



**tcpa**



# ensuring eco-towns are delivered:

## eco-towns delivery worksheet

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### summary points

Without good delivery, the high aspirations embodied in the eco-town concept will not be realised. The intention of this Worksheet is to provide background information and guidance that will assist those involved in eco-town delivery. It is *not* prescriptive. However, it does describe the factors that need to be given serious consideration before reaching decisions about delivery arrangements.

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Delivering an eco-town requires additional thought and focus over and above 'normal processes'. It is a long-term commitment which needs consistent direction through periods that are longer than election cycles or individual political administrations. This Worksheet therefore concentrates on the opportunities and responsibilities that will occur when delivering an exemplar eco-town, and on the steps that can be taken to grasp them fully.

Key questions to be addressed:

- Who controls (and who should control) the land?
- Who has (or who should have) planning powers, and do they have the necessary capacity and skills?
- Who will invest, and how to get investment?
- Will infrastructure be delivered on time?
- Who will provide leadership to organise and manage delivery?
- How to achieve community development and integration?

Having considered these issues, the rest of the Worksheet focuses on Local Delivery Vehicles (LDVs):

- **Why have an LDV, and what should it do?** The management of delivery cannot be left to chance, or left to local authority staff to do in addition to their existing responsibilities. LDVs provide a dedicated team of people responsible for the delivery of an eco-town, as well as providing visible leadership for the various other organisations involved. The LDV role will include upholding a long-term vision, developing a business plan, securing resources, co-ordinating work, and monitoring progress.
- **What forms of LDV are there to choose from?** There are three distinct types of LDV:
  - Informal partnerships, involving public, private and not-for-profit organisations without legal form, in which the local authority may take the lead.
  - Formal legal entities without statutory powers – for example, Urban Regeneration Companies and Community Trusts.
  - Statutory bodies – for example, the Homes and Communities Agency, Urban Development Corporations, and New Town Development Corporations.

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Additionally, joint venture agreements between LDVs and landowners/investors could be formed to aid delivery, although this arrangement has yet to be used in the UK.

- **Processes for choosing an LDV, and other important early actions:** A Statement of Intention (SOI) will help to create and maintain collaboration and a sense of shared vision and action among those involved in delivery, from the earliest stages of planning. Additionally, a business plan for delivery will set out actions required from all partners, and associated costs and sources of funding, showing timelines for the early stages.

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**Ensuring Eco-towns Are Delivered:  
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Advice to Promoters and Planners  
January 2010**

## contents

	page
<b>1 Introduction</b>	5
<b>2 Key questions to be addressed when delivering an exemplar eco-town</b>	6
<b>3 Local Delivery Vehicle options</b>	14
<b>4 Process for choosing a Local Delivery Vehicle, and other important early actions</b>	21
<b>5 Conclusions</b>	22

Annexes are available to download from the TCPA website, at <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/pages/sustainability-worksheets.html>

<b>Annex 1</b>	<b>Eco-towns - strategic delivery issues</b>
<b>Annex 2</b>	<b>Local Delivery Vehicle case studies</b>
<b>Annex 3</b>	<b>Overall eco-town development process diagram</b>
<b>Annex 4</b>	<b>ATLAS Statement of Intention</b>
<b>Annex 5</b>	<b>Planning ICT infrastructure</b>

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# 1 introduction

The process and arrangements which are needed to ensure the good delivery of complex long-term developments, such as eco-towns, are probably less well documented than any other subject dealt with in the Eco-town Worksheets series (see <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/pages/sustainability-worksheets.html>). Yet without good delivery the high aspirations embodied in the eco-town concept and detailed within the Worksheets will not be realised.

The intention of this Worksheet is to produce background information and guidance that will assist those involved in eco-town delivery, either in the four initial locations or in any subsequent additions. It is *not* prescriptive, since there are various ways of ensuring good delivery, and local circumstances should have a strong influence on the choices made. However, it does describe the factors that need to be given serious consideration in reaching decisions about delivery arrangements.

The delivery of large-scale innovative sustainable development requires additional thought and focus over and above 'normal processes'. In this Worksheet the term 'delivery' includes everything from formulation of a vision and masterplan right through to having completed developments and a functioning sustainable community. It will require the implementation of a large number of interconnected activities, some of which will be sequential but also many that will be carried out in parallel.

Delivering an eco-town is essentially a long-term commitment which needs consistent direction through periods that are much longer than election cycles or individual political administrations. People and companies who invest their lives, money and futures in an eco-town will do so under an implicit promise that the project will be seen through to the point where it can function effectively and sustainably. Any lesser achievement will undermine their commitment and faith in those charged with the delivery of the eco-town.

It is taken as read in this Worksheet that:

- The general location of an eco-town will already have been agreed.
- Readers of this Worksheet will be familiar with normal good practice in both planning and development.
- Readers will be aware of the range of guidance available for achieving higher standards of environmental sustainability (for example the Environment Agency's carbon calculator for construction projects, and Passivhaus building techniques).

This Worksheet therefore concentrates on the opportunities and responsibilities that will occur when delivering an exemplar eco-town, which are over and above normal good practice, and the steps that can be taken to grasp them fully. In due course, lessons learnt in the early eco-towns should inform and facilitate improvements to best practice everywhere.

The Worksheet refers to several relevant examples in the UK and Continental Europe from which lessons may also be learnt. Continental European examples will often benefit from different institutional arrangements. It is not the purpose of this Worksheet to advocate changes in UK arrangements or to suggest that eco-towns should be dependent on them. However, these examples illustrate what can be achieved by using particular arrangements, many of which could be replicable in the UK, in part if not in whole. Local authorities will need to give serious consideration to how best they can ensure delivery of an eco-town which is a true exemplar of best practice, resulting in a really excellent and sustainable community.

Local authorities may feel able to oversee much of the process. However, it will be very important at an early stage to recognise their need to import a range of additional skills and financial input from partners. This will lead to consideration of the best form of

partnership and leadership for the development. This consideration will include the extent to which local authorities should step back from direct control in order to secure long-term focus, momentum and commitment from their partners.

Annex 1 of this Worksheet includes a final draft paper on strategic delivery issues prepared by CLG's (the Department for Communities and Local Government's) external advisers. It provides an external perspective on possible delivery approaches, including joint ventures and asset-based vehicles. **It is a discussion document and is not a statement of Government policy.**

Finally, delivery arrangements for eco-towns must produce transparent and replicable lessons that can be applied elsewhere in the local community and in other places throughout the UK. Monitoring, transparency and dissemination of information about successes and problems faced should therefore be an integral part of the arrangements.

