

Epping Forest District Council Representations to the Draft Local Plan Consultation 2016 (Regulation 18)

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Letter or Email Response:

Draft Epping Forest District Local Plan Consultation: Response on behalf of Countryside Properties Land South of Vicarage Lane, North Weald Bassett (Site SR-0158A) December 2016

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Strutt & Parker have been instructed by Countryside Properties to submit representations to the Draft Epping Forest District Local Plan (DLP) consultation. Previous submissions were made to Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) in connection with land south of Vicarage Lane North Weald Bassett by the landowners in the Issues and Options Community Choices Consultation in 2012 and subsequently by Countryside Properties for the Site Promoter Survey in July 2016. The land in question is identified on the plan at Appendix 1. In the EFDC Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) 2015, it was identified as site references SR-0076 and SR-0158A. In the DLP the two have been combined under SR-0158A and are shown for allocation at draft Policy P6.

1.2 Countryside Properties have a proud history of building high quality residential developments throughout Essex and have a proven track record of working in collaboration with key stakeholders and local communities to bring forward and deliver high quality sustainable development. Locally to Epping Forest District, Countryside are delivering a new housing development of some 3,600 homes along with community facilities and infrastructure at Beaulieu, north Chelmsford in line with the planned development of the City Council in their Local Plan.

1.3 These representations are accompanied by a brochure which incorporates a concept masterplan Countryside have commissioned to demonstrate how site SR-0158A could be developed to assist in meeting the District's housing requirements. This document sets out comments on those issues of greatest relevance to our client's interests in the consultation.

1.4 Countryside have an agreement with the landowners to promote and develop the site and therefore, as a residential developer, can confirm that the site is available for the construction of new homes. Countryside have also undertaken a number of background studies which confirm that the site is deliverable and would be happy to discuss these with the Council in due course.

2.0 Comments on the Draft Local Plan

2.1 Countryside Properties have detailed comments on the DLP in respect of :

- The draft vision of objectives for Epping Forest District (3.26). Objectively Assessed Housing Needs (3.45 - 3.56) Housing supply and delivery (3.62 and Appendix 5) The Vision for North Weald Bassett
- And the following draft policies: SP2 SP4 SP5 H1 H2 ? DM1,2 4, 5 and 6 DM 9 DM 10 P6 D2

2.2 The overall strategic vision

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for the District and the Local Plan objectives expressed at 3.26 of the Plan is supported, particularly those elements relating to the need to make provision for objectively assessed market and affordable housing needs within the District, ensuring homes provide an appropriate mix of sizes, types and forms of tenure to meet local needs, and the creation of balanced, mixed and well integrated communities. In this regard the allocation of site SR-0158A would contribute to meeting those objectives for the reasons set out in these representations and the accompanying brochure.

2.3 Nevertheless, it is noted that DLP objective B introduces a caveat to meeting housing need; “to the extent that this is compatible with national planning policy”. It is not clear why this has been added. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is clear that a Local Plan should be prepared on a strategy that seeks to meet objectively assessed housing need (OAHN) in full. It is suggested that this caveat is removed or amended.

2.4 Approach to Objectively Assessed Housing Need The NPPF is clear on the importance of housing delivery, and on the need for planning to deliver the OAHN. This is illustrated at paragraph 17 of the NPPF which states that: “Every effort should be made objectively to identify and then meet the housing, business and other development needs of an area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth. Plans should take account of market signals, such as land prices and housing affordability, and set out a clear strategy for allocating sufficient land which is suitable for development in their area, taking account of the needs of the residential and business communities”

2.5 This point is then reinforced at paragraph 47 of the NPPF, where it is stressed that Local Plans should ensure objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing are met. Paragraph 182 of the NPPF confirms that Local Plans be based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development.

2.6 Meeting housing need is therefore of paramount importance if any Local Plan is to be sound. In this respect, it is considered that the approach of the DLP of catering for a need of 11,400 against the OAHN could be challenged. This is on the basis that it fails to acknowledge the issues associated with London or take into account more up to date evidence on housing needs or address with unmet need from other authority areas.

