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RUSHCLIFFE LOCAL PLAN PART 2: LAND AND PLANNING POLICIES

FURTHER OPTIONS CONSULTATION

CONSULTATION RESPONSE ON BEHALF OF THE WHIPLING FARM PARTNERSHIP

LAND OFF ORSTON LANE, WHATTON IN THE VALE

PROJECT REF.: P/300/M36

MARCH 2017



RTPI
Chartered Town Planners



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Project Client: Whipling Farm Partnership

Project Location: Land at Orston Lane
Whatton in the Vale
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
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Table of Contents

1. Introduction	4
2. Planning Context	4
3. Site and Development Potential	5
4. Comments on Local Plan Part 2 Further Options Document.....	6
5. Conclusion.....	9

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Andrew Granger & Co. Ltd specialises in the promotion of strategic land for residential development and commercial uses. As a company, we are heavily involved in the promotion of client's land through various Local Plan preparations throughout the country, and we also have vast experience in contributing to the Neighbourhood Plan process.
- 1.2. On behalf of the Whipling Farm Partnership we are seeking to work with Rushcliffe Borough Council in promoting the land off Orston Lane, Whatton in the Vale (**Appendix 1**) for residential development.
- 1.3. This document provides a written submission to the Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 2: Land and Planning Policies Further Options Consultation.

2. Planning Context

- 2.1. We have discussed the potential development of the site with Norman Jowett at Rushcliffe Borough Council [RBC] through a pre-application advice request [Ref: 16/03090/ADVICE]. In his response he advised that development of the site would be well related to the existing built form of the village, but key to any development would be the retention of the historic hedge (as far as possible), which fronts the site.

3. Site and Development Potential

- 3.1. The proposed development site has a total developable area of approximately 0.22 ha (0.55 acres) and is located on the eastern edge of Whatton in the Vale. The site is accessed off Orston Lane, as shown outlined in red in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.2. The site consists of a single field of arable land with clearly defined boundaries marked by mature hedgerow to the north, south and west. The site is bordered to the west by residential development, to the north and east by agricultural land, and to the south by Orston Lane.
- 3.3. Whatton in the Vale benefits from a Village Hall and the Saint John of Beverly Church. The site is also served by further services and amenities located in Aslockton (*approx. 0.5 miles*) and Bingham (*approx. 3.5 miles*). Services in Aslockton include a primary school, shop/post office, pub, hairdressers, church and village hall which can all be accessed via a footpath running along Old Grantham Road and onto Dark Lane. Services in Bingham include a health centre, library, police and fire station, post office, church, primary schools and comprehensive school. There are also a number of shops in the town centre, including a street market, small shopping mall, general store, newsagent, bakery, flower shops, banks, estate agency and a few restaurants.
- 3.4. The village has good access to public transport links to the surrounding area. Buses to Nottingham run every 30 minutes during the day, and there is a half hourly service to Bingham.
- 3.5. We consider the site has the capacity to accommodate a residential development scheme at a size and scale in keeping with the existing built form of the village. The proposed development scheme would provide a range of dwelling types and sizes, including affordable housing, and would be designed with significant consideration for the protection of the amenity of the adjacent land uses.
- 3.6. Therefore, we consider the site to be in a suitable location, close to a number of services in facilities in the neighbouring settlements of Aslockton and Bingham. It provides a good opportunity to make an important contribution towards meeting the immediate housing shortage across the Borough.

4. Comments on Local Plan Part 2 Further Options Document

- 4.1. On behalf of our client, we wish to make the following observations on the Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 2 Further Options Consultation Document.

Question 1: Do you agree with the Council's assessment of the present housing supply situation and that enough land will need to be identified by Local Plan Part 2 to accommodate around 2,000 new homes?

- 4.2. We fully appreciate the Council's recognition of the shortage of housing land supply that has been the result of delays in the development of the large strategic sites allocated within the Core Strategy. However, we are concerned that identifying sites for the development of 2,000 new homes, including 900 homes to address the current shortage, will not be sufficient to meet the development requirements of the Borough.
- 4.3. A recent appeal decision by an Inspector for a development south of Abbey Lane, Aslockton [Ref: APP/P3040/W/16/3143126] suggested that the shortfall may be much higher than the 900 dwellings identified by the Council in the Local Plan Part 2 Consultation document. Paragraph 21 of the appeal decision identifies the extent of the delays of the Sustainable Urban Extensions [SUEs] stating *'The SUEs are estimated to deliver some 1,340 fewer dwellings within the 5 year period than had been estimated in the trajectory and there could be a shortfall from this source at the end of the Plan period of some 1,500 dwellings'*. Furthermore, the Inspector also identified that delays in the 'key' strategic sites would result in fewer homes being developed on these sites within the 5-year period. Paragraph 22 of the appeal decision states *'the 'key' strategic sites are now estimated to deliver some 280 fewer dwellings within the 5-year period than had been anticipated in the trajectory but to deliver the whole of their contribution to the housing required within the Plan period'*.
- 4.4. Therefore, we do not agree with the Council's assessment of the present housing land supply position and suggest that sufficient land should be identified to accommodate up to 2,600 new homes. This would include the 1,100 dwellings originally anticipated for the Local Plan Part 2, as well as up to 1,500 dwellings to overcome the SUE shortfall; as identified by the Inspector for the site south of Abbey Lane, Aslockton in December 2016.
- 4.5. Furthermore, given that the delays in the development of the SUEs and the strategic sites have resulted in a significant dwelling shortage of the 5-year supply period, we would advise that the Council needs to allocate a number of development sites that are in a position to come forward in the short-term. We believe that this represents the most appropriate approach for ensuring that the Local Plan has a robust strategy for the delivery of residential development.

