

12 May 2023

To whom it may concern

ALACHO response - [Housebuilding market study - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk) for publishing.

The questions appear to be mainly England focused, ie laws for planning.

As the Association of Chief Local Authority Housing Officers, we have answered the questions based on our area of expertise. The points regarding planning would need to come from Heads of Planning.

ALACHO agree with the proposed geographic scope for the market study, as set out in paragraph 2.32. It would be beneficial for the market study to align geographically with the Scottish Government rural and island funding package to help provide a new data source to compare against.

Planning – is often cited by developers as the main delay to the delivery of new homes just due to the length of time it takes to get planning permission. This is often due to staffing resource in LA's planning teams.

But other parts of the housebuilding system cause delays too:

Utilities – timescales for approval to connect into existing utilities.

Scottish Water Connection – again timescales for approvals to connect to Scottish Waters sewars can cause delays.

Aftercare of newbuilds – snagging is a big issue as developers build and then leave to start their next job. They often allocate little resource for trades to deal solely with snagging in the first 12 months or however long agreed in contracts. External landscaping snagging is even harder to manage with developers, with issues around frequency of cleans carried out, adhering to agreed maintenance programme.

Adoption of roads by LA - All LA's will have their roads adopted to ensure that they are maintained, and the roads will be built to the relevant standard to allow for adoption. We would not have private roads on developments. This may be different for developers building private for sale sites but then residents or the developer would be responsible for ongoing maintenance of roads...not ideal.

Competition – There are a number of large developers in Scotland, who would bid for large mixed use and mixed tenure sites,

██████████, they both have the financial and personnel resource, to easily be able to bid. Smaller developers are out there but may or may not win a tender or bid for a tender for whatever reason.

The are a numbers of large construction firms, who will tend to be on most LA house building procurement frameworks and Excel Scotland Frameworks, [REDACTED], [REDACTED], again smaller construction firms are on some frameworks but the above construction firms seem to hold a large market share.

We demonstrate fairness, value for money and transparency buy using procurement processes to contract with housebuilders, developers, professional services etc. Often our contracts, state that our contractors should use the services of local SME's.