

Briefing note	<p>Chedzoy Affordable Housing Project</p> <p>Chedzoy Parish Council Briefing: Paper 1 – Presented 3 July 2017</p>
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	<p>Did you know that it is NATIONAL RURAL HOUSING WEEK</p>
Housing Enabling Team	<p>Sedgemoor District Council’s Affordable Housing Development Team (AFHDT) is a small-dedicated team with specific responsibility to oversee the delivery of new affordable housing. The team are part of the wider SDC Strategy and Development Service. This service is responsible for developing and implementing many of the Council’s key strategies and policies.</p> <p>The team has a successful record of accomplishment of delivering affordable homes in rural communities. The AFHDT provides support and advice to parish councils, landowners, developers and registered providers with the aim of developing new affordable housing.</p> <p>The AFHDT has developed its own housing need assessment processes, which provide publically available independent and robust evidence for future housing growth in rural communities.</p>
The Housing Picture in Chedzoy	<p>As per the March 2011 Office for National Statistics census Chedzoy’s population is 404. There are 162 homes in Chedzoy.</p> <p>Owner Occupation (homeownership) is the dominating tenure in Chedzoy. There are 133 owner occupied homes which equates to 82% this is significantly above the average for Sedgemoor which is 71.3%.</p> <p>Private Rented Sector there are only 13 properties to rent in Chedzoy, there is evidence to say there is a high level of local demand when vacancies are advertised. The rent levels for these properties are higher than the local district average.</p> <p>Affordable Housing there are 10 affordable rented homes in Chedzoy which equates to 6%. This is significantly below the average for Sedgemoor which is 20%. These homes do not have any form of local priority allocation plan attached to them.</p> <p>The prevailing high cost of buying a home means that Chedzoy properties remain unaffordable and out of reach for a significant number of local people.</p> <p><u>Unaffordable housing prices</u>, linked to a <u>lack of housing choice</u> is a major barrier for many.</p> <p>In summary, there are a growing number of adult children unable to get on the housing ladder who continue to live with parents or relatives. Many are forced to leave the village due to lack of affordable housing. Rural house prices are usually well above average, while local rural incomes are well below average. The affordability gap continues to grow and adds to the increasing loss of younger adults and families who often support and contribute to local rural communities. Local shops, schools and transport services can be affected as young people and families are forced to look for more affordable places to live.</p>

<p>Affordable Housing</p> <p>What is it?</p>	<p>Affordable housing allows LOCAL PEOPLE to access a suitable home, at a price they can afford where they were born / grew-up / have support, social networks or work in.</p> <p>Affordable Housing Project = Housing Need + Strong Local Connection with Chedzoy</p> <p>Housing Need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A household is considered to be in housing need if one or more of the following criteria apply and where they are incapable of resolving their housing problem in the prevailing local housing market: ▪ People with a particular social need, which cannot be resolved except through a move. ▪ Who cannot afford market properties and have a need to move. ▪ Homeless people, who those living in insecure housing (this will include housing that is too expensive compared to the household’s disposal income). ▪ Where there is a mismatch between the housing need the current home (overcrowding or under occupation). ▪ Someone with a physical (or other medical) impairment living in unsuitable housing. ▪ Where the property lacks basic facilities and places which are subject to major repair. <p>The best description of Affordable housing is 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.</p> <p>Local Connection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Currently living in parish for a reasonable period of time. ▪ Previously lived in the parish, but moved away due to problems finding a home. ▪ Permanent employment in the parish. ▪ Strong family connections. <p>Affordable housing can be provided on a rental basis.</p> <p>Affordable housing can be provided on a homeownership basis.</p> <p>Affordable housing can be provided by the public sector (Council or Housing Associations).</p> <p>Affordable housing can be provided by the private sector (house builder and private landlords).</p> <p>The community could provide affordable housing through a Community Land Trust.</p> <p>Affordable Housing - Rented and Homeownership</p> <p>Local authorities and housing associations own Social Rented housing. Guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. Local authorities or housing associations own Affordable Rented housing. Affordable rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable). In rural communities, such as Chedzoy we generally encourage a preference for social rent where possible. Social rent is considered the more affordable form of renting.</p> <p>Affordable Homeownership Options</p> <p>Affordable homeownership includes Shared Ownership (part rent/part buy), Low Cost Home Ownership (for example 20% less market value), self-build, custom build & Help to Buy.</p>
