

Interim Housing Policy Statement

Rossendale Borough Council

Forward Planning Team
One Stop Shop
Rawtenstall
Rossendale
BB4 7LZ
July 30th 2008

Rossendalealiye

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
2. The Policy.....	2
3. Affordable Housing.....	3
4. Strategy for Meeting the Housing Requirement: Consideration for Determining Planning Applications.....	5
5. Policy Context	9
6. Evidence Base & Analysis.....	14
7. Monitoring & Review	17
8. Glossary	18
Appendix A: The Regeneration Priority Areas in Rossendale	20
Appendix B: The Urban Boundary of Settlements in Rossendale	21
Appendix C: The Main Development Locations in Rossendale....	22
Appendix D: Viability Checklist.....	23

1. Introduction

Rossendale is a unique and picturesque borough, nestled in the Pennines and its development has been influenced by its geography and natural resources. The narrow urban valley of the River Irwell, running between the Pennine uplands, means fabulous scenery but a limited number of accessible sites for housing. The borough has a strong industrial past – the legacy of which is apparent today in many of our buildings; English Heritage recently described Bacup as one of the best examples of a preserved mill town in the country. In addition, we have over 260 listed buildings and 8 conservation areas, a testament to the historic character, charm and people of the Rossendale.

The need and want for housing in Rossendale is significant and therefore the Council is encouraging residential development. However in order to preserve and enhance the existing built and natural environments in Rossendale the Council is promoting sustainable residential development in the right location at the right time.

Hence this Interim Housing Policy Statement (IHPS) has been prepared to provide further guidance on how the Council intends to manage the release of housing land prior to the adoption of the new Local Development Framework (LDF). This policy replaces the IHPS on new residential development produced by Rossendale Borough Council in December 2007.

Because it is not part of the LDF, there are no statutory consultation requirements. However the Council has undertaken a number of consultation exercises on previous versions of the policy statement, appreciating the importance of this issue. During 2004, Rossendale published a consultative draft Interim Housing Policy to provide supplementary guidance to H3 of the Local Plan. The Council also issued a revised interim position statement in August 2005 to clarify residential development policy. More recently (in light of PPS3, updated monitoring information, new evidence identifying affordable housing need in the Borough and experience of implementing the Interim Position Statement) the revised Interim Housing Position Statement was released in January 2007. This was then merged with the Affordable Housing Position Statement that was published at the same time; in December 2007.

The Interim Housing Policy Statement (IHPS) does not introduce new policy. Its role is to identify a series of considerations that are material to applications, and to provide clarity about how the Council intends to approach these considerations.

It should be noted that the policy is to be read in conjunction with Section 3: Affordable Housing; and Section 4: Strategy for Meeting the Housing Requirement: Consideration for Determining Planning Applications.

2. The Policy

As an interim measure, the Council will encourage and promote residential development according to the following circumstances:

NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE REGENERATION PRIORITY AREAS (Appendix A) & MAIN DEVELOPMENT LOCATIONS (Appendix C)

Within the regeneration priority areas and main development locations new residential development will be encouraged where:

1. It uses existing buildings/ previously developed land or is for replacement dwellings; and
2. It makes an essential contribution to affordable housing (as summarised overleaf); and
3. It is built at a density between 30 and 50 dwellings /hectare (where appropriate the higher density of 50 dwellings /ha will be expected); or
4. Proposals are for solely affordable and/ or special needs housing as defined in the Glossary.

NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE URBAN BOUNDARY OF OTHER SETTLEMENTS IN ROSSENDALE – (Appendix B)

Within the urban boundary of other settlements in Rossendale, new residential development will be encouraged where:

1. It uses existing buildings/ previously developed land or is for replacement dwellings; and
2. It makes an essential contribution to affordable housing (as summarised overleaf) and uses previously developed land/ buildings; and
3. It is built at a density of no less than 30 dwellings per hectare; and
4. Residential schemes would not undermine the focus for most residential development to be in the main development locations (Appendix C) and regeneration priority areas (Appendix A) where the sustainability of the proposals can be demonstrated; or
5. Proposals are for solely affordable and/ or special needs housing as defined in the Glossary.

NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE THE URBAN BOUNDARY OF SETTLEMENTS IN ROSSENDALE

Outside the urban boundary of settlements in Rossendale, new residential development will be permitted where:

1. Proposals are for solely affordable and/ or special needs housing as defined in the Glossary; or
2. It is accommodation for agricultural or forestry workers, subject to an assessment of the need for the unit.

In addition to the above, all new residential development will need to:

- Demonstrate it will not undermine attempts to reduce vacancy rates in the existing dwelling stock; and
- Have regard to and be clearly justified in relation to the Councils objectives and Elevates objectives under the Housing Market Renewal Initiative; and
- Demonstrate that it would not lead to an un-manageable supply of housing and not prejudice the proper planning of new employment, services and infrastructure and the achievement of sustainable mixed communities.

3. Affordable Housing

PPS3 clearly states that providing affordable housing is a key role of the planning system. The evidence summarised in the following sections demonstrates a significant need for affordable housing in all parts of the Borough. PPS3 states that whilst the national indicative minimum size threshold is 15 dwellings, local planning authorities can set a lower minimum threshold and different proportions, where viable and practicable, including in rural areas. This approach has been adopted, based on the findings of the Housing Need and Market Assessment and consultation.

1. On proposals for 15 or more dwellings within the regeneration priority areas of Rawtenstall Town Centre AAP and/ or Bacup, Stacksteads and Britannia AAP the Council will seek to obtain 20% affordable housing (where there is a clear need as demonstrated through the Housing Needs Assessment).
2. Outside the regeneration priority areas, proposals within the urban boundary of settlements in Rossendale will only be acceptable where they make an essential contribution to the supply of affordable housing as interpreted in the table below.

Dwellings	Affordable Housing Requirement	%	Dwellings	Affordable Housing Requirement	%
1	None	0%	11	3	30%
2	None	0%	12	4	30%
3	None	0%	13	4	30%
4	None	0%	14	4	30%
5	1	20%	15	5	30%
6	1	20%	16	5	30%
7	1	20%	17	5	30%
8	2	20%	18	5	30%
9	2	20%	19	6	30%
10	3	30%	20+	30%	

Nb – Affordable housing requirements are the nearest whole number to achieving 20% affordable housing for developments between 4 and 9 units and 30% for major developments.

