



Editor
East Anglian Daily Times
30 Lower Brook Street
Ipswich
Suffolk
IP4 1AN

11th August 2003

Dear Sir

Bob Edwards takes Babergh District Council to task for its policy to preserve a wide supply of private sector affordable homes in the area (EADT 8th August). I hope the following facts will be of use to your readers in putting the matter into its correct context:

Firstly, Babergh has long recognised the social damage caused by the local shortage of affordable homes in that younger families or those on low or medium incomes are being increasingly forced out of their communities in their search for reasonably priced accommodation. Babergh is tackling this growing problem in a number of ways, including through working with Housing Associations in the provision of more social housing, the provision of improvement grants to private sector landlords and the inclusion of supportive policies in the emerging Local Plan, including a policy requiring that up to one in three of all properties built in new developments should be within the reach of residents on moderate and low incomes.

Secondly, the specific policy to which Mr Edwards refers does not affect a property's permitted development rights neither would it stop a homeowner from expanding his/her property for the provision of essential facilities.

Thirdly, Babergh is striving through other policies in the emerging Local Plan to increase the supply of three-bedroomed properties – hence allowing existing owners of two-bedroomed houses a better chance of trading upwards without over-stretching themselves.

Fourthly, as reported in a recent edition of the EADT, a recent series of face-to-face consultations between Babergh Councillors and residents in Sudbury, Hadleigh, Lavenham and Holbrook showed that the lack of homes within the price bracket of

low to average income families was the number one concern of the overwhelming majority of respondents. As a listening council, Babergh would be failing in its duty if it did not attempt to address these very real concerns.

Yours faithfully
Mike Hammond
Corporate Director