a highway improvement or to facilitate development - these are likely to be rare. (An example is the redevelopment of prefabricated dwellings at North Park, Kettering.)
- 4.56 The existing housing stock is more likely to experience change as a result of the changing use of existing buildings, alterations and extensions. Such changes are unlikely to alter substantially the physical character of existing housing areas but the effect on the local environment can be of concern to local residents.

**43. HOUSING:
CONVERSION OF FIRST AND SECOND FLOOR
ACCOMMODATION TO RESIDENTIAL USE**

Planning permission for changes of use of first and second floor town centre accommodation above commercial, shopping or office uses will be granted where the following criteria are met:

- i the property is suitable in terms of size layout and private space;**
- ii the external character of the building is retained or enhanced; and**
- iii adequate amenities are provided including access and bin storage.**

Changes of use

- 4.57 The Local Planning Authority, as part of its efforts to assist the viability and vitality of the Borough's town centres and to reduce the need for people to travel, believe that it is important to encourage more people to live in central locations. The potential for this to occur varies from town to town. However, first and second floor accommodation in the Borough's town centres is frequently under used. It does not command sufficient demand to attract shopping or office uses but it could be utilised to provide residential accommodation, probably small one and two bed flats in the rented sector. Such accommodation will appeal to a particular part of the market, benefitting from the close proximity of the town centre and its facilities.
- 4.58 Particular characteristics of town centre accommodation will demand an imaginative approach by designers/architects. Such changes of use represent a situation where the normal car parking standards can be relaxed by the Local Planning Authority (Policy 85). Other normal planning requirements will be considered more flexibly.

**44. HOUSING:
CHANGES OF USE TO MULTIPLE OCCUPATION**

Planning permission for the conversion of houses to multiple occupation will normally be granted where the following criteria can be met:

- i the property is suitable in terms of size, layout, private space and amenities;**
- ii the proposal has no significant adverse effects on the amenities of neighbouring property;**
- iii as a result of the permission there would not be a local concentration of properties in multiple occupation which, taken together, would have a significant adverse impact on the character and amenities of the area;**
- iv the proposal does not give rise to significant additional traffic to the detriment of the amenities of the area;**
- v on site parking and manoeuvring space is provided in accordance with Policy 85;**
- vi access is provided to the satisfaction of the local planning authority (Policy 84); and**
- vii adequate amenities - including bin storage, drying areas (internal or external) private space (discrete or communal) and landscaped areas are provided.**

Houses in multiple occupation

4.59 Similar planning concerns apply to the subdivision of property for flats or bedsits as apply to changes of use to residential institutions. However, as the pressure for small units of this type is likely to continue to be significant, safeguards will be required to ensure that a change in character does not occur by multiple changes of use in the same area. To an extent it will be a matter of judgement in the particular circumstances of each case as to when such change occurs. Certain changes can be undertaken without the need for planning permission but Policy 44 will apply where permission is required. Local concentration in the context of Policy 44 is the same as that defined in paragraph 4.51 above.

**45. HOUSING:
CONVERSION OF NON-RESIDENTIAL
PROPERTY**

Planning permission for the conversion of redundant factory buildings and other non-residential buildings to residential use will be granted where the following criteria are met:

- i the property is suitable in terms of size, layout, private space and amenities;**
- ii the proposal has no significant adverse effect on the amenities of neighbouring properties;**
- iii on site parking and manoeuvring space is provided in accordance with Policy 85;**
- iv access is provided to the satisfaction of the local planning authority (Policy 84);**
- v adequate amenities, including bin storage, drying areas (internal or external) and where practicable, private open space (discrete or communal) and landscaped areas are provided; and**
- vi the proposal would not prejudice the continued operation or development of existing industrial or commercial activities on adjoining sites.**

4.60 Of importance is the change of use of factories and other non-residential buildings to housing use, particularly as firms continue to relocate to modern industrial estates or business parks. Some of the buildings which remain are also of architectural or historic interest and lend themselves to conversion. There is demand for flat/bedsit accommodation which can often result from such schemes and they can produce a worthwhile reuse of physically sound industrial buildings that no longer fulfil their original purpose. Such schemes must make provision for adequate car parking, access and manoeuvring space and meet the requirements of the Building Regulations and the Fire Officer.