3. The type and tenures of houses which are to be made affordable shall be agreed with the Council and based on local need, set out in the most up-to-date housing needs assessment / Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

A reduction in the affordable housing requirement will only be acceptable where the applicant pays for the Council to approach an independent specialist to test their arguments on viability (see Appendix E for the Council's viability checklist).

These affordable housing requirements have been set at a level which is below the level required to fully satisfy local need in accordance with the Housing Market Needs Assessment (42% of all development would need to be affordable). This is in accordance with PPS3, which requires local planning authorities to ensure a flexible, responsive supply of land is delivered in the Borough.

Rossendale Borough Council has listened to stakeholders and members of the public regarding the current climate of housing policy in Rossendale. In response to the views and opinions expressed, it is evident that there is a need for a relaxation of

affordable housing contributions predominantly due to a downturn in the housing market. Continuing to seek the same level of affordable housing as required in the previous Interim Housing Policy Statement could lead to a significant reduction in housing land supply. It is considered that the revised contributions will still make a significant contribution towards addressing affordable housing need in the Borough.

Where required, there is a presumption that affordable housing will be provided on site in accordance with PPS3. However, the Council recognises that in exceptional circumstances a financial contribution in lieu of on site provision may be more appropriate. The formula for off-site contributions for affordable housing is consistent with the planning obligations paper approved by Cabinet on 13th December 2006 and is as follows:

Equivalent open market dwelling price (£) – affordable level (£) = Affordable housing contribution per property

4. Strategy for Meeting the Housing Requirement: Consideration for Determining Planning Applications

This section draws together the series of considerations that the council will take account of in dealing with proposals for new housing. All these issues will be considered together with the policy, and should be read as such.

Plan, Monitor, Manage

The Council can demonstrate that it has a rolling five-year supply of housing land when assessed against both the adopted targets in the Joint Lancashire Structure Plan and the proposed changes to the North West Regional Spatial Strategy.

PPS3 para 70 states that where local planning authorities have an up to date five year supply of deliverable sites, and applications come forward for sites that are allocated in the overall land supply, but which are not yet in the up-to-date five year supply, local planning authorities will need to consider whether granting permission would undermine achievement of their policy objectives. This has led the Council to relax the interim policy to enable housing proposals on previously developed land outside the main development locations to be supported (in locations such as Whitworth and Edenfield) where they are within the urban boundary of settlements in Rossendale. This is on the basis that these sites are considered to form part of the overall land supply in the LDF and will help ensure that the Council delivers at least 65% of housing on previously developed land. However, it remains a current policy objective of the Council to focus development in the main development areas in accordance with the Joint Lancashire Structure Plan (policy 2). As a consequence, the Council will closely monitor the amount of permissions granted within the urban boundaries of Rossendale to ensure a continuation of the current policy of focussed development in Rawtenstall, Haslingden and Bacup.

Developer Contributions

Further to the affordable housing contributions outlined above, all residential development will be expected to meet the requirements of the Planning Obligations paper approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 13th December 2006. Proposals should also have regard to the requirements of the draft Open Space and Play Equipment Contributions SPD.

Loss of Employment Land & Community Facilities

Whilst the interim policy supports the re-use of previously developed land and buildings, loss of employment facilities and / or other land uses to residential development will be required to provide evidence that such a loss is the most viable and beneficial option for the site; by marketing it for a variety of uses other than its current use, for a period of no less than 6 months. Loss of employment facilities and other land uses to residential development will be required to provide replacement facilities/ amenities of the same quantity and quality via a Section 106 Agreement; either as an on-site contribution or equal commuted sum, to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority prior to an application being submitted.

Supplementary Family Accommodation

Where the residential proposal is for supplementary family accommodation, often referred to as “granny flats / annexes” the Council will normally support applications where it is confident of the need to provide such accommodation.

In addition the Council will seek to ensure that a separate housing unit is not being created that could be sold as a separate dwelling; this will normally take the form of a condition or an obligation.

Temporary Accommodation

Where the proposal is for temporary accommodation such as a caravan, there will be a general presumption against development, unless it can be demonstrated that it is genuinely required over the short term. The Council will not permit static caravans, chalets or other park-style homes that are intended to be lived in permanently.

Renewal Applications and Variations to Approved Schemes

Planning permissions normally last for periods of three years, after which time they lapse if the development has not started to be built. An application is then required for a renewal of planning permission, which will be assessed against current policies and guidance. However, the Councils' Planning Department will also be mindful of any changes or advice from Central Government regarding the length of planning permissions and any subsequent enforcement measures. Applications for renewals of lapsed planning permissions will be assessed against the criteria in this policy. Variation applications will be considered acceptable under this policy as long as no additional units are being requested and providing other policies and guidance are complied with.

Regenerative Benefits

The Council will seek to avoid situations where potential applicants seek to exploit the criteria in this interim policy in the hope of gaining planning permission through regenerative benefits (e.g. deliberately vacating a site or building and leaving it to fall into disrepair). Rossendale Borough Council defines "regenerative benefits" as those which go beyond the simple re-development of previously developed land / buildings; having sustainable and substantiated social / environmental / economic credentials for amenities in the locality, such benefits should accord with the regeneration objectives and priorities as identified by the Council. The council will be particularly supportive of applications that demonstrate clear Borough wide regenerative benefits.

Development Density

Residential schemes permitted under this interim policy will be expected to take place at a density of no less than 30 dwellings per hectare. Proposals located close to public transport services or Town Centres should be built at a higher density of 50 dwellings per hectare.

Size, Scale and Phasing of Development

Whilst the interim policy does not place ceilings on the size and scale of development, schemes that would prejudice the proper planning of new employment, services and infrastructure will not be allowed. The council will consider whether granting further permissions would undermine achievement of our policy objectives, having regard to work on the emerging Local Development Framework.

Furthermore, the Council will also consider phasing the development of large sites permitted under this interim policy, where this is demonstrated to be necessary in order to co-ordinate new housing with infrastructure and the provision of community facilities.

The council will encourage schemes where the development is of an appropriate size and scale to the settlement in which is to be built, having regard to conservation areas and areas of historical importance/ interest.

Housing Need

All residential development should seek to widen the supply of house types in Rossendale, in line with the latest Housing Need and Market Assessment; and should also improve amenity within the locality.

Release of Greenfield Sites

In line with guidance contained in PPS3 and the proposed changes to RSS, the Council will restrict the release of previously undeveloped (greenfield) sites as long as sufficient housing land has been identified to meet housing requirements. This includes greenfield sites within the specified regeneration areas. Agricultural buildings and barns are defined as previously undeveloped land in PPS3 (see glossary).

