

Planning & Development

# INSITE

From **Carter Jonas**

ISSUE 5 | SUMMER 2018

**STUDENT HOUSING CHANGES | THE GENDER GAP | LAND BANKING CRISIS**

## **A NEW VISION FROM GROSVENOR ESTATE**

Chief Executive of Britain  
& Ireland, **Craig McWilliam**,  
tells us how they are at  
the forefront of change  
in the capital



**FUTURE OF THE PUB | NEW ENVIRONMENT PLAN | NORTHERN CITIES**

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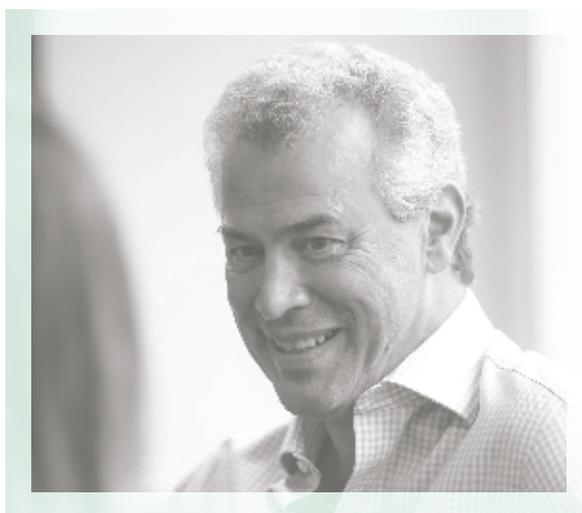
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# WELCOME

**We've shaken things up a little. Planning & Development Insite is back, but this time with a new design and philosophy - let's keep it snappy and informative.**

Welcome to the fifth issue. Over the next 44 pages we talk inspiration, legislation, concern and change. We tackle some big issues including terrorism, the environment and the gender gap. We put influential people at the forefront, talking with Craig McWilliams of Grosvenor Estate and Jo Negrini of Croydon Council. My team and I are never short of interesting topics to discuss, which has to be a reflection of how fast paced and interesting our industry is. A fact which we're always grateful for. Thank you to all that have contributed to this issue of Planning & Development Insite, it's without a doubt my favourite yet. I hope you enjoy reading it.



**James Bainbridge**  
Head of Planning & Development

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# TOP 10.

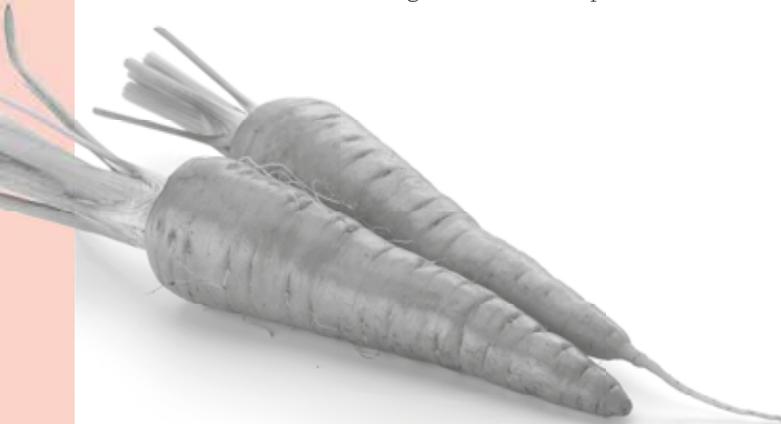
**WE LOOKED INTO OUR CRYSTAL BALL AND ANTICIPATED  
A SELECTION OF IMMINENT CHANGES IN OUR INDUSTRY**

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**01. RETURN TO REGIONALISM**  
Increased importance is being placed on strategic planning at a regional level, specifically in encouraging cooperation between local authorities

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**02. LESS CARROT, MORE STICK TO MEET HOUSING TARGETS**  
A recent housing delivery proposition suggests sanctions should be placed on councils failing to meet housebuilding targets in their local plans



**03. A CHANGING MODEL FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT**  
The draft NPPF states that sites may have to be found outside existing settlements to meet local community and employment requirements in rural areas, even locations that are not well served by public transport

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**04. CULTURALLY-INSPIRED REGENERATION**  
The London mayor's intention to introduce new 'creative enterprise zones' is already proving very popular with London boroughs

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**05. INCREASED DENSITY IN CENTRAL LOCATIONS**  
Minimum density standards have been proposed for use in town and city centres and around transport hubs. A consultation on a new permitted development right for upwards extensions is imminent

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### What changes do you predict for our industry?

Tweet us @carterjonas  
#CJinsite



## 06. HOUSING TO SAVE THE HIGH STREET

Theresa May has suggested that former shops could be turned into homes as online shopping reshapes our high streets



## 07. LOCAL AUTHORITIES AS FUNDERS AND DEVELOPERS

Local Authorities are having to take a more proactive role in assembling, planning, funding and delivering new mixed-use development and regeneration opportunities. We expect to see this trend continue

## 09. A BURGEONING OF BARN CONVERSIONS

The Permitted Development Rights concerning barn conversions are set to change. This will allow more units to be converted from a single agricultural building without the need for planning permission

## 08. A GREATER INTEGRATION OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND HOUSING

There is currently potential for housing to be provided on space such as car parks, service areas and railway infrastructure going forward. From 'cut and cover' tube lines in London to new transport infrastructure schemes, we expect to see the two sectors collaborating a lot more

## 10. A RELAXATION OF VIABILITY ASSESSMENTS

The draft NPPF states that 'Where proposals for development accord with all the relevant policies in an up-to-date development plan, no viability assessment should be required to accompany the application'



# WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF OUR CAPITAL?

With Crossrail cutting through the historic centre of London and bringing challenges and opportunities with it, who better to discuss the changing face of the capital with than the chief executive of Britain & Ireland at Grosvenor Estate – a company whose 400 year history stretches back to the days when Mayfair and Belgravia were swamps and pastures.

It goes without saying that Grosvenor Estate has experienced innumerable economic cycles, conflicts, and technological changes. The company has continually adapted to the changing world, now operating in 60 cities but with its heart still very much in London.

Craig McWilliam has been chief executive of Britain & Ireland at Grosvenor Estate since joining from Fortress Investment Group in 2010. As such he is now at the forefront of change in the West End – an area which in addition to being the epicentre of culture and leisure also generates 3% of the UK's economic output, 10% of its business rates and hosts well over 600,000 jobs.

McWilliam does not underestimate the impact of imminent change on the capital.

“London's growth is putting pressure on our infrastructure, communities and quality of life. The West End sits at the focal point of those pressures, and Oxford Street manifests many of them with crowding, congestion and poor air quality. Another pressure is retail competition: we face fierce national and international competition for talent and investment, with new forms of retail, online and offline, changing attitudes towards consumerism.

“Crossrail's impact will be substantial. On Oxford Street alone, the two new stations will disgorge 120,000 more people every day, a 40% increase on today's numbers. This will impact on the surrounding side streets, shops, offices and green spaces. So we will need to take this opportunity to transform the whole district, for Londoners, residents, workers and visitors. In the next 20 years we need three times more job space than was built in the last 20 years just to keep up with demand. The opening of the Elizabeth Line this year will accelerate this need.”

Grosvenor has identified a typically bold approach to keep the West End flourishing: one which is based on integration on a number of levels. The West End Partnership, itself a coalition of public-sector, private-sector,



*Eccleston Yards:  
A hub for new and  
innovative brands*

residents and amenity groups, has identified that the West End needs an extra £1bn over the next 15 years.

