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Elmsbrook Local Centre  
Cherwell District Council  
Affordable Housing Statement  
Land at Elmsbrook Local Centre,  
Charlotte Avenue, North West Bicester

Prepared on behalf of A2Dominion Developments Limited

October 2019

# Elmsbrook Local Centre

## Cherwell District Council

### Affordable Housing Statement

#### Land at Elmsbrook Local Centre, Charlotte Avenue, North West Bicester

Prepared on behalf of A2Dominion Developments Limited

|                       |                                       |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
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## **1.0 A2 DOMINION HOUSING**

- 1.1 The A2Dominion Group (A2D) was formed in October 2008, as a result of A2 and Dominion coming together to create an organisation with the financial strength and resources to deliver more homes and better services for customers. As a major developer of new housing, A2D offer a wide range of housing opportunities stretching from Cambridgeshire down to Hampshire and from Wiltshire across to Kent, with a significant presence across Greater London.
- 1.2 A2D has been named as a Top 100 not for profit organisation to work for by Sunday Times in 2013 and 2014. Furthermore, A2D are accredited with Best Companies '1 Star' status for 2014.
- 1.3 The Group offers a wide range of housing options including affordable and market rented, temporary, student, sheltered, supported and key worker accommodation. It also has homes for sale and shared ownership through the A2Dominion New Homes brand.
- 1.4 With roots going back over 60 years, the Group has a reputation for reliability and excellence across all aspects of its business.
- 1.5 A2D is one of the country's leading providers of high quality housing, with over 34,000 homes and 70,000 residents across London and southern England.
- 1.6 The Group has built a reputation for delivering large numbers of quality affordable homes on time and to budget. A2D has worked on a number of high profile schemes in successful partnership with 79 Local Authorities, the NHS trust, the private sector and other agencies. With an ambitious development programme across all tenures, the Group has a preferred partnership status with the Homes and Communities Agency.

## **2.0 EXCELLENT CUSTOMER-LED SERVICES**

- 2.1 A2D will aim to achieve a high level of customer satisfaction by delivering excellent services across the Group. Through its main subsidiaries, the Group takes a regional approach to ensure that it provides residents with locally tailored services that reflect their specific needs. This is supported by A2D's central Customer Services Centre and a strong resident involvement programme whereby residents work in partnership with the Group to help shape the services it provides.

### 3.0 SERVICES A2DOMINION GROUP PROVIDE

3.1 A2D provides a wide range of affordable housing services and these are detailed as follows:

**Affordable rent:** As a Registered Social Landlord, A2D provides the majority of its homes for permanent rent, mainly through nominations from local authorities.

**Care and support:** With a portfolio of over 2,500 homes, the Care & Support arm specialises in providing sheltered housing, extra care housing, and other supported housing across London and the South.

**Regeneration and stock transfers:** A2D has been involved in successful stock transfers from local authorities in Chichester, Gosport, Harrow, Oxford and Spelthorne, improving the standard of homes and quality of life for the residents.

**Home ownership:** A2D has one of the largest home ownership development programmes in Southern England and offers homes for private sale and shared ownership.

**Market and intermediate rent:** A2D offers a significant number of homes for rent on the private market. The surpluses these generate are used to provide even more affordable homes and better services.

**Students/key worker accommodation:** A2D has wide experience of providing and managing accommodation for NHS workers and students. A2D manages large residences for health professionals at various hospitals, including Churchill and John Radcliffe hospitals in Oxford. A2D also manages student accommodation in Oxford and Bristol.

## **4.0 MAINTENANCE AND HOUSING SERVICES**

- 4.1 A2D believes all its customers deserve the best service it can provide. One of A2D's top priorities is to provide an efficient, customer focussed planned maintenance and repairs service. This is delivered by Pyramid Plus, an asset management company which brings together the expertise of A2Dominion, Breyer B-line and MITIE, to deliver ongoing asset management strategy and responsive repairs service. A2D is working towards ensuring that all existing homes meet the Decent Homes Standard.
- 4.2 A2D's housing services play a key role in building and supporting sustainable communities for our residents. A2D believes residents are best placed to help shape services and tell A2D how it can improve. Its active community development programme is delivered in close partnership with Local Authorities and other agencies to provide a wide range of beneficial activities, particularly to disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The Neighbourhood Improvement Fund allows residents to make improvements to their estates.

## 5.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

### National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

5.1 Paragraph 60 states:

**“To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance....”**

5.2 Paragraph 61 states:

**“Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes.”**

5.3 Paragraph 62 goes on to state where it is identified that affordable housing is needed, set policies for meeting this need on site, unless off-site provision or a financial contribution can be robustly justified.

### Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (2016)

5.4 Policy BSC3: Affordable Housing states:

**“At Banbury and Bicester, all proposed developments that include 11 or more dwellings (gross), or which would be provided on sites suitable for 11 or more dwellings (gross), will be expected to provide at least 30% of new housing as affordable homes on site.....”**



**...All qualifying developments will be expected to provide 70% of the affordable housing as affordable/social rented dwellings and 30% as other forms of intermediate affordable homes. Social rented housing will be particularly supported in the form of extra care or other supported housing. It is expected that these requirements will be met without the use of social housing grant or other grant.**

**Should the promoters of development consider that individual proposals would be unviable with the above requirements, 'open-book' financial analysis of proposed developments will be expected so that an in house economic viability assessment can be undertaken. Where it is agreed that an external economic viability assessment is required, the cost shall be met by the promoter....."**

- 5.5 Policy Bicester 1 'North West Bicester Eco Town' also states 30 percent of housing delivered on site should be affordable.

#### **Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2014)**

- 5.6 The Oxfordshire SHMA (2014) indicates a continued need for affordable housing. The need for different sizes of affordable homes, as set out in the SHMA, is:

|                   | <b>1 bed</b> | <b>2 bed</b> | <b>3 bed</b> | <b>4 + bed</b> |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| <b>Affordable</b> | 25-30%       | 30-35%       | 30-35%       | 5-10%          |

## 6.0 AFFORDABLE HOUSING MIX

6.1 The proposed indicative affordable housing mix is as follows:

| Dwelling Type | Affordable Housing | SHMA (2015) |
|---------------|--------------------|-------------|
| 1 bed         | 6 (37.5%)          | 25-30%      |
| 2 bed         | 10 (62.5%)         | 30-35%      |
| 3 bed         | 0                  | 30-35%      |
| 4 + bed       | 0                  | 5-10%       |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>16 (100%)</b>   | <b>100%</b> |

6.2 100 percent of the homes proposed are to be delivered as affordable. All of the residential units will be provided on an affordable rent basis. The affordable housing offer exceed planning policy requirements.

6.3 The proposed scheme, which includes flats only, provides a high level of affordable one and two bedroom units which reflects the needs identified in the Oxfordshire SHMA (2014).

6.4 A2D will be applying for grant from the Oxfordshire Growth Fund for the OAHP funding.

6.5 The proposed affordable housing will be secured by a Section 106 Agreement.

6.6 The affordable homes will be designed to meet prevailing standards of internal and external amenity.

6.7 A Local Lettings Plan will be drafted in a priority order that delivers local homes to local people.