

Cabinet Meeting: Monday, 05 August 2024

Question from: Councillor Dickenson

Question to: Councillor Patient

Regarding green belt developments, the new government has set out “golden rules.” These rules stipulate that half of the homes built on green belt land must be affordable.

However, Calderdale Council in its Local Plan aims to provide 238 additional affordable homes per year by 2032/33 but this only accounts for approximately 24% of homes to be built. Given the housing problems in Calderdale, wouldn't it be prudent for the Cabinet to reassess its plans in light of these new policies?

After all, addressing housing shortages starts with building more affordable homes. If the developments on green belt are bound to go ahead, then we must ensure that the right homes are built, and where possible, these homes should be built in the areas of the Borough that need them most.

Response

The proposal referred to in the question relates to future Green Belt releases through the plan making and development management processes. It does not therefore capture sites that have already ceased to be Green Belt following the adoption of a current Local Plan. It should also be noted that the proposal refers to “...*at least 50% affordable housing [with an appropriate proportion being Social Rent], subject to viability*” [my underlining]. In relation to viability, analysis carried out to support the Local Plan, considered during the examination, concluded that residential development in Calderdale could only support 20-35% affordable housing (depending on the market area). It would not therefore be prudent to reassess the the Council's plans for housing delivery at the current time.

In terms of building homes in the right place, the spatial distribution of development was considered at the Local Plan examination. The Inspector concluded that “...*the spatial development strategy is robustly based, facilitates development in sustainable locations and supports other strategic objectives, whilst protecting the environment*”. It is therefore considered that the Council has planned for housing in the most appropriate locations.