

## ESSEX DEVELOPERS' GROUP

Meeting held Tuesday 1 October 2019  
Hill

### Attendance:

Mark Curle	-	EDG Chair
Lee Melin / Glyn Mutton	-	Hill
Michael Jenner	-	Croudace Homes
Robert Charnock	-	Higgins Construction
Tim Chilvers	-	Anderson Group
Phil Murton	-	Iceni / Colne Housing
Paul Landsberg	-	Barton Willmore
Rory Baker	-	Strutt & Parker / BNP Paribas
Rhiannon Meredith	-	Swan Housing Association
Helen Shackleton	-	CHP
Jeremy Potter	-	Chelmsford CC
David Randerson	-	Castle Point BC
Steve Collins	-	Rentplus
Emma George / Jody Bulman	-	Rentplus
Graham Cox	-	Kind & Company
Lee Heley	-	Essex County Council
Alethea Evans	-	Essex County Council
Richard Bambridge	-	Essex County Council
Nhi Huynh-Ma	-	Homes England
Leigh Norris	-	Essex Police
Jon Wilson	-	Essex Fire & Police Collaboration
James Palmer	-	Essex Fire & Rescue Services
Jemma Little	-	Haven Gateway Partnership
Brian Horton	-	SELEP
Paul Thomas	-	SELEP
Alastair Pollock	-	EDG / SEHG

1.	Apologies	ACTIONS	
	James Firth	-	Strutt & Parker
	Sara Thakkar	-	Colne Housing
	Christopher Moore / Robert Moore	-	Homes England
	Jane Owen	-	MHCLG
	Richard Bayley	-	NEGC
	Christine Lyons	-	Basildon BC
	Ian Butt	-	ASELA / Castlepoint BC
	Gwyn Owen	-	Essex Housing / Essex CC
	Carl Glossop	-	Countryside Properties
	Steven Kay / Ruth Neave	-	Birketts LLP
	Tom Newcombe	-	Birketts LLP
	Tracey Walker	-	Legal & General AH
	Daniel Joyce / Lucy Johnston	-	Close Brothers Property F
	James King	-	Keepmoat
	Luke Riley	-	Swan
	Richard Bayley	-	NEGC
	Daisy Rees	-	Peabody
	Kim McGregor	-	Moat
	Andrew Taylor	-	Countryside Properties
	John Grisley	-	Castle Point BC

