

Role of MHome – Middlesbrough’s Housing Delivery Vehicle

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Middlesbrough Overview

- Compact urban area
- 140,000 people
- City centre for the Tees Valley
- Local Plan in place since 2014
- Producing around 525 net additional units p.a.
- 3-4 bed volume development in the south
- Higher quality sites doing very well



Direction of Travel

- Brownfield sites for starter homes / affordable housing
- Existing greenfield developments being extended
- New premium sites in the south to bring to market
- Preparatory work, masterplanning, consultation underway
- New Local Plan agreed and ready to submit for inspection
- New greenfield allocations proposed

However....

- Growing, co-ordinated opposition within some communities

MHomes



- Council established HDV (pre election)
- Wholly owned company
- Set up to develop smaller, less commercial sites
- Sizable 'war chest' from Council to plug market gaps
- Simple structure - *procuring* rather than *doing*
- Mechanism for controlling / steering product and timescales
- Commercial business plan agreed for three Council sites
- Gearing up for 100 units per year (30-35 per site)
- All signed off by Labour administration (including Directors)

Change of Direction

- May elections returned a new independent Mayor
- Council now N.O.C.
- Heavy backing from south of the town
- Backing from anti development pressure groups
- Commitment to pausing development in the south
- Commitment to 4,000 additional people living in the town centre



Implications

- Site disposals in south to be reviewed
- New Local Plan unlikely to be submitted
- New Planning Committee put in place (N.O.C.)
- Complete rethink of strategy
- No one allowed on greenfield sites in hi-vis!



Challenges

- Need to develop a new Local Plan
- Focus shifting to an area with no established market
- Cost / value ratios are difficult commercially
- Infrastructure not ideal (parking / school places)
- Need to create an area people *want* to live
- Need to bring in people to strengthen, not weaken centre
- Council ownership (and control) in the centre very limited

Strategy

- Re-energising existing, stalled planning permissions
- Reusing 'better quality' empty properties
- Incentivising conversions for residential
- Developing available sites with height and volume
- Assemble/clear/reuse areas to establish mini communities
- Identify an opportunity for a major new community
- Wait for clarity on which sites in/out in the south

Next Steps for MHome

- Get a clear plan approved politically (or not)
- Move focus on to non-Council owned sites
- Develop a more enabling/facilitating role
- Greater scale, but less direct role
- As much about financing as developing now?
- Providing financial products for tenants?
- Using ability to lease / guarantee sales to stimulate activity?
- Rebuild the board of MHome to reflect new role
- Revise the business plan for MHome



Questions?

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