THE UK ECONOMY NEEDS LEGISLATION TO PROTECT AN ESSENTIAL NETWORK OF AIRFIELDS

The Power of Government and need for supportive legislation

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otherwise howsoever by way of profit, to members of the Council’. It may, however, employ and pay persons for research and expert advice.

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The short term profit motive to build houses is clearly trumping the national interest to have a secure Air Transport connectivity. Fairoaks…Manston… Dunsfold are just three examples of a further reduction in licensed airfields already deplete from 144 in 2008 to 124 at the last count in 2014. We just cannot allow this to continue.

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HCA Garden Town Capacity Funding Submission 2017-18
Dear Minister,

Thank you for giving North Essex Garden Communities the opportunity to submit this further bid for Garden Town capacity funding, which will enable us to build on work undertaken to date.

In the next few lines I want to explain why you should support this request and make the North Essex Garden Communities a priority for your department.

1. We are looking to create up to three communities comprising 45,000 houses - with the emphasis on communities.

2. While they will support economic growth across Stansted, Colchester and Harwich, the aim will be to create significant employment opportunities within the communities themselves.

3. By directly investing in land acquisition, the councils involved will be able to exert greater control and extract greater value, ensuring quality design, sustainability, and full infrastructure development contemporaneous with, rather than subsequent to, the housing.

4. This venture is forged by a remarkable partnership of councils with different political hues. In money terms they have already contributed £1m but a far greater sum in the uncosted work of many officers.

North Essex Garden Communities has the potential to re-write the relationship between the private and public sector when it comes to creating new housing. Lord Kerslake recently described this undertaking as being “of national significance”, and our ambition is to be recognised as one of the Government’s top locations.

This investment is well worthy of your support and engagement.

Yours Faithfully

John Spence CBE, Chairman, North Essex Garden Communities
Bid Information

1 Name of local authority & key contact details in relation to this bid
Chris Outtersides, Head of Programme (North Essex Garden Communities), Colchester Borough Council. (Chris.Outtersides@colchester.gov.uk 07867 578548)

2 Name of garden town project
North Essex Garden Communities, comprising of three separate new stand-alone communities which sit within an overall Multi-Authority long term growth strategy.

The individual sites & communities are:
- Tendring/Colchester Borders - a garden community of up to 9,000 homes;
- Colchester/Braintree Borders - a garden community of up to 24,000 homes; and
- West of Braintree in Braintree - a garden community of up to 10,000 homes (excluding potential additional development to come forward within Uttlesford District Council of circa 2,000 additional homes).

The programme overall will therefore deliver up to 43,000 new homes within three new Garden Communities alongside transformational new infrastructure, substantial employment, significant open space, social and leisure uses.

3 Original milestones for delivery of the garden town set out in the original Expression of Interest submission for garden town status (this should include as a minimum key local plan & planning application milestones; anticipated start on site; anticipated first housing completions)

The original bid was dated October 2015. At that stage the Councils had not yet confirmed the locations or scales of development (before Preferred Options stage) and were considering two sites (east and west of Colchester) for a combined total of 21,000 units. The following milestones were set out in the original bid:
- Issue Preferred Option Local Plans - Early 2016
- Submit Plans for Examination - Late 2016
- Adopt Plans - Mid 2017
- Prepare Joint Plans / Masterplans - 2015-2017
- Adopt Joint Plans - Mid 2018
- Determine planning applications - 2018/19
- Start on site initial phases - 2020/21

4 Current milestones for delivery of garden town to implementation stage. If there has been slippage of more than 6 months from the original milestones, please explain the reasons why?

Current milestones for the delivery of the three Garden Communities are:
- Issue Preferred Option Local Plans - Complete
- Submit Plans for Examination - Autumn 2017
- Adopt Plans - Autumn 2018
- Prepare Joint Plans / Masterplans - Started 2017
- Adopt Joint Plans - Spring 2019
- Determine planning applications - 2018/19
- Start on site initial phases - 2020/21

Before setting out factors that have influenced the work programme it is important to recognise that, since the original bid, a third Garden Community has been drawn into the programme and the overall scale of ambition has more than doubled (from 21,000 homes in 2015 to now up to 45,000). The programme has also evolved considerably since its inception driven by bold and ambitious local leadership and a strong cross authority partnership to ensure that the long term growth potential for North Essex fully addresses the Garden City agenda and realises its maximum potential. This renders a like for like comparison to the original bid difficult.

It should also be noted that whilst there have been changes to the Local Plan process, these have not necessarily impacted upon the anticipated start on site. The three sites are geographically distinct and provide flexibility on delivery timescales. A key tenet of further support would be to consider and implement opportunities to bring forward early interventions and phases of development on each site to accelerate the programme of development and set high quality benchmarks for the future. Some key factors influencing the timescale since the original bid include:
- The Councils commissioned an independent review of the programme led by Lord Kerslake in October 2016. This team consisted of Lord Kerslake, Lord Jamie Borwick, Trudi Elliott CBE, Malcolm Sharp MBE, Graham Hughes and Eugene Dreyer. Reporting in January 2017 they made a number of recommendations. Of relevance to this submission, the review recommended
further work on the delivery strategy for each site, the exploration of potential development and finance partners, the creation of a ‘Strategic Narrative’ and to ‘resource up’ the programme team. A link to the Kerslake report can be found here.

