
Rural Housing Needs Survey Results

SYNOPSIS

This report presents to Members the key findings of the Rural Housing Need Surveys

1. Relevant Background Details

- 1.1 The Council has a strategic and statutory responsibility to investigate housing needs and work with partners to ensure that wherever possible unmet need is satisfied. At a North Northamptonshire level the housing targets are supported by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, but the study is unable to break need down below a borough level. The best way of establishing need in the rural area is to conduct a survey so that every household in the Parish is given the opportunity to comment. The results of the surveys are used in conjunction with the North Northamptonshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment to help understand the number and type of properties that each area needs. The surveys can be used to support the delivery of new affordable housing through planning obligations and are a key part of the evidence base required for gaining planning permission for rural exception sites.
- 1.2 This report highlights the key findings from the surveys. Copies of the full reports are available on request.

2. Details

- 2.1 In August 2017 Midlands Rural Housing were appointed to carry out an independent Housing Needs Survey in each of the rural communities within Corby Borough. This was the first time that such surveys had been carried out anywhere simultaneously giving a unique opportunity for cross reference.
- 2.2 Survey packs were posted to every household and business in each parish in October 2017. The survey pack included a covering letter, a questionnaire and postage paid envelope for returned forms. In total, 667 completed forms were returned giving the survey a respectable 35% response rate.
- 2.3 The Rural Housing Need reports contain detailed local information including analysis of respondents and local property data. The reports highlight that to secure a mortgage for the 'cheapest' types of properties sold in the villages over the past 12 months would require an average deposit (at 20% of purchase price) of £43,500 and average income of just less than £50,000 per annum.
- 2.4 The following table summarises housing need by parish.

Parish	Open market homes	Affordable rented	Shared ownership	Total
Cottingham	2	2	2	6
East Carlton	0	0	0	0
Gretton	11	10	4	25
Middleton	6	0	2	8
Stanion	13	8	1	22
Rockingham	1	3	1	5
Weldon	14	14	12	40

- 2.5 The reports conclude that there is an identified need for 47 market homes and 59 affordable homes in the rural area over the next five years.
- 2.6 The reports also provide information about the type and size of local housing need. It is reported that the greatest need is for 2 and 3 bedroom bungalows and 3 and 4 bedroom houses in the open market housing sector. The greatest need in the affordable housing sector is 1 bedroom affordable rented houses and 2 bedroom shared ownership houses.

3. Conclusions

- 3.1 The study provides a robust assessment of housing need and demand across all tenures in each of the rural communities; and offers invaluable evidence for housing and planning to address local needs.
- 3.2 The Council has a key role in delivering affordable housing to address local housing needs, in collaboration with rural communities and Midlands Rural Housing or other Registered Social Landlords. Options include:
- Rural Exceptions – Policy 13 of the Joint Core Strategy allows development to take place where permission would not otherwise be granted, and where consequently, land values are low relative to normal development sites. It is expected that rural exception housing sites will be small and normally developed solely for affordable housing.
 - Allocations – allocation of non-strategic land for housing development in the Part 2 Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plans.
 - Section 106 – look to secure a local lettings plan for local people on any affordable homes that are provided as part of a larger open market development and use the data from the surveys alongside demand data from the housing register to negotiate with developers on particular sites.
- 3.3 The most appropriate approach will depend on local circumstances taking account of local appetite for growth and an assessment of any residential development already in the pipeline.

4. Issues to be taken into account:-

Policy Priorities

Building new homes for sale and rent and improving the existing stock is one of the priorities of the Corporate Plan 2015-2020. Addressing rural housing needs delivers the Council's priorities of supporting communities to improve their quality of life, promote social cohesion, and to be an inclusive Council with fully accessible services.

Financial

The cost of commissioning the Rural Housing Needs Surveys totalled £8,988, and was met from within the existing Local Plan budget.

Legal

Section 8 of the Housing Act 1985 requires the Local Housing Authority to review housing needs. Section 87 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires a Local Housing Authority to have a strategy in respect of such matters relating to housing and formulate and review this strategy.

Human Rights, Community Safety, Equalities, Sustainability and Best Value

None directly linked to this report

Risks

There are no risks associated with this report.

5. Recommendation

- To endorse the Housing Need Surveys as evidence base from which policies and strategies will be developed.
- Continue to build relationships with rural communities and Midlands Rural Housing or other Registered Social Landlords to promote affordable housing and encourage rural exception sites to meet locally identified needs.

Background Papers

[North Northamptonshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment](#), January 2015

[North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011-2031](#), July 2016

Consultations

None

Officers to Contact

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