AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

Summary of Key Points

- There is an on-going need to provide affordable housing in Eastbourne due to increasing unaffordability of housing as prices continue to rise, meaning market housing remains unaffordable for a significant proportion of households. The main way that new affordable housing is delivery is through contributions from developers.

- Eastbourne Borough Council is publishing an Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to set out how these affordable housing contributions will be secured.

- The Affordable Housing SPD has been published to allow the local community and other interested parties to comment between 26 May and 21 July 2017. The consultation can be accessed via [www.eastbourne.gov.uk/spd](http://www.eastbourne.gov.uk/spd).

- Eastbourne Borough Council’s Core Strategy Local Plan contains a policy requiring affordable housing contributions to be made within housing developments. Government guidance requires that these affordable housing contributions can only be made on development of more than 10 residential units.

- In order to reflect disparity between houses prices, which impacts on the viability of development, the town’s 14 neighbourhoods have either been identified as ‘High Value’ areas or ‘Low Value’ areas. Within ‘High Value’ areas, the affordable housing contribution should be 40% of the houses delivered, whilst in the ‘Low Value’ areas the contribution should be 30%. The level of contribution represents a starting point that can be negotiated if evidence can prove it would make development unviable.

- The presumption is that the affordable housing contribution will be delivered on-site. If it is not possible to deliver affordable housing on-site, or if the required contribution results in a percentage of an affordable unit to be delivered, then a financial contribution in the form of a commuted sum payment will be considered. The SPD sets out how commuted sums will be calculated.
The SPD provides a detailed summary of the stages involved in seeking affordable housing contributions, from pre-application stage through to submission and determination of a planning application.

Applicants are encouraged to undertake pre-application discussion to discuss financial viability to deliver the affordable housing requirements. During these discussions, regard will be made to the viability and costs of development; the location and character of the site; the tenure of affordable housing and type of dwelling units; the availability of affordable housing in the local area when measured against demand for such accommodation; and any updated national policy and/or guidance to be implemented.

If a developer considers that the affordable housing requirement cannot be met on-site, this must be justified in an evidenced and ‘open-book’ financial viability assessment and supporting statement. If an independent opinion from a viability expert is required to corroborate the evidence, this will be at the expense of the applicant.

It is expected that any affordable housing provided will meet nationally prescribed space standards, and development schemes should be designed with a view to reducing any ongoing management, maintenance and repair costs, and should also make use of good quality materials.

The affordable housing units should be handed over to a Registered Provider, the list for which is maintained by the Homes and Community Agency (HCA). For all planning applications where an agreed affordable housing contribution is required, applicants will be required to sign a Section 106 Agreement.

Further information about the Affordable Housing SPD is available from Eastbourne Borough Council. Please contact the Customer Contact Centre at:
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www.eastbourne.gov.uk