	<p>Simon Payne - Uttlesford BC  Helen McCabe / Ryan Farmer - Thurrock Council  Tina Hinson - Colchester BC</p> <p><b>Welcome, Introductions and Actions from 11 June Meeting</b></p> <p>To be noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two new members have been recently endorsed by the Housing Chairs Group: Anderson Group and Croudace Housing.  <b>Action: Further details about the new members including key contacts will be circulated with the minutes.</b></li> <li>• Rentplus and Colne Housing are confirmed as new members.</li> <li>• Barton Willmore and BECG have not renewed their membership.</li> </ul> <p>All other action items either completed or on the agenda.</p>	<b>AP</b>
<p><b>2.</b></p>	<p><b>North West Cambridge Development; design principles / place / sustainability – Glynn Mutton, Hill</b></p> <p>GM provided an overview of the North West Cambridge development which was being undertaken in collaboration with the University. The development included a number of infrastructure related amenities such as primary school, care home and large scale sustainable drainage system (SUDS) and new super market.</p> <p>Joint application team from Cambridge CC are overseeing the planning application process. University very keen secure an 800-year legacy.</p> <p>Overall design aspiration: to provide some separation to City and local village of Girton. Also respecting the ridge line / topography of site.</p> <p>Planning requirements from the North West Cambridge Action Plan include design codes, site wide strategies. Design panel reviews, board approval via the University also in place to reinforce legacy requirements. Land parcels have individual design codes which includes requirements on height, mass and landscape.</p> <p>Hill is responsible for a number of land parcels and has been responding to design codes and other reserved matters to show how their proposals are conforming.</p> <p>The development incorporates a huge amount of infrastructure which often sits underground to provide the drainage through SUDS, district heating etc. Houses need to conform with COVE Sustainable level 5. Bin stores Iceberg design has been well received.</p> <p><b>Q&amp;A:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services slightly higher than average but heating and water costs generally lower.</li> <li>• No standardised approach to financing the scheme and land values.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At outline application stage there was engagement with Fire and Emergency services.</li> <li>• Design code driven by University after a huge amount of consultation.</li> </ul> <p>The Group thanked GM. <b>Action: Presentation to be circulated with the minutes.</b></p>	AP
3.	<p><b>Affordable Housing Delivery in Essex - LH / MC</b></p> <p>LH said discussions were taking place on delivering more affordable housing, especially around Essex Prevent and Homelessness initiative led by Uttlesford DC. Outcome was recognition of the need for more affordable homes.</p> <p>Conversation also taking place at the Essex Planning Officer Association. Looking for themes that we can convalesce around to help inform a future strategy.</p> <p>Discussion ongoing with partners on how to address the shortfall in affordable homes. Partners have been requested to arrange a short meeting with LH / MC to discuss ideas. <b>Action: Partners are requested to discuss opportunities / barriers to delivering more affordable homes by contacting AP in the first instance.</b></p>	ALL
4.	<p><b>Housing Delivery Test - JP / AE</b></p> <p>JP explained how the Essex Planning Officers Group (EPOA) had set up a group to look at unintended consequences of the Housing Delivery Test (HDT). Recognised that there was a need to engage with the development industry on this. The Test is essentially a stick from Government to encourage local authorities to get on with their local plans. Most local authorities accept they needed to be tested on delivery, however, much of the delivery is reliant on the development sector delivering.</p> <p>Where delivery doesn't match need, there will be sanctions that will come into effect.</p> <p>Next test is due November where a further report is due from Government. Sanctions really start ramping up over the next few years. Mixed picture across Essex, authorities with a lot of Green Belt will find it difficult to meet the targets. (See presentation for Essex position).</p> <p>Working group has been set up represented by every Local Planning Authority. Already provided MHCLG with some initial feed. Intention is to review pipeline figures to estimate future build out rates. Look at sites and actual build out rates to determine future supply. Important to get some intelligence as to how it is going to work, where the implementation issues lie. Importantly, try to offset punitive measures where LAs and the development sector are doing everything to deliver the required housing numbers and avoid unintended consequences of inappropriate development.</p>	

	<p><b><u>Actions:</u> Further report back on HDT including engagement at future meetings.</b></p>	<p><b>JP</b></p>
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>Rentplus delivering affordable homes – Steven Collins</b></p> <p>SC talked about the importance of delivering affordable housing saying Homes England were not providing enough grant for affordable housing. Only 17% being delivered as affordable, impact on place-making. Important to have a good mix within schemes, making them more accessible to people.</p> <p>Estimated that between £12-15bn is needed to be invested in housing from the Government, unlikely to be forthcoming.</p> <p>Hence, alternative models need to be developed such as Rentplus' Affordable rent to buy model which fully funded via institutional investors.</p> <p>The model recognised that developers need to make the right margins, which can be achieved through the model. Affordable means meeting LHA or what's agreed with the LA.</p> <p>Rentplus works with LAs and HAs to assist potential homeowners get on the property market. Accessing the necessary deposit to buy a home recognised as one of the biggest barriers to home owners. Rentplus offer a 10% gifted cash deposit after usually 5 or 10 years.</p> <p>Rentplus targets low and middle income families who would not access housing through the LA allocation process. People benefit from discounted rent and go on a pathway to become homeowners in the future. Rentplus are an affordable rent to buy product as referred to in the NPPF policy Annex 2 (d) July 2018. They provide an innovative model that helps remove barriers to home ownership and improves viability and social mix of new housing schemes.</p> <p>Funds come from various institutional investors and pension funds such BA pension. Rentplus is keen to engage with developers and LAs. Key is that Rentplus replaces units within their portfolio when 25% are released for sale.</p> <p><b>Q&amp;A</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patterns of take up: lower income office and NHS workers have been taking up properties, 30% have also moved from social rented tenure to 80% market rented property, when questioned this was often because the house wasn't always their choice of house or area. Looking to staircase out into homeownership.</li> <li>• After 5 or 10 years the tenant is assessed to see whether they can purchase the property. There is an obligation on the HA to do a financial analysis to determine whether they would be able to buy the property. If they are not in a position, there is flexibility to add another five year to the tenancy. The cascade that is used should give tenants sufficient security.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Property sold at 10% of actual price. No penalty to pay back gifted deposit should they wish to move on and sale.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>Role of emergency services and community safety in new development Leigh Norris, Essex Fire Services</b></p> <p>LN introduced a piece of work they were looking at on how emergency services can engage with developers on new housing.</p> <p>240,000 – 250,000 new homes by 2036, resulting on 400,000 new residents. Need to consider will these new residents result in new demand for services.</p> <p>Important to consider how best to align services with new growth.</p> <p>Currently secure by design, technical input into building control.</p> <p>Wish to develop better forms of engagement and hear more about what the development sector requires from emergency services, including ambulance services.</p> <p>Recognise that there are some inconsistencies in responses across Essex, there is also a need to work up a future proof contact list.</p> <p><b>Q&amp;A</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific asks around CIL, and land provision how support can be given.</li> <li>• Fire and Rescue Services would like to early engagement on land opportunities coming up for development as often solutions can provide opportunities going forward in the design and layout of development. Too often these issues are considered as afterthoughts.</li> <li>• Developing a community safety strategy into a new development as recommended.</li> <li>• Often space for storage is required rather than a new fire station.</li> <li>• Shared use of community facilities would be good.</li> </ul> <p>The Group thanked LN. <b>Action: Presentation to be circulated with the minutes.</b></p>	<p><b>AP</b></p>
<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b>Essex updates</b></p> <p><b>Housing Excellence Awards:</b> Agreed to do a Housing Excellence Awards programme in Essex this year, not done one before.</p> <p>Aim to promote housing achievements focusing not on homes built and housing related partnerships / services across Essex.</p>	

