

New Communities
2026

torandco.com



tor
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1985
2025
40
From
Terence O'Rourke
to tor&co

Welcome to tor&co
turning constraints
to opportunities
and concerns
to understanding.

tor&co has been a leader in planning and designing new communities for more than 40 years. We promote, plan and masterplan new towns, the growth of towns and villages and the regeneration of urban neighbourhoods. Around 96% of our planning applications in this sector win approval.

tor&co was founded by Terence O'Rourke to merge planning, landscape and master-planning skills when designing communities. The skill-set has since expanded into EIA services, architecture, heritage, stakeholder engagement and viability know-how, as this task has become more urgent and complex both with the climate and biodiversity crises, and with housing and infrastructure needs intensifying across the UK.

Success comes from our firm commitment to in-house working. Each and every project has a bespoke team assembled from within tor&co to precisely fit the task. We bring to bear all our design skills together across our skill-set.

Place leadership



Of late, the UK has struggled with the complexity of building new places. Housing targets are missed, garden city proposals abandoned, quality is often criticised, and many existing communities object.

Making sure that developments foster strong, healthy and sustainable communities is our priority.

There is a target to build 1.5 million new homes over the next four years. Planning and masterplanning for new communities will need to embrace the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and take on board concepts such as the 'grey belt' and 'Golden Rules', alongside requirements for biodiversity net gain as well as blue and green infrastructure. Urban renewal will remain necessary for good growth but it's only part of the solution, alongside expanded towns and villages that are sensitive to existing character as well as carefully designed new towns.

We have extensive experience of promoting new communities, and of designing primary infrastructure, houses and green spaces. We realise the potential and find solutions, turning constraints into opportunities and concerns into understanding, setting the framework for quality place-making. Through all stages of planning and design, from initial appraisal and local plan promotion, to outline, full and reserved matters applications, we can set and navigate the promotional strategy and prepare the necessary supporting documentation, including planning and environmental statements, landscape and heritage assessments, design and access statements, design codes and SPDs, statements of community engagement and affordable housing statements.

Because we have these skills, we are often appointed from concept to delivery on our residential projects.

The new communities challenge



We are observably different in character from large consultancies, we believe in what we do, and work hard to build long and trusted relationships with our clients, helping to deliver on their business objectives.

It is our company's independence and people-first ethos that fosters knowledge continuity and reassurance. When you come to us, there will be a key contact that will not vanish after the first meeting but will build a dialogue with you over the years. We will assemble a team on each project to precisely match your needs, to give you the support you need and confidence in moving forwards to a deliverable consent.

We think about the bigger picture and look to long-term success rather than simply clearing

the next technical hurdle. And because we are independent we are nimble and can respond fast and informally where necessary.

tor&co set up as an EOT in 2021 transferring ownership to all employees, enshrining in its constitution independence and commitment, ensuring a lasting legacy for both our employees and our clients. As all our employees are equal owners we act as owner managers in the best interests of our clients.

Our staff retention rate is among the best in the sector. Many of us have worked here for years. Along the way, we have won countless awards and looked to our own environmental credentials. tor&co is accredited as a carbon neutral company and is working towards zero carbon status by 2030.

How we work with you



Site appraisals, capacity and feasibility studies

Site analysis, constraints assessments, capacity studies as well as due diligence, all inform clients about site selection ahead of land agreements. They can help to minimise risk, manage expectations, and inform appropriate terms.

Client promotion

We often help our clients prepare promotional material, to support bids to assist in becoming a landowner or local authority's preferred joint venture or development partner.

Land promotion

Having a robust planning strategy and compelling vision for a place from the outset is essential. We set out logical and considered arguments for development, its sustainability, suitability and pathway to successful promotion. Presenting a comprehensive and compelling case for development results in high level of success when it comes to securing local plan allocations. Our experience and knowledge allows us to identify when the time is right to move to planning application, addressing housing land supply, grey belt and other opportunities to progress.

Strategic frameworks

Our long experience, and integrated approach, on many large-scale new settlements, and town and village extensions, means that we are expert in producing strategic frameworks and masterplans.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

We have a strong track-record in putting together successful SPGs and SPDs for both the public and private sector. We also prepare development briefs.



From inception



Outline planning applications

Outline and hybrid planning applications for new communities and homes at a range of scales are the backbone of our work. We advise our clients on what's needed and when, and the best process to follow, including planning strategy and EIA screening and scoping. We deal with all aspects of often complex planning and design inputs needed for success, often taking the lead across the wide technical team, fostering a solution based approach.

