

Committee: LDF Working Group

Agenda Item

Date: 2 April 2012

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Title: Report into Greater Essex Demographic Forecasts

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Barker

Key decision: Yes

Summary

1. Phase 1 of the Greater Essex Demographic Forecasts project involved the use of POPGROUP technology to replicate the 2008-based SNPP from ONS plus the accompanying household projections from CLG. This initial validation of the POPGROUP technology demonstrated consistency and equivalence of forecast model output to the SNPP and to ONS mid-year estimates.
2. In addition, Phase 1 also examined the relationship between CLG estimates of household numbers with local data on dwelling stock change since 2001 (taken from Council tax registers). This was an important validation exercise to establish how the CLG's 'household headship rates', in combination with ONS population estimates, have modelled household growth since 2001. For each local authority, a 'vacancy rate' has been assumed to convert CLG households to dwellings; this has allowed direct comparison with the Council Tax totals.
3. The deviations between the datasets has provided the basis for a 'recalibration' of headship rates to ensure that the historical estimates of household totals are consistent with actual evidence from the Council tax statistics.

Recommendations

4. To note the Demographic Forecasts and to confirm the Economic Scenario as the appropriate forecast for the preparation of the new Uttlesford Local Plan.

Financial Implications

5. There are no direct costs associated with this report.
6. The provision of new housing within the District will have a direct impact on future Council Tax income which the District Council would receive. The greater Council Tax we collect locally results in a lower reliance on Central Government grants as 10% of Council Tax collected is retained by UDC. Any increase in Council Tax would need to be balanced against the fact that an increase in housing also increases demand for UDC services e.g. refuse collection.
7. Any early delivery of housing could feed into New Homes Bonus payments, although this is unlikely due to the timing.

Background Papers

8. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

Greater Essex Demographic Forecasts March 2012 Edge Analytics
The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012
The National Planning Policy Framework 2012
Ministerial Statement: Planning for Growth March 2011

Impact

9.

Communication/Consultation	The overall housing numbers will be subject to public consultation as part of the June/July 2012 Local Plan consultation.
Community Safety	No direct impacts.
Equalities	The demographic forecasts are not disaggregated to age sex groups in a way that would enable change in groups with protected characteristics e.g. older people to be identified.
Health and Safety	No issues.
Human Rights/Legal Implications	No issues.
Sustainability	Strategic Environmental Assessment has been carried out through each successive stage in the preparation of an up to date development plan. This has considered how impacts could be mitigated, for example, by policies to require new housing to be energy efficient to limit its carbon footprint. SEAs were also prepared of the levels housing proposed in the Approved RSS and Draft RSS Review dwelling led scenarios.
Ward-specific impacts	Affects all wards.
Workforce/Workplace	No issues

Introduction

10. Local authorities in Essex and adjoining areas have historically made use of demographic forecasts commissioned by the former East of England Regional Assembly (EERA). These forecasts informed the preparation and monitoring of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). With the revocation of the RSS and the abolition of the planning functions of the East of England Local Government Association (the successor body to EERA), demographic forecasts and analysis will no longer be available from this source. Local authorities are now charged with the production of a new evidence base to support the preparation of Local Plans and to contribute to other planning activities within the Greater Essex area.

11. To replace the demographic services provided by the former EERA, the Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA) has commissioned Edge Analytics to prepare a range of population, household and labour force forecasts to ensure consistency and robustness of evidence across the range of technical studies to be undertaken by EPOA and its member authorities. EPOA's demographic requirements are to be delivered through an agreed programme of work conducted in 4 phases over a fixed term to summer 2012. A report on the phase 2, incorporating details of phase 1, will be published in March 2012.

12. The project is designed to produce a suite of demographic forecasts based on a range of scenarios. Within this suite of forecasts,

- the population forecasts are delivered using a standard cohort component methodology (POPGROUP) which is the same methodology used by the UK statistical agencies.
- the household forecasts use a standard household headship rate as employed by Communities and Local Government (CLG) for its household projection statistics.
- the labour force projections use a standard economic activity rate methodology.