- North Essex is influenced by proposals to upgrade the strategic transport network (relating to the A12 and options for upgrading the A120). Whilst two of the sites are spatially unaffected, progression of the Local Plans needs to consider these other initiatives;

- The Councils have invested time in the land negotiation process to build positive relationships. This has to a degree been reliant on the responsiveness of land owners and their advisors;

- Aligned to the above, the Councils have been drawn further into the consideration of other delivery mechanisms, and have thus been following and actively supporting legislative changes relating to New Towns Powers and Compulsory Purchase, both of which have recently evolved further via the Neighbourhood Planning Act.

Finally, it should also be noted that the original bid recognised this to be an ambitious work programme, and without adequate support and resourcing it would be at risk of slippage. This was also raised by Lord Kerslake as part of his review. Previous DCLG support has been crucial in maintaining momentum and enabling the Councils to initiate and bring forward necessary workstreams. However, due to the understandably limited amount of DCLG funding available, capacity support has never been able to match the full set of requirements. Whilst the Councils have also contributed monies to ensure that this ambitious programme continues at pace, having adequate funding is crucial to maintain momentum.

5 Describe how previous garden town capacity funding has been / is being used & the impact it has had on the following. Include information on how the funding has been allocated to specific tasks, resources or commissions & the outcomes/outputs achieved in respect of moving the project towards delivery.

(i) achieving original milestones highlighting where it has accelerated delivery in terms of time or housing numbers;

(ii) improving the place-making & design qualities of the garden town;

(iii) developing innovation in the garden town;

(iv) implementing anticipated transformational & distinctive aspects of the garden town identified in the original submission;

(v) delivery of housing units (please attach a copy of the original and current housing delivery trajectories);

(vi) delivering government housing priorities as set out in the 2016 prospectus, e.g. mix of housing such as Custom & self build, use of SME builders

The Councils have been taking forward a range of key workstreams to take the programme forward. Much of it has benefitted from previous DCLG capacity funding. Capacity funding expenditure to date has focussed on:

- Concept feasibility, viability & infrastructure planning - to ensure that each of the proposed Garden Communities are grounded by a thorough understanding of infrastructure requirements, viability and deliverability;

- Vision, design & concept development to ensure that the projects are founded by a clear and unequivocal ambition and set of objectives, challenging traditional thinking and setting a clear basis to deliver on true garden city principles;

- Ensuring that the Councils have a robust Local Plan process in place including a robust evidence base and strong legal basis to decision making;

- Evolving a strong delivery model - to put in place an appropriate innovative delivery structure including the formation of ‘North Essex Garden Communities Ltd’ and three individual site specific subsidiary companies to act as focussed Local Delivery Vehicles;

- Direct negotiations with landowners - to evolve appropriate legal frameworks to bind the necessary land into the delivery structure;

- Ensuring the programme has appropriate skills & dedicated resources with a full time Head of Programme, Programme Manager, Communications Manager and project support. In addition, recruitment is currently underway for a Group Managing Director position. Additional internal and consultancy support has been provided to ensure the planning and financial workstreams have continued to programme.

With respect to specific actions and outcomes:

Achieving Milestones & Acceleration of Housing

- The overall scale of housing has doubled from the original bid with an additional Garden Community identified and included in the programme;

- Three Preferred Option Local Plans have been issued and taken through consultation;
Three Submission Local Plans have been finalised and are currently progressing through local committees in May and June 2017;

Three site specific DPDs have been initiated;

Acceleration of housing delivery is a realistic prospect (early start and faster rate) leading to potentially 2,500 additional homes within each Garden Community within the Local Plan periods up to 2032/33 (overall total of 7,500 homes);

Formal approval (in principle) has been obtained for scheme financing;

North Essex Garden Communities Ltd (NEGC) has been formally established. Company Directors representing all four Councils have been appointed and the first two Board meetings have been held;

Site specific local delivery vehicles (three separate companies) have been legally established and constituted;

The Kerslake Peer review concluded that “considerable progress has been made in the space of two years and a significant amount of detailed analysis has been done for all areas”.

Improving Placemaking & design

A North Essex Garden Communities Charter was published in June 2016;

NEGC Ltd was established with a core purpose to deliver Garden Communities to a defined standard (as defined and set out in the Articles);

The placemaking ambition is clearly set out in three separate Local Plans with specific policy guidance for the Garden Communities;

Concept Frameworks have been prepared for each Garden Community. It is intended that this work will lead to the creation of three DPD’s, one for each Garden Community, where the placemaking ambitions, garden city principles and high standards of design will be embedded in planning policy;

The Kerslake review recognised that “the Councils ambition is impressive” stating that there are few comparable projects putting such aspirations into practice, and concluding that “This is placemaking in its widest sense”.

