

# Lazonby Neighbourhood Plan Consultation – August 2017



Story House, Lords Way  
Kingmoor Business Park  
Carlisle, Cumbria CA6 4SL

T: 01228 404550  
F: 01228 404551

E: [info@storyhomes.co.uk](mailto:info@storyhomes.co.uk)  
[www.storyhomes.co.uk](http://www.storyhomes.co.uk)

Clerk to Lazonby Parish Council  
15 Duffell View  
Kirkby Thore  
Penrith  
CA10 1UJ

Our Reference: R1 SL

24 August 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

Lazonby Neighbourhood Plan Consultation – August 2017

Story Homes is generally supportive of the Lazonby Neighbourhood Plan and is encouraged by the positive approach which has been taken in relation to new development sites, in particular the allocation of sites for housing. We hope that the plan will be adopted as soon as possible and in this regard we offer the following comments to the Parish Council in order to help ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan is consistent with National Planning Policy and the Eden District Council Local Plan which is currently going through examination.

#### Policy D2: Greenfield Sites

Story Homes generally supports the objective of Policy D2 which seeks to encourage the development of brownfield sites. However, we would like to highlight that these types of sites are generally more difficult to develop as viability can be an issue and can prevent these sites from coming forward. We are also concerned with the inclusion of the words "...demonstrates that exceptional circumstances exist..." make the policy very onerous and essentially applies a Green Belt policy restriction. Therefore, we would suggest that the policy is revised in a manner which would allow greater flexibility and would allow alternative Greenfield development to come forward if the proposals would meet an identified housing need and it could be demonstrated that there are no viable alternative sites.

In addition, we would like to draw attention to the Ministerial Statement made on 12<sup>th</sup> Dec 2016. The statement seeks to protect the policies contained within Neighbourhood Plans in the circumstances where the Local Planning Authority cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites and therefore the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies. However, in order for the policies in the Neighbourhood plan to remain 'in date' there are 3 circumstances which all have to apply at the time of the decision. If the 3 criteria cannot be met then the presumption in favour of sustainable development would apply and Policy D2 would be considered out of date.

STORY HOMES LTD  
Registered in England No. 127564  
Registered Office:  
Story House, Lords Way  
Kingmoor Business Park  
Carlisle, Cumbria CA6 4SL



**Policy D3: Design of New Development**

Story Homes supports the need for high quality design in new developments. However, this policy requires "...justification of exceptional circumstances" should proposals not follow the Design Guide. This makes the policy very restrictive and it is unclear what would be regarded as 'exceptional circumstances'. We would suggest that the policy is reworded to allow a greater degree of flexibility in terms of the deviation from the Design Guide and in order to clarify what is considered to be exceptional circumstances. We would stress that the Design Guide is exactly what it says it is - a guide, not a policy requirement. This must therefore allow a degree of flexibility to ensure that innovation and design are not stifled.

**Policy D5: Trees**

This policy seeks to retain mature trees and hedgerows which may be affected by development. Story homes supports the retention of trees and hedgerows where possible. However, it is not always safe or feasible to retain all of these features. Therefore, we would suggest that the policy is reworded to allow for the replacement of trees and hedgerows where their retention is not possible or where this would result in a better overall planting scheme. This would ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan is consistent with both Local and National Planning Policy.

We hope you find the above comments useful. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to discuss our comments in more detail.

Yours faithfully

  
Rachael Osliif AssocRTP1  
Strategic Planner