From baseline settlement studies and constraints mapping, to environmental, landscape, heritage, and health impact assessments, to masterplanning and design and access statements, we put together the necessary design work to secure planning permission. Supported by our planning statements, and affordable housing statements, we secure robust, clear and compelling submissions, and we help our clients respond proactively and positively to matters raised post submission, resulting in our 96% overall success rate, be that through local decisions or appeal.

Engagement and stakeholder discussions

Our strategic communications specialists ensure that sound engagement and stakeholder consultation helps to smooth the planning process and encourages both understanding and support. This is especially important where proposals might be locally contentious, even when a development plan allocation has already been secured. We have a great record of resolving differences and winning permissions by building positive

relationships with planning officers, committee members, community and stakeholder groups.

Proving Layouts

Together with our architectural team, we prepare and test the layouts that underpin successful masterplans, applications and design codes. An aspect of this can be detailed architectural and landscape proposals that help ensure the optimum developable area or densities. The result is confidence in our masterplans and site capacity sought.

Design codes

We have devised design codes for a wide variety of projects. Our urban design, landscape, architecture and heritage teams work together to deliver comprehensive and deliverable codes that have regard to the National Model Design Code and other best practice at the same time as being creative and innovative.

Detailed design and reserved matters

Our planners, urban designers, masterplanners and architects often work together to submit successful reserved matters applications. From the outset of a project we are thinking about what will be permissible and characterful whilst commercially viable and deliverable at this detailed stage.

Discharge of conditions and compliance matters

We are happy to help our clients navigate the final pathway through planning to commence construction on the homes we desperately need.

To delivery

We have set out some case studies below. There are many more. Talk to us about your requirements and we can share our knowledge of other projects.

Case studies

Grand Union

Client

St George Developments Ltd

Location

London Borough of Brent

Expertise

Architecture
 Planning
 Landscape
 Strategic Communications

Key Challenges

Regenerating a brownfield, post-industrial waterfront in an area of housing and social need.

Our Solution

A former breaker's yard has become a nine-hectare waterfront neighbourhood at this west London regeneration project for 2,900 new homes, a 500sq m community centre, and a multi-storey light industrial building.

We provided St George with an interdisciplinary team of planners, masterplanners, architects and landscape architects to reshape the area from outset to occupation, devising a masterplan which provides an interface with the busy North Circular and an industrial estate while integrating with the struggling suburb of Alperton to the west.

Half the space is public realm, including a central park, a green/blue pedestrian and cycling spine, as well as new river meadows and walkways with bars and cafes where the Grand Union Canal meets the River Brent – a waterfront that was inaccessible for generations.

The first phase – all affordable homes – was delivered alongside the public realm. These homes are contained in medium-rise London brick blocks with generous balconies and bold modelling that brings gravitas, scale and urban densities. Townhouses and mews also feature.

Our strategic communications team was essential, working with community action groups to meet the needs of a diverse populace here and in the wider neighbourhood.





Grand Union

Outcome

And exemplary mixed-use waterfront neighbourhood with up to 2,900 new homes and generating some 650 new jobs.

19,000

sqm of workspce

4.6 ha

open space



Ford

Client

Vistry Group and Abri

Location

West Sussex

Expertise

Architecture
Landscape Architecture
Planning
Urban design

Key Challenges

Transforming a former airfield for a Community Land Trust

Our Solution

The Landings project, which has both greenfield and brownfield elements, had a difficult gestation before tor&co were brought in. Led by the Ford Community Land Trust, the former airfield between historic Arundel and Littlehampton will now provide up to 1,500 homes. 30% will be affordable. Alongside is a local centre with shops, care home, and primary school plus office space.

To win a revised outline permission for the whole site and detailed permission for the first phase of 680 houses, we formulated a successful masterplan and wrote a bespoke design code, which conformed to the National Model Design Code and its 10 characteristics for a well-designed place. Our architectural team has been responsible for the detailed design of over 50% of the new homes.

Careful landscaping includes a reinforced tree belt that provides a visual buffer and pleasant green setting. East-west streets have widened verges for additional planting. Village greens, allotments and other open spaces, are connected by a network of SuDS, footpaths and cycle routes.





Ford



Outcome

A significant contribution to the local housing need, with a new community focussed on a community hub, within a landscaped setting, and formed by tor&co's design code and housing designs.