The following section describes some of the key questions that need to be addressed. The answers will differ in each location and should be used to inform decisions about delivery arrangements which suit local conditions. Arrangements also need to consider lessons from other areas and previous times. The aspirations behind the eco-towns require innovation and distillation of best practice rather than a simple replication of previous models.

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## 2 key questions to be addressed when delivering an exemplar eco-town

### 2.1 Who controls (and who should control) the land?

Unified control is desirable for good delivery – otherwise plans may become distorted by working round areas not yet committed to the chosen form of development, or by having to appease landowners who decide not to co-operate in the development. This may result in unnecessary planning or delivery compromises and/or being held to ransom by non-co-operating landowners.

A unified landowner is one that either owns the unrestricted freehold on all the land or has implementable option agreements with all the freeholders. It may be a single legal entity, or several which have joined together through a contractual agreement. A unified landowner is well placed to work with the local authority (or local authorities) and other consultees in reaching an agreement (or agreements) about the nature and phasing of development. Local authorities and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) have compulsory purchase powers that may be used to resolve land ownership issues. These may be needed if small parcels of land are outside the unified landowner's control.

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Control over the land can be the most positive force for good delivery, especially if it is aligned with the use of planning powers and investment funds. For example, in the past New Town Development Corporations had land ownership and planning powers (plus investment funds) (see Section 3.2.3 of this Worksheet). They often used land ownership to deliver their vision and maintain detailed control of development quality, rather than their planning powers<sup>1</sup> (see Annex 2 for further details).

<sup>1</sup> Planning powers are a relatively blunt instrument, best suited to avoiding unwanted development rather than to delivering desired outcomes. Land ownership allowed New Town Development Corporations to market land for specific purposes and with clear development briefs consistent with the overall masterplan and vision. Development licences were then granted, with the freehold passing only when the desired development was completed to the agreed standards

Ownership of land also facilitates forward-funding by underpinning borrowing to provide infrastructure which can then be repaid when the land is sold for its full development value. A single private sector landowner may well use the land in a similar way, acting as a 'master developer'.

While this is much better than having disparate smaller landowners each acting in their own, potentially conflicting, interests, it still leaves room for possible conflict between the public interest and private commercial objectives. It is therefore important that local authorities (and their public sector partners) consider the use of any land in their ownership, and possible further acquisitions, at an early stage. They could work as partners with private owners in some form of joint venture or they could replace them if circumstances were suitable.

There are several examples from Continental Europe of using land ownership, and/or land value capture, which have been used to forward-fund key infrastructure and secure environmental and social benefits. These are described further in Annex 2.

Where unified land ownership is in the hands of a private company (or public authority other than the local authority), alignment of vision and timescale for realising added value is of the utmost importance and must be addressed at the earliest possible stage – otherwise land ownership and planning will pull against each other, probably to the detriment of good delivery.

There may be merit in investigating whether some form of 'joint venture' between the owner and planning authority (or alternative public sector body, such as the HCA) could help to achieve and maintain an effective alignment of vision and ongoing co-operation (see Section 3.2.4 for further information on joint venture arrangements).

While the ideal situation is a landowner with access to finance, and a long-term view of value realisation, many private landowners (and some public landowners) have quite short-term horizons in terms of their involvement and their need to realise value. This may be for obvious and legitimate reasons such as shareholder attitudes or budget requirements. If so, this needs to be understood and dealt with early on, including the nature of the requirement.

There may be ways in which short-term value requirements can be incorporated without damaging the delivery of a long-term vision, such as agreed buy-out terms when a certain trigger point is achieved. Or the public authorities may be able to put in place arrangements that help to de-risk development (for example regarding delivery of key infrastructure), in exchange for which they might expect some concessions from landowners. But all such arrangements will pose their own challenges, such as finding a suitable purchaser that can agree terms in advance, and they need to be addressed, in principle at least, at an early stage.

Valuation and appraisal processes have not always been helpful to large-scale projects such as eco-towns. They will often inflate the potential value after key trigger points, such as granting of planning permission. It is useful that RICS (the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors) is looking again at its guidance that should apply in such circumstances, recognising that land with planning permission also carries obligations to provide infrastructure and services (and therefore costs) as part of that permission – see the RICS website (at <http://www.rics.org/uk>) for further information on valuation practices and to contact a Chartered Surveyor.

**Longer-term land ownership and maintenance of community assets also merits consideration at this stage.** Once development has taken place, will public realm and community facilities be owned by the local authority, by a private company, or by a non-profit distributing company such as a local 'trust'? How will maintenance be carried out, and where will the necessary funds come from? Is there a wish to see social housing

land held in perpetuity by a public-interest organisation? Each of these options has implications for the type of delivery arrangements that should be put in place and the type of arrangements needed with landowners.

Nice, shiny new facilities are not sustainable unless they have viable long-term management backed up by effective sources of revenue. Questions that need to be addressed include:

- Will the landowner/'master developer' provide an endowment in the form of money or income-producing assets?
- Will there be a service charge levied on all residents and businesses and ring-fenced for local facilities and services? If so, how will that interact with community charge income?
- Could revenue from a MUSCO (Multi-Utility Services Company) or ESCO (Energy Services Company) be pledged to support maintenance?
- Will a local trust own and manage local facilities? Who will form it, and when?

Some options for long-term management are discussed in more detail as an adjunct to the Local Delivery Vehicles options discussed in Section 3 of this Worksheet.

Traditionally these questions of longer-term ownership and management have either been taken for granted or have not been given any real thought until development is well under way, by which time several of the above options will have unintentionally been ruled out.

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From all of the above it follows that early and open discussion between those most closely involved in delivery is vital, including various public bodies and the landowners. If one group attempts to work up detailed proposals in isolation, it is likely to reduce the extent of future mutual trust and co-operation, adding more conflict and probably delaying delivery.

For further information, see the Development Trust Association website at <http://www.dta.org.uk>. A best practice example is provided by the Nene Park Trust in Peterborough, which has been in operation for over 40 years – see <http://www.nene-park-trust.org.uk>.

## **2.2 Who has (or should have) the planning powers, and do they have the capacity, and range of necessary skills, to deal with an eco-town development?**

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Local authorities need to consider this question at an early stage. Planning powers may be in the hands of a single local authority or there may be several local authorities involved. The local authority (or authorities) needs to consider its capacity to deal with plan-making and planning applications at a scale and complexity of an eco-town in which the achievement of exceptionally high standards and some technical innovation will figure prominently over a lengthy period. Furthermore, as the eco-towns are likely to be a focus of interest for the local and national media, this will place the local authority's performance under increased scrutiny, as well as placing greater demands on their resources.

Finally, it is expected that any eco-town application will be accompanied by a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The local authority will need sufficient in-house or supporting expertise for the review of this technical document. This will help to ensure that it is fully effective in identifying and minimising negative environmental impacts and in highlighting positive environmental outcomes of the proposed development.

