

## Note to the Inspector on Affordable Housing needs

PINS REF: APP/R3325/W/20/3259668

Land North of Ansford Hill, Ansford, Castle Cary, Somerset

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1. Further to the Affordable Housing Proof of Evidence of James Stacey, the Council's Planning Policy team very recently published, on 19 October 2021, two documents with relevance to affordable housing needs. They are the:

- Local Housing Needs Assessment 2020 – South Somerset and Somerset West & Taunton Councils
- Local Housing Needs Assessment Update 2021 – South Somerset District Council

2. I consider that it is important the Inspector takes this new evidence into account.

**South Somerset and Somerset West & Taunton Councils: Local Housing Needs Assessment 2020 (August 2021)**

3. The Assessment gives a figure of affordable housing (AH) rented need between 2020 and 2040 of 3,362 or 168 AH rented dwellings per annum over 20 years. This is made up of current need (2020) of 888 units and future need (2020-2030) of 2,474.

4. It also provides an assessment of need for affordable home ownership which it gives as an additional 8,274 over the period.

5. Added to 3,362 this makes 11,636 or **582** per annum – this is higher than 206 per annum figure I identified in the 2016 SHMA.

6. For 2020/21 monitoring period a shortfall of -479 affordable dwellings has already accrued (103 gross completions - 582 need).

7. This shortfall is likely to be greater once Right to Buy losses for the 2020/21 monitoring period are deducted.

**South Somerset District Council: Local Housing Needs Assessment 2021 (October 2021)**

8. This report provides a further updated assessment of Local Housing Needs, for South Somerset only.

9. It states (paragraph 6.20) that the differences from 2020 LHNA includes a lower growth in the number of older persons in the population which is reflected in a lower growth projection for single persons and couples without children. This in turn implies a lower need for 1- and 2-bedroom properties. Changes in affordability also see a slight drop in the number of households who fall into the unable to affordable to own housing need category.
10. The Assessment gives a similar figure of AH rented need between 2020 and 2040 of 3,377 or 169 AH rented dwellings per annum over 20 years, made up of current need (2020) of 894 and future need (2020-2030) of 2,483.
11. The Assessment also makes clear (at paragraph 5.47) that any future losses from the current stock (such as demolition, or sales through Right to Buy) would increase the number of affordable dwellings needed by an equivalent amount.
12. It also provides updated information to reflect affordable home ownership which it gives as an additional 6,129 units.
13. Added to 3,377 the LHN Assessment identifies a need for 9,506 affordable dwellings or **475** per annum. Again, this is higher than 206 per annum figure I identified from the 2016 SHMA.
14. For 2020/21 monitoring period a shortfall of -372 affordable dwellings has already accrued (103 gross completions – 475 need). Once again, this shortfall is likely to be greater once Right to Buy losses for the 2020/21 monitoring period are deducted.

### **Conclusion**

15. The updated LHNAs only goes to demonstrate further the extent of need for affordable housing in South Somerset, with both Assessments showing an ongoing level of need significantly higher than the previous SHMA.
16. Against this scale of need, the provision of up to 70 affordable homes at the appeal site should be afforded **very significant weight** in the determination of this appeal.

Note prepared by James Stacey

08/11/2021