

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council – Development Management Examination: Additional Evidence

Additional Evidence

This statement provides additional evidence requested by the Planning Inspector for the examination into the Southend-on-Sea Development Management DPD, the hearing session took place 11th November 2014.

It deals with Policy DM3: The Efficient and Effective Use of Land and Policy DM13: Shopping Frontage Management outside the Town Centre. It highlights additional evidence and research in relation to these policies.

Policy DM3 – The Efficient and Effective Use of Land (Part 4)

The supporting text of the Southend Development Management DPD (SDM) at paragraphs 3.41 – 3.45 sets out evidence and the Councils approach to managing bungalows in respect to Part 4 of the Policy. It outlines that the proportion of older people living in Southend is expected to increase and that local health care strategies seek to support independent living so a continued reduction in the rate of admission of older people into residential care is realised.

The existing stock of bungalows in the Borough (12%) being single storey, and often detached, are seen as being suitable and adaptable as a person's physical and social needs change, supporting independent living.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (2013) – Further Evidence

The SHMA¹ (2013) states that the population of the housing market area is aging significantly and will continue to do so up to 2031 and beyond. The SHMA (2013) reveals that:

'The South Essex population is ageing and the future housing needs of the older population present a considerable conundrum. Older people are living longer, healthier lives, and the specialist housing offered today may not be appropriate in future years: the number of current Care and Nursing homes can be expected to decline as people are supported longer in their own homes.' (paragraph 1.8)

It also states that:

'Population projections show that the population in Thames Gateway South Essex is likely to become older in the period up to 2031 (Chapter 9). In particular, the number of people aged 65 years and above is expected to grow considerably. Of course, many of these people will already be resident in the area – the existing population is simply getting older.' (paragraph 9.4)

¹ <http://www.tgessex.co.uk/downloads/TGSESHMAReviewDec2013Final.pdf>

Additionally Figure 75 of the SHMA outlines that, on average, the number of older people aged 75+ in Southend is expected to increase by 27% as a proportion of the population. The actual growth in older people (75+) is expected to range from 39% - 50%.

Furthermore, the SHMA refers to the need for housing types that can accommodate older people and those with disabilities. Paragraph 9.29 of the SHMA refers to *Housing in later life: planning ahead for specialist housing for older people (2012)*², which contains suggested policy wording for Local Plans. This includes ensuring that:

'older people are able to secure and sustain their independence in a home appropriate to their circumstances and to actively encourage developers to build new homes to the 'Lifetime Homes' standard so that they can be readily adapted to meet the needs of those with disabilities and the elderly as well as assisting independent living at home.' (SHMA, paragraph 9.29)

Planning Practice Guidance

The government recognises that there is a role for bungalows in providing suitable accommodation for older people. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) states:

'The need to provide housing for older people is critical given the projected increase in the number of households aged 65 and over accounts for over half of the new households (Department for Communities and Local Government Household Projections 2013)' (Paragraph: 021 Reference ID: 2a-021-20140306)³.

The PPG goes on to state that when assessing future need for older people the need for bungalows is as equally important as other types of general housing.

Nationally Published Research

- *Housing our Ageing Population: Plan for Implementation, All Party Parliamentary Group on Housing and Care for Older People (2012)*

In recognition of the design aspirations across mainstream and specialist housing and linkages to the planning system the *Housing our Ageing Population: Plan for Implementation, All Party Parliamentary Group on Housing and Care for Older People (2012)*⁴ put forward a number of suggestions to be included as design criteria, including those that:

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http://www.housinglin.org.uk/library/Resources/Housing/Support_materials/Toolkit/Housing_in_Later_Life_Toolkit.pdf

³ <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments/methodology-assessing-housing-need/>

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http://www.housinglin.org.uk/library/Resources/Housing/Support_materials/Other_reports_and_guidance/Housing_our_Ageing_Population_Plan_for_Implementation.pdf

"Concentrate on typologies that are suited to older people i.e. apartments or single-storey dwellings (or dwellings which provide self-contained accommodation on one-level)." (Page 13)

- *Housing our Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation (2009)*⁵

The *'Housing our Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation (2009)* states that *"Lifetime Homes should increase our ability to remain at home as we get older, respond to problems of reduced visual acuity, physical dexterity and mobility."* (Page 13)

- *Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England, HM Government (2012)*⁶ outlines that:

'Half of all households in England are older 'established homeowners'. Some 42 per cent are retired and 66 per cent own their own home outright. As life expectancy increases, more of these households will need support to remain in their homes in later life. Limited choice in the housing market makes it difficult for older households to find homes that fully meet their needs.' (Chapter 1, paragraph 3).

