

Planning, Building Control and Regulatory Services  
Pendle Borough Council  
Town Hall  
Market Street  
Nelson  
BB9 7LG

5<sup>th</sup> December 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,

### **Comments on Pendle Publication Draft Local Plan**

Rural Solutions is a practice that works nationwide on a variety of development types and has worked on a number of planning applications in the Pendle Borough Council area. We wish to make comments as a practice on two specific housing policies of the local plan which relate to housing.

#### DM27: Self-build and custom housing building

As a practice we have worked on self and custom build developments across the country, including an award-winning development. We regularly review Self and Custom Build policies in draft local plans.

We support the provision of policy DM27: Self-build and custom housing building in the Publication Draft Local Plan and the scope of supporting this type of housing including outside of settlement boundaries.

However, we consider that clause 2(b) of the policy as drafted is not justified or effective or a sound approach controlling who can apply for this type of housing.

It is fully appreciated that the policy is seeking to ensure that the occupancy of new self-build and custom houses will meet an identified need in the local area. However, in this regard it is the end-user of the property that is the key, not the applicant for the property.

There may be landowners with land who wish to promote self-build and custom housing on their land within Pendle but who do not meet the terms of clause 2(b). If a landowner who does not meet the terms of the clause receive a consent which is then built out by someone who does meet those tests, then this is a positive outcome, as more self-build and custom houses will have been built to meet identified need in the Borough.

It is therefore recommended that the policy wording is amended so it references 'the first occupier' of the property.

#### DM09: Open Countryside

The policy provides support for new housing of exceptional quality design.

Rural Solutions has secured consent for a number of houses based on national policy included in what is now Paragraph 84e of the NPPF or in local policy which replicate the provisions of the national policy.

We support the provision of a clause in DM09 which provides local policy support for a new house of exceptional quality design.

However, we object to the precise wording of the policy based on the extent to which it will be effective. The policy wording is: “*(e) Represents a design of exceptional quality that can be justified in a particular location*”. It is not clear what ‘can be justified in a particular location’ means and it is not clear whether this is a geographic, planning or other test. This could cause some confusion at the development management stage and / or be confusing for prospective applicants. It is therefore considered that the policy wording is not effective.

The earlier wording of the policy confirms that the clause relates to land outside of a defined settlement boundary.

It is recommended that the policy is reworded so it provides greater clarity and either:

1. Directly replicates the wording of Paragraph 84e in terms of a new development significantly enhancing its immediate setting and being sensitive to the defining characteristics of a local area; or,
2. Includes similar reference to the policy in the Craven Local Plan (as an adjoining local plan area), where policy SP4 references:  
“d) the design is of exceptional quality and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.”

Please let us know if you have any queries in relation to our comments.

Yours sincerely,

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