Building the right capacity, at local authority member and executive levels, needs early attention. This includes the need for ensuring partnership working between authorities

where proposals cross boundaries or where two-tier local government applies (for example North Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire Horizons).

Setting up a specialised team with sufficient numbers and the full range of necessary 'state of the art' delivery skills will need a lead-in time for capacity-building plus some consideration as to where the money and the people are going to come from. Teams should be multi-disciplinary. For example, they should include transport representation as well as planning to ensure that planning and transport are developed together from an early stage. Can personnel be recruited by the local authority? Are other options available, for example, through a delivery partner?

### Box 1 *Building Better Lives: Getting the Best from Strategic Housing*

A recent report by the Audit Commission, *Building Better Lives: Getting the Best from Strategic Housing* (2009), states that, by managing housing responsibilities strategically, local councils can help to create sustainable communities. While much of the report focuses on the importance of improving the existing housing stock, the need to build capacity and to work in partnership to deal with funding and regulatory changes still applies to new-build housing and the provision of affordable housing.

The report found that fewer than half the district councils involved in the study believed that they had the necessary skills for strategic housing development, and that a third of all councils are still lacking the skills to understand housing markets. The full report is available at:

<http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/SiteCollectionDocuments/AuditCommissionReports/NationalStudies/betterlives9sept2009rep.pdf>

If the conclusion is that the required capacity and/or partnership cannot be achieved through the normal planning authority (or authorities), or delivery partners, consideration should be given to whether some form of statutory alternative arrangement might be preferable. This could include the use of HCA planning powers, a New Town Development Corporation, or an Urban Development Corporation (see Section 3.2.3).

Even where the public sector owns the land (see above), planning powers remain a vital component of success. If they are not used effectively they can become a serious negative influence on good delivery.

## 2.3 Who will invest, and how to get investment?

Large-scale development inevitably requires some upfront investment in infrastructure, especially if the development is free-standing (see Section 2.4). **The eco-towns cannot achieve their potential unless high-quality sustainable infrastructure is provided at the right time, which often means in advance of normal definitions of need.** The ways in which this is secured have changed over the last several decades.

At one time the public sector would generally invest in roads, sewers, schools, parkland and other community infrastructure. This was either as part of its statutory role or as a facilitator of development in exchange for returns at a later date through increased rateable income or returns from its land holdings.

Some local authorities, and all New Town Development Corporations, bought land when it was cheap and prior to any planning permissions. They then acted as 'master developer', servicing the land and selling it in parcels to developers with planning permissions at higher prices. In this way they had a high level of control over both development quality and pace, as well as a means of capturing most or all of the increase in land values. This could then be used to pay off loans taken out to fund the

infrastructure. The New Towns were funded almost entirely through this approach (see Section 3.2.3 for more information on NTDCs).

Latterly, during a period in which decreasing roles for the public sector coincided with increasing land values, there was a gradual shift towards much or all of the infrastructure being paid for by developers through planning gain, currently secured through Section 106 arrangements. In the future some infrastructure will be paid for through the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Following the financial collapse of the last two years, land values have plummeted. It is now impossible to obtain the same extent of developer contributions towards infrastructure, and this is likely to remain the case for some years to come. It is particularly difficult to negotiate large developer contributions 'upfront', because these come at the time when developers are most exposed financially, often relying on short-term project finance, prior to receiving any income from sales. Yet it is precisely at this early stage that much of the infrastructure is needed in order to deliver sustainable development.

We therefore need a new model for the early provision of infrastructure funding. This is of particular importance in eco-towns because sustainability relies very heavily on standard and novel infrastructure being delivered early on to encourage low-carbon lifestyles such as a greater use of public transport. If the infrastructure is not in place at a very early stage, patterns of behaviour (for example extensive reliance on cars) will be established which will be difficult to change later on (see the Eco-towns Transport Worksheet for further information on planning transport systems for the eco-town, at <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/pages/transport.html>).

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With public expenditure facing a squeeze, any call on upfront funding will have to be backed up by hard evidence of need and value for money. Using established routes such as Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) or emerging routes such as Multi-Area Agreements (MAAs) will be one obvious approach.

Funds that can be in the form of a loan rather than a grant, to be repaid from land value after development, have advantages over grant aid. Public funds made available in this way could provide confidence to private investors and facilitate the delivery of the high standards required in eco-towns. The HCA is becoming a focal point for advice about innovative ideas for levering in mixed funding streams.

Other potential sources of funding include CLG, local authority prudential borrowing, Regional Infrastructure Funds (where these have been established), Housing Companies, and Local Asset-Backed Vehicles (LABVs). Some of these have the advantage that they allow public funding to lever in private finance in ways which do not increase the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement (PSBR). Models for local housing funds are being developed which could use small-scale public sector guarantees to lever in much bigger amounts of private investment.<sup>2</sup>

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In addition, eco-towns may offer some public agencies and/or utilities the opportunity to demonstrate better ways of delivering development in keeping with recent policy changes (for example water consumption, local economic development), and this might provide a basis for seeking additional funding. Forming partnerships to identify requirements and potential solutions will be vital in delivering new infrastructure.

Water cycle studies are a useful example of this approach, bringing together all relevant stakeholders, including the local authority, the Environment Agency and the water

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<sup>2</sup> A useful summary of such models appeared in the September 2009 edition of the TCPA Journal, written by Kathleen Dunmore – see K. Dunmore: 'Models for a local housing fund'. *Town & Country Planning*, 2009, Vol. 78, Sept., 375-379

company under a single framework with relevant evidence. They provide a method for determining what infrastructure is required, where and when it is needed. Guidance on water cycle studies is available in Section 6 of the Eco-towns Water Cycle Worksheet (see <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/pages/water-management.html>).

The use of Community Bonds may be possible in some of the eco-towns, where the wider community feels that there is real benefit and connection to the development process. These take the form of Industrial and Provident Societies (IPs), which must be registered with the Financial Services Authority (FSA) (see [http://www.fsa.gov.uk/pages/doing/small\\_firms/msr/societies/index.shtml](http://www.fsa.gov.uk/pages/doing/small_firms/msr/societies/index.shtml)).

IPs conduct industry, business or trade for the benefit of the community, or operate as co-operatives. Societies run for the benefit of the community provide services and facilities for people other than their members. Community Bonds allow individuals to invest in community projects (providing projects with affordable finance), while earning a guaranteed investment rate.

The need for adequate funding which landowners/promoters may have access to, particularly in the early stages, should be a key consideration in selecting the right delivery arrangements for the eco-town.

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## 2.4 Will infrastructure be delivered on time?

