

VALE OF WHITE HORSE

LOCAL PLAN 2031 PART 2: DETAILED POLICIES AND ADDITIONAL SITES EXAMINATION

HEARING STATEMENT JUNE 2018

Introduction

- 1.1 The Inspector has invited comments on Matter 9 Development Management Policies in advance of the hearing sessions to be held on the w/c 4th September 2018.
- 1.2 This statement is made in relation to Item 1 (Self and Custom-Build) of Matter 9: Development Management Policies.
- 1.3 It is considered that the plan as submitted is ineffective to secure adequate provision of Self and Custom-Build. Additional wording to Development Policy 1 is required to make the plan sound in response to the national Self and Custom-Build agenda.

Matter 9: Development Management Policies

- 9.1 **Are the development management policies in the plan positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy?**

Item 1: Self and Custom-Build

- 1.4 The opening line of 'Development Policy 1: Self and Custom-Build' in its current form reads:

*"The Council will **support** the provision of plots for sale to self and custom builders on major development sites..." (Emphasis added)*

- 1.5 Major development sites are as defined within the Development Management Procedure Order 2010:

"major development" means development involving any one or more of the following...

(c) *the provision of dwellinghouses where —*

- (i) *the number of dwellinghouses to be provided is 10 or more; or*
- (ii) *the development is to be carried out on a site having an area of 0.5 hectares or more and it is not known whether the development falls within sub-paragraph (c)(i);*

1.6 The supporting text to Development Policy 1 states in Para 3.11:

“LPAs should also have regard to the demand recorded on the register in the preparation of Local Plans. The Housing and Planning Act 2016 also requires LPAs to permit the development of sufficient serviced plots to match the demand on their Self-Build and Custom Build Register.”

1.7 Paragraph 3.12 informs that as of August 2017, there were 174 recorded interests for Self and Custom-Build in the District. It is considered the provision of Development Policy 1 is unlikely to be effective in responding to this level of demand.

1.8 The Government is committed to the delivery of Self and Custom-Build. On 4th February 2016, Housing and Planning Minister Rt Hon Brandon Lewis at the time, stated that *“Many other countries have a track record of delivering large numbers of local homes through self-build and we’re determined to ensure self and custom housebuilding **grows significantly**”*. He also reiterated the Government’s commitment *“to **double the number of custom and self build homes by 2020** – so anyone who wishes to design their dream house can do so”*. (Emphasis added).

1.9 Rt Hon Brandon Lewis also stated in February 2016, that *“This government is committed to **increasing housing supply** and helping more people achieve their aspiration of home ownership – whether that’s buying on the open market through schemes like Help to Buy, or **by building or commissioning their own home.**”* (Emphasis added).

1.10 Paragraph 50 of the NPPF seeks to ‘deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership’. Self and Custom-Build plots should form part of the ‘wide choice’ referred to in paragraph 50.

1.11 Development Policy 1 does not require the provision of Self and Custom-Build housing, similar to the provision of affordable housing requirement (35%). Provision of such housing is a matter for the applicant.

1.12 It is considered that Development Policy 1 is unlikely to achieve the aspirations of the Government to enable housing choice for people to build their 'dream homes', and also not respond to the level of demand which has been established on the Self and Custom-Build register.

1.13 It is considered that the Local Plan should encourage the provision of 100% Self and Custom-Build sites and provide a wider choice of housing locations for people to build their 'dream homes'.

1.14 The suggested additional wording to Development Policy 1 is as follows:

100% Self and Custom-Build sites up to 10 dwellings adjacent to existing settlements may be appropriate subject to the satisfaction of the following criteria:

- 1. There is evidence to show there is a sufficient level of interest to build and occupy such dwellings on the site involved.*
- 2. The majority of plots should be taken up by individuals or households that have a local connection through living and/or working in Vale of White Horse District or by having close family living in the District.*
- 3. The development satisfies other development management policies (e.g. policies: access, heritage, ecology, landscape and drainage).*

All such schemes must make the following provisions:

- a) A Design Code to guide the form of dwellings that appropriate to the site.*
- b) Access to a public highway (or equivalent) to serve each individual plot.*
- c) Connections to all services, i.e. electricity, water, telecommunications, at the boundary of each point.*

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Framptons Town Planning