How will London attract that level of investment? “The Mayor and our civic leaders will need to present a compelling vision for growth in the West End. That vision would be the tent pole around which private capital could coordinate. And if the proceeds of economic growth were ploughed back into local jobs, more attractive amenities and a stunning public realm for all, then the political mandate for growth might outlast the electoral cycle.

“For too many years the West End's success has been undermined by a false trade-off between economic growth, new jobs and enterprises, and residents' needs; or between greater densification and enhancing the unique character of the West End. But if we get this vision of integration and funding right, the unique character of the West End will be enhanced.”

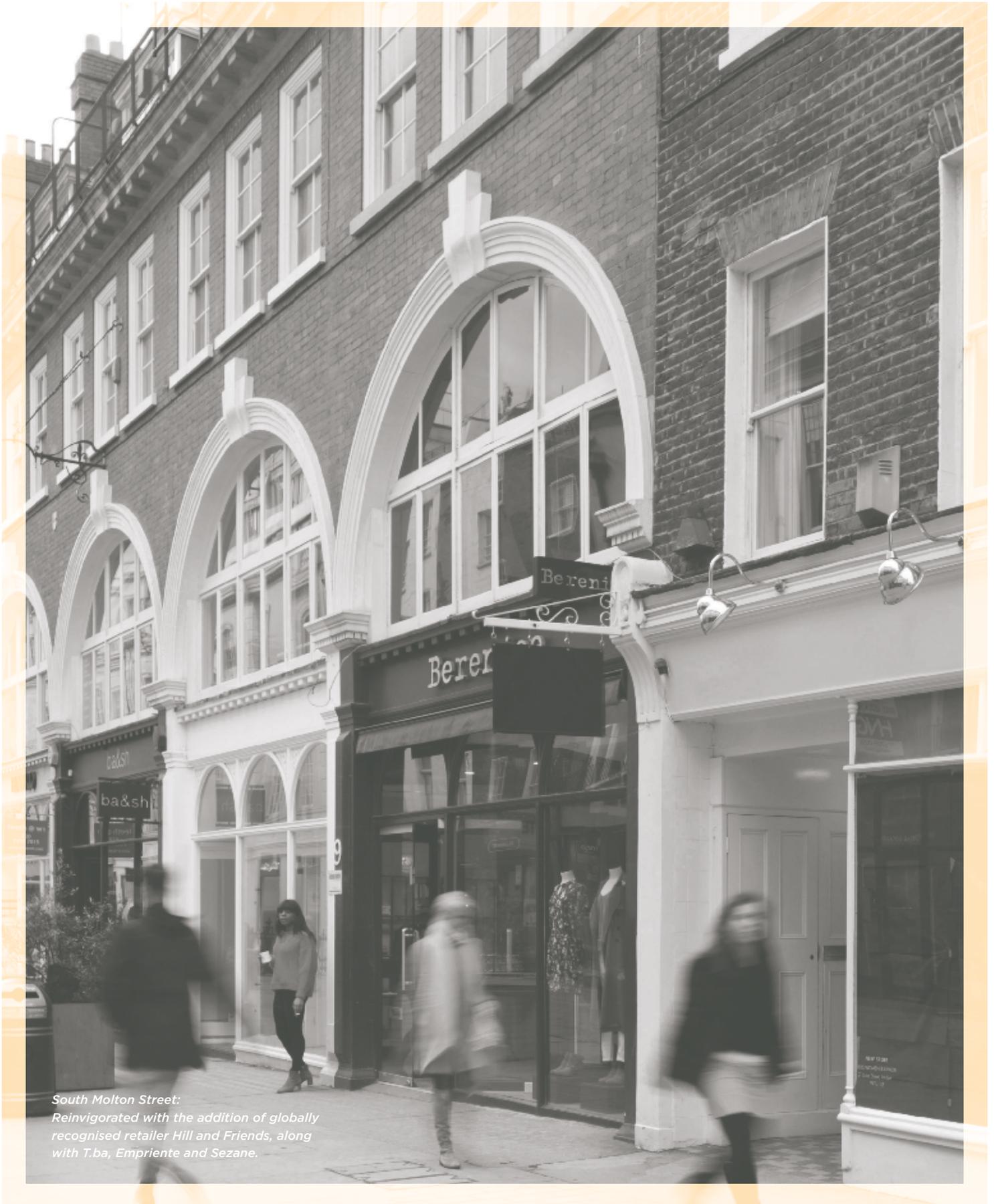
“At Grosvenor we're fortunate enough to work at the neighbourhood scale. The breadth of our ownership enables us to create an experience rooted in a place and defined by a

unique mix of shopping, food, leisure, culture and wellbeing. But we want to do more. Over the next 20 years, we want our London estate to be more active, more open. We want a bigger, better and wider blend - from amenities to luxury, enterprise to leisure - for workers, residents and visitors. We want to grow and sustain better destinations in the heart of the West End.”

Despite the ‘perfect storm’ battering the high street, Grosvenor signed 45 new tenants in 2017: food, fashion, lifestyle, and restaurant operators, “All strong, brands, the majority independent, seeking in many cases their first physical presence in London. The estate is adapting and increasingly giving a platform to tenants who can respond to, and predict, shifting trends.”

The spirit of integration also informs the metamorphosis of the retail sector. “We are responding to change by creating retail districts that are integrated with each other and with London; districts that are supported by amenities, public and green spaces and better infrastructure.”

On previously derelict and underused land on the boundaries



*South Molton Street:  
Reinvigorated with the addition of globally  
recognised retailer Hill and Friends, along  
with T.ba, Empreinte and Sezane.*



*Motcomb Street: A world-class public space with the UK's first open access ultra-fast broadband network alongside free public WiFi*

of Victoria and Belgravia, Grosvenor is creating a new hub for creative enterprise and co-working, around a new public square. Featuring 19 units for food, fashion, co-working and wellbeing, Eccleston Yards will be a destination to champion new and innovative brands. The intention is to establish a community of like-minded businesses and a mix of offers for workers and visitors. Tenants include Barry's Bootcamp, a stylish fitness studio and powerful global brand with a vast international following, which will attract regular users to this currently underutilised part of London. Also co-working provider, Central Working, a UK-wide network of shared workspaces that supports more than 3,500 businesses of all sizes, which will be instrumental in anchoring this new hub of enterprise and innovation.

A conversation about change in the West End would not be complete without reference to London's population - which is growing faster than any period since the 1800s. Over

10m new inhabitants will live in London by 2030, which will put pressure on communities, infrastructure and the current quality of life. The issue is compounded by the fact that London is only delivering 30,000 homes a year, creating a growing void in which an ever-increasing number are priced out of the market.

Again McWilliam cites leadership as the answer: "Creating more homes for a wider range of people will only be successful with bold public sector leadership. But it's not just about processing more housing units, it's also about the quality of those neighbourhoods."

It is clear from talking to Craig McWilliam that Grosvenor has already made great strides in adapting to change in London, but that this can't be achieved by the private sector alone. Whether we're looking at retail or housing, transport or leisure, integration and leadership are the key components necessary to deliver effective change.

**“WE WANT TO GROW AND SUSTAIN BETTER DESTINATIONS IN THE HEART OF THE WEST END”**



**NEW  
LEGISLATION  
PROMISED  
TO SAVE OUR  
ENVIRONMENT.**

**WHAT  
HAPPENED?**

**‘Aspirational’ best describes the Government’s 25 Year Environmental Plan which, when launched in January 2018, set out broad, commendable proposals for the environment. The revised NPPF, which followed after two months of anticipation, was expected to deliver on the detail. It didn’t. So we ask, how is this ever going to work?**

We welcome this inclination of the Government to give increased prominence to environmental issues. However, while we don’t want to be overly negative, there are three concerning issues we can’t ignore. Firstly, there is little in either document to identify who will have responsibility for financing environmental features. Secondly, we question whether, bearing in mind that many developers already put in place the measures mentioned, there will be no seismic change as a result. And thirdly, and perhaps the most alarming, the issue of enforcement has yet to be addressed.