One of the most common complaints about new development is that it puts strain on existing roads, schools, health facilities, sports facilities, etc., and damages the quality of life for existing residents, because new facilities are slow to appear. This concern is a prime cause of 'NIMBY' attitudes. Timely delivery of new infrastructure is a general concern, and its achievement is now more problematic for the reasons described above.

Sustainability is damaged in so many ways by the late provision of all types of infrastructure. When delivering large-scale eco-towns, being one year late over a period of a 20-year development should be regarded as abject failure.

Travel patterns, once set, are very difficult to shift if good public transport and walking/cycling routes are not available on day one. This may require the provision of roads/tram tracks, but will certainly need the co-operation of bus/train operating companies from a very early planning stage. Many of these will have regional priorities, and so getting the needs of the eco-town recognised will take a substantial effort. The cost of early provision and ongoing subsidy may be among the highest of all the infrastructure costs involved, and must be identified and resolved at an early stage. Not doing so may mean proceeding on false assumptions regarding a realistic end-state.

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As far as public transport infrastructure is concerned, the Local Transport Act 2008 included significant new powers for local authorities to influence the quality of bus services in their areas. Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) and Quality Partnership Schemes (QPSs) provide new opportunities for authorities to secure improvements to the standard of service provided by operators – including frequencies, timings and maximum fares – when new infrastructure such as bus lanes is being provided by the authority. Quality Contracts Schemes (QCSs) would enable authorities to specify bus networks in much more detail, along the lines of the franchising model that exists in London. (See Sections 6 and 7 of the Eco-towns Transport Worksheet for further discussion on the funding and management of transport systems – at <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/pages/transport.html>).

The provision of clean water, the safe disposal of waste water and household waste, and protection from flooding are essential to environmental sustainability. To ensure people's quality of life and to protect the environment, plans will need to be in place to

manage the demands on these services from the eco-town. These issues will also be addressed in an Environmental Impact Assessment accompanying the eco-town development application.

This will involve getting the location of new housing right and measures to manage demand informed by studies including water cycle studies (for more information on planning the infrastructure required see Section 6 of the Eco-towns Water Cycle Worksheet, at <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/pages/water-management.html>, and for information on waste management planning in an eco-town see Section 4 of the Eco-towns Waste Management Worksheet, at <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/pages/towards-zero-waste.html>).

Social sustainability relies on people settling in a new area. They are less likely to do this if they have to travel out for schooling, health care, restaurants, sports and leisure facilities, and shopping in the early years. All of this social infrastructure also needs to be on site from an early stage.

Community stability can also be accelerated and secured through a proactive community development programme, which requires some staffing and resources from day one and throughout the period of development (for more information on community involvement and inclusion in planning see Sections 2 and 3 of the Eco-towns Community Worksheet, at <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/pages/community-development.html>).

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Economic sustainability is central to many sustainability aspirations. Without a suitable supply of local jobs, residents of the eco-town will have no option but to commute out, damaging environmental and social sustainability. Jobs need to be available at a local level from very early days before commuter patterns become the established norm. Many jobs will be provided in the sort of local facilities mentioned above, making their early development even more important. However, these alone will not provide a sustainable economic base for the eco-town. Help should be enlisted from the Regional Development Agency (RDA), and there needs to be provision for economic development resources for the Local Delivery Vehicle (see also the Eco-towns Economy Worksheet, at <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/pages/economy.html>).

Procurement is dealt with briefly here, plus in Annex 5 of this Worksheet, which specifically deals with how to address the fast-moving world of ICT within the context of a long-term project. Procurement of infrastructure will be a central concern for the LDV. Various models have existed over past decades, altering as privatisation and regulation have changed the relationships with gas, water and electricity utilities.

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This Worksheet does not try to describe the multifarious forms of provider, regulatory bodies and commercial arrangements that can now apply.

However, one strategic option that needs early consideration is whether to set up or find a partner which can act as an Energy Services Company (ESCO) or Multi-Utility Services Company (MUSCO). Both can now operate across a whole urban area and could provide a means of co-ordinating infrastructure provision and ensuring that the various strands (energy supplies, monitoring arrangements, information systems, water and waste systems, etc.) are all designed to facilitate the vision of the eco-town. The provision of these services can support sustainable lifestyles by providing information on:

- When the next bus will arrive.
- How much energy a house is using.
- How to minimise and recycle waste.
- Water use and re-use.
- Community services.

By contrast, sustainable lifestyles could be frustrated by the absence of such services.

Sustainable procurement best practice as followed by the Environment Agency is based on a 'supply chain including green procurement' – for further information, see <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/aboutus/procurement/35590.aspx>.

Annex 5 of this Worksheet deals in some detail with ICT options, but these need to be seen in the wider context of other utilities, so that a conscious decision can be made about procurement, commercial arrangements, and ownership of any such arrangement.

In the longer term it may be that such a company could be owned by the community, or could pledge a proportion of revenues to the community, thereby providing an additional option for long-term maintenance of public spaces and buildings. However, caution will be needed as such arrangements are still novel and their viability will be subject to many variables.

In summary, therefore, the key to timely delivery of local infrastructure is:

- Planning and transport authorities working together from an early stage.
- Funding (see Section 2.3).
- Effective co-operation between the various public and private agencies whose involvement is required in order to gain necessary consents and to achieve the highest standards (see Section 2.5 and Section 3).
- Good project management of the delivery process (see Sections 3 and 4).
- A sound business plan for delivery of the eco-town (see Section 4.2).
- Good procurement processes (see immediately above).

## 2.5 Who will provide leadership to organise and manage delivery?

Project management arrangements for overseeing development frequently have weaknesses in terms of co-ordination and control of quality. The eco-towns represent both a need and an opportunity to address these weaknesses in ways that are replicable elsewhere.

Eco-town developments are relatively large, innovative projects and need good project management. They rely on lots of different organisations working together – government agencies, local planning authorities, transport authorities, education authorities, health authorities, utility companies, developers, etc. All of these must work together and with the existing and evolving local community.

A recognisable, transparent and effective governance structure for delivery, including project management, can help to make sure that leadership is visible and that co-ordinated action happens, is predictable and understandable, and is focused on achieving agreed aims and outcomes. It can also provide a vehicle for understanding the needs of, and for supporting the development of, the local community.

This governance structure for delivery, frequently referred to as a Local Delivery Vehicle, should be chosen carefully – see Section 3 of this Worksheet for a discussion of various options. Its form should be influenced by answers to many of the questions listed throughout Section 2, and it will be useful to reach an answer through an interim partnership of some kind which can ensure openness and transparency. Consistent leadership will be needed from the Local Delivery Vehicle through, and for far longer than, the normal electoral cycles. Although the Local Delivery Vehicle needs clear accountability, it also needs to be true to the vision for the eco-town, which will be serving as a prospectus to all those who commit their investment and personal futures (and their children's futures) to living or carrying out their business there. Leadership should be visible and should be seen to be committed to the delivery of the eco-town vision above all other considerations.

