Delivering bespoke strategies for planning, masterplanning and placemaking

We are an independent town planning and urban design consultancy with a reputation for delivering successful, commercially aware projects at all scales.

Our projects represent bespoke strategies born out of our extensive industry expertise, our flair for innovation and our focus on excellent design. They influence decision making and investment choices by the public and private sectors. At the strategic scale they help to deliver infrastructure, transform economies and evolve the geography of towns, cities and sub-regions.

Our motivation is our desire to use our combined skills and experience in spatially-led planning, working collaboratively with trusted partners, to help deliver great and sustainable places where communities can grow and prosper.

We have been based in Milton Keynes since our inception in 1988.

Please get in touch if you would like to learn more about our unique offer.

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Urban extensions and new settlements will accommodate the vast majority of our country’s new homes over the coming decades as the supply of brownfield land depletes and the capacity of our town and city centres is used up. They should not be seen as housing estates; we believe it is essential that they are planned, designed and delivered to create the healthiest and highest quality places, in which communities and local economies can thrive. We bring a comprehensive view of how the spatial, environmental, social, economic and movement opportunities at a given location can be best weaved together to achieve this.

During our thirty years of practice we have become market leaders in promoting, masterplanning and securing planning permission for major developments, adding real value to our clients’ land assets as well as establishing the frameworks to support the growth of new and expanded communities. We lead and coordinate the multi-disciplinary inputs needed to put together exemplar planning applications.

We have unapologetically aligned ourselves with Garden City principles, and we actively support the work of the Town & Country Planning Association in promoting the need for well planned places and greater housing delivery.

In addition, we are fully engaged in the delivery stage of large developments through a coordinated approach to design coding, reserved matters applications, condition discharge and S106 monitoring. We have developed efficient and accurate systems to secure good placemaking and support high delivery rates.

This booklet features just some of the schemes we have helped our clients to deliver.
Radio Station Rugby, now known as Houlton, occupies a strategic central location adjacent to the national road (M1, M6, M45 & A5) and rail networks with the added advantage of frontage to the Oxford Canal. The redundant radio masts are a landmark to the millions who pass the site every year. DLA has advised RRSLP, a joint venture between BT and Aviva Investors, and more recently Urban&Civic, on the promotion of the site through a complex strategic and local planning process and undertaken the detailed masterplanning of the site; widespread consultation on its future commenced in 2003.

DLA worked to secure the allocation of land west of the A5 as a Sustainable Urban Extension in Rugby Borough Council’s Core Strategy, adopted in June 2011. DLA subsequently secured outline planning permission in January 2014. The proposal includes 6,200 houses, up to 31 hectares of employment uses, a secondary school and three primary schools. The listed “C Station” building will gain new life as a focus for a district centre and new secondary school.

DLA has subsequently secured reserved matters consent for the construction of a new Link Road providing a rapid connection from the site to the railway station and town centre. We are involved in the submission of further detailed applications to secure practical delivery. The first residential parcel and primary school commenced in 2017 and extensive areas of green and grey infrastructure have been implemented.

The former Dolman’s Farm buildings have been converted and extended for use as a marketing suite and home to The Tuning Fork café.
We were appointed by Urban&Civic to prepare a new, mixed use vision and master plan for this major strategic site. The 575ha former RAF/ USAF airfield is now allocated in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan, was declared as an Enterprise Zone in 2011 and is one of the largest development projects in the UK today.

DLA secured outline planning permission in October 2014 for development to provide 8,000 new jobs and 5,000 new homes set in a new and extensive landscape setting. The scale of Alconbury Weald also means that a number of exciting sustainable solutions are being explored including the provision of a new rail station, and renewable energy projects.

The approach to the development of Alconbury Weald is focused on attracting new investment, jobs and opportunities. The site presents a unique opportunity to deliver significant and transformational change.

Through the Enterprise Zone, new employment is focusing on Low Carbon, High Tech & Creative Industries, ICT, Research and Development and advanced manufacturing, engineering and processing. Commercial development continues to move forward with planning permission granted for six new commercial buildings which are now under construction including major UK headquarters and two business incubation centres, one of which is fully occupied. Planning has also been granted for an on-site training facility linked to the Enterprise Zone and the local college and this will be open for September 2018.

Alconbury Weald is a sustainable mixed use development and as the commercial development continues to move forward, the first homes are being developed with associated infrastructure. Reserved Matters permission has now been granted for over 600 homes with the first occupations on site last year. The first Primary school opened its doors to pupils in September 2016 and work has commenced on the community allotments and pocket park for first residents. The heritage of the site has always been at the heart of the U&C approach in shaping future identity at Alconbury Weald and work is about to commence on the conversion of the Grade II Listed watch office.
DLA submitted an outline planning application to South Cambridgeshire District Council to develop up to 6,500 homes at Waterbeach Barracks and Airfield on behalf of developer Urban&Civic and the Secretary of State for Defence.