2.7 Issues associated with London housing needs It is unclear whether the West Essex and East Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA, 2015), from which the District’s housing need has been derived, has accounted for projected increased out-migration from London. Up to date evidence on Housing needs Conversely, the South Essex SHMA (2016) does note that Greater London Authority (GLA) projections assume migration outflow from London to neighbouring authorities will increase beyond the level suggested by the 2012 sub national population projections, reflecting more closely pre-recession trends. These projections formed part of the evidence underpinning the Further Alterations to the London Plan (FALP). The South Essex SHMA (2016) addresses the administrative areas of Basildon Borough, Castle Point Borough, Rochford District, Southend Borough and Thurrock. It noted the relationship between these areas and London, and concluded the projected increased out-migration from London necessitated an uplift in housing need for South Essex. It is clear from the DLP and the supporting evidence that there is a similarly strong (if not stronger) relationship between Epping Forest District and London given its location and connections to the capital. As such, the OAHN should account for this and an appropriate uplift should at least be considered to ensure the Plan is sound. It is unclear whether the DLP proposes to meet what the Council consider its OAHN to be. The DLP reports that SHMA identified a need for 46,100 dwellings between 2011 and 2033; 11,300 for Epping District specifically (equating to 514 dwellings per year). However, in August 2016 Opinion Research Services (ORS) updated the overall housing need to take into account more recent information, including more up-to-date household projections. It identified a revised OAHN for the housing market area of 54,608 between 2011 and 2033. The update goes on to state that the OAHN for Epping District is 13,278 dwellings in Epping Forest (equating to 604 dwellings per year). It would appear that the DLP does not therefore fully address the District’s objectively assessed housing need of 13,278 dwellings.

2.10 Duty to cooperate and unmet needs The NPPF not only requires the Local Plan to ensure the District’s development needs are met in full, but also that the unmet needs of neighbouring authorities are considered and addressed where it would be sustainable to do so. The DLP notes at paragraph 3.16 that a Draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between East Hertfordshire, Epping Forest, Harlow and Uttlesford has been produced. However, it is unclear whether any unmet development needs of other neighbouring authorities has been accounted for. At paragraph 3.35, the DLP indicates that the maximum number of dwellings that can be accommodated in the housing market area is 51,100 dwellings based on the Sustainability Appraisal of Strategic Spatial Options for the West Essex and East Hertfordshire Housing Market Area (SA of SSO) (2016). However, the SA of SSO does not fully support this

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view. At page 34, it states: "With respect to the overall quantum of c. 51,000 new homes, this reflects the furthest the authorities consider that they can reasonably go in delivering the most recent advice from ORS regarding housing need, ie. 54,608 homes to 2033, in light of the available evidence. Critically, the figure of c. 51,100 significantly exceeds the formal OAHN of 46,100 established through the SHMA and represents strong progress towards the revised figure. The critical issue in determining the overall quantum is the level of development that can be accommodated in and around Harlow on suitable sites during the plan period." 2.11 This suggests that the stated capacity of 51,100 dwellings for the housing market area is not driven by empirical evidence in relation to environmental capacity, physical constraints, etc. but rather local authorities' views on potential deliverability. It also suggests that the SA of SSO considers this quantum of 51,100 to be positive in respect of a total objectively assessed housing need of 46,100, when, in fact this figure has been superseded by a more up-to-date calculation.

2.12 Summary of views on OAHN In summary, the DLP would appear to fail to meet OAHN need tests. As such, if the Local Plan were to be continue to be based on such a strategy, it would be contrary to national policy and could be considered to be unsound. It is therefore critical to ensure that the overall housing provision and rational behind the plan is robust. Alongside this, it is important that the Council ensure that deliverable sites such as SR-0158A and the wider vision generally for North Weald Bassett, is taken forward in a proactive way as a critical component or EFDC's overall strategy for meeting OAHN. This is particularly important where North Weald Bassett is well related to support the Harlow Enterprise Zone and wider vision to deliver a global knowledge region on the M11 corridor. The London Stansted Cambridge Corridor Growth Commission identify the supply and affordability of homes as a significant challenge and barrier to future growth and prosperity. The findings and recommendations of the growth commission highlight that nearly one in seven of the UK's jobs are within a 10km radius of the corridor. The provision of new homes at North Weald Bassett has a key role to support these aspirations given its proximity to this corridor.