4.61 In considering proposals for the conversion of redundant industrial or commercial premises to residential use, the Local Planning Authority will seek to ensure that they do not compromise the continuation of existing businesses and their possible development on any adjacent property or land. Where redundant buildings are not suitable for conversion and reuse, proposals for re-development will be considered in the context of the policies in this Plan.

**46. HOUSING:
ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS**

Planning permission will normally be granted for alterations and extensions to existing dwelling houses where:

- i the design, mass and materials are in harmony with the character of the existing dwellinghouse and the local area; and**
- ii there is no significant adverse effect on the amenities of neighbouring properties or the existing dwellinghouse.**

Alterations and extensions

- 4.62 Alterations and extensions to residential property are a significant component of change in the appearance of residential areas. Many alterations and extensions can be undertaken without the need for specific approval from the Local Planning Authority (though Building Regulations approval may be required). Larger works require permission as do certain alterations. There are also specific regulations concerning alterations and extensions to Listed Buildings (buildings 'listed' by the Secretary of State for the Environment as being of special architectural or historic interest -see Chapter 3).
- 4.63 The need, in managing this type of change, is to encourage good quality development without unduly encumbering applicants in adapting premises to meet changing needs and circumstances.
- 4.64 Current supplementary planning guidance relating to house alterations and extensions is published with this Plan. (*Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 8 House Alterations and Extensions.*) There are other issues in the rural areas which are important and these are considered in paragraph 15.89.

Housing environment

- 4.65 The Local Planning Authority is also very conscious that the environment of residential areas is important in the quality of life of residents. Because of its historical evolution, Kettering has large areas of mixed use. This pattern is evident to a lesser extent in the other A6 towns. Changes in physical layout and environment have often not kept up with the pace of broader social and economic trends, most noticeable in the problems caused by increasing car ownership. A number of practical problems have resulted, in particular:
- i the highway system is not designed for modern requirements;
 - ii there is insufficient space available for car parking;

- iii the quality of the environment is reduced by the presence of some non-residential uses and the traffic they generate, by the general layout and by the saturation of these areas by parked cars and traffic generally; and
- iv the potential adverse impact of new development and changes of use upon the amenities of individual residential units.

**47. HOUSING:
RESIDENTIAL AMENITY**

Planning permission will not be granted for proposals for development, including changes of use, where they would have a significant adverse impact on the amenities of adjacent existing or proposed residential properties, resulting in:

- i overlooking and so the demonstrable loss of privacy within a residential property itself and in previously private areas of a property's garden;**
- ii overshadowing and so the demonstrable loss of sunlight and daylight to the principle rooms of a residential property;**
- iii an increase in noise and other disturbances including vibration experienced to above recommended limits within a residential property itself and in any garden area, especially during the evening periods of the day and at weekends;**
- iv an increase of dirt, dust, smoke, smell and other emissions into the atmosphere causing noxious and other fumes to be experienced within and around residential property;**

4.66 The quality of amenities enjoyed by individual residential units is also an important contributor to the overall quality of a housing area. The impact of any development upon such amenities, even on only one unit, can lower the overall quality of a housing area since it may be seen to set a future standard of acceptability. Whilst many factors will have to be taken into consideration in the determination of planning applications, the Local Planning Authority consider that proposals having a demonstrable adverse impact upon those amenities usually expected of residential accommodation should not be permitted. However, not all amenities expected by the general public are considered proper material considerations for planning purposes. Policy 47, therefore, sets out those aspects of residential amenity which should not be adversely affected by new developments, including changes of use and demolition.

4.67 In addition to Policy 47, the Local Planning Authority has also evolved a combination of policies to assist in tackling these issues and these are set out within this Plan. While limited resources and the legislative framework prohibit comprehensive large scale area improvement (such as was the case with General Improvement and Housing Action Areas) the Authority believes that the framework of policies and proposals summarised in Figure 4.3 will help address the issues and make important improvements to the quality of life in these areas.

