

Environmental Planning

Capability Statement
2024

tor
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A people practice

tor&co is a planning, design, and environmental consultancy with a human focus.

People are at the core of every tor&co project. We believe that when we consider what they need, how they think, feel, and behave, we uncover the potential to not just meet, but to exceed expectations. We pride ourselves on building long-term relationships, so that together with clients, communities, and partners, we realise our mission to build a lasting legacy.

Philosophy

For us, collaboration breeds creativity.

We believe that collaboration breeds creativity and that thinking creatively will always result in better solutions. By working alongside our clients and partners, calling on the expertise of our colleagues, and consulting the communities for which we create, we arrive at better outcomes for people, the planet, and all its ecosystems.

Our Clients

Fostering relationships for the long-term.

We are proud to partner with a broad range of clients on commercial and socially significant projects of every scale. Both in the public and private sector, our aim is to forge long-term relationships so that every challenge and complexity is tackled with insight and foresight.

Approach

Putting people and legacy at the core.

Our approach is always to start with people and continue to put them at the centre of every project. By giving every consideration to their physical, emotional, environmental and commercial needs, we exceed expectations and leave a sustainable and lasting legacy.

Culture

An interdisciplinary ecosystem.

We are a small but perfectly formed team with an open, inclusive and supportive culture. There are no siloes or egos, just a group of highly skilled individuals who interconnect in pursuit of better outcomes for people and planet



An integrated team

Diverse specialisms with an interdisciplinary approach.

Our breadth of projects demands a diverse set of specialisms and individual skills, but our seamlessly integrated culture and interdisciplinary approach means we listen, learn, and refine as one. Together we unravel the complex, clear a path with singular focus, and apply life-enhancing creativity.

Planning

For us, planning goes beyond just process and the purely technical. Our planning team has an enviable success rate, working to promote positive land use, devising ingenious strategies and advancing projects that make a positive contribution. We embrace challenges from the large, complex and demanding, to the small, and soon to be, perfectly formed, with equal enthusiasm, commitment and creativity.

Landscape Architecture

While we understand the value of the aesthetic, our landscape team know that how a space makes people feel, emotionally and physically, is the key to unlocking the full potential of a site. This focus ensures that our proposals are creative and sympathetic, so that we promote positive co-existence between people, place and planet.

Environmental Planning

Now more than ever, how we care for the environments in which we live, work, learn, and play, is high on everyone's agenda. Our environmental specialists analyse, advise and coordinate with respect to environmental and sustainability issues and environmental impact assessment so that our solutions are robust, meaningful, mutually beneficial, and future focused.

Strategic Communications

By providing strategic advice to our clients from the outset we can shape, design and deliver targeted communications and engagement strategies to help navigate complex circumstances. Developing opportunities for meaningful dialogue with local communities and building trust with decision makers across national and local government is critical in mitigating risk and maximising opportunities.

Architecture

Taking a holistic approach, working in synergy with clients and the wider tor&co team, we believe, results in buildings and spaces that are not only deliverable but exceed expectations. We create exceptional environments where people, business and communities can thrive.

Urban Design

We have a passion to create sustainable places where strong community bonds can be forged. Our belief that truly successful places, ones that intuitively respond to human needs, have exceptional core. So our approach to masterplanning is designed to add lasting value for developers, partners, and the communities they serve.

Heritage

Early consultation with local authorities and interest groups ensures our heritage experts bring their considerable experience to bear. We work with the wider team to uncover and resolve potential heritage risk, navigating planning pitfalls to ensure that heritage issues are comprehensively addressed. Our work safeguards historical integrity for generations to come.

Viability

We aim to help design and plan developments that are deliverable throughout dynamic market conditions. We help our clients balance commercial and policy requirements, promoting positive outcomes by demonstrating how development proposals are able to contribute towards planning gain.

Expertise

tor&co has over 30 years' experience of co-ordinating environmental impact assessments (EIAs), preparing environmental statements (ESs) and providing a range of other environmental planning services.

Our dedicated team of environmental planners are highly experienced at managing EIAs for major and complex developments for a wide range of sectors, from housing and mixed-use schemes to leisure, academic, airport infrastructure, renewable energy, water and waste management schemes.

We pride ourselves on our proactive and robust approach to EIA, which includes early engagement with local planning authorities and statutory consultees, minimising the scope of EIA by focusing on the key environmental issues, efficient co-ordination of the specialist consultant team and in-house preparation of the whole ES to ensure it is clear, concise and consistent and therefore

accessible and workable for all during the determination process. Our approach to EIA assists our clients in delivering projects in a timely and cost-effective manner, whilst robustly addressing the requirements of local planning authorities.

