

Planning Policy,
Cheshire West and Chester Council,
4 Civic Way,
Ellesmere Port,
CH65 0BE



Kensington House,
Ackhurst Business Park,
Foxhole Road, Chorley,
Lancashire PR7 1NY
T: 01257 443 250
F: 01257 443 251
E: info@storyhomes.co.uk
www.storyhomes.co.uk

Sent via email: planningpolicy@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

**CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER LOCAL PLAN (PART TWO) MAIN MODIFICATIONS CONSULTATION:
RESPONSE TO POLICY DM 20 - MIX AND TYPE OF NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

Story Homes does not consider that Policy DM20 in its current form can be considered sound as it is not justified, effective or consistent with national policy.

Policy DM20 proposes that new residential developments provide dwellings which are accessible and adaptable dwellings in accordance with the optional higher building regulations, subject to viability and design considerations. The policy also seeks a proportion of dwellings to be wheelchair user dwellings.

When proposing these optional standards, Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) states that: "...Local planning authorities should take account of the evidence that demonstrated a clear need for housing for people with specific needs and plan to meet this need".

To establish the need, the evidence should identify the size, appropriate location and type of dwellings needed. This should be subject to a comprehensive viability assessment of the policy. The local planning authority has not produced such evidence.

Whilst the Strategic Housing Market Assessment may provide some evidence of an ageing population, this in itself does not justify the draft policy requiring all new residential developments to provide accessible and adaptable dwellings. Nor does it provide specific evidence to suggest accessible or adaptable dwellings are needed to meet an identified need.

The local authority could provide wording to support developers providing these standards and to ask developers to voluntarily consider them, but they cannot require M4(2) requirements without the evidence to demonstrate there is a clear need within the authority. It is therefore requested that this element of the draft policy is removed.

In terms of seeking a proportion of wheelchair user dwellings, PPG states that "Local Plan policies for wheelchair accessible homes should be applied only to those dwellings where the local authority is responsible for allocating or nominating a person to live in that dwelling". As such, any proposal for the M4(3) requirements to be met can only apply to affordable homes where the local authority has nomination rights. It is therefore unclear how this element of the policy will be implemented and as such, it is suggested this wording within the policy is clarified or removed.

STORY HOMES LTD
Registered in England No. 2275441
Registered Office:
Story Homes Ltd, Story House,
Lords Way, Kingmoor Business Park,
Carlisle CA6

I trust that the above comments will be taken into consideration as part of this main modifications consultation. If you wish to discuss the comments further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Siobhan Sweeney.

Siobhan Sweeney
Planning Manager (North West)