



How we work to address the housing crisis: Capability Statement

January 2019

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01

Richborough Estates

Richborough Estates is one of the UK's most successful strategic land promotion companies.

We work on behalf of landowners promoting land through the planning system to secure local plan allocations and planning permissions for housing developments. We then manage the sale of the site from the landowner to the housebuilder who will then build the scheme and deliver the new homes. This document includes analysis of a sample of twenty one sites we have delivered in recent years from a wider portfolio, these sites have delivered:



Planning permission
for 21 sites

providing some: **2,955** homes of
which **702** are affordable tenures



£15.84m worth of local
planning contribution

for infrastructure and
other local benefits facilitated



68% of
our sites

achieve planning permission
through **locally-made decisions**



37 weeks

is average time between marketing
the site and selling site to a
housebuilder, leading to rapid delivery



10 different
housebuilders

are building on our sites



35 homes per annum

is the average rate of delivery
from a Richborough site, on an
average site size of 140 units



We currently have around 100 active projects across the country and if all of these sites come forward, they would contribute approximately 7% of the annual target and would play a significant role in ensuring a continued supply of new homes.



How do we work?

Richborough Estates is a privately owned land promotion company operating nationally. We work in partnership with landowners, councils and stakeholders to secure residential planning permission on suitable sites, which can then be sold to a development partner. The landowners we work with include private individuals, companies, charities, trusts and estates departments at public sector bodies, including Councils. The sites we promote range in size, but are typically 150 to 300 homes, and include greenfield and brownfield land.

Whilst we do not build and sell homes ourselves, our role in promoting land through the planning system, with all its attendant complexities and risks, is an important step along the way to the delivery of much needed new homes. Land promoters like us are responsible for 41% of homes secured through outline planning permission¹ providing an important source of 'oven ready' land with planning permission for housebuilders to pick-up and build-out.

Our approach at Richborough Estates can be split into three key stages:

- **Promotion agreement** – working with landowners we identify and appraise the potential of sites, agreeing a contractual position with the landowner which once secured, we then will promote the site through the planning system. The use of promotion agreements mean Richborough Estates will typically only take remuneration from the project once the site has been successfully sold.
- **Planning** – using our expertise and resources, we then seek to establish the principle of housing development. This is done by promoting the site either through a Local Plan process, where Councils will allocate land for housing development, and/or through an outline planning application, securing the necessary planning permission. Such work can be costly and risky and involves identifying a strategy, preparing technical work (such as on transport, ecology or other matters to show the site and development is suitable and impacts can be mitigated), undertaking consultation with stakeholders and communities and promoting the site to the relevant Local Planning Authority.
- **Land disposal** – once we secure an allocation or outline planning permission we then market the site for sale to a housebuilder. Following a bidding process, the site is disposed and ownership is transferred from the landowner to the housebuilder. Securing any final detailed consent, building the homes and selling them is then the responsibility of the housebuilder.

Our collaborative work and approach brings benefits to many of the main parties involved. Landowners gain the resources, finances, support, expertise and outstanding track record of Richborough Estates' professional team to navigate the process. Housebuilders get access to 'oven ready' sites without the attendant timescales and risks sometimes involved in land promotion. Councils can rely on our team's technical expertise and experience as we demonstrate sites are acceptable in-planning terms and can deliver local policy aspirations and local benefits.

¹ Realising Potential –
The scale and role of
specialist land promoters
in housing delivery
(March 2018)

Plan Led

We are strong advocates of a plan led system and are committed to promoting land for residential development by engaging actively with local authorities, Parish Councils and other Neighbourhood Fora through Local and Neighbourhood Plans. We do not routinely pursue speculative planning applications and take great care in early high-quality public consultation to identify local features and any public concerns and acknowledge these within our schemes.

Coverage by up-to-date Local Plans is far from universal across the country, and the timing of plan preparation may not always align with the timing for promotion of our sites. However, a number of our sites were promoted as emerging sites allocation (two of which were in Neighbourhood Plans) at the time of the submission of an outline application for the schemes. This reflects the positive outcomes of the engagement with relevant bodies that we pursue. Other times applications were submitted without an emerging allocation, but in areas where there was an acute need for housing.