Housing Supply and Delivery 2.13 Paragraph 3.62 of the DLP refers to the sources of housing supply to meet the housing requirements and Appendix 5 of the DLP sets out the housing trajectory that the DLP is proposed to deliver. It also reports the number of dwelling completions since 2011 (the point from which the OAHN assessment for the District has been calculated). 2.14 This shows a total of 1,173 dwelling completions between 2011 and 2016. The housing need during this period (based on the 2016 update of need) totalled 3,020 dwellings. As such, the total shortfall in housing provision during this period was 1,847 dwellings. Taken with the issue of our concerns that the Plan does not sufficiently provide for OAHN as set out above, it is clear that the shortfall represents a fundamental challenge for EFDC in providing for housing needs. The position is compounded by the fact that EFDC have decided to use methodology that is no longer the recommended approach set out in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). 2.15 The two

acknowledged approaches to addressing shortfall in housing land supply are firstly the 'Liverpool approach', where the shortfall is spread across the remaining Local Plan period and is sought to be met over this period; the second is the 'Sedgefield approach' which seeks to make up the shortfall within the first five-year period.

2.16 The PPG is clear that the Sedgefield approach should be applied where possible, stating: "Local planning authorities should aim to deal with any under supply within the first 5 years of the plan period where possible. Where this cannot be met in the first 5 years, local planning authorities will need to work with neighbouring authorities under the 'Duty to cooperate" (PPG, Paragraph: 035 Reference ID: 3-035-20140306) 2.17

Applying the Sedgefield approach, the initial calculation of housing need for Epping Forest District for 2016-21 is 4,867 dwellings. The NPPF requires that a buffer of (at least) 5% is applied to this figure. Adding a 5% buffer gives a total requirement for the District for 2016-21 of 5,110 dwellings. 2.18 However,

Appendix 5 of the DLP suggests the current proposed strategy will only deliver 3,541 dwellings between 2016 and 2021. This entails a shortfall of 1,569 homes against the requirement. 2.19 We are also

concerned that the figure of 3,541 dwellings represents an optimistic assessment. It includes 1,186 dwellings to be provided through existing commitments. It is unclear what the status of these commitments is, and whether a lapse rate of 5- 10% (as established as being appropriate for sites with planning permission / resolution to grant planning permission) has been applied. There is a reliance of 163 dwellings placed on windfall. If EFDC is to make an allowance for windfall, it is required to demonstrate that there is compelling evidence that such sites have consistently become available and will continue to provide a reliable source of supply. However, no such evidence appears to have been provided. It is also noted that the DLP's stated housing delivery rate assumes completions from 2017/18 from sites proposed to be allocated. This is considered to represent an optimistic view, the feasibility of which we would question given likely timescales for plan-making, planning applications and time necessary to discharge planning

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conditions and other regulatory processes. 2.20 Having regard to all of the above we are concerned that the DLP will deliver fewer dwellings than Appendix 5 suggests it will in the early years of the plan period. 2.21 Even if this DLP's stated housing trajectory were to be realised, this would still represent a significant shortfall when assessed against need, making the DLP vulnerable of being contrary to national policy and potentially being found unsound. Furthermore if found sound, EFDC could be a vulnerable target for speculative applications seeking to capitalise on a lack of five-year supply where a 20% buffer is added for a retrospective undersupply linked to the adoption of the Local Plan's eventual annualised housing target for past years. 2.22 Accordingly, it is imperative that the Local Plan considers the ability of sites such as SR- 0158A to contribute relatively quickly towards the current and acute housing need. In this regard, subject to the site being removed from the Green Belt as part of the DLP process, Countryside Properties as a residential developer, subject to planning timescales, could prepare a planning application relatively quickly to enable a start on site and the completion of a substantial number of homes within the next five-years.