The longer term potential of all sites will be investigated as part of the preparation of the Local Development Framework, in accordance with the sequential approach. Various matters including the strategic assessment of flood risk, local recreation and open space assessments, and Local Transport Plan provisions will inform analysis of sites.

Backland Development

The Council has also experienced increases in proposals for backland developments, including developments of domestic gardens/ curtilage. The release of such land can have detrimental effects upon the surrounding residential environment and therefore will not be promoted as part of this policy.

Where open land exists within the curtilage of previously developed land and buildings, the Council will not grant permission for new housing development at this time. This approach is in accordance with PPS3, which states that there is no presumption that the whole of the curtilage should be developed, and will enable the prioritisation of truly brownfield sites, whilst the council has a rolling five year supply. Baroness Morgan confirmed in a debate in the House of Lords (December 2007) that local authorities can ensure that in a local policy they exclude gardens from the brownfield allocation.

Subdivisions

The subdivision of suitable buildings into self-contained residential units can enable large buildings to be maintained economically and also improve the supply of small dwellings. Nevertheless, such development has the potential to impact negatively upon residential amenity and local highway safety.

As a consequence, proposals for the sub-division of existing residential properties into two or more residential units will not be encouraged where it would have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of adjoining and surrounding uses. Adequate car parking will need to be provided and any external alterations incorporated must be sympathetic in scale and character to the property concerned and its locality. Regard will also be given to the implications of the proposal on the supply of house types in Rossendale.

All proposals will be expected to provide future occupants with a satisfactory level of amenity, in terms of space, daylight, privacy, aspect and layout.

Cumulative Development

The development encouraged in this interim policy will be applicable to all residential proposals, regardless of the number of units, including proposals for individual single new dwellings. Permission for individual dwellings can set a precedent for others to be approved and the cumulative effect of these can significantly affect the managed release of housing land in Rossendale and prejudice a plan led approach through the Local Development Framework.

Historic Environment

Proposals for the conversion / change of use of listed buildings and important historical buildings will be required to demonstrate that the proposal is the only means of the buildings preservation and will be required to provide evidence that conversion to residential is the most viable and beneficial option for the site; by marketing it for a variety of uses other than its current use, for a period of no less than 6 months.

Mill Conversions/ Developments

The retention of existing buildings including mills is a key priority for the Council. The mills are an important historical element of Rossendales' industrial past and are important aspects of our heritage.

The Councils position for these buildings is retention first and foremost. The use of existing buildings is an integral part of the planning system. The starting point for all mill conversions will be mixed-use development. In the event of re-development of an existing mill site, the starting point for all applications will also be mixed-use.

It is stressed that even if sites meet the terms of the interim policy and the material considerations outlined above, they must also meet all other requirements to be acceptable for development. These requirements include assessments of flood risk and transport impact, as well as the need to conform with development plan policies covering wildlife, historical, archaeological and other impacts of development.

5. Policy Context

The Council consider that it is necessary to review the IHPS again in light of the following factors:

- PPS3 requires that local authorities maintain a rolling five-year supply of deliverable housing sites that are available, suitable and achievable. It also states that local planning authorities need to take an active and flexible approach to managing the supply of housing land in their area. As the emerging North West Regional Spatial Strategy (known also as the North West Plan) nears adoption, more weight needs to be attached to the housing figures it advocates. Since December 2007 the RSS has progressed through another milestone – with the Secretary of State’s proposed changes issued for consultation in March 2008. The RSS is due to be published by the Secretary of State in late summer 2008. The availability of new monitoring information (for 2007 – 2008) confirms that in order to maintain a five-year supply beyond the adoption of the RSS there is a need for a less restrictive approach to housing development in Rossendale.
- Baroness Andrews wrote to all chief executives of local authorities in the North West, in response to a debate in the House of Lords in December 2007 regarding housing provision. This stated that outdated regional housing targets should not be treated as a ceiling on local authorities that want to build more. The letter also states that it does not follow that “anything goes”, leading to excessive and unnecessary development, particularly on greenfield sites...nor would we wish to see development compromise strategies for development in the wider context such as those in Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder Areas”. Therefore it is felt that the IHPS needed a clearer emphasis on its housing policy objectives and less emphasis on the numerical oversupply against the Joint Lancashire Structure Plan (JLSP) targets (which remains part of the adopted development plan until the RSS is adopted).
- The review also presents an opportunity to respond to other elements of the proposed changes to RSS (as well as the overall housing numbers), which are likely to necessitate a shift in policy at a local level. Most notably, policies regarding the sequential approach to development and development in housing market renewal areas. These are discussed in greater detail further in this section.
- The review enables the Council to incorporate a series of material considerations, which will be considered in determining planning applications for residential development. This will ensure transparency in the Council’s approach.
- Again the interim policy has been tailored to different geographical areas, to ensure that a suitable distinction is made in policy terms where there are different spatial objectives. This reflects the necessity to balance the need for additional housing provision to meet emerging needs with the still present danger of over supply leading to declining neighbourhoods and housing market failure in some localities.

The Development Plan

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 s.38 (6) requires that any planning application be determined with regard to the development plan for the area, so far as it is material, and any other material planning consideration be taken into account.

The current development plan for Rossendale comprises of the following:

- Regional Spatial Strategy (2003)
- Joint Lancashire Structure Plan (2005) and Minerals and Waste Local Plan; and
- Rossendale District Local Plan (1995)

Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)

Regional Planning Guidance was adopted in 2003 as the North West Region's strategic planning document and became the Regional Spatial Strategy on 28 September 2004. The RSS is reflected in the Joint Lancashire Structure Plan 2001 – 2016 which was adopted 31st March 2005, which is discussed below.

Joint Lancashire Structure Plan (JLSP)

The JLSP was adopted in 2005. Policy 2 sets out Lancashire's Principal Urban Areas and Main Towns where most development will be concentrated (see Appendix C). For the purpose of this policy Rawtenstall, including Bacup and Haslingden, is considered to be a Main Town and should therefore receive an appropriate level of development to support its role as an important centre for transport, employment and other land uses.

Policy 5 states that outside of the Principal Urban Areas, Main Towns and Key Service Centres, development will be of a scale and nature appropriate to its location and will mostly take place in villages and other settlements identified in local plans. Most housing development outside of these areas is expected to be affordable housing or accommodation to meet the specific needs of a section of the community.

Policy 12 sets out the housing provision targets for each district in Lancashire for the period 2001 – 2016. However, when the draft RSS is adopted later this year levels of provision in that document will take precedence over figures in the Structure Plan.