## 2.6 How to promote community development and integration

Eco-towns are being built as a mixture of free-standing settlements and extensions to existing communities. Community development will be essential to create a strong sense of identity and ownership of the opportunities that are being provided in the eco-town for more satisfying and sustainable lifestyles.

There are well proven approaches to community participation and community development which can be built on. 'Enquiry by Design', promoted by The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment (see <http://www.princes-foundation.org/index.php?id=33>), and related approaches such as those promoted by Future Search Network (see <http://www.futuresearch.net/>) can be used to gain active input and a sense of involvement from within existing communities.

Exploiting the additional features of eco-towns, such as recycling, community allotments, bike hire, car share schemes and local power generation, can stimulate community development. This should be supported by the early recruitment of arrival and community development workers based within the eco-town, backed up by premises and appropriate budgets. They will help to create a positive community identity, and will help with the crucial integration with surrounding communities, reducing isolation, alienation and churn of residents (see Section 3.8 of the Eco-towns Community Worksheet at <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/pages/community-development.html>).

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Where an eco-town is an extension to an existing community there is an additional question: 'Is this a new community or not?' There are strong arguments for close integration with the existing neighbourhood, and indeed for spreading the benefits of the eco-town into those areas through regeneration of buildings and infrastructure.

In areas of serious water stress, for example, measures to make new dwellings water efficient might be combined with measures to retro-fit existing stock as a means to manage water demand within existing resources. However, there is a danger in treating an eco-town as 'just an urban extension'. The eco-towns need to be exemplary developments in every sense, and treating them in any other way may serve to reduce their aspirations.

An excellent new publication by the Keystone Trust, *Learning from the Past? Building Community in New Towns, Growth Areas and New Communities*, offers sound practical advice grounded in real experience (see <http://www.keystonetrust.org.uk> for further information).

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# 3

## local delivery vehicle options

### 3.1 Why have a Local Delivery Vehicle, and what should it do?

Eco-towns will be large-scale, innovative, long-term developments, aiming at previously unattained standards of sustainability. They are likely to generate a lot of interest from the media in the UK and overseas.

Managing their delivery cannot be left to chance, nor can it be left to existing staff to do in addition to onerous existing responsibilities. Regardless of the number of organisations involved in delivering the individual components of the eco-town, there needs to be visible leadership of, and responsibility for, the delivery of the eco-town.

The role of this organisation, usually called a Local Delivery Vehicle (LDV), should include:

- Guardianship of the long-term vision in the public interest (even though this may be derived from wider partnership working).
- Consistent leadership in driving forward delivery of the vision.
- Developing and 'owning' a business plan for delivery which identifies the responsibilities of each partner, including clear timelines for action.
- Securing and, if necessary, fighting for the resources and standards in that business plan.
- Having a range of capabilities for project-managing the parts of delivery for which it has direct responsibility, including the use of statutory powers (if any) that are given to it.
- Co-ordinating, supporting, lobbying, brokering agreements with and cajoling delivery by its partners, including their use of statutory powers where appropriate (for example compulsory purchase, planning).
- Monitoring overall progress-chasing, identifying actions required, and by whom.
- Working in a transparent and accountable manner that engenders confidence and inclusiveness.
- Having a 'single purpose' as described above.

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LDVs are a visible expression of a shared but focused commitment among their partners to making the eco-town happen. When properly set up, they can have the added benefit of increasing confidence among investors.

The form of the local delivery organisation, and the management/governance structures involved, will vary from one eco-town location to another. It should be determined through a process of open discussion between key delivery partners, including the local authority (or authorities), the landowners, and CLG/the HCA. It may be formed by the local authority and make use of many of their existing processes. However, at the end of the day it must be fit for purpose, and this may involve various forms of partnership and reliance on others.

An LDV needs to be given clear responsibility (perhaps spelt out in a Memorandum of Understanding with partners) and sufficient authority and resources to get on with its day-to-day job. This needs to be conducted within a framework which is created by agreement between its partners, expressed in a masterplan and through its business plan. The LDV and its partners need to work together to create and maintain mutual trust and commitment. The business plan should describe the LDV's own actions and resource commitments plus those of all key partners.

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As an excellent example, Milton Keynes Partnership has published a business plan for each of the last five years – see <http://www.miltonkeynespartnership>. This particular LDV has some statutory planning powers, which will not be appropriate in all areas, but its form of business planning is an excellent model for all types of LDV.

There will be a wide range of partners in the delivery process. In each case the right type of relationship needs to be worked out and put in place. This may range from being formally involved in the governance of the LDV to having a clear line of communication with, and agreed process for co-ordinating activity with, the LDV or seeking approvals where these are necessary.

'Partners' in the broadest sense may include some or all of the following:

- For social housing provision, and general support on large-scale project management (including pre-application activity with ATLAS – see Section 4.1 and Annex 4 of this Worksheet), the HCA needs to be involved. Indeed, there are a range of possible roles for the HCA, which are discussed more fully in Section 3.2.
- On the transport side the obvious partners would be the local transport authority and, depending on local circumstances, the rail and bus operators.