1,500
new homes

450
affordable homes



Fordingbridge

Client

Pennyfarthing Homes

Location

New Forest District, Hampshire

Expertise

Expertise
 Architecture
 Landscape Architecture
 Planning
 Urban design
 Environmental planning
 Heritage

Key Challenges

Forming a cohesive masterplan around some challenging constraints, including overland flow areas and listed buildings, at the edge of a National Park.

Our Solution

A highly sensitive environment adjacent to the National Park the masterplan approach required our combined skills to optimise the developable area in a district severely challenged by its housing need and mitigation requirements, including the need for alternative natural green space. We promoted three sites around the Historic Market Town, leading through EIA and planning stages to detailed design, securing a total of some 800 new homes.

Using our full suite of expertise we deployed a range of full, outline and hybrid applications, to navigate sensitive hydrology and landscape issues, and respond positively to the setting of nearby listed buildings, to achieve a larger number of houses than originally envisaged.

We helped our client develop new locally-sensitive housing typologies to be used at density and incorporate a high percentage of affordable units. The houses needed to integrate with the existing town rather than creating separate character. All achieved after careful engagement with local planning and design officers through a series of tailored workshops.



Fordingbridge



Outcome

Consent for 800 new homes for a growing historic market town at the edge of the New Forest.

I have employed the services of tor&co for, under various guises, for around 40 years, clearly indicated the very high esteem with which I hold the company. As a house builder having to battle against the increasingly onerous requirements of the planning system, there is great value in having the support of a professional, inter-disciplinary and successful company such as tor&co.

- Guy Peirson-Hagger, Strategic Planning Manager, Pennyfarthing Homes

18.42 ha
of ANRG

12.4 ha
of other public open and play space



Northstowe

Client

Gallagher Estates and Homes England

Location

Cambridgeshire

Expertise

Architecture
Environmental Planning
Heritage
Landscape Architecture
Planning
Urban Design

Key Challenges

Creating Cambridgeshire's third-largest market town from the ground up with 10,000 low carbon homes. Create one of ten demonstrator sites for the national Putting Health into Place initiative led by the NHS and The King's Fund.

Our Solution

Since 2007, tor&co has been creating a masterplan and planning strategy for the phased delivery of Northstowe, 30 minutes from Cambridge. It incorporates the ten principles of a Healthy New Town including compact neighbourhoods to encourage active travel, healthy eating and play, as well as delivering healthy homes and buildings.

A comprehensive network of safe walking and cycling routes is fully integrated, while a Guided Busway and adjoining cycleway connect to Cambridge and beyond.

The first residents moved in during 2017. Phase one facilities, including a market hall and civic hub, have been joined by Pioneer Park with its sports emphasis and additional schools. 10,000 homes are planned by 2040.

The project was initially dependent on major infrastructure funding which meant a strategic approach to kick-starting development while maintaining a cohesive masterplan. Additionally, Northstowe needed to be a benchmark for sustainable development, aligning with the principles of the Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth.



Northstowe

10,000

low carbon homes are planned by 2040



Outcome

Northstowe is a designated Healthy New Town, evolving into a sustainable community for 25,000 residents, with integrated green spaces, essential amenities, and strong infrastructure. The final housing parcel was approved in 2022.



Client

USS and Grosvenor

Location

Cambridgeshire

Expertise

Environmental Planning
Heritage
Landscape Architecture
Planning
Urban Design

Key Challenges

Lifting planning restrictions so that a 1,200 home, biodiversity-rich community can be created.

Our Solution

For award-winning Trumpington Meadows to happen, tor&co's inhouse multi-disciplinary team first needed to remove the farmland's Green Belt designation through a process of intensive engagement with the local planning authority, existing community, and stakeholder groups.

We put together a vision and masterplan for a 1,200 home community, focused on a new primary school and central green space within a 60 hectare country park. The community is part of Cambridge's Southern Fringe strategy. We won outline permission and the housing is now over 50 percent occupied. 40 percent of homes are affordable and all feature renewables.

The central green acts as Trumpington's hub from which a network of cycleways and footpaths connects residents to the natural context which includes facilities such as allotments.

The arable site was previously a monoculture with limited biodiversity but with careful planning and detailed design our landscape architecture team helped to transform the land, creating a 46 percent biodiversity net gain. A management arrangement was established for the country park with the Wildlife Trust.

Trumpington Meadows



Trumpington Meadows



Outcome

A new mixed-use community that has transformed unremarkable Green Belt land into a contemporary high quality neighbourhood and model for biodiversity net gain.

