

# 1 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

- 1.01 An enhanced awareness of how the housing market functions is essential to the effective integration of wider housing, planning, economic development and regeneration strategies. There is an increasing recognition of the need to better understand the complexities of the housing market and the relationship between housing supply and demand in order to inform the spatial planning process and housing strategies. As a consequence, local authorities have been tasked with developing a more strategic, long-term view of housing demand and need.
- 1.02 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) provides a tool to help achieve these strategic aspirations and equips local authorities and their partners with a framework to understand how housing markets operate. The SHMA process can also help local authorities and partners to understand the effect of planning decisions on housing markets. Put more generally, it is a key tool for aligning future policy to ensure the objective of ensuring balanced housing markets is achieved.
- 1.03 The Peak Sub Region SHMA has been commissioned against this backdrop to help partners in the sub-region to understand the dynamics and drivers of their housing market. The SHMA also provides an important part of the evidence base, with regard to the future balance of supply and demand in terms of tenure, type and location, to inform emerging Local Development Frameworks across the sub-region. The identification of policies and actions is the responsibility of the housing and planning authorities. Ultimately the SHMA's role is to assist those authorities to identify the policies and actions that will help deliver better housing, social, economic, and environmental outcomes for those living in the Peak Sub Region in the future.
- 1.04 This Strategic Housing Market Area is characterised by the rural nature of the sub-region and consequently the particular features of the rural housing markets are an integral part of the analysis. The draft guidance 'Building a Rural Dimension into Strategic Housing Market Assessments (East Midlands Rural Affairs Forum)' highlights six aspects of the study that can be incorporated to take account of the rural dimension. These are;
- The scale and detail for which data should be collected and analysed;
  - Assessing affordability in rural areas;
  - Where should housing be addressed;
  - How should the SHMA present the rural dimension;
  - The role of District and Local Housing Needs Surveys.

## **Context**

- 1.05 This study has been commissioned for the area that comprises the whole of the Derbyshire Dales District Council and High Peak Borough Council's jurisdiction. Whilst it includes a significant area of the Peak District National Park this report does not cover the areas outside of Derbyshire. The Peak Sub Region as defined in the draft Regional Spatial Strategy includes all of the Peak District National Park. Although a large proportion of the Peak District National Park falls within the study area, there are parts of the National Park that lie outside of it. For the purpose of this study we have termed the study area as the High Peak Derbyshire Dales Sub Area (HPDD Sub Area). Derbyshire Dales and High Peak authorities are neighbouring authorities in the north of Derbyshire. They are located in an

area that is popular for tourism due to the beautiful scenery. The landscape of attractive countryside also makes the area a popular destination for visitors from nearby Manchester, Sheffield, Nottingham, Derby and further afield. The popularity of the area also attracts commuters who choose to live within the sub-region and commute outside for work. The area is also popular as a destination for those retiring.

- 1.06 As such, issues common throughout the area include a lack of an adequate supply of affordable homes, high levels of second home ownership, limited supply of private rented stock, and limited supply of social housing. These issues mean that the area has been designated as a separate sub-region in terms of its housing market. It should also be recognised that there are distinct difference between the two districts.

### **Derbyshire Dales**

- 1.07 This area (800 sq km) is characterised by its rural nature with a low population density. Some 57% of the area (and around 36% of residents) is in the National Park. With the exception of Bakewell and Tideswell, all towns within the area are outside of the National Park. The District has a population of 70,200 (2007 ONS estimate) and the main settlements are the four small market towns of Ashbourne, Bakewell, Matlock and Wirksworth. The area attracts substantial numbers of visitors from the surrounding areas including Greater Manchester, Sheffield, South Yorkshire and the Midlands.

- 1.08 The economy is reliant on the service sector to a large extent with 70% of the population working in private and public service such as tourism, retailing, hotel and catering education and administration. Unemployment rates are low and levels of deprivation are low. However, wages are also relatively low compared to the national average making affordable housing for local people an important issue.

