



## Housing Recovery Survey – Key Findings

12/05

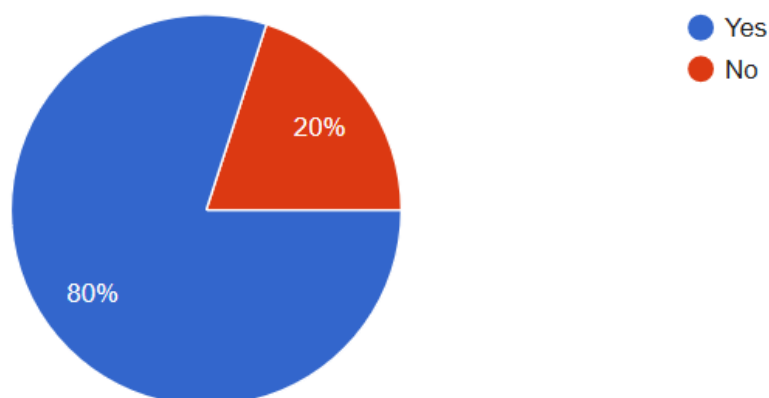
The survey ran between 24 April - 11 May and asked house builders and agents in Essex, Kent and East Sussex whether they were opening sites, taking on new commissions and accessing building materials.

Whilst there were a limited number of respondents, the survey captured the views of a range of house builders across the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) area providing a useful snapshot of the current market position. A summary of the survey findings is set out below:

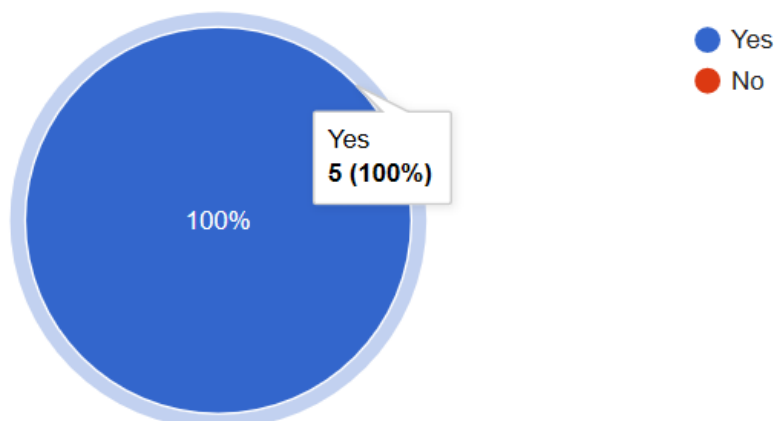
### Essex Developers Group

80% of the respondents said they were planning to open-up sites in Essex and 100% said they were taking new commissions. Responding on access to supplies and materials; 80% said they thought this was adequate in the short term, however, this fell to 50% in the medium and long term, with stock piles being limited.

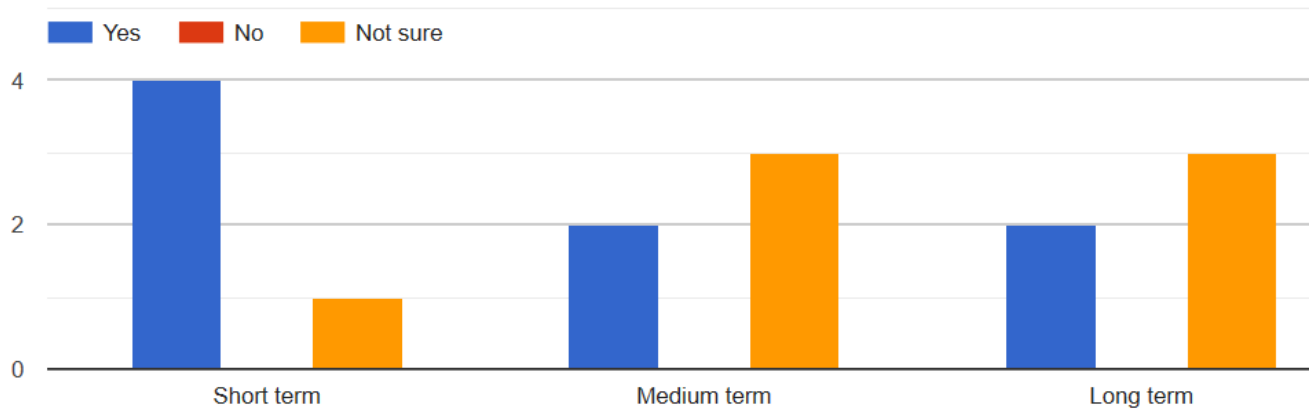
#### Are you planning to open any housing development sites in Essex?