<p>Delivering Housing in Chedzoy</p>	<p>Current Position</p> <p>The existing Core Strategy identifies Chedzoy as Countryside. Housing Development in Countryside under Policy P6 is strictly controlled. Development would only be supported where it accords with other relevant policies contained in the Core Strategy that provide, exceptionally, for development in the countryside.</p>

	<p>The Future – Opportunities</p> <p>The new emerging Local Plan currently undergoing consultation and is due for adoption by Sedgemoor District Council in Summer 2018.</p> <p>The emerging status would see Chedzoy designated as a Tier 4 Settlement and have a settlement boundary.</p> <p>Ideally, any new housing should be built on land within the village settlement boundary. If this is not possible, on land well related to the village development envelope.</p> <p>However, the emerging policy will allow development outside the settlement boundary that fulfils identified local housing need, supports a prosperous rural economy, and contributes to priority local infrastructure and services.</p> <p>The associated scale of development considers the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on meeting local housing needs and the retention / expansion of existing employment sites; • Retention of existing and provision of new key local services / facilities • Delivery of dwellings on existing committed sites with planning permission (approximately 20 dwellings); • Maximising development opportunities within the existing settlement through appropriate infill and redevelopment opportunities; • Specifically releasing small scale mixed tenure schemes outside of settlement boundaries that meet an identified local affordable housing need; • Releasing small-scale self-build and custom build schemes adjacent to settlement boundaries that meet local demand. <p><u>Starting Position – 100% Affordable Housing</u></p> <p>By its very nature, the building of affordable housing requires some form of subsidy support in order to make the homes affordable.</p> <p>Gap funding has in the past almost always been provided by the public sector (central or local government). Securing sufficient levels of public funds in support of new affordable housing has proved increasingly more difficult due to reductions in government expenditure.</p> <p>Funds are available to bid for but this fund is likely to be over-subscribed nationally.</p> <p>The complete reliance on public sector funding support (and the oversubscribed demand on such funds) might significantly delay or even hinder a project in Chedzoy.</p> <p><u>Alternative Approach - Mixed Tenure Housing</u></p> <p>Where delivery of such schemes (above) is not financially viable, cross subsidy by way of market housing will be considered.</p> <p>The number of market homes will not exceed the number of affordable units.</p> <p>Unlike the above approach, the building (funding) of these affordable housing does not require external public sector subsidy support. The gap funding is secured from the construction and sale of the open-market homes.</p>
<p>Typical Mixed Tenure Housing Project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The scale of affordable housing will be influenced by the outcome of the HNA. ▪ The affordable housing units must be on-site. ▪ The development could consist entirely of affordable-housing. ▪ The number of market homes will not exceed the number of affordable units. ▪ The affordable-housing should be well integrated with the open market homes. ▪ The affordable-housing units will be provided free from public sector investment, with some of the sales profit from the market housing subsidising the affordable homes.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In terms of affordable-housing unit size, minimum internal floor sizes must apply. ▪ The affordable-housing units must be undistinguishable in appearance and specification from the open market units on the site. ▪ Where affordable rented or shared ownership units are proposed, the long term management of the on-site affordable units should ideally be transferred to one of the Council's Main Development Housing Association Partners currently working in Sedgemoor. I would wish to secure the HA at the earliest possibility in order to ensure the overall development is viable and deliverable. ▪ The affordable-housing units (in reality the OMV homes) must achieve the highest standards of energy efficiency and sustainability. ▪ The TCPA s106 agreement must include a local letting (sale) plan for the allocation (sale) of the affordable housing units. This LLP will prioritise local people seeking an affordable home will have first refusal for new and future vacancies.
