

CUSTOM BUILD STATEMENT

Land to the rear of Manor Farm, Wood Lane, Norton Juxta Twycross

1. Introduction

This statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the development of four dwellings on land to the rear of Manor Farm, Wood Lane, Norton Juxta Twycross.

The purpose of this statement is to demonstrate that the proposed development constitutes a form of custom build housing, in accordance with:

- the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015
- national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- local evidence relating to custom and self-build housing demand within Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council

2. Definition of Custom Build Housing

Planning Practice Guidance confirms that custom build housing relates to dwellings where the initial owner of the home has primary input into the final design and layout of the dwelling.

The guidance recognises that custom build housing can be delivered through a range of models, including developer-led approaches, provided that meaningful input is afforded to the purchaser. There is no requirement within national guidance for a purchaser to be identified or in place prior to commencement of development.

This is a custom build scheme rather than self-build. Under a self-build approach the future occupier would directly commission the dwelling, typically purchasing a serviced plot from the developer and arranging design and construction independently. The developer-led custom build model proposed here is structurally different: the developer constructs the shell to a fixed external design, and purchaser input is exercised during construction prior to internal fit-out. Both delivery models are recognised within the statutory framework of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 and the Council's CSB register accommodates both. The pre-application response (ref. 25/10134/PREHMO) confirmed that the description of development could use either 'self-build' or 'custom build' terminology, and the applicant has elected to use 'custom build' as the legally and technically accurate categorisation for the developer-led model proposed.

3. Proposed Delivery Model

The proposed development will be delivered through a Developer-Led Custom Build Model.

Under this approach:

- the overall site layout, architectural form, and external appearance of the dwellings are established through the planning process to ensure a coherent and high-quality rural development
- the structural shell and external envelope of each dwelling will be delivered by the developer to a high standard, in accordance with the approved drawings, and constructed to a fixed external design
- purchasers will be actively sought from the point of planning permission being granted, with marketing commencing immediately
- purchasers will be able to engage with the developer prior to completion, with the opportunity to influence the internal layout, internal specification and finish of each dwelling

Critically, the developer-led model does not require a purchaser to be identified prior to commencement of development. The developer will construct the structural shell and external envelope of each dwelling to a fixed external design. Purchasers are able to engage at an appropriate stage of the build programme prior to completion. This is consistent with national guidance, which requires only that the initial owner has primary input into the final design and layout — not that this input occurs before or at the point of commencement.

The external envelope is constructed to a fixed design in order to maintain the build programme, ensure design quality across the development, and provide certainty to the Council and the local community on the final design outcome. This is integral to the deliverability of the developer-led model.

Demolition of existing agricultural buildings and enabling works will commence as soon as practicable following the grant of planning permission, in parallel with the marketing programme.

4. Marketing Strategy and Timing

Marketing of the dwellings as custom build opportunities will commence immediately upon the grant of planning permission. This will include:

- direct notification to individuals registered on Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council's Custom and Self-Build (CSB) register
- targeted promotion to individuals seeking custom build opportunities in rural locations within the Borough
- clear communication of the available customisation options and the process for purchaser engagement
- promotion through appropriate property marketing channels

The applicant is registered on Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council's CSB register. The development will therefore directly contribute to meeting identified demand from individuals on the register. The Council's register currently records 63 individuals, of whom 59 are seeking detached properties and 32 have expressed a preference for rural locations. This scheme directly addresses that identified need. Whilst the pre-application response noted that no individual has explicitly referenced Norton Juxta Twycross as a preferred location, the CSB register does not record specific village-level preferences, and the site falls squarely within the broader category of rural locations identified by 32 registrants.

Each dwelling will be marketed as a custom build opportunity for a minimum period of 12 months from the date of first marketing. In the event that a dwelling remains unsold following this period, it may be released for sale on the open market. This cascade mechanism ensures deliverability whilst providing a genuine and sustained opportunity for custom build purchasers.

5. Purchaser Input and Customisation

The proposed dwellings will provide genuine and meaningful opportunities for purchaser input into the final design and layout of each home.

Purchaser input is primarily focused on the internal layout, specification and finish of each dwelling.