- The RDA should take an interest in the economic development aspects, especially where these are innovative and may provide a stimulus to wider economic development (for example 'green jobs').
- The Strategic Health Authority – and through them the local Primary Care Trust and ambulance service – and the police and the fire services need to be involved. The new community will rely on their services, and they need adequate lead time to plan and to fund.
- The Environment Agency should also be engaged at an early stage. Many ambitious plans rely on the availability of water or waste treatment facilities that may be difficult or impossible to secure without early consultation and possibly modification through production of a water cycle strategy. The Environment Agency offers useful advice in its guidelines for scoping Environmental Impact Assessment of projects – see <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/policy/33013.aspx> – and in its guide for developers see – [http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/1\\_GETH1106BLNE-e-e\(1\).pdf](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/1_GETH1106BLNE-e-e(1).pdf) (see also Section 6 of the Eco-towns Water Cycle Worksheet, at <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/pages/water-management.html>).
- Culture and Sport will play a vital role in establishing a sustainable and healthy community. The Culture and Sport Planning Toolkit – which the TCPA took the lead in developing, and is part of the Living Places website – is a practical source of information and advice for all practitioners involved in culture and sport planning. The toolkit brings together for the first time a combination of existing and new tools to incorporate planning for culture and sport into new and existing developments. It can be accessed through <http://www.living-places.org.uk/culture-and-sport-planning-toolkit/about-the-toolkit/>. It is written for use by planners, developers and sporting/cultural development professionals. x
- Natural England will be looking for various site assessments and the identification of a suitable green infrastructure network at an initial stage – on the grounds that this provides the essential environmental framework for the development and cannot be 'shoehorned' in later (for details of the principles of green infrastructure provision, see Section 2 of the Eco-towns Green Infrastructure Worksheet, at <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/pages/green-infrastructure.html>). There may be a need to provide alternative facilities to protect sensitive habitats.
- The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) should be involved in the planning and design of eco-towns from the start to ensure sustainable design and an inclusive environment. A CABE-designed tool which will be particularly useful is the 'Building for Life' standards, devised to assess the sustainability of housing design and to promote social well-being in neighbourhoods – see <http://www.cabe.org.uk/about-cabe> and <http://www.buildingforlife.org>. x
- English Heritage will work to ensure that historic buildings or landscapes within the eco-town areas are preserved, that new building work is sympathetic to that which already exists, and that all of the community has equal access to heritage. This is useful in helping to create a sense of identity and social inclusion, which is particularly important within a new community. English Heritage runs community projects and events to aid this – see <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.20133>.
- Liaison with what used to be called 'public utilities' is now more complex, but is absolutely vital if key infrastructure is to be delivered in a timely and cost-effective way. Advanced planning needs to take account of regulatory rules and timescales, plus capital and revenue funding regimes. Ultimate provision in an eco-town could involve 'joined-up' procurement through an ESCO or MUSCO, but this type of decision can only be reached once there is a thorough understanding of the requirements, constraints and options available. Interaction with environmental or other objectives can influence provision. For example, an eco-town which focused on very high thermal efficiency in all buildings would place less load on power supplies, which may in turn make locally centralised generation options less viable.

### 3.2 What forms of Local Delivery Vehicle are there to choose from?

There are three distinct types of LDV, as set out in the following three sub-sections.

#### 3.2.1 Informal partnerships

There is a multitude of informal forms of partnership involving public, private and not-for-profit organisations without legal form. They are often the preferred way of reaching consensus on many issues, including bringing together disparate partners to define a shared vision. The local authority may take the lead in forming such partnerships, and they may help to define a common vision with wide commitment from other local organisations.

Informal partnerships are generally not well suited to the operational delivery of large-scale, long-term development, as they fail to address many of the key questions set out in Section 2 of this Worksheet.

There must also be doubts about the ability of this type of arrangement to stay the course through changes in local and national government, and through changes in market conditions. This is particularly so if there is no binding agreement, other than a Section 106 agreement, between the partners. However, informal partnerships could be used as an initial stage to discuss and decide on the best form of LDV.

#### 3.2.2 Formal legal entities without statutory powers, often formed at the instigation of local authorities

##### *URC-type structures*

This category includes existing **Urban Regeneration Companies** (URCs) and some **growth area LDVs**, such as Cambridgeshire Horizons. They can be in a number of legal forms, but **typically have been set up by local authorities and their partners as Companies Limited by Guarantee. This formality adds a clear sense of purpose and duty to the LDV and its Board.**

This type of agency draws its strength from its membership and sometimes from its physical assets. It has no statutory powers to buy land or grant planning permission. It relies on the local authority for planning permissions and on either the local authority, a statutory partner, or a private company for land assembly.

In the case of URCs, the partners are generally the local authority (or authorities), the RDA and the HCA. The membership can be more extensive, including, for instance, other public agencies, Registered Social Landlords, local businesses, or private development partners.

This type of delivery agency has grown up in the last decade. In URC form it is credited with some real success, for example in Manchester (New East Manchester – see <http://www.neweastmanchester.com>) and in Sheffield (Creative Sheffield – see <http://www.creativesheffield.co.uk>).

Another useful innovation is the use of joint planning committees, either for plan-making (for example in North Northamptonshire) or for development control (for example in Cambridgeshire). These have the potential to be very useful where developments cross local authority boundaries. They can be used in association with a URC-type structure, but do not rely on the existence of such an entity.

The above types of formalised partnerships can have great strength, since all partners can share a sense of ownership and responsibility. The main questions about long-term

delivery of large-scale development arise from their robustness over time and under changing membership and political circumstances. New members may feel less commitment to, and ownership of, the partnership and its vision than the original founders.

In these circumstances their lack of direct powers and funding could prove to be a problem if they are allowed to drift away from their founding 'parents'. While it can be argued that changing political circumstances ought properly to change the form of delivery, this flexibility sits awkwardly with the kind of long-term commitment that underpins the successful creation of new communities and which is needed to give confidence to investors and to families considering making their home in a new eco-town.

There is no reason why this type of LDV cannot own land and enter into a joint venture with a private investor/developer. This would add significant focus to the activity of the LDV, increase its credibility as a positive delivery vehicle, and assist enormously its ability to achieve its vision.

### **Community Trusts**

While local authorities are community based through open democratic elections, they will normally represent an area much larger than an eco-town; or in some cases an eco-town will cross local authority boundaries. These factors make the consideration of locally-based, eco-town-specific organisations even more important. X

This type of organisation has **not** been used in recent times for delivery of large-scale development. However, the nature of eco-towns – new communities with ambitious objectives – makes such an organisation an important consideration for delivery and certainly for long-term management.

A Community Land Trust (CLT) could be one option. The CLT, originally pioneered by Ebenezer Howard at Letchworth, is potentially of interest as a way of securing greater community ownership of and control over the quality of development. Among other things, a CLT would hold land for social housing, develop it, and hold the land in perpetuity. Rather than the normal options of renting or shared ownership, this would open up opportunities for more mutual forms of tenure. A CLT could also own the public realm, run energy, water and waste services companies, provide community development services, and own local commercial properties. X

CLTs have no fixed legal form. A CLT could be a Company Limited by Guarantee, a Co-operative, or another form of organisation capable of owning and managing assets on behalf of the community. Further information on CLTs, examples of their operation, and a CLT *Practitioners' Guide* is available at [http://www.communitylandtrust.org.uk/documents/practitioners\\_guide/practitioners\\_guide\\_9.8.07.pdf](http://www.communitylandtrust.org.uk/documents/practitioners_guide/practitioners_guide_9.8.07.pdf).

A CLT could be used as an LDV, but it would need to be vested with a reasonable share of landholding by agreement with the landowner(s). In this situation the landowners'/developers' viability would need to be considered and its profit requirements would need to be written into some binding arrangement. It would also need to have sufficient capacity to deal with the pressures of development decisions. This may be difficult in the early days of a new free-standing development where the new community does not yet exist.