Figure 4.3

HOUSING: HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT, POLICY SUMMARY

Chapter

1. Introduction

3. Environment

4. Housing

5. Employment

Policy

1. DEVELOPMENT: SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE
12. POLLUTING ACTIVITIES
18. NATURE CONSERVATION
19. NATURE CONSERVATION STRATEGY
22. DEVELOPMENT IN CONSERVATION AREAS
23. CONSERVATION AREA ENHANCEMENT
24. LISTED BUILDINGS
27. DERELICTION/VACANT LAND AND BUILDINGS
28. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS
37. DENSITY AND SITE LAYOUT
42. CHANGES OF USE TO RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS
43. CONVERSION OF 1ST AND 2ND FLOOR ACCOMMODATION
44. CHANGES OF USE TO MULTIPLE OCCUPATION
45. CONVERSION OF NON-RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY
46. ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS
47. RESIDENTIAL AMENITY
52. CHANGES OF USE TO SMALL OFFICES
58. EMPLOYMENT WITHIN TOWNS
59. RELOCATION/REUSE

Figure 4.3 (continued)

Chapter

	Policy
7. Transportation	74. PROVISION FOR THE DISABLED 75. CYCLING 80. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT: EXISTING HIGHWAYS 82. COMMERCIAL TRAFFIC
8. Leisure	94. EXISTING OPEN SPACE
11. Burton Latimer	B2. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS B8. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT
12. Desborough	D2. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT D8. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT
13. Kettering	K6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT K1 1. HEADLANDS POLICY AREAS K15. CHARACTER AND DENSITY IN DEFINED HOUSING AREAS K16. PROTECTED HOUSING AREAS K19. CHANGES OF USE TO SMALL OFFICES - ROCKINGHAM ROAD K27. RESIDENTS' PARKING K26. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT
14. Rothwell	R2. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT R8. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT
15. Rural Areas	RA15. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT
16. Implementation and resources	118. COMPENSATORY PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

- v a reduction in the amenities ancillary to the enjoyment of a residential property such as car parking spaces and gardens;
- vi the outlook of a residential property being adversely dominated, in close proximity, by a building or structure of an overbearing nature; or
- vii significant interference with radio or other electronic equipment.

**48. HOUSING:
REPLACEMENT DWELLINGS**

Planning permission for the replacement of existing dwellings will normally be granted where proposals conform with the other policies and proposals of this Plan, except where the dwelling is:

- i listed as a building of special architectural or historic interest or is in a Conservation Area; or
- ii in the countryside (i.e. outside the built up area of the towns or outside the boundaries of the villages) and:
 - a. is the result of a temporary or series of temporary permissions;
 - b. its replacement would be in serious conflict with public health or safety, the economy of public services or the appearance or potential for improvement of the countryside; or

Other housing development

Replacement dwellings

- 4.68 Planning permission is not normally required for the demolition of buildings (with the exception of Listed Buildings and buildings in Conservation Areas) and so the replacement of existing dwellings is normally acceptable provided the new dwelling meets normal standards of development and is commensurate in scale with the original dwelling. In some cases, however, this would not be appropriate because of the adverse impact this would have on other policies and proposals in this Plan, notably those relating to the open countryside. Even here though, replacement may be a means of improving a derelict site in the countryside.

- c. is either no longer in existence (unless the dwelling has been accidentally destroyed in the recent past e.g. by fire or flood and was occupied at the time of the accident) or is structurally unsound and incapable of renovation.

**49. HOUSING:
TEMPORARY DWELLINGS**

Planning permission will be granted for temporary dwellings only in exceptional circumstances where:

- i it can be demonstrated to the Local Planning Authority that the dwelling is required for essential agricultural or forestry purposes for a limited period only; or
- ii the dwelling is required to provide temporary on site accommodation during construction of a permanent c Felling, refurbishment/conversion of an existing building(s), or other development or to meet exceptional personal requirements such as an elderly persons annex);

and in the case of i and ii
- iii the proposal conforms with other policies and proposals in this Plan particularly in relation to site layout, access, drainage and landscaping,

Any such permission will be strictly time limited in accordance with the necessary requirements for the dwelling and will normally be personal So the applicant. In the case of (i) applications will be

Temporary dwellings

4.69 Temporary dwellings will not normally be an appropriate form of accommodation to encourage. However, they may be necessary in certain circumstances - usually to provide on site accommodation during construction of a permanent dwelling, refurbishment/conversion of existing building(s) or other development, or for purposes related to agriculture or forestry. Temporary accommodation adjoining an existing dwelling has also been used in this area as an alternative to the permanent construction of an annexe for elderly relatives. Usually, mobile or semi-mobile units will be used. Demand for this sort of temporary accommodation is perhaps more likely in the rural than the urban areas where alternatives are available. The visual amenity and public health considerations here will be particularly important.

assessed in a similar manner to those for permanent dwellings (see Policy RA5) and an appraisal from the Ministry of Agriculture or other recognised consultants will be required as part of the application.