Internal Layout

Purchasers engaging prior to completion of internal works will be able to influence:

- alternative internal configurations (e.g. open plan or cellular layouts)
- kitchen, dining and living arrangements
- provision of study, utility or ancillary spaces

Internal Specification and Finish

Purchasers will be able to influence:

- kitchen design, layout and finishes
- bathroom layouts and sanitaryware
- flooring and internal finishes
- joinery and staircase detailing

External Envelope — Fixed by the Planning Permission

The external envelope of each dwelling — including the form, scale, massing, fenestration, materials and roof design — is fixed by the planning permission and constructed by the developer to the approved drawings. This is essential to the developer-led delivery model and ensures design quality and coherence across the development. External envelope elements are not subject to purchaser customisation.

Plot-Specific Elements — Sliding Scale of Customisation

Purchaser input remains possible after construction has commenced but the scope of customisation reduces progressively as the project moves forward. The principle is that customisation opportunities narrow as relevant works are reached and completed. Plot-specific elements that may be available subject to the build stage include:

- hard landscape details within the curtilage (patios, terraces and pathways), within the approved landscape framework
- internal garden layout and planting within the approved boundary framework

The earlier a purchaser engages, the broader the scope for input across internal, specification and plot-specific elements. As construction progresses, the available range of choices narrows accordingly — but meaningful customisation remains available throughout the build programme until the relevant works are completed.

The overall approach ensures that each dwelling can be tailored to the specific needs and preferences of the purchaser in respect of its internal layout, specification and finish, whilst the external envelope of the development is delivered to a fixed and coherent architectural framework. This satisfies the PPG requirement that the initial owner has primary input into the final design and layout of the dwelling.

6. Timing of Purchaser Involvement

Purchasers will have the opportunity to engage with the development from the point of planning permission being granted. The delivery sequence is as follows:

- Planning permission granted — marketing to CSB register and wider market commences immediately
- Demolition of existing buildings and enabling works commence

- Foundation and substructure works proceed
- Structural shell and external envelope constructed to approved design
- Purchasers engage during the construction programme, prior to completion of internal fit-out
- Internal layout, specification and finish finalised in accordance with purchaser requirements
- Dwellings completed and transferred to initial owners

This sequence ensures that purchasers have meaningful influence over the internal layout, specification and finish of each dwelling, with the ability to shape the completed home to their individual requirements. Customisation remains available after construction has commenced, but the scope of customisation reduces progressively as the project moves forward and relevant works are completed. The earlier a purchaser is identified, the broader the scope for input on internal, specification and plot-specific elements — and the marketing programme is structured to maximise this opportunity from the outset.

7. Securing Delivery

The delivery of the development as custom build housing will be secured through a planning obligation (Section 106 agreement or unilateral undertaking). This will ensure that:

- marketing as custom build opportunities commences immediately upon grant of planning permission
- dwellings are marketed as custom build for a minimum period of 12 months
- purchasers are afforded the opportunity for meaningful input into internal layout, specification and finish prior to completion
- the cascade mechanism is applied appropriately

8. Contribution to Identified Need

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council has identified a shortfall in the provision of self-build and custom build housing. The Council's CSB register records 63 individuals, of whom:

- 59 are seeking a detached property
- 32 have expressed a preference for a rural location

The proposed development will provide four high-quality custom build detached dwellings in a rural location, directly addressing the profile of identified demand. The Council currently has a shortfall of self-build properties across the Borough, and the provision of four units will make a material contribution to meeting that shortfall. The pre-application response indicated that this consideration would be afforded moderate weight in the planning balance.

9. Conclusion

The proposed development represents a genuine and deliverable form of custom build housing, combining:

- immediate and sustained marketing to registered custom build purchasers from the point of planning permission
- meaningful purchaser input into the internal layout, specification and finish of each dwelling
- a structured and coordinated developer-led delivery model
- a high-quality rural design approach with a fixed external scheme
- a 12-month marketing period with cascade mechanism to ensure deliverability

The scheme accords with national guidance on custom build housing, contributes to identified local need, and should be afforded positive weight in the planning balance.