



HOUSING

Chartham Neighbourhood Plan Topic Paper

neighbourhoodplan@chartham-pc.gov.uk

www.charthamnp.com

Report date: 9 August 2021



IMPORTANT NOTICE

This document has been prepared by a group of volunteers to help the Chartham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group understand local issues relevant to Housing. It also sets out how the group believes the community could seek to address the issues identified through the Chartham Neighbourhood Plan.

Whilst the Steering Group will use this document to inform the preparation of the neighbourhood plan, its findings and recommendations are the views of the volunteer group and not necessarily those of the Steering Group.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
Overview	5
Recommendations	6
2. INTRODUCTION	7
Members of the Working Group	7
3. CONTEXT	8
Political Statements	8
Research / Evidence	10
The Development Plan	15
National Planning Policy	21
National & International Legislation	25
4. HOUSING ISSUES IN CHARTHAM PARISH	26
Issue 1 - Insufficient supply of housing to support the Community	26
Issue 2 - Difficulty of finding the best sites for development	26
Issue 3 - Housing supply does not meet the needs of the changing demographic	27
Issue 4 - Lack of appropriate specialist housing for the older population	27
Issue 5 - The threat of overdevelopment and challenge of balancing this with housing provision	27
5. ISSUE 1 - INSUFFICIENT SUPPLY OF HOUSING TO SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY	29
Overview	29
Options to address the issue	29
Consideration of options & recommended solution	30
6. ISSUE 2 - DIFFICULTY OF IDENTIFYING THE BEST SITES FOR DEVELOPMENT	32
Overview	32
Options to address the issue	32
Consideration of options & recommended solution	34
7. ISSUE 3 - HOUSING SUPPLY DOES NOT MEET THE NEEDS OF THE CHANGING DEMOGRAPHIC	36

Overview	36
Options to address the issue	36
Consideration of options & recommended solution	39
8. ISSUE 4 - LACK OF SPECIALIST HOUSING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE OLDER POPULATION	41
Overview	41
Options to address the issue	41
Consideration of options & recommended solution	42
9. ISSUE 5 - THE THREAT OF OVERDEVELOPMENT AND CHALLENGE OF BALANCING THIS WITH HOUSING PROVISION	44
Overview	44
Options to address the issue	45
Consideration of options & recommended solution	46
10. CONCLUSIONS	48
Recommendations	48

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This section provides a brief introduction to the issue of housing and provides a summary of the recommendations of this paper.

Overview

- 1.2. Housing is a challenging issue which has seen its impacts on a national and local scale. A chronic undersupply of housing and extortionately high houses prices has made it difficult to own a home and acquire genuinely affordable housing.
- 1.3. The Centre for Cities has determined that:
- The UK's chronic housing shortage is one of the biggest challenges the country faces. The Government is aiming to build 300,000 new homes every year to match demand and keep housing affordable, but less than 250,000 were built last year*
- 1.4. Statista identified under *Average price of residential property (120 square meter apartments located in the most important cities) in Europe as of September 2020, per country*¹ that the UK has the second highest house prices in Europe at €21,179 per square metres, only behind Monaco.
- 1.5. Zoopla identify on their website² that South East England have the second highest national average prices at £436,422 only behind London. Rightmove identify on their website³ that average prices in Kent are £406,912 which is similar to the prices in East Sussex (£412,368) but cheaper than prices in Surrey (£613,236) and West Sussex (£429,756).
- 1.6. This paper considers how the adverse impacts of housing upon Chartham can be mitigated.
- 1.7. Since mid-January 2021, the Housing Working Group have met twice monthly in a virtual capacity, owing to Covid restrictions. The Working Group identified the principal issues that housing poses for the parish, as detailed in this topic paper, and researched the current legal requirements for tackling and mitigating this, what is currently being done, and future options that could be considered. The future options include both those that can be directly addresses via the planning process and recommendations that can be taken forward by authorities at all levels and members of the public to address the challenges that housing poses.
- 1.8. A housing needs assessment was carried out by AECOM, which has helped to inform the Working Group's deliberations. However, the HNA had limited impact upon the groups decisions as its conclusions were not supported by current data.

¹ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/722905/average-residential-square-meter-prices-in-eu-28-per-country/>

² <https://www.rightmove.co.uk/house-prices-in-Kent.html>

- 1.9. As a result, the Working Group has considered the best way to address the future housing of the NP by considering a number of issues and options and making recommendations on which options should be taken forward.
- 1.10. The issues raised are listed below:
 1. Insufficient supply of housing to support the community.
 2. Difficulty of finding the most suitable sites for development.
 3. Housing supply does not meet the needs of the changing demographic.
 4. Lack of appropriate specialist housing for the older population.
 5. The threat of overdevelopment and challenge of balancing this with housing provision.

Recommendations

- 1.11. Accordingly, this report concludes by recommending that the following is considered for inclusion in the neighbourhood plan:
 1. Policy to only provide housing as a by-product of regenerating existing redundant, or brownfield land.
 2. Policy that seeks to increase windfall sites.
 3. Policy that defines criteria for suitable locations for new housing development.
 4. Sites for development that are most suitable for the older population.
 5. Policy that provides specialist housing on the identified sites.
 6. Policy that prioritises brownfield and infill sites for development and avoid development on green spaces unless it does not cause significant harm.
 7. Policy to improve infrastructure with new development.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. In 2011 there were 1,857 households in Chartham, living in 1,913 properties⁴. In the late 1990's there was significant growth in housing numbers due to the St Augustine's housing development, otherwise more recent development has been limited.
- 2.2. The existing Canterbury City Council (CCC) Local Plan (LP) makes no strategic housing site allocation for Chartham and development proposals in the area are governed by LP settlement hierarchy policies which adopt a more restrained approach to development in rural areas.
- 2.3. The Working Group recognises that some new housing development would be desirable for the community to ensure a sustainable future, but this has to respect the local community's wishes, to retain the important characteristics of the discrete settlements within the neighbourhood plan area (NPA). Any new development would have to minimise the impact on the surrounding countryside and important heritage assets. There was a clear wish, wherever possible, to re-use sites which are currently under-used and those that visually detract from the overall appearance of the NPA.
- 2.4. The Working Group recognised that CCC is currently undertaking a review of its LP including detailed analysis of the future housing requirements of the authority's area. Consequently, CCC was not able at this stage to provide a housing requirement figure. Therefore, the policies in the existing LP provide the framework for any consideration of future housing by the Working Group.

Members of the Working Group

- 2.5. This topic paper has been prepared by a Working Group set up by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to look into this topic. The Working Group comprises:
- 2.6. **Sally Scott** - Sally has lived on St. Augustine's development for 20 years and prior to that lived in Chartham village for 7 years. She has spent most of her adult life in Chartham which has met her changing needs over time as a positive place to live and would like to pass that on to future generations.
- 2.7. **Paul Wookey** - Paul is a qualified town planner and has lived in Kent for over 20 years,
- 2.8. **Lisa Root** – Lisa has lived in Chartham for 12 years moving to the village as her family expanded. She enjoys regular walks and cycles in the countryside direct from her front door.

⁴ 2011 Census

3. CONTEXT

- 3.1. This section provides an overview of the context relevant to this topic area.

Political Statements

- 3.2. Housing is a topic which is focused on a local, national, and international scale and features in political fields as discussed below.

Chartham Parish Council

- 3.3. In March 2005 Chartham Parish Council, together with Canterbury City Council and Chartham Society published the *Chartham Parish Design Statement*⁵. It has been accepted as Supplementary Planning Guidance by Canterbury City Council.
- 3.4. The Design Statement discusses housing in Chartham on page 9:

The early part of the twentieth century saw dwellings increasingly being divorced from employment. This gave rise to the provision of social housing, initially by the Local Authority and subsequently by Housing Associations. The majority of social housing in Chartham has been in the form of housing estates comprising housing of fairly uniform design within any particular development. The trend towards owner occupation began shortly afterwards and, again, was mainly satisfied through the provision of housing estates which comprise a number of properties of similar design. In addition, a number of architect-designed dwellings were erected. Since the introduction of planning controls, most development has taken place within the boundaries of existing settlements.

- 3.5. The Design Statement recognises that housing undersupply is an issue through its three key principles, one of which relates to housing:

To facilitate new dwellings provided they are in such locations, numbers and design as not to detract from the rural character of the Parish.

Canterbury City Council

- 3.6. Canterbury City Council's *Housing, Homelessness And Rough Sleeping Strategy*⁶ identifies the issues relating to housing which are categorised into three different priorities on page 4-6 as follows:

Key Strategic Priority One: Increase the supply and choice of good quality homes that local people can afford.

Challenges:

⁵ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GuD-W4fxrTh2CXOyZ3bcAey16Vm_g4Ro/view?usp=sharing

⁶ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Ero-xzAiwFwMMvb6k11Si0iB3Ya4a031/view?usp=sharing>

- *Our population is forecast to grow by 14% by 2031, so there is increasing demand for housing.*
- *With property values and rent prices predicted to continue to rise at a faster rate than income, homes are becoming less affordable.*
- *In the last five years 149 council homes have been sold through Right to Buy reducing our supply of social housing.*
- *Canterbury has an ageing population and our current housing offer falls short of what older people aspire towards.*
- *A large proportion of first-time buyers are 'priced-out' of the housing market.*
- *As we are a University city there is a need to accommodate a considerable number of students who move to the city to study.*
- *There is a lack of affordable housing options in rural areas.*

Key Strategic Priority Two: Improve quality and make efficient use of existing housing within the district, to ensure it meets current and future housing needs.

