

**TEST VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL: REVISED LOCAL PLAN
DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Test Valley Borough Council submitted its Local Plan for Examination in mid-2014 and the hearing sessions took place from December 2014 – January 2015. The planning inspector has required TVBC to consider a number of modifications which are needed to make the Plan 'sound'. These have been published for a period of public consultation ending on 5th June 2015.

2 ISSUES RELATING TO NEW FOREST DISTRICT

- 2.1 The Revised Test Valley Borough Local Plan identifies a housing requirement of 588 homes per year for Test Valley and puts forward an annual build of 194 homes in southern Test Valley (Ampfield, Chilworth, North Baddesley, Nursling & Rownhams, Romsey Town, Romsey Extra and Valley Park) and 394 in northern Test Valley. This equates to 10,584 dwellings for the period 2011-2029. Some of the development has already been accounted for by development completed or sites with planning permission. This leaves 1,659 new homes in southern Test Valley and 688 homes in northern Test Valley to be provided for, up to 2029.
- 2.2 The housing requirement has been established through a local 'Strategic Housing Market Assessment' (SHMA) covering Test Valley Borough, separately, but with a consistent methodology, from the work undertaken for the South Hampshire area, commissioned by the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) authorities and by the Solent LEP.
- 2.3 The Revised Local Plan directs the majority of new housing provision (7,092 dwellings) to the northern Test Valley (in the Andover area), with 3,492 dwellings proposed in the southern Test Valley. In Romsey a site for around 1,300 new dwellings to the south of Romsey (Whitenap) is proposed, and a site for 300 dwellings west of North Baddesley (Hoe Lane).
- 2.4 Test Valley Borough Council previously stated that the proposals in its plan will meet the objectively assessed need for new housing in its Plan Area. NFDC noted this and stated that if that was not the case, New Forest District Council advised Test Valley that there is no scope within New Forest District to address any shortfall in their housing needs in this District in view of the significant environmental constraints.
- 2.5 Additionally, a major new country park, Forest Park, is proposed adjoining the M27 motorway near Chilworth and Lordshill. It comprises over 400 hectares of woodland in 5 main parcels, and is seen as a key component in mitigating the recreational impacts of new residential development in southern Hampshire on the New Forest SPA/SAC/Ramsar site. NFDC noted this and gave support to this provision.
- 2.6 The main modifications relevant to NFDC are a reference to neighbouring authorities' housing need (see 'A' below) and mitigating the recreational pressures on the New Forest ecological designations (see 'B' below).

TVBC ref.	Proposed main modification by TVBC	TVBC reason for modification
TVBC/ MM/5/2	A) Add additional wording "The Council has worked with other PUSH authorities to ensure a consistent evidence based in South Hampshire. For the rest of Test Valley, the SHMA takes account of the housing market within which it is located. The proposed housing requirement figures do not rely upon any neighbouring authorities to meet the Borough's own housing need. <u>Similarly, no request has been received from any neighbouring authorities, for the Borough to contribute towards meeting their housing need</u> ".	To highlight that no other authority is relying on Test Valley to meet their housing requirement.
TVBC ref.	Proposed minor modification by TVBC	TVBC reason for modification
TVBC/ M/7/8	B) Amend paragraph to read: "The Council has commenced work with neighbouring authorities and statutory bodies on preparing a long term approach for mitigating the recreational pressures on the New Forest ecological designations. <u>In the short term the Council has approved the New Forest Interim Mitigation Framework 2014 [footnote]</u> " <u>[footnote: For a net gain in dwellings within 13.6km of the New Forest SPA]</u>	To update current position regarding New Forest mitigation.

- 2.7 There is some concern about the wording proposed by Test Valley Borough Council in Modification TVBC/MM/5/2. While it is true that while preparing Local Plans based on the former South East Plan there was no need for formal discussions between the two authorities regarding the need to look outside our Plan Area to help address 'objectively assessed' housing needs, as work commences on this Council's Local Plan Review it is expected that such a dialogue will be necessary. This district is subject to significant environmental constraints and has little remaining sustainably developable land available. It is suggested that Test Valley Borough Council amend the modification TVBC/MM/5/2 to read:-

The Council has worked with other PUSH authorities to ensure a consistent evidence based in South Hampshire. For the rest of Test Valley, the SHMA takes account of the housing market within which it is located. The proposed housing requirement figures do not rely upon any neighbouring authorities to meet the Borough's own housing need. However in future it may be necessary for further work with neighbouring authorities to be undertaken to address objectively assessed needs of the wider housing market areas.

- 2.8 Regarding modification TVBC/M/7/8, it is noted that TVBC has begun work on a Mitigation Framework to address recreational impacts of development on the New Forest European nature conservation designations. This Council has already adopted a Mitigation Strategy for European Sites Supplementary Planning Document and would welcome future opportunities to be involved in the work being done by Test Valley BC to ensure compatibility and consistency in approach.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None.

5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 If Test Valley Borough's housing needs were not addressed within its Plan area, this could place significant pressure on protected environments in this District.

5.2 Recreational impacts on European sites located within New Forest District arising from additional visits from the occupiers of new homes within Test Valley Borough. These impacts are required to be addressed by appropriate mitigation measures.

6 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None.

7 RECOMMENDATION

It is RECOMMENDED that Test Valley Borough Council be informed that:

- i.) New Forest District Council consider modification TVBC/MM/5/2 should be amended to read:
"The Council has worked with other PUSH authorities to ensure a consistent evidence based in South Hampshire. For the rest of Test Valley, the SHMA takes account of the housing market within which it is located. The proposed housing requirement figures do not rely upon any neighbouring authorities to meet the Borough's own housing need. However in future it may be necessary for further work with neighbouring authorities to be undertaken to address objectively assessed needs of the wider housing market areas.

And

- ii.) This Council would welcome closer working on cross-boundary issues, including the work on appropriate mitigation measures to address recreational impacts on the New Forest European nature conservation sites.

8 PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION

I have agreed to the recommendations of this report.

Signed: E J Heron

Date: 4 June 2015

For further information contact: Andrew Herring Planning Policy Officer Policy and Plans Team Tel: 023 8028 5588 E mail: andrew.herring@nfdc.gov.uk	Attached information: NFDC Response to TVBC Local Plan Pre-Submission – March 2014
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Date notice given of this Decision – 4 June 2015
Last date for call-in – 11 June 2015