



Self-build and Custom Housebuilding in Fareham

A report to Fareham Borough Council

On behalf of the Health & Housing Partnership

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Self-build and Custom Housebuilding in Fareham

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1 Introduction

Objectives

- 1.1 The objective of this report is to understand the demand for self-build and custom housebuilding in Fareham. Specifically this report sets out the policy options and recommendations for ensuring that the Local Plan Review meets national policy and guidance in respect of meeting any objectively assessed needs.
- 1.2 The focus of this report is on the need for self-build / custom build housing across Fareham Borough area.
- 1.3 Self-build housing, also know as Custom Build, typically involves individuals and/or associations commissioning the construction of a new house from a builder, contractor, package company or physically building a house for themselves. Sometimes developers offer the option of a serviced plot where individuals can design and build their own home as part of a larger scheme.
- 1.4 The evidence and information reviewed and presented in this report considering the demand for self-build and custom housebuilding will help to inform the review of Fareham Borough Council's Local Plan.

Context

- 1.5 Fareham Borough Council is undertaking a review of its Local Plan and needs to ensure the Plan takes into account of the need for self-build and custom housebuilding in the Borough.
- 1.6 Section 2 of the report includes a review of relevant legislation, national and local policy and guidance including the policy position in neighbouring local authority areas.
- 1.7 Section 3 of the report provides a review of the information recorded on Fareham's Self-build and custom housebuilding register to inform the evidence base of demand for this type of housing in the district. In addition, evidence gathered by contacting relevant land and estate agents operating in the Fareham area in regard to self-build and custom housebuilding demand is included.
- 1.8 Section 4 of the report draws on the information gathered to inform initial policy options and recommendations relating to this issue for the Local Plan Review.

2 Review of Legislative and Planning Policy Context

National Legislation and Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (2012) and Planning Practice Guidance

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012, and sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- 2.2 The NPPF is based upon a presumption in favour of sustainable development, incorporating economic, social and environmental roles. Local planning authorities are required to apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development when assessing and determining development proposals (paragraph 197).
- 2.3 With regards to self and custom build housing, paragraph 50 of the NPPF indicates that in order to "*deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, local planning authorities should ... plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community (such as, but not limited to ... people wishing to build their own homes)*".
- 2.4 Paragraph 159 indicates that local planning authorities (LPAs) should have a clear understanding of housing needs in their area and should prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) to assess their full housing needs. This should identify the scale and mix of housing and range of tenures required over the plan period that addresses the need for all types of housing, and the needs of different groups in the community, including individuals wishing to build their own homes.
- 2.5 The Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides further guidance on self-build and custom housebuilding, outlining the requirement for local authorities to keep a self-build and custom housebuilding register. The PPG indicates that LPAs should use the demand data from the registers in their area when preparing their SHMA in order to understand and consider future need for this type of housing in their area.

Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015

- 2.6 The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 places a duty on relevant authorities to keep a register of individuals and community groups who have expressed an interest in acquiring land to bring forward self-build and custom-build projects and to take account of and make provision for the interests of those on such registers in developing their housing initiatives and their local plans.
- 2.7 It also allows volume house builders to include self-build and custom-build projects as contributing towards their affordable housing obligations, when in partnership for this purpose with a Registered Social Landlord.

Housing and Planning Act 2016

- 2.8 Chapter 2 of Part 1 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 ('the Act') relates to self-build and custom housebuilding. The Act provides a definition of self-build and custom housebuilding as

“(A1) *the building or completion by—*

(a) individuals,

(b) associations of individuals, or

(c) persons working with or for individuals or associations of individuals,

of houses to be occupied as homes by those individuals.