The company has been a member of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment's EIA Quality Mark Scheme since its introduction in 2011. Membership of the scheme represents a commitment to excellence in EIA, giving confidence to our clients and local authorities that our work is legally robust and of the highest standard.

Our technical areas of expertise include:

- EIA screening
- EIA scoping
- EIA co-ordination
- Identification of environmental constraints and opportunities
- Mitigation strategies
- ES preparation
- ES review services
- EIA statements of conformity
- Community and social assessments
- Land use assessments
- Waste assessments
- Construction environment management plans
- Alternative sites assessments
- Discharge of conditions
- Sustainability appraisals
- Strategic environmental assessments
- Sustainability assessments
- Nutrient neutrality



Case Studies

In the following pages we present a selection of our projects. They showcase the breadth of experience we have throughout the country. This locational range continually develops our experience, expanding our knowledge of different approaches from councils, consultants and clients.

Knapp Mill

Water Treatment Works

Bournemouth Water is proposing major process improvements to its existing water treatment works (WTW) at Knapp Mill in Dorset.

The WTW is located prominently on the urban edge, in a highly sensitive location, with internationally important nature conservation sites, listed buildings, scheduled monuments and public rights of way in close proximity.

The practice managed the planning submission and a large EIA team for the proposed process upgrade. In addition to acting as the lead EIA coordinator, drafting the environmental statement and liaising with consultees, we also carried out the assessments of cultural heritage and landscape and visual effects, together with the landscape and architectural design.

Our EIA, architecture, heritage and landscape teams worked closely together to identify measures to minimise the potential for significant adverse effects on the designated areas, including careful consideration of massing, height, scale, building materials and construction activities.

We also worked closely with the local planning authority and statutory consultees to ensure that robust environmental information was provided at all stages to allow the potential environmental effects of the project to be fully understood.

Client
Bournemouth Water

Location
Dorset

Expertise
Planning
Environmental planning
Landscape architecture
Architecture
Heritage



Lakeside

EfW and High Temperature Incinerator Facilities

The site of the Lakeside Energy from Waste (EfW) and High Temperature Incinerator (HTI) facilities was required to facilitate the proposed expansion of Heathrow Airport. As a regionally important waste facility, the EfW and HTI need to be relocated as close as possible to the existing buildings.

We were appointed to help secure planning permission for a 'like for like' replacement EfW and HTI facility on a nearby former landfill site located in the green belt and within a strategic gap designation. We participated in pre-application discussions with the council and public exhibitions with the local community. We prepared the planning supporting statement, environmental statement and alternative sites assessment for the planning application and led the coordination of a large team of specialist consultants who provided technical expertise.

In addition to demonstrating very special circumstances to justify a green belt and strategic gap location, a key consideration was cumulative assessment under the 2017 EIA Regulations given that the proposed replacement facilities are located adjacent to two nationally significant infrastructure projects (NSIP), both of which are subject to Development Consent Orders (DCO).

Client

Lakeside EfW Ltd
(Grundon Waste Management Ltd and Viridor)

Location

Slough

Expertise

Planning
Environmental planning
Landscape architecture
Heritage



Creacombe

Solar Farm

We were appointed by Gnaton Farms to project manage the submission of a planning application for a 7.3MW solar farm at Creacombe, south Devon. Prior to our involvement, the LPA had advised that EIA would be required for this solar farm project. Our EIA specialists were able to agree a focused scope of work for the EIA, limiting it to the consideration of landscape and visual and heritage aspects only.

Our landscape architecture team liaised closely with the client to minimise the landscape and visual impacts on the site and the surrounding South Devon National Landscape from the outset. The EIA team also liaised with the heritage consultant and county archaeologist to address potential impacts arising from the scheme's proximity to a scheduled monument.

Subsequent to our involvement in the main solar farm application, which was consented under delegated powers, we were asked by the client to assist with the grid connection cable route.

Our EIA team undertook a formal screening of the route, putting forward a convincing case that EIA was not required, including identifying a mechanism for archaeological mitigation to be put in place to enable the works to be undertaken as permitted development. The solar farm has now been constructed.

Client
Gnaton Farms

Location
Devon

Expertise
Planning
Landscape architecture
Environmental planning



Approximate extent of development

Photomontage by tor&co showing the limited visual impact of Creacombe solar farm on the landscape

North Rhins

Wind Farm

tor&co was extensively involved in the early site selection process for the North Rhins Wind Farm, which included assessing over 70 land holdings for wind farm development based on issues such as ecology, environmental designations and wind speed.

We were then appointed as planning and environmental impact assessment (EIA) project manager and lead consultant for the planning application.