The majority (68%) of outline application determined on our schemes since 2010 were approved by planning committees with case officer recommendation for approval, with only two schemes recommended for refusal by the case officer.

Despite our track record, it is not always possible to successfully secure planning permission through Local Plan promotion or positive engagement with the Council, and in some instances, it is necessary to appeal. However, only six of our sites secured planning permission on appeal and of those, two thirds were recommended for approval by the case officer or were not determined in the given timescale.

We are committed to securing planning permission through open engagement with all relevant parties rather than speculative opportunities.

Case Studies



Winsford
secured through a made Neighbourhood Plan in 2014



Eccleshall
secured through a made Neighbourhood Plan in 2015

© Sheila Halsall / Alamy Stock Photo



Codsall and Norton Canes
both secured consent with emerging Local Plan allocations

© A.P.S. (UK) / Alamy Stock Photo

03

Quality

We are committed to the promotion of residential schemes which deliver high quality design and social infrastructure to create real places of which we can be proud. Our design-led schemes deliver more than just housing with schemes including public open spaces, natural play areas, country park, community orchard, community allotments, improvements to community centre, integrated footpath and cycleways and wildlife preservation.

Case Studies

Bampton

This 160-dwelling development embraced the physical assets of the site to create a bespoke scheme which is locally responsive and specific to Bampton. The design incorporated five development character areas including an urban village, green streets, and village green edges to reflect the character of the village and create a new sense of place. The development was characterised by flowing country lanes, hedgerow planting, and informal landscaped areas to create grasslands and meadows.

CALA Homes are currently building out the site.



Bampton

Newbold-On-Stour



Newbold-On-Stour

The Spencer Family and Richborough Estates proposed a sustainable housing development of up to 52 high quality homes in Newbold-on-Stour in Stratford-Upon-Avon.

Key principles to the development design at the site that were endorsed at the outline stage, including lower density features, varied architectural styles and soft landscaping.

The proposals will enable the Spencer Family to invest in their farm for the long term and enable future generations to thrive as independent farmers.

A great deal of thought and care has been given to the design of the development which will reflect the local character of Newbold-on-Stour and retain natural features such as the woodland, hedgerows and additional trees. The main benefit of this development will be to provide additional housing that will bring much needed affordable homes into the area, as well as provide a dedicated play area for the children and a car park for St David's Church.