(A2) *But it does not include the building of a house on a plot acquired from a person who builds the house wholly or mainly to plans or specifications decided or offered by that person.”*

- 2.9 The Housing and Planning Act inserts section 2A to the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 requiring 'relevant authorities' (as defined in Section 1 of the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015) including district councils, a duty to “*give suitable development permission in respect of enough serviced plots of land to meet the demand for self-build and custom housebuilding in the authority's area...*” (Section 10 (1)).
- 2.10 The Housing and Planning Act In this section 'development permission' means planning permission or permission in principle (within the meaning of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990). Evidence of this demand is provided by the self-build and custom housebuilding register compiled by the local authority as required by the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (Section 10 (6) (a)).
- 2.11 Furthermore, the Act includes amendments to the Schedule to the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (registers under section 1).

The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Regulations 2016

- 2.12 The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Regulations 2016 are made under sections 2B and 5 of, and the Schedule to, the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 and make provision in relation to the definition of a serviced plot of land, registers kept under the Act and exemption from the duty.
- 2.13 The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Regulations 2016 provide additional eligibility criteria for entry in an authority's register and for registers to be divided into Part 1 and Part 2 depending on circumstances of the applicant and allow authorities to set additional criteria for eligibility. The Regulations also set out what information must be provided in an application for entry in the register.

Local Planning Policy

Fareham Borough Council Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (2011)

- 2.14 The Core Strategy was adopted in August 2011. It identifies the Borough's development

- needs up to 2026 and how they will be met.
- 2.15 A number of strategic objectives set out greater detail as to how the Core Strategy's spatial vision will be delivered, amongst them Strategic Objective 6 identifies the need to '*provide a range of dwelling sizes and tenures which take into account existing and future housing needs.*'
- 2.16 Policy CS2 Housing Provision indicates that development in the Borough will achieve a mix of different housing sizes, types and tenures which will be informed by the Housing Market Assessment and the Council's Housing Strategy.
- 2.17 In addition, policy CS18 Provision of Affordable Housing outlines the requirement for development proposals to provide a mixture of dwelling types, sizes and tenures reflecting the identified housing needs of the local population.

Fareham Borough Council Local Plan Part 2: Development Sites and Policies (2015)

- 2.18 The Development Site and Policies (DSP) Plan outlines the Council's support for self-build housing, encouraging those wishing to build their own houses to do where the opportunity arises.
- 2.19 The DSP Plan indicates in paragraph 5.167 that:

"Opportunities for self-build within the Borough are provided through support in the Development Site Briefs for Housing Allocations H12 and H13, whilst the residential frontage infill component of Policy DSP7 will also offer support to the delivery of small scale self-build schemes (for one or two dwellings)."

- 2.20 It further indicates that the Council will continue to review the demand for self-build in the Borough, and through the Local Plan Review, will explore making further land available for self-build should future demand exceed the land made available for self-build in the Borough, by both the DSP Plan and the Welborne Plan (paragraph 5.168).

Fareham Borough Council Local Plan Part 3: The Welborne Plan (2015)

- 2.21 The Local Plan Part 3 – The Welborne Plan makes provision for custom and self-build housing as part of the Welborne development through policy WEL21 – Custom Build Homes.
- 2.22 The policy requires that a proportion of homes shall be delivered as dwelling plots for sale to individuals or groups of individuals wishing to build their own home. The number of custom build plots in any given residential phase shall reflect up-to-date evidence of demand and the need to ensure that the character and nature of that phase are not compromised. Overall, it is expected that not less than 1% of all homes at Welborne should be delivered as custom-build plots.

Policy Position in Neighbouring Local Authorities

- 2.23 A review of the planning policy position in neighbouring and nearby local planning authorities regarding self-build and custom housebuilding has been undertaken. The following section outlines relevant planning policies relating to self-build and custom housebuilding.

Portsmouth City Council

- 2.24 No policies relating to self-build and custom housebuilding were identified following a review of relevant Portsmouth City Council development plan documents and supplementary planning documents.

Gosport Borough Council*Gosport Borough Local Plan 2011-2029 (2015)*

- 2.25 Policy LP24: Housing requires that proposals for new housing development include a mix of dwelling types, sizes and tenure to meet the needs of Gosport's current and future population. Paragraph 11.11 of the supporting text for this policy indicates that in order to 'facilitate a mix of housing in the Borough, the Council will favourably consider self-build residential schemes'.

