

- 5.124 In the next twenty years the population of Eastleigh Borough will change with an estimated increase of 24% in the number of people aged 65 and over living in the Borough and an increase of 5% of people over 85 or over 54. This will lead to an increasing number of older people requiring accommodation, estimated to increase by 24%. Policy DM29 seeks to meet the needs for accessible housing including properties suitable for wheelchair users. In addition, the Council will support the provision of specialist accommodation meeting the criteria set out in policy DM25.
- 5.125 The provision of specialist accommodation, especially for older people, will be required as part of the housing mix on larger allocations where they meet an identified need, unless it can be demonstrated that this would have an unacceptable impact on the economic viability of the proposed scheme.
- 5.126 While support and care can be provided to people in their own homes, in some cases it is better for people to move to more appropriate housing, for example a bungalow or apartment providing level access or to specialist accommodation. Vulnerable and older people have a range of individual housing needs. These can sometimes be met with general needs market housing alongside additional support at home (and policy DM29 requires the provision of accessible homes in accordance with Building Regulations Part M4 which can provide the facilities and space required to address current and future needs), however in other cases it requires specialist housing. Therefore it is necessary to provide for a range of housing for older people, and other vulnerable groups where there is an identified need, both in the general housing mix and through the provision of specialist accommodation.

Residential development in the countryside

- 5.127 In order to limit the urbanising impact of development on the rural character of the countryside, and for reasons of sustainability, the Borough Council seeks to limit residential development in the countryside to the following:
- i. Residential extensions and replacement dwellings (see policy DM26);
 - ii. Limited residential conversions (see policy DM19);
 - iii. Rural workers dwellings (see policy DM27); and
 - iv. Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople's accommodation (see policy DM31).
- 5.128 The development of residential institutions in the countryside will only be permitted by conversion of existing buildings in accordance with policy DM19 'Change of use of buildings in the countryside'. Extensions to or the replacement of residential institutions already located in the countryside will be treated in the same way as extensions or replacement of dwellings (see policy DM26).

Policy DM26, Residential extensions and replacement dwellings in the countryside

1. **The extension or replacement of a permanent dwelling in the countryside will be permitted subject to the general development criteria and transport policies of the Local Plan and provided:**
 - a. the extension or replacement dwelling will not be disproportionate in size to the existing dwelling, neighbouring properties or in relation to its plot, or involve any extension to its curtilage; and
 - b. in the case of a replacement dwelling, the proposal includes the replacement of the dwelling

within the curtilage, and on the same footprint as the existing building, unless environmental and/or access benefits arise from an alternative location within the curtilage; and

c. no additional dwellings are created.

2. Permission will not be given for the replacement of mobile homes with permanent dwellings.
3. Residential institutions will be treated for the purposes of this policy in the same way as dwellings.
4. Proposals to extend or to replace rural workers dwellings will be considered under Policy DM27.

5.129 The development of new housing in the countryside will not be permitted except in very limited circumstances. However, there are many existing dwellings in the countryside, and it is inevitable that there will be proposals to extend or replace them. This policy enables such development but seeks also to limit their impact on the countryside and any urbanising effects.

5.130 Rural workers dwellings are modest dwellings meeting the essential need identified in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for rural workers to live at or near their place of work in the countryside. They are permitted only in very particular and exceptional circumstances as set out in policy DM27 below.

Policy DM27, Rural workers' dwellings

1. The provision of dwellings for rural workers in the countryside will only be permitted where:
 - a. it is essential for the worker to live at their place of work;
 - b. the work is an activity that can only be carried out in a rural area and supports management of the countryside;
 - c. the enterprise can be demonstrated to be economically viable in the long term, and the dwelling is essential to its continued viability;
 - d. there are no suitable alternative dwellings or buildings available for use or conversion in the immediate locality;
 - e. no dwellings connected with the enterprise have been sold off in the past 5 years;
 - f. the dwelling is sited and designed so as to limit its impact on the countryside; and
 - g. the internal floor area of the dwelling does not exceed 120 sq.m unless special justification is provided in terms of the operation of the agricultural enterprise.
2. Conditions will be imposed on any permission for a rural workers dwelling limiting the occupancy of the dwelling to workers engaged in the enterprise for which the dwelling was sought. These conditions will not be removed unless the Borough Council is satisfied that:
 - a. there is no longer-term need for a rural workers dwelling in the locality;
 - b. reasonable efforts have been made to sell or lease the property with the occupancy restrictions; and
 - c. the property is not suitable or needed as a rural affordable dwelling.
3. Permission will not normally be given for extensions to or replacement of rural workers dwellings which result in the internal floor area exceeding 120 sq.m, unless special justification is provided.