Draft Policy SP2 2.23 Draft Policy SP2 proposes a total of 11,400 dwellings are delivered in the District between 2011 and 2033. As set out above, the OAHN for the District for 2011-2033 is considered to be 13,278 dwellings. Policy SP2 is not therefore considered to meet Epping Forest's OAHN. 2.24 Furthermore, it is noted that Draft Policy SP2's proposal to deliver 11,400 dwellings is set out on the basis that the DLP's view to accommodate "approximately" 11,400 new homes between 2011 and 2033. The use of the word approximately does not accord with the usual and accepted approach to expressing housing numbers. There are numerous examples from the Local Plan Examination process elsewhere which has confirmed that housing numbers should be expressed as a minimum to be in accordance with the NPPF requirements to plan positively for development. 2.25 In addition, it is critical that the Local Plan enables the delivery of housing to meet need in the short, medium and long term; and that policies are sufficiently flexible to ensure a constant supply of housing, regardless of unforeseen circumstances. In this regard, the NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to maintain delivery of a five-year supply of housing land to meet their housing target (paragraph 47) meeting the objectively assessed needs with sufficient flexibility to adapt to repaid change (paragraph 14). These requirements should be acknowledged in the policy or supported text.

2.26 Site SR-0158A would provide the Council with a sustainable and deliverable site that would make an important contribution to the housing requirement of 1,580 for North Weald Bassett. The site can come forward within five years of the adoption of the Plan and its identification and allocation for development should be taken forward on this basis. Policy SP4 - Place Shaping 2.27 2.28 We broadly support EFDC's draft policy towards place shaping for the reason set out at in the DLP at 3.71 to 3.79. The Brochure accompanying these representations demonstrates that Countryside Properties are committed to the delivery of the proposed strategic development at North Weald Bassett at SR-0158A that would fully accord with the objectives set out. However, clarification is necessary with respect to the definition in criterion iii relating to housing types that are genuinely "affordable for everyone". This text is ambiguous and does not specify what affordable for everyone means or how this would be implemented. It is therefore unclear whether this would effectively cap house prices or is meant more generally for a whole development. Greater clarity is therefore required as a cap on sale prices could render residential developments unviable. Similarly, greater clarification is sought with respect to criterion ix which implies shopping provision should be incorporated into any masterplan. This would not be appropriate for the majority of non-strategic residential developments or where there is existing provision nearby. This requirement could also raise issues relating to longstanding planning policies relating to out-of-centre retail schemes. Greater clarity should therefore be provided elsewhere in the plan where specific strategic allocations are required to provide shopping facilities rather than a blanket policy approach. It is also suggested that the wording of this criterion is amended to read "...accessible shopping facilities in walkable neighbourhoods". The insertion of the word 'accessible' allows development to recognise existing shopping provision close to specific development sites. 2.30 2.31 SP5 - Green Belt District Open Land

We welcome the DLP's recognition that, if EFDC is to deliver the Vision and Objectives for the District in meeting housing requirements and the delivery of sustainable development, it will be necessary to alter the Green Belt boundary. At 2.51 of the DLP, it is acknowledged that there is very little land remaining in the District within the settlements that is not already developed. As a consequence, it would not be possible to accommodate the housing needs that the District have been identified (notwithstanding our submissions in respect of housing numbers generally as referred to at 2.4 to 2.25 above) without a review of the Green Belt. In this regard, and in so far as

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North Weald Bassett and site SR-0158A are concerned, the Green Belt has been thoroughly reviewed as part of the supporting evidence to identify the allocation in this location by : - The North Weald Bassett Masterplanning Study (2014) confirmed that “any development in the location of the site would probably have a lesser impact on the aim and purposes of the Green Belt; in particular this is because it has a limited role in presenting neighbouring towns from merging. Indeed, the settlement to the east and the airfield and M11 to the west means that this pocket of land is isolated from other nearby settlements”. The Stage 1 Green Belt Review (September 2015) which showed the site within Parcel DSR-010 and 011. It confirmed that the land plays a range of contributions across the purposes of the Green Belt and recommended that it go forward for a Stage 2 Review. The Stage 2 Green Belt Review (August 2016) which concluded that Parcel 010.2, within which the site sits, makes only a moderate contribution to two of the purposes of the Green Belt, and no contribution to the remaining two purposes assessed. Of the ten parcels assessed around North Weald Bassett Parcel 010.2 emerges as one of the most suitable for development

