

MEMORANDUM

To: Ben Glover
Senior Planning Officer

From: Debbie Ealand
Housing Supply Officer
Ext: 4526

Your Ref: 24/01883/RM

Date: 26 September 2024

**Reserved Matters: Application for the approval of reserved matters comprising details of the siting, design and external appearance of the development, and the landscaping of the site in respect of the approved outline planning permission ref: 18/01502/OP for the development of 140 dwellings and a new shop on the land between Royston Road and Cambridge Road, Barkway
Land between Royston Road and Cambridge Road, Barkway, Hertfordshire.
Case Ref No: 24/01883/RM.**

Dear Ben,

Thank you for your memo of 6 September 2024 in respect of the above reserved matters application.

Barkway is one of five villages in the Local Plan where a greater amount of development has been allocated. Barkway has two allocated housing sites which are expected to deliver an estimated total of 160 new homes. The development boundary is shown on the Policies Map to indicate the area within which further development will be allowed.

Barkway is a Category A village and the site is allocated, site BK3 in the Local Plan and outline permission has been granted.

The affordable housing requirement is 40% on sites which will provide 25 dwellings and above, in accordance with the Local Plan.

The preparation and review of all policies should be underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence. This should be adequate and proportionate, focused tightly on supporting and justifying the policies concerned, and take into account relevant market signals, in accordance with the NPPF.

Paragraph 63 of the NPPF says “Within this context of establishing need, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. These groups should include (but are not limited to) those who require affordable housing; families with children; older people (including those who require retirement housing, housing-with-care and care homes); students; people with disabilities; service families;

travellers; people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes”.

Paragraph 64 of the NPPF says “Where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required, and expect it to be met on-site unless:

- a) off-site provision or an appropriate financial contribution in lieu can be robustly justified; and
- b) the agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.”

A rural Housing Needs Survey (HNS) was undertaken by Community Development Action (CDA) Herts. in Barkway in 2019.

The HNS identified a total affordable assessed housing need for 18 units over a five-year period; including a mix of one, two and three bedroom homes for rent and sale on a shared ownership basis. Types of accommodation identified included flats, houses and bungalows, including sheltered and adapted accommodation. A small number of residents also mentioned an interest in community led housing and self-build.

The following types and minimum bedroom numbers, were identified:

Type	Affordable rent minimum	Total
1 bed flat / house	2	4
2 bed flat / house	1	7
3 bed house	0	2
1 bed sheltered / bungalow / accessible	1	2
2 bed sheltered / bungalow / accessible	1	3
TOTALS	5	18

This can be summarised as:

6 x 1 bed units
10 x 2 bed units
2 x 3 bed units

Evidence from the survey suggests that two bed family accommodation is needed across all tenures including market housing.

Based on 140 dwellings overall the affordable housing requirement is for the provision of 56 affordable dwellings, in accordance with the Local Plan, which the applicant is proposing to deliver.

Within the overall 40% affordable housing requirement a 65%/35% rented/ other intermediate affordable housing tenure split is required, in accordance with the Local Plan, the Council's Developer Contributions SPD and the 2016 Strategic

Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Update. This requires 36 rented units and 20 other affordable housing tenure units to meet housing need.

An indicative mix identifying the type/ size and tenure of units in the s106 Agreement was based on evidence from the 2016 SHMA. The 2023 SHMA update indicates a need for 65% affordable housing for social rent, 15% for affordable rent and 20% for other / intermediate affordable housing.

Within the combined rented affordable housing tenure, the 2023 SHMA indicates the following mix best meets housing need:

36 x 7% x 1 bed flats (2)
36 x 9% x 2 bed flats (3)
36 x 22% x 2 bed houses (8)
36 x 50% x 3 bed houses (18)
36 x 10% x 4 bed houses. (4)
36 x 2% x 5 bed houses (1)

Within the 35% other/ intermediate affordable housing tenure the 2023 SHMA indicates the following mix best meets housing need:

20 x 22% x 1 bed flats (4)
20 x 15 x 2 bed flats (3)
20 x 43% x 2 bed houses (9)
20 x 20% x 3 bed houses (4)

The figures in both the 2016 and the 2023 SHMA for 3 bed homes for rent is at odds with what the Council know is needed locally in accordance with housing register data and there is high demand across the district for two bedroom family houses for rent and intermediate affordable housing tenures. The number of one bedroom homes for single person households is low for rented accommodation which is also at odds with housing register data.

There is a growing need for wheelchair accessible houses/ bungalows for families with an adult or child with disabilities and/ or limited mobility. The applicant is proposing the provision of 4 x two bedroom bungalows and 4 x one bedroom ground floor flats to meet the requirements of Policy HS5: Accessible and adaptable housing.

This provision will assist in meeting housing need identified in the 2019 Barkway & Nuthampstead HNS.

The applicant's proposals for the rented affordable housing are acceptable but I would suggest that the applicant reduces the number of three bedroom shared ownership houses to 10 and provides the other 10 shared ownership homes as two bedroom houses, doing away with the four bedroom shared ownership homes.

The definition for affordable housing includes housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers).

The affordable homes should be owned and managed by a registered provider, should be spread across the sites in small clusters rather than be situated on one or two parts of the site and should be physically indistinguishable from the market housing.

In June 2021, the Government introduced a policy requiring 25% of affordable housing provided to be First Homes. First Homes can be considered on merit where the overall proportion of affordable housing that can be achieved on site will not be adversely affected and the Local Plan requirement for 65% of affordable homes for rent is met. Fourteen of the twenty intermediate affordable housing units could be delivered as First Homes to meet this requirement.

The Council will accept Affordable Rent tenure units up to 80% of local market rents (including service charges, where applicable) for one and two bed homes and Affordable Rent tenure units up to 70% of local market rents (including service charges, where applicable) for three bedroom homes to ensure affordability.

Four bedroom homes should be let at Social Rents (excluding service charges, where applicable) as evidenced in the 2016 SHMA and the 2023 SHMA Update, and all rents should be within Local Housing Allowance (LHA rates).

Any affordable homes should be allocated to applicants with a local connection to Barkway and Nuthampstead in the first instance.

As Barkway has a population of 3,000 or less, protected area status applies. Staircasing on any shared ownership properties is restricted to 80% in accordance with

The Housing (Shared Ownership Leases) (Exclusion from Leasehold Reform Act 1967) (England) Regulations 2009 which came into force on 07 September 2009. These regulations include the introduction of Protected Area Status for settlements currently exempt from the Right to Acquire (i.e. those with populations of less than 3000).

This ensures that the homes remain affordable in perpetuity.

The nationally described technical housing standards provide the nationally recognised standards for bedrooms, storage, and internal areas in new dwellings across all tenures. To ensure schemes are appropriately designed the affordable units are required to meet the nationally described housing space standards.

Parking courts are not desirable as there is often limited or no natural surveillance and residents prefer to park outside or near to their homes. To minimise on street parking, parking spaces should be provided in front of or adjacent properties with good natural surveillance.

Grant funding for the affordable housing on S106 sites is not available and the affordable housing should be delivered through planning gain alone.

Issues of financial viability must be submitted to the Council using a recognised financial toolkit and this will be independently tested at full expense to the applicant, in accordance with the Council's Developer Contributions SPD.

I hope this information is useful. Please contact me if I can be of any further assistance.

Regards

Debbie Ealand
Housing Supply Officer