

Housing Mix Statement

For Barratt Developments PLC | 21-270

Construction of 116 dwellings - Land at Hogshaw, SK17 7HN

Project: 21-270
Site Address: Land at Hogshaw, SK17 7HN
Client: Barratt Developments PLC
Date: 05 May 2023
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1. Introduction

1.1 This statement is prepared on behalf of Barratt Homes in support of an application for the construction of 116 dwellings at Land at Hogshaw, Buxton. The proposed scheme would provide 116 open market dwellings, the breakdown of which is as follows:

Dwelling size	Number of dwellings	Percentage of scheme
2-bed	10	9%
3-bed	81	70%
4-bed	25	21%

1.2 The mix comprises the following house types:

Name	Type	Bedrooms	Floor area (sqm)	NDSS compliant	Approved Document M	Quantity
Type 50	Mews house	2	80.5	Yes	M4(2)	10
Type 52	Mews house	3	95	Yes	M4(2)	7
Hopton	Semi/ detached	3	95	Yes	M4(2)	7
Matlock	Semi/ terrace	3	90	Yes	M4(1)	32
Knightwood	Mews townhouse	3	108	Yes	M4(1)	25
Rockland	Mews townhouse	3	111	Yes	M4(2)	10
Wallasea	Detached	4	112	Yes	M4(2)	12
Ashtead	Detached	4	117.5	Yes	M4(2)	13

1.3 This statement addresses the proposed housing mix in the context of Policy H3 of the High Peak Local Plan.



2. Policy context

2.1 Paragraph 62 of the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) states that size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies.

2.2 Policy H3 of the High Peak Local Plan (adopted 2016) states that the Council will require all new residential development to address the housing needs of local people by a number of measures, including:

“Providing a range of market and affordable housing types and sizes that can reasonably meet the requirements and future needs of a wide range of household types including for the elderly and people with specialist housing needs, based on evidence from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment or successor documents (criterion b);

Providing a mix of housing that contributes positively to the promotion of a sustainable and inclusive community taking into account the characteristics of the existing housing stock in the surrounding locality (criterion c); and,

Ensuring new residential development includes a proportion of housing suitable for newly forming local households (criterion d)“

2.3 It is important to note that the policy does not require specific developments to rigidly follow mix set out in the HELNA. The HELNA is an untested evidence base document which should be, as the pre-application letter states, ‘taken into account’. Furthermore, there is an inherent tension within Policy H3. Criterion b states that the range of housing types and sizes should be based on the SHMA (which recommends a greater provision of smaller properties), whilst criterion c states that the mix of housing should take into account the characteristics of the existing housing stock in the surrounding locality. Consequently, if the surrounding locality is characterised by large 3 and 4 bedroomed properties, providing significant proportions of new dwellings as 1 and 2 bed properties in accordance with the recommendations of the SHMA would mean that there would be conflict with criterion c.

2.4 Therefore, the recommendations sets out within the HELNA needs to be considered in the context of other local evidence. This can include evidence in relation to the local housing market, other sources of housing land supply and site-specific considerations. This statement addresses the evidence which is considered relevant to this application.



3. 2022 HELNA

- 3.1 The suggested housing mix for future development in High Peak is set out in the Housing and Economic Land Needs Assessment (HELNA) that was published in September 2022. The stated purpose of the HELNA is to inform the review of the Local Plan. However, the pre-application consultation letter received from the Council on 06/10/2022 states that:

“the HELNA is deemed to be a “successor document” to the SHMA as referenced in Policy H3 and it should therefore be taken into account when determining future development proposals.”

- 3.2 The recommendations from the 2022 HELNA in relation to the mix of market housing for both High Peak as a whole as well as Buxton are outlined in the table below:

	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4 or more bed
2014 SHMA	10%	45%	35%	10%
2022 HELNA High Peak	10%	37%	41%	12%
2022 HELNA High Peak (with market adjustment)	8%	32%	44%	16%
2022 HELNA Buxton	22%	32%	40%	6%
2022 HELNA Buxton (with market adjustment)	18%	27%	44%	10%

- 3.3 As can be seen in the table above, the HELNA provides the base figures based on demographic assumptions (i.e., the makeup for future household growth), and also figures for a ‘market adjustment’, which is essentially a 15% reduction in the number of smaller (1-2 bed) dwellings and a commensurate increase in the number of 3- and 4-bedroom properties. This is based on a qualitative analysis within the HELMA which identifies that there is a strong argument to justify a further shift in the housing mix to consider the very pronounced socioeconomic shock precipitated by the pandemic and the strong (and what appears to be a permanent) shift towards homeworking and the need for larger properties to accommodate this.
- 3.4 Whilst we welcome the principle of including a market adjustment in the HELNA, as opposed to the previous Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) which did not include for any adjustment, it is



important to note that the extent of the adjustment has not been tested through a Local Plan examination. We consider that the adjustment is extremely conservative taken against the quantitative factors set out within section 12 of the HELNA, as discussed below.