It goes on to say that:

'Good housing for older people can enable them to live healthy, independent lives and reduces pressure on working families in caring for older relatives. It can also prevent costs to the NHS and social care. For some older people a move to a smaller, more accessible and manageable home can also free up much-needed local family housing.' (Chapter 6, paragraph 27).

- *Housing Learning and Improvement Network, Viewpoint 62, Getting off the ground: Bungalow living – an attractive alternative for downsizers (2014)*

A recent viewpoint for the *Housing Learning and Improvement Network* (the leading 'knowledge hub' for a growing network of housing, health and social care professionals in England) *Getting off the ground: Bungalow living – an attractive alternative for downsizers*⁷ (2014) looks at the viability of a revival of the bungalow as a desirable, affordable option which could attract older people to downsize from a family house and concludes that:

'the chalet bungalow is an attractive option which fulfils a number of key criteria to suit active older people looking for a future proof last move.' (Page 5)

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http://www.housinglin.org.uk/library/Resources/Housing/Support_materials/Other_reports_and_guidance/Happi_Final_Report.pdf

⁶ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7532/2033676.pdf

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http://www.housinglin.org.uk/library/Resources/Housing/Support_materials/Viewpoints/HLIN_Viewpoint62_Bungalows.pdf

- *Housing Learning and Improvement Network, Case Study Report, Deck access, balconies and bungalows: new trends in HAPPI award-winning buildings (2014) concludes that:*

*'Bungalows are highly unlikely to return to being as commonplace as they were once in the last century, and the case studies referred to here need to be monitored for how they perform. But there is no doubting that for the first time in more than 30 years these much criticized designs are beginning to prove that for particular groups and in particular designs they give excellent results – flexible private and social outdoor space; access to sunshine, fresh air and views; proximity to public amenities; and a sense of personal comfort and security that encourages engagement with the community and environment.'*⁸

- *Housing Learning and Improvement Network, a better fit: Creating housing choices for an ageing population (2012) highlights that:*

*"There is very little specialist housing available to buy or rent privately, and very little mid-range specialist housing for older people who are not wealthy but do not rent socially. In the mainstream housing sector there is an under supply of bungalows relative to demand, and not all homes are easily accessible to those with limited mobility...Local planning authorities must factor older people's housing into local plans, strategies and housing market assessments, while integrating these with health and social care strategies."*⁹

- *Housing Learning and Improvement Network, Viewpoint 47, Older People: The New Kids on the Block (2013) reveals that:*

*"Alternative types of accommodation that might be attractive to older people include both the conventional and the innovative. In particular, those thinking of moving usually want standard 'retirement housing' – either a level access bungalow or flat. Both are at a premium. Valuation office information suggest that bungalows make up only 10% of the housing stock in England, and that new construction is currently at an all-time low at around 2%. Whilst flats abound, most are not built with the elderly in mind. Rising numbers of families with 'live in' parents are also being over-looked. To make matters harder, pensioners must compete with younger people to buy the few suitable homes available."*¹⁰

It goes on to say that:

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http://www.housinglin.org.uk/library/Resources/Housing/Support_materials/Reports/HLIN_CaseStudyReport_HAPPI-Buildings.pdf

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http://www.housinglin.org.uk/library/Resources/Housing/Support_materials/Other_reports_and_guidance/Better_Fit_summary.pdf

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http://www.housinglin.org.uk/library/Resources/Housing/Support_materials/Viewpoints/HLIN_Viewpoint47_NewKids.pdf

