

Tony Blackburn
Programme Officer
15 Ottawa Close,
Blackburn,
BB2 7EB
Tony.Blackburn@eden.gov.uk
Sent by email only

08/09/2016

Dear Tony,

Eden Local Plan Examination – Housing Land Supply Statement (Examination Ref: EL4.030k)

1.1 Thank you for consulting the Home Builders Federation (HBF) upon the recently published *Housing Land Supply Statement* (examination ref: EL4.030k). In responding to this document the information contained within the associated *Supply of Housing in the Key Hubs* (examination ref: EL4.030g), *Housing Trajectory Paper* (examination ref: EL4.030j) and *Windfall Topic Paper* (examination ref: EL4.030l) have also been taken into account.

1.2 The following comments have been structured to mirror selected sections contained within the *Housing Land Supply Statement*. A brief response to the *Supply of Housing in the Key Hubs* (examination ref: EL4.030g) is also provided at the end of this paper.

Assessing our Land Supply

Windfall

2.1 It is noted that windfall delivery has been strong over the last five years providing approximately 74% of the net housing completions. This is unsurprising given the lack of an up to date plan containing sufficient deliverable allocations. It is highly unlikely that previous rates of windfall completions will provide an accurate reflection of delivery once an adopted plan, with viable allocations is in place. It is also the case that a more detailed evidence base is likely to limit the amount of windfalls coming forward. The HBF, therefore, agrees with the *Windfall Topic Paper* (paragraph 3.2) that there will be a significant reduction in windfalls over the plan period.

2.2 The previous five years provided 105dpa, on average, from windfalls. Going forward it is understood that the Council anticipates windfalls delivering 50dpa from year 3 onwards (*Housing Land Supply Statement*, paragraph 3.7). Whilst this appears a significant reduction it must be viewed in the context of the statement

provided in paragraph 2.1 above. The HBF agrees that windfalls should not be counted before year 3 to ensure the potential for double counting is minimised.

2.3 Despite the reduction from the average over the previous five years the HBF has the following concerns over the level of reliance upon windfalls. Most significantly windfalls are by their very nature uncertain and therefore reliance upon a quarter of the supply being delivered from this source presents a significant risk to the overall delivery of the plan and the provision of a five year supply.

2.4 The period of monitoring of the windfall supply is relatively short, just five years. A longer period would provide greater confidence that such sources of supply have consistently delivered the numbers being relied upon.

2.5 It is understood that the 50dpa roughly equates to the average level of smaller windfalls in the last five years (*Windfall Topic Paper*, paragraph 3.6) which accounted for 55dpa. The HBF would not advocate the windfall allowance being based upon any delivery from larger sites as these are much less likely to provide additional dwellings once allocations are provided by the plan. It is also questioned whether the level of delivery from smaller sites will remain at or above 50dpa once other sites are provided through the plan. This is particularly relevant given the decision to allocate sites within the Key Hubs (see paragraphs 4.1 to 4.3 below).

2.6 Neither the *Windfall Topic Paper* nor the *Housing Land Supply Statement* provide any certainty on the capacity of the sources of windfall supply, going forward. Rather it is based solely upon previous rates of delivery. The NPPF, paragraph 48, is clear that local authorities should provide;

“...compelling evidence that such sites have consistently become available in the local area and **will continue to provide a reliable source of supply.**” (our emphasis).

2.7 The Council may wish to consider whether it can bolster its evidence in this regard.

Managing Undersupply

2.8 The HBF agrees with the Council that a 20% buffer is required in accordance with the NPPF, paragraph 47.

Potential Risks to Delivery

2.9 The HBF is concerned upon the lack of progress on an up to date Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Without this information it is unclear how the Council can assume that sites which do not yet benefit from permission will be able to be brought forward and will remain viable. This needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Eden Land Supply

3.1 The HBF agrees with the application of a discount for non-implementation. Without further evidence 25% appears reasonable. It is, however, possible that it may be greater for small sites. It is also notable that the discount only applies to small sites, yet a significant proportion of the supply from planning permissions, both large and small, is reliant upon sites which benefit solely from outline permission. Whilst this source will undoubtedly deliver it is likely that some will not feed through into starts on site. It is therefore unclear why a discount has not been applied to larger sites which benefit solely from an outline planning permission.

Summary of Land Supply

3.2 The HBF agrees with the use of the '*Sedgefield*' method of dealing with under-delivery and the application of the 20% buffer to both the requirement and under-delivery. The calculation is based upon the Council's preferred housing requirement of 200dpa. Within our original submissions, hearing statement (examination ref: EL2.004) and response to the SHMA review (examination ref: EL4.027) we argued that a higher housing requirement should be adopted. This would alter the overall position highlighted in the table at paragraph 3.11.

3.3 The supply element of the table identifies 433 units from extant permissions and 178 units from deliverable SHLAA sites. However, paragraph 3.5 of the document suggests that the LAA sites included benefit from planning permission. It is therefore unclear whether there is any double counting occurring.

Supply of Housing in Key Hubs (Examination Ref: EL4.030g)

4.1 Whilst this issue is not addressed within the *Housing Land Supply Statement* it is notable that the Council has agreed that it needs to allocate further sites within Key Hubs and intends to produce an Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) covering just the Key Hubs (*Supply of Housing in Key Hubs*, paragraph 1.12). Whilst the HBF is supportive of providing further allocations the production of a separate DPD will inevitably slow down the process and delivery within these locations.

4.2 Furthermore the production of a separate DPD is not consistent with the Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS), as submitted alongside the Eden Local Plan. The LDS did not include any reference to a Key Hubs Allocations DPD. This lack of conformity with the LDS may create legal compliance issues for the Council. The lack of reference to such a DPD also provides no certainty over the time which will be taken to produce and adopt such a document.

4.3 Due to the above concerns the HBF would prefer these allocations, or at least broad areas of search to be provided within the current plan.

Further Engagement

5.1 I trust that the Inspector and Council will find the foregoing useful. The HBF is keen to remain involved and informed of the progress of the Eden Local Plan.

Yours sincerely,

MJ Good

Matthew Good
Planning Manager – Local Plans
Email: matthew.good@hbf.co.uk
Tel: 07972774229