



North Essex Authorities Joint Strategic (Section 1) Plan

Examination in Public

Hearing Statement

by

Andrew Martin – Planning Limited

on behalf of

Crest Nicholson Operations Ltd, R.F. West Ltd,
Livelihoods and David G Sherwood

SECTION 1

Matter 7



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Matter 7: The spatial strategy for North Essex (policy SP2)

Q1 *Taking account of the Sustainability Appraisal and other relevant evidence, is the spatial strategy in policy SP2 justified as the most appropriate development strategy for North Essex, when considered against the reasonable alternatives?*

Yes, the Councils have undertaken a thorough strategic assessment of opportunities and constraints, capacity, infrastructure requirements and potential viability for each place (via AECOM feasibility work). A chronological set of reports included in the examination evidence base, justifying the spatial strategy for growth, are generally robust.

We support the spatial strategy for growth in Colchester Borough that focuses growth in the urban area of Colchester followed by the surrounding urban areas. ***“The next tier of preferred growth includes Garden Communities straddling boundaries with adjacent authorities and providing new greenfield sites in sustainable communities which will grow gradually, over time, extending beyond the plan period”.***

Q2 *Why does the spatial strategy include provision, at the proposed garden communities, for substantial development beyond the Section 1 Plan period?*

A report on Housing prepared by officers at Colchester Borough Council and delivered to members of the Local plan Committee in June 2017, made the following points:

- meeting housing need in full is an essential component of a local plan;
- a local plan will not pass examination if full need is not met;
- Colchester’s housing provision to 2033 includes a total of 7,868 new allocations in addition to the 7,210 of existing commitments;
- the decision to consolidate longer term growth has resulted in the proposed allocation of 2,500 (should be 2,600) units in two Garden Community sites within the plan period, which avoids the requirement to scatter this significant number elsewhere in the Borough in a less suitable piecemeal fashion;
- the Council would struggle to develop alternative options as they would either involve less sustainable large sites or, if spread around the Borough at a level of 50 sites of 50 units, or 100 sites of 25 units, (hence) the requirement for each settlement in the borough to take at least one additional site in addition to the growth already proposed;
- it is difficult to plan for strategic infrastructure on smaller sites even when taken together they add up to the same total.

Q3 *Does policy SP2 adequately and appropriately define the role of each tier in the settlement hierarchy?*

Policy SP2 largely defers the definition of the role of each tier to the Section 2 plans. This should be made clearer in the light of our objection to the Colchester Section 2 Plan and its housing trajectory, which is not consistent with this spatial hierarchy for growth. The Section 2 Plan/housing trajectory refers to development coming forward in some of the ‘sustainable settlements’ and other villages (in the lowest growth tier) in advance of sites in Colchester urban area, the surrounding built up areas such as Stanway and the new Garden Communities. An allocation for a first phase of growth of the



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Garden Community on the Colchester Braintree Borders to come forward in the early years of the plan would clarify this position and ensure flexibility if sites within the hierarchy do not deliver.

Q4 Is the detail in paragraphs 3.3 to 3.5 relevant to Section 1 of the Plan? If it is, should it be included in policy SP2?

Yes, it is relevant and should be included. See response to Q3 above.

Q5 Should paragraph 2 of the policy refer to the need to avoid coalescence of settlements?

This is implicit in other parts of the plan, for example Policy SP9 A.1.

Q6 Does the reference to “Garden City principles” in the last paragraph of the policy identify the principles that are intended with sufficient clarity? What is the relationship between these principles and the North Essex Garden Communities Charter (June 2016)?

This is for CBC and other authorities to respond.



Introduction to Crest as Promoter of the Land in Question

(Hearing Statements 1-8, submitted on behalf of Crest Nicholson Operations Ltd,
R.F. West Ltd, Livelands and David G Sherwood)

Crest Nicholson is a FTSE-250 company which has acquired a top level reputation for developing high quality housing within well-conceived masterplans for over 50 years across the south of England. We create places where people genuinely want to live, work and play, underpinned by a “value-adding” strategy which responds well to the aspirations of local communities. Importantly, this approach delivers a positive legacy for local planning authorities. For example, Swindon Borough Council’s experience of Crest’s placemaking and delivery at the new community, Tadpole Garden Village, is such that they are prepared to positively advocate our approach.

Crest are in the vanguard of delivering Garden Villages and sustainable new communities. We have been recognised for our exemplar approach, having won numerous awards over recent years including:

- Best Community Initiative for Community Interest Company at Tadpole Garden Village (Housebuilder Awards)
- Sustainable Housebuilder of the Year (Housebuilder Awards)
- Large Housebuilder of the Year (Housebuilder Awards)
- First or Second in Next Generation Benchmark for the last four years (only independent sustainability benchmark of the 25 largest homebuilders in the UK)
- Winner, Outstanding Landscaping for Housing (The Sunday Times British Homes Awards)

We are pleased to align ourselves with the principles set out by the TCPA for Garden Communities and we work closely with other organisations such as Local Enterprise Partnerships and the HCA in order to enhance delivery rates in line with national government objectives.

Our teams are highly experienced in delivering the required infrastructure that sits alongside new housing. At East Marks Tey, Crest are proposing to deliver another high quality development which encapsulates 21st Century Garden Village Principles, and delivers appropriate infrastructure in a timely and efficient way to benefit the local area. This includes a primary school, local centre, re-instatement of Marks Tey hall and its associated listed buildings, new employment provision, and green infrastructure to include open space, allotments and sports pitches.

We look forward to engaging proactively with Colchester Borough Council to deliver on our shared objectives.