13. A total of seven scenarios have been tested within the EPOA study. These scenarios are as follows:

Scenario Name	Description
SNPP	A 'trend' scenario which reproduces the 2008-based sub-national population projections (SNPP) from ONS
Migration-led - R	An alternative 'trend' scenario which uses additional evidence from 2009-2010 to update the trend forecast
Net-nil Migration - R	A 'trend' scenario which maintains in-migration and out-migration to each district but sets the overall net balance to be zero
Approved RSS – R	A 'dwelling-constrained' scenario that is controlled by the annual rate of dwelling provision set out in Policy H1 of the Approved RSS
Draft Review RSS - R	A 'dwelling-constrained' scenario that is controlled by the

	annual rate of dwelling provision set out in Policy H1 of the Draft Review RSS
AMR Dwelling Trajectory – R	A ‘dwelling-constrained’ scenario that is controlled by a new housing development trajectory provided by each district
Economic - R	A ‘labour-force constrained’ scenario that is controlled by an employment growth trajectory derived from the regional economic forecasting model

Note: The ‘R’ suffix on scenarios indicates that they have used headship rates that have been scaled to ensure consistency with Council Tax property statistics provided for each district (see below).

14. The SNPP scenario is consistent with the 2008-based round of population and household projections published by ONS and CLG.
15. For all scenarios EXCEPT the SNPP scenario, household forecasts have been derived using a set of household headship rates that have been calibrated to be consistent with Council Tax statistics when using a Household-Dwelling conversion factor derived from the 2001 Census. All scenarios, apart from SNPP have been run with a 2010 base year. At the base year the population is the ONS mid year estimate for 2010 (published June 2011) and the dwellings are taken from Council Tax statistics. Household totals at 2010 are adjusted to fit that population/dwelling relationship. From 2010 onwards all scenarios maintain fertility, mortality and headship rate trajectories as contained in the ONS/CLG 2008-based round of population and household projections. The age/sex structure of migrants is maintained constant across all scenarios, although the underlying premise of each scenario causes variation in the number of future migrants and population change.

Scenario detail

16. For all scenarios EXCEPT the SNPP scenario, household forecasts have been derived using a set of household headship rates that have been calibrated to be consistent with Council Tax statistics (see Appendix 2). The household forecast for the SNPP scenario is consistent with that published by CLG in its 2008-based round of household projections; it is the only household forecast that is run with the CLG’s headship rates unchanged.
17. In each scenario, a Household-Dwelling conversion factor has been derived from the 2001 Census. This converts the household forecast to a dwelling equivalent and vice versa. The Household-Dwelling factor remains constant throughout the projection period.
18. All scenarios, apart from SNPP (see below), have been run with a 2010 base year and a 2033 horizon. At the base year the population is the ONS mid year estimate for 2010 (published June 2011) and the dwellings are taken from Council Tax statistics. Household totals at 2010 are adjusted to fit that population/dwelling relationship. From 2010 onwards all scenarios maintain fertility, mortality and headship rate trajectories as contained in the ONS/CLG 2008-based round of population and household projections. The age/sex structure of migrants is maintained constant across all scenarios, although the

underlying premise of each scenario causes variation in the number of future migrants and population change.

19. The seven scenarios may be grouped into 3 types,
- Migration-led – assumptions on the future scale of migration are input to the model. The scenario forecast shows the future population, households, dwellings and labour force that would result from that level of migration. There are three scenarios of this type – SNPP; migration-led; and nil net migration.
 - Dwelling-led – assumptions on the future scale of dwellings are input to the model. The scenario forecast shows the future migration, population, households and labour force that would result from that level of dwelling provision. There are three scenarios of this type – Approved RSS dwellings; Draft Review RSS dwellings; and AMR dwelling trajectory.
 - Economic-led – assumptions on the future scale of the labour force are input to the model. The scenario forecast shows the future migration, population, households and dwellings that would result from that level of labour force. There is one scenario of this type – Economic-led.

SNPP- Sub National Population Projections

The SNPP scenario is the benchmark against which all other scenarios are compared. This is the scenario which was used to calibrate and validate the model in Phase 1 of the Project. The scenario replicates the 2008-based sub-national projection from ONS; the latest set of 'official' projections for local authority districts in England. This 'trend' scenario is based on historical evidence from 2004-2008 and does not take account of any later information from the 2009 and 2010 mid-year estimates. In comparison to the other 6 scenarios the SNPP uses the projected populations for 2009 and 2010, rather than the mid year estimates. This means that there is some variation in the 2010 population between the SNPP scenario and the remaining scenarios.