The Structure Plan outlines a target of 1,920 new dwellings in Rossendale between 2001 and 2016. It states that in most Districts / Boroughs there are currently sufficient sites with residential planning permission to meet at least the short-term housing provision set by Policy 12, and often for much longer. The delivery of housing against the targets in the Structure Plan is discussed in more detail in the following section.

Policy 12 states that outstanding planning permissions tend to be dominated by proposals for market housing, with only very limited numbers of dwellings approved to meet local affordable housing needs. Information obtained from the Council's Strategic Housing Department, suggests that between 2006 and 2010 135 affordable housing units will be supplied, alongside an identified¹ minimum need of 105 units per year.

¹ 2004 Housing Market Assessment and 2007 HMA Update

Rossendale District Local Plan

The Local Plan, adopted on 12th April 1995, was intended to be reviewed by 2001. It is now to be replaced by the LDF, which will contain a portfolio of documents intended to replace the adopted Local Plan. The Local Plan is now out of date in respect of several policies that are deemed to be not in conformity with the JLSP.

Other Material Considerations

Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3): Housing

PPS3 sets out the national planning policy framework for delivering the Government's housing objectives. It seeks to ensure that a flexible, responsive supply of land is delivered in line with the principle of 'plan, monitor, manage'. It puts in place a requirement for Local Authorities to identify and maintain a rolling five-year supply of deliverable sites for housing, which are available, suitable for residential development and have a reasonable prospect of being developed for housing within five years.

PPS3 goes on to state that "where local planning authorities have an up-to-date five year supply of deliverable sites and applications come forward for sites that...are not yet in (this) supply, local planning authorities will need to consider whether granting permission would undermine achievement of their policy objectives" (paragraph 70). Where local planning authorities are unable to demonstrate an up-to-date five year supply of deliverable sites, PPS3 stipulates that they should consider planning applications for housing favourably, whilst having regard to the other policies in PPS3 and ensuring that proposals do not undermine wider policy objectives, such as addressing housing market renewal issues.

Provision of housing in a mix of tenures and prices is another of the key objectives of PPS3. It requires local planning authorities to set specific targets for the amount of affordable housing to be provided, of both social-rented and intermediate tenures, and to set out their approach to seeking developer contributions. PPS3 also places a strong emphasis on securing well-designed housing and ensuring that new developments are directed towards suitable locations, which offer a good range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure.

Planning Policy Statement 7 (PPS7): Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

To promote more sustainable patterns of development and make better use of previously developed land, PPS7 states that the focus for most additional housing in rural areas should be in existing towns and identified service centres. Nevertheless, it is also recognised that it will be necessary to provide for some new housing to meet identified local need in other villages.

PPS7 emphasises that local planning authorities should plan to meet housing requirements in rural areas, based on an up to date assessment of local need. Local planning authorities are expected to make sufficient land available, either within or adjoining existing villages, to meet the needs of local people and strictly control new house building (including single dwellings) in the countryside, away from established settlements or from areas allocated for housing in development plans.

North West Regional Spatial Strategy - Proposed Changes

The North West Regional Assembly published the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West of England in January 2006. An Independent Panel held an

Examination in Public about the draft Plan between November 2006 and February 2007, and their report setting out recommendations to change the draft Plan was published in May 2007. Having considered the recommendations of The Panel, the Secretary of State published its proposed changes to the draft Plan for further consultation in March 2008.

In circumstances where Regional Spatial Strategies are in development, Government guidance recommends that local planning authorities should have regard to the level of housing provision as proposed in the relevant emerging RSS. Given the advanced stage of production of the RSS, having just passed another milestone with the publication of proposed changes, it is considered that significant weight can be afforded to the housing figures in the emerging Plan.

The emerging RSS sets a housing provision for Rossendale of 222 dwellings per annum, which equates to a total housing provision of 4,000 dwellings between 2003 and 2021 (net of clearance and replacement). Of this, the Plan recommends that at least sixty five per cent (2600 units) should be delivered on previously developed land. The delivery of housing against the targets in the Structure Plan is discussed in more detail in the following section.

To ensure that new development is delivered sustainably, and particularly in a manner that would ensure resources are managed prudently, Policy DP4 of the draft Plan establishes the following sequential approach:

- First, using existing buildings (including conversions) within settlements, and previously developed land within settlements;
- Second, using other suitable infill opportunities within settlements, where compatible with other RSS Policies;
- Third, the development of other land where this is well-located in relation to housing, jobs, other services and infrastructure. This will normally be on the fringes of settlements.

The emerging RSS makes it clear (Policy L3) that plans and strategies, particularly those in Housing Market Renewal Initiative Pathfinder Areas, should respond to any need to substantially restructure local housing markets; manage the delivery of new build and its impacts on the existing housing stock; reduce vacancy rates to 3% in the existing dwelling stock; and, where appropriate, make the best use of the existing stock.

[Ongoing Housing Market Renewal - Regeneration Programme](#)

The Housing Market Renewal (HMR) Pathfinder Initiative was announced by the Government in April 2002 to tackle the most acute areas of low housing demand and abandonment in parts of the North and Midlands. Nine pathfinder projects were identified including Elevate East Lancashire. Elevate is charged with finding innovative solutions to the problems of low demand, negative equity, and housing market collapse in towns across East Lancashire. Rossendale Borough Council was invited to become part of Elevate during 2003. The overall HMR intervention area in Rossendale takes in Bacup, Stacksteads and Britannia.

Elevate's strategy is central to the wider housing and planning strategies in East Lancashire and, indeed across the wider sub-region. A key focus of the strategy is on providing greater housing choice, quality and diversity; strengthening and stabilising the housing market through better match between supply and demand; and creating sustainable communities.

Although Rawtenstall does not fall within the Elevate HMRI Pathfinder area, the regeneration of Rawtenstall town centre will play an important role in supporting renewal of the housing market in these parts of the Borough. Accordingly, as part of Rossendale's emerging LDF, an Area Action Plan is being prepared to guide the regeneration of the town centre.

[Strategic Market Housing Assessment](#)

The Rossendale Housing Needs and Market Assessment was undertaken in 2004/05 to inform the preparation of both the Housing Strategy and emerging LDF. In the view of a changing housing market an update to this report was undertaken in 2007 to provide up to date information on affordable housing requirements.

