

**Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and**

**The Acquisition of Land Act 1981**

**Public Local Inquiry into:**

**THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL (LAND AT HENBURY WAY, OXHEY DRIVE, BRIDLINGTON ROAD, ST ANDREWS ROAD, THE PARADE, PRESTWICK ROAD, FAIRFIELD AVENUE AND STATION APPROACH, SOUTH OXHEY) COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2016**

**Summary Statement of Evidence**

**Pursuant to Rule 15 of**

**The Compulsory Purchase (Inquiries Procedure) Rules 2007**

**of**

**Mike Woolliscroft**

**On matters relating to delivery of the scheme**

**27 October 2016**

## Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION .....	3
1.1	Qualifications and Experience .....	3
2.	DESCRIPTION OF COUNTRYSIDE.....	3
3.	OWNERSHIP AND FUNDING .....	4
4.	REGENERATION EXPERTISE .....	4
5.	COLLABORATION WITH HOME GROUP DEVELOPMENT LTD .....	5
6.	SOUTH OXHEY INITIATIVE DELIVERY .....	5
7.	SCHEME FUNDING.....	6
8.	CONCLUSION.....	6

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Qualifications and Experience**

1.2 I, Michael Woolliscroft, hold a Bachelor of Engineering Degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Liverpool and a post graduate diploma in Structural Engineering from the University of Liverpool.

1.3 During my career to date I have worked as a civil engineer in design and project management. In 2008 I joined Berkeley Homes as Project Director for the delivery of a Crossrail Station at the Royal Arsenal Riverside regeneration project in Woolwich.

1.4 In 2011 I joined the operational board for Berkeley Homes (East Thames) Ltd and my responsibilities grew to cover all aspects of the Royal Arsenal Riverside development, which consisted of 2711 new homes, retail and leisure facilities.

1.5 In November 2012 I moved to St Edward Homes Ltd, The Berkeley Group joint venture with M&G Real Estate, as Managing Director.

1.6 In April 2014 I joined Countryside Properties as a Divisional Director for its Regeneration. I am currently Operations Director for the West London region of Countryside Partnerships with responsibility for developments in Ealing, Slough, Hounslow and the South Oxhey Initiative. My evidence demonstrates Countryside's commitment to the redevelopment of South Oxhey and confirm

1.7 I have been involved in the South Oxhey Initiative project since June 2015.

## **2. DESCRIPTION OF COUNTRYSIDE**

2.1 Founded more than 55 years ago, Countryside is a leading UK home builder specialising in place making and urban regeneration.

2.2 There are two complementary divisions, Housebuilding and Partnerships.

2.2.1 Our Housebuilding division develops sites that provide private and affordable housing, on land owned or controlled by the Group. .

2.2.2 Our Partnerships division specialises in urban regeneration of public sector land, delivering private and affordable homes by partnering with local authorities and housing associations. It is this division that is involved with the South Oxhey Initiative.

### **3. OWNERSHIP AND FUNDING**

- 3.1 Countryside Properties (UK) Limited (CPUK) is the principal operating company of the Countryside Group. All other trading companies in the Countryside Group are subsidiaries of CPUK.
- 3.2 The ultimate holding company of the Countryside Group is Countryside Properties plc (CPPLC). CPPLC is a non-trading company listed on the main market of the London Stock Exchange.
- 3.3 The Countryside Group benefits from a corporate revolving credit facility amounting to £300m expiring in May 2021.

### **4. REGENERATION EXPERTISE**

- 4.1 The Partnerships division has a 30 year track record of delivering more than 45 urban regeneration projects making it one of the most experienced regeneration partners in the UK. It operates primarily in and around London (Partnerships South) and in the North West of England (Partnerships North).
- 4.2 The Countryside business benefits from a very experienced team, with many staff having worked in the regeneration field of the residential development sector for over 20 years.
- 4.3 Countryside is committed to working with communities to ensure that its projects achieve the wide objectives of regeneration with as little disruption as possible. We invest in community engagement through high quality communication, the employment of Resident Liaison Officers, creation of Community Boards, Community Funds and local employment and training.
- 4.4 Countryside recognises that successful community engagement needs to be tailored to suit the specific requirements of the communities involved. We adapt our approach to ensure that it is effective and use lessons learned to inform improvements across our projects. At the major, twenty-one phase, regeneration project transforming the troublesome South Acton Estate, Countryside has been able to measure the social impacts of regeneration after the first phase. Countryside employed Social Life and Reading University to carryout research based on an independent survey of 544 households. A summary report is included in my witness statement at Appendix 1. This survey clearly shows how after the first phase the community reported an improvement to how safe they feel as well as improvements to their wellbeing and general satisfaction. I also identify a number of projects which clearly show the expertise of Countryside in delivering regeneration projects similar to that proposed at South Oxhey.
- 4.5 A description of example projects is provided.

