

CONVERSION OF DWELLINGS POLICY

Statement of Purpose

This policy covers the conversion, alteration, extension, demolition or development of any property in which Sentinel still holds a legal interest.

Sentinel is committed to providing and promoting affordable, sustainable communities. Sentinel strives for social inclusion through a mix of housing densities, types and tenures. In this way we can better cater for a range of housing need and provide for changing household demographics.

Recent studies of the local housing market show that there is a need to control the number of smaller homes in the area. It is important that there are enough larger homes in the area to ensure families are able to afford homes which are suitable for their needs.

Our Policy

Historically, Sentinel has sold properties through 'Preserved Right to Buy', Social Homebuy', 'Low Cost Home Ownership' and other similar initiatives. In these cases Sentinel still has an interest in the property and may still retain the freehold.

If a third party wishes to convert, alter, extend, demolish or develop their property they may require our consent. In making our decision we will take the following into account:

- the current and future demographic and housing needs of the area in question, including the mix, density, type and tenure of the area and the need for larger family homes;
- estate and community issues including the effects on the character of the neighbourhood and on other residents, management of the neighbourhood, parking and access to services and facilities;
- effect on the sustainability, integrity and balance of the community.

Given the current significant need for family dwellings in our areas of operation, applications to convert family houses into flats will normally be refused.

Sentinel will continue to apply restrictive covenants to all types of property sales restricting use to a single private dwelling and requiring our consent to any conversions, alterations, extensions, demolitions or developments.

Approval Stages

Named Departmental Sign off: Bill Flood

Named Director Sign off: Martin Nurse

Implementation Date: Board Approval 26 February 2009

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Changes from previous version

This is a first generation Policy

Regulation & Legislation

When assessing whether a property is appropriate for conversion, we will consult the following documents from the relevant Local Authority: Strategic Housing Market Assessment, The Council Plan, Housing Strategy, Housing Needs Assessment, Housing Mix Supplementary Planning Document, Planning Policy Statement 3 2006 and any relevant publication from the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Equality & Diversity Impact

The association is committed to meeting the needs and aspirations of customers and communities in a fair, respectful, and proportionate manner. Our approach to diversity and equality is to promote inclusiveness by recognising that anyone, regardless of origin or background, can make a positive difference in the achievement of the organisation's vision and in the wider society.

We will comply with the law and best practice, regulatory and inspection requirements. Codes of Practice and other guidance will be used appropriately to ensure progress on diversity.

Risk Assessment

Failure to ensure adequate housing mix may result in an inadequate number of larger dwellings for families, who may otherwise be priced out of the housing market.

Monitoring and Review

The operation of this policy will be regularly reviewed by the Assistant Director for Programme Delivery in conjunction with the Policy & Strategic Initiatives Officer, with adequate consultation of staff and customers. The outcome of that review will be communicated to the appropriate committee of the Board.