

**HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL BUILDING GROUPS**

**DRAFT MARCH 2009**

**1.0 Introduction & Policy Context**

This guidance note supplements Local Plan Policy 23: Housing Development in Rural Building Groups. This policy allows for development of new housing within existing rural building groups in appropriate locations of the National Park. The opportunity for additional housing in these small cohesive groups is recognised as an important means of reinforcing and sustaining rural communities.

This guidance note provides criteria, general principles and good practice advice, clearly recognising the need to safeguard the character and amenity of Rural Building Groups, their landscape setting and ensure the highest standards of siting and design. Proposals which do not fulfil the criteria given within this guidance shall be determined using other local plan policies. Early pre-application discussions are advised.

**Policy 23 Housing Development in Rural Building Groups**

Proposals for new housing development as part of an existing rural building group which comprises three or more occupied dwellings will be permitted where the proposal reinforces and enhances the character of the group, does not detract from the landscape setting, and does not add more than 33% to the existing size of the group within the plan period (based on the size of the group on the date the policy is implemented).

**2.0 What is an existing Rural Building Group?**

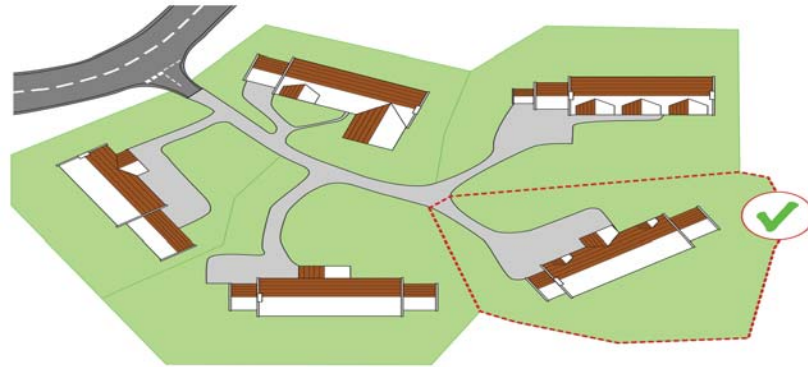
An existing Rural Building Group is a group of at least three dwellinghouses (other structures are not applicable) which are already completed and occupied, or capable of being occupied;

It is demonstrable that a clear and recognised relationship exists between the dwellings. The group must be well-connected and cohesive through built form or landscape features, in its pattern of development. This may require validation by site inspection;

Typically, the existing houses must be within 100m of each other.

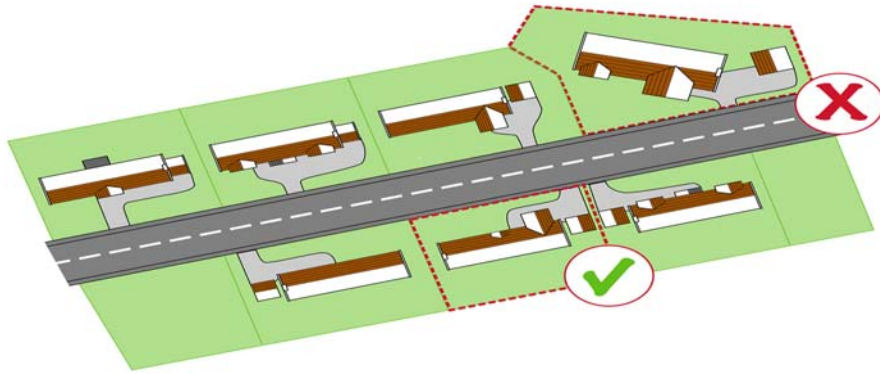
**3.0 General site principles:**

Any proposal must demonstrate satisfactory integration into the existing building group in terms of pattern and layout within appropriate and clearly definable sites;



*Typical example of cohesive, well-connected building group*

1. Proposals for new housing development must not add more than a third (33%) increase to both the cumulative area and number of dwellinghouses within the group over the local plan period. For example a group of 3 - 5 houses over 1 acre, 1 additional unit would be permitted.
2. Any proposals must positively contribute, reinforce and enhance the layout and pattern of the existing rural building group. They are expected to be well-connected and cohesive;
3. Any proposals must be an appropriate addition to the building group, not detract from any landscape setting or features and the general character and amenity;
4. Any proposals must recognise and respond to the existing nature, siting and design of the group including traditional features, the scale and proportions of neighbouring plots and buildings;
5. Linear or 'Ribbon' development along a roadside or landscape feature will not be supported unless it clearly reflects the traditional building pattern of the area -such as traditional crofting areas where such development is historic. Appropriate infill development between existing houses may be considered.



*Typical examples of undesirable ribbon development, poorly proportioned development contrasts with satisfactorily integrated 'infill' development.*

#### **4.0 Other Considerations**

Any proposals should take into account housing land allocations for the respective housing market areas over the local plan period;

Any application or enquiry should be accompanied by a supporting statement and information including: an Ordnance Survey based map highlighting the specific site, the existing and proposed grouping and any landscape features.

Any proposals must recognise local infrastructure and service requirements, these would be secured by suspensive condition or Section 75 Agreement, as part of any planning permission.

#### **5.0 Reasoned Justification**

Policy 23 aims to provide a supportive attitude towards appropriate housing development in existing rural building groups, recognising the benefits of reinforcing and enhancing dispersed small settlements and housing groups, in aiding sustainable and prosperous rural communities.

The policy will be used to allow for the development of new housing within existing rural building groups where the proposal is an appropriate contribution to the nature, character and amenity of the group. Proposals must effectively demonstrate fulfilment of the housing group's criteria, in that it is connected to the existing group through integration with existing built form, settlement pattern and landscape features.

## **6.0 Further Information**

It is recommended that the following other sources of planning advice are read in conjunction with this guidance note, available on the Scottish Government and the Cairngorms National Park Authority websites <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/planning> and [www.cairngorms.co.uk](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk).

SPP 3: Planning for Housing

SPP 15: Planning for Rural Development

PAN 72: Housing in the Countryside

PAN 44: Fitting Housing Development into the Landscape

CNPA SPG: Sustainable Design Guide

CNPA SPG: Affordable Housing

## **7.0 Contact Us**

Please get in contact if you have any queries:

The Cairngorms National Park Authority

Planning Office

Albert Memorial Hall

Station Square

Ballater

(t) 01339 753601

(f) 01339 755334

Email: [planning@cairngorms.co.uk](mailto:planning@cairngorms.co.uk)