Whitnash

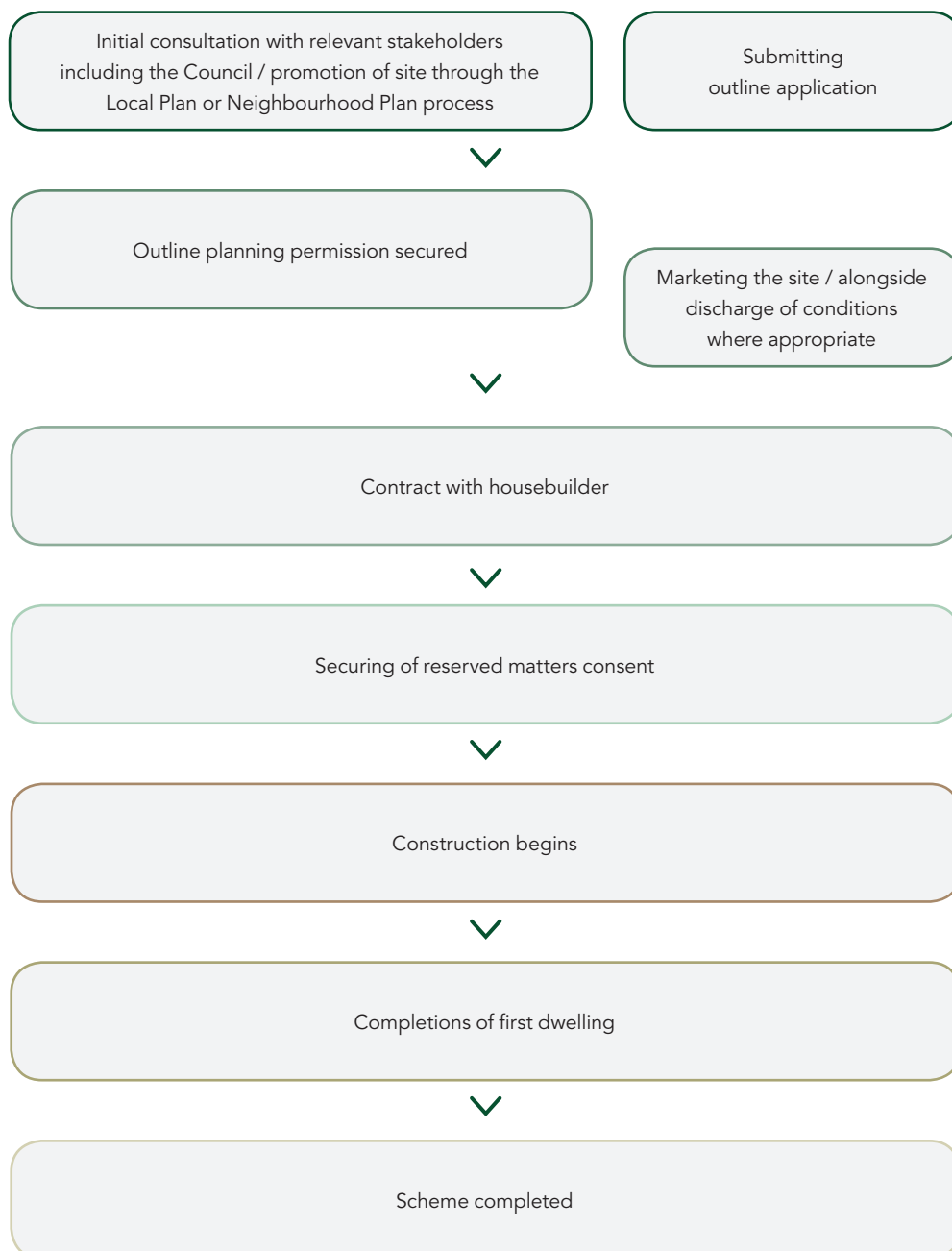
The scheme, consisting of 94 dwellings, had a street hierarchy characterised by different mixes and traditionally designed homes. The scheme also included extensive landscaping and incorporated ecology enhancements in to the attenuation design to enhance the sense of place. Finally, a children's play area was proposed that took advantage of its location on the sites sloping topography to create interesting playing features.

Bovis Homes Limited submitted the final reserved matters and have since built out the site.

Speed and Implementation

We have a proven track record of seeing that the sites we promote through to implementation in a prompt and timely fashion.

Figure 1: Stages of housing delivery



Source: Lichfields analysis

The Planning Period

We engage with local authorities early in the promotion of our sites to try and ensure as smooth a planning period as possible. We gain outline permission on sites before taking them to market. After initial engagement on average we achieve outline planning permission in 57 weeks. This increases slightly to 61 weeks if the scheme is allowed on appeal rather than granted by the local authority. However, where there has been very positive discussions with the Council, it is possible to achieve outline consent very quickly. For example, outline permission for the Whitnash site was achieved in just 13 weeks and Eccleshall in just 21. Both were emerging allocations in the local plan.

Marketing and Delivery

To minimise the time lag between granting outline permission and submission of a reserved matters application by a house builder, the site is sometimes marketed before outline permission is granted. In these instances, on average our sites are marketed circa five weeks before outline approval is issued. Housebuilders will normally make an offer subject to the grant of the outline permission and occasionally subject to a reserved matters approval and/or the discharge of specific conditions. However, the majority of the sites we promote are sold on the grant of outline permission with marketing commencing on average just seven weeks after the outline permission is issued.

Once the site is marketed, contracting a house builder can occur very quickly. At the Whitnash site a house builder was contracted within 11 weeks. On average this process takes just 37 weeks.