1,200
homes

60 ha
country park



Client

Consortium including Bloor Homes, Bovis Homes, Gleeson Developments, Miller Homes, Taylor Wimpey, Wellbeck Land

Location

Eastleigh Borough, Hampshire

Expertise

Planning
Landscape Architecture
Urban design
Environmental planning
Heritage
Strategic Communications

Key Challenges

Placemaking at an urbanising settlement edge, against countryside and local gap policy, and in the face of political opposition.

Our Solution

Regional and strategic plans long identified Hedge End, a rapidly expanding settlement at the edge of Southampton, as a sustainable and suitable place for new housing, including to meet the wider needs of the sub-region. But politics stalled progress.

In response we were appointed as lead consultants to devise a planning strategy for a new neighbourhood called Boorley Gardens. Bringing together our team of specialists we

formed a strategy that relied on the appeal process from the start, with a robust technical approach and masterplan addressing sustainability, connectivity, and settlement gap matters. We also managed the sensitive public engagement process.

Following the expected refusal of outline permission, tor&co coordinated the successful appeal inquiry process, instructing counsel and providing expertise in planning and housing land supply. The Secretary of State didn't recover the appeal, which was approved in 2016.

We have continued to assist with the delivery of the site through applications for reserved matters and conditions discharge, to realise the 680 homes permitted. Play areas, sports pitches and allotments form part of the open space while 35 percent of the new housing will be affordable. A new segregated pedestrian and cycle route connects to Hedge End Rail Station.

Most recently, we continue to engage in the local plan process, promoting further land close to the rail station. Whilst the process is at an early stage we are hopeful to secure an allocation for a further 1,000 homes plus, together with significant areas of open space to perform as settlement gap and SANG, this time with the support of Eastleigh Borough Council.

Hedge End



Hedge End

Outcome

Opposition has been addressed, the development secured, and more than 100 of the first homes are now occupied. The successful appeal set the stage positively for further land promotion.



680

homes

16 ha

open space and
sports pitches

Oxford Garden Village



Client

Grosvenor Developments

Location

West Oxfordshire

Expertise

Landscape
Urban design
Heritage
Ecology

Key Challenges

Clearing complex planning and design hurdles to ensure delivery of a national pilot garden village on a sensitive rural site.

Our Solution

In 2017, Eynsham, near Oxford, was selected as one of the government's 14 proposed garden villages. These 1,500 -10,000 home communities needed to meet criteria set out in the New Garden Villages, Towns and Cities Prospectus.

tor&co helped Grosvenor Developments win development partner status at Eynsham. We were then appointed as lead consultant for the masterplanning process, involving a coordinated and collaborative approach particularly across landscape, ecology and heritage matters, all covered by our internal team. The masterplan formed the focus of the outline application for what would become Salt Cross.

Together with the district and county councils and Homes England, an Area Action Plan was put in place first. We fully and carefully analysed the local environment to create a vision and masterplan to achieve a contemporary green village that would draw on traditional settlement and landscape patterns in the area but have its own distinct character. At the same time we were involved in extensive consultations with the existing community and key stakeholders.

The village will have around 2,200 new smart homes with EV charging, including 50 percent affordable for both rent and low-cost ownership. There will be a village hub as well as a science and technology park, all well-connected by an integral cycle and footpath network. All new buildings are to be zero carbon, powered by renewable energy.





Client

St Joseph/Berkeley Group

Location

Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire

Expertise

Architecture
 Landscape architecture
 Planning
 Urban design
 Environmental planning
 Heritage

Key Challenges

Embedding a new urban quarter into an historic town using subtle characterisation and identifying residential typologies.

Our Solution

Swan's Landing is seeing a section of Stratford's Canal Quarter Regeneration Zone of big box industrial and retail units transformed into a new neighbourhood of 500 homes, shops, cafes and community uses.

From initial analysis to detailed design, tor&co has provided a vision and masterplan for almost seven hectares of brownfield land stretching from the edge of the historic centre to the canal. We began with a thorough characterisation study that generated housing typologies and by drafting a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to guide the detailed

design approach and govern matters ranging from overall concept to addressing flood risks and utilities. Alongside the design challenges, our approach has resulted in a deliverable regeneration scheme.

At the heart of Swan's Landing is Timothy's Bridge Green, a key public space which links to a new linear park by the canal. tor&co successfully steered the planning and design process through to a hybrid planning permission, including a detailed first phase of 60 homes and public realm. We were appointed as a team of planners, masterplanners, landscape architects and architects for the site through a selection process with Berkeley St Joseph.

