

Local Government and Communities Committee

Strategic Housing Investment Plans

Response from the City of Edinburgh Council

Dear Convener

Consideration of Strategic Housing Investment Plans (SHIPs)

Please find Edinburgh's response to the questions detailed in the letter of the 31 May 2017 set out below.

Edinburgh is one of the most highly pressured housing markets in the country. Falling incomes and rising housing costs in the private market and an insufficient number of new affordable homes are the main drivers of poverty and inequality in the city. Edinburgh therefore needs affordable homes of all types. In response to this, the Council in partnership with housing associations set out an ambitious strategy to deliver 16,000 affordable homes over the next 10 years, this target has recently been increased, by the newly formed Council, to 20,000 homes. This clearly demonstrates Edinburgh's commitment to support the Scottish Government's target to deliver 50,000 affordable homes by 2021.

How do you decide on the number of specific house type, house sizes and tenures that will be delivered in your area (which may either be detailed in your SHIP or decided at a later date).

The SHIP provides a valuable delivery planning tool. The Council and RSLs consult with communities and partners regarding the sites and homes which are presented for inclusion in the SHIP. Housing is designed in accordance with local Planning policies and best practice in housing design and place making.

The Council's own house building team and Housing Association partners consult with local housing management colleagues to ensure that the mix of properties proposed for a site match the needs of the local area. A 10% provision of wheelchair properties target is included within each development of social rented housing, with an additional 10% suitable for ambient disabled.

Local planning policies play an important role in determining the mix and types of affordable homes delivered across the city. Edinburgh Council's Planning Design Guidance advises that 20% of the total number of homes delivered on sites of 12 or more should be designed for growing families: *"These types of homes should have three or more bedrooms, have good levels of storage and have direct access to private gardens (for example via patio doors or private external stairs) or safe play areas for children."*

Over half of the completions set out in SHIP will be delivered through the Affordable Housing Policy (AHP) over the next five years. The 25% affordable housing secured through AHP sites reflects the mix of the wider site. This mix is primarily determined by the developer; however affordable housing providers can and do influence the design of

individual homes. A tenure blind approach is adopted so that externally housing for market sale cannot be distinguished from housing for affordable rent.

In addition to this, the Housing Contribution Statement, part of the Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan 2016-19, includes a commitment to support the delivery of around 3,000 affordable homes and integrated health, care and support services for people with complex physical and health needs. The Edinburgh Affordable Housing Partnership Health and Social Care Housing-sub group has committed to undertaking a piece of work to identify and quantify the types of housing that will be provided as part of this commitment. The draft 2018-2023 SHIP will be shared with Health and Social Care Partners, to allow them to influence and make recommendations for specialist housing requirements before it is submitted to Scottish Government in October 2017.

The sites presented for inclusion in the SHIP are designed to meet local needs as identified in the processes outlined above. Individual projects are assessed on the basis of deliverability, including considerations such as site ownership, planning status and delivery timetable.

In addition to this, we give priority to projects which match Scottish Government outcomes. We have made a commitment to align our approvals programme with the Scottish Government target of 70 (Social Rent): 30 (Mid Rent) tenure split. Significant work has been done with housing association partners and Scottish Government to maximise the amount of social rent being progressed through the programme. The AHSP has a combined social rent rate of 64% over the next two years. Whilst we will continue to focus on maximising social rent it needs to be acknowledged that we have a desperate need for all types of affordable housing and we will seek to maximise opportunities of all tenures where they arise.

How do you monitor and evaluate whether the SHIP, and the projects finally delivered, meets the requirements and needs of the local area and also contribute to the Scottish Government's target of 50,000 affordable homes by 2021.

Edinburgh is one of the most highly pressured housing markets in the country with high housing costs and a high need and demand for affordable housing. As set out in the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment, it is estimated that Edinburgh needs will need between 3,300 and 4,600 new homes every year for the next 15 years to meet demand.

Edinburgh therefore needs an increase in all types of affordable housing. This continued demand is evidenced through the number of people seeking social rented housing. There are currently around 23,000 people registered on EdIndex, the citywide housing register; with each let having an average of 167 bids. Mid-market rent homes also continue to see very high levels of interest.

Turnover of new build affordable housing, included housing developed for mid market rent, is very low. This provides evidence that the homes developed are meeting city wide and local needs. The Council carries out reviews of new

developments which includes seeking views of new residents. This is used to inform develop proposals for other sites.

The SHIP is an important tool for monitoring delivery of our 20,000 homes target and as we accelerate the programme an annual update will be provided to Council and Scottish Government. It should be noted that while the SHIP templates allow for specialist housing provision to be recorded, they do not currently allow for the size and mix of all properties to be noted.

Regards

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