



21 August 2020

Planning Policy
Test Valley Borough Council
Beech Hurst
Weyhill Road
Andover SP10 3AJ

Dear Planning Policy Team,

**Refined Issues and Options Consultation for the next Local Plan
Response on behalf of The Ashfield Estate**

The Ashfield Estate is pleased to see the publication of the Refined Issues and Options Consultation for the next Local Plan (IOC). It provides an extremely interesting background analysis of population, housing, economy and education and the like as well as raising some very pertinent questions which aim to shape the emerging Local Plan (LP).

The Estate, as one of the four parties, is obviously signed up to the response to the IOC provided by WYG on behalf of the Ashfield Partnership. Primarily this was made in the context of the existing LP allocation for Whitenap. It also rightly touched on, amongst other matters, the changing nature of employment and the need to look laterally at this; the importance of good quality design and resilience of construction; the benefits of taking a settlement-wide view on cycle and walking opportunities; and the call for a multifarious approach to car parking. There is no need for repetition of its points here.

The Whitenap site is relevant in that it will show how the Partnership will deliver outstanding design and place making; Luzborough has established this benchmark, Hoe Lane will progress it further and Whitenap following on should be the ultimate in a new community. The schemes will be beautifully built and Design and Community Codes will ensure they stay that way.

Returning to the IOC, so much of the document is unquestionably calling for the 'right thing' to be done whether in town centres, the countryside, for communities, or the local environment. Housing Supply and Allocations are always a challenge for planning authorities. In terms of location and settlement growth the authority should use Local Plan Allocations based on sustainability and accessibility analysis and avoid any temptation to over-play rural areas. The precise calculation regime for housing need is evolving but it will inevitably require consistent or increasing supply in Southern Test Valley.

The land the Estate owns between the Whitenap and Hoe Lane new communities will of course offer SANG, pedestrian and cycle links, and 'Nitrates mitigation'. The Estate land will also embody a food and farming strategy of benefit to new and existing STV residents.

However the land can *also* fulfil two further functions should the planning authority so wish. Firstly it could accommodate some elements from the Whitenap allocation which might be difficult to locate. The second function could arise because the LP should have a long view and not end on a mid term 'cliff edge'. Taking this point together with ongoing housing need there would be merit in the LP annotating Reserve or Contingency Land. Again, through sound masterplanning, areas of Estate land could fulfil this function; beyond, but not far beyond, the existing Whitenap and Hoe Lane boundaries.



The Foreword to the IOC by Councillor _____ makes the point that: "*A Local Plan is arguably the most important document that a local authority can ever produce. Looking ahead for the next few years, this plan will have a serious impact on housing, jobs and the environment across Test Valley*". The Ashfield Estate would underline that this serious impact could and should be a positive one. To this end it is offering to assist the Borough Council where its input would be deemed helpful.

This is a large Estate between the two main settlements of Southern Test Valley and joint working with the authorities on a wider masterplan for the future is offered by the landowner should that be seen as a benefit for the Next Local Plan.

Yours faithfully