Challenges:

- *The majority of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard are in the private market.*
- *The Canterbury district has a high proportion of older homes which are at a greater risk of energy inefficiency.*
- *Improvements and adaptations are needed in homes of all tenures.*
- *An additional 800 HMOs will be subject to mandatory licensing on 1 October 2018.*
- *There are many under occupied homes in the district including in our own housing stock that could be used more efficiently.*
- *There are around 443 long-term empty homes in our district.*

Key Strategic Priority Three: Support vulnerable people to access and maintain housing including preventing and ending homelessness:

Challenges:

- *There is a large number of homeless people and rough sleepers.*
- *New responsibilities in the Homelessness Reduction Act is likely to increase the number of people the council will need to assist.*
- *Our population of older residents is growing at a faster rate than the general population and they can have specific housing support needs.*
- *Vulnerable people find it challenging to access and maintain affordable housing that meets their needs*

UK Government

- 3.7. The Department for Communities and Local Government's report titled *Fixing our broken housing market*⁷ (February 2017) identified the shortfall in housing provision in the UK on page 9:

Since the 1970s, there have been on average 160,000 new homes each year in England. 1 The consensus is that we need from 225,000 to 275,000 or more homes per year to keep up with population growth and start to tackle years of under-supply.

The problem is threefold: not enough local authorities planning for the homes they need; house building that is simply too slow; and a construction industry that is too reliant on a small number of big players.

- 3.8. *Planning for the Future*⁸ produced by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government in 2020 explains the damaging consequences of an undersupply of housing on page 14:

The result of long-term and persisting undersupply is that housing is becoming increasingly expensive, including relative to our European neighbours... We need to address the inequalities this has entrenched.

Research / Evidence

- 3.9. This section provides an overview of relevant research and evidence, on a local and national scale, to aid in identifying the key issues which Chartham Parish currently faces.

Chartham Neighbourhood Plan Vision & Objectives Survey (October 2020): Results & Analysis⁹

- 3.10. In Chartham Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Objectives Survey, the Community raised things that they don't like about the Parish relating to housing. These included phrases such as 'new housing developments / some modern developments', 'too many houses being built', 'becoming too built up / potential for over-development/ growing too big / expanding / threat of endless building' and 'not enough council / social housing'. When asked about what things the Community worries about the future for Chartham, phrases such as 'more houses/ too many houses being built / over development', 'new build housing developments/housing developments' and 'inappropriate development in sensitive areas' were used. Finally, when asked what would improve your life in the Parish, the Community identified 'no more houses being built'.

⁷

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/590464/Fixing_our_broken_housing_market_-_print_ready_version.pdf

⁸ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/958420/MHCLG-Planning-Consultation.pdf

⁹ <https://charthamnp.com/index.php/documents/category/6-vision-objectives-survey-oct-2020>

AECOM: Chartham Neighbourhood Plan Housing Needs Assessment
(March 2021)

3.11. The Neighbourhood Plan Housing Needs Assessment provides an overview of the Parish in relation to housing, discussing tenure, affordability and the need for affordable housing, type and size and specialist housing for older people. The recommendation of the document is that neighbourhood planners should discuss the contents and conclusions with CCC to draft housing policies bearing in mind:

- *All Neighbourhood Planning Basic Conditions, but in particular the following: Condition A, namely that the Neighbourhood Plan has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State; Condition D, that the making of the Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development; and Condition E, which is the need for the Neighbourhood Plan to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted development plan;*
- *The views of CCC - in particular in relation to the quantity of housing that should be planned for;*
- *The views of local residents;*
- *The views of other relevant local stakeholders, including housing developers and estate agents;*
- *The numerous supply-side considerations, including local environmental constraints, the location and characteristics of suitable land, and any capacity work carried out by CCC, including but not limited to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA);*
- *The recommendations and findings from this study; and*
- *The impact of the Government's Standards Methodology on calculating housing need for CCC and the neighbourhood plan areas within it*

3.12. The assessment identified 3 main issues relating to Chartham and housing. These issues are discussed below.

3.13. RQ 1: Tenure, Affordability and the Need for Affordable Housing.

Chartham is characterised by relatively high average incomes but quite constrained lower quartile incomes. Those on average incomes who do not already own their own home in Chartham, will not be able to afford to buy their own home, or rent in the market, except at entry level rent. Those households on two lower quartile incomes cannot afford any of the available tenures without recourse to benefits, except social rent.

3.14. RQ 2: Housing type and size.

There are 1,857 households in Chartham, living in 1,913 properties including the 595 detached houses, 606 semi-detached, 484 terraced houses, and 204 flats. Most properties are large with 4, 5 or 6 rooms. Together these three sizes categories account for well over half of the total stock and only 7.3% of homes have 1-3 rooms. The SHMAA recommended policy to be directed towards ensuring that larger properties - semi-detached and detached - are prioritised. This is not necessarily supported by the findings of this HNA.

3.15. RQ 3: Specialist housing for older people.

In comparing the outcomes of the tenure-led projections and the Housing LIN recommendations, it is important not to assume direct equivalence of the type of housing deemed suitable for those whose lives are limited 'a little' in with 'sheltered housing', even though both types of housing address the needs of those with relatively limited support needs. This is because there is a range of housing suitable for this group of the population including mainstream housing, whereas the HLIN identifies only sheltered housing specifically.

A more accurate result, therefore can be achieved by comparing the 153 dwellings identified in the tenure-led approach for those who require housing with care with the 121 specialist dwellings that emerge from the HLIN calculations. By contrast, the 153 figure in the tenure-led projections is based on those whose day-to-day needs are limited only a little, and whose housing needs therefore have the potential to be provided through adaptations to a conventional home.

For this reason, our recommendation would be to treat the outcome of these approaches as a range, with at least 121 specialist dwellings being required to service the needs of older people over the Plan period, and the projection of 153 dwellings functioning as an upper, more aspirational target, to be provided if other constraints allow.

Chartham Parish Design Statement (March 2005)

3.16. The Design Statement discusses housing in Chartham which is as follows:

The early part of the twentieth century saw dwellings increasingly being divorced from employment. This gave rise to the provision of social housing, initially by the Local Authority and subsequently by Housing Associations. The Majority of social housing in Chartham has been in the form of housing estates comprising housing of fairly uniform design within any particular development. The trend onwards owner occupation began shortly afterwards and, again, was mainly satisfied through the provision of housing estates which comprise a number of properties of similar design. In addition, a number of architect-designed dwellings were erected. Since the introduction of planning controls, most development has taken place within the boundaries of existing settlements.

Guidelines to control residential intensification¹⁰ (April 2008)

3.17. This CCC document identifies issues relating to intensification in Canterbury and these include:

- *Intensification of use - demolition and redevelopment of original house*
- *Scale and appearance of new infill development not in keeping with context*
- *Loss of building line, street pattern and roofscape*
- *Side extensions that tend to create a terraced effect in the street*

¹⁰ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Z5oFSam9EEz0gdh2ceh2MqWjqk8K4CQ/view?usp=sharing>

- *Acquisition of rear gardens for backland development*
- *Tandem development proposals*
- *Cumulative changes damaging character*
- *Loss of planting and specimen trees*
- *Oversized and overbearing redevelopment proposals for apartments/flats with parking areas dominant*
- *Demand for on street parking*
- *Front gardens surfaced to provide off street parking*

3.18. The document then provides guidance surrounding site and layout, and design of development to help ensure that inappropriate development is avoided.

*Better Homes: localism, aspiration and choice. A Housing Strategy for Kent and Medway*¹¹ (May 2011)

3.19. Produced by the Kent Housing Group, the Better Homes Strategy discusses the challenges that face Kent and Medway which are set out on page 3 and are:

1. *The need to secure the delivery of new homes*
2. *The imperative to achieve regeneration of key brownfield sites across the County*
3. *The need for renewal of existing homes and the return to use of empty homes*
4. *The challenges and opportunities of improving the energy efficiency of existing homes*
5. *The need to consider the needs of the vulnerable groups and the support services they require*

3.20. The ambitions of the Strategy are set out on page 4 and are:

1. *The continued delivery of key infrastructure to support managed growth and housing delivery across the County*
2. *The continued regeneration of our disadvantaged neighbourhoods to bring them in line with more affluent parts of the County*
3. *The provision of choice and affordability in housing for the citizens of Kent and Medway, including rural communities, which meets their needs and aspirations*
4. *The managed improvement and retrofit of existing homes to make them fit for now and the future*
5. *To support vulnerable people in housing need to fulfil their potential and live a high quality life through the provision of excellent housing and support services*

3.21. Although the strategy is from 2011, some of the ambitions can still be reflected into the needs of Chartham. The most relevant ambitions to the Parish are ambitions 1, to prepare for growth within the Parish, ambition 3, to improve affordable housing provision in the Parish, and ambition 5, to provide specialist housing for the older population.