- 1.09 There are significant challenges in the provision of affordable housing within the area compounded by the aging population, net out-migration of young people, increasing second home ownership, and increasing house prices (at least until the recent national downturn in the housing market, precipitated by the recent major contraction in the financial lending market, aka "*The Credit Crunch*").

### **High Peak**

- 1.10 High Peak Borough Council is situated in the north west of Derbyshire. To the immediate south lies Derbyshire Dales and Staffordshire and, farther on, the West Midlands conurbation. Cheshire and Greater Manchester lie to the immediate North West, whilst to the east are West and South Yorkshire. The Borough has a population of 92,800 (2007 ONS estimate).

- 1.11 High Peak is an area of 539 sq kms of which more than two-thirds lies within the National Park. However, only 7% of the population lives within the Park, with the majority (93%) of the population living outside, mainly within a small number of urban settlements including Glossop and Buxton. A large proportion of the population commute out of the sub-region to work in centres such as Manchester and Sheffield (Census 2001).

- 1.12 Tourism is a major contributor to the area economy each year. Buxton, Castleton and the Upper Derwent Valley are key tourism destinations. The authority does not lie on the national motorway network and accessibility by road is difficult in some areas, particularly in winter. Unemployment levels within the Borough are low at 2.2% (Office of National Statistics) but one ward, Gamesley, has high levels of deprivation and is within the top 10% of wards where deprivation and wages levels are below the national average.

### **The Peak District National Park**

- 1.13 The Peak District National Park covers 1,438 sq km (555 sq miles), 74% of the Peak Sub Region as defined in the RSS. It is home to around 37,900 people (around 23% of the Peak Sub Region's residents), and around 14,000 "main jobs" in 2001.
- 1.14 The Peak District National Park is closely linked with the surrounding conurbations. The area is relatively sparsely populated. Some 63% of the HPDD sub-area is included in the National Park and around 20% of the population live there.
- 1.15 National Parks have been designated by the Government for the purpose of:
- Conserving and enhancing the national beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area, and
  - Promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area by the public.
- 1.16 The Environment Act 1995 also defines a duty on the National Park Authority and other organisations to foster the economic and social well being of local communities within the National Park. A key consideration is that development within the Peak District National Park has to take account of these statutory purposes of designation.

### **Objectives of SHMA**

- 1.17 The overall purpose of the SHMA is to assist the local authorities within the housing market area, and other partners (the National Park) to decide on issues such as:
- What tenure and cost profiles are needed for future house building and what size and type of housing is required to deliver sustainable communities across the sub-region;
  - How partners can ensure the delivery of planned levels of new housing choice given that this will represent an increase in development;
  - What needs to be included in Local Development Frameworks and Housing Strategies to maximise affordability, improve delivery and shape the future housing market in the HPDD sub-area, and;
  - How the analysis can be updated in the future.
- 1.18 The analysis is conducted in accordance with the DCLG guidance on preparing Housing Market Assessments (Practice Guidance Version 2). The guidance highlights the use of secondary data as being acceptable when conducting a SHMA. In the case of the two council areas, a local HNS was completed during the period of the SHMA commission and this HNS data has been used to provide up to date data and forecasts. Other secondary data has been used where necessary to supplement HNS and to provide additional robustness to the study process.

### **The Strategic Context**

- 1.19 This section looks at the national, regional, sub-regional and local policy context within which the analysis of the housing market will be completed. It will be essential to refer back to this assessment at a later stage to inform policy recommendations.

