

Ashfield District Council
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SENT BY E-MAIL ONLY TO
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10 August 2018

Dear Sir / Madam

ASHFIELD LOCAL PLAN MAIN MODIFICATIONS CONSULTATION

Introduction

Thank you for consulting with the Home Builders Federation (HBF) on the above mentioned consultation. The HBF is the principal representative body of the house-building industry in England and Wales. Our representations reflect the views of our membership, which includes multi-national PLC's, regional developers and small, local builders. In any one year, our members account for over 80% of all new "for sale" market housing built in England and Wales as well as a large proportion of newly built affordable housing. We would like to submit the following representations to specific Main Modifications (**MM**) proposed by the Council.

The HBF is supportive of proposed main modifications which address concerns raised in previous representations. These main modifications are :-

- **MM4** - encouraging rather than prioritising the effective use of brownfield land ;
- **MM6, MM7 & MM140** - updating of the 5 YHLS Table in Appendix 2 to use the latest available data and the Sedgefield approach ;
- **MM8** - the deletion of the 5 YHLS calculation using the Liverpool approach ;
- **MM10** - the addition of the reference in the supporting text to the need for 164 affordable homes per annum ;
- **MM12** - the removal of the reference to varying affordable housing requirements in a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) ;
- **MM20 & MM143 to Policy S2** - the amendment for a minimum housing requirement of 9,120 dwellings for the plan period 2013 – 2032 and the encouragement for new housing for the elderly including the re-calculation of C2 housing need in **MM144** ;
- **MM22 to Policy HG4 Criterion 1** – the additional reference to the most up to date evidence of need in determining housing mix ;
- **MM87 to Policy CC2 Criterion 11** - encouraging rather than requiring water efficiency features ;
- **MM101 to Policy SD1 Criterion 6** - the removal of references to assessments against best practice guidance ;

- **MM103 to Policy SD3 Criterion 2a** – the removal of the reference to space standards ;
- **MM137 to Policy HG4 Criterion 2** – the deletion of nationally described space standards (NDSS) ;
- **MM104 to Policy SD4** - the removal of the reference to local skills enhancement ;
- **MM106** – the deletion of **Policy SD5 Criterion c** which duplicates **Policy HG2** regarding viability ;
- **MM107** – the deletion of the reference seeking external viability advice at the expense of the applicant ;
- **MM111 – MM114 to Policies SD9 & SD10** - amendments to car parking standards ;
- **MM139 to Policy HG1** – the confirmation of a Local Plan Review at least every 5 years as set out in the supporting text.

The HBF have no comments on proposed amendments to site specific allocations / policies and / or policies relating to non-residential matters.

However the HBF have the following remaining concerns :-

- **MM3 in Policy S2 Criterion 2 and MM145** - the word “prioritise” should also be changed to “encourage” for consistency with proposals in **MM4** and **MM20** ;
- **MM9** - sets out in the supporting text of **Policy PJ5** the requirement that all housing allocations will contribute towards primary pupil places arising from the development. This requirement was not proposed at pre submission stage of the Local Plan so it has not been subject to whole plan viability testing by the Council. Therefore any cumulative impact has not been assessed or considered. It is also noted that **MM12** states that “where there are viability issues with a scheme priority will be given to affordable housing”. It is unclear if this proposed prioritising of affordable housing fits in with the requirement for primary pupil place contributions as set out in **MM9** ;
- **MM13** – renames **Policy HG2** Affordable Housing and Starter Homes as the revised NPPF defines Starter Homes as Affordable Homes this modification is unnecessary ;
- **MM16 to Policy HG2 Criterion 7** - proposes that affordable housing will be provided in perpetuity which creates an inconsistency with national policy regarding Starter Homes and other affordable routes to homeownership ;
- **MM17 to Policy HG2 Criterion 8** - states that consent will not be given for schemes which are intentionally sub divided to avoid providing affordable housing. It is also stated that subsequent phases will be required to provide an appropriate level of affordable housing for the scheme in its totality up to that point. However the two statements are illogical and inconsistent with each other because if consent is not granted there is nothing for subsequent phases to rectify ;

- **MM102 to Policy SD2** - the reference to incorporating elements of Secure By Design in Bullet Point (i) should be removed. This bullet point is unnecessary given the criteria set out in the following bullet points ;
 - **MM150 to Policy HG2 Criterion 8** - when implementing this policy the Council should have regard to the fact that the definition of affordable in national policy may change in the future.
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Conclusion

For the Ashfield Local Plan to be found sound under the four tests of soundness as defined by the NPPF (para 182), the Plan should be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy. The Plan is considered unsound because of **MM3, MM9, MM12, MM13, MM16, MM17, MM102, MM145** and **MM150**. Therefore the Plan is considered to be inconsistent with national policy, not positively prepared, unjustified and ineffective. It is hoped that these representations are of assistance to the Council and the Inspector in preparing the final stages of the Ashfield Local Plan. In the meantime if any further information or assistance is required please contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully
for and on behalf of **HBF**



Susan E Green MRTPI
Planning Manager – Local Plans