## 5. **COLLABORATION WITH HOME GROUP DEVELOPMENT LTD**

- 5.1 For the delivery of the South Oxhey Initiative Countryside is working in partnership with Home Group Developments Ltd (HGDL). HGDL is the development arm of Home Group Ltd, a social enterprise and charity that is one of the UK's largest providers of social and affordable housing.
- 5.2 Countryside and HDGL are currently partners in two major regeneration projects. The excellent, close-working relationship between the organisations is strategically important to both businesses.
- 5.3 A letter from Home Group Developments Ltd in support is included as Appendix 3 to my Statement.

## 6. **SOUTH OXHEY INITIATIVE DELIVERY**

### **Housing**

- 6.1 We have proposed a masterplan that will provide the Council with the significant uplift in housing required together with major improvements to the urban design, replacement retail amenity, higher quality buildings, and a substantially improved public realm.
- 6.2 The delivery of the 514 new homes together with new public and retail amenity over three distinct construction phases enables Countryside to rejuvenate the town centre whilst maintaining and strengthening the existing community.
- 6.3 Since selection as preferred bidder in June 2015 Countryside has gained planning consent for the masterplan, and commenced Phase 1 works on site. £2.7 million has been spent on the project up to October 2016 and £35 million will be invested during the course of Phase 1.
- 6.4 The overall project is delivered over three main phases. Phase 1 works are planned to progress across five sites over the next two years.
- 6.5 The delivery of the first 48 affordable homes at the Maylands Road and Hallows Crescent sites enables the progression of Phase 2. This in turn enables progression of Phase 3.
- 6.6 Following the commencement of Phase 1 works on 12 September construction activity has progressed well.
- 6.7 We anticipate progressing designs for Phase 2 from February 2017.
- 6.8 As well as construction works progressing well, our community engagement is also being well received.

## **Retail**

- 6.9 The delivery of high quality public open spaces and a strong mix of retail uses is essential in ensuring a vibrant and economically sustainable retail zone is created.
- 6.10 For example, Heads of terms have been agreed with Lidl for the delivery of an 18,449 square foot foodstore.
- 6.11 Countryside has agreed to the requirements of the Retail Strategy as part of the Development Agreement.
- 6.12 It is recognised that the town centre that exists today benefits from some good shops and businesses that offer important public services.
- 6.13 Over recent months we have progressed discussions and are in the process of agreeing undertakings.
- 6.14 As the scheme progresses we will expand our discussions to include other operators as well as considering others that may help bolster the mix and quality of the overall offering.
- 6.15 Our phasing strategy maintains the availability of retail space and we are working to ensure a suitable mix of operators exist at all times.

## **7. SCHEME FUNDING**

- 7.1 As an expert in regeneration projects like the South Oxhey Initiative Countryside is confident in the financial modelling that has proven the viability of the whole project. Full financial modelling of the project being revisited at least every 3 months.
- 7.2 To the end of October 2016 the Countryside Home Group Development partnership have spent over £2.7 million on the project. This has funded development of the hybrid planning application and detailed design, enabling works and initial construction of phase 1. A further £4.5 million of orders are placed for groundworks, piling, beam and block flooring and bricks.
- 7.3 The delivery of Phase 1 works requires investment from Countryside and HGDL of over £35 million. This will be funded equally between the parties. I can confirm funding is allocated and.
- 7.4 Phases 2 and 3 are included in Countryside's 5 year business plan.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 Countryside and HGDL are delighted to be working with Three Rivers District Council on the South Oxhey Initiative.
- 8.2 The project has progressed well, with Phase 1 works progressing on site.

- 8.3 Delivery of the project will create jobs and Countryside will work with the community to pursue other opportunities.
- 8.4 The completed project will provide a safe and pleasant residential zone with vibrant and successful retail and public spaces.
- 8.5 On the basis of the evidence I have given and the evidence which will be presented to the Inquiry, I respectfully ask the Inspector to confirm the Order.