Home working

- 3.5 The significant increases seen in home working (the HELNA acknowledges that 37% of employees are expected to work from home following the COVID-19 crisis). Many of these households will utilise a bedroom as an office, particularly if other options such as designated internal offices or garden offices are not available / possible.
- 3.6 Of working adults currently working from home, 85% want to use a 'hybrid' approach to home and office working in the future (ONS May 2021). It is an essential prerequisite for many prospective households for there to be a 'spare' bedroom and this can act as a flexible space for occupiers to adapt to changing circumstances over their lifetime e.g. home office working, a bedroom, a games room for children, a visitor bedroom for relatives.
- 3.7 Remote working has several other benefits that weigh in favour of the grant of planning permission. For instance, there is a reduced need for future occupiers to travel on a daily basis with reduced traffic movements on the wider rural road network. This has the effect of reducing traffic congestion, emissions and resulting improvements in air quality and public health. It is known that the Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and is moving to develop policies to improve the Borough's resilience to climate change.

Under-occupation of houses

- 3.8 The HELNA recognises that the under-occupation of larger properties in the borough, and indeed nationally, is a significant trend. This is not a trend which the planning system can remedy. The HELNA identifies that a significant cause of this is older households continuing to live in their family homes after their children have left (the HELNA describes this as 'empty-nesting').
- 3.9 The HELNA identifies that although the dominant trend in the housing market is one of under-occupation, a number of households (including families with children) are living in overcrowded conditions in High Peak because they are unable to access the larger properties that they need.
- 3.10 It is therefore important that the policy is applied flexibly to ensure that these issues do not impede the housing market, and in particular the needs of working-age households who wish to work from home, and young families unable to access 3- and 4- bedroom homes due to demographic trends which are outside of their control and the control of the planning system.



4. Local evidence

Census data (local ward)

- 4.1 The site is located within the ward of Barms. The current mix of housing within the ward¹ is shown below, alongside the current mix of housing within High Peak and the 2022 HELNA's recommended mix for new development in Buxton:

Bedrooms	Quantity	Percentage (Barms)	Percentage (High Peak)	2022 HELNA Buxton (with market adjustment)
1 bed	177	20%	9%	18%
2 bed	231	25%	29%	27%
3 bed	349	39%	41%	44%
4+ bed	145	16%	21%	10%

- 4.2 The table demonstrates that the Barms ward has a higher proportion of 1-bed properties than the High Peak average. Smaller properties are largely focused to the south of the ward, adjacent to the town centre. The central areas of Buxton are where we would expect to see larger number of 1- and 2- bed market dwellings coming forward in the future.
- 4.3 The table also indicates that the Barms ward has a lower proportion of 3-bed properties than the High Peak average. The proposed development would therefore contribute towards balancing the mix of housing in the Barms ward.

Barratt's experience of the local housing market

- 4.4 Barratt Homes have delivered approximately 500 homes in the High Peak in recent years. They therefore have an unparalleled understanding of the local housing market, and the particular demand seen in the High Peak. This proposed development has been specifically tailored to meet the local demand, in the context of the constraints and characteristics of the site.

¹ 2011 Census data



4.5 Barratt Homes is also currently delivering another site in Buxton known as Heathfield Nook (LPA ref: HPK/2017/0613). The mix proposed in that application against the need set out in the SHMA is shown in the table below:

Size	Total number	% proposed	%SHMA requirements
1 bedroom	9	3.2	10
2 bedrooms	51	18.7	45
3 bedrooms	117	42.5	25
4+ bedrooms	98	35.6	10
Total	275	100	100

4.6 Barratt Homes have confirmed that the highest level of demand is for the 3- bedroom properties. The mix proposed on this application has been informed by Barratt Homes' experience on Heathfield Nook and feedback from prospective purchasers via the sales team.



