

(For Democratic Services use)

Decision Number: 16 (2023/24)

Portfolio Holder Executive Decision Statement

The Local Authority (Executive Arrangements)(Meetings and Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012

Subject:

A Local Lettings Plan for 148 Knights Croft, New Ash Green, Kent

Details of Decision taken

To approve a Local Lettings Plan for the Quercus Housing scheme at 148 Knights Croft, New Ash Green, Kent, comprising 1 Affordable Rented home.

Reason for Decision

A Local Lettings Plan is proposed to apply to the first letting only. Its purpose is to:

- establish a balanced and stable community;
- meet housing needs;
- be mindful of the number of children within the scheme;
- ensure the scheme is an attractive place where people want to live;
- give priority to applicants under the Afghan Resettlement Scheme;
- assist the District Council with its homelessness duties, enabling said duties to be discharged, with further priority given to applicants moving on from their temporary accommodation placements into this permanent home.

The Local Lettings Plan means at first letting only, an applicant with a higher housing need under the Sevenoaks District Housing Register Allocations Policy may not be allocated the home at this scheme.

All Documents considered:

Local Letting Plan for 148 Knights Croft, New Ash Green, Kent, is attached at Appendix 1.

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Details of any alternative options considered and rejected by the Member when making the Decision:
None.

Financial implications
None.


Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement
None

Equality Impacts (Consideration of impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty)
Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups, and (iii) foster good relations between people from different groups.
The decision recommended through this paper directly impact on end users. The impact has been analysed and varies between groups of people. The impact will only apply at first letting. For subsequent lettings, the Sevenoaks District Housing Register Allocations Policy (or its successor) will be applied and the home allocated accordingly. The impact is felt to be limited and therefore proportionate, as it will assist the District Council in meeting the housing needs of a specific group from the Housing Register (homeless households).

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Local Member (s), other Portfolio Holders and Chief Officer/Head of Service Consulted	
Cllr Perry Cole, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health Sarah Robson, Deputy Chief Executive, Chief Officer, People and Places Alison Simmons, Head of Housing	
Details of any conflicts of interest	
a) declared by any executive member who is consulted by the Decision Taker None.	
b) and any details of dispensations granted by the Chief Executive in respect of any declared conflict None.	
Decision taken by:	Cllr Perry Cole, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health
Signed by Portfolio Holder	
Date of Decision	14 th Dec '23
Record made by:	Phil Magee
Date of record:	15/12/2023

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Appendix 1

Local Lettings Policy Agreement for 148 Knights Croft, New Ash Green, Kent, DA3 8HZ			
1	Name of Development	148 Knights Croft	
2	Landlord of Development	Quercus Housing	
3	Mix	1 house	
4	Size, type and tenure of home		Tenure
		1 x 4 bedroom house	Affordable Rented
5	Rent levels (including service charges) and tenancy terms applying	<p>Rent (including New Ash Green estate charge of £70.76 per month and the Village Association charge of £19.91 per month*) capped at current Local Housing Allowance (LHA) levels that for a 4 bedroom house = £1,296.45 per month</p> <p>Annual rent increases capped at CPI +1% up to the LHA level</p> <p>Assured short-hold tenancy, subject to 12 months probationary period</p> <p>*Quercus Housing, through Sevenoaks District Council's Accommodation Team, will deduct the estate charge and Village Association charge from the monthly rent paid by the tenant and pay these charges to the relevant body</p>	
6	Completion Date	Home is due to be handed over and ready for letting in December 2023	
7	Build Standards	1970's existing satisfactory street property. Two floors. Energy rating EPC - C	
8	Gifted Items	Oven, hob, dishwasher, washing machine, floor coverings and shed	
9	Any limitations or special features that may affect residents e.g. restricted parking etc.		
	Parking	Private garage located in an adjacent block	
	Pets	<p>Pets Policy in place</p> <p>Pets will be considered with prior approval by Quercus Housing</p>	
	Internal features	<p>Houses</p> <p>Lounge. Kitchen/dining room</p>	
		Heating and hot water provided via gas boiler	

		Ground floor WC and family bathroom on first floor
	Council Tax	All homes are charged at Sevenoaks District Council's Annual Council Tax rates - Bandings to be confirmed
	Landscaping and external areas	Private rear garden Private garage located in an adjacent block The communal external areas of the New Ash Green estate are maintained under an estate service charge
	Refuse storage/collection	Household refuse should be bagged by the resident and left outside the front of the home on the morning of refuse collection
	Communal Areas	No internal communal areas. See above re. external communal areas of the estate
	TV and Media	A TV connection point is provided Residents will be responsible for obtaining their own individual TV licence
		Additional satellite dishes/aerials may be permitted to be fitted to the external elevations of the home, subject to approval by Quercus Housing, the Village Association and any necessary statutory consents. Obtaining consent is the sole responsibility of the resident and at cost to the resident
10	Funding	Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) - Afghan Schemes cohort and DIYSO refund monies
11	Planning or funding conditions attached to the development which are relevant to allocation of the homes	None
12	Objectives met by the development	Aims: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To meet local housing need To assist households under the Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme and the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy who are currently residing in Home Office Bridging Accommodation To provide much needed larger family accommodation
13	Management problems in the area eg demographic, economic, density of residents etc.	None known There is reasonable access to public transport, shops and health facilities which are all within walking distance
Local Lettings Policy		
1	Allocation	For the first let, priority will be given to applicants under the Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme and the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy who are

		currently residing in Home Office Bridging Accommodation
		The first let will be to applicants on the Sevenoaks District Council Housing Register
		All homes will be let directly by the Sevenoaks District Council's Housing Accommodation Team
		The home will be allocated as appropriate for the size of the household and property in line with National Bedroom Standards. This will include using the National Local Housing Allowance (LHA) Bedroom calculator, based on gender, ages and number of occupants for each household against the size of the property
		A prospective resident will need to provide verification documents including proof of identify proof of residency, proof of income and savings and a passport sized photo
		Quercus Housing will seek to obtain references for the prospective resident where applicable
		The applicant will need to complete an affordability check with Quercus Housing through the Sevenoaks District Council's Housing Accommodation Team
2	Duration of Local Letting Criteria	The local letting criteria will be in place for first lettings only
3	Does the proposed criteria conflict with equality and diversity policies?	The aim is to assist those applicants under the Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme and the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy who are currently residing in Bridging Accommodation to move into permanent accommodation, as per the condition of LAHF funding. This may conflict on equality and diversity grounds
4	Is there sufficient demand on the Sevenoaks District Council's Housing Register?	Yes, the need for 4 bedroom homes is very high and vacancies rarely arise. This scheme should assist in meeting the future needs of the Housing Register

Agreement reached by (signature):

Alison Simmons, Head of Housing, Sevenoaks District Council

Martin Goodman, Company Secretary, Quercus Housing

Jim Carrington-West, Director, Quercus Housing

Date of Agreement: