

HOUSING POSITION STATEMENT

Summary: To review and, if in agreement, adopt the Board's Housing Position Statement.

Recommendation: That the Board adopts the Housing Position Statement.

Report by: John Mills – Planning & Landscape Lead

Background

1. The previous agenda item, regarding the Landscape-Led Development Position Statement, provided the relevant background and context for both position statements. As such, this paper focusses on the changes that have been made to address the consultation feedback that is specific to the Housing Position Statement.

Issues that have been addressed

2. From the consultation feedback, it was apparent that there was a lack of clarity and context regarding the recommendations that we were putting forward. In order to address this issue, we have brought forward a lot of the information that had been provided as end-notes into the main body of the text. As a result, there is now a much stronger narrative which, hopefully, provides a much clearer context.
3. One of the over-arching principles of the position statement is for housing development in the Cotswolds National Landscape to be based on robust evidence of need arising within the National Landscape (in line with Policy CE12 of the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2018-2023). The challenge with this principle, as pointed out by several local authorities, is that assessments of housing need and housing requirements is based on local authority boundaries, not on the National Landscape boundary.
4. Whilst this principle still underpins the position statement, the position statement now takes a more pragmatic (and less hypothetical) approach, which will hopefully make it easier for the local authorities to implement our recommendations.
5. This more pragmatic approach is demonstrated by the fact that the position statement now explicitly recognises the government's 'standard method' for calculating housing need as the starting point for identifying how many houses need to be planned for in a local authority area. The position statement goes on to clearly differentiate between 'housing need' and 'housing requirements'. In effect, the recommendations in the position statement should now help to filter, or screen, the initial local authority housing need figure down to an appropriate level of housing provision within the Cotswolds National Landscape.
6. A more detailed summary of the consultation feedback and the changes that have been made to address this feedback is available on request.

Next steps

7. The position statement is now ready for adoption by the Board. Other relevant considerations were addressed in the previous agenda item.