Developing Innovation, including aspects of transformation & distinction

The programme is focussed upon delivering on the three garden city principles that make the NEGC project strand out from the ordinary – local leadership through the innovative delivery structure; local stewardship of assets through the establishment of a local body to own and manage local assets; and land value capture through agreements with landowners (or use of interventionist powers);

This is in addition to establishing strong garden city placemaking principles in the Charter, Local Plan and Concept Frameworks; evolving new ideas on sustainable transport including consideration of light/heavy rail alongside or other rapid transit North Essex ‘Express’ system);

The programme also benefits from innovation in collaborative working with the Kerslake review stating that “This is an excellent example of cooperation between Councils”.

Wider Government priorities.

The preferred delivery model will bring land into public ownership to secure control and provide the opportunity for multiple programme delivery, including multiple housing tenures (direct commissioning, custom build, starter homes etc.);

The scale of development enables the creation healthy well designed neighbourhoods addressing the needs of all occupiers including an ageing population;

The ambition to enhance build rates is significantly above current market rates via a fully funded infrastructure first approach, strong public sector role in delivery, and plot availability for multi-tenures;

In terms of infrastructure, the projects can directly align to Government growth related funding initiatives delivered through LEPs and the HCA (i.e. enabling/transport works). It also enables alignment of cross departmental funding to deliver housing growth (such as investment in A12 & A120).
6. Describe the role of the local authority in leading the process of delivering the garden town project (please attach a copy of the project governance structure if available). Define what added value this has brought to the delivery process and in securing/ embedding good garden town principles/ambitions in the project and with the developers/promoters. Describe what resources the local authority has allocated to this project for 2017/18. Provide details of any other investment secured or applied for to help deliver the project.

- The Councils have implemented an innovative public sector led delivery structure which has included the establishment of NEGC Ltd and separate Local Delivery Vehicles for each of the Garden Communities. These have senior representation from all four Councils and are already operational with Company Directors appointed and Board meetings being held every two months;

- The Councils have all agreed in principle to take a lead role in scheme financing and funding, as both a commercial proposition and a mechanism to secure delivery to the necessary quality and pace required;

- At an operational level, there is a programme Steering Group and working groups covering Land, Finance, Planning, Economic Development, Transport and Communications;

- The Councils have committed sizeable sums from stretched local revenue budgets towards the projects (a total commitment of £1m) as match funding to DCLG capacity monies secured to date;

- Dedicated NEGC resources are in post to lead and manage the programme;

- In addition, the Councils have committed considerable wider in-house resources to help advance the project involving corporate leadership, planning, finance and legal time across all four Councils. This has been calculated to equate to approximately 120 days per month of existing senior staff time across the four authorities.

7. Using the current milestones for delivery set out in your response to question 4 above, please itemise how much capacity funding you are seeking to help deliver these milestones, what it will be used on & when it will be used (if helpful, attach a summary of your project plan setting this out). What demonstrable added value will this bring to the project in respect of place-making & quality &/or accelerated delivery? For the purpose of this bid, the emphasis is on project capacity needs for 2017/18, but if you consider there will be a demonstrable need for further capacity funding beyond 2017/18, please provide details on a separate page.

The project seeks to deliver three Garden Communities. This bid is seeking capacity funding to help maintain the project’s positive progress and address the following critical workstreams and areas. Clearly the project involves other workstreams and activities which are also important:

**Legal & delivery vehicle support**

- To continue to negotiate with landowners to a point of being able to enter into binding agreements, or if this is not possible to establish a strong alternative basis to delivery via other control mechanisms - potentially via the use of locally led new town powers and CPOs. Legal and commercial support is in place, but requires sufficient budget. Funding requirement £125,000 (legals), £75,000 (commercial negotiation).

By the end of 2017/18 the Councils will have a clear business plan and delivery model to take forward the schemes. Total £200,000

**Corporate Finance support**

- It is estimated that to deliver the three Garden Communities will cost approximately £3bn with a peak debt of approximately £400 - £500m. One of the key recommendations of the Kerslake Review was for the programme to consider financial partners. As a result of this, further work is required to undertake market testing to identify and confirm the most appropriate approach to scheme financing and risk management, and develop formal business cases and commercial terms with external funding and delivery partners. By the end of 2017/18 the Councils will have a clear funding strategy in place including appropriate business cases alongside a formal partner procurement process. Total: £150,000
Placemaking & design

- As recommended by the Kerslake Review, to include further scheme design and the creation of a strong and compelling North Essex ‘strategic narrative’ (£50,000) to communicate the ambition to a broad audience, and evolution of design guidance to be integrated into (and accelerate the delivery of) the three site specific DPDs (£35,000 x 3). By the end of 2017/18 the strategic narrative will be in place and clear design guidance set out in site specific DPDs.
  Total £155,000

Accelerated delivery

- To include design work relating to early potential infrastructure interventions (£100,000) and design & feasibility testing for early phase/exemplar development proposals (£30,000 x 3). By the end of 2017/18 initial design work for upfront infrastructure interventions will be in place and opportunities for early phase/exemplar development will be identified. This will also include evolving the current financial model into a wider scheme model and the upgrading work that will require.
  Total £190,000

Innovation

- To include further development of sustainable transit options and initial business case development - funding requirement £75,000; option appraisal & business planning for local stewardship model (£35,000); consideration of area wide sustainable energy & resources management (£50,000); evolution of economic development strategy and opportunities afforded by the smart cities agenda (£35,000). By the end of 2016/17, studies will be complete and findings integrated into planning policy and operational business plans.
  Total £195,000

The total HCA funding requirement for the critical aspects identified above is £890,000.

