

Planning

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PLANNING AT WWA STUDIOS

WWA's award-winning Planning team include Chartered Town Planners, that provide a multi-disciplinary property consultancy service. Our Chartered Planners provide bespoke planning advice and site-specific strategies, delivering high quality developments of varying scales, ranging from minor developments to urban extensions.

WWA work across many sectors ranging from residential, healthcare, specialist housing and education, from small-scale developments to large mixed-use schemes. Over the years we have collaborated with clients including commercial and private developers, charities and local authorities, associations, schools and universities as well as councils.

While our services can be offered independently we are able to offer a broader scope. Working together with our Architectural, Heritage and Specialist teams, we can advise clients on the strategic development of assets, and bring a broad understanding of the wider context.

Our team will provide expert planning advice, untangle the red tape, decipher any jargon and provide you with a clear and well-laid-out approach. WWA Studios have successfully obtained planning permission for many hundreds of projects.

We pride ourselves on offering sound and honest planning advice in a clear and comprehensive manner.

In 2023 our planning team was shortlisted for RTPI Small Planning Consultancy of the Year. This follows our 'Highly Commended' award as the Best Planning Advisor 2022 at the Oxford Property Festival. A number of our projects have won awards including the RTPI South East Award for Planning Excellence in Masterplanning and Design for Gypsy Lane at Oxford Brookes University.

INTRODUCTION

We have a **92% approval rate on planning applications** over the past 3 years.

At WWA we understand that positive planning is essential for successful land development. The process of attaining planning permission can be fraught with difficulties and irreversible consequences.

With decades of experience in the industry, our planning team advises organisations of all types. We provide advice at all stages of the planning process, from feasibility assessments to obtaining permission for new-build developments, listed building applications and heritage assessments, site appraisals, and policy and guidance to appeal representation.

WWA's specialist planning team are structured to deliver high-quality solutions. Our clients benefit from an interdisciplinary practice and our comprehensive knowledge of techniques and legal framework of UK planning ensures our clients receive sound strategies to achieving exceptional results.

