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Meeting Title: Rother Viability Workshop

Attendees:

Mark Felgate (MF)	PBA
Mike Bodkin (MB) –	PBA
Norman Kwan (NK)	RDC
Kieran O’Leary	RDC
Jeff Pyrah	RDC
Richard Wilson	RDC
Graham Burgess	RDC
Alan Blackwell	Sea Change Sussex
Tim Daniels	Millwood Designer Homes
Laurence Hulkes	Park Lane Homes
Duncan McIntyre	McIntyre Development
John Steed	Steed Construction Ltd
Mark Presland	RPC Land and New Homes
James Briggs	Amicus Horizon
Ziyad Thomas	Planning Bureau
Sophie Palmer	Orbit Housing Group
Jane Gallifent	Hastoe
Chris Tipping	Batchellor Monkhouse
Ollie Dyer	Dyer and Hobbis
Parminder Dosanjh	Aspinall Verdi
Judith Norris	Judith Norris
Elaine Harrod	Building Design Services

Date of Meeting: 8th November 2013

Item	Subject
1.	NK introduced the workshop and the PBA team
2.	<p>MB set out the purpose of the workshop and an overview of the Community Infrastructure Levy providing a summary of its aims and objectives, setting it how it operates, and relationship with s106. Please see presentation slides for details.</p> <p><i>Post meeting note – if you want further information about CIL please go to the following pages where there are useful summaries and guidance or please feel free to ask the team.</i></p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/giving-communities-more-power-in-planning-local-development/supporting-pages/community-infrastructure-levy</p> <p>http://www.pas.gov.uk/3-community-infrastructure-levy-cil</p>
3.	<p>MF invited comment and questions on CIL.</p> <p>There was discussion around rural development and what impact CIL would have – in particular questions were asked around what type of development would be liable,</p>

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	<p>whether development would be tested for viability and whether the authority would set separate charges for certain types of development.</p> <p>MF and MB explained that development would only be liable where for non residential uses or residential extensions the development was over 100sqm net and that there is interaction with people therefore buildings such as barns or stables would not be liable for a charge. MF and MB also explained that the guidance and regulations require the viability and CIL setting to be considered in terms of not putting at risk delivery of the plan and that we are only looking at the majority of development in terms of testing and setting of CIL. Therefore in floorspace terms clearly residential development makes up nearly all the floorspace likely to come forward in Rother, with employment, and retail making up much of the rest.</p> <p>There was also a question about whether agricultural or forestry worker dwellings would be liable for a CIL charge. MF and MB responded that they would find out.</p> <p><i>Post meeting note – a bit of a lengthy response but this confirms the position: Market homes which are simply tied to use by agricultural workers or business owners by means of a condition etc. would not qualify for any relief, but certain social housing products would, as long as they meet the Reg 49 tests.</i></p> <p><i>Reg 49 sets out the definition of what qualifies for CIL social housing relief. It includes only shared ownership and rented accommodation where housing must be let by a private registered provider of social housing, a registered social landlord (within the meaning of Part 1 of the Housing Act 1996) or a local housing authority.</i></p> <p><i>The implications of this will be discussed with the local authority and the consultant team.</i></p>
4.	<p>MF described the market conditions and how Rother ranks amongst its neighbours. The market areas within Rother were also discussed with MF suggested that there were some distinctions between the towns and the villages and rural areas and even more distinction between some of the villages but with no clear geographic pattern of specific market areas.</p>
5.	<p>MF described the non residential scenarios that would be tested and the assumptions to be used in respect of values and costs.</p> <p>The scenarios presented were agreed although it was suggested that hotels should be tested</p>
6.	<p>MF described the residential scenarios to be used and explained that these were derived from what the proposed Plan has set out and the SHLAA sites. It was questioned whether past supply should also be used to guide the types of scenarios and in particular it was suggested that in the past a lot of smaller brownfield sites of 1-5 dwellings have come forward. MF and NK explained that there was some allowance in the testing for these types of sites in the towns but in going forward most of the supply would be on the allocated sites that will come forward through the SHLAA process. However it was acknowledged that a further scenario for a small development in the rural area of 1 dwelling should be tested.</p>
7.	<p>MF described the residential assumptions in terms of values and costs. There was some feedback on this as described below but as MF expressed at the time further feedback on the values and costs would be appreciated from the development industry.</p> <p>There was a discussion regarding the type of developers involved in Rother and the impacts this might have on development costs and in particular build costs. It was suggested that the majority of development both past and in the future will be undertaken by small local or regional builders and that the larger builders are unlikely to be involved – therefore the viability testing should reflect the different approaches to build costs, financing and overheads. MF agreed that this needs to be looked at in more detail and would be discussing this point with the Council further.</p> <p>There was no consensus on land values or the use of benchmarks, however it was</p>

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	<p>suggested that values attained in Wealden could be appropriate to use in Rother if they are adjusted downwards in proportion to house price difference.</p> <p>A question was asked in respect of Council Tax changes that were brought in April 2013 which mean that local authorities can now set their own rules in terms of empty properties including new builds awaiting a buyer. NK agreed to look at Rother's position and MF agreed to look at any viability implications.</p> <p><i>Post meeting note- Rother's policy for empty property (including new builds) is as follows:</i></p> <p><i>From 1 April 2013, this will change to a 100% discount for a maximum period of 1 month, after which full Council Tax becomes payable. Therefore if on the 1 April 2013, your property has had more than one calendar month exemption, you will be liable for the full Council Tax charge.</i></p>
8.	<p>MF and NK thanked everybody for attending and explained that the presentation slides and notes of the meeting would be sent out as quickly as possible and that further comments would be invited.</p>