Migration-led – R

To take account of more recent evidence from the 2009 and 2010 mid-year estimates, an alternative, 'Migration-led, 'trend' scenario has been run. This uses the later 2006-2010 period as the basis for the derivation of its migration assumptions from the components-of-change evident in the mid-year estimates. The scenario assumes that long-term variations in mortality and fertility are consistent with those evident in the latest (2008-based) national assumptions.

Net-nil Migration – R

An additional 'trend' scenario has been run, assuming that the 'net' impact of migration is zero throughout the projection period. This does not mean zero migration. The scenario assumes that in and out-migration continue (for both internal and international flows) but the overall balance between the two is zero. Fertility and migration assumptions remain consistent with the Migration-led scenario.

Approved RSS – R

The first of the dwelling-led scenarios is based on the dwelling provisions set out in Policy H1 of the Approved Regional Spatial Strategy (May 2008). For

each district, dwelling growth acts as a 'constraint' on population and household growth, with 'migration' used to balance the population and households required to achieve the dwelling target.

Draft review RSS – R

The second of the dwelling-led scenarios is based on the dwelling provisions set out in Policy H1 of the Draft Review Regional Spatial Strategy (March 2010). For each district, dwelling growth acts as a 'constraint' on population and household growth, with 'migration' used to balance the population and households required to achieve the dwelling target.

AMR Dwelling Trajectory – R

The final dwelling-led scenario is based on the dwelling trajectory published in each authority's 2010 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) or an updated dwelling trajectory that has been published and used for local planning policy purposes during 2011. For each district, dwelling growth acts as a 'constraint' on population and household growth, with 'migration' used to balance the population and households required to achieve the dwelling target.

Economic - R

The final scenario is one which constrains future population and household growth to the economic baseline forecast of Autumn 2010 produced by the East of England Forecasting Model (EEFM). Output from the EEFM includes a projected growth trajectory for the size of the labour force in each district. The annual growth associated with this trajectory is illustrated in Appendix 1. For each district, the annual labour force growth acts as a 'constraint' on population and household growth, with 'migration' used to balance the population and households required to achieve the labour force target.

20. The relationship between population, the labour force and the number of jobs in a district is controlled by three parameters: economic activity rates, unemployment rates and a commuting ratio. Economic Activity rates by age and sex have been derived from analysis by EERA which informed previous forecasts undertaken during RSS preparation and take account of changing labour force participation expected in the older age-groups as a result of proposed increases in the pension age. For each district, the unemployment rate and the commuting ratio have been derived from the 2001 Census and remain constant throughout the projection period.

Context

21. The Council have to consider the report and, taking into account the evidence, make a reasoned assessment of the models and decide which to adopt. This decision will need to be taken considering other background studies commissioned by the Council and critically take account of the Local Plan Vision and Objectives. The Vision and Objectives will shape the District for the years to come and are the textual description of the political aspirations for the area.
22. The latest consultation on the *Role of Settlements and Site Allocations* in January 2012 considered the existing hierarchy of settlements based on the

level of facilities in each market town and village. The review characterised the existing settlement pattern of the District.

23. The settlement hierarchy consulted upon is as follows:

- Two market towns – Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow
- 7 key settlements Elsenham, Stansted, Newport, Great Chesterford, Thaxted, Takeley and Hatfield Heath.
- Settlement A villages with primary school; and
- Settlement B villages with no primary school.

24. A review of the towns and villages indicated that the towns are the main service centres and that the facilities found in the key villages mean they are a provider of services to a wide rural area. The smaller villages are a local service centre or a provider of services to their own community.

25. This spatial pattern of development throughout the District is one of its key characteristics and is reflected in the settlement hierarchy.

26. The Local Plan Vision and Objectives have been reviewed and updated following emerging national policy and local consideration. The text below sets out the direction of travel and the expected outcomes of the Local Plan. It is important that the Council considers these together with the evidence in deciding the appropriate Scenario for the Districts housing numbers.

