



# Test Valley Borough Council Local Plan 2040 – Regulation 18 Stage 2 Consultation

March 2024

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Foreman Homes welcome the opportunity to comment on Test Valley Borough Council's Regulation 18 Stage 2 consultation on the Draft Local Plan 2040. These representations are made in the context of our land interest at Lambourne Close, Thruxton, shown in Appendix 1. The land at Lambourne Close is available and suitable to meet the objectives of sustainable development.

## 2.0 Land at Lambourne Close, Thruxton

- 2.1 The site is located in the village of Thruxton, to the west of the town of Andover. It comprises a field adjoining the north-eastern edge of the village. The village of Thruxton offers a good range of facilities, including primary school, church, community hall, public house, convenience retailing and the motorsports centre. The site is located just off the A303, and therefore benefits from convenient access to the strategic road network and the public buses that connect the village to Andover and beyond. The town of Andover, where a wider range of services and facilities is available, is located approximately 8km to the east of the site.

**Figure 1: Site Location**



*Site plan based on images from Promap*

- 2.2 Extending to 0.81ha, the site is an enclosed paddock which is roughly square in shape and backs onto the rear gardens of four residential properties along Lambourne Close (Nos 8 to

11 Lambourne Close). It benefits from its own access point from Lambourne Close, in the southern corner of the site, adjacent to No 11 Lambourne Close.

- 2.3 The site is bordered by residential properties along its western boundary linking it to the existing settlement and is surrounded by farmland on its northern and eastern sides, with mature hedges framing the site and providing a good level of seclusion.
- 2.4 The site is not covered by any statutory designation, but it is located within the Solent Nutrient Impact Area, where applications for residential development are required to mitigate for any potential impact from additional levels of nitrates they could generate from wastewater and land use change.
- 2.5 The site is not within a Conservation Area and there are no listed buildings within or near the site. In terms of flood risk, the site is located within Flood Zone 1.
- 2.6 The site is being promoted for residential development which would seek to extend the pattern of development of Lambourne Close into the site, replicating the size and types of homes.

### **3.0 Draft Local Plan Policies**

#### **Spatial Strategy Policy 1 (SS1): Settlement Hierarchy**

- 3.1 Thruxton is identified as being a Tier 3 settlement, and Spatial Strategy Policy 1 (SS1): Settlement Hierarchy sets out that these areas are suitable for a range of small-scale development including windfalls and community-led development. However, opportunities for such development are limited within the settlement boundaries, and as such the Local plan should include a mechanism whereby small-scale, sensitively designed proposals that are well related to the settlement boundary are able to be brought forward.

#### **Spatial Strategy Policy 3 (SS3): Housing Requirement**

- 3.2 Policy SS3 sets out the housing requirement for the Borough and how this is to be split between the Northern and Southern Test Valley Housing Market Areas. Furthermore, a minimum rural housing requirement has been identified in Policy SS4. This is evidenced by

the level of existing housing supply and total housing that is proposed to be met through designated active Neighbourhood Development Plans. However, Policy SS5 sets out that only the following Neighbourhood Development Plans will need to make provision for housing in Northern Test Valley:

- Amport (Northern Test Valley)
- Grately (Northern Test Valley)
- Longstock (Northern Test Valley)
- Nether Wallop (Northern Test Valley)

3.3 This represents a small proportion of the Northern Test Valley Housing Market Area, however, all settlements should be able to grow to an extent, to enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities by supporting local services and allowing young people and families, looking to buy their first home, to stay local.

3.4 The NPPF states that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and requires that development plans identify land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare. Whilst the Housing Site Selection Topic Paper recognises this requirement, the housing strategy relies on a small number of strategic sites to meet housing numbers, and just 5% of the borough wide housing requirement is planned to come through rural housing (and therefore likely to be small and medium sized sites).

3.5 Further small and medium sized sites should be allocated, such as Land at Lambourne Close, to ensure that there is sufficient diversity in the market in addition to strategic sites. Alternatively, the Spatial Strategy should provide a policy tool to allow small-scale development in the countryside where it can be demonstrated that the location is sustainable in terms of access to local facilities such as a location adjacent to a Tier 3 (or above) settlement, and that development would be in keeping with the character and pattern of existing development.

3.6 Small and medium sized sites not only support small and medium sized housebuilders, but they also support those seeking self-build plots. Small site delivery is declining as opportunities within existing settlements reduce and therefore, a policy tool providing scope

for small sites adjacent to existing settlements within the Borough would help to maintain a suitable supply of small sites.

#### **Policy HOU7: Self-Build and Custom Build Housing**

- 3.7 Policy HOU7: Self-Build and Custom Build housing is supported in that it will help to address the need for people wishing to commission or build their own homes. However, Foreman Homes do not support the proposed approach of meeting this need through a proportion of dwellings on larger strategic sites. It is challenging to incorporate self-build plots effectively on strategic sites which are usually brought forward by housebuilders who seek to masterplan their developments comprehensively and provide shared infrastructure and open space.
- 3.8 Furthermore, there is no evidence that people on the Council's Self Build Register want to build their own homes on strategic sites. Paragraphs 8.2 to 8.21 of the Test Valley SHMA (2022) does not provide any justification for 5% of all housing on sites above 100 dwellings. Instead, it identifies a general need for self and custom build plots based on the Council's Self Build Register. However, this need is indicative and relatively small in overall quantum and paragraph 8.11 demonstrates that the demand is spread through all parts of the Borough with greater demand in the rural areas. Consequently, the strategy to seek self-build plots on larger developments would not be meeting the identified demand and therefore specific suitable sites should be identified for the sole purpose of providing self-build homes, having regard to the requirements of those individuals on the Council's Self Build Register.
- 3.9 Foreman Homes support the principle that where serviced plots remain unsold after the marketing period, serviced plots may be developed for housing other than as self-build or custom build housing. However, it is considered that the 24-month marketing requirement is too onerous. If there is the demand for such plots, then a marketing period of 6 months would be more than sufficient.

#### **4.0 Conclusion**

- 4.1 In summary, Foreman Homes consider that land at Lambourne Close should be allocated to help meet the NPPF requirement for small and medium sized sites. Furthermore, the Local Plan should include a policy mechanism to facilitate the delivery of small sites adjacent to existing settlements within the Borough where it can be demonstrated that the location is sustainable in terms of access to local facilities.
- 4.2 There is no justification for the self-build requirement on large housing developments, this should be replaced with specific allocations for self and custom-build housing, reflecting the requirements of those individuals on the Council's Self Build Register.

## Appendix 1: Land at Borovere Farm Location Plan



0 10 20 40 60m

### Please Note:

This drawing can only be relied on for planning purposes. Dimensions to be checked on site and any discrepancies are to be highlighted to the Architect prior to construction.

Topographical / Ordnance Survey information shown has been prepared by a third party. HGP accept no responsibility for accuracy or completeness of the survey.

This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all other project drawings, construction notes and / or project specifications including those by other project consultants and specialists. All discrepancies should be reported immediately.

Design subject to detail development / approval. Measurements and accommodation schedules subject to amendments following coordinated input by others. Costings cannot be finalised until approval / confirmation by relevant authorities and Client.



Rev.	Description	DATE	DB / CB
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Date: Mar '22

Drawn By/Checked By: VP / HJE

Scale: 1:1000 @ A3

Revision: A

Project: Lambourne Close Thruxton

Title: Location Plan

Dwg#: 22.036.01

Status: Planning



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Client:

Mr Jason Sargeant