Going beyond 2017/18, requirements will be heavily dependent upon the nature of the finalised delivery model and structure. For example the role of private sector funding partners and existing landowners/developers, or conversely the potential evolution of the current delivery model into a locally led new town development corporation. Given the scale of ambition, resource needs will quickly escalate.

8 Why will the capacity funding sought not be provided by the local authority or developers?

The Councils have already committed sizeable sums from stretched local revenue budgets towards the projects (a total commitment of £1m to date).

In addition to this, the Councils have committed considerable in-house resources to help advance the project. This has been calculated to equate to approximately 120 days per month and amounts to approximately £800,000 of officer time to date (£400,000 per year). The Councils are committed to maintaining this resource moving forward.

To support this, the Councils are currently preparing a short term business plan which will establish a 3-5 year budgetary position (to be available by Autumn 2017). This is likely to deliver a further commitment of £1m of additional match funding support across the partnership for areas of the project that aren’t highlighted in this bid. However, this is not guaranteed and it is not considered feasible to address total needs through local funding sources alone.

What is clear, however, is that the scale of the endeavour will be far greater than the Councils can address through current revenue budgets and therefore work is also underway as to how such funding can be addressed with minimal impact on Council financing structures.

Given the nature of delivery and ambition for land value capture, the current focus is on demonstrating strong local leadership to ensure that high quality outcomes can be realised. It is not considered appropriate at this stage to rely on individual promoter funding as the sites have not yet been confirmed in adopted plans, and any private sector funding may dilute the strong and effective approach taken to date.

Over time it will become clearer as to how the individual projects will be funded, potentially via existing landowners/promoters/developers, or via the introduction of external funding/delivery partners.
What impact will an absence of additional capacity funding for 2017/18 have on the project? Please be as specific as possible in terms of impact on key milestones for delivery & qualitative aspects of the garden town.

Impacts will include:

- Opportunities to accelerate delivery of housing and other elements of the Garden Communities would be lost;
- Risk of slippage to Local Plan & DPD progress & slower pace design evolution of site specific masterplans;
- Infrastructure not adequately thought through or planned for leading to delay in start on-site. ‘Oven ready’ interventions not worked up to be ready to link in to wider Government initiatives.
- Private sector partners unable to deliver viable development, scaling back on obligations and undermining local public and political support leading to refusals of planning applications and delay.
- Less public sector control & influence over scheme design which could result in ambitions not being realised – (revert back to the ‘norm’);
- Inadequate evidence base putting adoption of planning documents (Local Plans & DPDs) at greater risk of external legal challenge;
- Scale back of activity to fit available budgets;
North Essex Garden Communities

Business Case for Additional Capacity Funding for 2016/17

Introduction

1.1 Colchester Borough Council (CBC), Braintree District Council (BDC), Tendring District Council (TDC) and Essex County Council (ECC) (‘the Councils’) are continuing to work in partnership with the University of Essex, the South East LEP (SELEP) and Haven Gateway Partnership (HGP) to consider pioneering, ambitious and visionary new Garden Communities across North Essex, with the potential for a significant number of new homes, along with transformational new infrastructure and considerable local economic growth opportunities.

1.2 The Councils are still keen to apply all of the TCPA Garden City principles to these large scale communities in order to select the best locations, and to deliver the communities to high standards. TCPA principles recognise that local leadership and control over land use are key to this approach, through which increases in land values arising from the granting of planning permission are applied first and foremost to the delivery of infrastructure and the long term stewardship of public facilities.

2.0 Description and Location of Proposals

2.1 Since the original capacity funding was granted, the North Essex Garden Community Project (NEG) has expanded and the potential for new Garden Communities in four separate locations is now being considered:

- To the west of Colchester, on the border between Colchester and Braintree District, and in the proximity of Marks Tey. The area is adjacent to the mainline railway between London and East Anglia, and at the intersection of the A12 and A120 strategic transport corridors (referred to in this document as ‘Marks Tey’). Land is being promoted which provides the opportunity to create a new settlement of considerable scale, with new and upgraded infrastructure and provision for economic development and employment growth;

- To the east of Colchester on the border between Colchester and Tendring. This provides the opportunity for a Garden Settlement to take the form of a significant urban extension to Colchester as well as significant employment opportunities and transport and infrastructure upgrades;

- To the north of Colchester and north of the A12. This area is located between the villages of Langham and Langham Moor respectively with a large proportion of the site containing part of Boxted Airfield which comprises a former Royal Air Force Station. This is being promoted to
provide a new community incorporating mixed uses and enhanced physical and social infrastructure; and

- To the west of Braintree. This land straddles the border between Braintree and Uttlesford District. The site is close to the improved section of the A120 which provides good links to London Stansted Airport. Development would need to incorporate significant employment opportunities and infrastructure and services.

2.2 In total, the North Essex Garden Communities has the potential to deliver up to 35,000 new homes, supported by new infrastructure.

