

Examination of the Tunbridge Wells
Borough Local Plan

**Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Hearing Statement**

**Matter 8: Meeting Housing
Needs (Policies H1, H2, H3,
H4, H5, H6, H7, H8, H9, H10,
H11 and H12)
Issue 4: Estate Regeneration**

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Matter 8 – Meeting Housing Needs (Policies H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7, H8, H9, H10, H11 and H12)

Issue 4 – Estate Regeneration

Inspector’s Question 1: [re. circumstances where loss of affordable housing will be permitted]

Where estate regeneration is proposed, is it clear under what circumstances a loss of affordable housing will be permitted by Policy H4? Is this justified?

TWBC response to Question 1

Introduction

1. Policy H4: Estate Regeneration, reproduced below, sets out a clear guiding principle on how applications for estate regeneration will be assessed where a net loss in affordable housing is proposed. It states:

“Proposals for estate regeneration will be supported, subject to any net loss in affordable housing being justified only in exceptional circumstances by the delivery of significant improvements to the quality, design, mix, and form of dwellings, and other public benefits.”

2. One of the overarching themes running through the NPPF is set out in the social objective for achieving sustainable development in paragraph 8 b):

“To support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being.”

3. The Estate Regeneration policy reflects the NPPF by supporting the renewal and improvement of housing stock and the creation of well-designed places that can meet the needs of residents of the borough. The policy acknowledges that while there is an identified need for affordable housing in the borough, as set out in the Housing Needs Assessment Topic Paper [[CD 3.73](#) pages 12-16, paragraphs 3.3-3.19], there are sometimes exceptional circumstances where, in order to re-design and deliver improvements to an existing estate, a net loss in affordable housing may be necessary.

4. This is expanded on in paragraph 6.343 of the supporting text to the policy which states that:

“Estate regeneration refers to the renewal and improvement of housing stock, and can ensure more efficient use of land, making a valuable contribution to the housing stock in the borough.”

5. In conclusion, Policy H4: Estate Regeneration is sufficiently clear to guide what is required when submitting a planning application. The policy is justified in that it acknowledges the need for affordable housing in the borough, while setting out a clear framework for the way planning applications for estate regeneration will be assessed when this is proposed.