

# unlocking the potential of large-scale new communities



Briefing Paper  
Town and Country Planning Association  
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## **Unlocking the Potential of Large-Scale New Communities**

TCPA Briefing Paper

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**The Lady Margaret  
Paterson Osborn Trust**



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# section 1

# introduction

Over the last decade there has been a growing consensus that, alongside the renewal of our existing towns and cities, larger-scale new communities are an important part of the portfolio of solutions needed to tackle the nation's housing crisis. New communities can offer multiple benefits, creating highly sustainable new environments for people while simultaneously increasing the rate of housing delivery and avoiding urban sprawl. A strategic approach to housing development also offers economies of scale and greater certainty in the development process, which can help to de-risk delivery and create attractive investment opportunities for patient investors. The UK pioneered one of the most remarkable programmes of new communities in the post-war era and its New Towns now house more than 2.8 million people.

Above all, following the interlocking Garden City Principles<sup>1</sup> of design and delivery that are necessary for modern, zero-carbon living is the stand-out opportunity offered by large-scale development. Embedding these principles into a long-term and comprehensive masterplan to guide the development over time creates an opportunity to deliver healthier, more rewarding and more affordable ways of living. The Garden City Principles' emphasis on creating stewardship bodies is directed at securing the quality of these new places over the long term.

Given the consensus about the value of development at scale, why does it continue to be so difficult to achieve in practice? There are, of course, successful examples of a large-scale approach to development being built out in places such as Bicester, but as a general rule the kind of ambition shown in the post-war New Towns programme is lacking, despite the pressing challenges of the current housing crisis. The new community option is still seen as

both politically and economically risky – perhaps with good reason, given the recent fate of some 'locally led' large-scale development proposals. The government has committed to the principle of new communities through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and its Garden Communities programme, and has advocated four new communities delivered by Development Corporations in the Oxford-Cambridge growth arc.<sup>2</sup> However, there remains uncertainty over the intrinsic sustainability of some of these places in terms of location, design standards, and effective delivery. As we begin to emerge into a post-COVID-19 world, the opportunity to deliver a step-change in both housing quality and delivery rates by building highly sustainable new places remains largely unrealised.

This short briefing paper highlights some of the key challenges surrounding the current debate on large-scale development, and sets out some key actions that local and national government could take to unlock the opportunities it offers. The paper focuses on distilling the TCPA's recent learning on the barriers to delivering large-scale growth, particularly lessons that have emerged over the last decade. Drawing on the lessons of the New Towns programme, it also offers recommendations on the best form of delivery vehicle to use, and on how we might best go about identifying need and location. From the outset it is useful to be precise about what we mean by large-scale growth here: this briefing paper is concerned with larger-scale new developments of over 10,000 homes, primarily in distinct new settlements (as opposed to extensions of existing towns or cities).<sup>3</sup> While there are specific opportunities and challenges at this scale, the majority of the lessons also apply to smaller new communities and urban extensions of less than 10,000 homes.

## Notes

- 1 The TCPA's Garden City Principles are set out at <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/garden-city-principles>
- 2 The commitment to explore the case for up to four Development Corporations in the Oxford-Cambridge growth arc was first made in the March 2020 Budget Report (*Budget 2020 Delivering on Our Promises to the British People*. HC 121. HM Treasury, Mar. 2020. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/871799/Budget\\_2020\\_Web\\_Accessible\\_Complete.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/871799/Budget_2020_Web_Accessible_Complete.pdf)). It is referenced in *Spending Review 2020*. HM Treasury, Dec. 2020. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/spending-review-2020-documents/spending-review-2020>; and most recently in the government's plan for developing a long-term spatial framework, *Planning for Growth in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc: An Introduction to the Oxford-Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework*. HM Government, Feb. 2021. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-for-sustainable-growth-in-the-oxford-cambridge-arc-spatial-framework>
- 3 This figure corresponds to the scale of the smaller New Towns designated under the New Towns Act – such as Hatfield, Peterlee, and Newton Aycliffe. The smallest was Newtown in Mid-Wales, with a proposed population of just 11,500 people, but this was built for the specific purpose of providing homes to support an existing employment base

