

Pendle Council

Note for Mr Andrew Ashcroft BA (Hons) MA, DMS, MRTPI

Independent Examiner for the Colne Neighbourhood Development Plan

Subject: Housing requirement figure for Colne

Background

At the Hearing for the Colne Neighbourhood Development Plan (CNDP), held at Colne Town Hall on Wednesday 15 March 2023, the Examiner in Session 1 requested that Pendle Borough Council (PBC) provide him with a note clarifying the housing requirement figure for Colne.

Setting out a housing requirement

Paragraph 66 of the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) confirms that “*strategic policy-making authorities should ... set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations*”.

Paragraph 67 of the NPPF continues by clarifying that “*where it is not possible to provide a requirement figure for a neighbourhood area, the local planning authority should provide an indicative figure, if requested to do so by the neighbourhood planning body*”.

Strategic planning policy

The [Pendle Core Strategy](#) (2015) is silent on how the housing needs of the borough are to be distributed on a settlement-by-settlement basis. Strategic direction is provided by:

- (a) Policy SDP2 Spatial Development Principles, which defines the settlement hierarchy for Pendle and outlines their expected roles and strategic expectations for the plan period; and
- (b) Policy SDP3 Housing Distribution, which confirms how development needs are to be accommodated within each spatial area, with Colne forming part of the M65 Corridor.

Establishing a settlement specific housing requirement figure

Whilst not defining housing need for individual settlements, the Core Strategy confirms that housing need is concentrated within the M65 Corridor spatial area and broadly aligns with the spatial approach to development.

Settlement specific housing need was to be addressed in the [Pendle Local Plan Part 2](#) (PLP2), but at its meeting on 9 December 2021, PBC resolved to abandon work on this document.

PLP2 would have allocated sufficient land to meet residual housing requirement to the end of the plan period in 2030.

The [PLP2 Scoping Report and Site Assessment Methodology](#) [“Scoping and Methodology Report”] was prepared in 2016, and subject to a six week public consultation in 2017. This document sets out an indicative housing requirement figure for each of the borough’s settlements. The proposed distribution is based on analysis that took account of a wide range of factors including the size/area of each settlement; its population; the level of service and infrastructure provision; and the availability of land for development. Although not independently examined, this document provides the best available evidence to inform the neighbourhood planning process in Pendle.

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PBC has been consistent in its approach to providing an indicative housing requirement figure for use in neighbourhood plans, using the figures from Table 3.11 of the Scoping and Methodology Report. This published evidence has informed the preparation of the neighbourhood plans for [Trawden Forest](#) (2019) and [Kelbrook and Sough](#) (2022). Together with the [Barrowford Neighbourhood Plan](#) (2019), which does not allocate sites for housing development, they form part of the statutory development plan for Pendle.

The Scoping and Methodology Report confirms that 35% of the housing need within the M65 Corridor spatial area should be met within Colne. In 2011, at the start of the Core Strategy plan period, this amounted to 1,387 dwellings over a 19-year plan period.

At an early stage in the preparation of the CNDP, Pendle Borough Council [“PBC”] advised Colne Town Council [CTC] that their plan would need to respond to the Core Strategy. PBC has consistently held to this position to ensure compliance with adopted strategic planning policy.

To provide an up-to-date housing requirement figure, the following allowances must be made:

- The Core Strategy makes allowance for the re-occupation of long-term empty dwellings, which were a significant issue in the early part of the plan period.
- The delivery of new homes on the Strategic Housing Site at Trough Laithe, which is located off Junction 13 on the M65 motorway. This site was allocated through Policy LIV2 of the Core Strategy, to help meet housing needs throughout the M65 Corridor. It is projected to deliver 500 dwellings in total, 340 of which are expected to be completed by 2030 (the end of the plan period for the CNDP).
- Net completions since work on preparing the CNDP has commenced
- Existing commitments (i.e. sites with a valid planning permission for housing).

The Regulation 14 (draft) CNDP contained an extensive list of potential housing site allocations. These would have delivered significantly more homes than required by the most up-to-date residual housing requirement figure.

The Regulation 16 (submission draft) CNDP proactively addressed many of the issues raised by PBC at the Regulation 14 stage. As confirmed in its Regulation 16 representation, PBC is satisfied that the submission draft CNDP allocates sufficient housing land to ensure that it is consistent with strategic planning policy and meets Basic Condition (e).

As the housing supply position set out in the submission draft CNDP was out of date, PBC provided a copy of the table shown in Examination Document CNDP/EX/012. This reflects the position at the end of the 2021/22 monitoring year and provides the most up to date information on housing need. The figure for Colne confirms that the submission draft CNDP meets Basic Condition (e).

This approach was also followed for the Kelbrook and Sough Neighbourhood Plan.

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16 March 2023