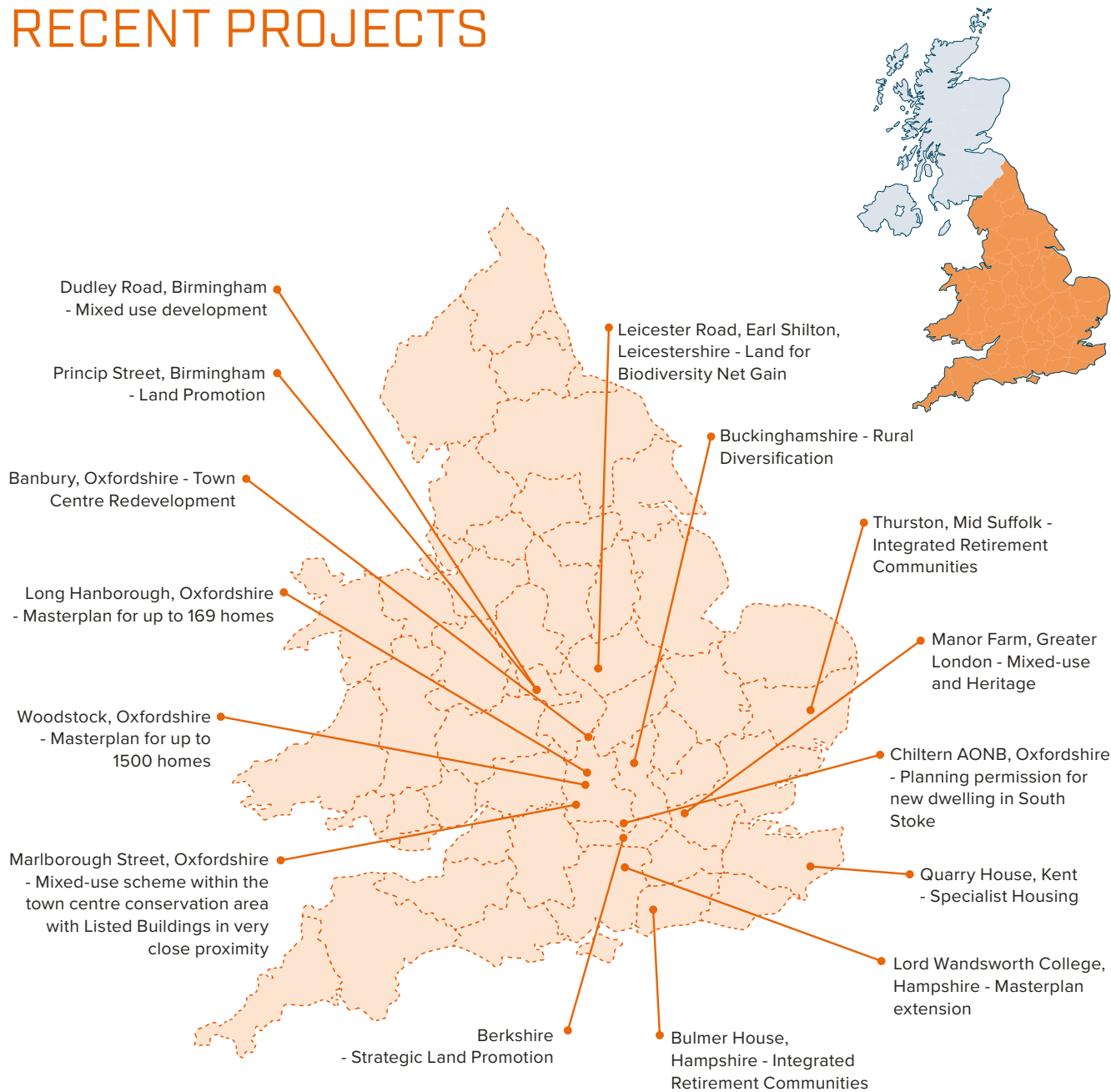
Some of our key sectors include;

- › Residential
- › Commercial
- › Rural
- › Industrial
- › Education
- › Healthcare
- › Heritage
- › Green Belt and
- › Biodiversity Net Gain

RECENT MILESTONES



RECENT PROJECTS



SERVICES

- Planning Feasibility and Strategy Advice
- Site Promotion
- Local Plan Representations and Examination
- Neighbourhood Planning
- Consultation and Community Engagement
- Pre-Application Submissions
- Planning Applications and Appeals
- Public Consultation
- Interpretation of Permitted Development Rights
- Applications for Listed Building Consent
- Discharge of Conditions Application
- Resolution of Enforcement Matters
- Section 106 Negotiations
- Environmental Impact Assessment

Planning today requires a team approach. Our interdisciplinary service starts from the stages of conceptualisation and planning. To optimise integrity, aesthetics and function, we integrate different disciplines with a common purpose, to set goals, make decisions, and share resources and responsibilities to offer solutions that take into consideration a variety of criteria, always starting with a thorough understanding of National and Local planning policy.



Architecture



Urban Design



Planning



Sustainable Design



Arboriculture



Asset Evaluation



Specialist Housing



Heritage



Research



Project Design/CDM



Education



Landscape



Project Management



Housing



Public Consultations

CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND PLANNING POLICY

The UK Government has declared a climate emergency and set a statutory target of achieving net zero emissions by 2050, and this is a material consideration in the determination of any planning application and appeal. WWA is at the forefront of this commitment and will be delivering net zero carbon projects by 2030 to meet RIBA and RTPI Climate Goals.