## National Policy Context

### *Overall Supply*

- 1.20 The Barker Review of Housing Supply presented choices for the Government depending on its objectives for the housing market. The key conclusion of the Review is that the UK has experienced a long-term upward trend in real house prices of around 2.4 per cent per annum over the last 30 years. This has created problems of affordability. In addition, the volatility of the housing market has exacerbated problems of macroeconomic instability and has had an adverse effect on economic growth. To improve macroeconomic stability and deliver greater affordability for individuals, a lower trend in house price inflation is desirable.
- 1.21 To address this issue the Review recommended increasing the supply of new housing.
- In order to reduce the trend growth in real house prices to 1.8% per annum, the Barker Review concluded that an additional 70,000 houses each year in England would need to be built. To bring the real price trend in line with the EU average of 1.1% an extra 120,000 houses each year might be required.
- 1.22 The Barker Review's final report set out a range of policy recommendations for improving the functioning of the housing market:
- The Government should set out a goal for improved market affordability;
  - Additional investment building-up to between £1.2 and £1.6 billion per annum is required to deliver additional social housing to meet projected future needs;
  - Introduction of a Planning Gain Supplement<sup>1</sup> to capture some of the development gains that landowners benefit from to ensure that local communities share in the value of development;
  - Establishment of a Regional Planning Executive to provide public advice to the Regional Planning Bodies on the scale and distribution of housing required to meet the market affordability target;
  - Introduction of flexibility at the local level through the allocation of additional land in Local Development Frameworks, with the release of additional land triggered by market signals;
  - Establishment of a Community Infrastructure Fund to help to unlock some of the barriers to development;
  - Local authorities should be allowed to "keep" the council tax receipts from new housing developments for a period of time to provide incentives for growth and to meet transitional costs associated with development.
- 1.23 The Government objectives in relation to housing are wide ranging and include overall supply, quality and the delivery of sustainable communities. The Government's Response to the Barker Review in December 2005 set out its ambition to increase house building to 200,000 units per annum by 2016, representing an increase of around a third on current completions nationally.

<sup>1</sup> A PGS is a tax on the difference in land value before and after planning permission was granted.

- 1.24 This ambition is guided by the objective of improving affordability as well as an explicit objective to increase the level of home ownership. This follows on from the aim set out in the Sustainable Communities Plan (2002) of increasing housing supply in areas of high demand and balancing it with jobs, strategic and local infrastructure.
- 1.25 Planning Policy Statement 3, Housing (PPS3) published in November 2006, also forms part of the response to the Barker Review. It aims to ensure that plans are more responsive to changing demand and that more land is prepared and released to meet future housing requirements. PPS3 also requires local authorities and regions to develop a strong evidence base to inform plans and policies. There is significant emphasis on understanding housing markets and identifying land that is developable as part of this process.
- 1.26 Local planning authorities need to work on the basis of a partnership approach with relevant private and public partners to bring forward brownfield or 'previously developed' sites for development to contribute to the national target of achieving at least 60% of additional housing on brownfield land. The guidance makes it clear that 'previously developed' land can occur in a rural setting as well as a built up setting, and includes defence buildings, land used for mineral extraction and waste disposal.
- 1.27 The Government indicated in its response to the Barker Review of Housing Supply that policies to provide resources for infrastructure to support housing growth would be reviewed in the run up to the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007. This would include consideration of local planning and housing incentives in addition to the proposed Planning Gain Supplement and the existing Planning Delivery Grant. In July 2006 a consultation paper was launched on the criteria to allocate £120 million of Planning Delivery Grant for 2007/08.
- 1.28 In July 2008, CLG published details regarding the allocation of the new Housing and Planning Delivery Grant, the first tranche of which will be distributed in October 2008. The Government had previously made it clear that any funding would be in addition to local infrastructure investment, giving local authorities the flexibility to invest in their area and allow them to keep additional council tax receipts for new homes. The measure is expected to encourage local authorities to become very actively involved in the delivery of new housing and incentivise efficient and effective planning procedures. National Park Authorities have been assured that they will not be penalised under the new grant system because of the low rate of housing provision within National Parks.
- 1.29 A notable feature of the HPDG made in the July 2008 announcement was the primacy of delivery over time taken to process planning applications in the funding criteria.
- 1.30 PPS3 indicates that specific consideration must be given to the differing needs of households. Section 225 of the Housing Act 2004 means every local housing authority must assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers residing in or resorting to their district. An assessment for the whole of Derbyshire has now been completed.
- 1.31 The CLG has recognised that housing has an important contribution to make to the environmental sustainability agenda and it is expected that new homes will be built to significantly higher environmental standards within the next ten years.
- 1.32 The Housing Green Paper, published in 2007, proposed a range of measures to provide more affordable and sustainable housing, increasing the annual target to 240,000. The Government's objective stated in the Green Paper is to increase the supply of housing by ensuring land is brought forward for development and to do this the Government indicated it would identify areas for growth across the country. The Green Paper focused on the need

to address affordability and announced increased funding to develop more social housing alongside a package of measures to promote the delivery of other forms of affordable housing to meet need where it arises. It also emphasised the need for sustainable development that makes best use of existing homes, disused land and buildings (particularly publicly owned assets) and promotes higher design and construction standards.

