

APPENDIX 6

Details of affordable housing provision / Ascent programme / other initiatives

In 2009/10, Cabinet agreed in principle to the establishment of a Joint Venture with Harvest Housing Group to deliver affordable homes across the district. Following consideration of a number of different options, the joint venture vehicle was set up as a limited liability partnership (LLP).

Ascent through a Members Agreement was governed by two boards, non- executive to provide strategic vision to the LLP and the executive board to undertake necessary supervision and day to day management of the partnership. Both boards comprised of four members, two from the Council and two from Harvest Group.

The Ascent programme had been founded on using joint land resources of SMDC and Harvest Group. Both organisations owned a number of sites with residential potential and agreed to collaborate to bring forward the development of these sites in a co-ordinated programme. The Ascent business plan focussed on providing affordable homes by establishing a rolling programme of development, recycling sales receipts from the non-rented properties in order to support the affordable housing development.

In total, Ascent planned to provide 380 affordable homes in the Staffordshire Moorlands by March 2015. The programme was supported by nearly £8,000,000 of funding from the Homes England (HE) formally the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), and was additionally supported by funding from Staffordshire County Council and Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.

The original aspiration was to build up of 245 rental properties and 125 shared ownership properties. 17 of the homes were to be developed in rural areas. In addition, Ascent hoped to also build and sell 54 properties for outright sale. Open market sales would enable for Ascent to become self sustaining by recycling sales receipts into ongoing developments.

In practice a small number of sites, originally envisaged to be part of the Ascent programme were unable to come forward.

- West St, Biddulph (13 dwellings)
- Lightwood Road, Cheadle (34 dwellings)
- Adams Food, Prince Street , Leek (60 dwellings)

The Ascent programme has delivered the following:

Site Name	Development address	Completion date	Affordable Rent	Shared Ownership/ shared equity	Open Market Sale	Total number of dwellings
Thorncliffe View, Leek	Roaches Close,	Sept 2012	10			10
Allen Street, Cheadle	Cecilly Grove	Nov 2012	8	14		22
British	Daisy Haye	July 2014	61	21	6	88

Trimming, Leek	(Extra Care)					
O'Hare Place, Leek	Beresford Place	October 2014	16			16
Fairview Road, Leek	The Laurels	October 2014		3	2	5
Haregate Hall, Leek	Ospray Close	April 2015	19			19
Harbourne Road, Cheadle	Sandpiper Close			7		7
Titlesworth Avenue, Leek		May 2015	2			2
Horsecroft Farm, Leek	Nightingale Gardens	December 2015	4	21	10	35
Mackenzie Crescent, Cheadle	Pavillion View (learning disability)	March 2015	9			9
Haregate Community Centre	The Doves	June 2015	15			15
Tittlesworth Estate, Leek	Jayden Court	April 2015	3			3
Spence Avenue, Leek	Albion Street	April 2015	4			4
Albert Street, Biddulph	Highfields Close	April 2015	3			3
Atlee Road, Cheadle	Altee Road	March 2015	3			3
Keeling Road, Cheadle	Mulberry Court	April 2015	4			4
Carlos Close, Cheadle	Carlos Close	July 2015	2	4		6
Borwnlee Road, Brown Lee	Gardners Close	March 2015	2			2
Trent Grove, Biddulph	Trent Grove	March 2015	2			2
Hope and Anchor. Cellarhead	Cherry Gardens	April 2015	22			22
			189	70	18	277

In addition to the above affordable dwellings and open market homes being completed, a number of other community benefits such as improvements to play provision and a new community centre were also gained.

Following the success of the Ascent programme, the Council looked for further ways to continue to drive forward housing delivery. This led to the development of the Accelerated Housing Delivery Programme (AHDP)

The Accelerated Housing Delivery Programme was approved by Cabinet in April 2018. The AHDP aim is to increase delivery through the following actions;

- Open for business approach to planning applications and the regulatory process

- Facilitating development on sites with unimplemented planning approvals
- Accelerating delivery of emerging Local Plan sites
- Council- led proactive interventions

The approved committee report identified a number of actions under each main heading. The table below outlines what work has been completed to date for each identified action.

Facilitating development on sites with unimplemented planning approvals

Action	Work completed to date
Enable and facilitate private sector partners and developers to help achieve an increase in the number of completions. Work with developers and partners to understand the issues and overcome barriers which delay development.	Phase 1 letters sent to all outline and full unimplemented planning approvals where no action (such as reserved matters application or DOC) is taking place. (Appendix 1) Meetings arrange with landowners and agents who respond to letter to discuss delivery constraints in more detail.
Approach land owners with planning approvals and outline support and Homes England (HE) (formally the Homes and Communities Agency) funding available	Phase 2 letters sent to 'large 10+ dwellings' unimplemented planning approvals where no action has been identified (Appendix 2)
Approach Registered Providers, land agents and developers to understand the barriers and constraints to delivery	Extensive discussion with Staffordshire Housing Trust, Wrekin Housing Trust and Your Housing Group has taken place. A report identifying issues was presented to Executive Director.
Work with Registered Providers to identify suitable sites for 100% affordable housing and pursue funding bids with HE	Registered providers have been provided with lists of unimplemented sites to investigate further.
Work with HE to promote 'Home Build Fund' aimed at small sites and small scale builders to bring forward delivery of sites	Phase 2 letter sent to identified sites. Information to promote Home Build Fund is also available on Councils website https://www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/article/2163/Home-Builders-Fund
Revise planning pages to include guidance for small site owners and business to demystify the planning process	Guide for business owners is available on the website; https://indd.adobe.com/view/befcce7f-ccf4-4f34-9b83-f1afc9207b5e Work on the guide for small site owners is on going.