The development industry was reassured that housebuilding is the ultimate priority of both documents. Introducing A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment, Michael Gove said that, “Population growth and economic development will mean more demand for housing and this government is committed to building many more homes” – but also that, “we will ensure that we support development and the environment by embedding the principle that new developments should result in net environmental gain.” Essentially that any neglected or degraded land should be restored and returned to health, so wildlife may flourish. Further, the document says the planning industry needs to consider and improve biodiversity.

**“THE  
PLANNING  
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CONSIDER  
AND IMPROVE  
BIODIVERSITY”**



**“CURRENTLY  
WE ARE  
BATTERED  
BY A PERFECT  
STORM  
OF POLICY”**

‘Net environmental gain’ is a phrase that appears frequently. Until now, developer attitudes towards environmental benefits were that they were ‘nice to have’, but a ‘net environmental gain’ is something quite different. Developers are not always known for their philanthropic approach to delivering sustainability. On completion of a new development, the responsibility is usually passed to the occupiers.

Far from dismissing environmental benefits as a financial liability, the Government now proposes that ‘natural capital’ would add significant value to a scheme, in such a way that developers would reap the benefit of the investment.

Surely it’s not that simple to turn a liability into an investment? Of course not. Alas the revised NPPF doesn’t give any insight as to how this might be achieved, and similarly is it not clear how such a financial benefit might be measured.

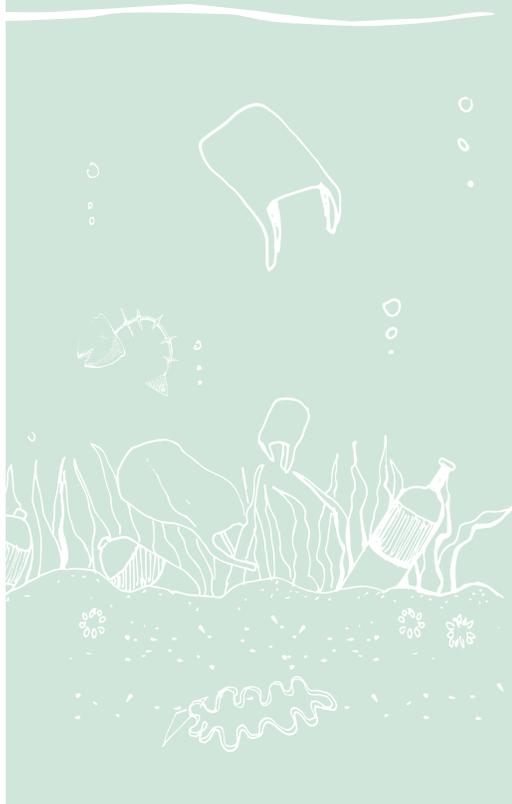
Another concerning element is that there is very little in either document which is not already being done within the planning system, or can be done either through national planning policy guidance or local plans. If the Government’s intention was to introduce developers to new sustainable methods, it needs to pull up its socks and do more.

Consideration needs to be given to enforcement. For environmental benefits to be consistently successful, they require ongoing monitoring and of course a body to enforce this. There’s a great opportunity here to share what works well and what doesn’t and learn from others’ experience, but is there an organisation able to coordinate this? It is unlikely that already over-stretched local authorities would have the capacity to do so.

No reflection on emerging policy would be complete without reference to Brexit – particularly so in the case of environmental policy post-Brexit, the UK government will come under greater pressure to aid in preserving our natural environment.

While we all have the best intentions to play our part in bringing about a greener, healthier, more sustainable future for the next generation, at the moment this is nothing but broad aspirations. Currently we are battered by a perfect storm of policy with the 25 Year Environmental Plan, revised NPPF, a new Housing Bill, a Clean Growth Strategy, an Industrial Strategy, and the Review of Building Regulations.

There is an opportunity here to make a difference, but questions as to who will pay, inspire and enforce are not pedantic: they are the essence of whether the plan can really work in reality.



## WHY DO WE NEED TO ACT QUICKLY?

We looked at the statistics of the current state of our earth



FOR EVERY 100M OF BRITISH BEACH, THERE ARE OVER **200** PLASTIC OR POLYSTYRENE ITEMS



A NAPPY WILL BE ON EARTH FOR **450 YEARS**, OVER FIVE TIMES THE AVERAGE UK LIFE EXPECTANCY



ONLY **1 IN 400** DISPOSABLE COFFEE CUPS IS RECYCLED IN THE UK



THE ARCTIC SEA LEVEL IS RISING BY **13.2%** PER DECADE

AROUND **33%** OF THE GREAT BARRIER REEF HAS BEEN DAMAGED BY CORAL BLEACHING

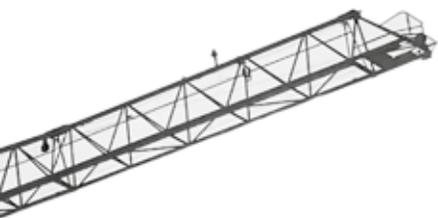
PLASTIC WASTE IN THE SEA WILL **OUTWEIGH** FISH BY 2050



# DO WE HAVE A LAND BANKING CRISIS?

**On the 5th March 2018, Prime Minister Theresa May accused developers of failing in their duty to their country by sitting on land and watching its value rise, instead of building housing. However, is this bold allegation true? Planning & Development Insite gives the Home Builders Federation a chance to respond.**





It was over a century ago that Mark Twain said with great premonition, “Buy land. They’re not making it anymore.” He was right then, but it is unlikely he would have anticipated quite how politically charged the value – specifically the ‘bankable’ value - of land might become.

The development industry has been tarnished with accusations of land banking for years. Accusations such as The Guardian’s description of “a vicious cycle” and “a speculative feeding frenzy”, and Shelter’s claim that the current land bank of the ten largest listed developers could provide 404,040 homes, warrant some exploration.

According to the valuation office, the average price of agricultural land in England is £21,000 per hectare, while land with planning permission for housing is £6m per hectare: an increase of almost 3,000%.

This begs the question, why would developers choose not to realise such a powerful asset?

Stewart Baseley, executive chairman of the Home Builders Federation is adamant: “When you look beyond the rhetoric and the lazy accusations, the facts are quite clear: house builders do not hoard land or land bank unnecessarily.

“The debate really needs to be about how we get the land through the planning system more quickly, not about myths. The planning process is complex, bureaucratic, costly and time consuming. As a result, housebuilders need a pipeline of land.”

Research by the HBF shows that just 4% of land owned by Britain’s larger housebuilders has an implementable planning permission but is yet to be developed and that virtually all remaining land in ‘land banks’ is ‘land in progress’.

“Housing delivery is up 74% in four years,” states Baseley, “And the fact more applications are being submitted demonstrates a commitment to build. The onus is on local authorities to ensure they have up-to-date local plans and efficient processes to grant buildable permissions.”

Daniel Sherwood, Carter Jonas, agrees. “We would welcome a more efficient approach. More often than not housebuilders, having gone to the time, effort and expense of gaining planning permission, are chomping at the bit to get going. It’s communication with local authorities that invariably holds them back. I have never known a client sit on a site for purely commercial reasons. Investing in an asset and ignoring it isn’t in their interests”.

Large schemes are often more complex than smaller ones. “It is no coincidence,” says Baseley, “That since the introduction of the NPPF in 2012, the number of plots included in the average residential planning permission, has increased by around 25%. Very large sites can be more complex and costly to prepare, often requiring significant upfront infrastructure and frequently comprising more than a single developer.”