The former base of the Royal Engineers comprises nearly 300 hectares of previously developed land only 3 miles from the internationally renowned science and technology parks in Cambridge. The scheme will include up to 6,500 new homes, small and medium-sized employment space, new local centres, schools, community and leisure uses, new infrastructure and a network of new green spaces including a 7ha lake for public use and recreation.

Acting as planning consultant, DLA is working closely with Fletcher Priest Architects as masterplanners and a large multi-disciplinary team including Peter Brett Associates on transport and environmental matters and Bradley Murphy Design on landscape design.
We were commissioned by Birmingham City Council during 2014 to provide advice on the masterplanning of an emerging urban extension at Sutton Coldfield, known as Langley, to the north east of Birmingham. Creating a new district of a city through strategic land release presents both challenge and opportunity, but moved a step closer with the publication of the Inspector’s Report endorsing the release of the site from the Green Belt.

DLA’s work is designed to help the City Council shape and articulate its ambitions for the New Community to a wide audience and ensure that these aims and ambitions are realised on the ground, as part of cementing the City’s reputation for leading the way in building great places. The residential-led urban extension of 6,000 homes is set to be an exemplar of sustainable development, building on the aspirations of the City Council to secure the same high quality development for its new suburbs that it has already achieved within the City Centre and core urban areas.

Our masterplanning work has evolved in tandem with the progression of the Birmingham Development Plan which proposes strategic Green Belt release to help meet the City’s identified housing requirements. Our masterplanning work has shaped the draft Supplementary Planning Document to guide development at Langley produced by the City Council.
Our work at Brooklands has seen the delivery of planned growth of a 160ha site immediately adjacent
to the designated development area west of Junction 14 of the M1 motorway. Working for a consortium
of developers (Hallam Land Management, William Davis, TRG Williams, Places for People, Cofton and
Haddon Estates), DLA secured an allocation in the Local Plan followed by a hybrid planning permission—
supported by a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment—for over 2,500 mixed tenure homes, primary
and secondary schools, a hotel, office and industrial accommodation plus supporting community and open
space provisions.

DLA’s master plan forms a comprehensive framework for delivery, with infrastructure and facilities coming
forward at an early stage to support the New Community. Early delivery of a three kilometre long, 11m high
acoustic ridge along the M1 motorway overcomes a key constraint of development, whilst the integrated
and inspired SuDS corridor has received accolades and awards from several sources including Landscape
Institute, Evening Standard, and the Chartered Institute of Housing.
SUSTAINABLE URBAN EXTENSIONS & NEW SETTLEMENTS

Walton High
Brooklands Campus
MOUNTFIELD PARK

CLIENT: CORINTHIAN LAND LTD

DLA leads a large multi-disciplinary team in the planning and masterplanning of this major extension to South Canterbury on behalf of Kent-based developer Corinthian Land. The City Council resolved to grant planning permission for the development in December 2016.

As the largest strategic allocation within the city, “Mountfield Park” will provide 4,000 homes, including 1,200 affordable units, and a major employment hub comprising 70,000sq m of varied business space to help the city achieve its ambitious growth targets.

In response to the City Council’s desire for a new garden suburb, our master plan embodies the Town & Country Planning Association’s Garden City principles to promote a development set within extensive woodland and open landscape, provide opportunities for walking and cycling, and local schools and services.

In addition, the development will deliver sizeable investment in local transport improvements to increase sustainable travel choices including a new Fastbus system, increased park and ride facilities, electric vehicle charging points for every dwelling, subsidised bus travel, a car-club and electric bicycle scheme. The development will also deliver a new junction on the A2.

The proposals were formulated with extensive input from local stakeholders. The wider team includes RGP Transport Planning, Lloyd Bore Ecology & Landscape, Proctor & Matthews Architects, Water Environment and Hillbreak Sustainability Consultants.
East Devon District Council has risen to the challenges of meeting new housing requirements by planning for a New Community.

DLA was instructed to master plan a New Community to the east of Exeter for 3,500 dwellings and subsequently the future expansion for a further 4,000 dwellings.

DLA has been instrumental in developing the planning strategy for Cranbrook, from the confirmation of the location of the community in the structure plan and local plan, which secured a policy allocation for the New Community, through to the submission and successful resolution of the outline planning applications for a total of 7,500 new homes. In addition, we have secured consent for an energy centre to supply combined heat and power for Cranbrook and other east of Exeter developments using renewable fuel sources.

We are currently engaged in the implementation of the first and second phases of residential development, primary school, secondary school campus, new railway station, community facilities, a new town centre and local shops. Our work includes preparation of design codes, the submission of reserved matters applications, applications to discharge conditions, and liaison with house builders on detailed planning and design matters.