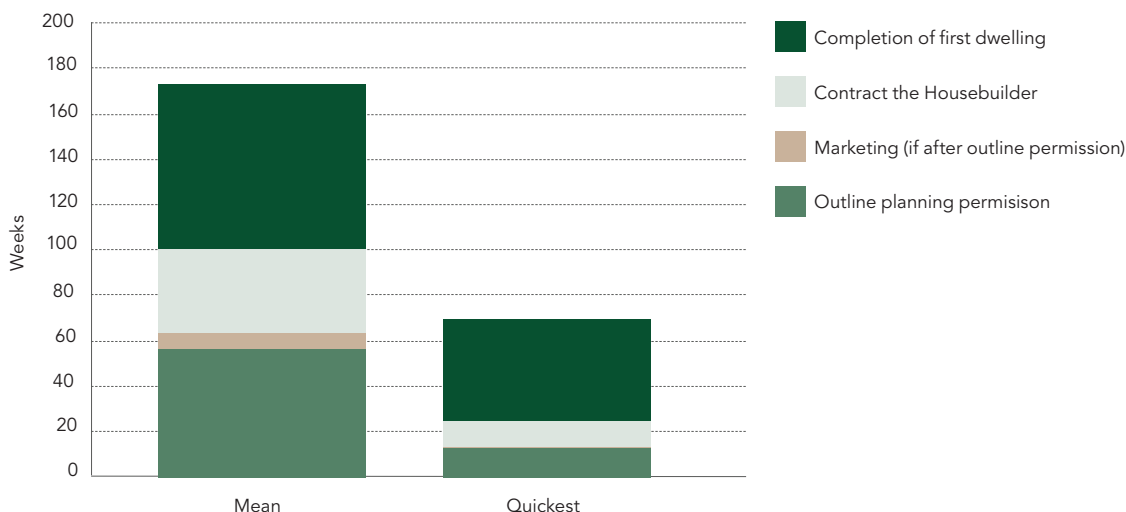
Because housebuilders will be paying for a site with planning permission, it attracts only those parties with a genuine interest in taking the site forward immediately. This means that the time between the contract being agreed and the delivery of the first home on site has been on average just 17 months, but has been as swift as 11 months. Furthermore, we often commence the discharge of pre-commencement conditions at the marketing stage to facilitate the implementation of schemes and enable the housebuilder to get on site quickly.

Once development has commenced, on average our sites have built out at 35 dwellings per annum.

Overall, the whole process from submitting the outline application to completion of the first house takes on average less than three years. But where a site has an emerging Neighbourhood Plan allocation (Whitnash and Eccleshall), it has been able to deliver substantially quicker at just a year and

a half. Through our dedication to engagement with the local authority and promotion through Local Plans, we strive to deliver our sites quickly through this positive engagement.

Figure 2: Length of time for housing delivery



Source: Lichfields analysis

05

Planning obligations

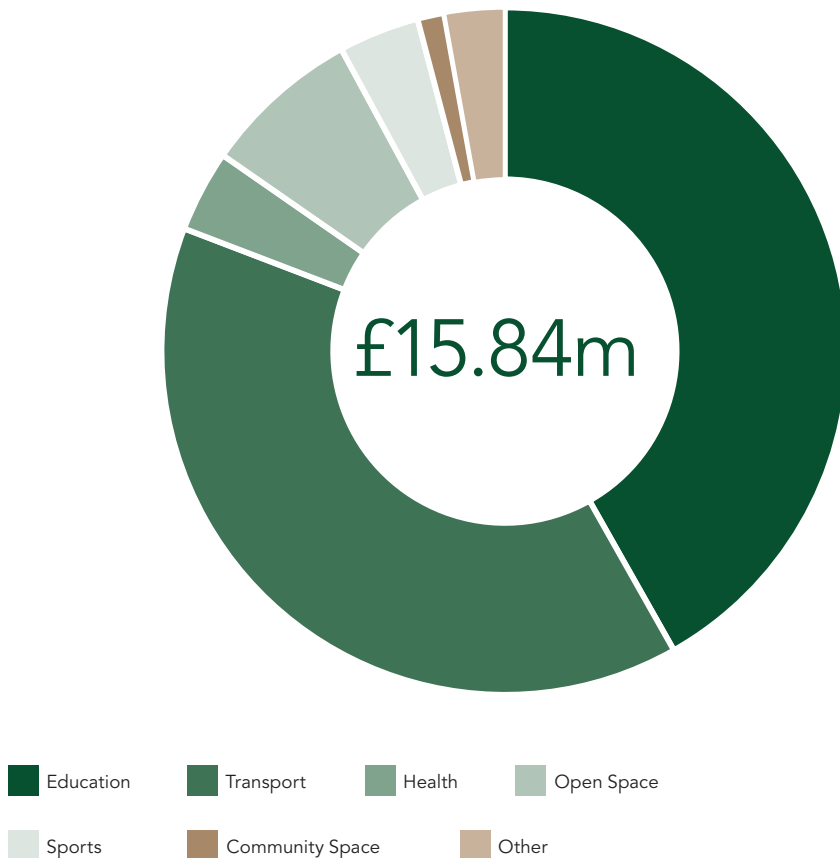
Richborough Estates is committed to ensuring the new homes it helps to deliver result in sustainable communities in which to live, work and play, supported by appropriate infrastructure. Over the past decade we have facilitated planning obligations **totalling £15.84 million** through our sites and developments schemes, an average of just over £7,000 for each private market dwelling. This is in addition to the affordable housing contributions made by our sites. open spaces, natural play areas, country park, community orchard, community allotments, improvements to community centre, integrated footpath and cycleways and wildlife preservation.