Question 2: Do you agree with the Council's view that none of the three strategic allocations (Melton Road, Edwalton; South of Clifton; and East of Gamston/North of Tollerton) should be expanded as part of resolving the current shortfall in the amount of land that is available for housing development over the next few years?

- 4.6. We fully agree with the Council's view that none of the three SUEs should be expanded. Given that the current shortfall in residential development is inherently linked to delays with the SUEs, we do not believe that expansion of these sites would represent a robust strategy for securing residential development within Rushcliffe. It is considered that any increased allocation attributed to these sites would result in development on these sites being extending into the future, rather than any increased development in the short-term or over the plan period. As such, we would advise the Council to allocate a number of residential development sites within Local Plan Part 2 that are in a position to provide development within the next 5 years, in order to resolve the immediate housing land shortage.

Question 16: Do you agree that, apart from the site to the south of Abbey Road, Aslockton with planning permission for up to 75 new homes, Local Plan Part 2 should not allocate greenfield land for housing development at Aslockton and Whatton in the plan period (up to 2028)?

- 4.7. The NPPF and the Rushcliffe Borough Council Core Strategy are both underpinned by a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. It is therefore considered rational to direct development towards locations where residential development will support and/or be supported by a wide range of local services and facilities.
- 4.8. In respect of development in rural locations, such as Aslockton and Whatton, Paragraph 55 of the NPPF states, '*to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. For example, where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby*'. In this light and given the close proximity of the two villages, development within Aslockton and Whatton should be considered to contribute towards maintaining the vitality of rural services within both villages.
- 4.9. Furthermore, the NPPF and the Adopted Rushcliffe Core Strategy are also both underpinned by a requirement to deliver a wide range of housing opportunities. As such, Local Plans are expected to encourage developers to provide a wide range of dwelling types and sizes, but this also relates to providing residential development across a wide range of locations.
- 4.10. Therefore, we consider it necessary for the Local Plan Part 2 to allocate land for residential development across a wide range of sustainable locations within Rushcliffe. The NPPF encourages residential development in rural areas where it will enhance the vitality of rural communities, including where development in one village may support services in a village nearby.

4.11. Consequently, we believe that land should be allocated for small scale development within Aslockton and Whatton as it will support the services located within both villages. Therefore, we are proposing the allocation of our client's land at Orston Lane, Whatton as a small scale residential development site. Pre-Application discussions with the Council has identified that development of the site would be well related to the existing settlement. Any development scheme would provide a range of housing types and sizes, including affordable housing, and would be designed to protect the residential amenity of the neighbouring residents. Therefore, we consider the site presents a good opportunity to provide residential development, in the short-term, which would contribute towards resolving the immediate housing shortage across the Borough.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. We appreciate the Council's recognition of the current shortfall in housing land supply that is the result of delays in the development of the SUEs and the key strategic sites allocated within the adopted Core Strategy. However, we are concerned that the full extent of the shortage has not been appreciated by the Council. An Inspector for the recent appeal decision, referred to earlier in this submission, identified the shortfall as 1,340 dwellings for the 5-year period and 1,500 dwellings over the course of the Plan period. As such, we believe that the Local Plan Part 2 needs to identify sufficient land for at least 2,600 dwellings, rather than the 2,000 currently proposed.
- 5.2. Given that the current housing land shortage is inherently related to the delays in the SUEs, we fully support the Council's position that these locations should not be subject to any expanded allocation, as this will only result in the development of these sites being extended into the future. Thus, we would advise that it would be more appropriate for the Council to allocate a number of sites that can come forward within the short-term in order to resolve the immediate housing shortage; as well as allocating sites that can contribute towards providing development over the course of the Plan period. We believe that this will ensure that the Local Plan Part 2 has a robust strategy for delivering housing development throughout the Borough, across the Plan period.
- 5.3. We believe that following the recent appeal decision, Aslockton and Whatton should have some small-scale allocations for residential development, in order to maintain the vitality of the local services in both villages. We are proposing the allocation of the site at Orston Lane, Whatton for residential development. We consider the site to be well-related to the existing village, and any development scheme could provide a mix of housing types, including affordable housing, and be designed to protect the amenities of the existing uses. The site is available for development within the short-term and therefore would contribute towards addressing the immediate housing land shortage within the Borough.
- 5.4. Andrew Granger & Co. would like to remain involved throughout the preparation of the Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 2 and therefore request to be informed of any future consultation stages and when the document is submitted for examination.

Land off ORSTON LANE, WHATTON IN THE VALE



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Not to scale : For Identification Purposes Only

