



# RUSHCLIFFE LOCAL PLAN PART 2: LAND AND PLANNING POLICIES

PREFERRED OPTIONS CONSULTATION

CONSULTATION RESPONSE ON BEHALF OF THE WHIPLING FARM PARTNERSHIP

LAND OFF ORSTON LANE, WHATTON IN THE VALE

PROJECT REF.: P/300/M36

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**Project Client:**

WHIPLING FARM PARTNERSHIP

**Project Location:**

LAND OFF ORSTON LANE  
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## 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 representations 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 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 Preferred Housing Sites Consultation and is framed in the context of the requirement for the Local Plan to be considered legally compliant and sound. The tests of soundness are set out at Paragraph 182 of the National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF], which state that for a development plan to be considered sound it must be:
  - **Positively prepared** – the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development;
  - **Justified** – the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;
  - **Effective** – the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities; and
  - **Consistent with national policy** – the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the Framework.

## 2. Planning Policy 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.
- 2.2. The site is the subject of a current outline planning application [Ref:17/02703/OUT] for the erection of three dwellings and associated vehicular access which was submitted to Rushcliffe Borough Council on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2017, and is currently awaiting determination.

### 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 St. 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 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 small number of 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 also a 30 minute frequency service to Bingham.
- 3.5. We consider that the site has the capacity to accommodate a small scale residential development scheme for 3 dwellings and 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 adjacent land uses.
- 3.6. Therefore, we consider the site to be in a sustainable location, close to a number of service and 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 Preferred Options Document

4.1. On behalf of our client, the Whipling Farm Partnership, we wish to make the following observations on the Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 2 Preferred Option Consultation Document.

**Question 1: Do you agree with the Council's proposal that Local Plan Part 2 should identify enough land for around 2,550 new homes?**

4.2. We fully appreciate Council's recognition of the shortfall in housing land supply that is the result of delays in development of the large strategic sites allocated within the Core Strategy. We also fully appreciate the proposed allocation of additional land above the identified 2,000 dwelling requirement to account for further delays in the delivery of housing. However, we are concerned that identifying land for around 2,550 new homes 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 accounted for within the Local Plan Part 2 Preferred Options document. Paragraph 21 of the Appeal decision identifies the extent of the delays at the Sustainable Urban Extensions [SUEs] stating *'The SUEs are estimated to deliver some 1,340 fewer dwellings within a 5-year period than had been anticipated 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 on the Key Strategic Sites would result in fewer homes being delivered on these sites within the 5-year period. Paragraph 22 of the Appeal Decision states *'they '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 requirement 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 have been identified to accommodate a minimum of 2,600 homes. This would include the 1,100 dwellings originally anticipated for Local Plan Part 2, as well as up to 1,500 dwellings to overcome the SUE shortfall; as identified by the Inspector at Land south of Abbey Lane, Aslockton.

4.5. Furthermore, the identification of land for a minimum of 2,600 homes would not include a buffer to accommodate any further delays in the delivery of new homes at the existing SUEs, or strategic allocations, or any sites allocated as part of Local Plan Part 2. As such, we would suggest that Local Plan Part 2 needs to identify enough land for around 3,000 new homes; this would include 2,600 new homes to meet the identified requirement and a further 400 homes to guard against any further delays.

4.6. In addition, given that the delays in the development of the SUEs and the strategic sites have resulted in a significant dwelling shortage over the 5-year supply period, we consider it important that a number of the allocated sites are in a position to come forward within the next 5 years. We believe that this approach is necessary to ensure that the Local Plan provides a robust strategy for the delivery of residential development.

**Question 3: Do you agree with the Council’s proposal that no sites adjacent to the main urban area of Nottingham (within Rushcliffe) should be allocated for housing development through Local Plan Part 2?**

- 4.7. We fully agree with the Council’s proposal that no sites adjacent to the urban area of Nottingham should be allocated for residential development. Given that the current shortfall in residential development is inherently linked to delays with the allocated SUEs we do not consider that allocation of further development in this location would represent a robust strategy for delivery housing within Rushcliffe.
- 4.8. It is considered that any increased allocation within this location would result in the delivery trajectory being extended into the future rather than any additional development being delivered in the short-term to address the identified need.
- 4.9. Furthermore, the NPPF and the adopted Rushcliffe Core Strategy are both underpinned by a requirement to deliver a wide range of housing opportunities. As such, the Local Plan is expected to encourage developers to provide a wide range of housing 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 the Borough, and in particular ensure that there are a number of sites that can deliver housing in the short-term. As such, we consider it important that the Council allocates a number of residential development sites across the Borough that are in a position to deliver housing within the next 5 years, in order to address the immediate housing land shortfall.
- 4.11. In respect of the proposed development site at Whatton in the Vale, the NPPF and the Rushcliffe 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.
- 4.12. With regards to development in rural locations, such as Aslockton and Whatton in the Vale, 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.
- 4.13. Consequently, we believe that land should be allocated for small scale development within Aslockton and Whatton in the Vale 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 in the Vale as a small scale residential development site. Pre-application discussions with the Council have identified that development of the site would be well

related to the existing form of the settlement. Any development scheme would provide a range of housing types and sizes, and would be designed to protect the residential amenity of the neighbouring residents. Therefore, we consider the site presents a good opportunity to deliver 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 large strategic sites allocated within the Core Strategy. We also fully support the proposed allocation of additional land above the identified requirement to accommodate any further delays in housing delivery. However, we are concerned that the full extent of the shortfall has not been recognised and/or satisfactorily addressed by the Council. An Inspector for a recent appeal decision identified the shortfall as being 1,340 dwellings in the 5-year period and 1,500 dwellings over the course of the plan period. As such, in order to be properly considered as 'sound' within the meaning of the Framework, we believe that the Local Plan Part 2 should identify sufficient land for at least 3,000 dwellings to include the 1,100 dwellings originally anticipated for Local Plan Part 2, 1,500 dwellings to overcome the identified strategic site shortfall, as well as a 400 dwelling buffer.
- 5.2. Given that the current housing land shortage is inherently related to the delays in the strategic sites, we fully support the Council's position that the main urban area of Nottingham should not be subject to any further allocation, as it will only result in the delivery trajectory 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 in the short-term in order to resolve the immediate housing shortage.
- 5.3. We believe that following the recent appeal decision, Aslockton and Whatton in the Vale should be allocated sites for small-scale residential development, in order to maintain the vitality of local services in both villages. We are proposing the allocation of the site at Orston Lane, Whatton in the Vale 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, 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.

**APPENDIX 1 – SITE LOCATION PLAN**