- 1.33 The Planning for a Sustainable Future White Paper was published in May 2007, and set out the Government's desire to see the planning system evolve so that it better serves individuals, communities and businesses; provides for better public consultation and engagement in the planning process; better supports local authorities' role; and better enables the nation to meet the challenge of climate change and deliver sustainable development including economic growth.
- 1.34 Enabling the delivery of the Government's ambitious housing targets, in a sustainable manner is a key driver of the Planning White Paper. The Paper noted the trend towards smaller households further increasing housing demand; and increased prosperity leading to more people seeking to own their own home. The housing and service needs of the elderly were also recognised. All three factors were noted as factors that are pushing up prices and reducing affordability.
- 1.35 The Planning White Paper also sets out the Government's desire to see more joint working between local planning authorities – for example on local housing market assessments, and economic development strategies. The intent to use the proposed new Housing and Planning Delivery Grant to incentivise progress in delivering local development frameworks is confirmed; so too is the aim to make progress in achieving outcomes from policies set out in local development frameworks; and joint working between groups of local planning authorities
- 1.36 The Planning Bill was introduced on Tuesday 27 November 2007. The legislation builds on the proposals set out in the Planning White Paper and introduces a new system for nationally significant infrastructure planning, alongside further reforms to the town and country planning system.
- 1.37 The Bill includes proposals for a new Community Infrastructure Levy, in order to “*establish a better way to increase investment in the vital infrastructure that growing communities need*”. The Bill will empower local councils to apply a Community Infrastructure Levy on new developments in their areas to support infrastructure delivery, if they so wish. The Government sees CIL as a preferred “replacement” for the PGS proposals initially raised in the Barker Report.
- 1.38 The potential CIL will focus on the need for LPAs to set and recover appropriate financial contributions from landowners and developers towards specific (identified in Development Plan Documents) local infrastructure requirements and in this way is different from PGS.

#### ***Change in the Private Rented Sector***

- 1.39 With regard to the private rented sector, the availability of buy to let mortgages has increased supply in many areas. The foundations for the growth of Buy to Let were laid in the reform of tenancy law contained in the 1988 Housing Act, but only took off from 1998 due to changes in lending practices and associated financial innovation.
- 1.40 The Housing Act 2004 introduced several reforms to protect tenants, improve housing conditions in the private rented sector and bring empty homes back into use. Most of the

changes discussed took effect from 6 April 2006. Some of these changes may deter private landlords and reduce or change the nature of existing supply, for example;

- The [Housing Health and Safety Rating System](#) (HHSRS) – replaces the existing Housing Fitness Standard. The emphasis has shifted from the condition of the property to the risk on health and safety imposed by its condition. The system should provide greater protection for tenants and other visitors against the harm caused by hazards in properties;
- Changes to the definition of a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) to cover properties over three storeys with five or more occupants making up two or more households, and;
- Mandatory licences for HMO'S and penalties if properties are rented out that are not registered.