¹¹ https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/6177/Better-homes-localism-aspiration-and-choice.pdf

Tackling the under-supply of housing in England¹² (January 2021)

3.22. This briefing paper produced by the House of Commons Library describes the nation's housing need on page 7:

- *Household growth is one factor affecting overall housing need. The number of new households in England is projected to grow by 150,000 per year, based on current trends.*
- *The backlog of existing need for suitable, affordable accommodation is often cited as another pressure on housing need, as is demand for more space by households that can afford it.*
- *There has been a range of research into the amount of new housing needed, with estimates as high as 340,000 new homes per year.*
- *The government's target is to supply 300,000 new homes per year by the mid-2020s*
- *There is geographic variation in household growth and housing need, with more need in London and the south of England.*

3.23. Chartham would benefit from this increased affordable housing provision especially as it is in the south east where there are some of the highest house prices in the UK.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the East Kent Sub-region¹³ (June 2009)

3.24. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMAA) for the East Kent sub-region includes Chartham. The conclusions of the SHMAA are as follows under section 15.

3.25. Parts of East Kent's housing markets are relatively self-contained. The rurality of East Kent is a significant factor that shaped housing markets and leads to high house prices. This combined with lower-than-average economic prosperity, has led to a smaller housing market.

3.26. The population of 45-64-year-olds is set to increase slightly however both the 65-84 and 85+ age groups are predicted to increase significantly by 2026. The increase in the proportion of the older population - especially the very elderly - is a critical factor for the future housing markets and economy of East Kent.

3.27. Given the significant need within the sub-region, reversing the decline in supply of affordable dwellings is a matter of urgent priority.

3.28. Detached and semi-detached properties are substantially the preferred property type with flats being relatively unpopular.

¹² <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7671/CBP-7671.pdf>

¹³ <https://services.swale.gov.uk/assets/Planning-Forms-and-Leaflets/Planning-General/Planning-Policy/Local-Development-Framework/Housing-Market-Assessment.pdf>

- 3.29. Although this assessment is over a decade old, most of the points raised in the conclusions relate to present day Chartham particularly the need to adapt to an ageing population and an increased supply of affordable housing.

The Development Plan

- 3.30. Planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise¹⁴. Proposals that are in accordance with the development plan should therefore be approved.

Canterbury District Local Plan¹⁵ (July 2017)

- 3.31. The Chartham Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the development plan for the area and its policies be used to determine applications. At this time however, the most relevant policies in the development plan are contained within the Canterbury District Local Plan (July 2017)
- 3.32. Canterbury City Council are currently preparing a new Local Plan which will replace the Canterbury Local Plan (2017). The emerging Canterbury Local Plan will cover the period to 2040 and a draft has not yet been published. The neighbourhood plan is therefore at this time being progressed in accordance with the Canterbury Local Plan (2017).
- 3.33. The plan prepared by the Local Planning Authority is also particularly important in the context of plan making. This is because of the basic conditions a plan must meet is that it *'is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority'*. Strategic policies tend to relate to strategic matters as defined by Paragraph 20 of the National Planning Policy Framework. This mean that any policies included within the neighbourhood plan will need to not undermine, and support and uphold the general principles of strategic policy.
- 3.34. In this context, the most relevant policies in the Canterbury Local Plan (2017) relating to housing are:
- 3.35. Policy SP3 Strategic Site Allocations requires development permitted at 12 strategic sites in the District.

Planning applications for development of all, or part, of a Strategic Site Allocation, shall be accompanied by a comprehensive masterplan for the whole Strategic Site Allocation. The masterplan shall identify how the Strategic Site Allocation fits into the wider surroundings and shall include the detailed requirements for the site; the phasing of development, the physical and social infrastructure; and detailed design proposals incorporating "garden city" principles (Appendix 1). Development

¹⁴ see section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 – these provisions also apply to appeals

¹⁵ [Canterbury District Local Plan adopted July 2017 | Canterbury City Council](#)

proposals submitted for these sites shall be in accordance with the requirements of this policy.

3.36. Policy SP4 Strategic approach to location of development states:

The urban areas of Canterbury, Herne Bay and Whitstable will continue to be the principal focus for development, with a particular focus at Canterbury, together with development at the rural service centres and local centres. Policy SP3 identifies the key sites for mixed-use development. In addition to the development allocations set out in this plan:

- 1. In the urban areas of Canterbury, Herne Bay and Whitstable, new housing development will be supported on suitable sites, where this would be acceptable in terms of environmental, transport and other planning factors, and would not result in the loss of sites identified for business and other specific uses;*
- 2. Provision of new housing that is of a size, design, scale, character and location appropriate to the character and built form of the rural service centres of Sturry and the local centres of Barham, Blean, Bridge, Chartham, Hersden and Littlebourne will be supported provided that such proposals are not in conflict with other local plan policies relating to transport, environmental and flood zone protection and design, and those of the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan, where applicable;*
- 3. In the villages of Adisham, Bekesbourne, Bossingham, Broad Oak, Hoath, Kingston, Petham, Rough Common, Tyler Hill, Upstreet, and Wickhambreaux, priority will be given to protecting the rural character of the district and infill development of an amount appropriate to the size of the settlement (or development to meet an identified local need for affordable housing), in a location appropriate to the form of the settlement and of a design and scale that respects and enhances the character of the village;*
- 4. At the hamlets of Chartham Hatch, Chislet, Bishopsbourne, Fordwich, Harbledown, Ickham, Lower Hardres, Patricxbourne, Stodmarsh, Upper Harbledown, Upper Hardes, Waltham, Westbere, Womenswold, Woolage Green, and Woolage Village development will be permitted which specifically meets an identified local need; and*
- 5. In the open countryside, development will be permitted if required for agriculture and forestry purposes (see Policy EMP13).*

3.37. Policy HD1 Housing Allocations permits development at 9 sites in the district, including one in the NP area, land at Baker's Lane, Chartham.

3.38. Policy HD2 Affordable Housing requires CCC to:

Seek provision of 30% affordable housing on all residential developments consisting of 11 or more units, or which have a combined gross floor area of more than 1,000 square metres, other than on sites in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty where commuted sums will be sought on developments of between 6 to 10 units.

The City Council's preferred option is for affordable housing to be provided on-site. Where it can be demonstrated that on-site provision is not suitable, a financial contribution will be sought.

A vacant building credit will be applied where it can be demonstrated that qualifying buildings are genuinely vacant. Whether a qualifying building is genuinely vacant will be determined on a site by site basis, having regard

to the vacant building credit policy intention to incentivise brownfield development. The vacant building credit applies where the building has not been abandoned, has not been made vacant for the sole purposes of re-development and is not covered by an extant or recently expired planning permission for the same or substantially the same development.

Where the proposed provision of affordable houses is below the requirements set out above, the City Council will require applicants to provide evidence by way of a financial appraisal to justify a reduced provision.

3.39. Policy HD3 Rural Exception Sites states CCC:

will permit affordable housing to meet local needs on rural exception sites that is, unallocated land outside the boundary of the urban areas and/or built confines of villages, subject to the certain criteria.

- a. The applicant and the parish council or local community in conjunction with the City Council, must demonstrate the existence of a local need which cannot be accommodated in any other way, i.e. no other sites are available within the village;*
- b. The development must be of a scale not in excess of the identified local need;*
- c. The City Council must be satisfied that the long term occupancy of the dwellings can be controlled to ensure that the housing will continue to be available for a local need at an affordable price and this will be defined by a legal agreement. Proposals to construct dwellings offering a discounted initial purchase price only will not be acceptable. The City Council will seek to control occupancy through agreements as appropriate to meet local needs;*
- d. The development must be capable of proper management by a registered provider, village trust, parish council or a similar organisation;*
- e. There is no conflict with environmental protection policies;*
- f. Any site must be well related to the village and existing facilities; and*
- g. Market housing will be acceptable as an element of the scheme to enable the financial viability of the scheme or to meet an identified local market need. A financial viability statement will need to be submitted with any application and may be validated by an independent assessor at the expense of the applicant. The market housing element will amount to no more than 30% of the scheme. Any permitted market housing must be comparable in scale and design to the affordable housing element. Starter homes will not be permitted on rural exception sites*

3.40. Policy HD4 New Dwellings in the Countryside states planning permission for new dwellings in the countryside will only be granted in the following circumstances:

- a. For Rural Workers Dwellings where:*
 - There is an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside, for example, to meet the needs of agriculture or forestry. In such circumstances the City Council will require the applicant to produce an independent report demonstrating the need for the dwelling and the financial viability of the business.*

- *Existing dwellings serving or closely connected with the holding do not provide sufficient accommodation for essential rural workers.*

Where a need is proven, the City Council will normally require the new agricultural dwelling to be sited in association with existing groups of farm buildings; or

b. For the re-use of heritage assets where:

The proposed development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets; or

c. For the re-use of existing buildings where:

The development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting; or

d. For a new dwelling where:

The design of the development is of an exceptional quality or innovative nature.

