

Record of an officer making an executive decision



TO SUPPORT A WAIVER OF DESIGNATED PROTECTED AREA RESTRICTIONS FOR SHARED OWNERSHIP PROPERTIES AT A SCHEME IN MOORLANDS, WING

(a) Decision(s)

To allow the restriction on stair-casing of 4 x s106 shared ownership units on a site at Moorlands in Wing to be lifted, as requested by the Registered Provider (RP) Catalyst Housing Group.

(b) Reason(s) For Decision(s)

Recent HCA guidance states:

It is evident that for some of the areas which are now covered by Designated Protected Area status, the policy aim of retention of stock is not an issue. These include planned urban extensions, new towns and many suburban sites where levels of existing or proposed development indicate that shared ownership homes would not be hard to replace.

Registered providers developing grant funded shared ownership housing where stair-casing is restricted can sometimes be affected by the limited availability of mortgages for purchasers; also many providers have raised concerns over their financial ability to guarantee to buy back properties as required by the shared ownership lease if the leaseholder wishes to sell.

As a response to these issues, the HCA has agreed that under certain conditions it is able to waive the particular conditions of grant relating to DPA status. Where schemes are not grant funded, such as the scheme referred to at Moorlands, Wing, the guidance states that the local authority should *carefully consider the merits of such a restriction if it imposes the same barriers to development that the HCA is seeking to overcome in these particular areas*. We are seeking further clarification on this and this decision is conditional to confirmation from the HCA.

Wing has identified two sites in its Neighbourhood Plan totalling just over 100 dwellings which are currently being brought forward by developers. 32 of these units are affordable and 8 of these for shared ownership. Parishioners will receive no preference for the shared ownership units above others in the district. In addition there are already 20 shared ownership units in the village, so supply does not appear to be an issue and it is therefore considered that removing the restriction would not adversely impact the availability of these units.

(c) Alternative Option(s) Considered

Not to apply for the above restriction to be lifted as above. This option would limit the purchaser by preventing their potential to own the property outright, restricting them to ownership of no more than 80% of the property. This could make a mortgage harder to obtain, put purchasers put off and oblige the RP to purchase the outstanding share upon sale of the property. This could, in turn, restrict a Registered Provider's ability to use the money to reinvest in additional affordable units and subsequently prevent them from wanting to invest in other similar schemes to bring forward affordable housing.

(d) Conflicts of Interest/Dispensation(s)

There are none

(e) Contact Officers:

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