### *Affordable Housing*

- 1.41 The Government aims to increase the provision of affordable housing (both social rented and intermediate housing) to meet the needs of those who cannot access housing in the open market. The 2004 Budget announced funding for an additional 10,000 homes per annum for social rent and, since then, a succession of initiatives and further funding packages have been introduced, with particular emphasis on intermediate housing products, such as Homebuy, considered below. Indeed policy development has been such that as part of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review, the Government set a target of 70,000 more affordable homes a year by 2010-11, including direct assistance to homebuyers through its shared equity and shared ownership programmes. This programme would be underpinned by a Housing Corporation investment of £8.4 billion over the three years following the 2008 Budget.
- 1.42 There are clear ambitions to improve affordability and home ownership through increased housing supply and new funding for shared ownership initiatives. Other policies to deliver these objectives are yet to be formalised. New support for low cost homeownership was implemented in October 2006 with the introduction of Open Market Home Buy where housing associations can help people buy a property outright on the open market. This provides for key workers, existing social housing tenants and those in priority housing need. The household would need to be able to raise a mortgage for between 15-50% of the cost of the property, with the housing association providing an interest-free equity loan to cover the balance.
- 1.43 The other two Home Buy products are Social Home Buy, which enables social tenants to buy a share in their homes, and New Build Home Buy. Under these, homes are sold as leasehold properties on shared ownership terms. The minimum share is 25%, and 75% is the usual maximum. The household will need to be able raise a mortgage for the share it wants to purchase and pays rent on the share it doesn't own. Rents are calculated to be affordable. As and when the household can afford to, it can buy additional shares until it has 100% ownership (or 80% on rural exception sites). This is known as 'staircasing'.

### *DEFRA Rural Strategy 2004*

- 1.44 DEFRA produced its Rural Strategy in 2004 which highlighted key rural issues in one document. The strategy identifies the particular problems of affordable housing in rural areas and makes recommendations about increasing numbers of rural housing to tackle rural homelessness and deprivation.

***Affordable Rural Housing Commission***

- 1.45 The Affordable Rural Housing Commission produced its final report in 2006, setting out the Commission's recommendations with regard to affordable housing. The Commission identified an acute shortage of rural affordable housing in all regions of England. The restriction of supply together with pressure from people moving into the countryside from urban areas has contributed to house prices increasing faster than those in urban areas. Those on local wages have been priced out of the market. The report makes recommendations for increasing the supply of affordable housing through changes to planning policy, good design to reduce environmental impact, use of cross subsidy from open market development, increased investment from the Housing Corporation for rural areas, re-classification of agricultural buildings and better use of publicly owned land.

**Regional and Sub Regional Policy Context**

- 1.46 The HPDD Sub Area is situated within the East Midlands Region and therefore Housing and Planning policy must accord with the East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy and be informed and directed through the Sub Regional Housing Strategy priorities. The Regional Housing Strategy aims to set housing priorities and compliments other strategic policies in the delivery of regional housing plans.
- 1.47 The East Midlands Regional Plan (Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands) was published in 2005. The emerging RSS takes forward policies over a longer horizon stretching through to 2026, and appropriate extracts from the draft RSS are presented below. It takes full account of the national policy context outlined above. Following the Examination in Public in 2007, on 22 July 2008, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government published Proposed Changes to the East Midlands Regional Plan (Regional Spatial Strategy) for public consultation. The consultation closed on 17 October 2008. It is expected that the approved East Midlands Regional Plan will be issued by the Secretary of State early in 2009.
- 1.48 The paragraphs below profile the policies and proposed amendments that are considered relevant to this SHMA, from the Draft through to the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes.

***With regard to economic development***

- 1.49 Para 2.5.22 states "*planning policies will continue to be applied to protect the National Park whilst addressing the social and economic needs of the Park's communities and supporting the regeneration of the surrounding urban areas.*"
- 1.50 Policy 9 addresses development within and outside of the National Park and states that social and economic needs can be met through, for example, the development of appropriate businesses and affordable housing.
- 1.51 Policy 10 addresses development in the towns outside of the National Park, and states that the growth of indigenous firms and a level of inward investment capable of supporting the existing population will be acceptable. A policy of restraint regarding new housing is advocated, except where a local need for modest growth has been identified.