3.41. Policy HD5 looks at the conversion of rural buildings to residential use:

Where planning permission is required for the conversion of an existing agricultural or other rural building in the open countryside to a residential use, it will be granted if the following criteria are satisfied:

- It has been demonstrated by means of a supporting statement to the satisfaction of the City Council that the building has been continuously actively marketed a year, for suitable preferred or alternative re-uses, such as business, tourism or community; or*
- The residential conversion is a subordinate part of a scheme for a business, tourism or community re-use, which will have a positive benefit on the local economy and community; or*
- The residential conversion meets an identified local housing need; and*
- The form bulk and design of the building is sympathetic to the rural surroundings and it respects local styles and materials; and*
- The building is capable of conversion without major reconstruction or extension and any alterations can be achieved without a detrimental impact on its character and appearance; and*
- The building is capable of conversion and re-use without requiring substantial additional outbuildings or a significant change in the setting of the building;*
- There is no overriding conflict with other policies in the Local Plan*

3.42. Policy HD6 Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMO) states:

In order to maintain an appropriate housing mix and to safeguard the character of local communities, the proportion of HMOs within the areas subject to Article 4 Directions should not exceed 10% of the total number of dwellings within a 100m radius of any application property. The City Council will not permit changes of use to HMOs, or extensions to existing HMOs, where that proportion would be exceeded.

However, in areas where there is already an exceptionally high proportion of HMOs, for example, in any particular block of properties, consideration will be given to permitting further conversions.

In all cases, regard will also be had to the following factors:

- a. whether the proposals would lead to a level of car-parking that would exceed the capacity of the street;*
- b. whether the proposals could provide acceptable arrangements for bin storage and other shared facilities; and*
- c. whether the design of any extension would be appropriate in terms of the property itself or the character of the area.*

3.43. Policy HD8 Retention of Housing Accommodation states:

The City Council will only permit the loss of housing accommodation where:

- a. The existing accommodation is unsuitable for residential use; or*
- b. The existing residential accommodation is incompatible with adjoining uses; or*
- c. The change of use will ensure the retention and refurbishment of a building which makes a significant contribution to the character or appearance of the area, where it could not be achieved if the residential use remained; or*
- d. The proposed use will meet an identified community, business, tourism, or other residential need, which would be compatible with the character and amenity of the area.*

Planning guidance and supplementary planning documents

3.44. Canterbury City Council's *Guidelines to control residential intensification* sets out guidance regarding residential intensification to ensure that localities which have high quality environment and character which are not designated conservation areas are protected from residential intensification. A summary of the guidance is detailed below:

3.45. Site and layout:

- Intensification may be acceptable if; the site is in an existing residential area, the site has been allocated for housing and the development would not conflict with local plan policies.
- Site layout and orientation should follow the character of the area.
- Development plots should be of a similar size to those prevailing in the adjoining area.
- New dwellings should be spaced to prevent any direct overlooking of habitable rooms of the existing neighbouring houses.
- Proposals should retain important trees and landscape features and should not disturb wildlife corridors.

3.46. Design

- New development proposals when considered acceptable in principle will need to fit in with existing built form.

- Backland development will only be allowed where it does not affect the amenities of surrounding properties.
- The height form and footprint of the proposed building, particularly in respect of infill developments, should be similar to that prevailing along the road frontage.
- There should be adequate side boundary separation of buildings in the street frontage.
- All developments should have a frontage onto the street, or driveway, with an active frontage.
- Windows should have the appearance of side hung casements or sashes.
- Sufficient parking shall be provided on site.
- The loss of healthy mature areas of established planting will be resisted where it is considered that these form an intrinsic part of the area's character and appeal.
- All dwellings designed as family houses should provide private garden space suitable for family needs.
- Apartment designs and developments of flats will be resisted in locations where they are considered to be out of scale and context with the surrounding area.
- Apartment designs and developments of flats will be expected to provide appropriate levels of private usable amenity space for residents.
- External layouts for apartments must clearly define public and private space around buildings.
- Pedestrian entrance points into flats and apartments must be legible from primary street frontages.
- Where it is proposed to increase the internal capacity of dwellings to provide additional bedroom spaces, there should be scope within the plot to cater for off-street parking.
- Proposals for domestic extensions that are considered to have a detrimental effect on the character of existing streets will be resisted.

3.47. The *Chartham Parish Design Statement* provides guidance relating to housing on page 19:

Residential development would be acceptable where:

- *Use is made of suitable brownfield sites or existing buildings within the built-up areas, which are otherwise redundant.*
- *It is the provision of new dwellings for key-workers or agricultural workers - provided, in the latter case, the dwellings have an agricultural restriction placed on them and on all other existing dwellings on the same holding.*
- *The design of the housing is in keeping with the form, materials and construction methods of existing dwellings, especially those in close proximity*

Any proposed development in the future should be on a small-scale only, and should take the form of:

- *Infilling (filling of a narrow gap in an otherwise built-up frontage) and groups of no more than 6 houses.*
- *Re-use, or conversion, of existing properties.*
- *Use of brownfield sites.*
- *Restricting severely any new development beyond existing built-up areas of the Parish.*
- *Careful siting of buildings in locations where they may intrude into the landscape, and cannot be effectively screened, e.g. on the skyline or when significantly higher than surrounding buildings.*
- *Ensuring that thorough research with the Environment Agency, and appropriate authorities, is made into plans in order that any proposed development will not add to the risk of flooding, particularly in areas close to the River Stour and the course of the Chartham Nailbourne.*

National Planning Policy

- 3.48. The National Planning Policy Framework¹⁶ (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance¹⁷ (NPPG) together form the legislative framework for planning in England.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.49. The NPPF was originally published in March 2012, consolidating over two dozen previously issued documents. It has since been revised in 2018, 2019 and 2021. It represents up-to-date government planning policy and is a material consideration that must be taken into account when considering development proposals. This includes the presumption in favour of development found at paragraph 14 of the Framework which is particularly relevant in the context of housing. If decision takers choose not to follow the NPPF, where it is a material consideration, clear and convincing reasons for doing so are needed.
- 3.50. The most relevant policies within the NPPF which relate to housing are as follows:
- 3.51. Having a neighbourhood plan in place provide some special protections to the plan are when considered against areas that have no plan. Paragraph 11 confirms that where the where there are no relevant policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, permission should be granted granting permission unless a set of criteria is met. Paragraph 14 however provides a stricter set of criteria for areas with a neighbourhood plan in place, this

¹⁶ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1004408/NPPF_JULY_2021.pdf

¹⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

generally means speculative applications are harder to get through. Paragraph 14 states:

In situations where the presumption (at paragraph 11d) applies to applications involving the provision of housing, the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the neighbourhood plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, provided all of the following apply:

- a) the neighbourhood plan became part of the development plan two years or less before the date on which the decision is made;*
- b) the neighbourhood plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement;*
- c) the local planning authority has at least a three year supply of deliverable housing sites (against its five year housing supply requirement, including the appropriate buffer as set out in paragraph 74); and*
- d) the local planning authority's housing delivery was at least 45% of that required over the previous three years.*

3.52. Paragraph 60 states:

To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.

3.53. Paragraph 62 states:

Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes).

3.54. Paragraph 64 states:

Provision of affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments, other than in designated rural areas (where policies may set out a lower threshold of 5 units or fewer). To support the re-use of brownfield land, where vacant buildings are being reused or redeveloped, any affordable housing contribution due should be reduced by a proportionate amount.

3.55. Paragraph 67 states:

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. This figure should take into account factors such as the latest evidence of local housing need, the population of the neighbourhood area and the most recently available planning strategy of the local planning authority.

3.56. Paragraph 70 states:

Neighbourhood planning groups should also give particular consideration to the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites (of a size consistent with paragraph 69a) suitable for housing in their area.

3.57. Paragraph 71 states:

Where an allowance is to be made for windfall sites as part of anticipated supply, there should be compelling evidence that they will provide a reliable source of supply. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the strategic housing land availability assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends. Plans should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area.

3.58. Paragraph 78 states:

In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs, and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this.

3.59. Paragraph 79 states:

To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.

3.60. Paragraph 80 discusses that development of isolated homes in the countryside should be avoided unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;*
- b) the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;*
- c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;*
- d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building; or*
- e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:*
 - is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and*
 - would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area*

3.61. Paragraph 119 states:

Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and

improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or 'brownfield' land.

3.62. Paragraph 120 discusses that planning policies and decisions should:

- a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains - such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside;*
- b) recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production;*
- c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;*
- d) promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively (for example converting space above shops, and building on or above service yards, car parks, lock-ups and railway infrastructure)*

3.63. Paragraph 121 states:

Local planning authorities, and other plan-making bodies, should take a proactive role in identifying and helping to bring forward land that may be suitable for meeting development needs, including suitable sites on brownfield registers or held in public ownership, using the full range of powers available to them. This should include identifying opportunities to facilitate land assembly, supported where necessary by compulsory purchase powers, where this can help to bring more land forward for meeting development needs and/or secure better development outcomes.

3.64. Paragraph 124 identifies that planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:

- a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;*
- b) local market conditions and viability;*
- c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services - both existing and proposed - as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;*
- d) the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and*
- e) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places*

National Planning Practice Guidance

3.65. The online NPPG was published by the Government in 2014 and provides further planning guidance to be used alongside the NPPF. It is updated as national policy

changes. The NPPG is split into topics such as 'Housing needs of different groups' which provides specific guidance surrounding these topics.