Since 2004/5, the affordability situation in Rossendale has worsened and the annual shortfall has increased from 70 to 105. As a consequence, the study recommends that the Council seek a minimum 30% affordable housing target across the district. It also suggests that between 10% and 20% of new provision should be intermediate tenure.

6. Evidence Base & Analysis

PPS3 requires Local Planning Authorities to assess and demonstrate the extent to which existing plans fulfil the requirement to identify and maintain a rolling 5-year supply of deliverable land for housing. The most up to date assessment of housing land deliverability can be found at:

<http://www.rossendale.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents.php?categoryID=374>.

The following table outlines the Borough's current housing supply for the period 2001 – 2008 when assessed against the Joint Lancashire Structure Plan.

Table 1: Housing Land Supply for Period 2001 - 2008

		Dwellings
a	Housing Requirement 2001 - 2016	1920
b	Housing Completions 2001 - 2008	1309
c	Total Losses	49
d	Residual Requirement	660
e	Supply of deliverable sites	1455
f	Current Position	-795
g	Remaining Structure Plan Period	8
h	Annual Average Completions Required	82.5
i	Requirement for 5 years 2008	412.5
j	Number of Years Supply	17.6

There is a current oversupply of 795 units, against the JLSP target of 1920. The current supply is equivalent to 17.6 years supply. As mentioned in previous sections, limited weight is attached to this oversupply in formulating our revised approach to managing the release of housing land, and more emphasis is placed on the housing figures in the proposed changes discussed below.

The following table outlines the Borough's current housing supply for the period 2003 – 2021 when assessed against the proposed changes to RSS.

Table 2: Housing Land Supply for Period 2003 – 2021

		Dwellings
a	Development Plan Allocation 2003 - 2008	1110
b	Annual Allocation	222
c	Housing Completions 2003 - 2008	1011
d	Total Losses 2003 - 2008	44
e	Over or Under Supply to date	143
f	Adjusted 5 year supply requirement (2008 - 2013)	1253
g	Residual annual requirement 2008 - 2013	251
h	Deliverable Sites	1455
i	Current Housing Land Supply	5.8

The Council has 5.8 years supply when assessed against the RSS proposed changes. In the previous interim policy, the current supply when assessed against the housing figure in the proposed changes was 6.9 years.

Therefore, were the Council to continue with the same level of restriction on housing development, there is a concern that we would not be able to demonstrate a rolling five-year supply of housing land.

The Council is keen to avoid a situation where there is a presumption in favour of residential development in order to help a greater level of control in achieving our policy aspirations (particularly in relation to the regeneration priority areas) and a desire for a plan led approach to development through the Local Development Framework.

Affordable Housing Need

In 2004 Rossendale Borough Council commissioned David Cumberland Housing Regeneration Ltd to undertake a comprehensive Housing Market Needs Assessment. The assessment identified the level of affordable housing need to be 354 units for the period 2005 – 2010. These figures have been updated in 2007, with the breakdown across the Housing Market Areas outlined below. This illustrates that the level of annual affordable housing need has risen to 105 dwellings per annum (equating to a total of 525 over the period 2007 to 2012).

Affordable Housing Need 2007

Haslingden: Worsley, Helmshore and Greenfield wards					
General Needs		Total	Older Person	Total	Total Units
1-2 Beds	3-4 Beds		1-2 Beds		
117	31	148	3	3	151
Rawtenstall: Longholme, Hareholme, Cribden, Goodshaw, Eden and Whitewell wards					
General Needs		Total	Older Person	Total	Total Units
1-2 Beds	3-4 Beds		1-2 Beds		
254	64	318	6	6	324
Bacup: Greensclough, Irwell and Stackstead wards					
General Needs		Total	Older Person	Total	Total Units
1-2 Beds	3-4 Beds		1-2 Beds		
18	6	24	1	1	25
Whitworth: Facit & Shawforth and Healey & Whitworth wards					
General Needs		Total	Older Person	Total	Total Units
1-2 Beds	3-4 Beds		1-2 Beds		
20	6	26	1	1	27

Most of the affordable housing need requirement within Rossendale falls within the six wards of Cribden, Eden, Goodshaw, Greenfield, Helmshore and Longholme, which are predominantly to the north, west and south of Rawtenstall.

The completion rate since the start of the RSS plan period (2003) has been 1011 in total; or 202 dwellings per annum. Based on this historic build rate, approximately 52% of residential development or more would need to be affordable to deliver the 105 units per annum as identified in the Housing Market Needs Assessment.

Returning to our emerging 5-year supply calculations, there is a residual requirement for 251 dwellings per annum. Therefore even based on this higher completions figure there would still be a requirement for 42% of all development to be affordable to fully satisfied local needs in accordance with the Housing Market Needs Assessment.

Empty Dwellings

Empty dwellings represent a waste of resources and can detract from the quality of the local environment by creating a run down appearance and generating anti-social behaviour. As at April 2006 approximately 5.5% of the housing stock in Rossendale was vacant, which equates to approximately 1,600 properties. This is significantly greater than the average for North West England (4.2%) and the national average (3.2%).

There are particular concentrations of empty properties in parts of the Borough. The Worsley and Greensclough wards account for nearly a third of the total number of vacant properties and data available for the Bacup, Stacksteads and Britannia area from Council Tax Records reveal that there were 388 vacant properties in October 2004 comprising 6.8% of total stock.

In response to this challenge, the Council adopted an Empty Properties Policy Statement and Action Plan in November 2006 to set out levers to be used across all the Councils services to address the problems caused by empty properties.

7. Monitoring & Review

This policy will apply to all residential planning applications submitted after 31st July 2008. This policy may also be used as evidence to support any appeal challenges to decisions made where the planning application was submitted before this date.

The impact of the interim policy on housing supply will be regularly reviewed in accordance with the requirement in PPS3 to plan, monitor and manage the release of housing land.

The interim policy will remain relevant guidance until the Council is able to pursue a plan led approach to housing provision through the LDF. The interim policy may also be reviewed in light of the outcomes of the ongoing partial review of the RSS.

8. Glossary

Previously Developed Land (Brownfield Land)

'Previously-developed land is that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure.'

The definition includes defence buildings, but excludes:

- Land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings.
- Land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures.
- Land in built-up areas such as parks, recreation grounds and allotments, which, although it may feature paths, pavilions and other buildings, has not been previously developed.
- Land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time (to the extent that it can reasonably be considered as part of the natural surroundings).

There is no presumption that land that is previously-developed; is necessarily suitable for housing development nor that the whole of the curtilage should be developed.

