

**Examination of the North Essex Authorities  
Shared Strategic (Section 1) Local Plan**

**Andrewsfield New Settlement Consortium & Countryside Properties**

**Matter 4: Build Out Rates**

**Question 1: Would participants like to comment on:**

- (a) The Homes and Communities Agency's paper *Notes on Build out rates from Strategic Sites (July 2013)* submitted with the comments on EB/082 from GL Hearn on behalf of Andrewsfield New Settlement Consortium and Countryside Properties ?**
- (b) The Lichfield's blogpost *Driving housing delivery from large sites: What factors affect the build out rates of large scale housing sites ? (29 October 2018) (EXD/057)* ?**
- (c) The University of Glasgow report *Factors Affecting Housing Build-out Rates (February 2008)* appended to CAUSES's consultation response on EB/082 ?**

**Answer 1**

- (b) The Lichfields blogpost provides interesting analysis of build out rates for some 200 sites, including 100 large-scale housing sites. However, from the information provided via the blogpost it is unclear how many very large sites, of a scale comparable to the West of Braintree Garden Community formed part of the Lichfields analysis. Indeed, the map of England and Wales used within the blogpost appears to identify very few sites of 3,000+ units. Furthermore, the Housing delivery rates stated within the blogpost bar graph refers to sites of 2000+, without any reference to sites of 3,000+ or any reference to sites of a scale in the region of 10,000+. There is no reference at all within the Lichfields blogpost to sites of a scale comparable to the NEAs proposed Garden Communities. It is therefore submitted that very limited weight should be given to the contents and any conclusions within the Lichfields blogpost relating to build out rates for very large sites.**

**Question 2:**

- (a) How many outlets would be needed at each of the proposed GGs in order to deliver (i) 250dpa (ii) 300dpa (iii)500dpa ?**
- (b) Is there evidence to show that the required numbers of outlets could successfully operate at each GC ?**

**Answer 2:**

- (a) Countryside Properties consider that 4, 5 and 8 outlets would be required at any of the Garden Communities to deliver 250dpa, 300dpa or 500 dpa respectively. This assumes 50 to 70 dpa per outlet, including affordable housing.
- (b) In the case of North East Chelmsford (NEC), comprising Beaulieu Park and Channels, there have been up to 7 outlets that have delivered an average of 249dpa for the years 2015/16 to 2018/19, with a peak of 372 homes delivered in 2017/18. These delivery rates at NEC should be considered in light of the NEC sites benefitting from detailed planning permission for 2,669 dwellings, and as part of an outline consent for 3,600 dwellings at Beaulieu and 750 dwellings at Channels. The wider NEC allocation will deliver up to 5,500 additional dwellings. Housing delivery at Beaulieu Park by Countryside Zest (a partnership between Countryside and L&Q) commenced in 2015. The number of outlets has varied over the years. Countryside itself has had several outlets selling concurrently (4 in 2017/18 Beaulieu Chase, Heath, Keep and Oaks) and this has continued with 3 outlets currently at Beaulieu. This shows a single developer can provide different products and achieve high completions. In addition at Beaulieu Countryside have sold a parcel to Cala for 152, a sale to JV partners L&Q for 300 and a sale to a care home operator for 82 homes during 2019/20 which will start to see delivery increase during 2020/21.

There is no reason why the market could not accept 4, 5 or 8 outlets at any given time at the WBGC. At NEC there has been a peak of 7 concurrent outlets to date and sales have been strong.

Great Kneighton has had several years of very strong delivery, averaging at 389 dpa across the 5 years 2013-2017. It lies very close to Trumpington Meadows (1,187 dwellings) where Barratt has been lead developer.

The HCA paper, Notes on Build out rates from Strategic Sites, July 2013, indicates that doubling the number of outlets may not double delivery, but it can do and Countryside has strong evidence to show a strong link between number of outlets and delivery rates. A key factor, as shown at Beaulieu and Great Kneighton, has been variety of product. Whilst Countryside has built several phases at these sites different outlets have been able to sell concurrently due to variety of product in terms of type, size, style and price. At the WBGC the likelihood of having several entrances is high for a number of reasons including: its considerable scale, proximity to the surrounding highway network and potential existence of RTS, high proportion of employment provision. A greater number of key entrances allows for 'place' to be established at each one, with a variety of townscape characters, again adding to diversity of offer. This is supported in the HCA paper 'Notes on Build out rates from Strategic Sites' (2013) which cites that two of the key influences on green field sites are 'The location, nature and scale of the site, as well as its layout and phasing approach. This will influence how many separate housebuilders could be on site at any one time' and 'The type and variety of products...'

The HCA paper even states that for well-established sites in strong areas the number of outlets could get as high as 10-15. 'Some of the larger national housebuilders can even operate more than one outlet off a single site, and run these as entirely separate construction and sales outlets under different brands or aimed at different market segments'.

Furthermore, modern methods of construction, one of Letwin's key conclusions regarding potential constraints to build out rates of large sites is limited supply of building materials. Countryside are moving towards such modern methods of construction with a modular panel factory having opened in Warrington in March 2018 helping to delivery 376 homes between March to September 2019, and an expectation of delivering 1,400 homes in 2020.

For the above number of reasons, it is submitted that 8 or more outlets could operate successfully at the WBGC.

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