



Guildford Borough Local Plan Housing Density Policy.

The Council wishes to hear your views on its Housing Density Policy in the Draft Local Plan.

Policy 99H10 expects all residential developments to have a density of at least 30 dwellings to the hectare (12 to the acre) with higher densities encouraged in appropriate locations including the Town Centre. This Policy was drafted to allow a lower density, as an exception, on sites of less than 0.4 hectares (1 acre) where local context and character and site constraints may make it difficult to achieve higher densities.

The Government Office for the South East (GOSE) has raised objection to the wording of the Policy in particular the criteria used for defining sites where lower densities may, as an exception, be acceptable. GOSE have the power to direct a change to the Draft Local Plan.

The Housing Density Policy was subject to formal public consultation in March 2002, and the Councils agreed wording is shown overleaf. Also shown is a proposed alternative form of wording to Policy 99H10 which reduces the "exception site" size threshold and incorporates some other minor changes in accordance with GOSE's requests. On the back page is a section for comments. Please ensure that any comments are received by **Friday 29 November 2002.**



POLICY 99H10 - NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (As agreed by the Council)

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SHOULD PROVIDE BETWEEN 30 AND 50 DWELLINGS PER HECTARE NET.

THE COUNCIL WILL NOT PERMIT DEVELOPMENTS THAT ARE BELOW 30 DWELLINGS PER HECTARE NET EXCEPT WHERE HIGHER DENSITY PROPOSALS WOULD HAVE AN UNACCEPTABLY DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON THE EXISTING CHARACTER OF THE AREA. DENSITIES BEYOND THIS RANGE WILL BE ENCOURAGED AT LOCATIONS WITH GOOD PUBLIC TRANSPORT ACCESSIBILITY.

PROPOSALS FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SHOULD PROVIDE A MIX OF DWELLING SIZES AND TYPES TO REFLECT THE NEEDS OF THOSE SEEKING HOUSING IN THE BOROUGH.

IN ALL CASES, THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT MUST ACCORD WITH THE CRITERIA CONTAINED IN POLCY H4 AND OTHER RELEVANT PLAN POLICIES.

The Council's strategy for providing additional dwellings seeks to accommodate new residential development primarily within the existing urban areas and in the village settlements. The principle objective of this strategy is to minimise the development of "greenfield" sites and other open land. For this strategy to be achieved, it is essential that efficient use be made of the limited supply of previously developed urban sites. Policy 99H10 seeks to ensure that residential development makes efficient use of land and that the dwellings provided match the needs of those seeking homes, as assessed by the Council.

The emphasis of Policy 99H10 is to ensure the most efficient use of land but this will not be at the expense of the quality of the existing environment. Although the Council will not permit developments of less than 30 dwellings per hectare, exceptionally, lower densities may be permitted on small sites (less than 0.4Ha) where the development would otherwise cause unacceptable harm to the existing character of the area. The Council has adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance "Large Houses in Large Gardens" and is preparing an additional SPG in respect of Residential Areas of Special Character. Such guidance will be a material consideration in assessing proposals for new residential development.

PROPOSED POLICY 99H10 - NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

(In line with GOSE's comments)

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE AT A DENSITY OF BETWEEN 30 AND 50 DWELLINGS PER HECTARE NET. DENSITIES ABOVE THIS RANGE WILL BE PERMITTED IN LOCATIONS WITH GOOD PUBLIC TRANSPORT ACCESSIBILITY.

DEVELOPMENTS WITH A DENSITY BELOW 30 DWELLINGS PER HECTARE NET WILL NOT BE PERMITTED EXCEPT WHERE HIGHER DENSITY PROPOSALS WOULD HAVE AN UNACCEPTABLY HARMFUL IMPACT ON THE EXISTING CHARACTER OF THE AREA. PROPOSALS FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SHOULD PROVIDE A MIX OF DWELLING SIZES AND TYPES TO REFLECT THE NEEDS OF THOSE SEEKING HOUSING IN THE BOROUGH.

IN ALL CASES, THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT MUST ACCORD WITH THE CRITERIA CONTAINED IN POLICY H4 AND OTHER RELEVANT PLAN POLICIES.

The Council's strategy for providing additional dwellings seeks to accommodate new residential development primarily within the existing urban areas and in the village settlements. The principle objective of this strategy is to minimise the development of "greenfield" sites and other open land. For this strategy to be achieved, it is essential that efficient use be made of the limited supply of previously developed urban sites. Policy 99H10 seeks to ensure that residential development makes efficient use of land and that the dwellings provided match the needs of those seeking homes, as assessed by the Council.

The emphasis of Policy 99H10 is to ensure the most efficient use of land but this will not be at the expense of the quality of the existing environment. Exceptionally, developments having a density of less than 30 dwellings per hectare may be permitted on small sites (less than 0.2 Ha) where the development would otherwise conflict with the criteria of H4 and cause unacceptable harm to the existing context or character of an area. The Council will need to be satisfied that alternative, higher density options have been thoroughly explored and that other planning considerations clearly outweigh the benefits of higher density development.

The Council is intending to prepare Borough wide design guidance. This new guidance will encourage good housing design and more efficient use of land whilst ensuring that local character is respected and enhanced. It will incorporate existing SPG's such as "Large Houses in Large Gardens" and the draft "Residential Areas of Special Character". This guidance will be a material consideration in assessing proposals for new residential development and will assist in identifying areas where lower density development may, as an exception, be appropriate.

We are keen to hear your views on this Policy. In particular we would value your comments on the following:

1. What do you consider the appropriate threshold for lower densities should be?

0.2 hectares
(0.5 acres)

0.4 hectares
(1 acre)

Other

Please give your reasoning below:

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2. Do you consider that alternative wording would achieve the balance between maximising densities and protecting established character? (Please bear in mind that planning policies should be clear, understandable and precise.)

No

Yes

Please set out your ideas below and any other comments you may have on this issue (Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

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Your name:

Organisation:

Address:

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For further information please contact Kate Hilson, Senior Planner on Tel: 01483 444662 or visit the GBC Website at www.guildfordborough.co.uk.

We look forward to hearing your views.

Please ensure that any response is received by **29 November 2002**.

Please reply to Planning Policy, Environmental Planning Group,
Guildford Borough Council, Millmead House, Millmead, Guildford Surrey GU2
4BB

or e-mail: localplans@guildford.gov.uk