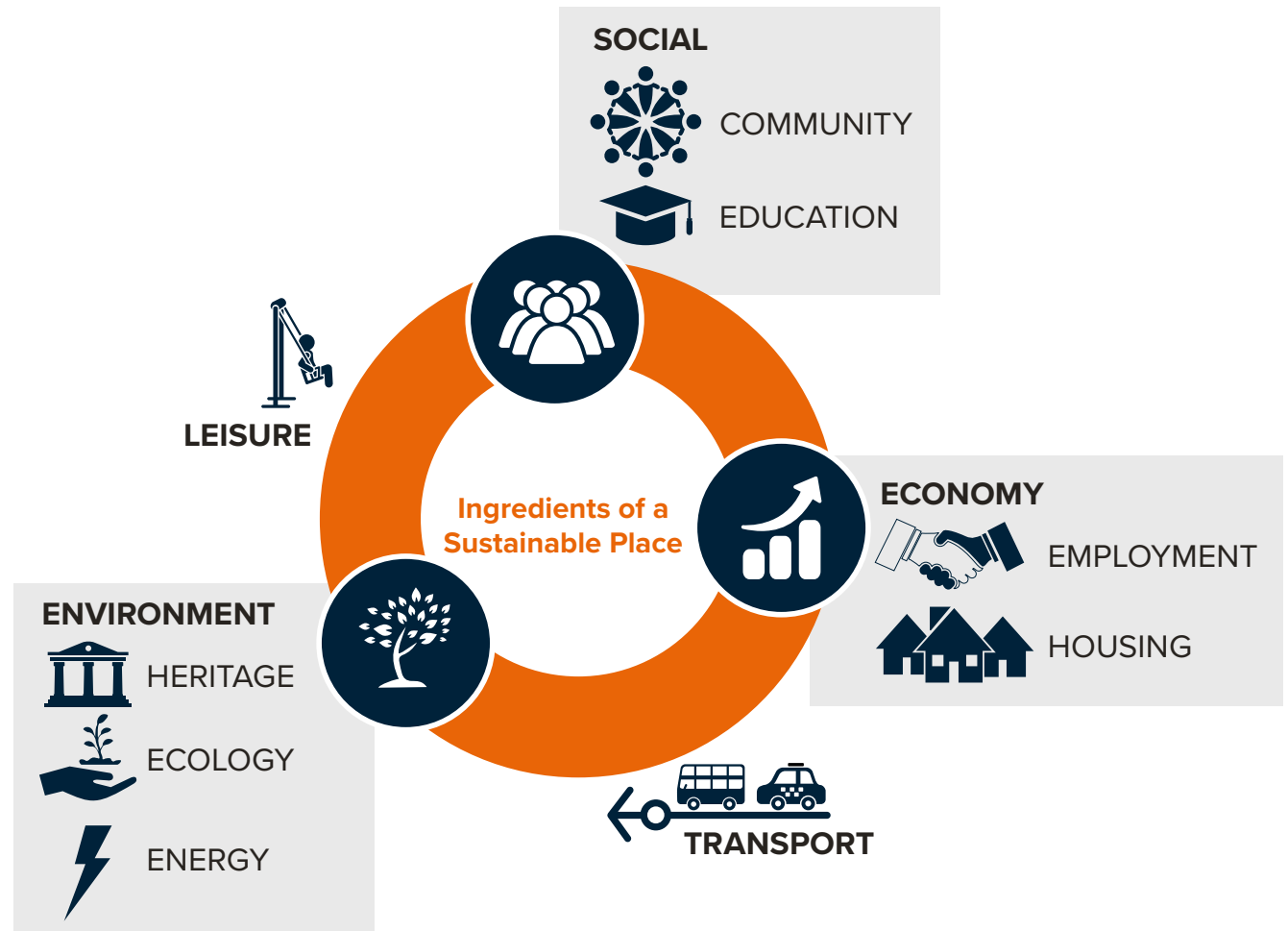
Furthermore, many local planning authorities are adopting their own sustainability and energy performance standards at the planning stage.