- 3.66. Relevant topics within the NPPG which relate to housing include 'First homes', 'Housing and economic land availability assessment', 'Housing and economic needs assessment', 'Housing needs for different groups', 'Housing for older and disabled people', 'Housing: optional technical standards', 'Housing supply and delivery', 'Rural housing' and 'Self-build and custom housebuilding'.

National & International Legislation

- 3.67. The Housing Act 1996¹⁸ was introduced to provide legislation regarding the disposal of land and related matters, grants and other financial matters, general powers of the relevant authority, houses of multiple occupation, landlord and tenant rights, universal credit, housing benefit and related matters, conduct of tenants, allocation of housing accommodation and homelessness.
- 3.68. The Housing and Planning Act 2016¹⁹ provides legislation regarding new homes in England, rogue landlords and property agents in England, recovering abandoned premises in England, social housing in England, housing, estate agents and rent charges: other changes, planning in England, compulsory purchase etc and public authority land.
- 3.69. The Housing Act 2004²⁰ provides legislation regarding housing conditions, licensing of houses in multiple occupation, selective licensing of other residential accommodation and additional control provision in relation to residential accommodation.

¹⁸ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/52/contents>

¹⁹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/22/contents/enacted>

²⁰ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/34/contents>

4. HOUSING ISSUES IN CHARTHAM PARISH

- 4.1. The main issues in the topic paper, at this stage, are drawn from initial consultations that have taken place to date and the housing needs assessment undertaken by AECOM in March 2021.
- 4.2. The local housing issues which have been identified and considered in this topic paper are:

Issue 1 – Insufficient supply of housing to support the Community

- 4.3. The provision of new homes is a hot topic as it often leads to discussions regarding loss of greenfield land, pressure on existing services, and whether they are needed.
- 4.4. The Parish Design Statement has identified as a key principle, that new dwellings should be facilitated in locations, numbers and design as not to detract from the rural character.
- 4.5. The Working Group have discussed and determined that some housing will be needed in the parish to meet the rising housing demand in Canterbury.

Issue 2 – Difficulty of finding the best sites for development

- 4.6. Rural settings are very sensitive and therefore on which sites development should occur should be carefully considered to not cause significant harm to the rural setting.
- 4.7. The Community raised through the Vision and Objectives Survey that some of the things that they didn't like about the Parish included 'threat of development on green space / building on greenbelt', 'derelict buildings' and 'neglected buildings'. When asked what they were worried about for the future of the Parish, the Community identified 'building over green spaces / loss of green spaces / building over farmland / woodland' and 'additional building spoiling the village character and views'. Finally, when asked what would improve their lives in the Parish, the Community stated 'protecting our village status and green land / protecting outdoor space'.

Issue 3 – Housing supply does not meet the needs of the changing demographic

- 4.8. The Planning Practice Guidance recommends the consideration of the existing housing provision and its suitability, having regard to demographic shifts in age and household composition, to address future, as well as current community need.
- 4.9. The HNA identified that there is an undersupply of affordable housing to meet the needs of the changing demographic. The Working Group have determined that this is an issue which needs to be addressed.

Issue 4 – Lack of appropriate specialist housing for the older population

- 4.10. The older population have unique wants and needs from their homes that cannot be met through typical housing. The SHMA has determined that older people are preferring to live independently.
- 4.11. The HNA has identified that more specialist housing should be provided within the Parish to meet the needs of the older population.
- 4.12. The Working Group has therefore identified that a lack of appropriate specialist housing for the older population is an issue and specialist housing is needed to support the older population within the Parish.

Issue 5 – The threat of overdevelopment and challenge of balancing this with housing provision

- 4.13. Overdevelopment can cause various issues within the Parish and must be managed and avoided however, due to high levels of housing demands, housing must be provided.
- 4.14. In the Vision and Objectives Survey, the Community raised the things that they don't like about the Parish and this included phrases such as 'too many houses being built', 'becoming too built up / potential for over-development / growing too big / expanding / threat of endless building' and 'threat of development in green space / building on greenbelt'. The Community also identified the things that they were worried about for the future of the Parish and this included 'becoming a satellite extension of Canterbury / encroachment by Canterbury', 'more housing with insufficient infrastructure', 'more houses / too many houses being built / overdevelopment', 'too many modern developments that will take away its character', 'building over green spaces / loss of green spaces', 'additional building spoiling the village character and views', 'new build housing developments / housing developments', 'urban sprawl' and 'growing too big'. Finally, the Community determined what changes would improve their lives in the Parish and this included 'protecting our village status and green land / protecting outdoor

space', 'no more houses being built' and 'tight intra-community information and control of future building projects'.

- 4.15. The Working Group has therefore determined that the threat of overdevelopment and challenge of balancing this with housing provision is a key issue in the Parish.

5. ISSUE 1 – INSUFFICIENT SUPPLY OF HOUSING TO SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY

Overview

- 5.1. The provision of new homes is a hot topic as it often leads to discussions regarding loss of greenfield land, pressure on existing services and on the environment.
- 5.2. The Parish Design Statement identified the following key aim for the future:

To facilitate new dwellings provided they are in such locations, numbers and design as not to detract from the rural character of the parish.
- 5.3. The Canterbury Local Plan has identified that the 20-year District requirement for 2011-2031 is 16,000 units. This could cause an increase in housing demand in rural settlements such as Chartham, especially due to its proximity to the city of Canterbury.
- 5.4. The Working Group recognise that a limited number of houses are required in the parish to meet housing demands in the southeast, however it is critical that consideration is made to minimise the impacts which development could cause on the rural setting.

Options to address the issue

- 5.5. The Working Group have considered the best way to address the issue and consider that there several possible ways which this could be done. N.B. there may be ways to address the issue outside of the neighbourhood plan and these are included below.

Option 1 – Do not address this issue in the neighbourhood plan, and instead leave it to existing policy to support the provision of a sufficient supply of housing

- 5.6. There is no requirement within national or local policy for a neighbourhood plan to include policies to provide new homes and as mentioned earlier in this document. This option would see the provision of new housing in line with national policy left to CCC to provide through the new local plan currently being prepared. This approach would see a more strategic approach to meeting housing requirements across the district being adopted.

Option 2 – Identify the amount of housing needed within the plan area and allocate sites to meet that need.

- 5.7. This option would see the local community grasping the issue with both hands and seeking to allocate land to provide the amount of housing required, in line with national and local level policy. Identifying a correct figure could involve:
- Asking CCC to provide a ‘housing requirement figure’.
 - Commissioning work to identify the amount of housing that is required over the plan period.
- 5.8. Once a figure is established the plan could then look to identify and assess available land and include policies and allocations within the plan to meet it.

Option 3 – Introduce a policy to only provide housing as a by-product of regenerating existing redundant, or brownfield land

- 5.9. This option would not see the neighbourhood plan seeking to meet any identified housing need set out in national/local policy. Instead, it would mean that housing could come forward through allocations aimed at regenerating parts of the plan area.
- 5.10. This builds upon initial consultation, as part of the Vision and Objectives survey with the local community, that there is a desire to address issues relating to existing areas of derelict and underused land or buildings within the NPA which are ‘ugly’ and detract from the overall appearance and character of the area.

Option 4 – Do not try and meet any specific amount of housing but instead adopt a policy approach to increase the supply of windfall sites.

- 5.11. This option would promote the supply of new homes through policy wording, not allocations. By utilising policy, the plan could promote and support new housing developments in appropriate locations.

Consideration of options & recommended solution

- 5.12. The Working Group recognises that some new housing would be desirable for the community to ensure a sustainable future.
- 5.13. The ‘easy’ route for the Steering Group in preparing the plan would be to adopt Option 1. This would see the community delegating all responsibility for the provision of new housing to CCC who would in due course allocate sites across the District to meet their housing need. This could mean that many new houses come forward within the plan area, but it could also mean that very few come forward as CCC would adopt a strategic approach to their new area and guide development to where they believe it is best suited. Taking such an approach would likely limit the community’s ability to address the issue.

- 5.14. Option 2 seeks to provide new homes within the Parish in line with national and local policy requirements. This option too however has its pitfalls. Whilst the NPPF (2021) requires local authorities, through paragraphs 66 and 67, to provide neighbourhood groups with a definitive or indicative number of houses to plan for over the plan period, CCC has confirmed it is not in a position to do this given the stage it is at with its local plan. In addition, a HNA undertaken by AECOM, is based on historic data and the broad LP settlement hierarchy policies and therefore is very unlikely to provide a credible housing quantity figure from which we could work.
- 5.15. The Working Group therefore considers that a more sensible approach is to provide some housing, but not seek to meet any specific number as, for the reasons outlined above a reliable number would be hard to achieve.
- 5.16. Option 3 embodies this approach and would mean that some new housing would come forward because of the neighbourhood plan in a way that aligns with the concerns of the local community - there was a clear wish to re-use sites which are currently under-used and those that visually detract from the overall appearance of the NPA.
- 5.17. Option 4 could also be used to promote infill and/or redevelopment moving forward although great care would be needed to ensure the policy supports development which the community would consider to be appropriate.
- 5.18. A combination of Option 3 and Option 4 is therefore the Working Group's recommended way forward. This would be consistent with the views of the local community and could have the ability to provide a limited number of new homes within the NPA within the plan period.
- 5.19. To support this approach, the Working Group recommends that they proceed with a 'call for sites' for existing redundant, previously developed or brownfield land to ensure no sites are accidentally omitted from consideration. Following an evaluation, it is hoped that several sites will be considered appropriate for regeneration and those schemes will include some new housing. This, complimented with broad policy support for appropriate new windfall housing proposals, should go some way towards addressing the identified issue.