Draft Local Plan Vision

1. The district's high quality natural and historic environment will have been maintained and enhanced and the settlements will continue to be separate entities with green space between them.
2. The houses and facilities people need will be available and affordable locally, new sustainable housing developments will be distributed across the District.
3. The vitality and viability of our towns will have been maintained and enhanced and they will be safe, clean and attractive places. Facilities will exist for companies to grow and establish in Uttlesford.
4. There will be convenient, comfortable, safe and affordable alternatives to private transport, whether by bus or rail serving the settlements of Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow, Elsenham, Great Chesterford, Hatfield Heath, Newport, Stansted Mountfitchet, Takeley and Thaxted and the regional interchange centre of Stansted Airport.
5. The impact of Stansted Airport will have been minimised so that its presence is recognised as an asset to the District which attracts people to live, work and visit.

Draft Local Plan Objectives

1. District Character: To maintain and protect the Metropolitan Green Belt by only allowing building in the most exceptional circumstances. To preserve, conserve and where possible enhance the locally distinctive and historic character of the market towns and rural settlements and their settings within Uttlesford and to retain the separation between settlements.
2. Protecting the Environment: To protect, conserve and where possible enhance the natural environment and varied landscape character within Uttlesford, reflecting landscape sensitivity and promoting local

distinctiveness and an understanding of the historic significance of landscape features.

3. Function of the Market Towns: To preserve and enhance the historic nature of the town centres of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow and support their function as important local retail centres within the District. New high quality and sustainable development will support this retail role within the District.
4. Housing Need: To meet the housing requirement for Uttlesford and to make sure that the housing being provided creates balanced communities by delivering sustainable, safe, attractive and healthy places to live while meeting local housing needs in terms of type and tenure including affordable and special needs housing.
5. Employment Growth: To support a local economy which retains and encourages growth of existing and new employers by providing enough land and premises of the right type and in sustainable locations that will meet the anticipated needs and aspirations of businesses. To provide opportunities for employment growth related to the airport.
6. Sustainable transport: To reduce the need to travel by car promoting realistic alternatives to the car and locating new development so that journeys can be reduced and residents and employees can access public transport, cycle and footpath networks but recognising the continuing role that the car has in meeting transport and accessibility needs in this rural area.
7. Infrastructure: To ensure provision of infrastructure that will allow people to access social, educational, health, employment, recreational, greenspace and cultural facilities within and outside the district. To ensure provision of new open space, play, sport and recreational facilities to meet the community's needs.
8. Stansted Airport: To accommodate development at the airport which equates to a passenger throughput of 35 million passengers a year and that the maximum number of connecting journeys by air passengers and workers will be made by public transport. Appropriate surface access infrastructure and service capacity will be provided to meet airport related demand without impacting on capacity to meet the demands of other network users.
9. Use of Resources: To reduce the use of resources and minimise greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging the supply and use of appropriate renewable energy and low carbon technologies, reduce water use to the lowest practical minimum in the construction, operation and eventual disposal.
10. Air Noise, Ground Noise and Air Quality: The Council will seek to minimise the impact of air noise, ground noise and air quality on the health and amenity of local communities and the historic environment.

Reasoned consideration

27. The migration led scenarios need to be considered because they indicate the degree of demographic pressure to which the district is likely to be exposed. Selection of a net nil migration scenario would have significant implications. Constraining the scale of house building would not stop households from migrating into the district, but inflows would have to be balanced by

households migrating out of the district. This would in effect be regulated by market mechanisms. New local housing allowances as part of housing benefit reforms would also play a part. On the other hand, planning for housing growth on a scale consistent with migration trends would involve a 35% increase in the number of households in the district between by 2030. Another 11,700 homes would mean significant change to more settlements, and could not be accommodated without significant adverse impacts with the current settlement hierarchy.

28. The two higher migration led scenarios, and the Approved RSS and RSS Review dwelling led scenarios would all lead to a scale of housing in excess of that consistent with a jobs forecast led approach. Parity between the increase in the number of jobs in the district and an increase in its economically active population does not of course mean that growth in commuting will be addressed, because Uttlesford's accessibility to high paid jobs in London, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire will always mean outcommuting, with workers resident in other areas travelling in to fill local jobs. However, a better balance between the prospects for job growth locally and housing growth will avoid the current situation with congestion on key commuting routes on approaches to critical junctions being unduly exacerbated.
29. The Annual Monitoring Report dwelling trajectory approach, the final dwelling led scenario, has similar adverse implications to the net nil migration scenario.

