

# **Rural Housing Plans**

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- What is Durham's Planning Approach ?
- How to find a good site
- Sites that will struggle
- How to progress and take the first steps

# Durham's Approach

- Positive – recognise issue of need from past SHMA's / general housing intel.
- Also understand benefits of new housing is rural areas as well as more urban centres – plays strong role in sustaining communities
- Brought forward policies in 2020 Local Plan to seek to open up markets. Been only partially successful

# Durham's Approach Cont.

- Have bespoke internal standard procedures in place to try to help smooth planning / wider DCC process for such schemes

# How to Find a Good Site

- Ideally close to towns or large villages with some services
- One that avoids fundamental planning constraints – flood zone, SSSI etc
- One that is in a location and of scale to interest a developer / registered provider – exit strategy ?
- Clear of obvious practical development constraints – levels, sewers, mine shafts etc

# Sites That Will Struggle

Despite the strong level of in principle support for affordable housing in rural areas this not an overriding magic bullet. Need to be wary of:

- Isolated sites with no facilities
- Where strong harm to landscape / settlement form & character
- Fundamental issues such as flood zone, bad access, TPO trees etc etc

# How to Progress & First Steps

- Planning hugely complex and expensive process
- Experience suggests important to have confidence of an exit strategy / agreed developer
- Often advantage in approaching a land agent or developer direct
- Durham happy to provide an initial view of potential sites for free
- If favourable move onto formal pre-application advice

# Thank You - Questions

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