2.3 All the locations benefit from active promoters and/or landowners who are keen to see development of some or all of the land which might be needed. Whilst these promoters have their own planning proposals, the Councils are keen to form their own vision for any such settlements, and to choose the scale and boundaries that appear to offer the best prospects for sustainable communities and viable development.

2.4 To assist this process, the local authorities are continuing to work with Garden City Developments CIC (GCD), a not for profit community interest company, to promote and establish partnerships with these third party landowners and option holders. These discussions are continuing to explore landowners’ appetites to enter legally binding agreements with the respective councils. To date, GCD has made positive progress with all landowners/agents and it is anticipated that a form of legal agreement will be in place before the Councils issue their Preferred Options Local Plans in June/July 2016. These agreements will seek to give the Local Authorities, through their Local Delivery Vehicles (LDV’s), effective control of the delivery of the Garden Communities by acting as “Master Developer” for the scheme(s) as through the Local Planning process.

2.5 To assist the Councils in this process, a governance and delivery structure has been established. This includes an agreement to establish LDV’s for each Garden Community, thereby enabling Council investment in the new communities as well as joint working with landowners/promoters. These structures have been approved at Cabinet within each of the Councils as well as by the North Essex Garden Communities Shadow Delivery Board. Further work on the detail and composition of the LDV structures is currently underway.

2.6 Since the capacity funding was awarded in December 2015, the Councils have procured a consultant team to assist them; AECOM has been instructed primarily to help inform the councils’ selection of Preferred Options and specifically the locations for any Garden Communities, and Denton’s LLP has
been instructed to advise on the LDV delivery structure, the detailed landowner negotiations and issues relating to planning policy formulation.

2.7 The Councils continue to be committed to establishing an appropriate and robust planning policy framework to create and deliver new high quality Garden Communities to meet housing and employment need in the plan period and beyond. It will therefore be important that the policy framework provides sufficient guidance on the nature, content, infrastructure requirements and delivery process for the garden communities to underpin and reinforce the approach to delivery proposed.

3.0 Plan-making processes

3.1 All three district Councils are in the process of evolving concurrent new Local Plans to address future need, and intend to publish Preferred Options during June/July 2016. It is envisaged that the Preferred Options will include reference to the Garden Communities and their locations.

3.2 To facilitate the strategic consideration of the Garden Communities proposals, the Councils have taken the approach to plan for the proposed Garden Communities and the North Essex area as a whole through the preparation of a ‘Part 1’ Chapter. This document is being prepared across the four Councils and will effectively the first chapter to each Local Plan. It is envisaged that this common Part 1 will be assessed at a separate Local Plan Inquiry and will address some of the key strategic issues in North and Central Essex including the proposed Garden Communities. Concurrent discussions on this are currently being held with the Planning Inspectorate.

3.3 The Councils are working towards a number of following key milestones. This is still an ambitious work programme and further consideration is required in terms of the most appropriate route towards planning consents, with scope for twin-tracking policy and application processes to ensure expedient delivery. It should be noted that given the complexity, nature and scale of the range of areas being considered, this timescale is indicative and will be adapted to suit the individual merits of each site.

- Issue Preferred Option Local Plans: June/July 2016
- Submit Part 1 and Part 2 Local Plans: Early 2017
- Part 1 Local Plan Inquiry: Summer 2017
- Part 2 Local Plan Inquiry: Winter 2017
- Adopt Local Plan (Part 1 and Part 2): Mid 2018
- Prepare Joint Plans / Masterplans: 2016-2017
- Adopt Joint Plans: Mid 2018
- Determine planning applications: 2018/19
- Start on site initial phases: 2020/21
4.0 Capacity Funding Bid

4.1 This section of the submission focusses on how the existing capacity funding has been committed, the outcomes that have been achieved as a result of that funding as well as setting out a business case for additional funding for 2016/17.

Commitment of the 2015/16 Capacity Funding

4.2 In December 2015, the North Essex Garden Community Project was awarded £640,000 of capacity funding. In addition, £15,000 of funding was also secured from Essex County Council (ECC) making £655,000 in total.