	<p>Call for entries in early summer – great response 40. Shortlisted down to 30.</p> <p>Evening ceremony now booked for 10 October – over 100 partners on the guest list and programme has been circulated.</p> <p>Currently, finalising a brochure of all shortlisted submission, which will go on the Housing Essex website awards page along with video and photo announcing the winners. <a href="https://www.housingessex.org/housing-excellence-awards/">https://www.housingessex.org/housing-excellence-awards/</a></p> <p>One award; a special chairs award, goes to somebody in the meeting room who unfortunately is not able to attend the ceremony. It was agreed by the Chair, that an early announcement would be made in respect of this award.</p> <p>The Chairs' Award was therefore announced as going to Alethea Evans - Lead for Strategic Development, Planning Service, Place and Public Health, Essex County Council. The Group congratulated AE on her award.</p> <p><b>Livewell Development Accreditation:</b> JP said that Chelmsford City Council with other partners was bringing forward the above initiative, where successful schemes would receive a gold, bronze or silver awards.</p> <p><b>Essex Place Marketing</b> AE said that ECC Tourism team were putting together a place marketing strategy which would include an advertising programme to help promote Essex. They were keen to engage with house builders to see how the strategy could be used to also promote their developments. <b>Action: A paper on the strategy will be circulated shortly.</b></p> <p><b>Developer Guide to Infrastructure Contributions:</b> AE..referred to the paper that had been circulated with the agenda on proposal to refresh the Developers Guide to Infrastructure Contributions. The draft Guide is scheduled to be completed by end of October and will then be subject to a 6 week consultation before being signed off in the New Year. <b>Action: Draft Guide to be circulated to Essex Developers Group for comment.</b></p>	<p>AE</p> <p>AE</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><b>Skills: Contributions / Future Proof / I-construct</b></p> <p>RB followed up saying that the Developers Guide would also include a section on construction skills to tackle the poor level of skills across the County. It would require developers / landowners to prepare Employment and Skills Plans as well as making developer contributions to support skills. Thresholds would apply to 200 residential units or over and commercial development of 2,500sqm or more.</p> <p><b>Q&amp;A</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was a community case to promote the value that development brings to an area through for example section 106 and using site based signage to promote what schemes will be delivering.</li> </ul>	