2.32 Paragraph 3.85 of the DLP confirms that the evidence suggests that if EFDC is to deliver the vision and objectives of the DLP, the extent of the Green Belt be reviewed. Paragraph 3.90 confirms that the DLP is pursuing a strategy that seeks to minimise the use of Green Belt land for development whilst focussing development in the sustainable locations. We therefore support the Council’s proposals to amend the existing Green Belt boundary around North Weald Bassett to exclude SR-0158A to meet the Council’s objectives. Indeed, the evidence demonstrates that the site, when considered against other alternatives, would be an entirely appropriate choice to be excluded from the Green Belt to provide an important component of the Council’s strategic growth strategy for the District and the settlement.

2.33 Draft Policy - H1 - Accommodation Mix and Accommodation Types Whilst in general the policy is supported, we have some reservations that the policy as drafted is too imprecise or lacking justification in two areas : - Part B - the requirement for developers to provide evidence to justify the mix of housing proposed should be deleted. The need to justify a mix adds uncertainty and risk to any application. It is also not clear what evidence the Council will require to justify a mix beyond the Council’s SHMA’s and wider market considerations at the time an application is submitted. We would recommend that the DLP, by supporting text to the policy, ought to set out the desired mix district wide in accordance with para 50 of the NPPF having regard to the findings of the SHMA. Part D - It is not at all clear where and how the evidence for the need for specially designed housing/specialist accommodation is to be provided or what scale of development would attract such a requirement. The implication of the policy wording as draft is that any scheme that fits the threshold needs to include both provision for self-build and specialist accommodation in addition to affordable housing. In combination this would be onerous and likely render development unviable unless greater clarification and/or viability assessment for the DLP is carried out to consider this particular issue.

2.34 Draft Policy H2 - Affordable Housing Whilst the need to provide affordable housing for the District is fully acknowledged, it is questionable whether the 40% target set by the draft policy is fully justified by the evidence. The ORS SHMA (2015) states at 4:101 that the need for Epping is actually at 34%. Against this background the DLP will clearly need full supporting and tested evidence to justify a 40% requirement where this would unduly frustrate the intentions of the NPPF and the Council’s policies to boost the supply of housing.

2.35 Draft Policies DM1 - Bio-diversity, DM2 - Landscape Character, DM4 - Green Space and Corridors, DM5 - Green Infrastructure, DM6 - Open Spaces The draft policies set out in the DLP towards the natural environment and green infrastructure are broadly supported. Our proposals for SR-0158A as indicated in the supporting Brochure demonstrates the Countryside commitment to a landscape led design for development, taking into account the need to support and provide for structural landscaping, bio-diversity, informal and formal open spaces, playing areas and allotments in association with the new homes and wider benefits for the community

2.36 Draft Policy DM9 - High Quality Design The draft design policy is generally supported and the supporting brochure indicates Countryside’s commitment to the general principles set out for SR-0158A. Nevertheless, greater clarification will be required on those sites that will require strategic masterplans. As can be seen from the accompanying brochure, Countryside Properties have already embarked on this process.

2.37 Draft Policy DM10 - Housing Design and Quality Whilst we note the provisions of Section 3 relating to access and open space, it is assumed that the text at Part B relates to flats or apartments but it could also be taken to mean the upper floor of family housing. It is important to clarify the interpretation of this requirement to clarify the application of this policy.

