

## Core Strategy Policy 1

### Housing provision, mix and affordability

1. Housing provision across the borough will generally be in accordance with the spatial policies contained in Section 6.
2. Development should result in no net loss of housing and housing densities will be in accordance with Core Strategy Policy 15.
3. The Council will seek the maximum provision of affordable housing with a strategic target for 50% affordable housing from all sources. This would equate to approximately 9,082 net new dwellings between 2010/11 and 2025/26.<sup>(106)</sup>
4. Contributions to affordable housing will be sought on sites capable of providing 10 or more dwellings. The starting point for negotiations will be a contribution of 50% affordable housing on qualifying sites across the borough. This would be subject to a financial viability assessment.
5. To ensure a mixed tenure and promote mixed and balanced communities, the affordable housing component is to be provided as 70% social rented and 30% intermediate housing.
6. The provision of family housing (3+ bedrooms) will be expected as part of any new development with 10 or more dwellings.
7. All new housing is to be built to Lifetime Homes standards and 10% of all housing are to be wheelchair accessible or easily adapted for those using a wheelchair in accordance with London Plan policy.
8. The Council will seek an appropriate mix of dwellings within a development, having regard to the following criteria:
  - a. the physical character of the site or building and its setting
  - b. the previous or existing use of the site or building
  - c. access to private gardens or communal garden areas for family dwellings
  - d. the likely effect on demand for car parking within the area
  - e. the surrounding housing mix and density of population
  - f. the location of schools, shops, open space and other infrastructure requirements.
9. For affordable housing, the Council will seek a mix of 42% as family dwellings (3+ bedrooms) and will have regard to the criteria listed above.
10. Where a site falls within an area which has existing high concentrations of social rented housing, the Council will seek for any affordable housing contribution to be provided in a way which assists in securing a more balanced social mix. This may include a higher percentage of intermediate housing or other arrangements as considered appropriate.

<sup>105</sup> Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites

<sup>106</sup> This is 50% of the borough's projected housing delivery of 18,165 over the Core Strategy period

### Policy justification

- 7.10** The evidence through the Lewisham Housing Market Assessment and the South East London Boroughs' SHMA shows overwhelming housing need within Lewisham, which is spread across the borough rather than being concentrated in particular locations, and for provision across a mix of housing tenures as well as housing size. This is further supported through the Lewisham Housing Strategy.
- 7.11** The SHMA modelling results show there is a five-year net housing requirement of 6,777 additional homes across all tenures.<sup>(107)</sup> The Council is seeking to deliver a strategic target of 50% of all new housing as affordable. The evidence shows that there is a pressing need for more affordable housing in the borough, which justifies our target of 50% affordable housing on new developments. This is supported through PPS3, the London Plan and the Council's own Housing Strategy. National and regional guidance further shows that the quality of accommodation and its affordability have a strong influence on the issues which contribute to quality of life such as health, crime, education and skills, key issues which the Core Strategy and the Sustainable Community Strategy seeks to address and improve.
- 7.12** The approach to affordable housing is further evidenced through an Affordable Housing Viability Assessment (AHVA) in accordance with PPS3.<sup>(108)</sup> The AHVA tested the ability of a range of sites throughout the borough to provide 50% affordable housing, with and without grant and with various tenure mixes. Following 10 years of growth, the housing market throughout the United Kingdom in 2009 is currently experiencing a severe 'correction' with values falling in London by around 20% to 25% below their 2007 peak. The Council is setting its affordable housing policy for the plan period in order to meet overwhelming housing need, during which market conditions are forecast to improve.
- 7.13** It is important to consider the affordable housing target in its proper context. It is a strategic target for delivery across all sites in the borough, many of which will deliver 100% affordable housing. The AHVA results provide support for the adoption of a 50% affordable housing target, which should be applied sensitively, taking account of individual site circumstances.
- 7.14** The affordable housing tenure mix provides for 70% social rented and 30% intermediate housing. This is supported through the Lewisham Housing Strategy and the Council sees this as being deliverable and contributing towards mixed and balanced communities.
- 7.15** The evidence from the Lewisham SHMA model has been used to generate the housing mix for social rented and intermediate housing requirements as it relates to family dwellings (those with three or more bedrooms).<sup>(109)</sup> The model demonstrates a need for larger affordable homes with 42% as three plus bedrooms. This is in line with the London Mayor's Housing Strategy. It will be important for the Council to maximise the delivery of larger affordable housing. This requires a policy decision to prioritise the provision of this housing over the delivery of some of the requirement for smaller homes identified, but this could be justified in the context of delivery of affordable housing that enables families to remain in the area and provide long term sustainability for local communities.
- 7.16** The importance of mixed and balanced communities is reinforced in PPS3.<sup>(110)</sup> The SHMA, the AHVA and the Lewisham Housing Strategy support considering alternative affordable housing tenure mixes in different parts of the borough. In areas where there is a high level of pre-existing social rented housing, a higher level of intermediate housing may be considered

107 Chapter 6, paragraph 6.28

108 AHVA, paragraph 29

109 SHMA, Chapter 6, Figures 108, 109, numbers in Table 7.1 have been rounded

110 PPS 3, paragraphs 20 to 24

appropriate. This would primarily apply within the Evelyn, New Cross, Bellingham, Downham and Whitefoot wards, which have some of the highest levels of social rented housing in England.

- 7.17** The Council will also ensure that all new dwellings are built to Lifetime Homes standards and that 10% is wheelchair accessible or capable of being adapted to ensure wheelchair accessibility. This is in conformity with the London Plan, supported by the Lewisham Housing Strategy and the South East London Housing Partnership and responds to forecast demographic change over the period of the Core Strategy and beyond.