

Land known as Bull Field, Warish Hall Farm, Takeley Affordable Housing Statement

Prepared in support of the Full Planning Application at the land known as Bull Field, Takeley, Essex.



Affordable Housing Statement

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Document History

Date	Version	Author	Revision/ Notes
15.06.23	1	J.Spencer	

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Affordable Housing Statement (AHS) has been prepared by Weston Homes to support a Full planning application in relation to the Land known as Bull Field at Warish Hall Farm, Takeley, (The Site) for the following development:

“Access to/from Parsonage Road between Weston Group Business Centre and Innovation Centre buildings leading to: 96 dwellings on Bulls Field, south of Prior’s Wood, including associated parking, landscaping, public open space, land for the expansion of Roseacres Primary School, pedestrian and cycle routes to Smiths Green Lane together with associated infrastructure.”

- 1.2. The Site is currently in use as arable farm land and extends from Parsonage Road in the west, adjacent to the Weston Group Headquarters, to Smiths Green Lane in the east with development. The site boundary includes Prior’s Wood, an area of ancient woodland which is to be retained and extended (see Figure 1, below).

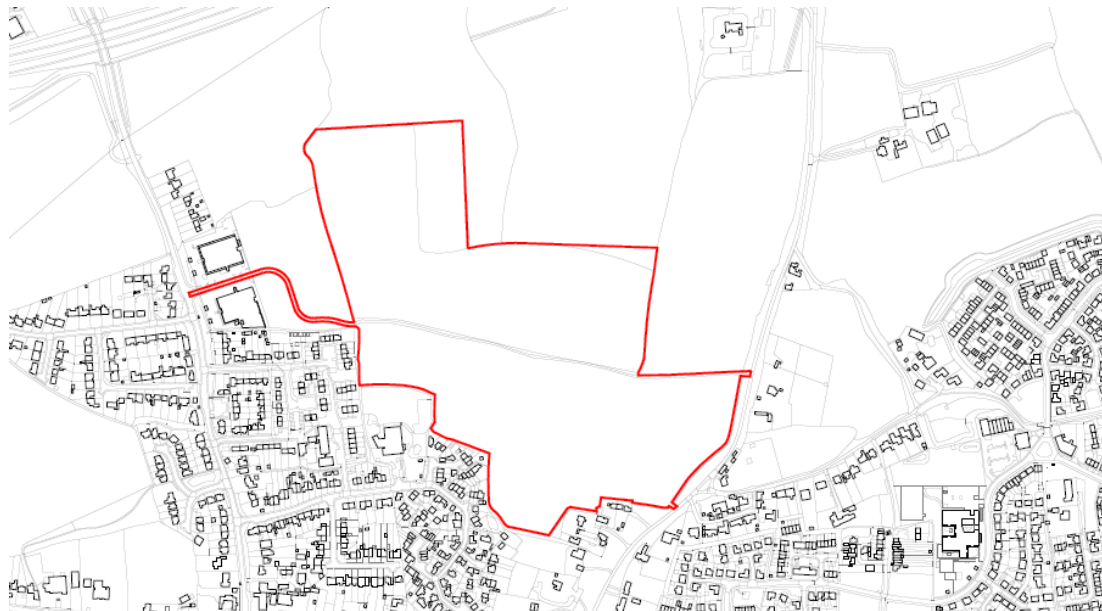


Figure 1 - Site Location

- 1.3. The Site falls within the jurisdiction of Uttlesford District Council (UDC).
- 1.4. This statement will set out the affordable housing provision which is proposed to be brought forward on site, with reference to the policy requirement set out in the UDC Local Plan and the most up to date figures for Local Demand, provided by UDC’s Housing Team.

2. Planning Policy

Adopted Uttlesford Local Plan

- 2.1. The affordable housing policy is set out within the Uttlesford Local Plan adopted in January 2005, Policy H9 (Affordable Housing). The policy wording is as follows:

“The Council will seek to negotiate on a site to site basis an element of affordable housing of 40% of the total provision of housing on appropriate allocated and windfall sites, having regard to the up to date Housing Needs Survey, market and site considerations”

- 2.2. Policy H9 seeks to achieve a provision of 40% affordable housing of the total number of dwellings on appropriate allocated and windfall sites. This is negotiated on a site-to-site basis, with regard to the most up to date Housing Needs Survey, market and site considerations.
- 2.3. The mix of affordable housing proposed is based on the latest evidence of local affordable housing need. The West Essex and East Hertfordshire SHMA – Affordable Housing Update undertaken in 2017 set out a demand for the mix, which is set out in Figure 2.