4.3 The allocation of this funding was agreed at a NEGC Steering Group meeting in January 2016.

4.4 This budget, along with a status update, is set out below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description of output(s)</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Status Update</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Costs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Manager Post</td>
<td></td>
<td>£43k</td>
<td>Position is in post on a 24 month contract expiring in July 2018.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Officer Post</td>
<td></td>
<td>£30k</td>
<td>Position is now in post on a 12 month contract.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Masterplanning</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masterplanning and Concept Framework</td>
<td>Concept Feasibility Study (Stage 1)</td>
<td>£110k</td>
<td>AECOM were appointed utilising the HCA multidisciplinary framework in January 2016 to prepare a Concept Feasibility Study. This work will assist in evaluating the proposals for the Garden Communities and will help inform the Councils’ selection of preferred options. AECOM are due to deliver their final report to Councils in early May 2016.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masterplanning and Concept Framework</td>
<td>Concept Feasibility Study (Stage 2)</td>
<td>£190k</td>
<td>It is envisaged that this work will be commissioned once Preferred Option Local Plans have been issued mid-2016 and will focus on the conceptual masterplanning of those sites that have been selected as Garden Communities within the respective Local Plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community engagement/</td>
<td>As the proposals evolve, the Council’s will need to</td>
<td>£25k</td>
<td>It is envisaged that this strategy will be procured once Preferred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation strategy</td>
<td>prepare and deliver a dedicated community engagement and consultation strategy specifically in relation to the proposed Garden Settlements.</td>
<td>Options have been released in mid-2016 and will focus on the Garden Communities.</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Landowner Negotiation and Support</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negotiation Lead</strong></td>
<td>Garden City Developments are continuing to work on behalf of the Councils and with the respective landowners with a view to entering into legally binding Agreements. The intention of these Agreements will be to give effective control of the delivery of the Garden Communities to the respective LDV’s.</td>
<td>£50k (until June 2016)</td>
<td>GCD has been formally engaged to continue acting on behalf of the Councils during 2016/2017. The initial phase of this contract includes work up until Preferred Options are issued in June/July 2016. However, it is expected that GCD’s role in the Project will extend substantially beyond this point.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Negotiation legal support** | Legal and land agency assistance with the landowner negotiation process as well as providing further advice on the setting up and administration of the delivery vehicle(s). | £153k | Denton’s (Stephen Ashworth) were appointed in March 2016. This instruction was to provide focussed legal assistance to the project, and in relation to three distinct workstreams:  
- Robust and clear planning framework;  
- LDV arrangements; and  
- Land agreements.  
Given the broad scope of work required, Denton’s has been initially appointed on an hourly basis. |
| **Negotiation and investment financial support** | Financial assistance to support the negotiation and investment considerations of the Project. | £50k | Discussions are currently underway with PWC to provide additional financial support to the Project. It is envisaged that this work will include work surrounding the tax implications of the LDV creation and structures as well as a review of the financial model. |
| **TOTAL** | | | £651k |
It is noted that the original submission to DCLG requested £848k (£863,000 including the ECC grant). This amounts to a shortfall of approximately £212,000. Should this submission be successful in being awarded this shortfall, it is envisaged that this additional funding would be allocated in the first instance to those outputs that were included within the original submission but that were not included on the reduced budget agreed by the Steering Group, as follows:

**Infrastructure Delivery Planning - £90,000**

- Infrastructure Delivery Plan(s) (IDP) for each Garden Settlement;
- On and off site infrastructure schedules;
- Advice on infrastructure timing, delivery, associated stakeholder liaison; and
- Advice on available infrastructure funding opportunities.

**Additional transport modelling, capacity and strategy work - £100,000**

- Additional transport feasibility modelling capacity to identify innovative transport solutions with the aim of creating a different pattern of movement from the 65% travel to work by car that currently exists.
- Investigation of rapid transit links for each Garden Community.
- Feasibility assessment on how to overcome the barriers to walking and cycling movement such as the A12, A120 and the rail line.
- The Councils are already expending large sums to undertake transport modelling to inform Local Plan work and this element of funding is for additional work.

**Additional Community Engagement Work - £10,000**

- The original submission sought £35,000 for community engagement work. The agreed budget reduced this to £25,000.

**Plan Making Support - £12,000**

- Additional capacity to further advance the Joint Part 1 Plan.

Further detail on these additional outputs is set out in the original submission in December 2015. However, further information can be provided if required.

**Why further funding is required?**

The Councils are committed to progressing with Garden Communities. However, although they have a proven track record of delivery and have already committed significant funding to investigating the feasibility for Garden Settlement type development, the strategic scale and associated timing and
delivery of development proposed is far beyond what any Local Planning Authority has dealt with over recent times. As such, further dedicated resources, specialist advice and support will be required to develop proposals – particularly once Preferred Options Local Plans have been released. Whilst the location of any proposed Garden Communities has not been determined, the proposal is extremely ambitious and visionary in terms of scale and delivery, and will set high standards for design, quality and the provision of green space.

4.8 Put simply, we do not believe that Garden Communities of the purity, unique nature and scale of ambition that the North Essex Garden Community Project is proposing are currently being proposed elsewhere across the UK.

4.9 There are a number of further areas of work that will need support to develop emerging proposals, to meet key milestones and secure delivery. These are detailed below.

Capacity Funding

4.10 The Councils are already expending considerable sums as part of their formal plan making processes. In addition, a joint working governance structure and dedicated project management post has been created.

4.11 However, the further evolution of the proposals as Garden Communities, of the scale being envisaged, introduces far greater complexity and resource requirements than the Councils can support through existing budgetary allowances. As such this submission is being made to enable the Councils to both dedicate sufficient technical input, and undertake a range of key studies and assessments.

4.12 As foreshadowed within the original submission to Government in 2015, consideration is currently being given to whether the creation of a dedicated Garden Communities Team should be put in place once Preferred Option Local Plans have been released in mid-2016. This would give the Project more focus while also (and importantly) convincing landowners that the Councils are fully committed to the garden city principles and the process

4.13 Notwithstanding that, this submission focusses on outputs that are expected to be incurred and/or commissioned within the 2016/2017 financial year as follows:

- Preparation of a Common Part 1 Chapter within each Local Plan;
- Preparation of Joint Plan(s) addressing each Garden Community
- Signed legal agreements with local landowners across all the chosen sites;
- Concept Masterplans prepared for all sites;
- Infrastructure Delivery Plans prepared for all sites;
• Creation and establishment of local delivery vehicle(s) for each Community(s); and
• Creation of an appropriate stewardship model.

