

Affordable Housing Statement

Framework paragraph 65 expects all major housing development to make at least 10% of the total number of affordable homes provide available for affordable home ownership, unless to do so would exceed the local level of need, or significantly prejudice the ability of meeting identified affordable housing needs of specific groups. Neither exception applies. Paragraph 65 continues to set out three further exemptions from this 10% rule, including (a) where a proposal is solely for Build to Rent homes which does apply in this proposal. However, no affordable housing is proposed per Core Strategy Policy C4.

Core Strategy Policy C4 – Providing Affordable Homes applies to the site. It directs schemes exceeding 15 homes should provide an affordable housing contribution of 7.5% of the development sales value of the overall scheme. This should be provided onsite with the type, size, tenure to be agreed based on local evidenced need and potential registered provided; or, off site via financial contribution. The policy sets out 4 factors that will be taken into account when negotiating an appropriate level of affordable housing provision:

- i. The type of affordable housing required in the area;*
- ii. The availability of Social Housing Grant or equivalent;*
- iii. The need to deliver other planning objectives with a higher priority; and*
- iv. The economic viability of the development.*

In this proposal the third and fourth factors are uppermost in consideration.

Factor 3, the site location at the Station Gateway (and SPD guidance) places a greater importance on its delivery than simply the provision of housing as part of the mixed housing and commercial development. The Rochdale Station Area SPD supports and applies relevant Core Strategy policy to deliver new high quality homes to widen housing choice and broaden the appeal of the area, linked to strategic objectives SO1, 2, 3,4 & 5 and policies C1, C2 and C3. This strategy does not preclude affordable housing in such mix, but affordable housing need not be provided in all cases where there is a need to bring about change in perceptions and values in the local housing market, which we say is the case here.

Factor 4, economic viability is engaged because the site is being promoted by Rochdale Development Agency on council owned (or shortly to be acquired property in case of 29/31 Maclure Road). There is a funding gap, evidence by the separate submission by the RDA, to enable the delivery of this project which will require public investment through Brownfield Fund Grant. Because of this funding gap there is no ability to provide further financial contribution toward affordable housing.

On the basis of the third and fourth factors, no affordable housing is proposed