## section 2

# the current state of play

Central government in England does not currently play a clear strategic role in the site identification or delivery of new communities. Nor does it set a wider strategic context which might help in identifying areas of search for local designations. The National Infrastructure Strategy<sup>4</sup> sets out a range of investment priorities, but it does not provide a wider spatial framework which might give an indication of long-term priority housing growth areas and their relationship to infrastructure investment. There are ad hoc exceptions to this approach, most obviously in the government's support for the Oxford-Cambridge growth arc. Homes England is the government's 'housing accelerator', sponsored by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). It provides a range of support and investment for a number of large-scale projects. This includes projects at an early stage, projects that are already going through the local planning process, and projects that are part of the Garden Communities programme. While support is provided by Homes England, responsibility for the Garden Communities programme rests with MHCLG.

At present, the primary role of central government and its agencies in supporting large-scale new development through the local planning process is to offer encouragement, brokerage, and funding (for capacity and infrastructure).<sup>5</sup> In places such as Burgess Hill in West Sussex and Northstowe, to the north-west of Cambridge, Homes England has assisted local partners directly in delivery, acquired land and taken on a master-developer role. Sites that are part of the Garden Communities programme have been provided with a support package, primarily through the programme, which helped in accessing resources from other government funds.<sup>6</sup> This role also includes brokerage and instituting legal changes to support delivery, such as the introduction of the option to set up 'Locally led New Town Development Corporations' and the occasional one-off designation of Urban Development Corporations, such as for the proposal at Toton.<sup>7</sup> **But the specific responsibility of policy-setting, promoting, consenting and delivering the majority of large-scale housing schemes rests with local government. It follows that the burden of political risk also rests with local authorities.**

Over the last decade, local authority interest in meeting housing needs through large-scale new communities has

increased. This has been due partly to encouragement through national planning policy, but is also due to the political attractiveness of meeting housing need in one strategic location. By the end of 2019 there were 49 'garden communities' being promoted by local authorities under government's programme. Not all of these were new settlements and only 15 were 'garden towns' of over 10,000 homes, with only one of over 15,000 homes (at Ebbsfleet), the latter being a hybrid made up of existing planning consents now being overseen by an Urban Development Corporation.<sup>8</sup> While some larger sites are progressing through the process, as in Carlisle or at Otterpool Park, there is no example of a proposal for a settlement that matches the scale and ambition of a New Town, and not all of the proposals have gained planning consent.

Perhaps of most concern is that places in the programme are not required to adopt the Garden City Principles. A set of 'Garden Community Qualities' was included as a requirement in the most recent Garden Communities prospectus. This was a huge step forward, particularly given government's aversion to specifying standards for new development in the last 10 years, but these qualities are essentially a weaker version of the Garden City Principles, and many places became part of the programme before they were defined. This has led to some places committing to the Garden City Principles in a very 'flexible' way, with the result that some of the developments are not ideally located or able to seize the opportunity to deliver high standards, land value capture, and long-term stewardship.

It is important to emphasise the success of some local authorities in supporting large-scale growth, with considerable efforts being made by some authorities and their partners to deliver ambitious developments to high standards. In some places officers and delivery partners have a genuine commitment to the Garden City Principles. However, there remains a raft of practical barriers that are encountered at every stage of the development process, from site identification and consenting to detailed negotiations on infrastructure investment and build-out rates, all of which can prevent this ambition being realised.