	No. of bedrooms	Affordable Rent	Affordable Rent (%)	Shared Ownership	Shared Ownership (%)
Flat	1 bedroom	260	58%	40	31%
	2+ bedrooms	190	43%	90	69%
	Total	450	70%	130	30%
House	2 bedrooms	470	42%	230	45%
	3 bedrooms	510	45%	250	49%
	4+ bedrooms	150	13%	30	6%
	Total	1130	70%	510	30%
Sub – Total		1580	70%	640	30%
Total		2,220 (100%)			

Figure 2 - Affordable Housing Demand – West Essex and East Herts SHMA 2017

Latest figures for Affordable Housing Demand

- 2.4. As the SHMA figures are somewhat dated, during the pre-application process Weston Homes confirmed with the UDC Housing Team the most recent figures for affordable housing demand and past delivery.

- 2.5. The number of people on the waiting list for affordable housing in the district has increased over the last 5 years. Figures for the demand for affordable housing in the last five years, as provided by UDC's Housing Team, are set out in Figure 5 below:

Date	Demand
Jan 2016	895
Jan 2017	856
Jan 2018	956
Jan 2019	1032
Jan 2020	1040
Jan 2021	1216

Figure 3 - Figures for Number of People on the Affordable Housing Waiting List over the last 5 years

- 2.6. Weston Homes made a FOI request to the council for the current figures for people on the Affordable Housing waiting list, which as of 25th April 2022 stood at 1299. If the 1299 people on the list 229 applicants expressed an interest in Takeley and 191 applicants expressed an interest in Little Canfield.
- 2.7. It is noted that these figures are over a year old and the affordable housing completions in the year 2022-23 as per the FOI request are 108 units (65 Affordable Rent and 43 Shared Ownership).
- 2.8. The full copy of the FOI request can be found at Appendix A.

Shared Ownership Demand

- 2.9. According to data previously provided by Help to Buy, there are currently an additional 165 people on the waiting list for a Shared Ownership home across Uttlesford District. Of the 165 people on this list, 11no. people have expressed an interest in the Takeley Area in particular.
- 2.10. It is noted that Help to Buy has now ceased so the date is no longer collected by any agency. However, it is noted that only 43 shared ownership units have been delivered in the year 2022-23.
- 2.11. Most of the individuals on the Shared Ownership List expressed an interest in 2/3-bedroom houses.

Emerging Local Plan

- 2.12. During an Extraordinary Council Meeting on Thursday 30th April 2020, Councillors decided to withdraw the draft Local Plan 2019 and prepare a new plan. The decision was made in response to the government-appointed Inspector's Letter, dated 10th January 2020, and the independent Peer Review report from the East of England Local Government Association, dated 23 March 2020.

- 2.13. Due to the withdrawal of the emerging Local Plan, there are no emerging policies to which any weight can be afforded.

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 2.14. Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines affordable housing as *“housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers)”*. Affordable housing is then broken down into four categories: a) affordable housing for rent, b) starter homes, c) discounted market sales housing, d) other affordable routes to home ownership. The definitions of each can be found in Annex 2 of The NPPF (2019).
- 2.15. Paragraph 65 requires ‘at least 10% of homes to be available for affordable home ownership unless this will significantly prejudice the ability to meet the identified affordable housing needs of specific groups.’ Starter homes, discounted market sales housing and shared ownership are affordable home ownership products.
- 2.16. Following the initial planning application, an update to the NPPF has been published but this does not have any material impact on the application, other than changing references to paragraph numbers, which this updated report has been altered to reflect.

Pre-Application Advice

- 2.17. Weston Homes engaged in early discussions with UDC to determine the level of affordable housing to be provided on the site in order to inform the design of the scheme. During pre-application discussions relating to a previous application (The Warish Hall Scheme) Ref. No. UTT/21/1987/FL, which this site formed a part of, UDC put the forward proposed mix as set out below in Figure 6.

1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed
16%	45%	33%	6%

Figure 4 - Indicative Affordable Mix provided by UDC at Pre-Application Stage

3. Proposals

Tenure & Size Mix

- 3.1. The adopted UDC Policy H9 seeks to provide 40% affordable housing of the total provision of housing made available on allocated and windfall sites, whilst reflecting current demand in the district.
- 3.2. The application comprises 96no. dwellings in total, of which 40% are proposed as affordable housing units (39no. units) as a fully policy compliant provision. The quantum and size mix of the proposed housing units is shown in Figure 5 below.

	Private	Affordable Housing Tenure		TOTAL
		Affordable Rent	Shared Ownership/ First Homes	
1 Bed	0	7	2	9
2 Bed	11	11	6	28
3 Bed	25	7	4	36
4 Bed	12	2	0	14
5 Bed	9	0	0	9
TOTAL UNITS	57	27	12	96

Figure 5 - Proposed Housing Mix

- 3.3. Figure 6 below sets out a comparison between what the affordable provision would be inline with the 2017 SHMA and the proposed provision.