Swan's Landing



Swan's Landing

Outcome

A new urban quarter for one of England's most cherished historic towns, made possible by first shaping local planning policy.

16.8 ha

of brownfield land regeneration

500

homes



Tree Tops

Client

Bournemouth Development Company

Location

BCP District, Dorset

Expertise

Architecture
 Planning
 Landscape Architecture
 Heritage
 Strategic Communications

Key Challenges

Re-imagining an underused car park to produce high quality urban homes in a sensitive heritage and landscape context.

Our Solution

Tree Tops is one of the many happy outcomes of tor&co's strategic study evaluating the potential of 16 council-owned car parks across Bournemouth. The Bournemouth Development Company asked tor&co to continue on from the strategic study to design Tree Tops on one of the carpark sites. A £12million development of 46 build-to-rent apartments set across two blocks of six and seven storeys on a prominent corner site in the resort town.

The context was sensitive with Grade I St Stephen's Church and a conservation area adjacent, but the steeply sloping site surrounded by protected and veteran trees

was used to full effect to nestle a scheme within a strong landscape-led setting. Brick facades, a curvaceous corner, and generous balconies create a deeply articulated frontage which integrates with the woodland while creating a landmark. The scheme was a finalist in the British Home Awards.

We took an interdisciplinary approach to get there, analysing the site, testing scenarios, and engaging with heritage stakeholders and the local community. Producing the right visual materials for exhibition and consultation was an important factor in the strategy given the site sensitivity.

Tree Tops uses site constraints as opportunities and manages to maximise development potential and create the environment for high-quality, sustainable, urban living. We have achieved similarly high-quality results across other Bournemouth car park sites.





treetops

treetops

Tree Tops

Outcome

Carefully considered strategy, thoughtful design and stakeholder engagement, have helped in the transformation of an underutilised car park into a landmark development.



46

apartments

74%

retained trees

'The tor&co team has breathed new life and purpose into an underutilised car park site in central Bournemouth. The team has excelled designing a statement contemporary residential development on a challenging site constrained by trees, access and topography.'

- Sara Longthorpe, Director of Delivery and Regeneration, BCP Council

Client

Blenheim Park Estate

Location

Oxfordshire

Expertise

Landscape

Planning

Urban design

Environmental planning

Heritage

Key Challenges

Expanding communities and delivering homes around a World Heritage Site

Our Solution

Since 2010, tor&co has been assisting Blenheim Park in bringing forward new neighbourhoods at the historic town of Woodstock. It is a highly sensitive endeavour given the proximity to Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site. Our, planning, landscape and heritage advice has been critical to outcomes that exceeded prior expectations.

Ranging across various sites, the first 300 homes are at Park View. Here, after a failed bid by others, we achieved a site allocation in the local plan, and successfully prepared and negotiated a hybrid application supported by environmental impact assessment.

tor&co were invited back, realising projects for a combined further 415 homes at Hill Rise and Banbury Road. These began with securing further site allocations, followed by hybrid and outline applications including masterplans, a coordinated environmental statement, thorough landscaping strategies, views testing, and robust heritage reports. At Hill Rise, we pushed at the development boundaries to secure an additional 60 homes above the allocated site capacity as well as promoting an innovative parking barn solution to encourage a car free residential environment. This did result in local refusal, but the approach was sound and we won on appeal, instructing counsel and providing expert witness for planning, landscape and heritage.

A further ongoing southern extension to the town, this time within Cherwell District, has council support in its emerging local plan but still needs careful planning and design to satisfy the complex issues of heritage, including buried archaeology.

Given our long-term involvement helping Blenheim Palace Estate to achieve its objectives, noting that a large part of the profits circle back to help maintain the Baroque palace, we are now assisting with wider heritage advice around the Conservation Management Plan.



Woodstock



Woodstock



Outcome

The successful expansion of a historic town adjacent to a World Heritage Site, achieved through a holistic, well-coordinated and fully robust approach.

“We have worked with tor&co on many projects over the years and continue to do so, they provide a comprehensive service, offer well researched and robust advice, and often contribute support beyond their brief and our expectations’

- Roger File, Managing Director, Real Estate Blenheim Palace

715

zero carbon homes with planning permission

500

additional homes in planning

Our cross-sector portfolio of projects are managed across our UK offices

torandco.com

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