East of England Forecasting Model

30. The East of England Forecasting Model (EEFM) was originally developed for the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) and regional partners by Oxford Economics. Its purpose was to project economic, demographic and housing trends in a consistent fashion and in a way that would help in the development of both the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) and the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the East of England. The outputs released are available on the Insight East website <http://www.insighteast.org.uk/viewArticle.aspx?id=17083>. A number of other related resources can also be accessed on the site also.
31. The abolition of EEDA has resulted in ownership of the EEFM being transferred to the East of England Local Government Association (EELGA). Cambridgeshire County Council is to manage the Model on behalf of the Association and Oxford Economics has been re-appointed to maintain and operate it for a further 2 years. The currently available forecasts were produced in Autumn 2010 and consist of a Baseline forecast and three scenario forecasts. The next set of forecasts are due to be published in Spring 2012, following updating to the new 2007SIC sectors and geographic expansion to include all local authorities within those Local Enterprise Partnerships now with a role in the East of England region.
32. The EEFM is primarily designed to produce economic forecasts for local authority areas. It is a spreadsheet-based model which covers a wide range of variables, and is designed to be flexible so that alternative scenarios can be run and the impacts of different assumptions can be measured. For instance, the Model can show the impact on the local economy of different overall economic growth rates or of accelerated growth or decline in particular sectors

and the consequence for future dwelling requirements. Similarly, the Model can show the impact that different scale and distribution of dwelling change between authorities may have on the local economy in terms of job growth, commuting and unemployment.

33. The EEFM comprises a full database including 147 separate variables for each of the East of England's 48 pre-April 2009 local authorities, as well as for historic counties, strategic authorities, selected other local authority groupings, the East of England as a whole, and the UK. Key outputs of the Model are:
 - Information at local authority level for individual years to 2031;
 - Forecasts of employment and Gross Value Added (GVA) by 29 sectors;
 - Numbers of employed people by workplace and residence with net commuting;
 - Unemployment;
 - Total population, households and dwellings
 - Carbon emissions by 4 groups
34. An important feature of the EEFM is its links to other Oxford Economics forecasting models, ensuring that all EEFM forecasts are consistent with Oxford Economics' world, UK national and UK regional forecasts.
35. The overall Model structure of the EEFM captures the interdependence of the economy, demographic change and housing at a local level, as well as reflecting the impact of broader economic trends on the East of England. The employment forecasts take account of the supply and demand for labour, the demographic forecasts reflect labour market trends as they are reflected in migration (and natural change indirectly), and the housing forecasts take account of both economic and demographic factors. This structure allows scenarios to be designed which test the impact of variables upon each other – for example, the impact of housing supply on economic variables as well as vice versa.
36. The EEFM is constructed on an annual basis. Historic data for most variables has been collected over 20 years to provide a basis for estimating the relationships between variables and for forecasting future trends. Forecasts are currently made up to 2031, reflecting the end dates of the available global, national and regional forecasts. But, the longer-term forecasts should be treated with caution, as unforeseen - but inevitable - future change in key causal factors will affect forecast accuracy. Medium-term forecasts are more likely to be better approximations than shorter-term ones, as there can usually be more confidence about medium-term trends than about short-term random fluctuations around the trend.
37. The EEFM is very large, with over 7,000 economic, demographic and housing indicators. Each of these variables is linked to others within the Model, and many key variables are also linked to others in the wider Oxford Economics suite of models.