2.38 2.39 Vision for North Weald Bassett We support the proposed vision for North Weald Bassett as set out at 5.108 of the DLP. These representation and the accompanying Brochure demonstrate that the proposed allocation of SR-0158A would positively contribute to the

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achievement of the vision set out. Draft Policy P6 – North Weald Bassett These representations support the allocation of SR- 0158A as a fundamental part of the policy. Countryside Properties are taking forward this site as a housing developer with a track record of delivering new homes throughout Essex. The site is suitable, achievable and deliverable to be an important part of the Council’s objectives for North Weald Bassett in providing for sustainable development. Subject to the planning process, Countryside would like to start delivering homes at this site within the next five years. Its identification has been thoroughly tested in the evidence base commissioned by EFDC and supporting the DLP including the North Weald Masterplanning Study 2014 prepared by Allies and Morrison and the Site Suitability Assessment (SSA) prepared by ARUP. With regard to the latter and the SLAA both acknowledge that the site could accommodate up to 600 dwellings. It is therefore suggested that Policy P9 should reflect this by indicating a site capacity of between 600 and 650 homes.

2.40 The site is being actively promoted for development by Countryside Properties, an established house-builder with a proven track record of delivering quality development in the region.

2.41 The site totals some 35 hectares, is an essentially flat, greenfield site, and is currently arable farmland. Beyond the site’s historic Green Belt designation, there are no constraints or planning policy restrictions that would prevent the site’s development.

2.42 As confirmed in the SSA the site is not subject to any environmental, ecological, physical or heritage constraints that would prohibit development. Detailed work has been undertaken which demonstrates that the site is entirely capable of being developed through a comprehensive, landscape-led masterplan approach that accords with the design objectives of EFDC.

2.43 As confirmed through previous submissions to the Council, an access appraisal has been undertaken which confirms suitable vehicular access can be provided to the land via Vicarage Lane. An access arrangement has been designed and agreed in principle with Essex County Council.

2.44 Allocation in the DLP would ensure that the site will make a valuable contribution towards meeting the current and acute housing need, helping to address concerns on OAHN and housing delivery set out earlier within these representations. Further, the site and their potential development should be viewed within not only the context of a District-wide need for housing; but also a need to direct growth to North Weald Bassett in accordance with the Vision for the Settlement as expressed in the DLP. As indicated in the brochure at Appendix 2, Countryside Properties have commissioned detailed technical studies. These have assisted an understanding of the environmental and infrastructure issues and opportunities associated with the site to be able to confirm that the development as set out in the supporting brochure can be delivered.

2.45 Draft Policy D2 Essential Facilities and Services Whilst the general thrust of the policy is supported, the requirement for a Health Impact Assessment is considered to be unnecessary. This is on the basis that issues relating to mitigation in relation to healthcare should be the subject of detailed review as part of setting the Community Infrastructure Levy. Any planning application for major development would by necessity be subject to detailed review and assessment on mitigation measures necessary to enable development to proceed and would include consultation by EFDC with the NHS.

3.1

3.2 There are concerns that the extent of OAHN for Epping Forest District is greater than

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stated in the DLP. In any case, there are also concerns that the DLP does not plan to meet the figure that has been identified. If the Local Plan were to continue to be based on such a strategy there is a risk that it would be contrary to national policy and found unsound at Examination.

Against this background it is critical that the Local Plan can deliver the sites that have been proposed in this consultation. Site 0158A as part of the identified growth strategy for the district and North Weald Bassett should therefore be supported by EFDC on this basis.

3.3

3.4

North Weald Bassett has quite properly been identified by EFDC as a sustainable location to accommodate a proportion of the additional homes required to be provided in the District between 2011 and 2033. Furthermore housing development at North Weald Bassett would be ideally located to support growth at the Harlow Enterprise Zone and the wider vision to deliver a global knowledge region along the M11 corridor. The provision of quality new homes is a core component of delivering this global knowledge economy.

The background evidence to the DLP and notably the North Weald Bassett masterplanning study has demonstrated that the settlement can accommodate the development as proposed.

3.5

3.6

Evidence submitted to the Council demonstrates that SR-0158A in particular is a deliverable site, development of which can be secured through a comprehensive, landscape-led proposal. Allocation for residential development within the Local Plan would be justified, and would help ensure the Local Plan provides sufficient homes to meet the requirements for the District.

