

1. Thank you Mr Chairman for allowing me a few words on behalf of the community. Our questions, Mr Chairman, centre on the need and legality of building on our sensitive flood plains without over development of our historic Greystoke village.

- a. **Is there a need for more houses in Greystoke than is set out in The Eden Local Plan?**
- b. **Can developers still build houses on a flood plain?**
- c. **Will the character of Greystoke be adversely affected by a new 30 house high density estate?**

1.1. I will take each in turn, by focusing on Eden District's 2014-2032 Local Plan, and not on personal opinions. That said, the community has already made its views very clear in a petition of 300 signatures. I have been asked to represent them.

2. First. Is there a need for more housing in Greystoke?

2.1. Greystoke welcomes well planned, sensible, housing, and Eden District favours development that balances the need for more housing against the urbanisation of Eden's most attractive towns and villages.

2.2. Greystoke has already met, 10 years early, 91% (ie 61) of its housing target of 69 completions or approvals. Furthermore, the Eden Local Plan states there is no additional housing need. Thus, there is provision for 6 more houses in the village, where, of the 290 dwellings, currently 34 are available at affordable rents or discounted prices. We would like these extra 6 to be affordable too and are exploring a community led initiative to identify, with the Parish Council, a Neighbourhood Plan to establish what the further need and suitable site provision might be in Greystoke.

2.3. Planning officials positively encourage housing development up to the 69 target in the local plan, but not for developments which would significantly breach this target, as this would mean over development, which the Local Plan seeks to avoid. In Greystoke, we have done our bit; just consider the Story Homes' 40 house development.

3. Can developers still build houses on flood plains?

3.1. The Government says not. Housing Minister, Robert Jenrick said so in an announcement in 2020.

3.2. The Environment Agency now has a veto on planning applications: if they are not happy, no matter what planning officials say, developments on flood plains will not go ahead.

3.3 The Eden Local Plan sets out allocated sites for development. Atkinson's proposed site is not one of them, because of the high risk of flooding.

3.4 The plan states that housing development should always be steered away from sites where there has regularly been extensive flooding after heavy rain. This is classified as flood zone 2 and 3A, which currently takes up most of the site. No amount of tree planting or landscaping will prevent this type of flooding and any measures to allow water to run off into adjacent flood zone 3 areas and roads will only raise water tables and make flooding in the locality worse.

3.5 No development at all is permitted on flood zone 3B, where water flows and has to flow in time of flood. This zone bounds the north, east and south of the site, and includes the two potential entrances off Church Road and Icold Road. The only other flood zone of note is a small shrinking flood zone 2 strip next to the allotments.

3.6 Flood zones 3A and 3B are increasing, as can be shown by comparing Environment Agency Flood Maps for 2008, 2015 and 2017. Any planning assessment needs to take into account the effects of climate change, which can increase zone size by up to 60%. You can't base a future 30 house site application solely on the 5 year old 2017 flood map. To better understand the projected flood data due to climate change, we are using our own risk analysis consultancy.

3.7 Who decides the size and boundaries of flood zones 2/3A/3B? Not the Environment Agency, not the developer, but EDC planning officials. They also have to take into account Cumbria County Council's own flood map for Greystoke which makes Church Road flood zone 3B, all the way from the Post Office down to near the Church.

3.8 All villagers know about the flooding on and around this site that follows torrential rain and many have photographs to demonstrate this. Are Atkinson Homes aware of the extent and nature of this flooding in severe winter storms? Church Road is impassable to cars and, not so long ago, horses on the site had to be evacuated and rescued from rising flood waters.

3.9 Separately, there has been a recent hold on planning applications based on a requirement for nutrient neutrality (no more nitrates and phosphates, for example from house building, sewage or waste water drainage). How will Atkinson's prevent such nutrient run off from contaminating the River Petteril and the Eden SSSI?

4. Lastly, will the character of Greystoke be adversely affected by this proposed housing estate?

4.1. A modern 30 house estate in the heart of the village would destroy the iconic vista from Icold Road across the water meadows to Greystoke Church. It would also sit incongruously alongside Church Road with its seven Grade 2 listed buildings, including the war memorial bridge and the Church.

4.2. Finally, a site entrance on Church Road would be hampered by the on street parking problems all along this road. Plus the extra traffic would add significantly to the bottleneck exit difficulties by the Post Office.

5. To summarise

5.1. Thank you, Mr Chairman, for allowing me to speak. The heartfelt message to Atkinson's from 300 members of this community about this 30 house proposal on the flood plain is simple;

- **We don't need it.**
- **We don't want over-development in Greystoke.**
- **It would be a blot on the landscape.**
- **It is on the wrong site: not environmentally suitable for housing**
- **Save our historic flood plains for the environment and for future generations!**

Thank you