Accelerating the delivery of Local Plan sites

Action	Work completed to date
Once the Local Plan is submitted, start to approach owners of the newly allocated residential sites to look for steps for delivery	To follow
Work with private sector landowners to prepare masterplans and delivery options for larger cluster sites identified in the emerging Local Plan; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wharf Road, Biddulph • Tunstall Road, Biddulph • Mobberley Area, Cheadle • Blythe Vale sites 	Sanderson Weatherall have been appointed to prepare masterplans for Wharf Road and Tunstall Road, Biddulph. Completion of the work is likely to be Spring 2019.
Council led intervention to prepare masterplans for coordinated delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheadle Town Centre • The Mill Quarter, Leek 	The Council is working in partnership with Staffordshire County Council to prepare a tender brief to commission a masterplan for Cheadle town centre
Following masterplans, work with landowners and stakeholders to initiate delivery and land assembly discussions	To follow
Work with Stakeholders to bid for funding for relevant infra structure or viability gap as and when appropriate	Working in partnership with two local landowners we have facilitated bids for £1,700,000 and £2,600,000 to the Local Growth Fund through the Stoke and Staffs Local Economic Partnership to support infra structure requirements and remediation work.

Council led proactive interventions

Action	Work completed to date
Consider proactive intervention by the council where appropriate to gain more control and certainty over development by using Council resources and powers in form of assets, funding, borrowing powers, CPO powers and skill and expertise of the staff	To follow
Commission consultants to prepare and Investment and Acquisition Strategy for the purchase of land in appropriate areas to allow direct intervention from the Council and or its partners	CBRE have been commissioned to produce an investment and acquisition strategy which will be used to inform the Councils prudential borrowing and financial plan.
Consider a housing delivery vehicle such as a joint venture for public sector led delivery of a range of housing tenures and typologies.	To follow
Work with other public sector bodies to	Work is on going with partners.

review land assets in their ownership through the One Public Estate programme (OPE) and consider options for enhanced service delivery through rationalisation of assets which result in surplus land for additional housing sites.	
Review all council owned land assets and consider development where appropriate	Ongoing

Appendix One- example of phase one letter

Dear Sirs

Regarding: Planning application SMD/XXX/XXX – Erection of XX dwellings

I am writing to you regarding the above planning application. Our records indicate that you gained outline planning approval on 5th December 2014 for xx dwellings but at present haven't applied for reserved matters approval.

The Council is keen to work with local landowners and developers of sites with planning approvals and understand the issues which may prevent the development of the site.

We would like to help you move your site forward onto the next stage if that is what you desire to do. Support and advice are available for the following:

- preparing a reserved matters application
- discharging planning conditions,
- liaising with local Registered Providers for affordable housing
- understanding the market value of the site
- how to actively market the site and finding an appropriate buyer/ developer/ builder
- understanding legal issues related to development
- funding support, finance if required

Please let me know if you intend to develop your site and would like to meet to discuss how the Council may be able to help.

Please feel free to contact me on the number below and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours faithfully

Appendix 2 – example letter of phase two letters

Dear XXXXX

Homes England: Home Building Fund

I wrote you back in November 2017 to highlight the advice and support the Council is able to offer to landowners such as yourself (planning ref SMD/XXX/XXX). We are keen to work with local landowners and developers of sites with planning approvals to understand the issues which may prevent the development of the site.

We would like to help you move your site forward onto the next stage if that is what you desire to do. Support and advice are available for the following;

- discharging planning conditions,
- liaising with local Registered Providers for affordable housing
- understanding the market value of the site
- how to actively market the site and finding an appropriate buyer/ developer/ builder
- understanding legal issues related to development

In addition to the above support, we are working closely with Homes England. Homes England is a government agency that brings together land, money and planning expertise with a clear remit to facilitate delivery of new homes, where they are most needed. In order to assist landowners and developers Home England offer financial support through the Home Build Fund. The fund is a structured loan which can be provided on both a short or long term basis. Included with this letter is an information sheet produced by Homes England along with a FAQ sheet.

In order to assist landowners and developers, and make the application process as easy as possible we will be holding drop in sessions with a senior officer from Homes England who will be able to provide advice and answer any questions you have. The sessions will be held on:

- Tuesday 19th June 2018 10:00am and 1pm.

Please contact me on the number below to reserve you time slot.

Yours sincerely