

# **MATTER 2: EMPLOYMENT**

**North Essex Authorities Shared Strategic (Section 1) Plan –  
Further Hearing Sessions**

**SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF L&Q, CIRRUS LAND LIMITED, AND  
GATEWAY 120**

December 2019



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## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared on behalf of L&Q, Cirrus Land Limited, and Gateway 120, who together form the West Tey Partners behind the majority landholdings within the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community (CBBGC).
- 1.2 This Statement is made following the re-opening of the Examination into the North Essex Authorities ('NEAs' or 'the Councils') Shared Strategic (Section 1) Plan. We note and approve of the scope of examination hearings as detailed by yourself in the 'Matters, Issues and Questions'. This Statement covers those questions posed within Matter 2 – Employment provision for the proposed garden communities.
- 1.3 The West Tey Partners have been active participants throughout the Examination of the Section 1 Plan, working with the NEAs where appropriate to demonstrate the deliverability of CBBGC in line with the principles established by the North Essex Garden Community Charter, reflected in draft policy, and echoed throughout our promotion of the site.
- 1.4 In promoting West Tey, we appreciate that this land does not comprise the entirety of the 'Area of Search' included within the Plan for a new garden community. Furthermore, whilst our capacity study work has shown land being promoted capable of accommodating approximately 17,000 homes as part of a comprehensive new community in line with the principles set by the NEAs, it does not amount to the full 24,000 homes stated as the top-end of draft policy.
- 1.5 Accordingly, what we are promoting has, in places, differences to that put forward by the NEAs. Despite this, it remains true that the proposals promoted by the West Tey Partners would deliver a garden community within the development parameters, and to the quality of that sort in draft policy.
- 1.6 Where amendments have been proposed to policy, this is to ensure accordance with national policy and provide sufficient comfort that should critical infrastructure not be delivered, the proposed garden community remains to a sustainable scale.
- 1.7 We continue to work productively with the NEAs and NEGC Ltd to bring forward a new garden community at West Tey.

## 2 EMPLOYMENT PROVISION FOR THE GARDEN COMMUNITIES

**Q6. Is there clear justification for selecting the comparator locations identified on p55 of EXD/052, rather than other comparator locations?**

**&**

**Q8. Is the percentage mix of employment sectors shown in Table 2 of EB/081 justified, having regard to the sectoral GVA shares identified in EXD/052, pp125-127?**

- 2.1 The NEAs have been aspirational in selecting West Essex, Cambridgeshire, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire, West Surrey, and East Surrey as comparator locations. However, these are not unreasonable or unachievable goals.
- 2.2 Whilst the North Essex sub-region may have a lower GDA per capita, it shares many characteristics with some or all of these locations, including:
- Relatively strong and stable housing markets;
  - Predominantly rural character but with key settlement that is focal point of the sub-region economy;
  - Strong student population base but problems with retaining;
  - Proximity to international airport;
  - Within one hour connectivity of central London, with strong rail and road links.
- 2.3 In doing this, we support the NEAs in seeking aspirational growth to economic performance for the Plan-area. However, in addition to the above factors, the NEAs will need to appreciate the more unique characteristics of both the North Essex sub-region as well as the specific local authorities, with each having its own strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- 2.4 The Plan area extends some 60km east to west, and 35km north to south. The profile of coastal Tendring is vastly different from that of rural Braintree, with micro-economies within this as you get closer in proximity to Harwich Port and Stansted Airport economic hubs. Similarly, the profile in Colchester as a town differs considerably from Braintree town and again from Clacton-on-Sea.
- 2.5 The Plan area has a core economic focus of the A120 corridor, building off the strength of the distribution corridor between Harwich and Stansted. Whilst there is a clear ambition to see a shift in the economic profile of the region towards a knowledge economy, it would be ill advised not to utilise and support this clear strength.

- 2.6 Whilst we support in principle the approach of the NEAs, the Economic Vision has to appreciate that there will need to be different responses to different parts of the region. The garden communities will need to play a significant role in shaping the future economic profile of North Essex. However, it is important that these play a complementary role to both the existing settlements, as well as rural areas.