



SCG/014A

Publication Draft Braintree, Colchester and Tendring Local Plans: Section One Shared Strategic Plan

Statement of Common Ground with Gateway 120, Cirrus Land Limited and L&Q New Homes Limited

DECEMBER 2019



Braintree District Council, Colchester Borough Council and Tendring District Council Section 1 Shared Strategic Plan

Statement of Common Ground

Between a. Gateway 120, Cirrus Land Limited and L&Q New Homes Limited and b. Braintree District Council, Colchester Borough Council and Tendring District Council

Introduction

This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared to identify the areas of agreement between a. Gateway 120, Cirrus Land Limited and L&Q New Homes Limited and b. Braintree District Council, Colchester Borough Council and Tendring District Council, collectively known as the North Essex Authorities (NEAs), as the Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) on matters relating to the LPAs Section 1 Shared Strategic Plan and the representations submitted by Gateway 120 (G120), Cirrus Land Limited (Cirrus) and L&Q New Homes Limited (L&Q), collectively referred to as the 'West Tey Delivery Partners', concerning that document and its supporting evidence.

This Statement follows the January 2018 Statement of Common Ground (SG/014) which addressed all of the issues raised by the West Tey Delivery Partners in the representations submitted to the Section 1 Shared Strategic Plan during the Publication Draft Local Plan consultation period. At that stage it was agreed that there were no unresolved issues.

Following the Examination in Public (EiP) in January – May 2018 the NEAs produced additional evidence base documents to support the Section 1 Shared Strategic Plan to address matters raised by the Inspector in June 2018.

This Statement addresses all matters arising in the Section 1 Shared Strategic Plan and the representations submitted on behalf of the West Tey Delivery Partners to the consultations on the Section 1 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Methodology, the Technical Consultation on additional Sustainability Appraisal, additional evidence base documents and the suggested amendments to the Section 1 Shared Strategic Plan.

General Matters

Representations have been submitted to the consultations on the Section 1 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Methodology, and Technical Consultation on additional Sustainability

Appraisal, additional evidence base documents and the suggested amendments to Section 1.

The West Tey Delivery Partners support Section 1 of the Local Plan in the following areas:

- (a) We support the production of a new Local Plan in principle and have worked closely with the Councils to date in the delivery of the Local Plan.
- (b) In particular we support the delivery of a garden community within the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community Area of Search.
- (c) The broad aims of Policies SP7 and SP9 are supported in principle, subject to the relevant amendments sought in representations.

Representations

The summary of all representations is:

We support the production of a new Local Plan in principle and have worked closely with the Councils to date in the delivery of the Local Plan. In particular we support the preparation of the Section 1 Plan, with particular regard to policies SP7 & SP9. Earlier representations identified a number of areas within which the NEAs needed to strengthen the evidence base to ensure a sound and legally compliant Local Plan is demonstrated. We have worked with the NEAs to assist in delivering this and the representations submitted to the recent updated evidence base are part of this process.

Whilst there remain matters to address, we remain of the view that the principle of the Local Plan to date has been sound and legally compliant. Detailed matters of agreement and disagreement are considered further below. The West Tey Delivery Partners continue to support the NEAs in delivering the Local Plan as a whole for the area and remain committed to a collaborative approach to delivery.

1. Areas of agreement and disagreement

The following are identified as areas of general **agreement**:

- The garden community model is appropriate to bring forward the delivery of comprehensive, sustainable, well-planned development that aligns housing, employment and infrastructure.

- We are committed to the principles established by the Councils within the NEGC Charter.
- Land under control of the West Tey Delivery Partners comprises approximately 889ha and is contained within the area of search identified within Policies SP7 and SP9 and identified on the policies map.
- Land under control of the West Tey Delivery Partners is secured within a single promotion entity and there is no impediment to delivery. The West Tey Delivery Partners consider that under land that they control a total of around 17,000 homes could be built.
- The West Tey Delivery Partners agree that the planned growth requirements of Policies SP7 and SP9 can be met.
- The delivery of 2,500 dwellings is the minimum that can be delivered within the Plan period.
- There is no impediment to the viable delivery of utilities to serve Colchester Braintree Borders garden community.
- Both the Councils and L&Q have the ability to access the funding necessary to deliver the garden community, including the early provision of infrastructure under a Master-Developer role.
- L&Q is a proven delivery partner on major development projects, including by way of example Barking Riverside; Beaulieu Park, Chelmsford; Wixams, Bedford; and Glebe Farm, Wavendon, Milton Keynes, all of which align housing, employment and infrastructure provision, and deliver stewardship/governance models appropriate to the site.
- The proposed development is viable and deliverable.
- Both the Councils and L&Q have access to long term stewardship/ governance models which will be formed at an initial stage in any proposal.