In June 2021, WWA made the decision to practice what we preach and commit to being a zero-carbon business by 2030. The WWA team believe the delivery of net zero carbon projects goes hand in hand with ensuring the practice's operations are also net zero carbon, and we have already undertaken several sustainable initiatives which means we are well ahead of our sustainability targets.

WWA embarked on an ambitious training programme which culminated in two of our team being Passivhaus Accredited in the last year. This knowledge has been disseminated through the practice through an internal CPD programme which also included guest seminars on a wide variety of sustainable topics from biodiversity net gain to the latest in renewable technologies.

The practice is currently delivering a few projects to achieve BREEAM Excellent which includes enhanced fabric performance to Passivhaus levels. We also have a few projects promoting creative high-quality sustainable developments.

SUSTAINABLE PLACE DIAGRAM



NOTHING IS 'BLACK AND WHITE' IN THE PLANNING PROCESS!

To address the multitude of challenges faced by new development and the potential resulting impacts, the planning system has grown increasingly complex. Satisfying policy requirements is often a nuanced exercise involving interpretation, negotiation and a balanced planning judgement.

In 2020, a client approached WWA for planning advice for the redevelopment of redundant agricultural land and buildings that had been previously used for a commercial chicken farm. Considering the site's complex planning history (9 planning applications refused/withdrawn and 1 Appeal dismissed), it was conceived that any new commercial development in this semi-rural location would have 'in-principle' planning objections and would likely be refused. A legal opinion from a KC also confirmed the same. However, in considering the site's existing condition, there was a strong planning argument that if permission were not forthcoming for future development, the site would remain an eyesore for the foreseeable future.

WWA considered that the significant planning benefits (including much-needed rural employment floorspace, highway improvement, biodiversity net gain and landscape improvements) were important material planning considerations overriding the general presumptions against the resistance of new development in this semi-rural location.

After months of negotiations with the Officers, WWA successfully secured an outline planning permission (all matters reserved except access) for the erection of seven rural business units for light industry (Class E(g) (iii)) with 38 parking spaces and associated landscaping. WWA is currently working on the submission of a Reserved Matter Application and discharging all pre-commencement conditions. The landscape-led design approach for the proposed development will significantly enhance the character and appearance of the area while positively addressing the economic, social and environmental objectives of sustainability.







I would like to record my appreciation of the hard work and commitment that you and your colleagues have put into this.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Registrar of Oxford Brookes University.

EDUCATION

As part of a Framework Agreement with Oxford Brookes University, WWA developed a £110m Masterplan for the University's Headington, Wheatley and Harcourt Hill Campuses.

The Masterplan sets the parameters that enabled the University to implement its vision over a 15-year period. Working closely with other consultants, the Practice was responsible for all planning advice associated with the University's ambitious plans.

Our commission included completing a Sustainability Appraisal and we also advised upon the form and level of consultation associated with the Masterplan as well as producing a consultation report consolidating all stakeholder involvement. The Sustainability Appraisal involved project managing and co-ordinating nine other consultants.

The University's three campuses are located within different local planning authority districts and co-ordinating the Masterplan between Councils with different planning policies proved particularly challenging.

The Masterplan for the Headington Campus was endorsed by Oxford City Council and paved the way for subsequent individual planning applications prepared by WWA for various phases of work in implementing development.

Key to the Masterplan was the re-orientation of the main approach to the campus which now faces the London Road, linking more successfully with the adjacent Headington Hill Hall facilities and creating a strong visual identity and sense of place.

WWA Studios received an **RTPI Planning Excellence Award for our masterplan vision** that transformed the campus at Oxford Brookes.



Above Image: John Henry Brookes Lecture Theatre, Oxford Brookes University.
Main Image: Headington Library, Oxford Brookes University.



STOLL MANSIONS REDEVELOPMENT

London

MIXED-USE REGENERATION SCHEME

The Stoll Foundation instructed WWA to prepare a Planning and Development Brief to review the context, setting and design rational considerations to guide residential-led mixed-use development on the site. The brief was designed to guide prospective developers and designers in developing proposals that meet national, GLA and Local Plan policies, as well as the charity's aspirations for the site.