“There is now convincing evidence from bodies like the Joseph Rowntree Foundation that the best housing for older people increases wellbeing, reduces care home admissions, and offers major savings to the health service. But the impact of painfully slow build rates is truly alarming. It means that the amount of older peoples housing is actually decreasing as a proportion of the total stock at the same time as numbers of older households multiply. Meanwhile, with no reliable updated data base kept by the government, it is impossible to identify the exact quantity and distribution of existing housing suitable for older people across the country - other than to say there is just far too little of it.”¹⁰

Local Evidence and Policy

Evidence from Southend Borough Council Housing Department reveals that of the 10,018 tenants across the Council’s housing stock (September 2014) over a third (3,167) of those are aged 60 and over.

The public sector housing stock may provide a good example of how bungalows are being used to meet a key aspiration of the Southend Housing Strategy. Southend Borough Council has 211 bungalows recorded within its ownership. Of those properties, 61% have been identified by the Council’s Housing Department as having major adaptations (i.e. level access showers, adapted kitchens, access alterations etc.). It has been identified that although there is a reasonable proportion of these properties occupied by Southend’s older residents, they also provide much needed accommodation for those who may require a single storey dwelling or equivalent to assist with their everyday living and allow them to live more independent lives for longer in line with national and local policy.

Indeed it has been identified by Southend Borough Council Housing Department that the majority of bungalows may be adapted to suit both ambulant and wheelchair dependant disabled residents. They identify that the biggest need from the ‘Nominations Panel’ clients is for 1 and 2 bedroom ground floor dwellings, whether that is from older people or those who are disabled or those who qualify as both among nominees.

The Council’s Housing Department are also keen to encourage under-occupiers to downsize so that the best use may be made of the housing stock. Bungalows may be seen as a good option for older people to move to if they wish to downsize and still retain the elements that may have attracted them to a multi storey dwelling such as an independent front entrance, front garden and back garden and parking space where possible.

Evidence that the Council is keen to encourage downsizing can be found in Southend Borough Council’s ‘Allocations Policy’¹¹ (which gives those under-occupying social housing top priority on the Housing Register). South Essex Homes also provides a financial incentive to tenants who downsize¹².

Summary

¹¹ http://www.southend.gov.uk/downloads/file/2996/sbc_allocations_policy_-_august_2014

¹² http://www.southessexhomes.co.uk/seh/downloads/file/32/money_to_move_leaflet

The available evidence suggests that the population of Southend and the wider housing market area is aging, with a significant increase in the proportion and number of older people. Local and national policy seeks to support independent living in suitable accommodation for older people as an approach to reduce the costs to the NHS and social care, as well as to provide a better quality of life for people in a residential setting that is familiar, and comfortable for them.

The evidence and research outlined above highlights that single level accommodation may provide beneficial and flexible housing for older people and those with disabilities; in particular bungalows provide a very attractive and desirable proposition for older people to downsize, as they retain positive elements that may have attracted them initially to a multi-storey dwelling such as an independent front entrance, front and back garden and convenient parking.

Furthermore, downsizing has the advantage of releasing the existing larger housing stock in the Borough, which can then potentially contribute towards meeting the needs of other larger households, i.e. providing family accommodation. Overall, the retention of bungalows as a proportion of the housing stock will assist with ensuring that there is a supply of housing types and sizes that may be highly suitable, and where necessary, easily adaptable, and importantly desirable to older people as well as those with disabilities; whilst also allowing the existing housing stock to be used effectively to meet wider need in the Borough.

Policy DM13: Shopping Frontage Management outside the Town Centre

- All prior approval requests in respect to IA (A1 to C3) of Part 3 of the General Permitted Development Order (as amended):
 - According to Council records 3 prior approval requests were made to the Council as follows:
 - Two of these were granted, these were not located in either primary or secondary shopping frontage areas;
 - One prior approval was refused. This was located in a secondary shopping frontage area in Westcliff.

- All notifications of a change of use (A1 to A2 [deposit taker]) under Classes CA Part 3 of the General Permitted Development Order (as amended):
 - According to Council records no notifications have been received.