We trust that the representations set out in this statement with accompanying brochure will be given careful consideration and support as the Local Plan progresses. We also hope that changes can be made to reflect our suggestions and changes as submitted.

3.7

We also look forward to engaging with EFDC and other stakeholders in our proposals for the land to the South of Vicarage Lane following the submission of these representations, in order to secure the delivery of new homes for the District early in the plan period in a high quality development to reflect the aspirations of EFDC and the local community.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Site Plan

Appendix 2 - Brochure land south of Vicarage Lane, North Weald Bassett (Site SR-0158A)

ABOuT THE SITE

The site is located to the northwest of North Weald Bassett on land between existing residential streets and North Weald Airfield. The site is immediately to the south of Vicarage Lane and surrounds the Chase Farm Business Area.

In the immediate vicinity of the site are Queens Hall Community Centre and St Andrew's Church of England Primary School with residential areas to the east and south. To the west is Church Lane Meadow and beyond the meadow is North Weald Airfield.

The Lanes, Wickhurst Green, West Sussex
Great Notley Garden Village, Braintree
Wickhurst Green West Sussex

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A CONTEMPORARY GARDEN SuBuRB

at North Weald Bassett

Countryside is promoting the development of up to 35 hectares of land for new homes to the northwest of North Weald Bassett. The promotion carries forward the concepts of the North Weald Bassett Masterplanning Study prepared for Epping Forest District Council in September 2014 and those of the emerging Local Plan.

North Weald Airfield

Abode, Cambridge Beaulieu Heath, Chelmsford

BACKGROUNd

during the preparation of the draft Local Plan, the Council commissioned a study to provide a clear framework for future development and investment at North Weald Bassett. This work culminated in the publication of the 2014 Allies and Morrison Masterplanning Study which involved two stages of local consultation.

This consultation included community workshops, a public exhibition and Parish Council briefings before being accepted as an evidence base study by EFdC in October 2014. The minutes of the EFdC cabinet meeting in October 2014 record that the "local ward Members for North Weald Bassett welcomed the report and hailed the public participation with the Masterplan exercise via the workshops".

The Masterplanning Study set out three growth options for North Weald Bassett allowing for up to 1,600 new homes around the village. The Study then went on to provide two different distribution scenarios, both of which identified the site as being suitable for residential development.

The Masterplanning study suggested that any development in the location of the site:

"would probably have a lesser impact on the aim and purposes of the Green Belt; in particular this is because it has a limited role in preventing neighbouring towns from merging. indeed, the settlement to the east and the airfield and M11 to the west means that this pocket of land is isolated from other nearby settlements".

This is particularly important as North Weald Bassett is well related to support the Harlow Enterprise Zone and wider vision to deliver a global knowledge region on the M11 corridor. The London Stansted Cambridge Corridor Growth Commission identify the supply and affordability of homes as a significant challenge and barrier to future growth and prosperity. The findings and recommendations of the growth commission highlight that nearly one in seven of the UK's jobs are within a 10km radius of the corridor. The provision of new homes at North Weald Bassett has a key role to support these aspirations given its proximity to this corridor.

ABOuT COuNTRYSIdE

Countryside is a leading UK home builder, specialising in place making and urban regeneration for more than 55 years. We work to create places of character with new homes and neighbourhoods of lasting quality with a sense of place and community.

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We recognise that it will be an important objective for the masterplan for North Weald Bassett to integrate new development with the existing community.

All our developments and homes carry a signature style and character, designed to work for the way people live today and cater for future generations.

In recognition of our approach, we have received more than 350 awards for design and sustainability excellence since 2000. We hold more Housing Design Awards than any other home builder and are the only home builder to receive the RIBA

Stirling Prize for a housing development with our Accordia development in Cambridgeshire. Accordia was themed around the concept of 'living in a garden', with each home designed to overlook green spaces.

When designing our developments, we place considerable emphasis on collaborative working to deliver the best masterplan possible to create desirable and attractive neighbourhoods. Going forward in evolving a masterplan for the site, we would be keen to enter into discussions with the Council, other stakeholders and the local community.