Stoll continues to be at the forefront of housing and support for vulnerable ex-servicemen and women. The proposed redevelopment will provide much needed financial security to enable Stoll Foundation to meet and grow its charitable objectives, whilst providing modern Veteran's accommodation and much-needed affordable housing for LBHF.

The development brief provided the basis for a coordinated and comprehensive approach to future development that can achieve greater economic, social and environmental value in the area. In addition to a high-quality design approach, the brief set out the expectation of future development to be highly sustainable with respect to minimising the use of natural resources, integration of renewable energy, sustainable transport measures and ecology.

The site had a complex planning context with pertinent planning considerations relating to the level of affordable housing provision and heritage matters. WWA's Planning Team worked closely with key stakeholders on these matters to gain a robust understanding from which to develop a planning and development strategy that

supported the charities aims and objectives. Overcoming these complexities will enable the Stoll Foundation to continue supporting members of our Armed Forces with a long-term sustainable development model.



Whether it's engaging with planners, estate master planning, stakeholder consultation or building design (and construction), my experience has been a very good one.

Richard Gammage - Chief Executive of Veteran Charity, Stoll Foundation



Above Image: Aerial view outlining the current Stoll property.
Main Image: Illustration of the proposed redevelopment of Stoll Mansions.



WOODSTOCK MASTERPLAN

West Oxfordshire, Oxfordshire

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Acting on behalf of Vanbrugh Unit Trust (working on behalf of the Blenheim Estate) and Pye Homes, WWA prepared and submitted a hybrid planning application for a mixed-use development comprising of 1,200 dwellings, including affordable housing and up to a 120-unit care village (C2) with associated publicly accessible ancillary facilities; site for a new primary school; up to 930sqm of retail space; up to 13,800sqm of locally-led employment (B1/B2/B8) including transport interchange; site for a Football Association step 5 football facility with publicly accessible ancillary facilities; public open space; associated infrastructure, engineering and ancillary works.

The proposed development site (referred to as “Woodstock East”) straddles the administrative boundaries of West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) and Cherwell District Council (CDC).

The site was located directly opposite the Grade I Registered Blenheim Park and Garden, the Blenheim World Heritage Site, Grade I Listed Blenheim Palace, Grade II Listed Cowyards, Grade II Listed Park Wall, and Blenheim Villa Scheduled Ancient Monument. The effect of the proposed development on the highway, heritage assets, design and scale, sustainability, and the character and appearance of the locality and landscape were the key planning issues to be addressed.

This Sustainability Statement and Environmental Impact Assessment was also prepared by WWA to support the outline planning application highlighting how the proposal would meet three dimensions of sustainability.





LORD WANDSWORTH COLLEGE: SCIENCE CENTRE

Long Sutton, Hampshire

EDUCATION

The new science centre at Lord Wandsworth College was planned and designed as part of a wider masterplan proposal to rationalise the existing campus with a landscape-led urban design strategy. The WWA Planning team were involved throughout the project advising on key planning constraints and policy context informing the masterplan and building design as well as preparing, submitting and negotiating the planning application.