Affordable Housing

Affordable housing is clearly defined in PPS 3 as:-

"Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Affordable housing should:

- Meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a cost low enough for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices; and
- Include provisions for the home to be retained for future eligible households; or if these restrictions are lifted, for any subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

Social rented housing is:

Rented housing owned and managed by local authorities and RSL's, for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. The proposals set out in the Three Year Review of Rent Restructuring (July 2004) were implemented as policy in April 2006. It may also include rented housing owned or managed by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Housing Corporation as a condition of grant.

Intermediate affordable housing is:

Housing at prices and rents above those of social rent but below market price or rents, and which meet the criteria set out above. These can include shared equity (e.g. HomeBuy) and other low cost homes for sale, and intermediate rent."

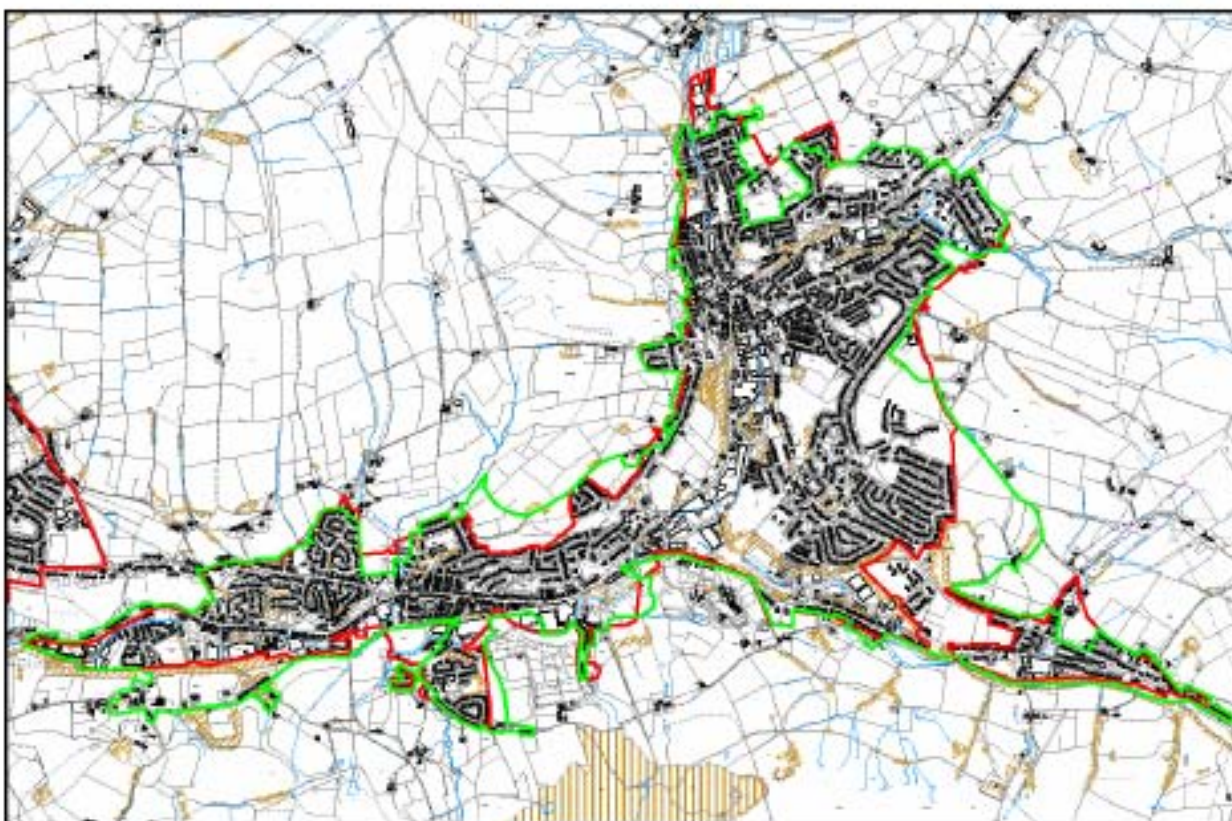
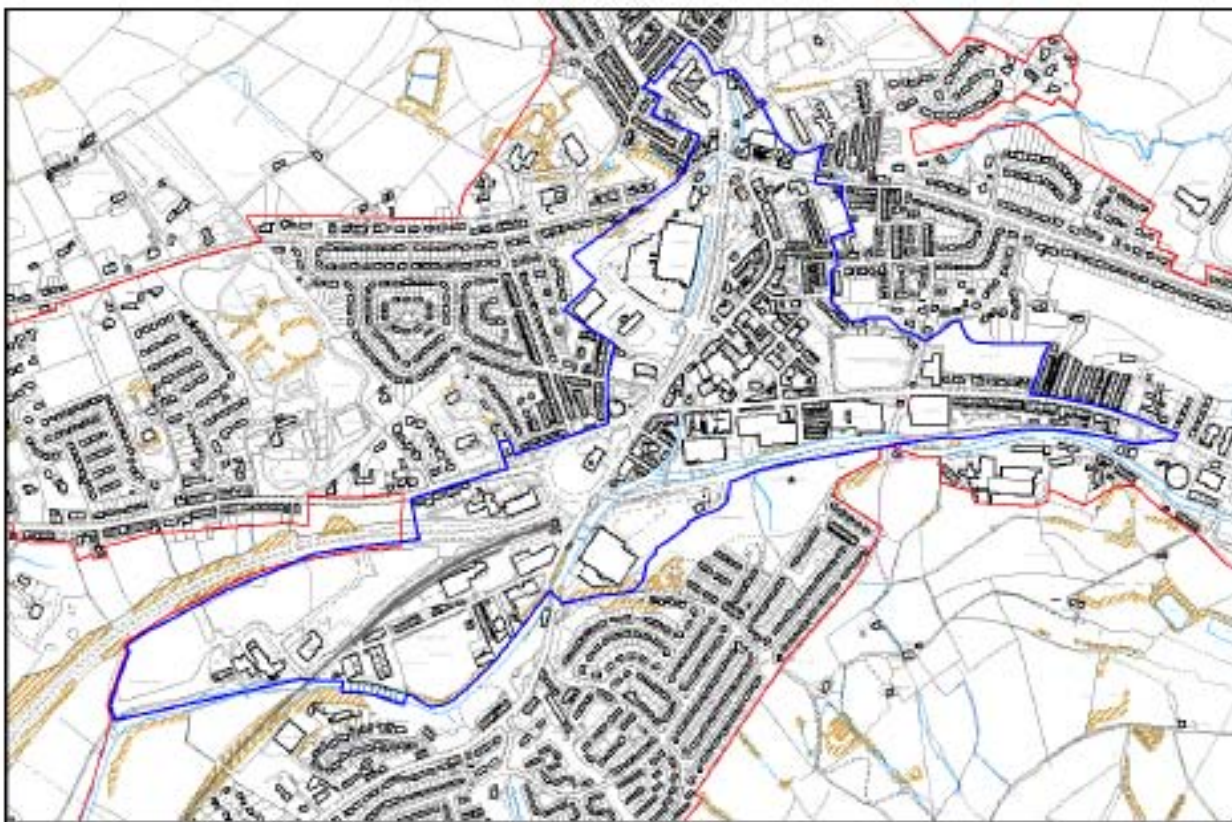
Affordable housing has a value linked to the Open Market Value of the property.