Isle of Wight Council

- 2.26 No policies relating to self-build and custom housebuilding were identified following a review of relevant Isle of Wight Council development plan documents and supplementary planning documents.

Winchester City Council

- 2.27 No policies relating to self-build and custom housebuilding were identified following a review of relevant Winchester City Council development plan documents and supplementary planning documents.

Havant Borough Council

- 2.28 No policies relating to self-build and custom housebuilding were identified following a review of relevant Havant Borough Council development plan documents and supplementary planning documents.

Eastleigh Borough Council

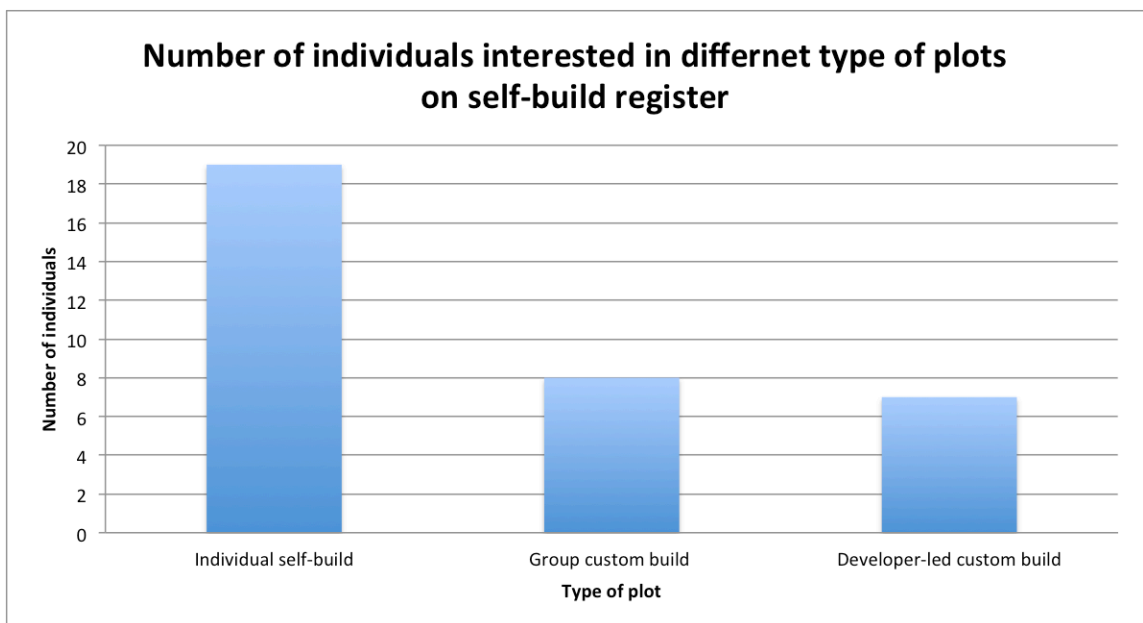
- 2.29 No policies relating to self-build and custom housebuilding were identified following a review of relevant Eastleigh Borough Council development plan documents and supplementary planning documents.

3 Review of current demand for Self-build and Custom Housebuilding

Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Register Review

- 3.1 Self and custom house building registers provide valuable information on the demand for self-build plots in the relevant authority’s area and form a key part of a Local Planning Authority’s evidence base of demand for this type of housing.
- 3.2 The following information is based on a review of Fareham Borough Council’s self-build and custom housebuilding register undertaken in October 2016.
- 3.3 Fareham Borough Council has a total of 20 individuals who have successfully been accepted onto their custom and self-build housing register (August 2016). In regard to the local connection of individuals on the register; 14 individuals are residents within the Fareham district, 4 individuals either have a working or family connection with Fareham; and 2 individuals did not provide a local connection to Fareham.
- 3.4 Figure 1 shows the type of plots which individuals on the register have recorded their interest in. A total of 19 individuals on the register recorded their interest in individual self-build plots, 8 recorded an interest in group custom build, and 7 recorded an interest in developer-led custom build plots showing that several individuals expressed an interest in different types of plots.