What would any further funding be spent on and expected outcomes?

4.14 The table below sets out the detail of the various required work streams, the outputs and defines the additional funding sought. This is in addition to the work streams highlighted in Section 4.5 which relate primarily to the previous submission.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description of Output(s)</th>
<th>Additional Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal Resources</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Management</td>
<td>The Councils have already committed to allocating their own internal resources to drive the Garden Communities Project forward through the agreed Governance and structure arrangements. To support this, there are Working Groups set up in relation to legal, finance, transport and masterplanning. These Working Groups involve Officers from all four Councils as well as representatives from ATLAS and the University. In addition, each Council has dedicated one day a week to the Project. This day (‘Garden Community Thursday’) involves Directors from each Council co-locating in one place for the whole day and allows the coordination of meetings between the various parts of the Project Team and is in addition to their normal day to day Council responsibilities. This represents a significant time and resource commitment to the Project.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Manager Post</td>
<td>Match funding is sought to ensure this position continues to be funded, principally to manage contracts and ensure the plan making is progressed on time.</td>
<td>£46k (match funded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Officer Post</td>
<td>Match funding is sought to ensure this position continues to be funded, principally to assist the Project Manager and ensure that the Project continues to be serviced.</td>
<td>£31k (match funded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evidence Base &amp; Key Consultancy Support</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>£210k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing landowner negotiations and legal support</td>
<td>As mentioned elsewhere in this submission, GCD is continuing to lead discussions with landowners as to their willingness to enter into agreements with the Councils. This work is being supported by legal assistance from Denton’s who have been engaged in relation to three distinct work streams, being the landowner agreements, the delivery vehicle evolution and the town planning strategy.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Landowner Agreements

Whilst the landowner discussions are progressing well, additional legal support will be required to lead and support the detailed Agreements moving forward. Whilst it is envisaged that initial agreements will be signed prior to the issuing of Preferred Options, final versions of these agreements must be in place prior to the submission of all Local Plans in early 2017.

LDV evolution

Legal resources will be required to continue to evolve thinking and put in place the most appropriate delivery vehicle (LDV) for the Garden Communities. It is envisaged that these LDV’s will be in place by the end of 2016.

Town planning strategy

Legal assistance will also be required to advise on the strategic planning approach that the Councils are taking. This includes the common Part 1 which will form part of each Local Plan and how this relates to the rest of the plan. In addition, it is envisaged that Senior Counsel advice will be sought in relation to strategic planning issues.

The previous submission requested £160k for this element of work. This was to include both GCD and additional external assistance. Since Denton’s have been appointed to provide legal assistance, it is clear that additional work will be required to continue to support this critical element of the Project.

Based on current budget projections, it is anticipated that an additional £210k is required to continue to provide legal support to the Project, primarily to secure legally binding agreements with landowners prior to submission of the Local Plans and to assist in setting up the LDV’s.

In addition, existing legal officers across all four Councils will continue to be involved in the Project as part of the Legal Working Group.

Valuation advice

Additional valuation and surveyor advice is needed to inform the landowner negotiations and agreements. This work will provide information in relation to the local property transaction market, local land values as well as testing assumptions about land values in relation to the Project.

£20k
### Financial Capacity

Additional capacity will be required to explore the financial implications of the Project, and in particular the LDV structures and running costs, the available funding sources and types, the investment potential for the Communities, the creation of business plans as well as separate tax assistance. Financial assistance in relation to auditing will also be required.

In addition to this advice, recruitment is currently underway to procure a full time Financial Modelling Analyst. This role will form part of the ‘in house’ Project Team and will primarily be responsible for developing and maintaining the existing ATLAS financial model that has been created to support the Project as well as providing additional financial assistance across the project and preparing business plans where required.

A copy of the Job Description for this post can be provided if necessary.

| Additional infrastructure modelling, funding, capacity and strategy work | Additional infrastructure modelling resources are required. This work will also consider the creative use of land which motivates people to travel in a more balanced pattern and will include feasibility assessments on how to overcome the barriers to walking and cycling movement. The issue of infrastructure provision and how this could be funded and delivered is also something that needs further capacity - In particular, exploring how the forward funding of infrastructure would be secured as part of each Garden Community as well as the delivery mechanism(s) that would be involved. | £80k |
| Community Trust capacity | One of the key principles underlying the North Essex Garden Communities Project is the long term stewardship of assets. Further capacity is therefore required to investigate the mechanisms that could be used to set up and deliver Community Trusts, if that is deemed the most appropriate option. | £40k |
| Communications Strategy | Capacity is required to prepare a dedicated Project Communications Strategy. This will set out a procedure for dealing with internal and external communications in relation to the Project. | £40k |
| Economic Modelling | Work is required to consider the local and regional economic impacts of the Garden Communities. This will also assess the role and extent of employment generation within each Community and how they may relate to the wider North Essex economy. | £30k |
**Demographic Modelling**
Work is required to consider the demographic composition of the future populations of the Garden Communities alongside any likely future population change, and the impacts that this could have on the Communities. This will include work in relation to the delivery of social and community aspects of the Garden Communities. **£30k**

**Housing Tenure**
Work is required in relation to the housing tenure mix and specifically what the Garden Communities would be seeking to achieve in relation to the mix of housing tenure. It is envisaged that this element of work will also include work as to how Starter Homes will be integrated into the Garden Communities. **£30k**

**Low Carbon/energy strategy**
Initial feasibility work has suggested that some of the areas under consideration for Garden Communities may be suitable for low carbon/energy initiatives.

