

## APPENDIX C

### Allocations to Rural Exceptions Sites

- 1 Appendix C is a Local Lettings Policy, in relation to the Central Bedfordshire Housing Allocations Policy. In order to ensure that local housing need is met, this Policy will provide the legal framework for the allocation of new homes in relation to all Rural Exception Sites in Central Bedfordshire. This policy will apply to re-lets of accommodation that has been provided through rural exception site development, prior to adoption of this policy in 2012.
- 2 Rural Exception Sites are a valuable source of new properties to help meet the growing demand for affordable housing and to promote rural/village sustainability. Rural exception site schemes are proposed and typically brought forward to meet an identified (assessed) need for affordable housing within a Parish.
- 3 It is an absolute requirement of this Policy that any person, applying for a home that is available within a rural exception site scheme, shall be in need of affordable housing. All households must be qualifying households as defined in the Housing Act 1996, Part VI, s160a.
- 4 Households should have a local connection to the specific Parish or area that is defined by the section 106 Planning agreement, on which basis the Rural Exception Site scheme was developed. Typically, the Planning agreement will prescribe the Parish, in which the exception site exists, as being the area to which a local connection must relate.
- 5 However, if there are no qualifying persons with a connection to a prescribed Parish, at the time of allocation, it is expected that the Planning agreement will prescribe the adjoining Parishes as being the area to which a local connection should be held. In the event that no such qualifying person exists in those adjoining Parishes, then the allocation may be made to any person with an affordable housing need, in accordance with the Central Bedfordshire Housing Allocations Policy.
- 6 Subject to the criteria at 3, 4 and 5 above, the priorities for allocations will be weighted in accordance with paragraphs 7 to 17 below,
- 7 First priority, for allocation to a Rural Exception site home, will be to qualifying persons, assessed as being within bands 1-3 of the Central Bedfordshire Housing Allocations Policy, who are currently resident in the Parish, or the area defined by the Planning agreement; or persons who have been previously resident within the Parish or the defined area in the past, for a period of not less than ten years, which they are able to evidence.
- 8 Priority to qualifying persons who are currently or were previously resident in the Parish will be determined in accordance with the Central Bedfordshire Housing Allocations Policy.

- 9 In relation to paragraph 7 above, the current residency condition shall require that the household has been resident in the Parish (or the area defined by the Planning agreement) for a minimum period of two years, prior to the date of application.
- 10 Second priority, for allocation to a Rural Exception site home, will be to qualifying persons, assessed as being included within bands 1-3 of the Central Bedfordshire Housing Allocations Policy, who have a close family connection through their mother; father; brother; sister; son or daughter, that person being currently resident within the Parish, or the area defined by the Planning agreement. Priority to qualifying persons with a family connection will be assigned in accordance with the Central Bedfordshire Housing Allocations Policy.
- 11 In relation to paragraph 10 above, the close family connection condition shall require that the close family member is currently resident in the Parish (or the area defined by the Planning agreement), and has been resident for a period of not less than two years, prior to the date of application.
- 12 Third priority, for allocation to a Rural Exception site home, will be to qualifying persons, assessed as being included within bands 1-3 of the Central Bedfordshire Housing Allocations Policy, who are currently employed within the Parish, or the area defined by the Planning agreement, as a main place of work. Priority to qualifying persons with an employment connection will be determined in accordance with the Central Bedfordshire Housing Allocations Policy.
- 13 In relation to paragraph 12 above, the current employment condition shall require that the applicant, or a joint applicant for the property, has been employed in the Parish (or the area defined by the Planning agreement) as a main place of work, for a period of not less than two years, prior to the date of application.
- 14 Fourth priority, for allocation to a Rural Exception site home, will be to qualifying persons, assessed as being included within band 4 of the Central Bedfordshire Housing Allocations Policy, who are persons either resident within the Parish (or defined area); or persons having an employment connection; or a family connection to the Parish or defined area, as described by the criteria set out at 7 to 13 above.
- 15 The priority for allocation to persons who are assessed as being included within band 4 of the Central Bedfordshire Housing Allocations Policy shall be first to persons currently resident within the Parish as well as persons who have previously lived in the Parish for a period of not less than ten years. Next to persons with a close family connection. And next to persons with an employment connection.

- 16 The fifth order of priority shall be to qualifying persons who can demonstrate a local connection to an adjoining Parish that may be prescribed by the Planning agreement. Allocations to qualifying persons within an adjoining Parish shall be on the basis of the weightings that are set out at points 7 to 13 above.
- 17 Therefore, current residence or previous residence will take precedence over a family connection, which in turn will take precedence over an employment connection. In effect, the principle described at criteria 4 shall apply.
- 18 In the event that no qualifying person exists, in either the prescribed Parish or adjoining area, or an adjoining Parish (as defined by the Planning agreement), then the sixth order of priority shall be to qualifying persons who are nominated by the Council. These persons may not necessarily have a local connection to the Parish but such persons must be assessed by the Council as being in priority need; or in need of housing in accordance with the Central Bedfordshire Housing Allocations Policy.
- 19 The purpose of this policy is to meet local housing need and to promote rural and village sustainability. In exceptional circumstances, or where an application falls outside the prescribed terms of this Local Lettings Policy, it shall be for the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing, in consultation with the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing, to determine whether discretion should be exercised with regard to applicants whose personal circumstances do not comply exactly with the prescribed terms of this Policy.
- 20 The exercise of discretion shall be constrained by the intent of this policy, set out in paragraph 19. For example, an applicant may not satisfy the two year current residence condition, but the merits of the case may be such that, on balance, the allocation to a particular property is appropriate in order to meet local housing need.