Special Needs Housing

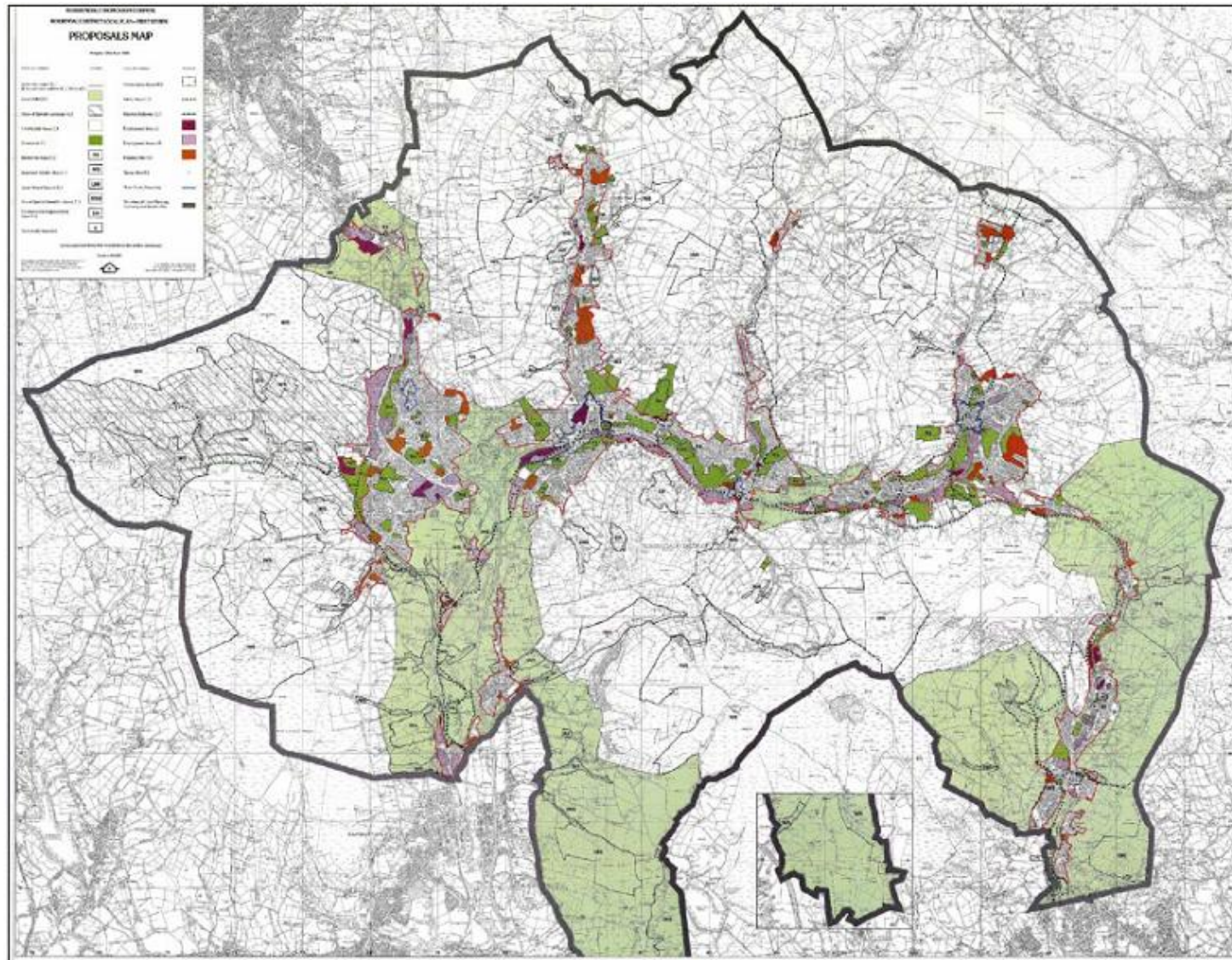
Special needs housing is defined in the Planning Obligations in Lancashire Policy Paper as:-

“Special-needs housing is a clearly defined sector. It includes hostels for homeless people, group homes and accommodation specifically built to meet the needs of people with mobility problems.”