Daniel Sherwood questions whether the phenomenon of land banking is in fact a consequence of our system rather than a deliberate attempt to control the market. “In addition to a regrettable but inevitable time lag in the planning process many factors should be taken into account. Initially, land sales must be completed. Negotiations need to take place with third parties, such as highways and utilities providers, and remediation works carried out. All of this and more needs to take place before the first digger arrives on site.”

However isn’t the highly criticised concept of speculative development central to the development process? Yes, strategic land buying is a core component of some of the UK’s best developments.

“The most worrying thing about the perception that land banking is taking place is that it shows a complete misunderstanding of the whole industry,” says Daniel Sherwood. “What business would spend hundreds of thousands of pounds securing planning permission for a site, purchase it for millions of pounds and then sit on it, making no return, whilst hoping house prices improve? The housebuilder’s cash flow and business model simply doesn’t allow for such speculation.”

The development industry will await the Letwin Review this Autumn with interest. But apart from further policy revisions, what steps if any, should be taken? As suggested by the Labour Party, is the knee-jerk reaction of compulsory purchase viable? Or is the length of time between consent and completion simply a product of our system and one which can’t change?

Or is there really an issue at all? As Baseley says, “Even if there were 450k permissions out there, that is only about 18 months’ supply at current build rates”. Is a developer wrong to plan ahead by 18 months?

It seems that Theresa May’s call for developers to “step up and do their bit” may not be the answer to the housing crisis, or as straight forward as she is proposing, but either way there are certainly two sides to this argument.

*–Daniel Sherwood provides development land consultancy and agency services throughout the North of England. He’s an expert in the negotiation of development agreements including: options, promotion agreements and conditional contracts with associated valuation, strategy and viability advice.*

**“TERRORISTS  
ARE JUST AS ADEPT  
AT SCANNING  
PLANNING RECORDS  
AS ANY SURVEYOR  
OR AGENT”**

*An imaginative solution: The giant ARSENAL letters outside the Emirates stadium are there to protect against vehicle attack*

*Editorial credit: Philip Willcocks / Shutterstock.com*



# COULD OUR PLANNING SYSTEM WORK HARDER TO PREVENT TERRORIST ATTACKS?

The need for new build schemes to design-in anti-terrorism measures is of increasing importance. But in providing detailed information in publicly available planning applications, are we at risk of inadvertently assisting terrorists? Planning & Development InSite spoke to *Katy Davis*, partner at Carter Jonas.



On Thursday 7 July 2005 Katy Davis left home in Clapham, south London, at around 8am. The then 24-year old planner was on her way to the RICS headquarters, opposite the Palace of Westminster. What became known as 7/7 was the deadline for her APC submission. At 8.49 am bombs exploded in three tube trains, near Liverpool Street, Kings Cross and Edgware Road stations. An hour later the top was ripped off a bus in Russell Square. Tragically, a total of 52 people died.

Planning defences against terrorism now interest Katy, specifically designing-in measures against what the police call MTAs: Marauding Terrorist Attacks. In March 2017 four pedestrians were killed by a terrorist’s van careering along Westminster Bridge. Three months later, terrorists drove a van over

London Bridge and carried out attacks around Borough Market. Eight people died. “There is certainly more emphasis on terrorism now than there ever has been,” says Katy. “If you talk to the Met Police they will say they have been discussing this for decades, but now people are finally listening.”

“But we don’t want our cities to look like places where people are living in fear. No one wants to have ugly steel bollards everywhere. Developers need to think about making buildings secure at the early design stage. It may not be the first thought that comes to mind, but it should be one of them. Owners have not only got to protect their staff, but people around the base of the building too.” Davis cites the giant Arsenal letters outside the Emirates stadium. “They are there to protect against vehicle attack

but you wouldn’t know it. Imagination is needed. It’s amazing what you can do at the early design stage.”

However, the amount of detailed development information posted on the internet has ballooned in recent years, partly due to ease of posting. Katy has two worries. One, the simpler it becomes to generate, distribute and review information, the more it seems to be demanded. Both public and private sector planners need to question what might be called ‘planning bloat’. Yet, she also has a more pressing worry.

“We have got to be very aware of what information is put on the public record.” The suggestion being that terrorists are just as adept at scanning planning records as any surveyor or agent. “At the moment we are making all information available: building plans,



Editorial credit:  
Claudio Divizia / Shutterstock.com

## “WE DON’T WANT OUR CITIES TO LOOK LIKE PLACES WHERE PEOPLE ARE LIVING IN FEAR”

escape routes, everything. Applications now need to have the details of anti-terror measures employed. Should all this information be in the public domain? Information on the measures used to protect existing public buildings is never disclosed. Councils ought to think more about the use of ‘Sensitive Information in Planning Applications’ and what is made public in private planning applications.”

*–Katy Davis is a chartered planning and development surveyor specialising in securing planning permission for major residentially-led and mixed-use developments in London. One of her current instructions includes advising Brentford Football Club and Be Eco World on the delivery of Brentford’s new stadium, supported by 910 build to rent and for sale homes.*

## WHAT IS ‘PLANNING BLOAT’?

“If I were to list the reports that have to be put in some applications you would think the world had gone mad.” says Katy. “There has been talk for years about streamlining applications. The Killian Pretty review of 2008 recommended that applications should be made clearer, simpler and more proportionate. Nothing of consequence has happened. The Government still talks about ‘streamlining the planning process. I think you almost need to rip it up and start again’.

“Outline planning applications have almost lost their function, with some authorities requesting extensive amounts of ‘indicative’ information akin to a detailed application. Examples include details of construction sequencing and routes of delivery vehicles, a flood evacuation plan and car park management plan. Some of this may not even be known at the application stage, especially if not being promoted by the end developer.

“Applications that used to be three inches deep now fill three boxes. Authorities want full-on detail. Why do they need to know what sort of nesting boxes are specified? The problem is, planning committees tend to benchmark themselves against each other. If one starts asking for a specific report, so will all the others. The result? Planning bloat. If Council A asks for 15 reports on a 10-unit site as well as 100-unit site, so does Council B.

“There is more and more expectation that applicants need to go through the pre-application advice process first before making an application; yet any pre-application advice is without prejudice. Our suggestion would be for all this work to be given some weight and form a material consideration in the determination of a planning application.” Surely some information is better captured by building regulations rather than the planning system?

“There is also the issue of public safety. Unfortunate events such as the Grenfell fire and London/Manchester terrorist events have increased the requirements for public safety measures to be documented: a sensible idea, hard to argue against. However, not all this needs to be documented in a planning submission. It’s like providing the bank robber with the plans to the vault.”

**IS OUR INDUSTRY  
DOING ENOUGH TO  
CLOSE THE GENDER**

**G A P ?**

**Diversity is currently the 'hot topic' of the moment and rightly so. 2018 marks a century since women were given the vote, however many industries are still crying out that more has to be done to level the playing field. Planning & Development Insite considers whether the property world is 'dragging its heels', or moving fast enough in the right direction. We spoke to *Jo Williams*, national chairman of Women in Property.**

The membership of the increasingly powerful Women in Property organisation, which has existed for the past 30 years, represents what is sadly still a significant minority of women in the business. Jo Williams, a building consultancy partner at Sanderson Weatherall, is the newly appointed national chairman. Having worked in the property industry since 1995, she is all too familiar with the barriers that women face in the workplace.

“Currently women represent 15% of the property and construction industry workforce,” says Williams. “We are continually working to increase that figure, however, there’s still much work to do. After more than 30 years of raising awareness of the issues faced, things are finally changing. It seems that the industry is having a lightbulb moment and understanding that, apart from the positive and cultural aspects of a balanced workforce, there is a strong business case for diversity.”