The TCPA has summarised a number of the practical barriers that have been encountered by members of the

TCPA New Communities Group.<sup>9</sup> The most significant include:

- a lack of a consistent political leadership at both national and local levels, which undermines confidence in the delivery of long-term growth;
- a lack of skills and capacity among planning teams and elected members;
- a lack of effective, strategic cross-border co-operation on identifying new locations;
- a deficit in infrastructure investment, particularly in transport and affordable homes (including those for social rent);
- complexities in the viability testing process, and particularly in the factors to be applied to developer and landowner returns;
- tensions between private sector delivery rates based on local market conditions and local authorities' wider aspirations and obligations for housing delivery; and
- national planning policy, which can undermine the case for taking a long-term, large-scale strategic approach to meeting housing need by instead focusing on short-term land supply and housing delivery tests.

The significance of each of these problems can vary from case to case, but a lack of overall investment in infrastructure and the failure to co-ordinate action among infrastructure partners is a common problem. This leads to the related and important problem of effective sequencing.

The successful delivery of highly sustainable growth at scale depends on a clear sequence of planning, consent and delivery milestones, particularly in relation to transport and social infrastructure. The failure of any one of these elements compromises both the delivery and the sustainability of the development and can reinforce patterns of behaviour which undermine wider public health and sustainability objectives. In its starkest form, such failure can simply prevent access to a new site. The more complex the institutional arrangements and the greater the number of partners – from Network Rail to Local Enterprise Partnerships to the Department of Health – the harder it is for a local authority with limited powers to unblock the development process. There is no doubt that England has a uniquely complex assortment of investment partners who need to be effectively managed if large-scale development is to be secured.

#### Notes

- 4 *National Infrastructure Strategy*. CP 329. HM Treasury, Nov. 2020. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/938539/NIS\\_Report\\_Web\\_Accessible.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/938539/NIS_Report_Web_Accessible.pdf)
- 5 A summary of the funding sources for new communities can be found at <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/funding-opportunities-for-new-communities>
- 6 See the government's 'Garden communities' webpage, at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/garden-communities>
- 7 '£235m vision for future of East Midland economy unveiled as region comes together to fight back post-Covid'. Press Release. East Midlands Council, 28 Oct. 2020. [https://www.emcouncils.gov.uk/write/Press\\_Release\\_28.10.pdf](https://www.emcouncils.gov.uk/write/Press_Release_28.10.pdf)
- 8 *How Does Your Garden Grow? A Stock Take on Planning for the Government's Garden Communities Programme*. Lichfields, Dec. 2019. [https://lichfields.uk/media/5638/how-does-your-garden-grow\\_a-stock-take-on-planning-for-the-governments-garden-communities-programme.pdf](https://lichfields.uk/media/5638/how-does-your-garden-grow_a-stock-take-on-planning-for-the-governments-garden-communities-programme.pdf)
- 9 The New Communities Group (NCG) was set up in 2009 by the TCPA and the Department for Communities and Local Government. Together, members of the NCG are providing innovative local leadership for plans delivering in the region of 280,500 new homes – see <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/new-communities-group>

## section 3

# recent lessons large-scale new community delivery

In the face of the sort of problems that hinder the delivery of large-scale new sites across England set out in Section 2, some local authorities have attempted to think strategically for the long term, but the level of success has been patchy and inconsistent. Some proposals have advanced successfully through local plan-making processes, whereas others, sometimes of a similar nature, fail to satisfy the needs of the system. Three illustrations of the challenges are set out below, based upon recent Local Plan Examination outcomes in 2020. These case studies are presented not in judgement on whether or not the outcomes were right, but as illustrations of some of the current challenges.

### **Example 1 – Easton Park, North Uttlesford, and West of Braintree Garden Communities (Uttlesford District Council)**

Uttlesford District Council draft Local Plan 2019 contained proposals for three new large-scale ‘Garden Communities’, put forward on the basis that further defining detail would be provided through future site-specific policy and guidance.

In January 2020 the Local Plan Examination Inspectors wrote to the council identifying a number of concerns over the soundness of the plan. The Inspectors were unconvinced that ambitions on land value capture, vision, leadership and community engagement, and long-term stewardship of assets would be achieved, and stated that the mechanisms by which they would be delivered were not readily evident – despite the council suggesting a collaborative mechanism and evolving a proactive delivery approach alongside planning policy.