	2017 West Essex and East Hertfordshire SHMA	Proposed Affordable Mix
1 Bed	6	9
2 Bed	17	17
3 Bed	14	11
4 Bed	2	2

Figure 6 – 2017 SHMA Mix vs Proposed Affordable Mix

- 3.4. The 39no. affordable housing units in total are split into 27no. Affordable Rent and 12no. Shared Ownership units. The proposed location of these dwellings is shown on Dwg. No. WH202_10_P_33.

- 3.5. To ensure the Affordable Rent and Shared Ownership units are deliverable, they have been located to represent an attractive offer to prospective registered providers (RPs). From a management perspective, the affordable dwellings have been located to avoid issues with service charges etc. Weston Homes has experience of RPs declining schemes where these management principles are not designed into the scheme. However, a more widespread, pepper-potted approach has been adopted with the above in mind that best reflects the need and which was agreed with the Housing Enabling & Development Officer during the meeting held on 14th October 2021.

First Homes Scheme

- 3.6. First Homes are a specific form of discount market housing which can be considered to meet the definition of “affordable housing” for planning purposes. First Homes were introduced within a statement from The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), made on 24th March 2021. Specifically, First Homes are discounted market sale units which:
- a) Must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value;*
 - b) Are sold to a person or persons meeting the First Homes eligibility criteria;*
 - c) On their first sale, will have a restriction registered on the title at HM Land Registry to ensure this discount (as a percentage of current market value) and certain other restrictions are passed on at each subsequent title transfer; and,*
 - d) After the discount has been applied, the first sale must be at a price no higher than £250,000 (£450,000 in Greater London)*
- 3.7. First Homes are the government’s preferred discount market tenure and should take account for at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered by developers through planning obligations.
- 3.8. With First Homes properties going to market as of 4th June 2021, Weston Homes have acknowledged that the proposed scheme can potentially make provision for First Homes as part of its affordable housing offer. This can be negotiated and delivered via planning obligation.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1. This Affordable Housing Statement has been prepared in support of the application for the erection of 96 dwellings. The AHS covers the proposed affordable housing provision (quantum, type, tenure and location) and has demonstrated the provision complies with the relevant planning policy.
- 4.2. The affordable housing provision meets a policy compliant level of 40% of the overall dwellings and the mix is in line with the 2017 West Essex and East Hertfordshire SHMA. The provision and distribution were agreed with the Case Officer and the Housing Enabling and Development Officer during the meeting held on 14th October 2021.
- 4.3. The provision of 39 affordable homes therefore forms a significant benefit of the application proposals.

**Appendix A – FOI Request (23-249) Affordable Housing Waiting List and
Delivery Rates Figures**

Subject: Freedom of Information Request – Reference No: 23-249

Thank you for your request for information, which has been considered and actioned under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The information you requested is shown below with the responses in **bold – NB only figures not previously provided have been included for historic data please see response to FOI 22-207 and FOI 21-190:**

I wish to request the following:

- Past delivery rates (over the last 3-5 years) of Affordable Housing by size and tenure;

Affordable completions:-

Year	Affordable rent	Shared ownership	Totals
2022/23	65	43	108

- The Current number of persons on the Council Waiting List;

1299 (505 in bands A to D) as at 25/4/22

- The number of people of the waiting lists for the last 3-5 years;

See response to FOI 22-207

- Number of people expressing and need/connection with Takeley/Little Canfield;

229 applicants upon the register for Takeley of which 94 are in bands A to D. A total of 27 with a local connection to Takeley of which 7 are in bands A to D. 191 applicants upon the register for Lt Canfield of which 76 are in bands A to D. A total of 19 have a local connection to Lt Canfield of which 11 are in bands A to D.

- Any information on shared ownership need at present and over the past 3-5 years.

See response to FOI 21-190 and now that the Help To Buy Agents have ceased shared ownership need is not collected by any agency

I am also seeking to obtain any data on households on the self build register for the district and again past delivery. If this is a different department, please could you advise who is best to contact.

Contact Demetria Macdonald [REDACTED] Planning Policy Officer, who responded to this part of the request for FOI 21-190.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries or concerns.

If you are dissatisfied with the response to your request, please let us know. If we are unable to resolve the matter quickly then you may wish to pursue this through the Councils complaints procedure and request an internal review be undertaken. Internal review requests should be submitted within 40 working days of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to: [REDACTED]

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Telephone: 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545 700 Website: 