“Some really good work is being done by companies who understand there is a better way. Subjects that were, at best, irritants and, at worst, forgotten, are now on the agenda in most enlightened boardrooms. They include flexible working for men and women, recruitment policies to encourage diversity, parental leave, a greater number of female senior staff and tackling the gender pay gap.”

The case for diversity is indisputable, echoed across a range of sectors and a range of minority groups. It is widely recognised that diversity is not just about box-ticking but benefits business directly, with clients and the public increasingly expecting to see a varied workforce. Millennials, we hear, are increasingly discerning about the make-up of a workforce. It is no coincidence that recent research carried out by McKinsey & Company identified that firms in the top quartiles for gender diversity and ethnic diversity are,

respectively, 21% and 33% more likely to have higher profits than those in the bottom quartiles.

### “IN 2017 NO FEWER THAN 53% OF THE RTPI’S NEW MEMBERS WERE FEMALE”

“Within the planning and development industries there are additional benefits of having a workforce representative of the wider population,” comments Emma Jewson, partner at Carter Jonas, a past chairman of the Women In Property Thames Valley branch. “Planners and development specialists create new communities. A diversity of skills and insights from the widest possible range of backgrounds and perspectives enables us to do so much more. When involving a local population on a planning issue, the expression ‘hard-to-reach’ is used all too frequently. If we were more representative of any given community, reaching those individuals would be less of an issue.”

And in fact, although the 15% female representation figure is disappointing, planning is clearly at the forefront of change: in 2017 no fewer than 53% of the RTPI’s new members were female.

While this statistic is encouraging, it means that there are also areas of the property world with significantly fewer than 15% women. Jo Williams explains what Women in Property is doing to bring about change in these areas: “We have been working hard to correct the gender imbalance in specific areas of the industry, encouraging girls considering career options to ‘think built environment’ and supporting women through mid-career and upwards. Aspiration, success and inspiration are very much woven into the fabric of the organisation.

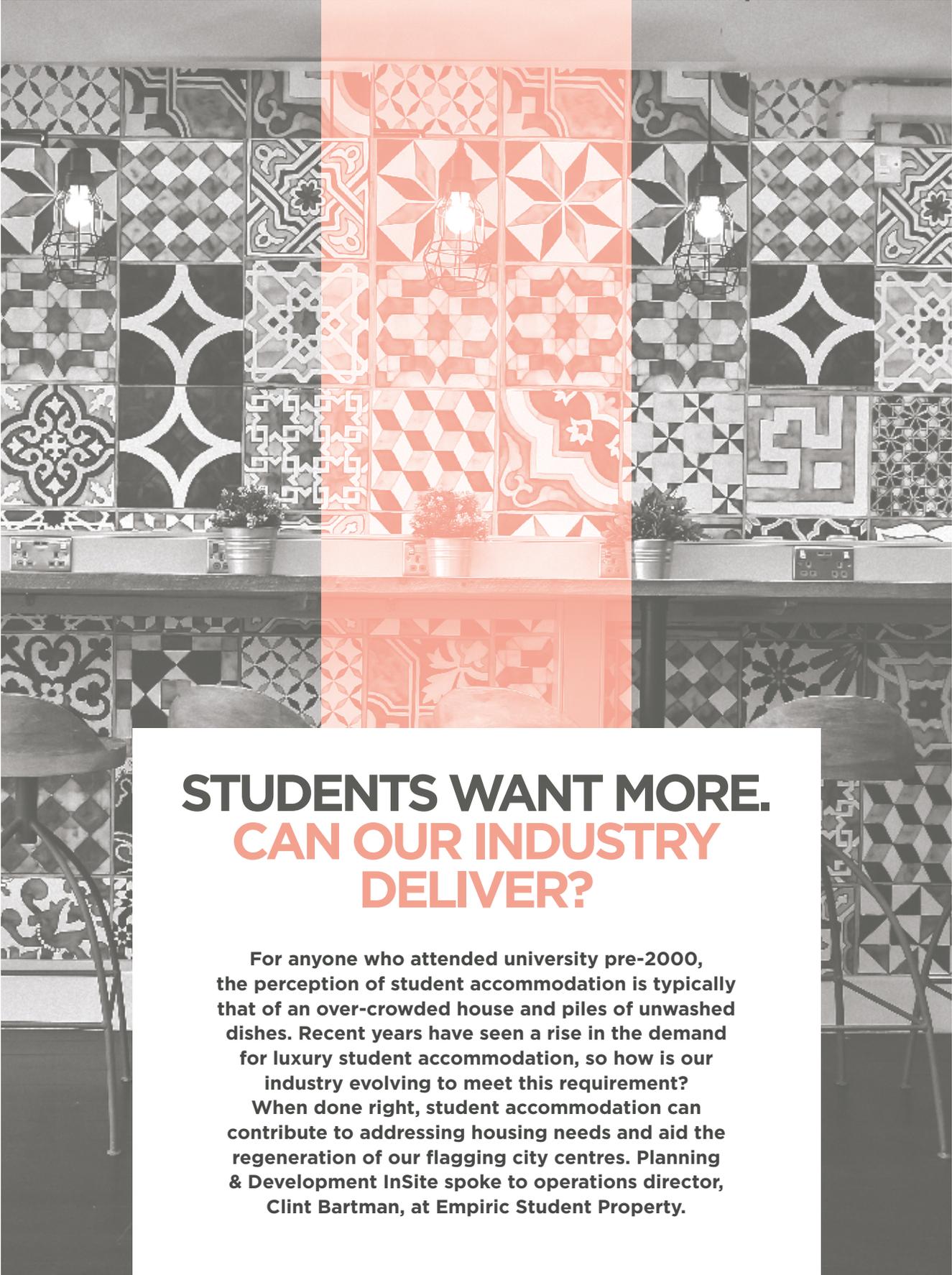
“If we are to truly tackle diversity and improve gender balance in our industry,

we must make all property professions more attractive to young women. This includes ensuring excellent career development and progression. It means having more women in senior positions – their role models.”

“We have a number of programmes and initiatives that have been part of our offer to the industry for some years. For example, we run unconscious bias workshops for individual businesses to help their teams understand how insidious bias can be and how we are all susceptible to it. We also talk to businesses about our mentoring programme which guides them on how they can progress, become more visible and make an impact. Aside from this, we offer practical advice on really important issues such as parental leave and flexible working – the two biggest culprits when it comes to losing highly experienced staff at that mid-career moment.”

No conversation about gender inequality would be complete without the question of women-only shortlists and other forms of positive discrimination. Williams is very firm on this point. “Women in Property doesn’t advocate quotas to instil change – we think this could be tokenistic – but we do encourage targets. Women want to be promoted to senior roles on their own merit. This is not about working against our male colleagues, far from it. It is time gender was taken out of the equation. This is about best practice, a positive productive work environment for all. I believe we’re getting there. The generation coming through will enter a workplace that has made significant changes already.” From where the industry was 30 years ago, it’s a seismic shift.