6. ISSUE 2 – DIFFICULTY OF IDENTIFYING THE BEST SITES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Overview

- 6.1. The community have made clear that development should result in minimal, if any harm to our rural setting, the community, the environment, flora and fauna, heritage, and the built environment.
- 6.2. Chartham is a highly sensitive parish due to the proximity to the Kent Downs AONB, the Conservation Areas, the variety of green spaces, the River Stour, the rare species of animal and plant, and the valued tranquil environment. Where development occurs, all of these factors will have to be considered to decide if the site is the most suitable where minimal harm is caused.
- 6.3. The area that people live in is a matter close to their hearts. A distinctive village character is an often-cited reason why people live in the area and people fear the countryside gap between Chartham and Canterbury getting smaller and the loss of green space. Also of concern, was run down and derelict buildings, particularly the Mill and the derelict houses opposite.
- 6.4. The Working Group have therefore identified the challenge of identifying the best sites for development as a key issue.

Options to address the issue

- 6.5. The Working Group have considered the best way to address the issue and consider that there several possible ways which this could be done. N.B. there may be ways to address the issue outside of the neighbourhood plan and these are included below;

Option 1 – Do not address the issue in the neighbourhood plan, and instead leave it to national policy to guide CCC regarding identifying land for homes

- 6.6. National policy sets out that local planning policies should identify a sufficient supply and mixture of sites taking into account their availability, suitability and economic viability.
- 6.7. This will help CCC to identify the best locations for development within the Parish which would minimise harm to the locality.

Option 2 – Identify sites/land which are not consistent with the existing Local Plan policies/settlement hierarchy

- 6.8. Policy SP4 of the local plan states:

Provision of new housing that is of a size, design, scale, character and location appropriate to the character and built form of the rural service centres of Sturry and the local centres of Barham, Blean, Bridge, Chartham, Hersden and Littlebourne will be supported provided that such proposals are not in conflict with other local plan policies relating to transport, environmental and flood zone protection and design, and those of the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan, where applicable

- 6.9. New housing development within the NPA is currently governed by CCC's Local Plan policies and its settlement hierarchy which pursues a more restrained approach to development in the rural areas. This anticipates a more limited scale of any new development consistent with accessibility, infrastructure provision, level of services available, suitability of sites and environmental sensitivity.
- 6.10. This is restrictive as in an area such as Littlebourne, housing development has deviated from this trend but has been successful in boosting housing supply whilst having minimal impact on the surrounding area.
- 6.11. Identifying sites which are suitable for development, but oppose CCC's approach, would help to meet the demands for housing and the wants and needs of the Community.

Option 3 – Introduce a policy to define criteria for suitable locations for new housing development

- 6.12. The Working Group has acknowledged that during the initial consultation exercise the local community supports the re-use of existing derelict and unsightly sites and buildings, does not want to encroach onto green spaces or into the surrounding countryside.
- 6.13. Following the 'call for sites' recommended in Issue 1, the Working Group consider that criteria should be used to help identify what is a suitable location for new housing development. These should be consistent with the settlement hierarchy and would be in line with the NP's early-stage consultation.
- 6.14. The Working group considers the similar criteria to that being used by CCC in its LP review and 'call for sites' currently underway, should be used in any evaluation of land/sites that come forward following the NP's 'call for sites' and would be used rank/prioritise site selection.
- 6.15. Whilst requested, CCC has not provided its call for sites evaluation criteria to date and therefore the Working Group is proposing the following to help start the NP process and will need to be refined further in due course:
- Is the site in a sustainable location i.e. has it good access to services and facilities, public transport links and footpath routes so as to avoid the use of a private vehicle?

- Has the site been in previous use i.e. is it a brownfield land site/building which could be brought back into a more productive use?
- Does the site detract from the character and appearance of the NPA?
- Would the site be affected by flooding?
- Has the site good access to the local highway routes and could it be accessed safely without causing danger to other highway users?
- Would the site encroach onto the surrounding countryside or negatively impact on the landscape?
- Would the site have an impact on the character and appearance of the NPA and important heritage assets?
- Would the site conform with the Local Plan's settlement hierarchy and its development justified as an exception due to it being one or more of the following:
 - Meets an identified local need
 - Brings back into use a redundant building
 - Would provide accommodation for a worker in agriculture or forestry
 - Would the design be innovative?

Option 4 – The NP defines a settlement boundary

- 6.16. Over the last 5 years 5 planning applications (19%) have been rejected with one of the reasons cited that “the application site lies outside of an existing settlement and would give rise to an unsustainable form of development. By reasons of its location, the application site is poorly accessible to a range of day-to-day services and is contrary policies SP1 Sustainable Development, SP4 Strategic approach to location of development and TV8 Rural Tourist Accommodation, Attractions and Facilities of the Local Plan and the NPPF.”
- 6.17. There is no defined settlement boundary for Chartham and defining a settlement boundary would provide clarity for prospective developers and avoid the refusal of such development proposals.

Consideration of options & recommended solution

- 6.18. Leaving national policy to encourage CCC to identify the most suitable locations for development through option 1 would help CCC to define where development would produce minimal harm on the Parish whilst also meeting the required housing supply. The downside of this is that the Community are not able to identify

where they believe are the most suitable locations for development which is important as they have useful specialised knowledge of the area.

- 6.19. The LP review being undertaken by CCC will assess and decide on the future housing needs of the area as a whole over the plan period. This process will involve a period of consultation once draft proposals have been formulated and at this stage there is no indication that there will be any deviation from the existing Local Plan policies that cover the NPA.
- 6.20. The Working group considers that identifying any new housing sites would not be consistent with existing local plan policies for Chartham and would potentially undermine the validation process of the NP. Further rationale for the approach in this option is that the Local Plan's policies and settlement hierarchy has provided an effective mechanism for the management of new housing proposals since the Plan was adopted in 2017. Therefore, there is no justification nor need for the Working Group to try and identify any site/land which would not be consistent with the Local Plan's existing settlement hierarchy at this stage. Option 2 is therefore disregarded.
- 6.21. It is proposed to adopt selection criteria that will support ranking the sites put forward following the 'call for sites'. This process will help direct the selection of suitable locations for new housing by applying specialised local knowledge. The downside of this however is that some criteria could be in conflict with the local plan and this must be considered. Therefore option 3, define criteria for suitable locations for new housing development, is recommended to be adopted but these criteria cannot be in conflict with the local plan.
- 6.22. The adopted Local Plan's existing settlement hierarchy has provided a sound basis for considering the suitability of new housing development and is considered to be consistent with national policy. There is therefore no justification to deviate away from that proven approach. The Working Group considers that the policies in Local Plan and CCC's settlement hierarchy, which does not define a settlement boundary has provided a useful approach to development management over the LP plan period. There is no rationale to justify, at this stage, for the NP to deviate away from this tried and tested Local Plan settlement strategy, which is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (2019). Therefore option 4 is disregarded.
- 6.23. Option 3 is therefore recommended to the Steering Group as the Community will be able to apply specialised knowledge to define criteria for identifying suitable development sites which would help to minimise the impact of development on the Parish.

7. ISSUE 3 – HOUSING SUPPLY DOES NOT MEET THE NEEDS OF THE CHANGING DEMOGRAPHIC

Overview

- 7.1. Chartham's rate of home ownership is higher than in the CCC area, whilst rates of renting within the private and social rented sectors are lower, as referred to in the HNA. Combined with the high cost of open market housing, it is difficult for those on average incomes to afford to rent or buy their own home in the NPA, except at entry level rent.
- 7.2. Most households in Chartham occupy a three-bedroom house, followed by two and then four-bedroom homes. A small number of households live in one-bedroom homes and there are fewer than average one person households, especially of older persons.
- 7.3. The Parish Council recognises that there is a perception that there is an imbalance between average incomes and relatively high, constantly rising house values. These factors combined would make it difficult for a member of an existing household, earning an average income to enter the local housing market and the limited supply of rented accommodation locally, means they would probably be forced to move outside of the NPA.
- 7.4. The housing needs assessment provides limited evidence on income levels and any proposed household income survey, due to the type of information requested, is not likely to provide sufficient data to fully understand whether the perception of affordability is borne out by reality.
- 7.5. Further there is limited information on the actual need for rented accommodation for either private or social housing and CCC has provided no information from its waiting list for Chartham.
- 7.6. The Working Group recognises that 'affordable housing' either for purchase or renting could be met within Chartham or from the wider CCC area and in fact there may be locations outside of the NPA which are better able to provide for these perceived housing needs.

