

Local Government and Communities Committee

Strategic Housing Investment Plans

Response from North Lanarkshire Council

Mr Doris, MSP

Consideration of Strategic Housing Investment Plans

I refer to your letter dated 31 May regarding the above and would advise as follows. I would firstly advise that the purpose of the SHIPs is to identify the strategic housing priorities for investment rather than provide a detailed delivery programme. At the stage when a site is identified and approved for inclusion within the SHIP the detailed assessment of the housing mix may not have been finalised, particularly for sites that are identified for later years. Sites for inclusion within the SHIP are evaluated and assessed against a number of criteria, including their contribution to our Local Housing Strategy priorities, i.e.:

- Increasing supply of affordable housing to meet identified local need;
- Contribution to regeneration priorities, including creation of sustainable town centres;
- Contribution to meeting the needs of older people and those with particular needs.

In terms of how housing mix is determined for RSLs sites, this would generally be determined by the RSL in consultation with ourselves in terms of any particular needs requirements, unless the site had already been earmarked for a particular purpose. For our own sites, we determine housing mix based on a local housing needs assessment/ analysis of local waiting list, in consultation with our local housing teams. Within our Local Housing Strategy, which sets out the overall housing supply target and housing needs for the area, we have set a target of 5% of all new social rented homes being built to full wheelchair standard, and within our own new build programme we have set a general target of 10%. However, this obviously varies on a site by site basis depending on the type and location of the site/ topography etc. It should also be noted that all social rented housing is built to Housing for Varying Needs Standards making them more accessible for people who have mobility difficulties. This means that although some stock may be classified as 'mainstream' it is in fact able to be used flexibly to meet different needs. This is particularly the case in relation to ground floor cottage flats, or larger properties which have downstairs bedroom and wet room.

In terms of how we monitor progress with meeting the needs of the local area and contributing to the 50,000 target I would advise that this is principally done through the Local Housing Strategy process and through our close liaison arrangements with

our local Scottish Government More Homes team. The Local Housing Strategy sets out our Housing Supply Target and a range of other priorities, actions and indicators. Progress is monitored through an Annual Review and monitoring report which is reported to the Local Housing Strategy Steering Group, which comprises of key stakeholders from a range of services, including the Scottish Government. One of the ways that we evaluate how housing needs are being met is by monitoring trends in relation to housing pressure (ratio of applicants to available lets in the last 12 months) across our different housing areas. Obviously this is influenced by a range of factors, not just new supply, but it does provide an indicator of the level of pressure for different locations and sizes of property. In general our analysis shows that while we continue to have substantial housing need, there has been a demonstrable reduction in pressure across our housing areas in recent years. Finally, in relation to progress towards the 50,000 target, we meet on a regular basis with our local More Homes Team to discuss progress with the implementation of the Strategic Local Programme to ensure that we are working effectively together to achieve full spend on the annual budget, meet targets and develop the forward programme to meet our local housing priorities.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you require any further information please contact Pamela Humphries, Housing Development Manager.

Regards

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