The Inspectors noted that some of the landowners had shown a degree of reluctance to agree with the land value capture and collaborative partnership approaches, leaving them with concerns that the plan’s stated vision for the new settlements would not be met. In addition, they requested more detail and definition on strategic infrastructure requirements and scheme viability testing, even though the proposed schemes had lifetimes of at least 20-30 years, with the consequent practical difficulty in providing such detail or absolute certainty. Among other concerns the Inspectors also took issue with the council’s approach in attempting to define a long-term

strategy. Alongside concerns that the council has failed to identify a sufficient number of smaller sites that could deliver homes in the short to medium term and help to bolster the five-year housing land supply, the Inspectors stated that ‘the Garden Community approach predetermines the strategy long beyond the plan period and so is unduly inflexible’. This fundamentally brings into question whether the system can properly accommodate long-term strategic growth. As a result, after many years of work and costly evidence-gathering, the council had to withdraw the plan and start work again.

### **Example 2 – New Settlement at Murrell Green/Winchfield (Hart District Council)**

Hart District Council’s Local Plan to 2032, submitted in 2018, proposed a new settlement as part of its approach to growth, identifying an area of search for up to 5,000 dwellings, to be further explored through the preparation of future planning policy. Delivery was not required to meet identified housing need during the plan period, but the proposal was put forward as a longer-term opportunity and in an attempt to recognise the lead-in time needed when thinking about large-scale development.

The Examining Inspector responded in February 2020, setting out his concerns over the soundness of the new settlement proposal policy. Although its housing provision was not relied upon by the plan, its inclusion was considered to be establishing the principle of a new settlement as the most appropriate growth strategy for meeting the council’s long-term needs. The Inspector was not satisfied on the level of background evidence given and held that a significant level of further supporting work would be required for the policy to be found sound, including more detailed site assessments, infrastructure analysis, viability testing, evidence on deliverability, and further assessment via the Sustainability Appraisal process, which would need to be carried out in an impartial manner and consider all possible alternative future strategies.

Overall, the Inspector concluded that the proposal was not justified given his doubt that a comprehensive and inclusive new community could be delivered and his

judgement over a lack of testing to demonstrate the new settlement to be the most appropriate long-term growth strategy.

The council decided to modify the plan in line with the Inspector's findings and remove the proposal for a new settlement entirely, leaving it as a matter now to be re-addressed through future plan-making processes.

**Example 3 – North Essex Garden Communities  
(Braintree District Council, Colchester Borough Council,  
and Tendring District Council)**

Braintree District Council, Colchester Borough Council and Tendring District Council set out a shared approach in their Local Plans, submitted in 2017, promoting three cross-boundary 'garden communities', to contain over 40,000 new homes and to be delivered to Garden City principles. The initiative was the largest in the government's Garden Communities programme and won two Housing Infrastructure Fund awards which would have committed nearly £400 million for local strategic infrastructure. A delivery company was established, with recognition that it could become one of the first greenfield 'Locally Led New Town Development Corporations'.

Following a lengthy period of examination, the Inspector set out his conclusions in June 2020. He considered that two of the proposals were not deliverable. This decision was based on an assessment of highly detailed and complex evidence and assumptions on infrastructure and viability. He argued that assumptions should be based on historic practice and experience of delivery from projects. However, such practice and experience are not particularly comparable to the scale and type of schemes that were being suggested. A narrow approach based upon recent developer practice hinders an ability to think to the future

– to do things differently and better than has been done before.

The proposals were supported by the councils and the scheme promoters but strongly opposed by local communities. A lack of confidence in the delivery of future strategic infrastructure, and a judgement that the sites would not deliver sufficient returns for landowners, resulted in the Inspector ruling out two of the three proposals. In the interest of moving forward, the councils have accepted modifications and are now proceeding with only one of the three proposed schemes. After several years of challenging, expensive and pioneering activity, the delivery company was disbanded and most of the approved infrastructure funding was lost.

