

AFFORDABLE HOUSING STATEMENT

**OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION
FOR LAND NORTH OF THE VIADUCT, LEDBURY**

For Bloor Homes Western

Our Reference: 5065
June 2017



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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Affordable Housing Statement has been prepared by Hunter Page Planning, and accompanies an outline planning application for the proposed mixed used development at land north of the Viaduct, Ledbury. Bloor Homes recognise the importance of providing affordable homes as part of their developments to supplement housing supply to those on lower incomes both locally and nationally and foster mixed and sustainable communities. The need in Ledbury as evidenced in the adopted Core Strategy evidence base demonstrates how the scale of demand exceeds the capacity of planned development and that large deficits dating back to 2008 must be rectified highlighting how there is an acute affordable housing need which pre-dates this application. A recent appeal on Land South of Leadon Way (Ledbury Appeal Ref: APP/W1850/W/15/3009456) confirms this as the inspector stated that “completions date for affordable homes is falling significantly below the front loading and annualised 20 year requirement.”
- 1.2 This statement seeks to set out the information regarding the provision of affordable housing and its justification as part of the proposed development scheme. The next section sets out relevant affordable housing policy for which the application will be assessed followed by a detailed explanation of the proposed affordable provision.
- 1.3 These proposals have undergone consultation with the councils housing officer and other various stakeholders in order to formulate a comprehensive and appropriate strategy. This statement should be read in conjunction with the supporting Planning Statement which forms part of the accompanying application package.
- 1.4 The description of the development is as follows:

An outline application for a mixed used development comprising the erection of up to 625 new homes (including affordable housing), 2.9 hectares of B1 employment land, vehicular access onto Bromyard Road, land to facilitate a restored canal public open space, access and drainage works and other associated works.

- 1.5 The proposal includes 40% of affordable housing, discussed with the housing officer during pre-application discussions. The affordable housing will include a combination of types and tenures including social rent and intermediate housing. This will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

2.0 Planning Policy

Herefordshire Core Strategy (2015)

- 2.1 The Herefordshire Core Strategy was adopted on 16th October 2015.
- 2.2 **Core Policy H1** of the Herefordshire Core Strategy and relates specifically to affordable housing thresholds and targets for the area in new residential developments. An indicative target of 40% affordable housing provision has been set for sites within Ledbury, based on current housing market values and local needs as informed by the latest local housing requirement study (2014) and economic viability assessment (2014). The Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment (2012 update) is the most recent report released with regard to an identification of the area's housing need. It has highlighted a net annual need across the wider area for 3457 affordable homes from 2012-2017 – a level which is unlikely to be met. Looking at Ledbury specifically, 546 affordable homes are required from 2011-2031.
- 2.3 **Core Policy H3** requires sites of over 50 dwellings to provide a range of housing units to cater for a variety of needs and create inclusive mixed communities. This could be for young singles, those with adaptive needs and the growing elderly population and includes specialist accommodation. In order to meet the demands of an ageing population the Herefordshire Older Persons Survey (2012) indicates that sites where permission in principle for residential development is established should include elements of specialist accommodation.
- 2.4 The requirements of the above policies are reiterated in policy LB2 which relates directly to the site given that it has been allocated for a mixed use development.
- 2.5 With regard to tenure mix, Core Strategy paragraph 5.1.5 states that there is a significant need for affordable housing and that a range of options and mix of tenures will be required across new developments. There will be some flexibility in terms of viability where levels of intermediate housing could increase to keep the overall percentage policy compliant; however there is a significant need for socially rented housing (paragraph 5.1.11).
- 2.6 The proposal includes an amount of affordable housing which is in accordance with policy.

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

- 2.7 The National Planning Policy Framework is a positive and enabling document which supports a pro-growth agenda.
- 2.8 Paragraph 47 seeks to boost significantly the supply of housing which includes the provision of affordable homes.
- 2.9 Paragraph 50 looks to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes to create inclusive and mixed communities, which includes the provision of affordable housing on site where possible.
- 2.10 Paragraphs 173 and 174 refer to viability and in summary, state that requirements for affordable housing and other contributions should not render developments unviable whilst still providing competitive returns to a willing landowner and willing developer.

3.0 Proposed Residential Provision

- 3.1 The proposal includes an amount of affordable housing, discussed with the housing officer as part of pre-application discussions. The affordable housing will include a combination of types and tenures including (as defined by the NPPF);
- Social rent which *“is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency”* and;
 - Intermediate housing which *“is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing.”*
- 3.2 The proposal includes 40% affordable housing and includes a significant proportion of social rented housing (as opposed to ‘affordable rent’) which is not typically being provided in most Districts due a lack of grant funding, if the council considers it appropriate a specialist housing scheme could also be included. As identified in the Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment (2012 update) smaller sized affordable properties are in the highest demand and the majority of affordable units should be in the form of flats and/or 1 and 2 bed properties. The exact type, tenure and user group is yet to be determined.
- 3.3 This need is evidenced through Core Strategy Policy H3, which seeks to ensure an appropriate range and mix of housing with specific reference to meeting the needs of the elderly population through both specialist extra care and non-specialist housing provision. It identifies sites where residential permission is accepted in principle to be the main locations for specialist older person’s accommodation to be provided. Therefore the allocation north of the viaduct satisfies this aim.
- 3.4 This affordable housing approach is likely to include approximately 138 units of social rented housing and 112 units of intermediate housing.

3.5 In response to the identified need, the proposed housing mix for both market and affordable units seeks to provide a range from 1 bed apartments to 4 plus bed larger family style homes. The indicative mix is shown below.

3.6 The mix will need to have flexibility in the S106, particularly given the long term nature of the development and the requirement to adapt to changing needs.

Property Standards

3.7 The proposed scheme will deliver a mix of dwelling sizes and tenure types throughout the development. A mix of property sizes is proposed, as identified above.

Addressing Local Need

3.8 The Applicant is committed to ensuring priority for affordable housing will be given to people with a local connection to Ledbury, in the first instance.

Land North of the Viaduct, Ledbury: Housing Mix					
Open Market (60%)					
	1 & 2 bed		3 bed	4 +bed	Total
Units	75		150	150	375
%	20%		40%	40%	100%
Affordable (40%): 55% Social Rent					
	1 Bed	2 bed	3 Bed	4+ bed	Total
Units	24	56	47	11	138
%	17%	41%	34%	8%	100%
Affordable (40%): 45% Intermediate					
	1 Bed	2 bed	3 Bed	4+ bed	Total
Units	0	60	52	0	112
%	0%	54%	46%	0%	100%
-					
Combined Affordable					
	1 Bed	2 bed	3 Bed	4+ bed	Total
Units	24	116	99	11	250
%	10%	46%	40%	4%	100%

Summary

- 3.9 The scheme seeks to provide up to 40% affordable housing (250 units) and a range of size and tenures as is consistent with local policy and guidance.
- 3.10 Affordable housing delivery will be secured via S106 agreement. The size and tenure will need a degree of flexibility particularly given the long term nature of the project and the need to be adaptable to changing needs in the future.
- 3.11 To summarise, it is considered that the schemes affordable housing proposals are both policy compliant and will provide high levels of good quality affordable housing to meet an identified local need.