Matter 2: Employment Provision on the Proposed Garden Communities

The following are identified as areas of **agreement** regarding employment provision:

- Both parties are supportive of the proposed quantum of employment land set out in the proposed modifications to the section 1 Local Plan EB/091 modification 70 which proposes a minimum of 4ha of employment land to be delivered at Colchester Braintree Borders GC by 2033 and as part of an overall total of approximately 71 ha at site completion.

- Both parties agree that further work will be undertaken through the DPD and masterplanning process to ensure this employment land is appropriately located in the Garden Community and managed to ensure it delivers the ambition of a wide range of high quality jobs

Matter 4 Build Out Rates

The following are identified as areas of **agreement** regarding build out rates:

- Both parties agree that a minimum of 300 homes per annum can be delivered on the site and there are likely to be opportunities to exceed this figure per year on this site, particularly beyond 2033.

Matter 6 Transport and other Infrastructure

The following are identified as areas of **agreement** regarding the A12 and A120 Upgrades:

- There is a firm ambition for all parties to see the delivery of upgrades to the A12 and A120 route corridors. The A12 widening has confirmed funding.
- The delivery of a well-planned and cohesive garden community at Colchester Braintree Borders GC can be delivered within the development parameters set in the Plan (i.e. 15,000-24,000 homes) from any combination of options being chosen for the A120 or A12 upgrades that have been consulted on by Essex County Council and Highways England.

The following are identified as areas of **disagreement** regarding the A12 and A120 Upgrades:

- Commencement of development at Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community is requisite on the delivery of the A12 and A120 upgrades. Evidence of the West Tey Delivery Partners demonstrates that interventions to the local road network are sufficient to allow development to commence, provided that it maintains and respects the overarching vision and requirement for quality arising from garden community principles.

The following are identified as areas of **agreement** regarding infrastructure phasing:

- The infrastructure requirements for Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community can be viably provided in the anticipated timeframe, in order to deliver an attractive

sustainable place to live and work as set out in policies SP7 and SP9 of the Local Plan

- There are no natural, physical or economic constraints which will prevent the infrastructure required for the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community development from being delivered to provide an attractive sustainable environment in which people will want to live, work and play.
- The assumed infrastructure presented in the Council's evidence (The Infrastructure Order of Costs Estimates (EB/087) and the Infrastructure Planning, Phasing and Delivery (EB/088)) and L&Q's Infrastructure Delivery Plan are based on two separate development proposals so yield different overall provision. However, there is a shared underlying principle of the garden community (at both 17,000 and 21,000 dwelling scales) to seek to provide for the day-to-day needs of residents, including in relation to education, healthcare, convenience retail, open space, and utilities, as well as a significant portion of community, leisure, and employment facilities, appropriate to a settlement of this size and in the context of its role within the wider sub-region.
- A garden community provides opportunities to incorporate new and sustainable utilities systems (including by way of example a site-wide water reduction, reuse and recycling system) compared with urban extension projects.

The following are identified as areas of **disagreement** regarding infrastructure phasing:

- The NEA's Order of Costs Estimates (EB/087) details a first phase of development of up to 2,550 dwellings with proposed supporting infrastructure. Whilst the broad context and rationale of the Order of Costs report is agreed in principle, L&Q considers the initial phasing of some infrastructure to place an unjustified and unnecessary burden on Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community. L&Q's Infrastructure Delivery Plan represents normal commercial approach to delivery whilst ensuring that there is no infrastructure gap during the life of the development.
- The NEAs incorporate £129,300,000 as part of initial phasing for on works relating to the upgrade of the A12 and its linkages into the garden community. This makes the garden community reliant on a successful HIF bid to viably deliver these works. The garden community promoted by the West Tey Delivery Partners (of up to 17,000 dwellings) does not require this additional funding and can be delivered in its entirety in liaison with any route committed by RIS funding, or a realigned HIF route. Junction costs have been factored in to viability.

The following are identified as areas of **agreement** regarding the proposed Rapid Transit System (RTS) and Modal Share:

- A RTS for North Essex is supported in principle and would be of considerable benefit to both existing and future residents, including at the planned garden communities.
- Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community will be served by the RTS for North Essex.
- A significant shift in modal share towards sustainable transport measures (walking, cycling, public transport), can be achieved through both the delivery of a well-planned environment, as well as attractive, affordable and reliable public transport measures.

The following are identified as areas of **disagreement** regarding the proposed RTS and Modal Share:

- That the delivery of a RTS for North Essex should be linked to the delivery of individual garden communities as a policy requirement where the individual garden communities are proposing the delivery of an internal RTS.

General

The following are identified as areas of **agreement** regarding Local Plan soundness:

- The matters contained within the Statement of Common Ground address matters that go to the final form of the Local Plan;
- All matters of disagreement between parties are capable of being addressed through modifications to the Local Plan; and
- None of the matters identified affect in principle the soundness of each of the Section 1 Local Plans as a whole.

Signed:

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Council

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