**Issues and challenges to be resolved**

These cases illustrate just a few of the complex issues encountered through the current approach to gaining planning approval for locally led, large-scale new communities. They provide a flavour of the ongoing challenges facing local authorities contemplating the long-term development of new settlements and future growth. The cases were all judged against the 2012 NPPF, and there have since been some limited changes in national policy to address the problems of long-term uncertainty and viability testing. However, the bar is still set high, and the risks are great for anyone attempting to show ambition for the long term.

Unless future policy and guidance recognises the reality of uncertainty, and properly addresses the question of viability (the balance between infrastructure costs and land value expectations), local authorities are unlikely to be willing to take the risk of planning for new communities.

## section 4

# why the current approach is inadequate

Section 3 makes clear that, while large-scale development can be – and in some cases is being – promoted through the existing local planning system, there are multiple barriers that actively deter local authorities from taking a strategic approach. Recent setbacks have acted as a strong disincentive for local authorities looking to take an ambitious approach. There is also no doubt that there is unfulfilled potential to meet much more of our housing need through sustainable new communities, rather than sticking to the current development model – which very often produces very poor outcomes. Our current system lacks many of the necessary characteristics to support large-scale growth throughout what is necessarily a long-term and complex development process. There are six related areas of dysfunction which appear to be of the greatest significance:

- the lack of a strategic approach to site identification;
- the shortage of skills and capacity in local government;
- the inadequacy of the Local Plan model for managing large-scale strategic growth;
- the failure to provide adequate financial support and clear land value capture models (including problems stemming from the complexities of viability testing);
- the lack of clarity on workable delivery models, including the multiple forms of development control that can now be deployed; and
- the general lack of public trust in the planning process, which is being reinforced by a sense that people are ‘in the way’ of government housing objectives.

It is significant that, while some of these difficulties relate to local government practice, the majority can be resolved only by central government action. If there were a single proposition that distilled the current problems of large-scale development it would be that **the general offer from government does not provide the confidence and certainty to enable local action**. In broad terms, the balance of financial and political risks has shifted to the local level, despite national government’s identification of housing delivery as a key national priority. Successful models from the past were all defined by a fairer sharing of the risks and rewards in committing to large-scale development, particularly through the role that central government can play in the day-to-day unblocking of development barriers.

# section 5

## the way ahead

An enormous amount of effort has been devoted to considering the problem of increasing housing delivery. In fact, as the Independent Review of Build Out led by Sir Oliver Letwin concluded, the answer to the problem calls for a stronger role for public authorities in co-ordinating infrastructure delivery and de-risking development. It is extremely unlikely that the private sector alone or any other current business model would either be willing to take the financial risk or have sufficient public legitimacy to deliver large-scale growth.

Making a reality the opportunities offered by large-scale growth in England requires changes to the current system for those proposals already in the development process and strategic changes that might secure a much more effective route for new large-scale development.

### Improvements to the current system

Changes to the current system are required in the following areas:

- **National policy on scale and five-year land supply and the housing delivery test:** Current national policy set out in the NPPF does not provide sufficient incentive to plan strategically for the long term and to commit to growth beyond the plan period. Without specific encouragement for longer-term planning, the focus of local planning authorities will inevitably be on meeting short-term housing requirements, resulting in priority being given to development which is easy to deliver but may often be unsustainable.
- **Viability testing based on 'existing use plus':** Changes in national guidance and policy on viability testing have supported the 'right pricing' of land whereby clear policy requirements in plan policy aim to reduce the price paid for land by developers. This is an effective form of land value capture, but is hampered by continued uncertainty about what constitutes an acceptable return to landowners. Such returns are defined for developers and increased clarity would help to speed up the assessment of viability and manage landowner expectations.