<p>Affordable Housing Project Plan Stages</p>	<p>Stage 1: Understanding Local Housing Need for Affordable Housing</p> <p>This would usually see the AFHDT conduct a parish wide Housing Need Assessment (HNA) of local people and their future housing requirements.</p> <p>The HNA is typically a survey of people seeking an affordable home, however a Chedzoy HNA would give an insight into the scale and nature of local housing need, both affordable and other tenures (such as open market downsizing).</p> <p>The AFHDT approach to the HNA would see a HNA questionnaire sent to every property in Chedzoy, the questionnaire would also be sent to those registered on Homefinder Somerset who have a local connection to Chedzoy. Each form received is assessed individually. A draft HNA report is then presented to the parish council.</p> <p>Stage 2: Finding & Securing a Suitable Site for the New Affordable Housing</p> <p>Finding specific parcels of land which are available for development follow a sequential site search:</p> <p>Sequential Site Search: Stage 1</p> <p>Potential site WITHIN Chedzoy settlement boundary</p> <p>Sequential Site Search: Stage 2</p> <p>Potential site OUTSIDE Chedzoy settlement boundary</p> <p>Initial Desktop Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is the site available? ▪ Is the site suitable for housing development? ▪ Is the site deliverable and achievable for housing development? <p>Once these assessments have been carried out the parish council will have a list of preferred sites that that would like to pursue</p> <p>Stage 3: Designing and Agreeing a Housing Project</p> <p>This will see the establishment of a local development group to oversee further activity. This group could include representatives from the local community, the Parish Council, the AHDT, a Developer, and Registered Provider etc.</p> <p>Stage 4: Securing Funding and Planning Permission</p> <p>Details plans will provide information on viability, local lettings policy, tenure and mix of units and information for pre planning advice. Planning consent obtained and S106 signed.</p>

	<p>Stage 5: Construction Phase Contractors start on site with project/site meetings being attended by the AHDT.</p> <p>Stage 6: Occupation Stage Local people occupy the homes and an opening ceremony is organised with possible attendees being Parish Council, Developer, Registered Provider, Ward Councillors, AHDT and MP, and any other felt appropriate.</p>
<p>Parish Council Role</p>	<p>Our experience tells us that successful affordable rural housing developments are initiated and supported by active and committed Parish Councils.</p> <p>Parish Councils are encouraged to keep affordable housing on the local agenda and provide support at local housing consultations.</p> <p>Parish Council's provide local knowledge and leadership on their area and feed into the process from start to finish.</p> <p>The Parish Council Steering Group will help identify sites, initiate projects and comment on the design layout.</p> <p>Parish Council's will help facilitate local communication with local people, promote community consultation and participation.</p> <p>Parish Council's will help measure and understand local housing need.</p>
	<div style="background-color: #e6f2ff; padding: 10px;"> <p>Policy T 10</p> <p>Housing</p> <p>Housing proposals for redevelopment, infill, subdivision and conversion within existing settlement boundaries (as defined on the Policies Map) will be supported where it meets all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It does not involve the loss of, or harm to spaces or facilities (public or private) which contribute to the character and role of the settlement; • It is appropriate to the scale, design and existing character of the settlement; • It would not harm the character or amenity of any nearby property. <p>Development proposals for small scale affordable housing that meets local affordable housing needs outside but adjacent or well related to the settlement boundary will be supported where;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are evidenced by an up to date assessment of local housing needs • The scheme demonstrates meaningful and robust consultation with the Parish Council, local community and other local stakeholders. • Following consultation, it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by the local community have been fully addressed and therefore the proposal has their backing. • Are supported by a robust assessment of alternative sites normally identified in the Councils SHLAA (updated annually) that demonstrates the proposed site is the most appropriate, such assessment will include deliverability considerations • The scale of development should be appropriate to the size, accessibility, character and physical identity of the settlement; • Are well related to and complement the existing built form of the settlement, providing opportunities for walking and cycling to local services and facilities; • Schemes that are not able to demonstrate local support are unlikely to be acceptable. <p>Where delivery of such schemes is not financially viable, cross subsidy by way of market housing will be considered where;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council is satisfied it is essential for the successful delivery of the development demonstrated through an independent financial appraisal • Market housing does not exceed the affordable housing element <p>Any such proposal that includes affordable housing will be supported by a local lettings policy.</p> <p>Exceptionally small sites that deliver other local infrastructure priorities instead of affordable housing as agreed with the relevant Parish Council may be acceptable subject to considerations above.</p> <p>In accordance with Policy S3, local infrastructure will normally be secured through use of S.106 agreement. Where such an agreement results in the scheme becoming unviable, the Council will consider the use of the adopted Exceptional Relief Policy subject to any application meeting the necessary regulatory requirements.</p> <p>Any sites must be supported by a robust assessment of alternative sites normally identified in the Council's SHLAA (updated annually) that demonstrates the proposed site is preferable, such assessment will include deliverability considerations.</p> </div>