

**TEST VALLEY NEXT LOCAL PLAN – REFINED ISSUES
AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION (JUNE 2020)
LAND SOUTH OF FINKLEY FARM, ANDOVER**

Prepared by Pro Vision on behalf of The Trinley Estate

August 2020

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PROJECT NO. 1721

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Pro Vision is instructed by the Trinley Estate (the Estate) to submit this representation in response to the Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC) Refined Issues and Options consultation (June 2020) for the next Local Plan.
- 1.2 The Estate is promoting Land South of Finkley Farm for allocation through the emerging Local Plan.
- 1.3 This representation responds to the Refined Issues and Options consultation document, particularly in relation to the proposed residential development strategy of the next Local Plan.
- 1.4 In preparing this representation, we have provided background and contextual information relating to the Estate's land and its strategic development opportunity. We have also provided a separate site promotion document¹ which demonstrates how a mix of uses, including residential, educational, recreational, retail, commercial and open space could be delivered to provide comprehensive development on this land for future generations as a key part of the Local Plan's spatial strategy.
- 1.5 It is hoped that this representation provides suitable background information about the Estate's strategic development opportunity and forms the basis for further discussions and consultations with TVBC and other stakeholders.

¹ See Appendix A

2.0 Land South of Finkley Farm

- 2.1 The Estate is located in north Hampshire and is approximately 5km to the north east of Andover Town Centre (Northern Test Valley). The Estate straddles the administrative boundaries of Test Valley Borough Council and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.
- 2.2 Since 2015, The Estate has promoted part of its land for residential development through the TVBC's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) in 2015 (site reference 300), the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) in 2018 (site reference 231), the SHELAA in 2019 (site reference 231) and has made representations on the Issues and Options consultation in 2018.
- 2.3 The 2015 SHLAA assessment indicated that the Trinley Estate's land (Land South of Finkley Farm) could be a suitable broad location for an urban extension to Andover Town, given the proximity of the site to East Anton and existing amenities and public transport links. The 2015 SHLAA placed the site in Appendix 4 which recognised that a change in policy would be required to bring this site forward for development.
- 2.4 However, TVBC reached a different conclusion in the 2018 SHELAA assessment, indicating that the Trinley Estate's land is a rural location and unsuitable for development. On behalf of our client, Pro Vision has raised concerns with the Council's inconsistent assessment. Council officers made a commitment to review its assessment.
- 2.5 In the 2020 SHELAA assessment, the Trinley Estate's land (site reference 231) was placed back into Appendix 4 recognising that a change in policy would be required to bring this site forward for development. The 2020 SHELAA indicated once again that the Trinley Estate's land could be a suitable broad location for development.
- 2.6 It is therefore established that the Estates' site is within a broad location for potential development to help meet the development needs of the next plan period.
- 2.7 The total area of the Estate being promoted is circa 157 hectares.
- 2.8 The Estate land is relatively unconstrained, lying outside of any existing green gap or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). There are areas of historic interest, for example, that would need to be carefully managed and protected from the impacts of development. However, there are no overriding physical constraints that would inhibit delivery of this site and therefore The Trinley Estate are firmly of the view that the site should be fully

considered as a strategic site allocation to help meet the development needs identified in the next Local Plan.

- 2.9 The appended site promotion document sets out the vision for comprehensive development of the site. It is intended to provide a framework for discussions about bringing forward the site as either part of a strategic urban extension or separate garden village settlement.

3.0 Future Growth at Andover

3.1 We note that the Issues and Options consultation document suggested a number of options for how housing could be distributed and that the strategy of a wider distribution of housing to a larger number of settlements was supported².

3.2 Within the Refined Issues and Options consultation document, paragraph 5.13 states:

“One of the key decisions regarding the strategy of the next Local Plan will be how the provision of new housing is distributed. This includes broadly across HMAs, together with how it is then identified across settlements and individual sites. This also concerns the balance between the scale of development in Andover, Romsey and the other settlements within STV, and the rural area.”

3.3 Paragraph 5.17 explains that:

“As the largest settlement in the Borough, with the widest range and number of facilities, Andover has been the major focus of recent development and of existing planned growth under construction or with planning permission. The future scale of further growth will be considered, and we will look at a range of sites to meet future needs.”

3.4 Andover is a sustainable settlement with a range of higher order services and is well connected to the strategic road and rail network. The A303 runs to the south of the Town Centre providing links to the A34 and M3. The town also benefits from mainline rail connections to London, Basingstoke and Salisbury. Therefore, Andover plays an important role in the wider region.