Options to address the issue

- 7.7. The Working Group have considered the best way to address the issue and consider that there several possible ways which this could be done. N.B. there may be ways to address the issue outside of the neighbourhood plan and these are included below;

Option 1 – Do not address this issue in the neighbourhood plan, and instead leave it to existing policy to meet the needs of the demographic through housing supply and type

- 7.8. National policy aims to ensure that local authorities create planning policies which reflect the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community, including those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes.

Option 2 – Introduce a policy to encourage certain types and sizes of development, based off of HNA findings, to meet the changing needs of the demographic

- 7.9. The HNA states that:

In 2011, the dwelling stock shows that 3 bed properties make up the largest proportion of properties. This should not change very much in 2031, where three beds are still most required, but to a lesser extent. Two beds make up the second greatest group, increasing in proportion in the ideal distribution for 2031, compared to 2011 stock. The greatest percentage change shows in one be properties which make up only a small proportion of the 2011 stock (6%) but increase in importance in the ideal distribution for 2031 to a more significant 11%. Properties of 5 or more bedrooms make up an equally small part of the 2011 distribution of stock and become slightly less significant in the 2031 ideal distribution.

And:

New dwelling stock should provide some mix of all sizes of properties involving the following share: 34.5% as 1 bedroom, 51.5% as two bedrooms, 6% as three bedrooms, 4% as four bedrooms and 4% as five bedrooms.

- 7.10. This evidence should be used to identify the type and size of housing that will be required in the future and policy should be introduced to provide encourage and favour this over other types and sizes of development.

Option 3 – Outside of the neighbourhood plan, encourage CCC to undertake an updated viability assessment to determine if the affordable housing supply requirement (30%) could be increased

- 7.11. To encourage a greater supply of affordable housing, CCC could be engaged and encouraged to undertake an updated viability assessment to the one used to construct policies in the neighbourhood plan. This could determine if the housing supply requirement could be increased to improve the affordable housing supply in the Parish to meet the needs of the changing demographic.

Option 4 – Outside of the neighbourhood plan, encourage a limited amount of affordable housing provision to be delivered by the private sector

- 7.12. Identify suitable sites of a scale of development which would be capable of incorporating some affordable housing units, delivered by a private developer or a social housing landlord would help to boost the supply of affordable housing, helping to meet the changing needs of the demographic.

Option 5 – Outside of the neighbourhood plan, explore community-driven options to secure affordable housing

- 7.13. Affordable housing can also be provided by the community through a variety of different approaches as discussed below.
- 7.14. Community development orders (neighbourhood development orders (NDO)) is defined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Act 61E (2)²¹ as:

An order that grants planning permission in a particular neighbourhood for a specified development or development of any specified class of the Use Classes Order.

NDOs can be used to grant permission for affordable housing development in the Parish without the need for CCC to determine the outcome of applications. This would help to provide affordable housing in the Parish.

- 7.15. Identifying exception sites. Exception sites are defined by the Planning Portal's website²² as:

Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the local authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.

Affordable housing can be provided through exception sites where permission would not normally be granted due to planning constraints. Permission would be granted by the local authority and consideration for site suitability, scale, design etc must still be made.

- 7.16. Community land trusts are defined by the National Community Land Trust Network's website²³:

Community land trusts are set up and run by ordinary people to develop and manage homes as well as other assets. CLTs act as long-term stewards of housing, ensuring that it remains genuinely affordable, based

²¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/part/III/crossheading/neighbourhood-development-orders>

²² https://www.planningportal.co.uk/directory_record/489/rural_exception_site/category/7/glossary_of_planning_terms

²³ <http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk/what-is-a-clt>

on what people actually earn in their area, not just for now but for every future occupier

Developing a community land trust would enable the community to hold onto land and use it when required to provide affordable housing to meet the needs of the population for existing residents and potentially for new future residents.

Consideration of options & recommended solution

- 7.17. National policy encourages that the wants and needs of all groups is met through housing size, type and tenure through option 1. The benefit of this is that there should be a sufficient supply of houses for all groups, helping to maximise their quality of life. The drawback is that it isn't a requirement for local authorities, so they are not forced to identify this need and provide for it.
- 7.18. Creating a policy to provide the housing type, size and tenure identified in the HNA through option 2 would help to meet the wants and needs of the Community and aid in preparing for the future housing demand within the Parish. This will make Chartham an even more attractive place to live in the future. The downside of this is that it doesn't address the current wants and needs of the Community therefore other action would have to be taken alongside this.
- 7.19. Encouraging CCC to update their viability assessment through option 3 would help to determine if it would be possible to increasing the affordable housing requirement and thus help to provide more affordable houses. The drawback of this is that the local plan was only adopted in 2017 therefore it is unlikely that the affordable housing requirement could be increased as viability will not have significantly changed since then. Alongside this, increasing the affordable housing requirement would act as a deterrent for development.
- 7.20. Encouraging a limited amount of affordable housing provision to be delivered by the private sector through option 4 would help to increase the affordable housing supply. Affordable housing is required on sites with more than 10 units and 1,000 square metres of combined gross floorspace; it is unlikely that there will be many of these developments therefore this option would help to work around this and provide affordable housing on small sites. The disadvantages of this are that providing affordable housing on smaller sites may make the development unviable and thus put off developers. Another disadvantage is that providing affordable housing on smaller sites may retract from the appeal of the development and harm the rural setting.
- 7.21. Seeking alternative, community-driven approaches to providing affordable housing through option 5, such as neighbourhood development orders, using exception sites and community land trusts, would help the community to secure affordable housing on sites of their choice. CCC may need to be engaged for some of the approaches, however this would give the community more power. The downside of this is that it may be difficult to identify the need for affordable housing and thus

know how much affordable housing to provide. It can also be difficult and expensive to acquire the land to provide affordable housing from landowners.

- 7.22. Option 1 is recommended to the Steering Group. CCC's Local Plan currently proposes 30% of housing on development sites over 11 units to be provided as affordable housing. This may provide the best option to secure a limited amount of affordable housing within the NPA if sites of the requisite size were identified for development. Option 2 could be considered in the future to meet the needs of the Community however the HNA does not identify the current demand therefore this option is not considered. Option 3 would not be appropriate as the viability assessment is recent therefore affordable housing requirement is not likely to increase. Option 4 would encourage private developers to provide affordable housing on smaller sites however this may not be viable for developers. Option 5 offers several community-driven approaches to securing affordable housing and could be used if the current planning system is not able to provide a sufficient number of affordable homes to meet the needs of the community through option 1, although it may be challenging to acquire the land necessary to provide these houses.

8. ISSUE 4 – LACK OF SPECIALIST HOUSING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE OLDER POPULATION

Overview

- 8.1. The NP Steering Group has indicated that it has interest in establishing the demand for older persons housing and smaller dwellings which may be appropriate for households with specialist housing needs. There is currently a limited supply of elderly person accommodation in the NPA.
- 8.2. Specialist housing is defined on the Local Government Association website²⁴ as:

Any housing, service where housing, support and/or care services are provided to help people live as independently as possible
- 8.3. In the Planning Practice Guidance, the Government states that plans need to provide for specialist housing for older people where a need exists. Innovative and diverse housing models will need to be considered where appropriate.²⁵
- 8.4. The HNA states that a range of between 121 and 153 specialist houses are required in the Parish to meet the needs of the older generation over the plan period. The SHMA also identifies that older people prefer to stay in their own dwellings therefore providing specialist housing is fundamental for planning for ageing populations.
- 8.5. The Working Group has considered the following options recognising that there is no specific policy in the CCC Local Plan for older persons:

Options to address the issue

- 8.6. The Working Group have considered the best way to address the issue and consider that there several possible ways which this could be done. N.B. there may be ways to address the issue outside of the neighbourhood plan and these are included below;

²⁴ <https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/specialised-supported-housing-guidance-local-government-and-nhs-commissioners>

²⁵ See Paragraph: 012 Reference ID: 63-012-20190626 at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-for-older-and-disabled-people#identifying-the-housing-requirements-of-older-and-disabled-people>

Option 1 – Do not address this issue in the neighbourhood plan, and instead leave it to national policy to encourage the provision of specialist housing

- 8.7. National policy encourages the provision of housing for older people by the local authority, where a demand is identified, to meet their wants and needs and improve their quality of life.

Option 2 – Identify sites for development that are most suitable for the older population

- 8.8. Before delivering specialist housing, it is important to identify sites that are most suitable for the older population. These sites should be close to public transport, to reduce the need to walk, close to shops and services to reduce the need to walk, on flat ground to make walking easier and safer, away from land that is at risk of flooding to increase safety and close to a GP to reduce the need to walk.
- 8.9. This would help to increase the quality of life of those older people living within the Parish.

Option 3 – Introduce a policy to provide specialist housing on the identified sites

- 8.10. Specialist housing must be prioritised on the aforementioned sites to meet the needs of the older population. Specialist housing must therefore be provided by CCC or by private specialist housing providers.

Option 4 – Explore the opportunities for alternative forms of accommodation for older persons

- 8.11. Depending on the specific demands of the older population, it may be more appropriate to explore alternative forms of accommodation such as sheltered housing, extra care housing, close care housing, retirement villages and homeshare schemes. This would help to meet the needs of the older population, helping them enjoy the rural setting that Chartham has to offer.