Figure 1: Number of individuals interested in different types of plots on the self-build register



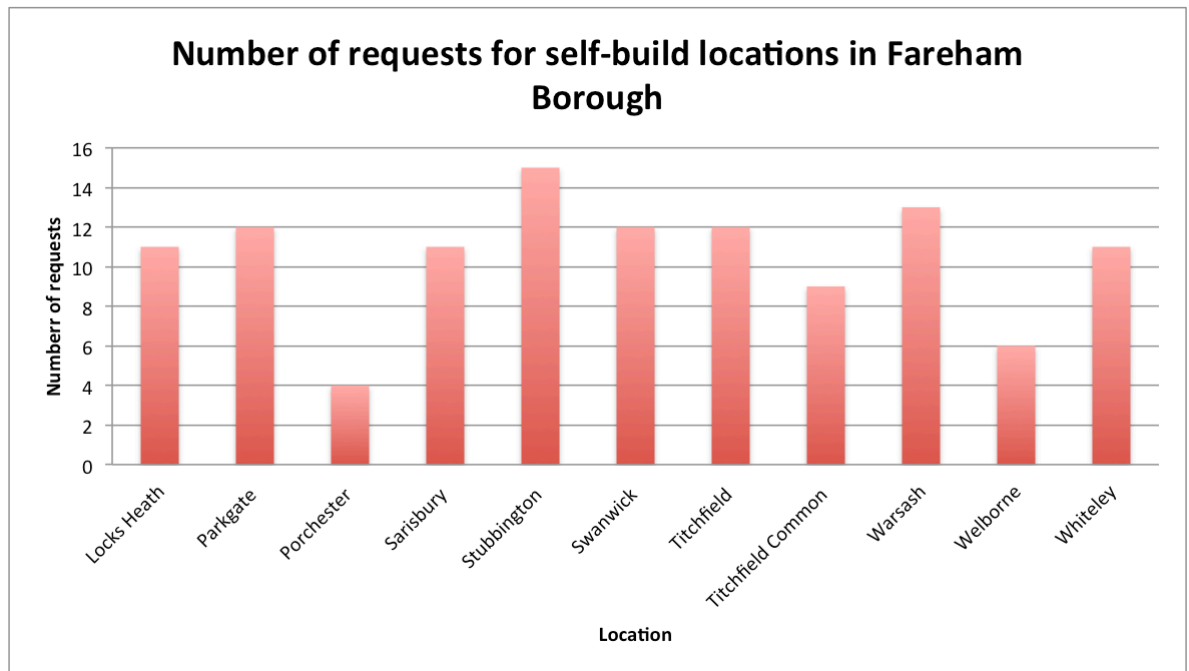
Source: Fareham Borough Council

- 3.5 Figure 2 displays the popularity of areas in the Borough where individuals on the self-build

register would like to undertake their build. Notably Stubbington is the area in the Borough where most individuals (15) have stated they would like to undertake a self-build project. Warsash (13), Parkgate, Titchfield and Swanwick (all 12) are also represented as highly requested locations whilst Locks Heath, Sarisbury and Whiteley all received 11 requests.

- 3.6 80% of individuals on the register recorded an interest in multiple locations within Fareham where they would like to undertake a self-build project, with 65% of individuals recording 5 or more different locations within the borough.