Character of the surrounding locality

- 4.7 Criterion C of Policy H3 requires proposals to provide a mix of housing that contributes positively to the promotion of a sustainable and inclusive community taking into account the characteristics of the existing housing stock in the surrounding locality.
- 4.8 The existing housing to the south of the application site and is shown on the below plan:



4.9 The area comprises the following roads:

- **Glenmoor Road** – There are 43 dwellings on Glenmoor Road, which are pre-dominantly semi-detached, with 4 detached dwellings. One of the detached dwellings is located immediately adjacent to the site. The Zoopla website contains details relating to 13 of the dwellings, with eight of these having 3 bedrooms and five having 4+ bedrooms.
- **Barms Way** – There are 8 dwellings on Barms Way, all of which are semi-detached. The Zoopla website contains details relating to 3 of the properties, all of which have 3 bedrooms.
- **St Peters Road** – There are 31 dwellings on St Peters Road, which are pre-dominantly semi-detached, with 6 detached dwellings and 7 terraced dwellings. The terraced dwellings are located to the southern end of St Peters Road. The three dwellings which are immediately adjacent to the site on St Peters Road are detached. The Zoopla website does not provide any details in relation to the bedroom numbers of the houses on St Peters Road.
- **Nunsfield Road** – Nunsfield Road is a large road with 110 houses located on it, according to the Zoopla website. For this reason, the housing mix of the road has only been considered for the northern half of the road which is located adjacent to the site. This section of Nunsfield Road is predominantly semi-detached, particularly the houses which are immediately next to the site. There are 29 semi-detached houses, 24 terraced houses and 2 detached houses. Of the houses on the north half of the road, information for 23 of the houses is available on the Zoopla website. This consists of eighteen 3-bedroom houses and five 2-bedroom houses.

4.10 The surrounding dwellings have a slightly lower housing density than that proposed under this planning application, with the dwellings in the surrounding locality consisting of approximately 24 units per hectare and the dwellings proposed under this application having a density of 28 units per hectare.

4.11 The proposals provide for a variety of terraced, semi-detached and detached units, which reflect the character of the locality. The proposed mix of housing strikes an appropriate balance having regard to the characteristics of the existing housing stock in the surrounding locality and the need to use land efficiently.

4.12 Of note, a similar position in relation to housing mix was accepted on the Heathfield Nook development. The scheme departed from the housing mix in the SHMA to a greater degree than this proposal, but that was justified primarily on the basis of the need to reflect the character of the local area. However, as discussed above, demand for the proposed development and the mix of housing has been extremely strong. There is no evidence to suggest that the Heathfield Nook development is failing to meet local needs. To the contrary, demand has been extremely strong.



5. Summary and conclusions

5.1 A comparison between the application proposal and the suggested mix of housing for new development in Buxton as identified in the HELNA is provided below:

	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4 or more bed
2022 HELNA Buxton (with market adjustment)	18%	27%	44%	10%
Proposed development	0 no. (0%)	10 no. (9%)	81 no. (70%)	25 no. (21%)

5.2 Whilst the proposal would provide 81 no. 3-bedroom properties, which the HELNA indicates is the greatest need in Buxton, it is accepted that the mix of proposed dwellings does not precisely accord with the mix set out within the HELNA. However, the mix set out in the HELNA should be applied flexibly, as the Council has correctly done so on other sites. Local evidence needs to be taken into account, as well as the characteristics of the local area (in accordance with criterion c of Policy H3). In this case, the proposed housing mix is justified for the following reasons:

- The proposed mix would contribute positively towards the mix of housing in the Barms ward, which has a higher proportion of 1-bed homes and a lower proportion of 3-bed homes than the High Peak average.
- Barratt's direct experience at Heathfield Nook is that the highest level of demand locally is for 3-bed homes and modestly sized 4-bedroom homes. The profile of the houses proposed would also provide occupiers flexibility for home working, that could not otherwise be provided within the development.
- The proposals provide for a variety of semi-detached and detached houses, which reflect the character of this part of Buxton.

5.3 Furthermore, all of the proposed dwellings would accord with the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS). 57 of the proposed dwellings (49%) also accord with M4(2) of Part M of the Building Regulations. This is important when considering compliance with Policy H3 as a whole.

5.4 To conclude, the proposed development secures an appropriate housing mix in terms of the size and type of properties, and it responds positively to the available housing need evidence and the character of this part of Buxton. The proposal therefore complies with Policy H3 of the High Peak Local Plan.