*–Emma Jewson, partner, is a chartered surveyor with over 25 years of experience in the property industry, delivering development advice including valuation, strategy and agency services to a wide range of client across both the residential and commercial sectors.*



## **STUDENTS WANT MORE. CAN OUR INDUSTRY DELIVER?**

**For anyone who attended university pre-2000, the perception of student accommodation is typically that of an over-crowded house and piles of unwashed dishes. Recent years have seen a rise in the demand for luxury student accommodation, so how is our industry evolving to meet this requirement?**

**When done right, student accommodation can contribute to addressing housing needs and aid the regeneration of our flagging city centres. Planning & Development InSite spoke to operations director, Clint Bartman, at Empiric Student Property.**



*Left:  
Talbot Studios,  
Nottingham*

*Right:  
Windsor House,  
Cardiff*

**“WE DON'T  
DO HALLS,  
DORMS OR  
DIGS. WE DO  
HOMES”**

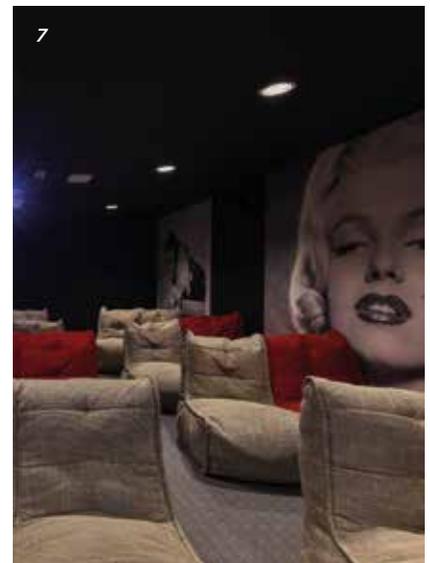
‘We don’t do halls, dorms or digs. We do homes’ is the slogan of premium student accommodation management company, Hello Student! owned by Empiric Student Property. “We pride ourselves on our substantial understanding of the student as a consumer and the emphasis on the customer experience when they stay with us.”

Bartman explains the rapid transformation of student accommodation as responding to the substantial investment that students make in their education: “Today’s students are spending a considerable amount of money on university fees. Their need for peace and quiet and to avoid unnecessary distraction compels them to choose accommodation which is best suited for study.”

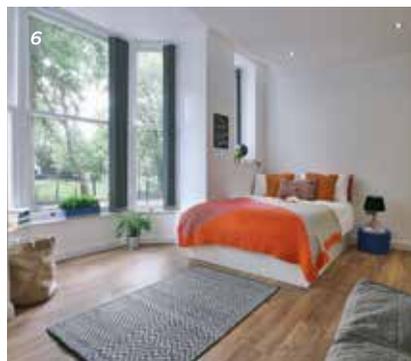
Among the increasingly sophisticated student population, unique accommodation is the

preference. So how are Hello Student! addressing this growing demand? Many Hello Student! properties are distinctive converted buildings such as former schools, chapels and hospitals. The company is always keen to maintain and renovate original features such as fireplaces, mouldings and facades. This, in part, makes for a positive relationship with local authorities.

“We pride ourselves on our relationships with local authorities” Bartman comments. There are a number of reasons for this. Perhaps most importantly, we seek out locations which are centrally located in a city centre and close to the main university campus. This has the double benefit of enlivening city centres, while reducing the number of students living in much needed family homes. Additionally, with student areas tending to be among the less expensive parts of a city, our



3. Europa House, Portsmouth  
4. Provincial House, Sheffield  
5. Provincial House, Sheffield  
6. 134 New Walk, Leicester  
7. Willowbank, Glasgow



brand has a regenerative impact, both aesthetically, economically and in terms of contributions to community infrastructure, such as public art.

“In most of the cities in which we operate there is a shortfall of student accommodation and a local push, where possible, to give homes back to families. By focusing student accommodation in city centres and near universities it reduces the spread of students into established areas.”

The focus on conversions raises the question, does Hello Student! use the PDR route to convert unused commercial buildings into student accommodation? “This is rare, because of the boutique nature of our schemes, but has been used on occasions. In cases such as these we will not act as developer, but will forward fund the development of a scheme. The guidance of local planning consultants is a priority for us, as it assists us with establishing and creating positive relationships with local authorities.”

Build to Rent is also a mechanism used by Hello Student in certain circumstances – more often than not at the local authority’s request, or because the scheme has existing planning consent for private rent. While this use type has financial advantages, as empty units can be let on the open market and not just to students, it tends to be

avoided because it doesn’t sit easily with the communal focus which is so central to the Hello Student! brand.

Without a doubt, the unique student developments that Hello Student! create and operate are so much more than bricks and mortar. Not only does Hello Student! select unique and interesting buildings but accommodation is more akin to that of a boutique hotel than of digs. Their offering features double beds, en-suite bathrooms, high speed broadband and frequently a kitchenette. Communal spaces include fully kitted gyms, cinemas and games rooms with services exceeding those of a hotel, encompassing social events, welfare monitoring and the all-important facility for receiving and storing Amazon parcels.

Hello Student’s unique product which has proved so successful to date is testament to the fact that the landscape of the student accommodation sector has dramatically evolved in recent years. Our industry will need to wake-up to this realisation if we’re to meet these ever increasing and drastically different requirements. In the near future we expect to see an increase in innovative developers taking on the opportunities offered through planning vehicles such as PDR and build to rent. Watch this space.

**“WE PRIDE OURSELVES ON OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES”**



# LAST ORDERS FOR



# THE BRITISH PUB?

The prolific writer and historian Hilaire Belloc declared in 1912, "When you have lost your inns, drown your empty shelves, for you will have lost the last of England." The UK has lost 30,000 pubs in the past 40 years, but is this a matter for concern? And more specifically, as many have claimed, is it a matter for which the development industry is responsible?

## “PUBS INVESTING IN THE RIGHT MARKET, AND MORE IMPORTANTLY THE RIGHT LOCATION, ARE BUCKING THE TREND”

With the exception of churches, pubs are perhaps the oldest social institution in built form, on a par with the café culture of Paris or the souks of Marrakesh. Yet legislation such as the 2007 smoking ban, competition from the falling price of alcohol in supermarkets and shifts in consumer behaviour appear to have conspired against pubs.

Despite all this, the most commonly held view is that too many pubs are lost as a result of gentrification. The fact is that the value of a pub increases significantly with planning consent for residential use. And with large car parks, gardens and popular locations, pub sites are ideal for redevelopment or even conversion into apartments.

Planning policy has frequently intervened to protect pubs, though its success is not conclusive. Across the country, some local authorities have introduced Interim Planning Policy Guidance aimed at protecting pubs, together with measures such as providing viability and marketing assistance to pub owners.

Colin Brown, partner at Carter Jonas, has substantial experience in converting pubs, not only into residential schemes but also into more successful pubs often as part of a mixed-use scheme alongside new development.

“We have seen a range of new entrants on the pub scene: small independent companies which have taken on failing pubs and have

managed to introduce new audiences, new ranges of food and beverages, and completely turned them around. For example, City Pub Co. is a success across the South of England. They don’t just take on existing pubs, but also other quirky buildings such as shops and cinemas, even the ticket office of a railway station.

“Pubs investing in the right market, and more importantly the right location, are bucking the trend – none more so than the City Pub Co’s Georgian Townhouse in Norwich which is a conversion of a house to a pub!”

And as for pubs which are deemed to be assets of community value, the Localism Act legislated to protect them from extinction, albeit with varying levels of success. Colin Brown comments, “We currently have a situation whereby a client bought a struggling pub and wanted to demolish it and build two new houses in its place. The local community considered the pub an asset of community value and have had it designated as such. This effectively means that the site can’t be redeveloped or even sold for six months in order to allow for the local community to put in a bid.

“But the legislation isn’t necessarily the solution that it was set out to be. After all, it’s rare that a local community possesses both the funds to purchase such businesses and the required experience to make them

profitable, although there are some notable examples. The owner of the site is not however duty bound to sell to the community group, so it may be argued that the legislation buys time but does not always lead to the expected outcomes.”

The recently published draft NPPF contains a clause which states that, “Planning policies and decisions should enable the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.” Alongside the prerequisite of delivering more homes of course.