A policy allocation for the future expansion has now been secured and outline planning applications for the future expansion to 7,500 dwellings have been submitted and are being negotiated. Implementation of Cranbrook is now well underway and the project is ongoing.
PRIORS HALL PARK, CORBY

CLIENT: BEE BEE DEVELOPMENTS, URBAN&CIVIC

Priors Hall Park is a new community of 5,100 dwellings and associated mixed use development on the eastern edge of Corby. The outline planning application, prepared by DLA, was approved by Corby Borough Council in 2007. As a catalyst for Corby’s exciting regeneration strategy, the ambition for the development is for a new sustainable community within an extensive parkland setting. The parkland will make an important contribution to the regeneration of the town, providing an area of open countryside within easy reach of many homes.

In addition, Priors Hall will transform the link between the existing industrial edge of Corby and its rural hinterland. The original master plan prepared by DLA, was recognised by CABE review panel as ‘exemplary’ paving the way for a step change in public realm and architecture quality in this part of North Northamptonshire.

Acting as ‘town architect’ since the grant of the outline planning permission, DLA has been committed to help the development team deliver an exceptional scheme. In February 2009, three years after it was identified on DLA’s master plan, the £30 million Corby Business Academy was officially opened by Prime Minister, Gordon Brown. DLA, with DLA Architects Practice, prepared the detailed design and helped secure funding for an Enterprise Centre in Priors Hall. The same team also designed the Priors Hall combined 1st School and Community Centre. The first phase of the project, some 1,850 dwellings is being delivered through the application and management of a Design Code.

Priors Hall park was acquired by Urban&Civic in 2018. DLA is working with the new landowner to secure outline planning permission for a revised master plan for Phases 2 and 3 of the development.
Redhill Garden Community is planned to be the solution to the long-term housing and economic development needs of Tandridge District Council and Reigate and Banstead Borough Council. The two Councils have huge unmet demand for both homes and jobs and this site is capable of delivering both for the foreseeable future.

It is centred on Redhill Aerodrome, a leisure airfield in the Green Belt in East Surrey. The airfield is an anomaly in the local landscape - a wide open space in the midst of an intricate network of woodland blocks and belts.

The plan is for up to 8,000 new homes over a 25 year period with a new District Centre, a Secondary School and three Primary Schools, expansion of the East Surrey Hospital - the key emergency centre for Gatwick Airport - and a wide variety of employment possibilities in a motorway linked business park, the District Centre, Neighbourhood Centres and the hospital. The proposed Garden Community is in the heart of the Coast-to-Capital LEP area, second only to the M4 Corridor as an economic engine of SE England. It is all in the control of Thakeham.

More than 40% of the area will be beautiful and accessible green space.

The site is already served by four railway stations. The plan involves a new strategic link between the M23 and the A23 to open up new routes for strategic traffic but also capacity for much improved and more reliable public transport along the length of the corridor.

The project is being promoted through both Councils’ Local Plans.
SUSTAINABLE URBAN EXTENSIONS & NEW SETTLEMENTS
THE HAMPTONS & GREAT HADDON

CLIENT: O&H PROPERTIES

For the last 15 years DLA has been engaged in the promotion, masterplanning, planning strategy and delivery of The Hamptons and Great Haddon sustainable urban extensions on the southern edge of Peterborough.

Totalling more than 13,000 dwellings, the two urban extensions have come forward sequentially in response to an ongoing and sustained level of new housing requirement within Peterborough over the last two decades. Crucially, this level of involvement has enabled a strong working relationship to be developed between DLA and Peterborough City Council on a range of issues, from supporting the Council’s funding bids and strategic decision-making on public sector investment in infrastructure in the area, to our role as ‘town architect’ or ‘design mediator’ on reserved matters applications to help bridge the gap between applicants and City Council in the interests of securing high quality placemaking and urban design in new development schemes.

At its height, the Hamptons delivered 500 homes a year and with around 5,000 homes now built, the New Community is firmly embedded within the fabric of the wider city of Peterborough. The planning approval for Great Haddon will allow seamless continuation of housing delivery for Peterborough as the Hamptons reaches maturity.
We work with public and private sector clients of all sizes to create deliverable planning strategies and successful master plans which in turn secure robust permissions and guide high quality development on the ground.

The breadth of our services includes all core planning and masterplanning activities, and is enhanced by a wide range of associated skills which enable us to produce project specific outputs.

**Town Planning**
- Strategic planning
- Planning strategies
- Site promotion & advocacy
- Outline, detailed and reserved matters applications
- Environmental statements
- S106 monitoring
- Consultation strategies and stakeholder engagement
- Planning application management including team coordination
- Viability assessments & development advice

**Masterplanning & Urban Design**
- Strategic spatial strategies
- Masterplanning
- Development Frameworks and Parameter Plans
- Site layouts
- Design & Access Statements
- Design codes & site briefs
- Phasing strategies

**Communication & Mapping**
- Graphic Design
- AutoCAD
- GIS
- 3D illustration and visualisations
- 3D printing
- Drone imagery