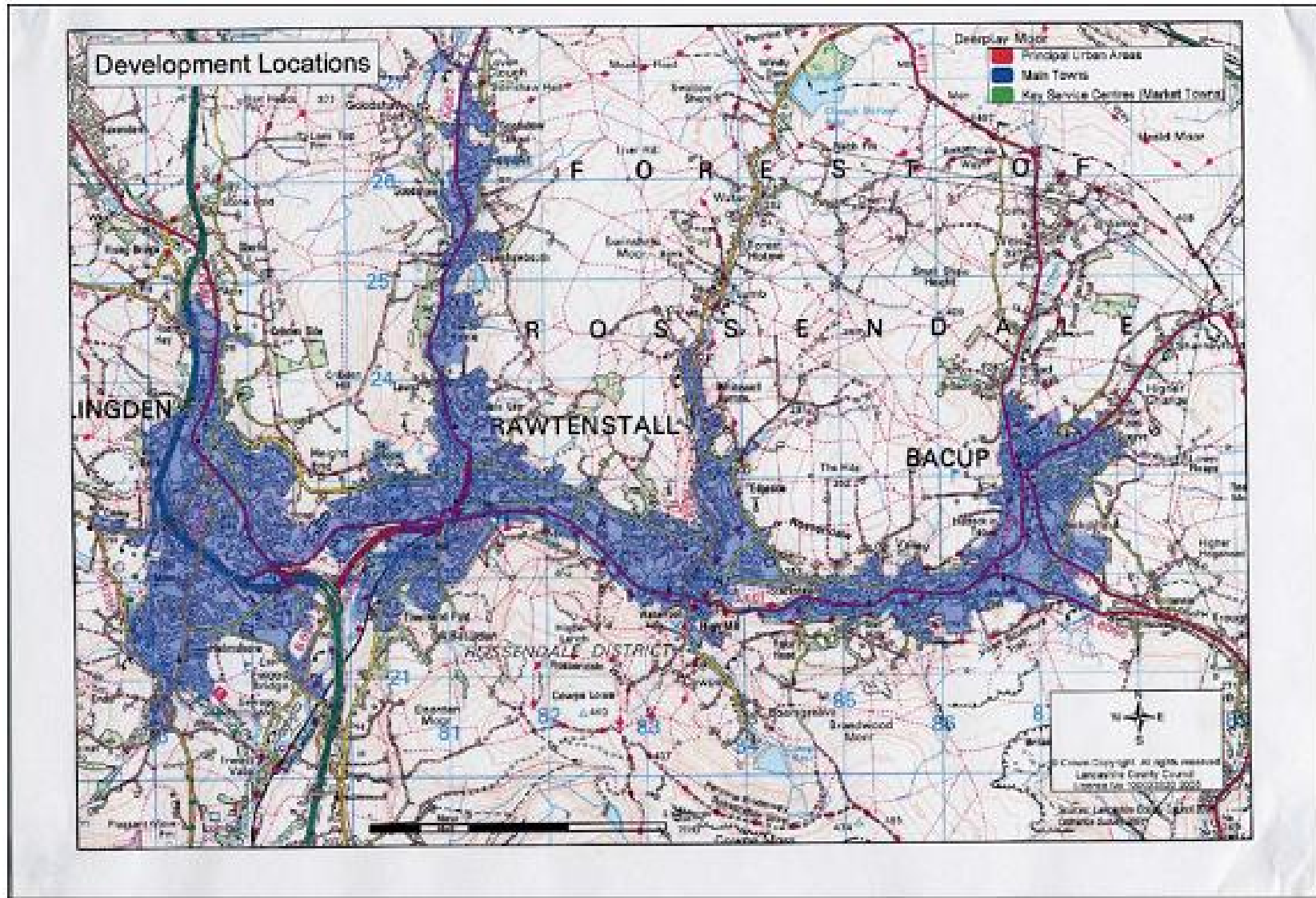
Appendix A: The Regeneration Priority Areas in Rossendale



Appendix B: The Urban Boundary of Settlements in Rossendale



Appendix C: The Main Development Locations in Rossendale



Appendix D: Viability Checklist

Development Appraisal: Checklist of Information Requested from Developers

To justify the provision of less affordable housing than that set out in the Interim Housing Policy, the Council requires a Development Appraisal to be submitted with the planning application.

The information to be supplied should include the value of the completed development proposed by the application, and all costs incurred or expected to be incurred in order to achieve this value. The information should include the following, but it may also be necessary to cover other items specific to the proposed development.

Development Appraisal Checklist
Developmental proposal - Overview Brief description of the scheme and context to why the applicant considers there is an economic case for lower levels of affordable housing provision than those requested. Schedule setting out individual unit sizes (either GIA or Net Sales Area – habitable roof space should be listed separately), unit types, tenure, types and sale prices.
Proposed Number of Affordable Housing units - square metre size, number of beds and mix.
Appraisal Form
Development Revenues Sale values of private units (per unit, by size of unit per sq m/ft basis) with total revenue for the whole site. Please include a summary sales specification and indicate the car parking to be provided per unit.
Cost of sales or lettings, broken down into marketing/ estate agents fees and legal fees
Sales revenues for other mixed use elements with calculation to give capital values including rental stream and yields used.
Sale of Affordable Housing Units to be agreed with RSL based on 1) The offer of affordable housing being made and 2) The level of affordable housing being sought by the council (by way of separate calculation) of viability.
Value of ground rents
Service charge information
NB. All sales values to be supported by professional evidence and values for comparable units in the area of the development for independent verification on a unit by unit basis (e.g. 1 bed 2 person flat/ 1 bathroom, balcony, view, car space etc) Comparable information includes; address, date of transaction, sale price, incentives, size, price/ sq. ft, opinion of comparable location compared to subject site.
Development Costs
1. Build Costs Cost of building units (per sq metre/Ft) X gross internal area with supporting detailed cost plan to support the headline costs. State where this is a tendered sum or an estimate.
Cost of building Affordable Housing Units (if this differs from private market units) x per sq m/ft of affordable housing to meet SDS standards and Eco homes 'Very Good'.
Cost plan, together with evidence of any actual costs incurred on nearby developments (if

applicable) and how that development differs/ compares to the subject property. Costs should be by type of unit and by price/sq. ft or square meters.
2. Other Site infrastructure costs/external works i.e., roads, sewers, services. Highways/access, landscaping, connections etc
Sufficient detail of any abnormal costs supported by professional evidence.
Contingency
3. Development Costs Professional fees identified by specialism together with supporting information of appointment.
Other costs – planning fees - site investigations - building regs fees NHBC etc
NB. Evidence to support costing. This should include detailed breakdown of costs provided by appropriate professionals and a method statement of how costs have been calculated. Any provisional sums should be clearly shown. Figures for comparable schemes should also be supplied.
4. Off Site Works - if relevant
5. S106 allowances
Commuted sum contributions (other than Affordable Housing) with brief summary of item.
6. Finance costs Cost of financing scheme over development period including funding fees giving interest rate assumptions based on monthly costs.
7. Profit Required profit margin/return(s) i.e Profit on cost/revenue
8. Residual land value Anticipated Land Acquisition cost (please state if conditional, and the condition) and date of contracts where relevant. Evidence of contract details and prices etc required
Other Information Required
Most recent scheme plan – relating to planning application and updates
Cash flows
Planning status – windfall or identified in the Local Plan?
Details of current use of the site

Please supply three copies of all documents and where possible in electronic format

Please note:

Rossendale Borough Councils experience is that this exercise can take between 6-8 weeks to carry out; especially on complex sites where the Council have to select and appoint independent specialists to assist with the appraisal process.

However it is in the applicants interest to provide as much information as possible to ensure the process can be completed as quickly as possible. In the event that information is missing or is not provided, the Council will take the view that viability cannot be adequately tested and therefore no case has been made resulting in the viability argument being dismissed and the full requested element of Affordable Housing and other Section 106 items being assumed to be affordable for that site subject to consideration.