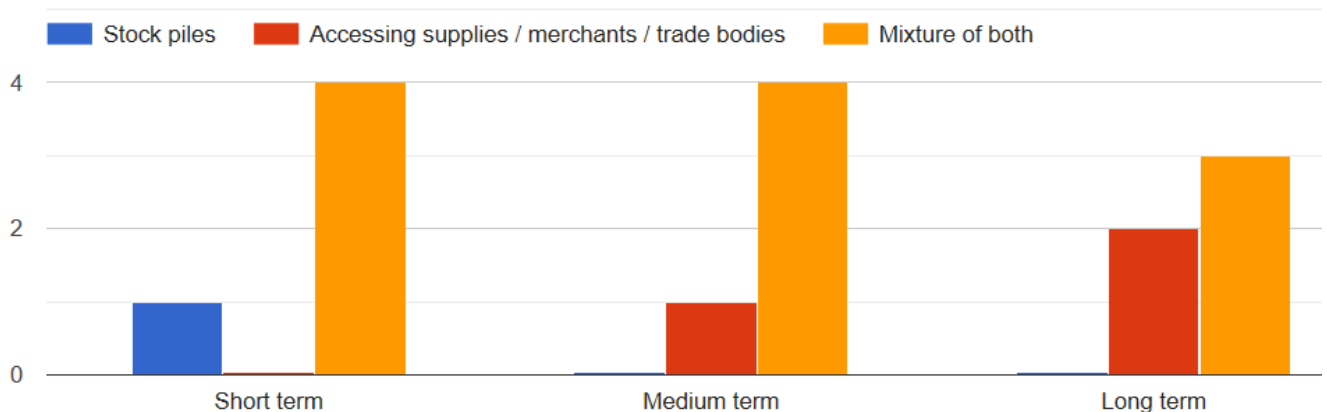
#### Are you undertaking new commissions in relation to site surveys, acquisitions etc?



**Do you have adequate access to supplies and materials to enable sites to open and operate over the short, medium and long term?**



**If yes: Is this reliant on current stock piles or accessing suppliers / merchants / trade bodies or mixture of the both?**



**Additional findings**

It should be noted that **SME house builders** were less representative in the survey, however, one Essex based company commented as follows:

“The message we are getting back from clients, now, is that development teams are not going to board for approvals (first stage or otherwise) because the boards can’t be seen to approve spending large amounts of money on sites, when there is a chance that revenues from rent and sales are being hit by Covid-19.

There’s also internal political pressure about spending money on the welfare of residents (by deferring rent to key workers etc) rather than using that money to buy sites.” ..... “switching funds from development should not be sacrificed.”

...When all is said and done, “allocating” or “promising” monies for “next year” and spending money on contracts, planning consents and the various costs associated with these surely should be advanced.”

“Fine, include some fresh “escape clauses” but, be bold enough to risk these investment monies, to be ready and able to “attack” when the time comes.”

Limited representation was made from **developing RPs**, although it is understood they are opening sites and where applicable MMC production.

There was also a response received from a **large national merchant / supplier** which provided some useful information on the market. The key message was that they did have adequate access to most supplies and materials to enable sites to open and operate over the short, medium and long term. This was reliant on a mix of current stock piles and accessing new supplies. The one material where there is currently a shortage is plaster board and plaster where some builders are looking at the European market as an alternative, however, this is up to 3 times more expensive. The supply of bricks was considered adequate because there had been some over production leading up to Covid-19. (The response was removed from the summary survey findings because they were not a house builder or agent).

### **Conclusion / next steps**

The above findings provide a snap-shot of the market position in April-May and will act as a base-line for a follow up survey in June-July to determine the latest position on site openings, new commissions and availability of material through supply chains.