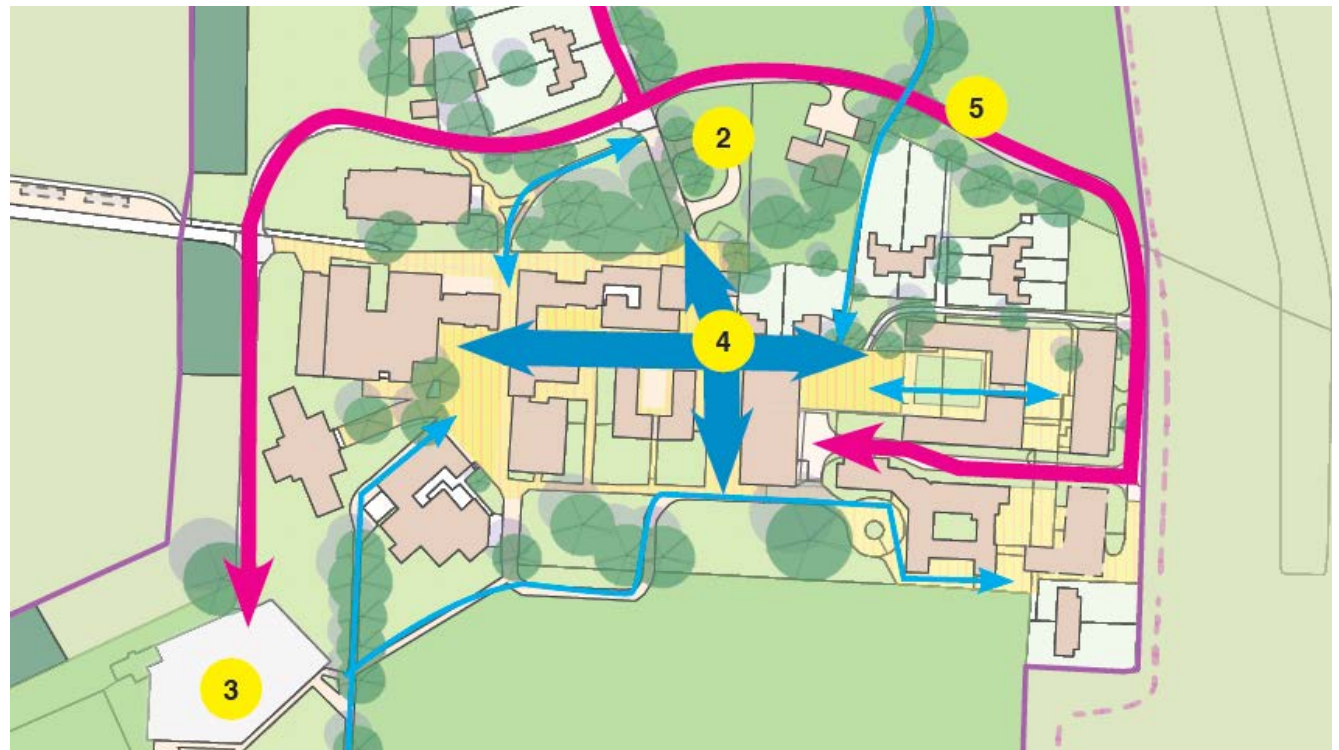
The building is designed to provide new science laboratories for secondary school children and sixth formers. The Planning Team's thorough assessment of the site's context and identification of the relevant policy implications in decision making were integral to the successful delivery of the project. Many of the existing buildings on the campus are statutorily listed and brick-built with generously proportioned tiled roofs incorporating mansards. The science centre design draws from these proportions, through the emphasis of the roof-scape. The use of modern zinc panels, in a tonal red-brown is sympathetic to the heritage context surrounding the building while embedding a future ready approach that responds to the climate emergency.

The inherent tension between the practical demands of the proposed building and the heritage context were a key challenge the planning team had to assist in overcoming. The demands of the science laboratories required significant ventilation to cater for fume cupboards and the use of bunsen burners. The planning team worked closely with the M&E consultants and our in-house design team to ensure the demands of the building could be met in a contextually responsive and policy compliant manner. The ventilation is expressed in the zinc-clad ventilation stacks

that divide up the roofscape to create a contemporary yet sensitive design.

Driven by passive design principles, the building features clerestory windows at a high level, allowing light and ventilation into the central atrium, positively addressing the transition to net zero while simultaneously taking inspiration from this traditional architectural feature. The result has been the delivery of an exceptional education

facility inspiring students in the science subjects for future generations to come. WWA believe the project will stand as a lasting legacy not only for the school, but as a reminder of how the high-quality design of buildings can respond to the challenges of a changing climate, while creating outstanding people-centric places that care for our heritage.