Figure 2: Number of requests for self-build locations in Fareham Borough



Source: Fareham Borough Council

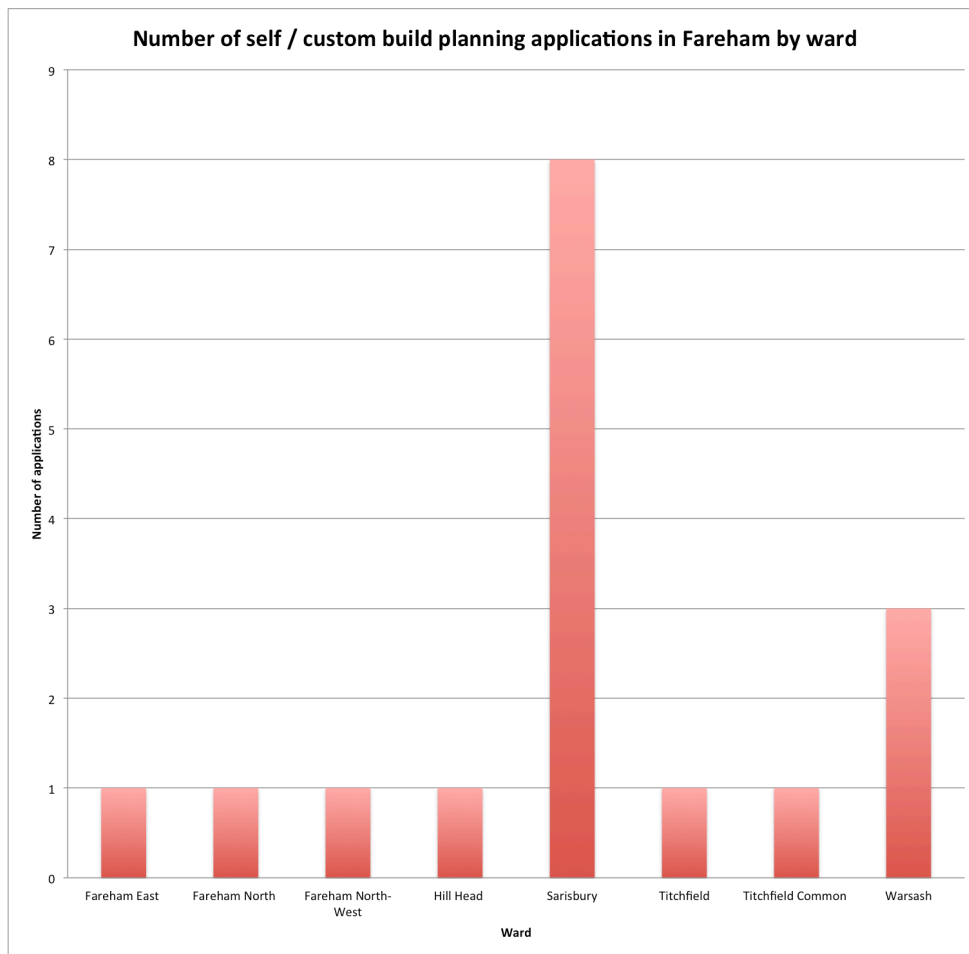
- 3.7 As of January 2017, 3 people are registered on the Self Build Portal 'Need-a-plot' service looking for a plot within the Fareham area with plot areas within Locks Heath, Warsash or Sarisbury listed in addition to across the whole of the Fareham district.

Self-build and Custom Build Housing Planning Applications and Permissions

- 3.8 A total of 17 planning applications for self or custom build homes have been submitted to Fareham Borough Council in the past 5 years (since mid 2011). All 17 planning applications have been granted planning permission and 11 of these permissions have now been implemented. The remaining 6 approved planning applications are yet to be completed.
- 3.9 The number of planning applications for self-build and custom housebuilding submitted to Fareham Borough Council is shown by location in Figure 3 below.
- 3.10 As illustrated below in Figure 3, Sarisbury represents the location where the highest number of planning applications have been received for self-build and custom housebuilding in the past 5 years with a total of 8 applications granted planning

permission. Warsash has received 3 planning applications and individual planning application have been determined in a further 6 wards in Fareham.

Figure 3: Number of planning applications for self-build and custom housebuilding by location



Source: Fareham Borough Council

- 3.11 A total of 12 applications or over 70% of planning applications received have been to demolish an existing dwelling and for the erection of a replacement dwelling on the same site.

CIL Exemption

- 3.12 There have been no planning applications submitted to Fareham Borough Council under the Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) Regulations 2014 54A, 54B, 54C and 54D for an exemption from CIL for Self-build housing.