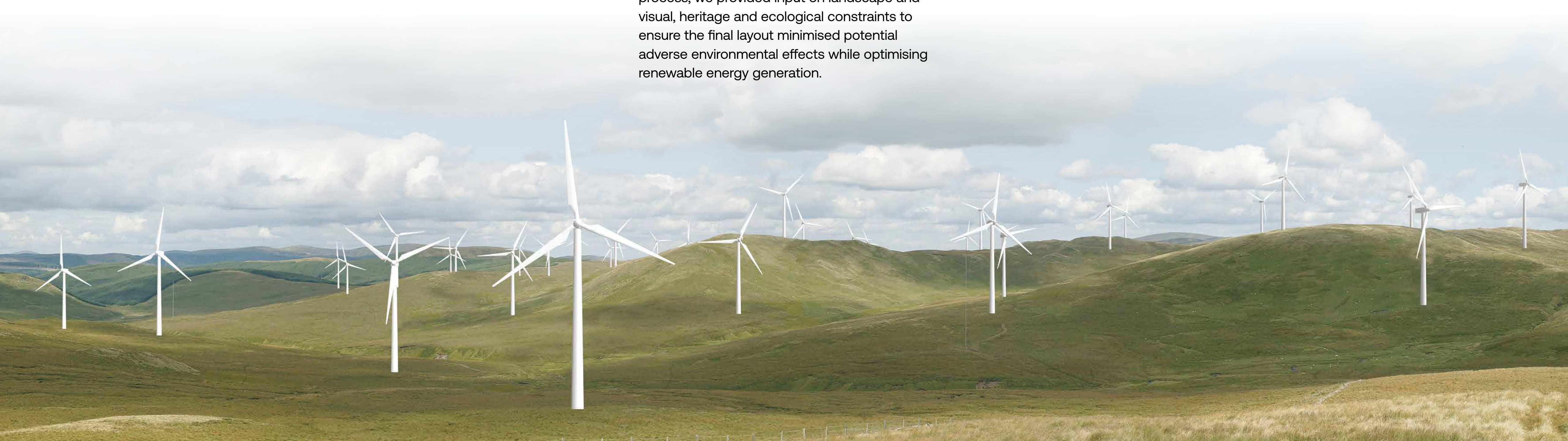
In addition to acting as the lead EIA coordinator and drafting the environmental statement, we also carried out the assessments of community and social, landscape and visual, land use and cultural heritage effects. During the design process, we provided input on landscape and visual, heritage and ecological constraints to ensure the final layout minimised potential adverse environmental effects while optimising renewable energy generation.

Post-permission, our involvement in the scheme continued with the preparation of an environmental management plan and a brief for the appointment of an environmental clerk of works. The 11-turbine wind farm, with an installed capacity of 22 MW, is now operational.

Client
Wind Energy

Location
Dumfries and Galloway

Expertise
Planning
Environmental planning
Landscape architecture
Strategic communications
Heritage



Farnborough

Airport

After the Ministry of Defence withdrew from the aerodrome, TAG Aviation proposed to use Farnborough for business aviation which required a change of use. The practice submitted the planning application and the approved proposals included provision for a new terminal building, changes to runways, taxiways and aprons, landscape remodelling and a new master plan, also allowing for the Farnborough Airshow to continue.

We carried out an environmental impact assessment to address the effects of works on the community in terms of noise, air quality and traffic. The works were situated within an area of considerable nature conservation sensitivity, so were designed to avoid wildlife features.

The restoration of heathland and wetland areas, along with careful design and management, has ensured habitat changes are beneficial in nature conservation terms.

Client
TAG Farnborough Airport Ltd

Location
Hampshire

Expertise
Town planning
Environmental planning



Goodmayes

The Goodmayes scheme will see the redevelopment of an under-utilised brownfield site in the heart of Goodmayes into a high-quality, legible, inclusive and sustainable environment.

The scheme will provide up to 1,280 new homes including 35% affordable, a replacement food retail store, primary school, flexible commercial and community spaces, open space, parking (lower ground level) and pedestrian and cycle connectivity to the wider area.

The project was particularly challenging as it necessitated the preparation of a full planning application for a substantial redevelopment scheme, which required EIA. tor&co undertook extensive liaison with the local authority, other key stakeholders and statutory consultees, and worked closely with the client's architects and wider technical team to optimise the evolution of the scheme.

This included developing appropriately detailed parameter plans to sit alongside the architectural drawings and preparing the environmental statement, the landscape and visual impact assessment and heritage assessment chapters, and extensive project management input.

Client
Weston Homes

Location
Redbridge

Expertise
Environmental Planning
Planning
Heritage
Landscape architecture



Land East of Park View Woodstock

tor&co was the lead EIA coordinator for this development of up to 500 dwellings and public open space to the south east of Woodstock. In addition to coordinating the EIA team and liaising with consultees, we drafted the environmental statement and undertook the assessments of community and social, cultural heritage, and landscape and visual effects.