Alternatively, a CLT could be seen as the long-term organisation to which another type of LDV hands over community assets at a later stage, as a partner to the LDV. Or scaled-down forms of Community Trusts could be used for some or all local amenities. A good example exists in Milton Keynes, where over 4,500 acres of parkland are managed by the Milton Keynes Parks Trust (see <http://www.mkparks.co.uk/parks-trust/>).

### 3.2.3 Statutory Bodies – the Homes and Communities Agency, Urban Development Corporations, and New Town Development Corporations

The **Homes and Communities Agency's** role is to create opportunity for people to live in high-quality, sustainable places. It was established by the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 with wide-ranging powers. It states on its website that: '*We provide funding for affordable housing, bring land back into productive use and improve quality of life by raising standards for the physical and social environment.*' The HCA was created in 2008 from a merger of English Partnerships (itself based largely upon the Commission for New Towns) and the Housing Corporation, and formally began to operate in 2009.

The HCA has the ability to support the delivery of eco-towns in several ways, by:

- Providing professional support and advice on leading-edge innovative practice, including possibly joining the Board of whatever type of LDV is chosen.
- Providing financial support, including direct investment or loan finance.
- Playing the leading role in an LDV.
- Using its CPO powers (although the powers of local authorities may be more appropriate).
- Using its planning powers by forming the LDV under its own wing as a close alternative to a UDC (as with the Milton Keynes Partnership in Milton Keynes – see <http://www.miltonkeynespartnership.info> and Annex 2 of this Worksheet).

The HCA aims to deliver its work through a 'place-based' approach, rather than one determined by separate programmes. Local Investment Agreements will be developed with local authorities following conversations with them on strategy, investment, capacity and delivery. The HCA controls multi-billion pound budgets, and, in relation to eco-towns, long-term funding for growth/new settlements will be reflected in HCA Regional Business Plans rather than in national programmes. Regional HCA Directors are the key figures in developing Regional Business Plans. The support of the HCA will be of great importance to almost any area considering the development of an eco-town and so needs consideration and discussion with the HCA Regional Office.

British New Towns were developed through **New Town Development Corporations** (NTDCs) and were the largest attempt by positive Government policy to create large-scale new urban settlements. They began in 1946 and the last New Town Development Corporation was closed in 1992 (although large-scale development continues today in many new towns).<sup>3</sup> During this period they saw the development of over 1 million homes and the creation of 1 million local jobs, plus a vast range of local facilities and enterprises. Although new towns today are sometimes regarded as unfashionable, they provide homes and jobs for many millions of people in the UK (see Annex 2 for further details).

The later but similar **Urban Development Corporations** (UDCs) continue today, and legislation allowing the establishment of NTDCs also remains available to Government today.

If properly established and led, an NTDC is particularly well placed to fight in a single-minded way for the resources needed to provide high-quality co-ordinated growth, and to do so over the extended period that is needed for large-scale community-building. NTDCs have not been created since the late 1960s. Annex 2 gives details of how they

<sup>3</sup> In the past, following some preliminary informal consultation, the Minister would publish a 'Draft Designation Order' defining the exact area of the new town. 'Designation' meant that all and any land within the area designated was liable to be covered by the powers of the NTDC, and specifically that compulsory purchase could be carried out for the new town's purposes (which were set out in the Draft Order). Objectors were given six weeks or so to lodge their opposition or concerns. A public inquiry followed six to eight weeks later, before an Inspector appointed by the Minister (someone of distinction such as a public servant). Two weeks were allowed for the Inquiry; then 8-12 weeks for the Inspector's report. The Minister confirmed the Order, and announced the names of Board members – two each from the district and county councils and four to six others

operated and speculates on how a modern NTDC might differ from its predecessors. The most famous UDC today is the Olympic Delivery Authority, established by the London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Act 2006 and based on use of the same legislative provisions as for UDCs. Current examples of UDCs are in West Northamptonshire (see <http://www.wndc.co.uk>), Thurrock (see <http://www.thurrocktgdgc.org.uk>), and London Thames Gateway (see <http://www.ltgdgc.org.uk/>).

### 3.2.4 Joint venture arrangements

A joint venture between the public and private sectors has not been used in the UK as an LDV. However, any of the above forms of LDV with sufficient legal power could form some sort of joint venture agreement with landowners and/or investors if they felt that this would aid delivery. A joint venture could form an additional way of giving all parties comfort and confidence regarding the alignment of objectives, the availability of funding for the chosen form, and the quality of development. Some examples of recent thinking are mentioned in Section 2.3 above.

In Continental Europe there are also examples of such arrangements, and one of these, the Vathorst Development Company, is described in some detail in Annex 2.

There are various ways in which a joint venture could be structured, and specialist advice would be needed relating to the specific circumstances. As an illustrative simple example, a local authority could 'exchange' some of the financial requirement in its Section 106 agreement for a share in the eventual land value, or for ownership of a proportion of the land. Alternatively, if the local authority already owned some land in the eco-town it could put this landholding into a joint venture with other landowners and/or investors, with agreements about sharing both risk and reward from any

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#### Box 2 The Continental European model

The research consultancy URBED has produced a series of recommendations for developing new settlements based on the findings of study trips in Europe for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Academy for Sustainable Communities (now the HCA Academy) and jointly with the TCPA.

What is surprising is the degree to which the different countries that have achieved 'eco' standards on major schemes, such as the Netherlands, Germany and Sweden, have taken a similar approach, even though their institutions and cultural histories differ. The results of this work are freely available on various websites (see, for example, <http://www.urbed.co.uk> – follow the 'Learning from Europe' link).

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The general conclusions from this work, summarised in the 'Learning from Europe' page of the URBED website, are as follows:

- Pursue smart growth (for example growth points and clusters).
- Join up transport and development (for example as in Accelerated Development Zones).
- Pool land in key locations (for example joint venture companies that dispose of land as a percentage of sales value).
- Finance better advance infrastructure (for example low-cost local finance/bonds).
- Create balanced communities through neighbourhood management (for example Community Trusts).

There are also recommendations for achieving 'transformational leadership' that have emerged from studying how organisations work:

- Provide incentives to work together (for example Multi-Area Agreements).
- Employ multi-disciplinary teams to maintain continuity.
- Sell small, serviced sites to maximise choice.

eventual value that is created. Or, if the HCA was willing to purchase some of the land, it could form a joint venture with the remaining landowner.

In summary, eco-towns should be showing the way in sharing experience and being open to fresh ideas. This will require giving the same amount of weight to learning about management and finance as they have been doing to design in its various aspects.

# 4 process for choosing a local delivery vehicle, and other important early actions

## 4.1 A Statement of Intention

Good delivery depends in part on collaboration and shared vision. It follows that creating and maintaining a sense of shared vision and action should be a constant priority from the early stages of planning.