Gypsy Review

Government Advice

4.70 The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 together with Department of the Environment Circulars 1/94 and 18/94 mark the privatisation of gypsy site provision. Local Authorities are guided by the following:

- i Section 24 of the Caravan Sites and control of Development Act 1960, as amended by Section 90 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, provides that "Gypsies":

"means persons of nomadic habitat of life, whatever their race or origin, but does not include members of an organised group of travelling showmen or of persons engaged in travelling circuses, travelling together as such".

The courts have also recently clarified the definition of the term "gipsies". In R v South Hams District Council, ex parte Gibb and two other applications - The Times, 8 June 1994; The Independent, 15 June 1994 - the Court of Appeal held that "gipsies" meant persons who wandered or travelled for the purpose of making or seeking their livelihood, and did not include persons who moved from place to place without any connection between their movement and their means of livelihood. Furthermore, in Maidstone Borough Council v. Secretary of State for the Environment and Dunn (as reported in J.P.L. July, 1996) it was clarified that a person can remain a gypsy even if they have a permanent home, as long as they retain a nomadic way of life at certain periods of the year.

- ii The need for gypsy site provision to be addressed through the Development Plan system, either by specific site identification, or by the setting out of clear, realistic criteria for suitable locations as a basis for site provision policies.
- iii Local Authorities no longer have a duty but a discretion to provide gypsy sites, be they temporary or permanent.
- iv The need for a policy of tolerance towards gypsies who have encamped on unauthorised sites which are not causing a nuisance, such as is sometimes the case of a site on Council owned land.
- v Local Authorities are urged to assist gypsies in the process of owning, developing and managing their own sites but only on condition that there is a defined local need and provided countryside protection policies are not breached.

Structure Plan context

4.71 The approved County Structure Plan, 1989 as amended by Alteration No. 1, 1990 states that provision should be made for a limited number of permanent gypsy caravan sites and their location must:

- i be accessible to established gypsy routes;
- ii be accessible to places of work, schools and shops;
- iii have regard to the environment and local amenities; and
- iv have no adverse impact upon the road network.

In respect of point i above, it is considered that since the identified need within the Borough is for permanent sites rather than temporary stopping areas, this criterion is inappropriate. The primary concern is accessibility to the necessary facilities rather than accessibility to established gypsy routes. Furthermore, there is no definition of the established gypsy routes within the County. This criterion has therefore not been included within the Adopted version of the Alteration to the Local Plan whereas the remaining criteria have.

Local Need

- 4.72 The Kettering Borough Council Draft Housing Strategy -1997 to 2000 and the half-yearly census undertaken by this authority on behalf of the Department of the Environment, identifies a need for continuing the housing provision for gypsies. It identifies a growing number of households who desire to purchase land for sites for settled occupation.
- 4.73 The census reveals that there are currently 32 households/families at 7 gypsy sites. There are authorised gypsy sites at Pastures End in Desborough, which is owned and managed by the Council; Animal Corner near Braybrooke; The Stables near Braybrooke; and land adjacent to A43 at Broughton. In addition there are unauthorised sites at the Rothwell/Orton Road/A14 junction; Spinney Close near Desborough; and Peacock Farm near Rushton. Should these families be forced to move, there will be a need to accommodate approximately 6 households/families, within the local area. Although not all the households have established local links with Kettering, this provides a guide as to the local need which should be planned for.