Our expertise in EIA coordination allowed a robust but tightly scoped five-topic EIA to be carried out on a quick timescale, with six months from EIA scoping to submission of the planning application. The provision of robust environmental information was particularly important for this application, as there is a scheduled monument in the west of the application site and the internationally significant Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site lies around 30 m from the site.

Our interdisciplinary team worked closely throughout the design process to identify appropriate mitigation measures, including restricting the developable area outside the setting of the scheduled monument, suitable landscape buffers and planting, and setting appropriate building height and density parameters. These measures enabled the EIA to conclude that there would be no significant residual adverse effects on either the scheduled monument or the world heritage site.

Client
Blenheim Strategic Partnerships

Location
Oxfordshire

Expertise
Environmental planning
Planning
Landscape architecture
Heritage



Warner Bros.

Studios Leavesden

We have supported Warner Bros. for over a decade by providing planning, environmental planning, landscape architecture and heritage services at Warner Bros. Studio Leavesden, including delivering planning consent for the first dedicated Hollywood film production studio outside the United States and the Warner Bros. Studio Tour London - The Making of Harry Potter™.

Client

Warner Bros.

Location

Hertfordshire

Expertise

Planning
Environmental planning
Landscape architecture
Heritage

An in-depth EIA screening process was undertaken with the local authority for the studio tour, including close liaison with the wider technical team and LPA and preparation of a detailed EIA screening request. Consent was gained without the need for EIA and without the application being called in by the Secretary of State.

The practice has supported Warner Bros. in each step of its expansion, including gaining permission to double the size of the Studio complex.

EIA was required for the studio expansion and our environmental planners worked closely with the LPA to agree a tight scope, limiting the EIA to five key issues. In addition to coordinating the EIA and the preparation of the ES, we were closely involved with facilitating the client's aspirations for biodiversity net gain and working with the ecologists to ensure a robust strategy was put in place to relocate a county wildlife site, which was integral to the design of the additional studio space.



Marwell Zoo

Tropical House and Wild Explorers

We were commissioned to prepare a masterplan for Marwell Zoo. This provided a framework for the development of the wildlife park which would seek ultimately to increase visitor numbers at the zoo. A series of keynote projects have followed for tor&co, including the dramatic state-of-the-art Tropical House and Energy Centre and the immersive Wild Explorers exhibit.

Set within the sensitive South Downs National Park that surrounds the listed Marwell Hall, the projects required the full involvement of our planning, design and environment teams to ensure a smooth delivery through the planning process to completion on site. This included the preparation of a series of screening reports to provide sufficient information to enable the council to determine that EIA was not required..

Client

Marwell Zoo

Location

Hampshire

Expertise

Architecture
Landscape architecture
Masterplanning
Planning
Environmental planning



Silverstone Park

Located at the heart of the Silverstone Technology Cluster and adjacent to the home of British motor racing, Silverstone Park provides a global destination for innovation, business development and engineering.

tor&co has provided comprehensive planning advice relating to Silverstone Park since MEPC acquired the site in 2013. We had previously advised the British Racing Drivers' Club and Silverstone Circuits Ltd for a number of years, securing planning consents for a range of developments at the Circuit..

tor&co obtained planning consent on behalf of MEPC for 14 new speculative units for high-tech engineering companies, which have now been completed. In parallel, we obtained planning permission for over 2 million sq ft of commercial development..

Our environmental planning team played a key role. As lead environmental impact assessment (EIA) coordinator for the development we steered the consultant team through a number of complex environmental

considerations, including transport, landscape and visual and drainage. In addition to coordinating the EIA team and liaising with consultees, we drafted the environmental statement and undertook the assessments for community / social effects and cultural heritage. Our involvement helped to ensure that no objections were received from statutory consultees for this complex planning application.

We have been retained by MEPC to provide advice on future developments at Silverstone Park.

Client
MEPC

Location
Northampton

Expertise
Environmental planning
Heritage
Planning
Landscape architecture



Tremough

Campus extension

University College Falmouth and the University of Exeter appointed us to assist with plans for a £160 million expansion of their Tremough campus in Penryn, Cornwall. We prepared a master plan and an environmental statement, and provided planning consultancy to secure the outline planning consent for the development of the 40ha site into a leading sustainable campus. The project won a Commendation from the South West RTP.

In 2017 we provided further planning and environmental advice to enable FXPlus to obtain permission to increase student numbers from the 5,000 originally conditioned to 7,500. This included an addendum to the environmental statement and a shadow Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening report.

Client

University College Falmouth, the University of Exeter and FXPlus

Location

Cornwall

Expertise

Environmental planning
 Planning
 Masterplanning
 Landscape architecture
 Architecture
 Heritage



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Bournemouth
Birmingham

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