

Annex C: Density

1. In determining appropriate approaches to density at the regional and local level, regional planning bodies and local planning authorities should have regard to the indicative density ranges for specific types of location set out in Table 1.

Table 1: Indicative density ranges

	Location			
	City Centre ¹	Urban ²	Suburban ³	Rural ⁴
Density range (dwellings per hectare)	Above 70	40-75	35-55	30-40

Footnotes to Table 1:

¹ Where the predominant area lies within the central area of a city, as defined by the 2001 Census, or is part of the central area of a regional centre which serves a wide catchment. In London, parts of the whole of the Boroughs of Camden, Hackney, Hammersmith & Fulham, Greenwich, Haringey, Islington, Kensington & Chelsea, Lambeth, Lewisham, Newham, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Wandsworth and Westminster form part of areas which are considered to have the characteristics of a city centre.

² Areas which are generally denser than more suburban areas and comprise a mix of residential and employment areas.

³ Areas of medium housing density which are predominantly residential in character.

⁴ Areas where there are no 'towns' and which are generally more than 10 km from an 'urban centre'. For purposes of this Annex, 'urban centre' means a settlement which exceeds 2 km² in geographical extent and 'town' means a settlement which exceeds 1 km² in geographical extent.

2. Local planning authorities should work with local stakeholders and local communities to set appropriate density ranges for specific types of location having regard to the indicative density matrix and to the approach to density set out in the regional spatial strategy.
3. The choice of appropriate levels of density for an area should be informed by:
 - an assessment of the characteristics of an area, including the mix of uses;
 - location and level of public transport accessibility;
 - the need to use land efficiently;
 - the importance of promoting high quality design;
 - the broader spatial strategy and vision for the future development of their area, in particular the need for housing and the housing plans and policies;
 - the level of service provision and public spaces; and
 - resource efficiency and the minimisation of environmental impacts.

4. Densities should be expressed as net residential density in dwellings per hectare (dph) and should be expressed as a range. The bottom of the range should act as a minima. Local planning authorities may set ranges below those set out in Table 1, and where they wish to do so this should be clearly justified. The presumption is that the minimum density should be no less than 30 dwellings per hectare. It will not generally be appropriate for local planning authorities to have one broad density range covering the whole of their plan area.