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## **Affordable Housing Proposal for Land North of Deepdale Farm.**

### **Site Overview**

Davidsons Homes Outline Planning Application for up to 135 dwellings at Land North of Deepdale Farm, Lutterworth Rd, Burbage, was refused on 30th September 2020 under application number 19/01405/OUT but was granted under appeal ref: APP/K2420/W/20/3265143 on 6th October 2021. A Reserved Matters consent was approved on 6th July 2023 under reference: 22/00636/REM.

The signed S.106 agreement asks for 20% Affordable Housing Contribution which includes 75% Affordable Rented Homes and 25% Intermediate Homes “unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Borough Council”.

One Place Affordable Housing Solutions were instructed by Davidson Homes to find an RP partner for the 27no. s106 Affordable Units on the 25th January 2022. A comprehensive list of 10no RP's were approached and only 3no. offers were returned. One Place then revisited the list of RP's in July 2022, going out to 12no. RP's, but only receiving 2no. offers. This process was repeated in October 2023 & January 2024, but this time there were no offers because the market conditions at the time, which are still the same in the current market. I attach below the schedule of comments from the RP's:

## **Registered Providers**

The current economic climate continues to impact the housing market, the increased cost of borrowing is making investment decisions for most RPs more difficult, and in some cases their entire development programmes have been put on hold. RPs are also facing challenges posed by the impact of the cost-of-living crisis for their tenants. Most Local Authorities are fully aware of the current issues and have probably experienced similar, noting the following difficulties:

- LPA's are still experiencing no take up by RPs (even those approached outside of the preferred partners including for-profit providers).
- The key problem stems from high levels of grant available to strategic partners to fund schemes they are prioritising with use of grant, but this grant cannot be used for S106 sites - the key delivery mechanism for most LPA's is S106 AH.
- There is unlikely to be developer appetite to provide Off the Shelf or 'Serviced Plots' and if there was developer appetite to provide these - the fact remains that these are still S106 plots which RPs in any form are not taking at present.
- A number of LPA's actively continue to work with RPs in the hope they can incentivise and encourage take up by amending tenures, units mix to accommodate their preferences above the usual requirements to and try to work up innovative solutions.
- LPA's are currently having to work pragmatically and innovatively to agree AH Schemes.

## **Benefits of the Off-Site Contribution**

The local authority's Housing Strategy emphasizes the need to deliver affordable homes that meet the specific housing needs of the community. The off-site contribution will allow the council to allocate resources to areas where there is a more immediate demand for affordable housing, ensuring that these homes are delivered in locations where they will best serve local residents. The contribution may also be used to address specific housing challenges, such as providing specialist or supported housing, which might be difficult to deliver within the current development but is a priority within the broader housing plan.

## Conclusion

The proposed off-site contribution supports the goals of the Local Housing Strategy by enabling the local authority to deliver affordable homes in the most appropriate locations and tenures, responding to local housing needs, and optimizing the use of resources. It aligns with strategic priorities of maximizing the delivery of affordable housing, addressing housing affordability, and creating sustainable, inclusive communities.

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