During the bidding process for eco-town status (in 2008), the ATLAS team within English Partnerships (now the HCA) devised a route map for bidders and local authorities to use to get from initial ideas to a full and acceptable planning application. **This involved writing a 'Statement of Intention' (SOI) – guidance is included as Annex 4 to this Worksheet. The guidance on the SOI forms a suitable starting point for successful eco-towns partners to collaboratively map their way forward.** Those involved must include the landowners (or their option holders) and the local authority (or authorities), although it would be wise to have a much wider list of partners at this early stage.

### Box 3 Elements of the Statement of Intention

The Statement of Intention should comprise of the following key elements:

- **Vision and objectives:** Clearly articulate the current vision and identified objectives for the eco-town concerned, including the level of support received from key stakeholders to date. This section should also provide a commentary of the current status of the development plan for the area concerned (including the RSS), together with comment on how the scheme conforms with planning policy.
- **Key tasks in preparing a planning application submission:** Specify the tasks that have been undertaken to date, and draw out those tasks that still need to be undertaken prior to the submission of a planning application (including identifying those already carried out).
- **Proposed project management framework:** Identify who from the promoter's team together with other stakeholders will need to be involved in seeking to resolve those tasks, and how the tasks and overall planning submission will be co-ordinated.
- **Masterplanning:** Describe progress on the masterplan to date and how this is to be evolved up to the planning application submission stage, to take account of further work such as the Environmental Impact Assessment, final transportation studies, etc.
- **Community and stakeholder engagement strategy:** Set out which stakeholders have been engaged to date, how they have contributed, and who needs to be involved from both stakeholders and the wider community in the future.
- **Delivery, governance and long-term management:** Set out the current thinking on the mechanisms required to deliver the scheme through the planning system, together with views on what would be the initial phases of development. Set out the management systems that it is envisaged should be put in place for the long-term evolution of the town.

In some of the initial eco-towns, the SOI has already been produced and can form a basis for action. In others it is suggested that the landowners, the local authority and other partners produce an SOI as a joint early priority.

While written primarily for the bidders, the Atlas guide serves as guidance to all partners regarding the steps which should be taken, in sequence or in parallel, and includes advice on setting up delivery arrangements. An effective SOI will also describe the timeline and the process for undertaking an Environmental Impact Assessment of the proposed development, as required by the relevant legislation. To be most effective, the SOI will indicate how the results of the assessment, including early consultation and the identification of environmental design features, can effectively shape the development masterplan and facilitate the planning process.

#### 4.2 A business plan for delivery

Once the SOI has been produced, partners should also begin to put together a rudimentary version of a **'business plan for delivery'**. This business plan should show the actions required from all partners, and associated costs and sources of funding (in both revenue and capital terms), showing timelines for the early stages. There will be lots of blanks and lots of vague figures with uncertainty as to the source of funds. This will serve to highlight the extent of confidence and/or further work required on the scheme, which can also be built into the business plan.

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The actions identified in the early business plan will include subjects such as procurement of infrastructure and development, involving consideration of options such as MUSCOs and ESCOs, as discussed above in Section 2.4, and phasing of development in different parts of the eco-town.

The interim business plan and the SOI will be closely integrated and should provide a common agenda for all partners, helping them to progress in sensible transparent steps towards firmer and more detailed arrangements. At this early stage, there is unlikely to be an established LDV. Therefore the main public authorities and landowners may take the interim lead on a joint basis for producing the SOI and the interim business plan.

## 5 conclusions

Delivering a large-scale development, including 5,000 or more homes, is a long-term activity. When the aim is also to produce an exemplar eco-town, the need for long-term commitment and consistent leadership is absolutely vital.

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Many factors that will influence the eventual nature and success of the eco-town will be determined at an early stage, either by conscious action or by default. The premise of this Worksheet is that decision by default is not good enough when we are aiming for an exemplar that can be both a wonderful place in which to live and a source of inspiration and learning for others. Important decisions should be made explicitly, in a transparent manner and with an inclusive approach to delivery through partnership.

This Worksheet draws attention to those subjects that need early attention, before too much is 'set in concrete'. There are many, but this need not be daunting if an open, collaborative and iterative approach is taken, accompanied by serious efforts to gain the engagement of a wide range of partners. There is no need for all the details to be agreed at once. Indeed, it would be folly to try to do so in a situation where so many things will change over the period of delivery, including external factors and internal experience.

The key factors that need early attention and continued development are:

- Creating a vision that can encompass all the qualities desired in the eco-town, including its physical, economic and community development, from which all subsequent planning can find guidance.
- Considering and identifying the full range of partners who need to work together for delivery, and engaging them in the project, under some form of interim partnership arrangement.
- Using the ATLAS Statement of Intention to help structure actions of all partners in the early stages (see Annex 4).
- Using the Environmental Impact Assessment as an effective early planning tool to:
  - Shape aspects of the development.
  - Engage local interested parties in consultation.
  - Develop effective improvement measures to minimise impacts of the development.
  - Identify positive environmental features.
- Through the partnership, giving early consideration to a delivery structure (LDV) to provide leadership, focus and a sense of responsibility (see Sections 3 and 4, plus Annex 2 for real examples).
- Using the key issues set out in Section 2 (land ownership, etc.) as a checklist before reaching firm conclusions regarding delivery arrangements.
- Matching the form and powers (if any) of the LDV to the specific eco-town situation, including:
  - The scale and difficulty of task.
  - The availability of necessary skills and experience.
  - The nature of land ownership.
  - Likely sources of funding.
  - Consideration of producing Memoranda of Understanding between the LDV and its partners which spell out respective roles and expectations (for a recent example, see that used by Aylesbury Vale Advantage – see <http://www.aylesburyvaleadvantage.co.uk/>).
- Assessing and securing adequate skills and resources as needed in the LDV (and its partners). These must include project management and a degree of delegation for (and within) the LDV, within a clear framework of accountability.
- Considering the potential benefit (if any) of a joint venture arrangement, exploring options, and identifying potential partners and their roles (see Section 3).
- Considering and assessing how to procure infrastructure that will achieve the objectives – including assessing whether an ESCO or MUSCO might be suitable (see Annex 5 for ICT options).
- Building a business plan for delivery, owned by the LDV, which includes funding requirements and sources plus action timelines for all delivery partners.
- Giving some thought to long-term ownership and management of public amenities and how this might be funded (for example through endowments, service charges or income-producing assets), and to how this might affect initial funding arrangements.
- Considering how best to create a real sense of community that reflects the eco-town aspirations and how best to integrate the new community with surrounding areas. This should be linked to the above issue of asset ownership and management.
- Not treating the eco-town as a major planning application but as a complex integrated project, requiring excellent project management and partnership throughout its period of delivery.

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