- **Requirements for strategic planning:** There is strong case for a less ad hoc approach to strategic planning. The arrangements for London and some of the government's devolution deals give formal status to a strategic plan which can provide certainty about the role and location of new growth. But in many other cases strategic arrangements are either informal or absent.
- **Funding for skills and enhanced capacity:** Large-scale development requires a unique skill set and the capacity to manage a complex process. Resourcing the required capacity is partly a matter of local government finance, but it is also about investing in planning education. There is also a need to resource the Planning Inspectorate to ensure that inspectors have the capacity and training to deal with the unique challenges of decision-making for large-scale sites.

### Strategic solutions

The Planning White Paper sets out a radical programme of change to the planning system. On the one hand, this provides an opportunity to make structural changes to enable large-scale growth. On the other hand, the White Paper is largely silent on the kinds of direct support that could enable such growth. While it refers to the possibility of using Development Corporations and Development Consent Orders, it does not explain how these options might be applied, nor how the new zonal planning system or national infrastructure levy could be used to support large-scale and long-term growth.

The TCPA remains concerned about the basic unsuitability of using local planning tools to facilitate strategic growth, and is strongly supportive of a modernised version of the New Towns legislation. A detailed programme for how this could be achieved was set out in the TCPA's 2014 publication *New Towns Act 2015*<sup>10</sup>

Action on three major issues is vital if there is to be a step-change in the delivery of new communities:

- **A strategic and spatial approach to site identification:** This briefing paper highlights the significant limitations of using a purely local process to identify sites for large-scale growth. A national and

regional approach to identifying the need for growth and the relationship between that need and environmental constraints and infrastructure provision is a pre-condition for future success. This requires a cascade of spatial policy, from a national plan to regional and sub-regional frameworks. Detailed proposals for this approach have been set out in the Final Report of the Raynsford Review,<sup>11</sup> but the key point is that this allows for the identification of growth areas within which local authorities – enabled by government – can work together to identify the precise scale and location of new development. It also forces government to commit to a long-term narrative around national and regional development, which can give confidence to local authorities and businesses. The National Infrastructure Commission is capable of producing such a plan, but crucially it must be linked to a much wider public debate about the future of England. In short, it must have robust public legitimacy and parliamentary approval if it is to have any chance of success.

**Recommendation:**

The government should oversee the formulation of a national spatial plan and adopt a formalised approach to sub-regional spatial planning.

- **An effective approach to consenting and delivery:** The second pre-condition for success is greater clarity from government on the delivery mechanisms that should be used for large-scale new settlements. Here, it is vital that any consent process secures public trust and that the delivery mechanisms have all the necessary powers and the long-term basis to secure a co-ordinated approach. In terms of delivery, the New Town Development Corporation model remains the most successful and proven approach. It requires further reform in terms of its objectives and public participation but, unlike the ‘Locally led New Town Development Corporation’ option, it draws central government into an active role into the delivery of new places. This produces its own tensions but it is vital in building confidence among all the delivery partners.

There is an active debate about whether Development Consent Orders introduced by the 2008 Planning Act

for the national infrastructure regime could be fused together with the delivery mechanisms of the New Towns legislation. The TCPA has always argued that the job of delivering single infrastructure projects is a radically different proposition to the long-term job of shaping a new community. However, elements of the of the regime could provide a useful model for consenting large-scale developments if these provisions were adjusted to meet the need for much greater public participation. In the same way, there are lessons from the production of National Policy Statements which could be applied to the approval of a national spatial plan, providing there is a greater emphasis on building public trust.

**Recommendation:**

The government should publish a clear policy statement on its preferred approach to the delivery of large-scale new settlements.

- **A lasting settlement on land values, viability and compulsory purchase:** At the heart of many of the complexities relating to large-scale growth is the question of a lasting settlement over land values and betterment. As seen in the North Essex Garden Communities case, this can relate to the overall deliverability of a project; but it also relates to compensation payments made for compulsory purchase. The problem is not that compulsory purchase powers are inadequate but that there is a confused approach to the underlying question of the valuation of land, both in the compensation regime and in viability testing.