These obligations fund improvements and enhancements to existing local infrastructure and even fund the provision of brand

new facilities. Whilst the majority of our planning obligations go towards transport improvements and school provision, significant sums also support improvements to key local services such as GP surgeries, local sports facilities, libraries and community centres.

As well as meeting our wider obligations, we seek to embed good principles of placemaking into our schemes, providing for places and spaces that residents can use within the development. Our schemes have variously included a village green, community gardens, wildlife corridors, tree planting for a National Forest, allotments, children’s play areas and improved cycle networks. Such features have sought to jointly meet community needs, create enhancements in biodiversity, and promote active and healthy lifestyles.

Figure 3: Total Richborough Estates planning obligations



Source: Lichfields analysis



Diversifying the house building market

We can provide landowners with access to a full range of housebuilders to suit their development needs. We have a symbiotic relationship with housebuilders that is mutually beneficial; balancing risks at different stages of the development cycle. Our role to housebuilders is to facilitate the existence of a much greater choice of land for the delivery of homes. By taking on the initial planning risk and preparing 'oven ready' sites, Richborough can offer land to both volume and more bespoke

builders. In providing a choice of land, we are also able to provide landowners with a greater choice of housebuilders to suit their needs.

We work with a range of housebuilders all offering different housing products at different price points and we will can utilise these relationships to ensure the best developer is found to meet your development aspirations. This includes SMEs such as Lioncourt Homes and Mulberry Developments.



Summary

Richborough Estates is one of the UK's most successful strategic land promotion businesses. We work in partnership with landowners, Councils and local stakeholders to bring land forward for housing in the most efficient manner possible.

Richborough Estates has an unsurpassed track record in delivering planning permissions in co-operation with Local Planning Authorities and we are particularly proud of the way we engage with local communities and stakeholders throughout the whole process. This enables us to maximise values in the shortest possible time for our clients.

We are strong advocates of a plan led system and within it wherever we can. The majority of outline applications on our schemes are determined locally by planning committees with case officer recommendation for approval, with only a handful of schemes ever recommended for refusal. We are committed to the promotion of residential schemes which deliver high quality design and social infrastructure and deliver more than just housing. We embed good principles of placemaking into our schemes, providing for places and spaces that residents can use within the development. Our schemes have variously included a village green, community gardens, wildlife corridors, tree planting for a National Forest, allotments, children's play areas and improved cycle networks.

We have a proven track record of seeing that the sites we promote through to delivery in a prompt and timely fashion. Overall, the whole process from submitting the outline application to completion of the first house takes on average less than three years. But where it has been possible to secure an emerging allocation, it can be substantially quicker almost half the average time.

Once development has commenced, on average our sites have built out at 35 dwellings per annum. Furthermore, of the 2,955 units granted planning permission since 2010 on our sites, just over 700 are for affordable units, representing a significant subsidy.

Richborough Estates is committed to ensuring the new homes it helps to deliver transform into sustainable communities to live, work and play supported by appropriate infrastructure. In the last decade we have facilitated planning obligations **totalling £15.84 million** through our sites and developments schemes. This includes obligations for transport improvements, school provision, improvements to GP surgeries, local sports facilities, libraries and community centres.

We can provide landowners with access to a full range of housebuilders to suit their development needs, all offering different housing products at different price points. We concentrate our efforts on promoting small and medium sized sites so we therefore also facilitate development with SMEs including Lioncourt Homes and Mulberry Developments.

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