3.5 Therefore, we agree that Andover should remain as a focus for strategic growth in the next Local Plan. In order to meet future housing requirements, the delivery of sustainable urban extensions, or other strategic growth in the Andover area, will be necessary and will form an important source of the Borough’s future housing land supply.

3.6 There continues to be a national objective to significantly boost the supply of housing³. It is also noted that the *Planning for the Future* White Paper proposes a new standard method for establishing housing requirement figures. This points to a significant increase in housing

² Paragraph 5.16 of the Refined Issues and Options consultation document

³ National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 59

need in the Borough – from 550 under the current standard method, to 813 under the new standard method⁴.

- 3.7 A sustainable urban extension, or a separate but well connected garden village, will not only significantly boost the supply of market and affordable housing, but also provide the necessary quantum of development to fund the provision of necessary infrastructure and facilities to support the new community, delivering social, economic and environmental benefits for future generations.
- 3.8 With reference to the ‘Development Opportunity’ diagram on page 13 of the appended site promotion document, it is clear that opportunities for strategic growth around Andover are limited. In summary, the A303 presents a defensible boundary to the southern limits of the town and helps to protect the character and setting of the outlying villages, including Upper Clatford. Development west and north of the town risks coalescence with other outlying villages, including Penton Mewsey and Enham Alamein.
- 3.9 The logical broad location for growth therefore continues to be eastwards, following the pattern of strategic development through the last two plan periods. The Trinley Estate’s land therefore presents an ideal opportunity for sustainable planned growth east of the town.

⁴ Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners Ltd (2020). How many homes? The new Standard Method [online]

4.0 Question 8

In updating the settlement boundaries to reflect recent development which has been built and development with planning permission, should we also include new allocations?

- 4.1 New allocations should be included within settlement boundaries, particularly new allocations which are situated on the edge of settlements and are well related both physically and functionally to existing settlement boundaries.
- 4.2 Settlement boundaries define the limits of a settlement and differentiates built up areas from the countryside and the difference between where there is a general presumption in favour of development and where there is not.
- 4.3 National policy and guidance seek to direct the majority of development to settlements where it can achieve sustainability. Generally, there is a presumption in favour of development within settlement boundaries, with land outside of settlement boundaries subject to more restrictive planning policies for development.
- 4.4 It is also noted that the *Planning for the Future* White Paper is proposing greater emphasis on plan making with the possibility of site allocations having permission in principle for suitable development. The likely direction of travel, therefore, is that Local Plans will be required to give greater certainty about where development is and is not supported in principle. Inclusion of site allocations in settlement boundaries would accord with this principle.
- 4.5 As well as reviewing settlement boundaries, the Local Plan should identify broad locations for growth in the higher order settlements, in accordance with paragraph 23 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). There should be a clear strategy for bringing sufficient land forward in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, including planning for and allocating sites for development.
- 4.6 Furthermore, NPPF paragraph 72 explains that: *“The supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing towns...Strategic policy-making authorities should identify suitable locations for such development where this can help to meet identified needs in a sustainable way.”*

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 As noted in the Refined Issues and Options consultation document, Andover is the largest settlement of the Borough, with the widest range and number of facilities and has been the major focus of recent development and existing planned growth, with further growth to be considered. We agree that Andover should remain a focus for growth through the next plan period.
- 5.2 In order to meet future housing requirements, the identification of strategic development locations will be necessary and will form an important source of the Borough's future housing land supply.
- 5.3 Noting the constraints around the town, the logical broad location for growth continues to be eastwards. The Trinley Estate is promoting part of its land in the broad location for strategic development, either as part of a planned urban extension, or a separate garden village settlement, well connected to the town.
- 5.4 The appended promotion document presents a concept and vision for the development opportunity. It demonstrates the site could be developed to create a distinctive new community, with opportunities for a mix of uses, including residential, educational, recreational, retail, commercial and open space. There is even potential scope for a new mainline rail station.
- 5.5 This site is a logical strategy for significant future growth in the Borough by following and respecting a pattern of growth that has occurred over the past plan periods. The land is suitable, available, and deliverable for development within the next Local Plan period.
- 5.6 The site should therefore be given serious consideration as an opportunity for a strategic development as a key part of the spatial strategy.
- 5.7 The Estate welcomes further discussions with stakeholders about this strategic development opportunity.

Appendix A – Site promotion document: Land South Finkley Farm

