

Summary of Housing Requirements – Blackerton, September 2012

An open event was run on Friday 7 September 2012, at Blackerton House. In advance of that event, the Rural Housing Project had written to the six adjoining Parish Councils/Parish Meetings (East Anstey, West Anstey, Knowstone, Oakford, Molland, and Brushford) informing them of the event, and encouraging them to let local people know about it. The Rural Housing Project also wrote individually to every household in the three immediately adjoining parishes (East Anstey, Oakford, and Knowstone) letting them know and encouraging people interested in housing to come along. The Rural Housing Enabler also attended East Anstey Parish Council on 15 August.

The event was in two parts. From 1.30-3.00pm, Parish Councillors were invited to attend. From 3.00- 6.30pm it was open to the general public. Both sessions were well attended. The first part was largely attended by Parish Councillors from East Anstey, Knowstone, and Oakford.

As well as discussing the outline scheme presented by Greenslade, Taylor, Hunt, there was discussion about affordable housing, and it was made clear by the Rural Housing Project that this form of housing would be restricted to occupation by local people- principally those from the parish and adjoining parishes. The level of provision would be restricted to that to meet the identified need of those parishes. Previous surveys would support a need for up to nine homes, but it was acknowledged that these surveys were now mostly 5 years old.

The open event was designed to identify local people currently in need of housing, particularly affordable housing. Two forms were available to facilitate this. The Rural Housing Project "Housing Needs Questionnaire" which identifies housing need, affordability, and local connection. Secondly, a simple form "Affordable Housing for local people", to identify whether people in housing need would find the Blackerton site suitable to live at, and if not, where they would prefer to live.

A third form was available to people not needing housing, but offering an opportunity to comment on suitability of the site, and whether they would support a housing scheme if there were a proven need.

Summary of Need

At the time of writing seven households have completed both the "Housing Needs Questionnaire" and "Affordable Housing for local people" forms, three others have returned just the "Affordable housing for local people" form, giving ten households in total identifying themselves as needing affordable housing. Other forms were taken away, but to date have not been returned. This report will be updated if further forms come back.

All ten households identified Blackerton as a suitable location to live. Respondents were given the opportunity to identify their preferred location and these are summarised in the table below. One respondent ticked just Blackerton and East Anstey, so these have both been shown as first choices. Only one respondent made a fifth choice.

| Location | First choice | Second choice | Third choice | Fourth choice | Fifth choice |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Blackerton | 6 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| East Anstey | 4 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Knowstone | 0 | 0 | 5 | 3 | 1 |
| Oakford | 1 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 0 |
| Other location (please specify) | 0 | 0 | 1 (West Anstey) | 0 | 0 |

This shows a strong preference for Blackerton and East Anstey as the most suitable locations, with Blackerton coming out highest.

Local connection

Only those returning the questionnaire have been assessed. Several respondents appear to have misunderstood the question about local connection, but as far as the answers go, it would appear that all seven respondents will meet the local connection criteria. Where there is uncertainty, the Rural Housing Project will seek clarification.

Housing need

The seven respondents to the Questionnaire all ticked several of the reasons for why they needed to move. On the basis of these responses, it is clear that all are in housing need, and are likely to need housing in the next couple of years.

| | |
|---|---|
| First independent home | 5 |
| Couple setting up home together | 4 |
| Present home too small | 2 |
| Present home too large | 1 |
| Renting but would like to buy | 1 |
| Private tenancy need more security | 3 |
| In tied housing need more security | 3 |
| To be near work | 2 |
| Living with parents or in someone else's home | 5 |

Housing required

The following table summarises the household size, and the housing tenure they are likely to be able to afford.

| Household | House size and tenure |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Young single person | 2 bed rented |
| Young couple | 2 bed rented |
| Young couple with one young child | 2 or 3 bed to buy/self-build |
| Older couple | 2 bed rented |
| Young couple with one young child | 2 or 3 bed rented |
| Young single person | 2 bed rent or buy |
| Young couple | 2 bed rent or buy |

Recommendation

The seven respondents that have provided detail of their need and housing requirements are all in serious need of housing, and are all likely to remain living locally given the chance. Three others have provided basic information, and it is likely that others will respond in the next few weeks. It seems reasonable to provide for the full level of identified need, as it is probable that there are other households that have not come forward at this stage. The Rural Housing Enabler would recommend provision of nine affordable homes, up to two of which could be some form of low cost home ownership. This might be shared ownership, discounted sale, or self-build, which one respondent has already identified. There were others at the open event who expressed an interest in this tenure. Consideration might be given to providing nine affordable homes, and allocating additional land for affordable self-build homes, which could be sold to individuals as serviced building plots. Discounted sale and self-build homes would have value restricted to probably 75% of open market value.

From the responses received to date there should be **seven 2-bed/4-person** homes and **two 3-bed/5-person** homes.

This report will be reviewed and finalised during October, once final responses from those in housing need are received.

Colin Savage

Rural Housing Enabler
25 September 2012