Above Image: Masterplan Movement Framework for Lord Wandsworth College.
Main Image: Entrance to the new Science Centre at Lord Wandsworth College.



ALL SOULS COLLEGE: SUSTAINABILITY, ENERGY REDUCTION AND HERITAGE SERVICES

Oxford

HERITAGE

WWA has specified and managed repairs and restoration work at All Souls College Oxford. This included removing decades of grime and soot from stonework as well as replacement ashlar and repairs to ornate chimney stacks and mouldings. The Planning Team utilised their training and experience in understanding the cultural and historic significance of this historic asset and prepared and submitted the listed building consent application on behalf of the client.

The College is Grade I listed and the foundation of the facade was laid in 1438. The facade has been remodelled throughout the centuries with the battlements added and windows replaced in the Victorian era. A sensitive approach was required with a thorough understanding of the building's heritage significance forming the basis of the project.

Working closely with key stakeholders including heritage consultees, WWA's planning team were able to undertake a robust heritage assessment and offer pragmatic advice on how best to enhance and conserve the significance of these iconic cultural and heritage assets. WWA are proud to be able to continue supporting the important contribution these assets make to the social, cultural and economic sustainability of the City of Oxford. The successful outcomes of this project enables the continued viable and sustainable use of All Souls College, ensuring it's preservation for generations to come.

The facade restoration phase was awarded the **Outstanding Contribution to Oxford** award by the **Oxford Preservation Trust Conservation Awards**.



Above Images: Repairs and restoration being undertaken of heritage structures.
Main Image: High Street elevation of All Souls College.



MANOR FARM

Ruislip

MIXED-USE

Manor Farm complex forms a vibrant facility including a thriving library, performance hall, interpretation centre, craft workshops and community café. We have preserved and disseminated the heritage value of the site, increasing its role as a local community attraction.

Acting in the role of Lead Consultant, WWA directly engaged other conservation specialists and worked closely with English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund whose grant assistance was crucial to deliver the project.

WWA provided town planning, heritage and architectural services on this prestigious project. The project was awarded **Bronze in the international Green Apple Environment Awards** which recognise, reward and promote environmental best practice around the world.



Top Image: Restored timber frame of the
C13th Grade II* Great Barn.

Bottom Image: Craft workshop and community cafe.

TETRONICS

Faringdon, Oxfordshire

URBAN REGENERATION

WWA has been involved with this site since 2005 and was subsequently appointed in 2022 to prepare an application for 14 dwellings for the new site owner.

The development is to be defined at two scales. The domestic scale within the site and its relationship with the larger townscape with distant views towards the site from the south and northernmost blocks along Lechlade Road.

The design proposals are contemporary in appearance; however, the base forms and proportions are inspired by nearby structures. This will make it possible for the scheme to blend in with its surroundings and improve the legibility of the development without advocating a pastiche style.

Ensuring the development is not dominated by vehicles, the landscape strategy enhances the setting of the proposed dwellings and masks the impact of parked cars on the shared surface street whilst delivering a robust parking standard.

The development proposals deliver flexible modern living, enhanced energy performance and a new pedestrian route across the site. A suitable mix of housing typologies allows for various users and their specific needs and has been developed with an ageing population in mind. Exceeding the minimum standard for fabric efficiency, the proposed dwellings will provide heating and hot water from a non-fossil fuel source.

WWA planning team secured both outline and reserved matters applications. The team successfully negotiated the key planning issues including design, highway, drainage, land contamination, setting of the listed building and conservation area, financial viability, and affordable housing.



HARWELL

Oxfordshire

DEVELOPER HOUSING

Our planning team act for private developers and housebuilders as well as housing associations, charities and local councils delivering residential schemes of all types and scale including affordable, open market and specialist needs housing. From small infill plots up to strategic housing land promotions, WWA are experts in identifying planning issues and opportunities and can steer often complex housing schemes through the planning process.