Ad hoc Correspondence / Opinion Polls & Surveys

- 3.13 In regard to ad hoc correspondence received by Fareham Borough Council from prospective self-builders, land / estate agents or developers seeking assistance from the Council in relation to meeting demand for self and custom build, enquires have been received in relation to the following:

- Expressing an interest in self-build plots

- Enquiring what land is identified as set aside for self-build; and
- The timescale of delivery

3.14 The Council have undertaken two Resident's Surveys in the past 5 years (2011 and 2013), which were circulated to 4020 households in the Borough. However the 2011 Resident's Survey Report and 2013 Resident's Survey Report did not include any questions in respect of self or custom build housing.

Neighbouring Local Authority Self Build Register Data

3.15 Table 1 displays the number of individuals recorded in self-build and custom housebuilding registers in Fareham's neighbouring Local Planning Authorities. This information has been collected in order to make reasonable assumptions to avoid double counting the number of individuals on Fareham's Self-build register and for comparison with Fareham's data.

Table 1: Neighbouring Local Authority Areas: Self / Custom Build Register Data

Neighbouring Local Authority Areas: Self / Custom Build Register Data		
Local Authority	Number of Individuals on Custom and Self-build Register	Number of Individuals who are a resident in Fareham
Portsmouth City Council	12	1
Gosport Borough Council	17	1
Eastleigh Borough Council	8	Unknown
Winchester City Council	37	1
Havant Borough Council	10	-
Isle of Wight Council	59	-

Source: Portsmouth City Council, Gosport Borough Council, Eastleigh Borough Council, Winchester City Council, Havant Borough Council and Isle of Wight Council

3.16 Based on the number of individuals on self-build and custom housebuilding registers in the neighbouring LPAs it is reasonable to assume that the 3 individuals who are listed on these registers can be discounted from the analysis, as they are resident within the Fareham area. Therefore they are likely to also be included on Fareham's own self-build register.

Local Market View of Current and Future Demand

3.17 Evidence has been gathered through contacting relevant land and estate agents that operate in the Fareham area and which maintain a list of clients who are seeking suitable plots to build their own home.

3.18 The contacted land and estate agents were asked a series of questions in regard to the current demand of self and custom build plots. The full list of research questions asked to

inform the current and future demand is provided in Appendix 1. This included a question regarding what barriers agents have experienced and the responses received included:

- Shortage of land availability
- Restrictive Local Plan designations including EA Flood Risk Zones and Tree Preservation Orders, due to their widespread coverage.
- High cancellation rate – A large register of interested individuals with also a high cancellation rate. The number of individuals who actually proceed to purchase is contrasted to the number of people on the register due to funding circumstances.

3.19 The most frequently cited response received from land and estate agents contacted was the shortage of land availability as a barrier to providing suitable plots of land for self-build and custom housebuilding.

3.20 Land and estate agents were also asked whether there is anything they feel Fareham Borough Council could do to improve the market for self-build and custom housebuilding. The responses received by the Council included:

- Collaborative working from an early stage
- Need to market appropriately
- Greater allocation of land
- Approve more planning applications

3.21 The full list of questions undertaken in compiling evidence of the local market view is provided in Appendix 1.

4 Summary

Key Points

- A total of 20 individuals have successfully been accepted onto the Council's self-build and custom housebuilding register.
- 90% of individuals on the register have a local connection with Fareham.
- A total of 19 individuals on the register recorded their interest in individual self-build plots, 8 recorded an interest in group custom build, and 7 recorded an interest in developer-led custom build plots showing that several individuals expressed an interest in different types of plots.
- Stubbington represents the highest requested location for self-build in Fareham with several other locations receiving a high proportion of requests. This is underlined by 80% of individuals on the register have recorded an interest in multiple locations within Fareham.
- A total of 17 planning applications for self-build or custom housebuilding have been submitted to Fareham Borough Council in the past 5 years (mid 2011). All 17 planning applications have been granted planning permission and 11 of these permissions have now been implemented.
- Sarisbury represents the location where the highest number of planning applications has been received for self-build and custom housebuilding.
- Based on responses received from land and estate agents that operate in the Fareham area, a frequently experienced barrier cited is the shortage of land availability.

