

# SLAUGHAM PARISH COMMUNITY LAND TRUST LIMITED

Registered with the Financial Conduct Authority No. 32329R

21 February 2023

Councillor Eric Prescott  
Slaugham Parish Council  
2 Coltstaple Cottages  
Coltstaple Lane  
Horsham  
Sussex RH13 9BB

Dear Councillor Prescott

I am writing on behalf of the Directors of Slaugham Parish Community Land Trust Ltd "SPCLT" following yesterday's meeting of Slaugham Parish Council "SPC" Neighbourhood Planning Committee.

In a letter dated 14 February 2023 Dowsett Mayhew informed us that SPC do not wish to progress negotiations with SPCLT. The implication is that SPC therefore no longer wishes to achieve the benefits of SPCLT involvement by providing affordable housing in perpetuity to those with a connection to the Parish, in the St Martin Close (East) development. We believe that this decision is manifestly unreasonable and may therefore be unlawful.

Since SPCLT was established about 10 years ago, the Community Land Trust Movement has grown significantly and there are now over 500 CLTs in the UK. These CLTs provide a variety of benefits to their local communities and many of them have successfully partnered with local councils and Registered Providers to provide affordable housing.

SPCLT believes that because SPC owns the St Martin Close (East) site, it has a unique opportunity to ensure that the affordable housing on the site provides the optimum benefit to the community and that one of the best ways to achieve this is by working with SPCLT.

SPCLT has no intention of disputing the advice that SPC has obtained that the only realistic developer of their land is Millwood Designer Homes. However, that does not preclude the involvement of SPCLT as SPC could, for example, include a condition in the sale agreement with Millwood Designer Homes that the freehold of all the affordable units on the St Martin Close (East) site should be sold to SPCLT. This should have no significant adverse effect on SPC's proceeds but would secure the benefits of CLT involvement. SPCLT would then grant a long lease to a suitable Registered Provider.

It appears to SPCLT that the Appraisal Report prepared by Fowlers Land and New Homes seeks to maximise cash proceeds and minimise the provision of affordable housing. SPCLT believes that the unique opportunity to provide affordable housing that St Martin Close (East) represents, means that careful thought needs to be given to increasing the affordable element within the development. It seems likely that the planning application for the site will encounter significant opposition and demonstrating the substantial benefit to the community in the provision of affordable housing may be valuable in countering such opposition.

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Whilst planning requirements may make some increase in affordable housing essential, SPCLT believes that there is a sound basis for reducing cash proceeds in exchange for greater affordable housing provision unless it can be shown that cash the proceeds can be used to provide a greater benefit to the community elsewhere. This is particularly important in circumstances where SPC is likely to receive substantial S106/CIL monies from the Pease Pottage development adding still further to the opportunity to fund projects for the benefit of the Parish community.

You have told us that the Fowler report was illustrative and that no decision has been made about the amount of affordable housing to be included in the St Martin Close (East) development and we accept that assurance.

Please would you confirm within the next 14 days that the decision to cease involvement of SPCLT in the St Martin Close (East) development has been rescinded and that the Dowsett Mayhew letter of 14 February 2023 to SPCLT will be withdrawn.

SPCLT and its Registered Provider partner would then be delighted to work with you to achieve the best possible outcome for the community in the development of St Martin Close (East).

Yours sincerely



Tim Arnold