

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

**Andrewsfield New Settlement Consortium & Countryside Properties**

**Matter 5: Delivery Mechanisms and State Aid**

**Response to Hearing Statements**

**Question 1:**

**A number of participants argue that delivery of the proposed garden communities could be more effective if it were led by private-sector developers than by a public-sector body. Please respond to these arguments.**

**Response to Answer 1 by NEGC Ltd:**

ANSC and Countryside disagree with NEGC Ltd (1<sup>st</sup> paragraph, page 3 NEGC hearing statement) statement that:

*“The NEGC Board is clear that a public sector led deliver vehicle potentially working in partnership with the private sector is the best way in which to provide confidence that the Local Plan policy aspirations will be delivered over time and to the right standard. Public control of the land would offer an additional ability to control the nature and quality of development, better able to take a long-term view of the value of the investment in infrastructure and place”.*

Countryside Properties has a strong track record in delivering Garden Communities, and high quality places in general. Countryside is renowned for creating landscape led design schemes with green and blue infrastructure central to developments.

Countryside Properties is able to deliver a high-quality Garden Community development at the WBGC meeting each of the principles of garden community developments in accordance with the North Essex Garden Community Charter, meeting local plan policy aspirations and delivery to “the right standard”. The community, education, health, social, and green and blue infrastructure requirements, including stewardship, are all deliverable and viable alongside new homes and employment developed by Countryside. The lead Master Planner role can be progressed successfully by Countryside, acting collaboratively and in close partnership with the relevant authorities including Braintree District Council, Uttlesford District Council, Essex County Council, health, community and infrastructure providers and

with local stakeholders including parish councils. It has not been demonstrated that a public sector delivery vehicle is necessary for the WBGC.

Countryside has already delivered the award winning Great Notley Garden Village, within Braintree District. In terms of stewardship, some 24 years ago at Great Notley, Braintree, a new parish council was established as the stewardship body for the new community, which has been highly successful and has evolved over time with community groups maintaining some facilities such as the Notley Green Community Centre. Alongside this Countryside established a new Country Park and visitors centre (Great Notley Park and Discovery Centre) which is managed by Essex County Council to great success as a popular community facility for the district of Braintree and beyond.

Countryside also has a strong track record in delivery of residential and mixed uses at Beaulieu, north Chelmsford. Beaulieu is part of the emerging Garden Community of up to 10,000 new homes in North-East Chelmsford, which when complete, will demonstrate the TCPA's garden city principles as well as the placemaking principles set out within the North Essex Garden Communities Charter, already meeting many of these goals even at this early stage. Countryside has worked with the Land Trust, a national land management charity, to create a land management scheme for the community at Beaulieu. The Land Trust manages all green space within the 604 acre site including a community garden and a 176 acre country park, with a dedicated on site manager who works from the community centre to manage the site and work directly with residents, organising community events such as community fetes and walking tours of ecological and SUDS features to generate social value to the green space and allowing residents to become more involved in the local environment.

Countryside will also deliver the further expansion of Beaulieu and Channels at north Chelmsford (as part of the now wider NEC) through a further 5,500 new homes and 45,000sq.m high-tech employment space, open space and parkland at Chelmsford Garden Village, which has received support and financial backing from the UK government through the Garden Communities Programme. Chelmsford Garden Village is designed to build on the success of the surrounding Beaulieu and Channels developments, delivering a total of 9,850 homes. Countryside Properties therefore demonstrate a strong track record locally in delivery of new communities commensurate in terms of scale and also meeting garden community principles as required at the WBGC development.

Countryside has frequently used innovative methods to deliver community assets such as the community garden at Great Kneighton, a public art/community project which has seen the establishment of a community group through an onsite 'artist in residence' who has facilitated the creation of a group of existing and new residents of the local area who will eventually take stewardship of the community space. The scheme has been highly successful to date and has added great social value to the Great Kneighton strategic development, in particular in bringing residents from the adjacent long-established community together with new

residents on site. These are a few examples, and there are many more, from our schemes to date. Countryside is of course open to new ideas and innovations and will continue to develop these very sound principles alongside their partners on this exciting new garden community.

Countryside is committed to meeting all the TCPA and NEGC garden community principles, it has a powerful and persuasive history in this regard and is keen to extend this legacy to the West of Braintree Garden Community.

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