

Appendix 2- Housing Strategy Consultation Response Summary

BACKGROUND

1. There were 58 responses to the draft Housing Strategy consultation. In general, most respondents agreed that the 4 priorities drafted in the Strategy were right for meeting the challenges for Oxford over the next 3 years and beyond. In terms of the action plan, 59% agreed that the actions would meet the objectives of the Housing Strategy, with 41% stating that the actions would only partially meet the objectives.
2. There were also individual responses given to the draft Housing Strategy and these were provided by the following:
 - Oxfordshire County Council;
 - John Phillips Planning Consultancy on behalf of Oxford University;
 - Response from Jericho Community Boatyard;
 - Savills on behalf of GRA Acquisitions Ltd; and
 - Symposium on Sustainability

KEY ISSUES

3. The key issues raised through these individual responses were:
 - Increase in supply of retirement homes to purchase;
 - More emphasis on housing for disabled people (new homes a % built to National Wheelchair Standards Level 3);
 - Encourage further provision of student accommodation to release PRS family sized housing for households requiring accommodation;
 - References to public sector land should be extended to include the Universities (with a view to using for Student Accommodation);
 - Re-consider using the Oxford Stadium Dog track for housing purposes;
 - Some emphasis on meeting housing needs for those living on boats;
 - Key Worker living should form a key part of any planning policy to help meet housing needs;
 - More innovative housing models needed to meet the housing need, rather than the traditional model of private developer;
 - Role of Co-housing to help wellbeing and health issues;
 - Self – Building consideration as a model to deliver more homes;
 - Affordability should be real, 60-80% market rents are not affordable, and land values need to be factored in;
 - Make better use of existing stock in relation to under occupation;
 - Continue to press neighbouring districts on duty to co-operate in supply of housing land;
 - Strategy should challenge current market forces. Land for Housing should be purchased at existing use values with a small uplift (see Lyons Review);
 - Affordable housing should be Affordable living and rents should be tied to 35% of average household earnings in both PRS and Social housing sector;

- Consider reducing the % of Affordable housing in current policy to stimulate the market (current AMR rates since policy was adopted show less housing completions in Oxford);
4. Two further questions were asked for further expansion and these were relating to the following:
- What should be given greater priority in the Housing Strategy; and
 - Is there anything missing from the draft Housing Strategy

WHAT SHOULD BE GIVEN GREATER PRIORITY

5. In total there were 49 respondents who chose to expand on this question and explain what needed greater priority. Whilst it would be useful to see individual responses, it is not practical for the purpose of this briefing. In summary the following issues were raised:
- Greater priority on affordable housing and in particular more emphasis on council new build programme;
 - Greater emphasis on Priority 3 – Support growth of a balanced housing market
 - More focus on those households in the private rented sector who want to aspire to owner occupation but can't afford it, but can't access affordable housing either;
 - Allocation of properties should not always be to the neediest groups and perhaps allocations policy needs to be reviewed;
 - Empty Homes;
 - More Land available, and change planning policy to relax affordable housing requirement to balance the market;
 - Work with private sector more creatively to develop alternative models;
 - More priority for access to housing for disabled households;
 - Availability of suitable properties for elderly people in the private sector to downsize to; and
 - More support for people with mental health problems and vulnerable households in general

WHAT IS MISSING

6. When answering this question, over 53% of respondents said that there was something missing from the Draft Housing Strategy, with only 18% saying no. The remaining 29% said don't know. Again there were 27 people who chose to respond to this question and expand on their answer of yes. The main concerns were grouped around the following:
- General policy on improving the accessibility of all new housing for disabled households;

- Transport infrastructure links to meeting Housing Need, i.e. Northern Gateway and pressures this will create, more links with City Deal and Strategic Economic Plan required;
- More creativity and models to supply new homes, such as self-build and co-housing;
- Use space for Park and Ride to minimise impact on City from transport. Only going to get worse due to fact most people can't afford housing costs in oxford and therefore commute;
- More emphasis on Duty to Co-operate and actions linked to how the City will work with the Districts to meet housing need;
- Where is the land going to come from to build the houses needed;
- Liaison with the universities and how the student population will be managed;
- Intermediate housing tenures and models to deliver them; and
- Home improvement fund for energy efficiency measures

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