Proposed site at North Weald Bassett

*The identified site has capacity to deliver:

I Between 600 and 650 new homes (including the provision of affordable and/or starter homes)

I Approximately one-third of the site (11 to 12 hectares) dedicated to open space, including the provision of community spaces such as children's play facilities and allotments

The land is strategically located close to community facilities and local services in North Weald Bassett and provides a unique opportunity to deliver a development based on high quality design principles which could be delivered as a contemporary Garden Suburb.

OPPORTuNiTY

Countryside has a proven track record of building the highest quality new developments, where new homes have a distinctive character and benefit from direct access to open spaces and a richly landscaped setting.

development of the site provides the following opportunities:

Stylish new homes - An inspiring mix of quality homes including affordable homes, housing suitable for families, first time buyers and the elderly.

Sustainable location - New homes within walking distance of facilities such as schools, shops and community uses.

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A landscape led masterplan - Provision of new green infrastructure which retains and enhances the best parts of existing landscape features.

Abundant open space and multifunctional green infrastructure - New areas of recreation, with play facilities and allotments at walkable distances, as part of connected green spaces all designed to encourage a healthy lifestyle.

Enhanced ecology and biodiversity - New areas for enhanced ecology and natural environment with habitat opportunities. The existing river corridor and meadow would be supplemented by accessible park land and a network of new wildlife areas.

Choice of sustainable transport - Excellent access to local facilities in North Weald Basset and the wider area by foot or bicycle, with investment into public transport, public rights of way and new pedestrian/ cycle routes.

A robust Green Belt boundary - Responding sensitively to its location through the provision of a new robust Green Belt boundary to define the settlement edge.

Fostering a sense of civic pride - Options for community ownership and long term stewardship of assets within the development.

Concept masterplan

dESiGN viSiON

Countryside believe the site is an opportunity to provide a modern interpretation of garden suburb principles of balancing town and country. This approach can integrate new homes within a landscape setting that transitions into the surrounding countryside whilst providing a high quality living environment for residents.

in 2015 Countryside commissioned an initial concept masterplan to explore how these themes could be incorporated into a potential development of the site.

The concept masterplan (right) includes the provision of:

I 21 hectares of residential land, providing land for between 600 and 650 homes at an average density approximately of 30 dph

I 11.5 hectares of open space and land for community uses (approximately 33% of the site)

I 2.7 hectares of land associated with access and

Response to the Draft Local Plan Consultation 2016 (Regulation 18)

movement corridors

The concept masterplan illustrates how a number of design criteria associated with garden suburbs could

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be achieved as follows:

I A perimeter block structure across the site which creates public frontages and private backs to buildings.

I Green corridors flowing through the site forming the basic structure of a wider network of public landscaping and open space to create a green and leafy environment.

I A permeable network of streets on key desire lines connecting with the wider foot and cycle path network that surrounds the site and which links with local shops in the village centre, St Andrew's Primary School, community centre and the Millennium Trail.

These principles of the concept masterplan closely align with the draft Place Shaping policy (SP4) of the Local Plan with its emphasis on high quality and imaginatively designed homes with the provision of gardens and access to amenity spaces; well connected green spaces and options to provide bus access though the site.

dELivERABiLiTY

Subject to the planning process, new housing can be commenced within the next 3 to 5 years and therefore make an almost immediate contribution to meeting

the housing needs of EFdC.

detailed environmental and infrastructure capacity investigations have already been undertaken and confirm there are no barriers to its development.

I Utilities (Electricity, Gas, Water and Telecommunications)

Points of connection are available for all services.

There is an intermediate Pressure gas pipeline passing through the site, which requires an easement to be

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provided. This easement has been incorporated into our concept masterplan.

I Transport

The provision of two vehicular access points from vicarage Lane capable of accommodating bus services through the site.

I Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy

The site is classified by the Environment Agency as Flood Zone 1 and is therefore not an area of high flood risk. Sustainable urban drainage Systems are to be incorporated into the masterplan to ensure that any development does not give rise to flood risk elsewhere.