

## **Affordable Housing in Major Developments in Keinton Mandeville. Policy Statement Adopted By Keinton Mandeville Parish Council on 7 September 2021**

SSDC adopted the current (2006- 2028) Local Plan on 5 Mar 2015. It sets out the development objectives for the district. Policy SS1 identifies the settlement strategy in which Keinton Mandeville is a “Rural Settlement” to which national countryside protection policies apply with development only permitted if compliant with policy SS2.

A strategic objective of the policy, set out at paragraph 3.4.6 is to achieve:

“A balanced housing market with a range of both general and affordable housing to meet the required growth *and sited and built to support sustainable lifestyles* with low carbon emissions, delivered through a sustainable district settlement strategy and hierarchy

Within the Local Plan, policy HG3 sets out how SSDC will address affordable housing needs. In the context of the adopted plan, this anticipated that most development would take place in the larger urban centres where there are job opportunities, good public transport, and a wide variety of commercial and social activity.

Based on the October 2016 Strategic Housing Market Assessment, SSDC requires 35% of any Major development (10 homes or more) to be “affordable”. The expected mix is 20% intermediate properties<sup>1</sup> and 80% social rented. In line with central government policy, this has changed to reflect the new “First Homes<sup>2</sup>” requirement that a *minimum* of 25% of affordable homes should be “First Homes”. The new ratio is 25% First Homes and 75% social rented housing.

Due to SSDC’s inability to demonstrate a 5-year land supply, developers are bringing forward major schemes in villages such as Keinton Mandeville which would have been unacceptable under policy SS2. When applying policy HG3 the Local Plan para 10.28 states:

“The number *type and tenure of affordable housing will be negotiated on a site by site basis* informed by the SHMA, contemporary information from the housing register and *taking into account local imbalances.*”

It is therefore clear that there is a responsibility on the planning team to consider current local requirements and adjust the mix of affordable homes accordingly. This is even more relevant given the unanticipated scale of development in rural areas enabled by the lack of a 5 year land supply. The contemporary information referred to on the SSDC planning website is the Homefinder Housing Demand Table<sup>3</sup> which is updated monthly. The latest information shows just 4 households have expressed a preference for social rented housing in Keinton Mandeville.

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<sup>1</sup> Typically shared ownership.

<sup>2</sup> First homes are discounted market housing with a minimum discount of 3

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/4740/expressed-demand-for-south-somerset-parishes-4th-august-2021.pdf>

We are aware of at least two Major developments being proposed in the village, one which has already applied for planning and one which we expect to apply in the next couple of months. If policy HG3 is applied without appropriate consideration of local circumstances, these could result in a massive excess of social rented housing being provided. This will not benefit the village, nor will it benefit those in the district that need such housing as Keinton doesn't have the services and doesn't present the job opportunities that need to go alongside that provision.

Without prejudice to the Parish Council's support or objection to such development, we believe that, until the 5-year land supply is re-established, the affordable housing element of any such development should include a much larger proportion of First Homes and shared ownership property. This will be in line with government objectives to promote home ownership and more appropriately reflect local need. In our view this should be in the ratio of 80:20 First Homes/shared ownership to social rented.