***With regard to housing***

- 1.52 With regard to new housing development, the Draft RSS states that housing development in Peak Sub-Area/Peak, Dales & Park HMA should:



- comply with the statutory purposes of the Peak District National Park;
  - consolidating the roles of the market towns of Buxton, Matlock and Glossop;
  - meet affordable housing needs in a way that promotes a more sustainable pattern of development
- 1.53 Policy 14, Regional Housing Provision, states the following annual targets for housing within the Peak HMA sub-region for the period 2001-2026
- Peak, Dales & Park HMA:
  - Derbyshire Dales 150
  - High Peak 270
  - PDNPA 0
- 1.54 Paragraph 3.1.11 of the Draft RSS states that local authorities and housing providers are encouraged to use all available mechanisms to secure affordable housing in rural areas, including:
- supporting Rural Housing Enablers;
  - reducing the threshold site size on which developer contributions apply;
  - changing the quota to be provided on qualifying sites;
  - rural exception site policies;
  - allocating sites solely for affordable housing; use of Section 106 planning obligations and agreements to ensure delivery and/or retention of affordability in perpetuity;
  - considering shared ownership without grant rather than social renting;
  - considering housing associations borrowing potential;
  - purchasing within the existing stock, particularly former council housing;
  - the potential to re-use redundant farm buildings for affordable housing;
  - creating Community Land Trusts to retain affordable housing in perpetuity;
  - setting separate targets for rural affordable housing within Local Development Frameworks; and
  - co-ordinating across boundaries to ensure that where land supply is constrained in a particular authority area, nearby provision to meet need can be considered in neighbouring areas.
- 1.55 Policy 15 advocates the following tenure breakdown - Peak, Dales & Park HMA: 35% of all housing social renting; 19% of all housing intermediate housing, to apply to the targets set out in Policy 14, above.
- Examination in Public, and Government's Proposed Changes***
- 1.56 The new regional spatial strategy (RSS8) was submitted in draft form to the Secretary of State and the Examination in Public began in May 2007.
- 1.57 The Panel Report was generally supportive of the policies for the Peak Sub Area.

- 1.58 Comment was made regarding the “zero” provision of housing within the National Park as part of the total provision of 420 dwellings a year in the “Peak, Dales and Park” housing market area. It was noted that the actual provision within the Park during the period 2001-2006 had been 438 dwellings or 87 a year. In light of this progress, it was considered that the 50 dwelling target<sup>2</sup> served no useful purpose and might even prove counter intuitive as it could, on the one hand, weaken the ability of the National Park Authority to resist proposals for open market housing and, on the other, raise expectations of hope values and delay the bringing forward of rural exemption sites.
- 1.59 The “below CLG” trend provision within the parts of the HPDD sub-area outside of the National Park was also supported on the basis of their special position in proximity to the Park, and their relationship with the adjoining regions of the North West and Yorkshire. However, in recognition of the affordability problems faced in the Derbyshire Dales and High Peak local authority areas and the “zero” provision in the National Park, it was considered appropriate to increase the provision (from 420 per annum to 500, 200 for Derbyshire Dales and 300 for High Peak). This was done on the basis that the increase would be entirely within the affordable categories.
- 1.60 It was suggested that Paragraph 3.1.11 of the RSS, regarding delivery of affordable housing, be adopted as Policy (with some wording changes), with the material policy change being the equal placing of social rented and shared ownership
- 1.61 On 22 July 2008, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government published Proposed Changes to the East Midlands Regional Plan (Regional Spatial Strategy) for public consultation. The consultation closed on 17 October 2008. It is expected that the approved East Midlands Regional Plan will be issued by the Secretary of State early in 2009
- 1.62 The Government’s Proposed Changes document included the following amendments:
- Adopted, in a renumbered Policy 13, the EIP Panel reports proposed changes regarding not setting a housing allocation for the National Park
  - A revised Policy 15 (renumbered as Policy 14) that set indicative affordable housing targets for the purpose of monitoring; a target of 7,300 over the period 2001-2026
  - A new paragraph 3.1.12 that states: *“This strategy seeks to address the particular issues that the region’s rural areas are experiencing, ranging from deprivation and social exclusion, for example in the Meden Valley area or acute affordability pressures in remote areas such as, amongst others, the Derbyshire Dales. Providing appropriate levels of new housing in suitable locations is key to achieving the overall aim of creating sustainable rural communities. Whilst the focus is on providing new housing to meet local needs, particularly affordable housing, rural areas will also require market housing if they are to prosper. New homes must be of a high quality which enhances the character and biodiversity of rural areas whilst respecting the regions particular rural features”.*
  - A slightly amended Paragraph 3.1.11, renumbered as 3.1.13, with the deletion of wording relating to the support of rural housing enablers, and that of wording regarding changing the quota to be provided on qualifying sites; and the amending of