Current and Future Demand

- 4.1 The opportunities for self-build homes within the Borough are identified in the Local Plan Part 2: Development Site and Policies (DSP) Plan at sites in Stubbington Lane (H12) and Land at Sea Lane (H13). In addition, Local Plan Part 3: the Welborne Plan Policy WEL21 states that "Overall, it is expected that not less than 1% of all homes at Welborne should be delivered as custom-build plots."
- 4.2 No planning applications have been submitted and no planning permission has been granted at either the Stubbington Lane site (H12) or the Land at Sea Lane site (H13) and therefore the combined indicative residential capacity of 15 dwellings across the two sites represent a 75% coverage of the current demand recorded on Fareham Borough Council's self-build and custom housebuilding register.
- 4.3 The total number of 6,000 dwellings to be completed at Welborne will equate to the delivery of 60 self-build and custom build homes in accordance with Welborne Plan Policy WE21. Therefore three times the current level of demand for self and custom build is

- expected to be provided through the Welborne Plan. However focusing on the housing trajectory for Welborne, the delivery of the main phase 1 (2015 to 2019) which includes the delivery of 500 homes, equating to the provision of 5 custom build homes during the phase. This potentially represents a 25% coverage of the current demand in Fareham.
- 4.4 Therefore the combination of Welborne Plan Policy WE21 and the DSP Plan sites H12 and H13 provide the supply for the current demand identified for self-build and custom housebuilding plots in Fareham.
- 4.5 However whilst DSP Plan sites H12 and H13 provide a supply for the current self-build demand and the delivery of Welborne provides a longer-term supply of land there is a need to accommodate future demand identified as the delivery of housing at Welborne comes forward.
- 4.6 The supply of land provided through the Welborne Plan and the DSP Plan sites H12 and H13 are also limited to the areas of Stubbington and Welborne. It is noted that Stubbington represents the highest requested location for self-build in Fareham however 80% of individuals on the register recorded also expressed an interest in multiple locations within Fareham where they would like to undertake a self-build project. The residential frontage infill component of Policy DSP7 will also offer support to the delivery of small scale self-build schemes (for one or two dwellings). The requested locations for self-build on the register signifies a demand for a greater coverage of land availability for self-build across the Borough.
- 4.7 The Local Plan Part 3 – The Welborne Plan states that the evidence gathered to support Policy WEL21 through engagement with land and estate agents (within the Portsmouth and Southampton housing market areas) which maintain lists of clients who are seeking suitable plots to build their own home, indicated “*that there is demand for custom and self-build housing that is currently not being fully met*”. This is reflected in the evidence gathered to compile a local market view of the current and likely future demands set out in Section 3 with the shortage of land availability the most frequently cited barrier to the current self-build market.

Policy Options and Recommendations

Policy option to ensure sufficient delivery of land for people wishing to build their own homes

- 4.8 The Local Plan Review could consider the introduction of a quota based policy, which requires any large development sites of more than 20 dwellings to provide a percentage of dwelling plots for self-build and custom housebuilding. This would increase the land availability for self-build and also the coverage of plots. The policy could be supported by a periodic review of the evidence of demand to ensure the allocation of self-build land is supported by future demand. Such a quota based policy could also be in place as the Welborne development comes forward and then made redundant upon the completion of a specified phase of the development.
- 4.9 A Policy could be supported by setting out requirements in relation to:
- Marketing: Self-build plots are to be marketed for a minimum period of 12 months and

if they have not sold, the plot(s) may either remain on the open market as custom build or be offered to the Council or a Housing Association before being built out by the developer;