Gypsy Sites

- 4.74 Proposals for new gypsy sites or the expansion of existing sites within the Borough will be considered and assessed in relation to the criteria set out in Policy 119. Through the ongoing consultation with local gypsy families, a clear need has been identified for accommodating gypsies on privately owned sites for permanent occupation.
- 4.75 It is important that gypsy sites are located close enough to urban areas for gypsies to have access to essential services such as schools, health care, shops, public transport and other social services. Care should also be taken to avoid overconcentration of gypsy sites in any one area as this could have a detrimental impact on the amenities, character and appearance of the surrounding area.
- 4.76 Although it is recognised that planning applications for sites may be received from gypsies who do not reside in or regularly resort to the Borough, planning permission will not normally be granted in these circumstances, since the priority remains to accommodate local gypsies

119. HOUSING: GYPSY SITES

Planning permission will be granted for gypsy sites which cater for gypsies who conform to the definition of a gypsy (see supporting text, para. 4.70) residing in or resorting to the Borough, where:

- i the site does not normally exceed a density of 8 caravans (main units of habitation) per acre, or 10 per 0.5 hectares, but in any case not more than 10 caravans on any one site;**
- ii the site is within a reasonable distance of community facilities such as schools, shops and medical facilities;**

- iii **the site is not located in the Kettering/Corby Green Wedge, Special Landscape Areas, designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Conservation Areas, archaeological sites of county-wide importance, other nature conservation sites, playing fields, parks and public open spaces, or on sites which comprise best and most versatile agricultural land;**
- iv **where use cannot practically be made of derelict, redundant or vacant land, sites within the open countryside will be considered where this is consistent with the other policies and proposals in this Plan;**
- v **the site, either on its own or in COT unction with other sites within the area, does not result in an overconcentration of gypsy sites, or have a cumulative detrimental impact on the amenities, character and appearance of the surrounding area;**
- vi **the site does not have a significant adverse impact on the highway network, including traffic impacts on the local community;**
- vii **the site can be satisfactorily accessed from the existing and proposed road network; and**
- viii **the site should make use of existing landscaping and field boundaries (where possible) for the definition of the site's . boundary and in any case incorporating screening and appropriate boundary treatment by means of landscaping and ground contours.**

residing in or regularly resorting to the Borough. Thus the emphasis will be on facilitating the provision of small privately owned sites for settled occupation in accordance with the identified local need.

4.77 Density is based on the useable area, ie. excluding lakes, roads, communal services and other areas unsuitable for the siting of caravans, rather than the total site area. Density calculations are based on information taken from the Caravan Sites & Control of Development Act 1960, Sec. 5 - Model Standards 1989: Permanent Residential Mobile Home Sites, for the minimum distances permitted between caravans; and the Caravan Sites Act 1968 Part III - Miscellaneous, Sec. 13(2) for the standard size of a sectional dwelling.

"Any one site" means any site which comprises several individual gypsy sites adjoining or adjacent to one another, shall be treated as one main site.

4.78 The stated maximum of 10 caravans is seen as reasonable in enabling a family, or families, to be accommodated on one site. Gypsy families are increasingly being accommodated within sectional dwellings and prefabricated structures on permanent sites and are using caravans for their work associated journeys. However, the accepted definition of a caravan, as set out in the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 (as amended by the Caravan Sites Act 1968), does not make provision for such structures. To reflect this need, all reference to caravans within Policy 119 includes sectional dwellings and prefabricated structures, as defined by the Caravan Sites Act 1968 Part III - Miscellaneous, Sec. 13(2), referred to above. The maximum of 10 caravans is intended to relate to the main units of habitation on the site. It is accepted that a reasonable number of smaller caravans for use when travelling will also need to be accommodated within the site boundary. This will be controlled by the relevant site licence. The capacity of each site will be evaluated on its merits in terms of its appropriate size.

4.79 The Borough Council would encourage the intensification of an existing authorised site which is in accordance with Policy 119, in preference to an extension of the existing site or the allocation of an additional site within the locality.

4.80 An essential element of a sustainable development strategy is to prevent unjustified development within the open countryside. In terms of Department of Environment Circular 1/94, the primary aim is to secure provision appropriate to gypsies' accommodation needs while protecting amenity. In accordance with paragraph 14 of the Circular, consideration will be given to sites outside existing settlements but within a reasonable distance of local services and facilities. Preference will be given to sites in these locations which make use of derelict or redundant land which shall be taken to have the same meaning as in Policy 27 of this Plan, ie. "incapable of beneficial use without treatment". Only where this is not practically possible will consideration be given to the use of other land in rural and semi-rural settings. Sites should not be located on land which comprises best and most versatile agricultural land.