Progress has been made in viability testing to enable the ‘right pricing’ of land – i.e. the reduction in land values based on the cost of delivering clearly articulated policy outcomes in a development scheme. But the compulsory purchase Compensation Code allows for factors in market valuation that planning guidance on viability does not – principally relating to ‘hope value’, which is both complex to calculate and has been described by the courts as a ‘land of make-believe’<sup>12</sup> through where landowners receive rewards for future speculative development rights. In some cases, the full cost of delivering new places will reduce land prices to close to existing-use

value. If government were to support the approach of the Letwin Review then a standardised percentage factor could be applied to this landowner bonus.<sup>13</sup> In any event, it is vital that government provides as much clarity on landowner returns as they do on developer returns and that viability guidance in planning is aligned with the Compensation Code.

One additional concern is the consideration of the reduction of the high returns afforded to housing developers, currently rationalised as merited because of the uncertainty presented by the planning process. Under a Development Corporation model housing developers would be operating under high levels of

certainty, and profit margins may need to be adjusted to acknowledge the shift in the burden of risk.

**Recommendation:**

The government has specified a standardised return for developers on larger-scale sites, and a standardised return should also be identified for landowner returns. The government should also require that viability assessments for larger-scale sites reflect the choice of delivery vehicle. For example, where a New Town Development Corporation is chosen to deliver a large-scale new community, the certainties and confidence provided by the use of that vehicle should be reflected in the viability assessment process.

**Notes**

10 *New Towns Act 2015?* TCPA, Feb. 2014. <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=a1abf968-2127-4e0c-a04d-fbed529fb230>

11 *Planning 2020: Raynsford Review of Planning in England. Final Report.* TCPA, Nov. 2018. <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/raynsford-review>

12 *Myers v Milton Keynes Development Corporation* [1974] 1 WLR 696. See <https://swarb.co.uk/myers-v-milton-keynes-development-corporation-ca-1974/>

13 The degree to which the uplift factors recommended by the Letwin Review are the correct ones is open to debate, but the principle of a standardised formula is an important first step

# section 6

# conclusion

It has been 50 years since the UK designated its last New Town. Over the last ten years there has been renewed interest in building new communities, but, despite heroic achievements by some localities, and the efforts of Homes England, the opportunities for and offered by large-scale development have remained largely unrealised. Some changes can be made now to improve the local delivery of large-scale development, but ultimately the system will be fully unlocked only through

a comprehensive programme of change pursued by central government. The choice between poorly located and poor-quality homes and the opportunities that development at scale can offer in realising a zero-carbon and sustainable future remains the crucial housing delivery issue of the 2020s. This is no longer a question of our technical ability to finance, design and deliver such places: it simply a question of the political will to achieve them.

# recent TCPA publications on delivery

## **Guide 2: Finance and Delivery. Practical Guides for Creating Successful New Communities**

November 2017 (Living draft)

<https://www.tcpa.org.uk/guide-2-finance-and-delivery>

## **The Garden City Opportunity: A Guide for Councils**

January 2020

<https://www.tcpa.org.uk/the-gc-opportunity-guide-for-councils>

## **White Paper: Planning for the Future A response by the Town and Country Planning Association to the MHCLG Consultation**

October 2020

<https://www.tcpa.org.uk/tcpa-white-paper-response>

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### **Unlocking the Potential of Large-Scale New Communities**

TCPA Briefing Paper

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The **Town and Country Planning Association** is an independent charity working to improve the art and science of town and country planning. the TCPA's strategic priorities are to:

-  Work to secure a good home for everyone in inclusive, resilient and prosperous communities, which support people to live healthier lives.
-  Empower people to have real influence over decisions about their environments and to secure social justice within and between communities.
-  Support new and transform existing places to be adaptable to current and future challenges including the climate crisis.

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