- Planning Applications: Sites delivering self-build plots are to seek a planning permission for the self-build element of the scheme;
 - Accessibility: Self-build plots are to marketed by a certain phase of the development (completion of 50% of total dwellings) to ensure plots are accessible at an early stage of the development; and
 - Design codes: Self-build developments require to be in accordance with details set out in a Design Code.
- 4.10 The requirement of a self-build plot to be marketed for a minimum period of 12 months should be carried out in accordance with an agreed marketing strategy. The marketing strategy should set out how plots will be marketed including through various means such as; direct advertisement; an active local marketing campaign including consideration of targeted marketing to potential self builders and local community groups, and roadside marketing boards.
- 4.11 Such a policy would enable Fareham Borough Council to satisfy the future demand for self-build plots including until phases of the Welborne development are delivered.
- 4.12 The definition of self-build housing included in the Community Infrastructure Regulations should be taken into account.
- 4.13 As included under paragraph 5.168 of the Local Plan Part 2: Development Sites & Policies the Council will continue to review the demand for self-build in the Borough, and the policy option to provide self-build plots by large developments sites would be subject to monitoring the level of the current demand. Any planning application would be judged against the criteria of the policy and other relevant policy requirements.
- 4.14 The review should include a periodic update of the local market view of current and future demand by undertaking further contact with land and estate agents that operate in the Fareham area to ensure the local market review remains current. It is recommended that Fareham Borough Council consider re-contacting the non-responding land and estate agents from the local market view of current and future demand to increase the response rate.

Publicising the self-build and custom housebuilding register

- 4.15 Section 1(2) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 requires each relevant authority to publicise its register. As a minimum, Planning Practice Guidance recommends relevant authorities to hold a webpage on their website that is dedicated to self-build and custom housebuilding. Relevant authorities are also recommended to consider additional innovative methods of publicising their register to increase awareness of it.
- 4.16 As advised by the Planning Practice Guidance, one recommendation to Fareham Borough Council is to actively promote self-build and custom housebuilding, to be proactive in securing an increase in self-build developments and actively encouraging people to come

forward and register. This would assist the Council by informing the demand for self-build and custom housebuilding.

Setting local eligibility criteria for entry in the register

- 4.17 Evidence gathered to inform the local market view of current and future demand provided insight that although there are large numbers of individuals included on registers of interest, there is also a high cancellation rate and the number of people that actually proceed to purchase is lower than the number of people on the register due to funding circumstances.
- 4.18 The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Regulations 2016 made under the schedule to the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 make provision in relation to the definition of a serviced plot of land, registers kept under the Act and exemption from the duty. The Regulations provide eligibility criteria for entry in an authority's register and for registers to be divided into Part 1 and Part 2 depending on circumstances of the applicant and allow authorities to set additional criteria for eligibility. The Regulations also set out what information must be provided in an application for entry in the register.
- 4.19 Regulation 5 of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Regulations 2016 allows a relevant authority to introduce eligibility criteria based on those with local connections, by demonstrating sufficient connection with the authority's area. Regulation 5 also allows a relevant authority to set a criterion "whereby only individuals who can demonstrate that they have sufficient resources to purchase the land for their own self-build and custom housebuilding, are eligible."
- 4.20 It is recommended that Fareham Borough Council update their register base to reflect the additional eligibility criteria, and to increase the accuracy of demand which is evident on the self-build register. The criterion relating to "sufficient resources" will also contribute in avoiding the 'high cancellation rate' due to funding circumstances cited in the local market view of the current and future demand.

Appendix 1: Current and Future Demand Research Questions

Land/estate agents - Current and Future Demand Research: Self-build and Custom Housebuilding in Fareham					
Survey Questions	Responses	Land and Estate Agents	Location	Contact Number	Notes
Introduction and background to research. Confirm the agent is happy to answer a series of questions regarding the current demand of self-build and custom housebuilding in Fareham Borough Council.					
What is the current demand for self-build / How would you describe the current demand for self-build plots?					
Can you provide details of the number of individuals who have registered their interest in the past 5 years?					
How long have the registered individuals been waiting for? Is this typically a long time or is there a quick turnaround?					
As an agent - what are the barriers you have experienced? (Builders, land, wider range of problems)					
Is there anything you feel Fareham Borough Council could do to improve the market?					
Any notable issues / challenges that have arisen? Locational preferences?					

