

14<sup>th</sup> February 2014



5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
80 Leadenhall Street  
London  
EC3A 3DH

DD: 020 7648 4068  
M: 07989 575 160  
T: 020 7648 4070  
E: [info@housingforum.org.uk](mailto:info@housingforum.org.uk)  
W: [www.housingforum.org.uk](http://www.housingforum.org.uk)

## RESPONSE OF THE HOUSING FORUM TO THE LONDON HOUSING STRATEGY CONSULTATION FEBRUARY 2014

- The Housing Forum exists to campaign for "More Homes and Better Homes" and so we support the aim of the strategy to substantially increase the supply of new homes to levels that have not been seen in the capital for many years.
- The Housing Forum welcomes the vision and ambition that the London Housing Strategy sets out. We agree that this ambition would be difficult or impossible to fulfil without structural changes to the context in which new housing is procured in London. In particular we agree that London needs more freedom to control the local expenditure of taxes raised in the City in order to secure investment in affordable housing and the infrastructure necessary to support it.
- The target to build 42,000 homes a year on land identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Land will not be sufficient to deliver the 50/60,000 new homes a year necessary to meet demand. The Housing Forum believes that a clear spatial plan strategy identifying locations where much higher density of new build development and urban intensification of areas of existing stock can be achieved.
- We await the GLA's proposals on Housing Zones with eager anticipation. We believe that these designations should be accompanied by policy changes that will incentivise appropriate urban intensification in terms of tax breaks, tax increment financing, the planning regime and the standards to be applied. Housing Forum members have been working on such measures and we offer our support in contributing to the development of such zones.
- The Housing Forum offers strong support for the recognition of a substantial increase in housing provision as vital to the infrastructure of the capital city - but the strategy must do more to increase the numbers of lower cost homes that are affordable and place more emphasis on the role of local councils in providing social housing. We support the increase in raising the limits for prudential borrowing by Local authorities to enable this.
- We believe that structural changes to land supply frameworks are urgently needed and support the emphasis on compliance by London boroughs requirements to accelerate and liberalise land supply. We believe that there is more capacity that can be extracted from small sites in particular and we urge the use of procurement measures which will assist SME constructors to overcome the shortage of loan finance which precludes their contribution at present.

- The Housing Forum has a strong representation from the housing supply chain from amongst its members. We recognise that materials and skills shortages will become a limiting factor in the ambition to double housing production. The GLA will need to redouble its efforts to encourage the creation of apprenticeships in traditional building skills as well as promote innovation and the use of modern methods of construction.
- We believe that substantial growth of housing through urban extensions and the appropriate re-designation of green belt boundaries achieving high quality housing in volume (as set out in our report "The ABC of Housing Growth and Infrastructure") and that these techniques should be applied to London housing development. Housing Forum members responsible for this report are available to explain the critical success factors for such plans.
- A key recommendation of two of our reports this year, "The ABC of Growth" and "Making a Place for Low Cost Housing", is the establishment of a publicly backed Housing and Infrastructure investment bank on the model of the Caisse des Depots in France which financed the construction of 133,000 new homes in 2011 - investing funds from regulated savings accounts on a secure basis in the public interest.
- The homebuilding industry needs to be synonymous with the delivery of a quality product if any impact is to be made on the opposition to the addition of new homes in neighbourhoods - the NIMBYism that dogs housing supply. The Housing Forum is working on proposals for a voluntary Home Performance Labelling scheme which enable the public and consumers of housing to recognise quality.
- New entrants to house building in London are needed to deliver homes in the required volumes - there is huge potential for UK off site manufacture of housing and for a much wider range of housing product. Tax breaks and financial incentives for companies to invest in manufacture could both stimulate economic performance and deliver certainty of supply in the volume needed.
- Our members are seeing a bottleneck in the supply chain created by the 2015 drop dead date for HCA and GLA funded housing schemes. We have been campaigning for an extension to this unnecessary deadline which only serves to inflate prices in the supply chain and risk the creation of a short term bubble and subsequent crash. London development sites are often complex and risky and delays which occur due to utilities or the provision of infrastructure increase cost. Government bodies can help delivery by addressing these difficulties.

## Appendix 1 - The Housing Forum Board 2014 - 2015

CATEGORY	BOARD MEMBER	TITLE	ORGANISATION
DEVELOPERS / HOUSE BUILDERS / CONTRACTORS	EMMA CARIAGA	DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR – LONDON PORTFOLIO	LAND SECURITIES PLC
DEVELOPERS / HOUSE BUILDERS / CONTRACTORS	ANDY HOBART	MANAGING DIRECTOR	WATES LIVING SPACE
DEVELOPERS / HOUSE BUILDERS / CONTRACTORS	STEPHEN TEAGLE	MANAGING DIRECTOR – AFFORDABLE HOUSING & REGENERATION	GALLIFORD TRY PLC
HOUSING PROVIDERS	MARK ALLNUTT	GROUP DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR	THAMES VALLEY HOUSING ASSOCIATION
HOUSING PROVIDERS	PAUL BRIDGE	CHIEF EXECUTIVE	HOMES FOR HARINGEY
HOUSING PROVIDERS	KERRY KYRIACOU	GROUP DIRECTOR OF NEW BUSINESS & DEVELOPMENT	AFFINITY SUTTON GROUP
SUPPLIERS / MANUFACTURERS	ANDREW CARPENTER	CHIEF EXECUTIVE	STRUCTURAL TIMBER ASSOCIATION
SUPPLIERS / MANUFACTURERS	MIKE LEONARD	CHIEF EXECUTIVE	MODERN MASONRY ALLIANCE
SUPPLIER / MANUFACTURERS	ADAM TURK	COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR & DEPUTY CHAIR, THE HOUSING FORUM	POLYPIPE
SPECIALIST / CONSULTANT	BEN DERBYSHIRE	MANAGING PARTNER & CHAIR, HOUSING FORUM	HTA DESIGN LLP
SPECIALIST / CONSULTANT	RICHARD JONES	PARTNER – GROUP HEAD OF REGENERATION & GROWTH	EC HARRIS
SPECIALISTS / CONSULTANTS	ANDY VON BRADSKY	CHAIRMAN	PRP
CO-OPTEEES	SIMON BERRILL	SENIOR ADVISOR	MACQUARIE CAPITAL (EUROPE)
CO-OPTEEES	JOHN CROSS	DIRECTOR & DEPUTY CHAIR, THE HOUSING FORUM	JOHN CROSS CONSULTING
CO-OPTEEES	ANDY TOOKEY	MEMBER	BAILY GARNER
CO-OPTEEES	KATIE SAUNDERS	PARTNER	TROWERS & HAMLINS
NHBC BOARD REPRESENTATIVE	MEHBAN CHOWDERY	REGIONAL DIRECTOR, LONDON	NHBC
NHBC BOARD REPRESENTATIVE	IAN DAVIS	OPERATIONS DIRECTOR	NHBC

## **BACKGROUND**

The Housing Forum is the only cross sector, industry wide organisation that can properly claim to be the voice of the housing industry.

It has over a hundred member organisations from both public and private sector and throughout the supply chain, collaborating to inform, network and influence with the shared objective of more homes and better homes for the nation. The cross sector representation of our membership equips us especially to investigate issues that require collaboration for successful outcomes.