	<p><b>I-construct / Future Proof</b>          JL reported on the above two skill projects. I-construct is looking to help drive up innovative approaches to delivering better homes and responding to the Government’s transformation agenda of the skills sector.</p> <p>I-Construct will be launched in November with a new centre in Braintree to support partners and offer training. There will also be events and grants to support training.</p> <p>Future Proof – seeks innovative approaches to housing delivery of market housing to unlock supply using different financial models. Support from SELEP working with consultants Daedalus on concepts such as off-site construction, lower rates of returns, talking to stakeholders on proof of concept study, includes a model to test viability on a site. <b>Action: Further information on both I-construct and Future Proof to be circulated shortly.</b></p>	<p>JL</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p><b>Housing Market: Round table discussion on developers’ issues</b></p> <p><b>Homes England</b>          NHM confirmed new appointments of Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP - Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and Esther Louise McVey PM - Minister of State for Housing and Planning.</p> <p>Chairman Sir Edward Lister stepped down, now strategy advisor for PM, interim in place. Homes England maintaining “strong muscle” to support delivery of housing through its programmes.</p> <p>HQ office re-locating to Coventry. Office closed in Bedford and Birmingham, new offices in Manchester and New Castle. Keeping London office, but new office in Northstowe replaces Cambridge office.</p> <p>Strategic Plan published last year with new operational model MPP, Market, People and Places. Account managers will be offered to drive housing delivery forward.</p> <p>Directors for South East is Paul Kitson, and Terry Fuller heads-up Acquisitions. Investment ongoing through for example HIF and SOAHP. Social rent being prioritised. S106 line from Ministry still no grant funding to be made available.</p> <p><b>SELEP</b>          Preparing a Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) setting out long term ambitions for the South East based on clear evidence and aligned to the National Industrial Strategy. Will help inform nation policy and impact of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Draft LIS expected October the go to co-designing stage with Government before publication March 2020. Housing Development feeding into the consultation to ensure it has a housing focus.</p>	

	<p><b>South Essex Joint Strategic Plan – ASELA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent progress is being made on the South Essex Plan, and it is anticipated that the Issues stage will be launched in the early new year. The Issues will be the first suggestion of how the spatial strategy could develop across 6 growth corridors. The Plan will work to the Standard methodology assessment of 147,000 new homes by 2050.</li> <li>• Running alongside this is a Productivity Strategy, which will effectively act as the South Essex Local Industrial Strategy setting out how a transformational approach to employment growth can be achieved, supported by the right housing and improved connectivity.</li> <li>• A connectivity workstream is looking at what mobility will look like in 2050 based on the forecast level of growth, access to jobs and services, and strategic links.</li> <li>• We will also shortly request stakeholders to sign up for a consultation and engagement database so direct links can be made.</li> </ul>										
<p><b>10.</b></p>	<p><b>Date / venue / guest speakers / topics for next meeting (11 June)</b></p> <p>JP commented that there was a new Garden Community being planned - Chelmsford Garden Village and reported on the success of the recent HIF announcement where Essex received more than half the investment coming forward from Government. For further information see <a href="#">Essex Highways</a>.</p> <p>EPOA agenda for next quarterly planning meeting. Looking for agenda items for December. Seeking to invite developers to attend meeting.</p> <p>EDG members invited to suggest future agenda items for consideration by the Chairs group. These should be emailed to AP in the first instance.</p> <p>AP reported that the Group's Terms of Reference refer to the re-appointment of the Chair on a 3 year cycle which is due now in October. Whilst the current Chair – Mark Curle is willing to stay on, the wider EDG Group is asked to make nominations for role of Chair by 31 October. A decision on the new Chair will be made at the next meeting of EDG on 12 December. Further details are set out in the Terms of Reference: <a href="https://www.housingessex.org/essex-developers-group/">https://www.housingessex.org/essex-developers-group/</a></p>										
<p><b>11.</b></p>	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>12<sup>th</sup> December, 11.00am at Swan, Stratford, London, diary invite to be sent.</p> <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th><b>Date</b></th> <th><b>Year</b></th> <th><b>Venue</b></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>April</td> <td>2020 Higgins Construction (tbc)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>23</td> <td>June</td> <td>2020 CHP, Chelmsford</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Partners who are hosting meetings were reminded to book the necessary meeting rooms.</p>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Venue</b>	1	April	2020 Higgins Construction (tbc)	23	June	2020 CHP, Chelmsford	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Venue</b>									
1	April	2020 Higgins Construction (tbc)									
23	June	2020 CHP, Chelmsford									