<sup>2</sup> The nominal provision of 50 dwellings per annum in Policy 17 of the approved RSS8. The inclusion of such a nominal figure was originally advocated by the Government Office, but which proposes now to accept the Panel’s recommendation that RSS should not contain a target for the National Park.,

the wording regarding the setting of thresholds above which affordable housing may be sought from “reducing the threshold site size” to “setting an appropriate threshold site size”

- A new Policy 15: Regional Priorities for Affordable Rural Housing:
  - New housing in rural areas should contribute to : creating sustainable rural communities through a choice of well designed homes; addressing affordability issues by providing appropriate levels of housing in suitable locations; maintaining the distinctive character of rural areas and respecting the quality of tranquillity; strengthening rural enterprise and supporting economic growth, particularly linkages between settlements and their hinterlands; and compact, sustainable patterns of development which facilitate access to jobs and services.

### **East Midlands Rural Action Plan**

- 1.63 The East Midland Rural Action Plan sets out objectives for the delivery of affordable housing to meet needs in rural areas and market towns to support sustainable communities.

### **Local Policy Context**

#### ***Joint Local Strategic Partnership***

- 1.64 Derbyshire Dales District Council and High Peak Borough Council have joined together to form the Joint Local Strategic Partnership, which also involves the National Park Authority. This partnership is responsible for preparing the Community Strategy for the sub-region in partnership with key stakeholders. The two authorities have produced a joint Community Strategy, which includes key national, regional and sub-regional priorities and targets for improvement. The housing priorities highlighted included:

- work with landlords and housing associations to increase the supply and standards of housing;
- bring empty properties back into use;
- understand and make links between local labour market needs and local housing needs;
- improve communications between partner agencies and local communities to help overcome objections to new affordable housing development.

- 1.65 Within the National Park, the Community Strategies will be considered within the context of the National Park Management Plan

#### ***The Planning Policy Context***

- 1.66 Work is underway on the Local Development Frameworks within the sub-region and these now take on board the strategic objectives of a range of documents including:

- East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS);
- Derbyshire Dales Local Plan;
- High Peak Local Plan Saved Documents;
- Derby and Derbyshire Joint Structure Plan;

- The Peak District National Park Structure Plan 1994;
- The Peak District National Park Local Plan 2001.

1.67 The Local Plans of both Districts set out the Councils' land use planning policies for the areas outside the National Park. These plans identify land for development and are used as a material basis for planning decisions. The National Park Local Plan covers the whole of the National Park, including the parts of High Peak Borough and Derbyshire Dales District that lie within it.

#### **Housing Strategies**

1.68 Derbyshire Dales District Council and High Peak Borough Council have joined together to produce a joint housing strategy that covers each local authority area. This has been carried out to tackle common housing issues, share good practice and use one strategic housing team to ensure efficiency. The strategy has three main priorities:

- improving the supply and access to affordable housing;
- creating new supported housing services for vulnerable people;
- remedying poor housing conditions.

#### **Linked Strategies**

1.69 The authorities have worked together on strategies linked to the housing strategy to produce joint strategies for

- Empty Homes;
- Homelessness (under development).

#### **Peak District National Park**

1.70 The National Park produces a number of policy documents relevant to the supply of housing within the sub-region including:

- Corporate Outcomes, Actions and Priorities 2007/08;
- National Park Management Plan;
- Structure and Local Plan.

1.71 The Supplementary Planning Guidance "Meeting Housing Need for Affordable Housing" is of particular note. The SPG highlights the fact that the National Park is not a housing authority and relies on the local housing authorities, social housing providers and private interests to implement the development of affordable housing. The document also acknowledges the potential conflict between the aims and objectives of the NPA to preserve the integrity of the Park and to encourage appropriate affordable housing. It confirms that where there is a conflict then the priority is to conserve and enhance the National Park.