

VALE OF AYLESBURY LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

Q14

The definition of Affordable Housing in the submitted plan's glossary is consistent with that in the current NPPF. Paragraph 5.2 of the submitted plan canvasses the idea that policy and supporting evidence on affordable housing will probably need to be altered before the plan is adopted because of the introduction of the concept of starter homes in the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and the different approach suggested in the Housing White Paper of February 2017.

If the council really does want to amend its policy to be in line with the emerging definition of affordable housing, this may not be straightforward because the plan has clearly been prepared on the basis of the old definition. Costs resulting from the new definition would be different and so would require a new viability assessment with potential impact on the percentage required as affordable housing in policy.

The draft revised NPPF is a consultation document at this stage and so does not represent agreed government policy. At the moment its annex 2 contains a new definition of affordable housing but annex 1 contains the advice "The policies in the previous Framework will apply for the purpose of examining plans, where those plans are submitted on or before [] [this will be the date which is six months after the date of the final Framework's publication]. In these cases the examination will take no account of the new Framework."

In the light of these considerations, the council may want to consider a modification to paragraph 5.2 to note the emerging NPPF, the changing definition of affordable housing and its transitional arrangements and to highlight the issue for consideration in an early review of the plan, rather than to press for a modification to the policy in the now submitted plan.