At Harwell in Oxfordshire, we acted for a regional housebuilder to obtain outline planning permission followed by reserved matters consent for a scheme of 16 individually designed dwellings for sale. Our design team took their cues from existing vernacular architecture in the area with plenty of variety in the house types. Working closely with the planning team at all stages we created a legible, landscape-led housing layout including plenty of open space reflecting the character of the village in which the development is located.

The combination of planning and design skills provided in-house by WWA ensured a smooth ride through the planning process. It is this combination of planners and architects working together that offers our clients added value, saving considerable time and smoothing out the planning process.



It is clear that they operate a professional outfit and the team that worked on our Harwell site were pro-active and very efficient at keeping us informed throughout every stage.

Daniel Ede, Managing Director, Ede Homes



Image: View over central green space at Harwell Development



BEECHWOOD GROVE

Caversham, Reading

INTEGRATED RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

Beechwood Grove is a collection of 43 one and two-bedroom apartments designed to offer independent living for over 55's in tranquil surroundings. WWA Studios worked closely with A2 Dominion and Feltham Construction to deliver the project which offers hotel-style amenities that make life easier and more enjoyable.

The scheme, designed in close collaboration with the Local Planning Authority, blends in with and complements local context and character with a subtle contemporary twist. The materials are chosen to harmonise with those used in the surrounding vicinity. We have ensured we retain most of the mature trees on site and the project achieved BREEAM 'Very Good' energy standards.

The key planning challenge of this project was navigating the highly debated planning use class issue which is synonymous with the Integrated Retirement Community sector. Through diligent reviews of planning case law and tying this into local planning policy, we were able to secure the client's preferred use class ensuring the building could operate sustainably securing the long-term future for the operation of the site.

This is just one example of WWA's specialist housing projects where our planning team successfully navigated the grey area of planning policy in relation to Integrated Retirement Communities. The outcome is a futureproof, high-quality integrated retirement community leading to the project reaching two finals of national prestigious awards.

The development was a finalist in the **"Best Older People's Housing Development"** category at the Inside Housing Awards 2019 and shortlisted for the **"Best Retirement Development"** at the What House Awards 2019.



MINOR PROJECTS

WWA frequently represent a wide range of challenging projects that are accompanied by complex planning issues. Our clients know that our expert planning team can maximise development potential and advance their cause with a creative and strategic approach.

Each of these projects shown represents a pivotal victory in planning terms, giving a project feasibility where none could previously be promised.

- › Herons: Our team successfully argued the definition of urban infill for the subdivision of a plot on the edge of a settlement, in doing so unlocking the potential of this site to take the design through a considered response to the AONB and floodplane context.
- › Tetsworth Barn: We secured a Class Q Permitted Development Consent to turn an existing agricultural building into a home, and then successfully argued for a replacement dwelling that would be contemporary whilst still respecting the vernacular of the rural agricultural setting. This two-phased strategic approach also maximised the value of the land.



Long Hanborough Surgery - Long Hanborough
Masterplanning



Abingdon Prep - Abingdon-upon-Thames
Masterplanning



Herons - South Stoke
Planning and Design



Tetsworth Barn - Thame
Planning and Design



Progress Mews - Kingston-upon-Thames
Brownfield Site Conversion



Headmaster's House, Lord Wandsworth College - Hampshire
Masterplanning



Winterbourne Medieval Barn - South Gloucestershire
Planning, Design and Heritage works

MEET OUR EXPERT TEAM

WWA is an innovative multi-disciplinary practice of Architects, Urban Designers and Town Planners with a rich pedigree of successful projects delivered over our 137 year history. We offer outstanding client focussed services embracing the natural crossover between built environment disciplines and we consistently deliver high quality projects on time and on budget.

Our team of town planners offer added value to clients with an exceptional success rate in achieving planning consent.

Find out more about our team and the outstanding projects they deliver, via our website and social media.



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