Additional work is required to assess this potential, highlight potential low carbon/energy opportunities and such opportunities could be incorporated across the Garden Communities. **£30k**

**Water Cycle Study**
Since the previous submission, the requirement for dedicated Water Cycle Studies has been identified. These studies will assess the strategic water cycle impacts of the Garden Communities over the anticipated lifetime of the project. This work is in addition to the water cycle work required to support the Local Plans and will involve long term strategic forecasting. **£30k**

**Sub Total - Additional Funding Requested** **£792k**

4.15 In summary, additional capacity funding would enable the respective Local Plans to be advanced efficiently. In terms of timing, the current Local Plan timetable envisages that the Garden Communities will start delivering housing towards the middle to the end of the next plan period (around 2024-25). The intention will be for each Local Plan to highlight broad areas within which Garden Communities will be investigated further, with the detail to be devolved to specific DPD’s or alternative masterplanning mechanisms for each Community. The current intention is for these documents to be created sequentially, with overlap where possible. Should additional resources be secured, this could enable the masterplanning/DPD process for each Garden Community to be brought forward and progressed in parallel as the individual Local Plans progress to examination and adoption. This could then expedite the overall planning timescales, all of which could result in bringing forward work on the ground in some areas up to two or three years earlier than currently envisaged.
4.16 In addition, and as set out in the above table, the issue of infrastructure provision and how this could be funded and delivered is also something that could be expedited as a result of additional funding. In particular, exploring how the forward funding of infrastructure would be secured as part of each Garden Community as well as the delivery mechanism(s) that would be involved. Again, expediting this work in parallel with the Local Plan process could enable the delivery of the Communities earlier in the plan period (two or three years) than is currently envisaged.

4.17 Finally, the unique nature of the North Essex Garden Community Project, and the intention for the Councils to be in control of the proposals through local delivery vehicles means that there will also be a beneficial impact on the delivery of houses, and specifically the pace and quantity of housing delivery which is expected to be beyond traditional market delivery norms.

Why funding cannot be obtained from other sources?

4.18 It is acknowledged that the Project is ambitious, and if successful could lead to the delivery of new Garden Communities of a scale and size that has not been seen in the UK since the Second World War.

4.19 It is also acknowledged that, for the Project to be successful, it cannot rely only on assistance from capacity funding. As such, it is envisaged that additional funding will need to be provided by each of the Councils.

4.20 This has been acknowledged by each of the Councils, and a draft budget is currently being prepared for the Project to cover the next three years. It is expected that this budget will inform a Paper to be considered by the Shadow Delivery Board meeting in May. It is expected that this Paper will be asked to authorise the commitment of additional funding to the Project from each Council. This will be in addition to any funding secured as part of this submission.
Dear Dr Frost

Internal review under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004
Our reference: 3503248

Thank you for your request for a review received on 13 November. I am sorry that you are dissatisfied with our attempts to handle your request for information under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR). I should explain that the EIR offers the same parallel access to information as the Freedom of Information Act.

I am the review officer appointed to undertake the internal review and I am writing to provide a response. I can confirm that I had no involvement in the original response to your request.

Background

On 3 October and 7 October you made a request to this Department to be provided with the following information:

“I have an interest in the future of Andrewsfield airfield. I am aware they have received funding support via the DCLG for an application submitted for Locally Led Garden villages, Towns and Cities. This application required BDC to set out their proposals to specific questions in relation to siting of a Garden Community on Andrewsfield Airfield. I wish to understand their intentions for the airfield in the medium to long term future. Please may I have a copy of this application made by Braintree District Council?”

On 9 November Samya Muddathir wrote to you explaining that the information sought falls within the exception to disclosure at regulation 12(4)(e) and 12(5)(e) of the Environmental Information Regulations as its disclosure would involve releasing internal communications and adversely affect the confidentiality of commercial or industrial information where such confidentiality is provided by law to protect a legitimate economic interest.

Internal review response
On reviewing this case, and the public interest test set out by Samya Muddathir, I consider that the withholding of the information in its entirety under the EIR exceptions was somewhat over-cautious on this occasion.

**Consideration**

I am now providing these documents as requested, in full.

If you are not satisfied with my consideration of this review and with this outcome you may apply to the Information Commissioner for her own decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Office of the Information Commissioner  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Telephone 01625 545 700  
e-mail: mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

JOHN PIERCE  
KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION ACCESS TEAM