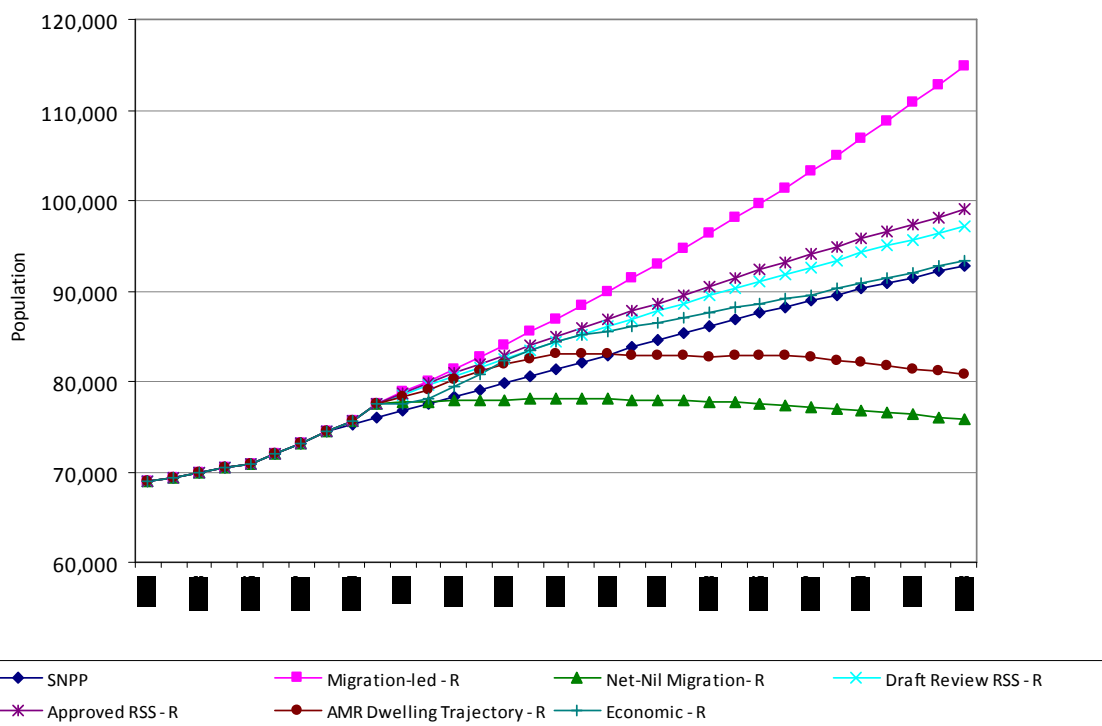
Conclusion and recommendation

38. The Government's Planning for Growth agenda issues by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in March 2011 focused on the need to support economic growth to help rebuild the economy. This has been a focus of Government

over the last year and has led the drive for the review of planning guidance and the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework. In addition Uttlesford Council have provided additional support and momentum behind local economic development through the funding of this work and the intended production of an Economic Development Strategy to further the economy of the District.

39. The economy within the District is fairly robust and this is demonstrated through the East of England Forecasting Model outputs. The economic led scenario is a robust basis on which to base the core strategy for the district's new development plan.

40. The following charts show the various population projections of the different scenarios together with the average number of dwellings required per year.



Scenario	Change 2010 - 2033				Average per year		
	Population Change	Population Change %	Households Change	Households Change %	Net Migration	Dwellings	Jobs
Migration-led - R	37,394	48.2%	15,210	49.1%	1,393	686	685
Approved RSS - R	21,533	27.8%	9,539	30.8%	787	430	324
Draft Review RSS - R	19,680	25.4%	8,873	28.6%	718	400	282
SNPP	16,667	21.9%	9,087	29.6%	661	410	249
Economic - R	15,891	20.5%	7,500	24.2%	578	338	197
AMR Dwelling Trajectory - R	3,339	4.3%	2,955	9.5%	92	133	-87
Net-Nil Migration - R	-1,724	-2.2%	-572	-1.8%	0	-26	-330

Note: 'AMR Dwelling Trajectory - R' scenario reverts to zero dwelling growth from 2027 onwards

Risk Analysis

41.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Insufficient houses are provided to meet the population needs.	2- There is some risk that there will be insufficient houses.	2 – If there are insufficient houses this may put pressure on the Housing Department in terms of providing temporary or long term housing. An undersupply could also result in an increase in house prices.	<p>A robust assessment of the scenarios has been undertaken. The Economic Scenario follows the East of England Forecasting model and job creation which will therefore supply sufficient houses for the employed population.</p> <p>Additional houses on Exceptions schemes could be forthcoming to provide housing specifically for people with local connections.</p>

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

