

Brent Knoll Affordable Housing Project

Briefing Update

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Purpose Paper

This note discusses recent activity associated with the Brent Knoll Affordable Housing Project.

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Defining Affordable Housing

Affordable housing allows **LOCAL PEOPLE** to access a **suitable home**, at a **price they can afford**, where they were **born / grew-up / have support and social networks or work in**

Affordable housing is best described as housing provided at prices below the prevailing market value to people who are unable to find a suitable home on the open market (primarily due to its price).

Affordable housing can be provided on **rental basis**

Affordable housing **homeownership basis**.

Affordable housing can be provided by the **public and-or private sector**.

Affordable housing can be provided by the **community** (CLT etc etc)

The Affordable Housing Project Plan

~~Stage 1: Understanding local housing need for affordable housing~~

Stage 2: Finding and securing a suitable site for the new affordable housing.

Stage 3: Designing and agreeing a housing project.

Stage 4: Identify development partners

Stage 5: Agree funding options, followed by securing funding and planning permission

Stage 6: Construction phase

Stage 7: Occupation stage

Stage 1

Brent Knoll HNA published December 2013

Understanding Local Housing Need in Brent Knoll

It is important to note that the Brent Knoll Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) offers a snap shot of the housing situation in the parish at the time of the survey. These will alter with increasing/decreasing values of housing, policies of lenders, the economic climate, and demographic changes in the community and as individual's situations change.

Affordable Need	2bedB (rent)	2bedH (rent)	2bedF (SO)	3bedH (rent)	TOTAL
Now	1	3	0	2	6
Within 1yr	0	0	0	1	1
Within 5yr	0	0	1	0	1
TOTAL	1	3	1	3	8

The 2013 HNA is reaching the end of its useful shelf life. It should be noted that the SDC Housing Development Team recommend that a refresh of the HNA be completed in 2016 in order to better understand the latest levels of local affordable housing need.

Stage 2

SDC Housing Development Team has been looking for a suitable parcel of land on which new affordable homes could be built.

Finding and Securing a site for the new affordable housing.

This site search exercise followed a sequential approach using local knowledge, evidence from planning reports from the previous site search, Internet Mapping facilities and adopted planning policy maps. The site assessment considered issues relating to planning history, flooding, conservation, archaeological status, flooding, access (highways and pedestrian), topography and established uses.

Sequential Site Search: Stage 1

Sedgemoor District Council Planning Policy first requires that any sites inside the Brent Knoll settlement boundary are explored for their potential to deliver affordable housing. It

soon became apparent that there were no available, suitable and achievable parcels of land fitting this description.

Sequential Site Search: Stage 2

Given the apparent absence of any suitable, available and achievable parcels of land within the settlement boundary, the site search exercise expanded its search to include parcels of land outside the settlement boundary. Sedgemoor District Council Planning Policies (D7 & P4) allows for sites outside the settlement boundary to be delivered for affordable housing if there is a demonstrable local need and support from the community.

Assessment Criteria 1: Site Availability for Housing

A site is considered available for development, when, on the best information available, there is confidence that there are no legal or ownership problems, such as multiple ownerships, ransom strips, tenancies or operational requirements of landowners. The key question asked under this assessment was a simple one. Did the land owner wish to dispose of their land to support the provision of affordable housing?

Assessment Criteria 2: Site Suitability for Housing

Factors such as planning policy restrictions and limitations (designations, protected areas, existing planning policy and corporate, or community strategy policy), any physical problems or limitations (access, infrastructure, ground conditions, flood risk, hazardous risks, pollution or contamination), any potential Impacts (upon landscape features and conservation) and any environmental conditions

Assessment Criteria 3: Site Achievability for Housing

A site is considered achievable for development where there is a reasonable prospect that housing will be developed on the site at a particular point in time. This is essentially a judgement about the economic viability of a site, and the financial capacity of the affordable housing provider to actually build the new homes.

This second stage exercise identified a limited number of possible land parcels.

The Parish Council felt that the SDC Housing Development Team should concentrate on bringing forward a brownfield parcel of land in the heart of the village ("site 1"). After lengthy unproductive discussions with the land owner, further work in respect of this land parcel was discontinued. The land was not available.

There were another three potential land parcels to consider.

After further discussions with the Parish Council, it was agreed that the SDC Housing Development Team should concentrate on bringing forward a parcel of land to the north of the heart of the village ("site 2"). Strong progress has been made in terms of this parcel of land. The following activities have taken place:

SDC Housing Development Team and a Contractor met with the landowners and have concluded that the land is available, potentially suitable and achievable.

As at June 2016, discussions had progressed sufficiently well enough to report matters back to the Parish Council. To progress matters further, Parish Council support to progress to the hosting of a public consultation day would be needed. The purpose of the event would be to gauge the reaction of local people to the possible redevelopment of the parcel of land in question. This discussion with the PC has not taken place at this point in time.

The PC did not wish to consider the remaining two parcels at this point in time. One was located in the heart of the village and the other closer to the A38.

The community consultation on specific parcel on "site 2" would allow local people to:

1. Provide local people with an insight into the subject of affordable housing.
2. Offer help and advice to local people who need help to find suitable home at a price they could afford.
3. Gather initial community views and opinions to the possible construction of new homes on site 2.
4. Ask local people whether there might be other parcels of land available on which new homes might be built.