

Gladman Developments Ltd.

Darlington Local Plan Examination

Matter 5

Hearing Statement



April 2021

Matter 5 – Meeting Particular Housing Needs

Q5.1. Is the Council's proposed modification to the opening paragraph of policy H4 necessary to make the Plan sound and, if so, would it be effective in so doing?

1.1 Gladman consider that the proposed modifications to paragraph 1 of Policy H4 are necessary to make the Plan sound and provide an effective approach to the delivery of housing mix over the plan period in Darlington.

Q5.2. Is the Council's proposed modification to the requirement in policy H4 for accessible and adaptable homes necessary to make the Plan sound? Is the modified requirement (47%) justified by up to date and proportionate evidence including about need and viability having regard to relevant national guidance?

1.2 Gladman contend that the proposed modifications to Policy H4 make the Plan sound and welcome the modified requirement of M4(2) Category 2: Accessible and adaptable dwellings.

1.3 Indeed, the updated requirements are justified through the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment published in 2020. This details the number of houses in the current stock which are capable of meeting the needs of people with long term illnesses or disabilities and considers that at least 4,948 households will require adapted homes by 2036. It then goes on to assess the separate need for wheelchair accessible dwellings M4(3) standards and ensures the two differing requirements are not 'double counted' within the M4(2) standards requirement in Policy H4.

1.4 Furthermore, the amended requirements for accessible and adaptable homes have been tested through the December 2020 Local Plan Viability Assessment.

1.5 In this regard, Gladman assert that the supporting evidence justifies the requirement for M4(2) dwellings within Policy H4 while having regard to guidance set out in National Planning Practice Guidance¹.

Q5.3. Are the affordable housing requirements of policy H5 table 6.5, which sets out three different levels of affordable housing for different parts of the Borough (which are defined on the map in Appendix E), justified by up to date and proportionate evidence relating to need and viability?

Q5.4. Is the Council's proposed modification to the affordable housing tenure split in policy H5 necessary to make the Plan sound and, if so, would it be effective in so doing?

Q5.5. Is the exemption for executive housing schemes to provide on-site affordable homes consistent with national policy which aims to create mixed and balanced communities, or otherwise justified?

¹ PPG ID-63 (2019)

- 1.6 Gladman consider that the December 2020 SHMA accounts for updated evidence and national guidance in relation to affordable housing which has resulted in the proposed modifications to Policy H5. Furthermore, consideration of historic levels of affordable housing delivery have been analysed and compared to need and viability, in order to ascertain the most appropriate policy requirements and ensuring consistency with the Framework.
- 1.7 In addition, Gladman support the flexibility within Policy H5 which allows applicants to submit a detailed viability assessment where they consider that the requirements of Policy H5 would render a scheme unviable. Indeed, Local Plan policies and viability assessments capture the market values and requirements at a certain moment in time, allowing for such flexibility ensures that if the market signals alter or site-specific infrastructure requirements arise, then the Plan is responsive and ensures that market and affordable housing continues to be delivered throughout the lifetime of the Plan.
- 1.8 When considering the factors set out above, the amendments to Policy H5 are fully justified, proportionate and sound.

Q5.6. Is the Council's proposed modification to H6 relating to entry-level exception sites necessary to make the Plan sound and, if so, would it be effective in so doing?

- 1.9 Gladman consider that the proposed modifications to Policy H6 ensure consistency with national planning guidance and ensure that the Plan is sound.

Q5.7. Are the Council's proposed modifications to policy H7 necessary to make the Plan sound and, if so, would they be effective in so doing?

- 1.10 Gladman do not have any comments to make in relation to Question 5.7.

Q5.8. Are the Council's proposed modifications to policy H8 necessary to make the Plan sound and, if so, would they be effective in so doing?

- 1.11 Gladman do not have any comments to make in relation to Question 5.8.