Consideration of options & recommended solution

- 8.12. Leaving national policy to encourage the provision of specialist housing through option 1 places demands on local authorities to develop this type of housing thus helping to meet the wants and needs of the older population. The downside of this is that policies regarding specialist housing are not obligatory therefore specialist housing does not need to be provided by the local authority.
- 8.13. Identifying and allocating sites for specialist housing through option 2 would help to provide specialist housing on the most strategic sites that would reduce the need to travel to key Parish amenities, improving their quality of life. The drawback of this is that because of the characteristics of these sites, they could be some of the

most expensive sites to develop on across the Parish and it may become difficult to make development viable on these sites.

- 8.14. Providing specialist housing either through CCC or private specialist housing developers through option 3 would provide housing that meets the wants and needs of the older demographic through specific design that increases the ease of living independently in a house.
- 8.15. Providing alternative accommodation for the older demographic through option 4 would offer a solution to meet the needs of the older population if the demand for individual specialist housing is not there. Although the SHMA identifies that most older people prefer to live independently, this is not guaranteed to be the case therefore this option must be considered if offering specialist housing is not appropriate.
- 8.16. On balance, a combination of options 2 and 3 are recommended to the Steering Group with option 4 being considered if the demand for specialist housing does not exist. Option 1 assumes that no action can be taken which is incorrect therefore option 1 is inappropriate. Option 2 would identify and allocate sites where specialist housing is a priority with option 3 providing specialist housing on these sites. Finally, option 4 would offer an alternative solution to meeting the needs of the older demographic by providing alternative accommodation which should only be considered if the demand for specialist housing does not exist.

9. ISSUE 5 – THE THREAT OF OVERDEVELOPMENT AND CHALLENGE OF BALANCING THIS WITH HOUSING PROVISION

Overview

- 9.1. Overdevelopment is a typical threat for rural communities who value their rural, tranquil setting and close-knit communities. This is particularly a threat for Chartham where there are several other settlements located nearby and overdevelopment could cause these settlements to merge.
- 9.2. There will always be a demand for housing and a need for all areas to provide more houses. There will always be a threat of overdevelopment and therefore a challenge to balance this with providing houses within the Parish for the current and future generations.
- 9.3. In the Vision and Objectives Survey, the Community raised the things that they don't like about the Parish and this included phrases such as 'too many houses being built', 'becoming too built up / potential for over-development / growing too big / expanding / threat of endless building' and 'threat of development in green space / building on greenbelt'. The Community also identified the things that they were worried about for the future of the Parish and this included 'becoming a satellite extension of Canterbury / encroachment by Canterbury', 'more housing with insufficient infrastructure', 'more houses / too many houses being built / overdevelopment', 'too many modern developments that will take away its character', 'building over green spaces / loss of green spaces', 'additional building spoiling the village character and views', 'new build housing developments / housing developments', 'urban sprawl' and 'growing too big'. Finally, the Community determined what changes would improve their lives in the Parish and this included 'protecting our village status and green land / protecting outdoor space', 'no more houses being built' and 'tight intra-community information and control of future building projects'.
- 9.4. Overdevelopment could cause the following issues:
 - Merging with nearby settlements
 - Putting pressure on, and stretching of services
 - Degradation of the rural setting
 - Pressure on infrastructure such as roads
 - Loss of community feel
 - Pressure on the environment

- Development on green spaces and within the greenbelt
- Increasing levels of noise and air pollution
- Harm to heritage assets

9.5. The Working Group have therefore determined that the threat of overdevelopment and challenge of balancing this with meeting the housing need as a key issue which effects Chartham.

Options to address the issue

9.6. The Working Group have considered the best way to address the issue and consider that there several possible ways which this could be done. N.B. there may be ways to address the issue outside of the neighbourhood plan and these are included below;

Option 1 - Do not address the issue in the neighbourhood plan, and instead leave it to national policy to address this challenge

9.7. National policy encourages local authorities to consider how rural communities can sustainably grow where housing will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities without causing significant harm to the rural settlement.

9.8. National policy also addresses the issue of putting pressure on services by recommending that where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in another village nearby.

Option 2 – Introduce a policy to prioritise brownfield and infill sites for development and avoid development on green spaces unless it does not cause significant harm to the rural setting

9.9. As previously stated under issue 1, prioritising development on brownfield and infill sites would help to remove potentially unattractive and derelict sites and replace them with housing, alongside avoiding development on green spaces.

9.10. Avoiding development on green spaces would avoid significant harm on the rural setting, however to meet the challenge of overdevelopment and housing need, development on green spaces would be supported if it does not cause significant harm to the rural setting.

Option 3 – Introduce a policy to improve infrastructure with new development

9.11. To avoid putting too much unnecessary pressure on, and causing an overburden to, existing infrastructure from new development, a policy should be implemented that aims to improve the condition of infrastructure. This would benefit both new and existing residents.

- 9.12. Infrastructure that would benefit from this includes road network, water and drainage, sewage, mobile service etc. Although not preventing overdevelopment, this would help the Parish to adapt to house supply increases.

Option 4 – Introduce a policy to avoid major development within the Parish

- 9.13. Major development of over 10 units would not be complementary to the character of the Parish and should therefore be avoided as it would cause significant harm to the rural setting. This would help to avoid inappropriate overdevelopment.

Option 5 – Outside of the neighbourhood plan, encourage the provision of new shops and services

- 9.14. New services should be provided to avoid the stretching of, and overburden of existing services that would come from new development. At present, there is not a sufficiently wide enough range of shops and services, and this was identified as an issue by the Economy Working Group.
- 9.15. Additional shops and services would have to be provided if the overall population of the Parish is to increase to meet the needs of existing and future residents.
- 9.16. Although this would not prevent overdevelopment, it would help the Parish to adapt to house supply increases.

Consideration of options & recommended solution

- 9.17. Leaving it to national policy to prevent unsustainable growth of the Parish through option 1 would seek to not support development that would cause significant harm to the Parish and aims to prevent overdevelopment from occurring. CCC does not have to adhere to this however and therefore this option may not prevent overdevelopment.
- 9.18. Prioritising brownfield land and infill sites alongside preventing development on green spaces, unless it does not produce significant harm to the Parish, through option 2 would seek to use unappealing land to secure housing thus preventing the degradation of the rural setting. Preventing development on green spaces would also help to prevent inappropriate development and overdevelopment within the Parish. The downside is that these brownfield and infill sites must be appealing enough for development, if they are not and development on green spaces is restricted, it may be difficult to attract housing development in the Parish.
- 9.19. Improving infrastructure with new development through option 3 would enable the Parish to adapt to an increasing housing supply by avoiding existing infrastructure from becoming overburdened from the increased population. The drawback is that infrastructure improvements can pose a significant cost to CCC and may contradict local policies and damage the environment and the rural setting.

- 9.20. Avoiding major development of over 10 units in the Parish through option 4 would help to control development and prevent overdevelopment from occurring. Major development on unsuitable land would cause great harm to the environment and rural character and must therefore be prevented. The downside of this is that major developments significantly help to boost the housing supply and would also help to provide affordable housing within the Parish as mentioned under issue 3.
- 9.21. Encouraging the provision of shops and services through option 5 would help the Parish to adapt to an increased housing supply by preventing existing shops and services from becoming overburdened. This would be particularly important with GPs where long waits for appointments is undesirable, and for schools where large classes should be avoided as well as refusing children access to schools because they are full.
- 9.22. A combination of options 2, 3 and 5 are recommended to the Steering Group. Option 1 assumes that no action can be taken which is incorrect therefore option 1 is inappropriate. Option 2 would prioritise brownfield and infill sites and avoid development on green spaces to avoid overdevelopment. Option 3 would help the Parish to adapt to an increased housing supply by improving infrastructure. Option 4 would restrict inappropriate development and overdevelopment however it would prevent affordable housing from being delivered thus counteracting the solution for issue 3 therefore this option should be avoided. Finally, option 5 would help the Parish to adapt to an increased housing supply by providing new shops and services so that existing ones do not become overburdened.

10. CONCLUSIONS

10.1. This Topic Paper has discussed the context of Chartham regarding housing and has provided relevant supporting national and local policy. The paper has set out the issues which the Working Group have identified, through both community engagement and the Housing Needs Assessment, and have also detailed options which can solve these issues. These options have been considered against each other and the most applicable options have been recommended to the Steering Group.

Recommendations

10.2. The outcome of this topic paper is therefore to recommend that the neighbourhood plan seeks to:

1. Only provide housing as a by-product of regenerating existing redundant, or brownfield land.
2. Increase windfall sites.
3. Define criteria for suitable locations for new housing development.
4. Identify sites for development that are most suitable for the older population.
5. Provide specialist housing on the identified sites.
6. Prioritise brownfield and infill sites for development and avoid development on green spaces unless it does not cause significant harm.
7. Improve infrastructure with new development.

10.3. In addition, the following actions should be picked up and progressed by the Parish Council separately to the Neighbourhood Plan:

- Encourage the provision of new shops and services.