

SOUTH LAKELAND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK 2010

RESPONSE TO LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN AS IT RELATES TO EMERGING SITES PRESENTED IN THE BRIGSTEER FACT FILE.

The Helsington Community Trust was set up in part to address the issue of affordable housing in the Parish of Helsington as highlighted in the survey carried out in 2008 and has been instrumental in identifying 4 sites, not including R411, in or in the immediate surrounds of Brigsteer ,two of which, RN 213 and RN 214, have been adopted by SLDC.

Emerging Site RN 213

This site known locally as " Four Walls " is shown in the Fact File as being capable of accommodating 13 houses at a density of 30 dwellings per hectare and yet we are admonished in the report submitted by Natural England [July 2010] to "enhance the natural environment" and to " retain a good proportion of the existing trees" The two requirements are incompatible.

Our own proposals, mindful of the topography, existing trees and the proximity of adjoining properties showed a maximum of 7 dwellings 4 of which would be affordable. We would resist any attempt to increase this number as we believe doing so would damage both the social and environmental fabric of the village.

Emerging Site 214

This site known locally as " Peat House " is shown as accommodating 11 dwellings where our own proposals indicate a maximum of 9. There is significant tree cover on this site and if as suggested by Natural England this is to be retained then this has to be reflected in a reduced density.

We take issue with the classification of 100% affordable. We do not dispute that this is an exception site, sitting as it does in isolation, there is however a very real danger of creating a ghetto with the residents stigmatised as being in need of subsidised housing. Just as SLDC insist on not less than 35% of all new dwellings for sale on the open market being affordable then you should attempt to integrate affordable residents into the wider community by relaxing the 100% rule possibly by prescribing not more than 35% of dwellings to be for sale at the open market rate, the reverse of the same coin. This has the added advantage of cross subsidy where the funds so raised go toward funding the affordable dwellings. In these straightened financial times where government subsidy is being withdrawn this could be the difference between a scheme going ahead or being abandoned.

You will appreciate that the Trust has gone to considerable effort to persuade existing residents of the viability of our proposals often leading to recrimination and personal antagonism. This is not helped by SLDC's blanket application of a density of development entirely inappropriate to the sites in question.

M B Whorwood

Trustee Helsington Community Trust