So legislation exists to protect pubs, residential developments have been shown to come to the rescue of failing pubs, and ultimately those that have the potential to succeed, do succeed.

Returning to Hilaire Belloc’s words, it would seem premature to ‘drown your empty selves’ over the demise of the British pub. Our pint glass is half full, rather than half empty, and raised in celebration of the fact that British pub culture, frequently in a new and improved form, is here to stay.

*– Colin Brown, partner, is head of the Planning & Development Team in the eastern region. He has over 25 years’ of planning experience. Colin has been involved in all aspects of statutory planning from both a public and private sector perspective.*



olive

a smiling life...  
Chicken Teriyaki, Salad with  
medicines and Seeds

Quail, Salmon Energy,  
Tomato, Green and Onions

Open Chicken Caesar Salad

Smiling, sweet...

to share  
Vanilla Caramel Males, Bites  
Spring Roll

# HOW CAN WE HELP INSPIRE THE NEXT GENERATION INTO THE PROPERTY WORLD?

**The Pathways to Property initiative was set up in 2012 by leading figures in the property industry, headed by British Land chief executive, Chris Grigg. A consensus had emerged that too many entrants to the sector were from the same background, many with family connections in a related business. Whilst current statistics serve as a reminder that our industry as a whole still needs to work on equality, the Pathways to Property scheme is at the forefront of diversifying the next generation. Property should be more accessible and attractive to a wider audience. We caught up with a programme graduate and the programme director.**

## **ELEANOR'S TALE**

Eleanor Prince, now 22, took the first step on her career pathway in 2013. At the time Eleanor was in the lower-sixth at a large comprehensive school.

"I was browsing the University of Reading website and noticed this small advert for Pathways to Property" says Eleanor, who had already completed her GCSE's. "After taking a look, I thought property sounded like an area which covered a wide range of skill sets, so I applied for the 2013 Summer School. I thought it would at least give me the opportunity to have a think about what I wanted to do."

"There was a wide variety of people on the course" says Eleanor. "I enjoyed the lectures on sustainability and property law especially". That summer school was the first-ever for Pathways to Property.

Eleanor's A-levels assured her of a place on the BSc (Hons) Degree in

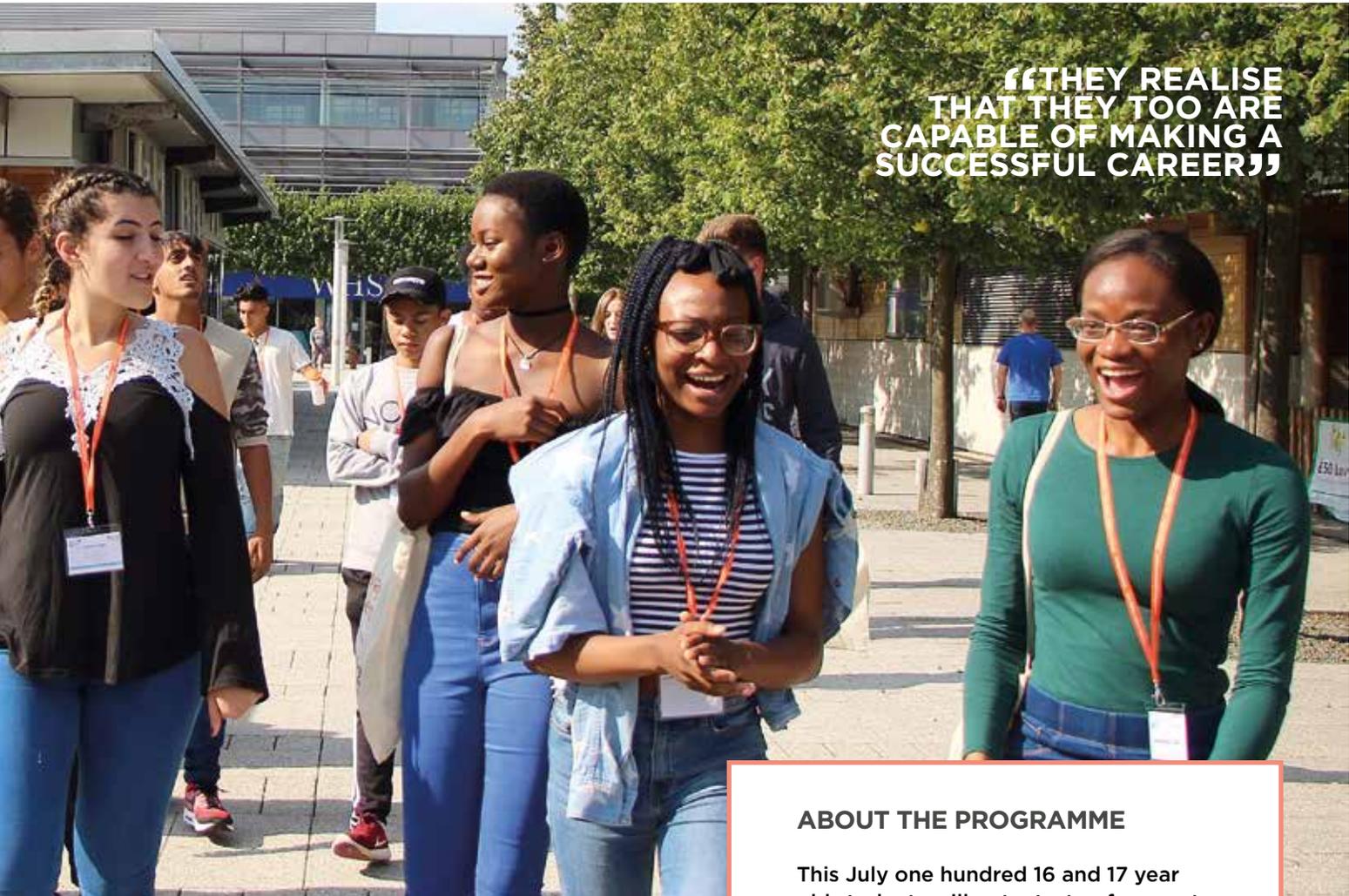


Real Estate at Henley Business School, University of Reading. Work placements came at Savills, Gerald Eve, BNP Paribas and in September 2016 at Lateral Property, after winning a prize from the developer for a project on partnerships in urban development. Eleanor has worked in the CPO and valuation teams since winning a place on the GVA graduate scheme in September 2017. "I am not sure what specialism I will end up with yet."

## **JEAN-PIERRE'S TALE**

Jean-Pierre Choulet is director of alumni and development at the Henley Business School, which merged with Reading University in 2008. The former Vice President for Strategy and Development at the 'Grandes école' ESSEC Business School in Paris oversees the Pathways to Property summer school.

"These young students discover what they are capable of doing," says Jean-



“THEY REALISE  
THAT THEY TOO ARE  
CAPABLE OF MAKING A  
SUCCESSFUL CAREER”

Pierre. “For the first time in their lives they are exposed to top executives. Their self-worth soars when they present their projects and see the approval of influential people in the industry. They realise that they too are capable of making a successful career. It is wonderful to see. So far, 23% of those who have attended the summer schools have gone on to take property degrees.

A few get bursaries, donated by supporting companies. Jean-Pierre would like to be able to offer financial assistance to all who go on to degree courses, which last three years. That means raising enough money to pay for at least 30 students. “We have been surprised and gratified by the success of the programme. We want to double or triple the number of scholarships. That is my next task. To raise enough money.”

### ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

**This July one hundred 16 and 17 year old students will get a taste of property at the summer school, the sixth programme run under the Pathways to Property initiative. The course was set up by the Reading Real Estate Foundation (REEF) and takes place at the University of Reading’s Henley Business School.**

Over the past five years the Pathways programme has:

- Engaged with more than 10,000 students, 2,500 teachers and careers advisors
- Run five summer schools attended by 410 students
- Given work placements to 175 students
- Offered Reading property degree places to 25 students

Carter Jonas are a proud sponsor of Pathways to Property. If you are interested in a career in property, or would like to support the Pathways to Property initiative, please contact Emily Archer at [Pathways2Property@reading.ac.uk](mailto:Pathways2Property@reading.ac.uk)

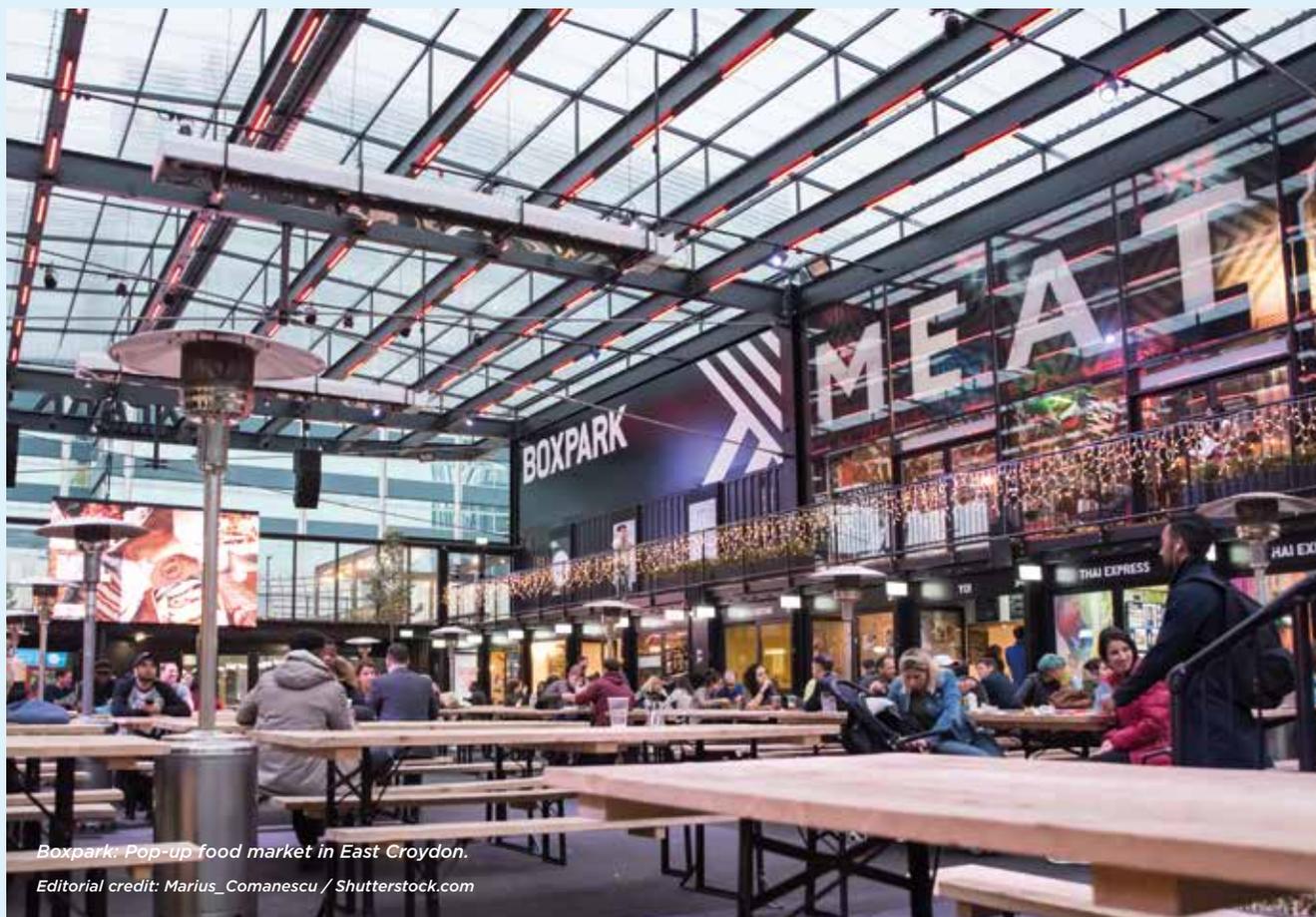


**“WE HAVE A  
LONG TERM INTEREST  
AND A BROADER  
REMIT THAN SIMPLY  
BUILDING HOUSES”**

# A REGENERATION SUCCESS STORY.

## WHAT CAN BRITAIN'S COUNCILS LEARN?

Croydon Council's chief executive, *Jo Negrini*, has in her words, "the best regeneration job in London" overseeing a unique and substantial regeneration model which provides 51% affordable housing. Planning & Development InSite spoke to her about the potential for other local authorities across the UK to follow the same approach.



Boxpark: Pop-up food market in East Croydon.  
 Editorial credit: Marius\_Comanescu / Shutterstock.com

Jo Negrini has set herself an ambitious challenge: to change perceptions of regeneration. As she explains, “All too often regeneration is associated with developers profiting over property development and local communities are rightly sceptical of that. Regeneration isn’t just about the physical stuff – buildings and infrastructure – it’s about changing people’s lives on every level.”

Four years into a major transformation of their town, the people of Croydon are already experiencing the comprehensive benefits of regeneration thanks to this resident-focused approach.

Originally from Australia, Negrini gained a degree in Town Planning from the University of New South Wales but left Australia for a career in London local authorities.

As Lambeth’s director of regeneration from 2007 – 2010, she was responsible for the award-winning Windrush

Square and Clapham One schemes. She then took on the post of director of strategic regeneration, planning and Olympic legacy at Newham for the four years which encompassed the London Olympic Games. Moving to Croydon as executive director for place in 2014, Negrini was promoted to chief executive within two years.

**“WE HAVE TO COMMUNICATE THE NEED FOR GREATER DENSITY”**

Throughout her career, Negrini’s focus has been regeneration. “My early experience of working on housing estates and talking directly to residents about their particular needs was the ideal foundation for my career and is an important influence in my role as chief executive.”



Over the past four years Negrini has been instrumental in driving Croydon's growth and devolution agenda through Brick by Brick, which she established with Colm Lacey in 2014 with the aim of delivering a thousand new and affordable homes across the borough by 2019.

Brick by Brick is a private, independent company of which the Council is the sole shareholder. It aims to deliver over 50% affordable housing. Profits from land value uplift and development returns are reinvested – meaning that the full value of development growth is kept in the borough, to be invested in further affordable housing, infrastructure or services. This level of reinvestment would have been impossible using a private sector development company.

"When you're a local authority you're coming from a different place", explains Negrini. "We want to increase the supply of the right amount of homes to get a good mix of affordable housing across a range of tenures. But you also have a bigger responsibility: we have a long term interest and a broader remit

than simply building houses. We carry responsibilities that developers don't and if we do something wrong, or are perceived to have done something wrong, that will stick with us."

Hence the importance of communication. "We really value consultation, not because we have to do it but because we want to. We have a difficult message to communicate. Living in an outer London borough, many of our residents are used to bungalows with large gardens and extensive green views. And yet with 5,000 new residents coming to Croydon each year, we have to communicate the need for greater density. I find that these types of conversations have to take place face-to-face, when the dialogue is appropriate and well-managed it is generally successful."

"And we're not in the same environment now as we were five years ago. This is a result of some very large scale schemes across London, which have stalled people's expectations of regeneration. The key role for both local authorities and developers is recalibrating the relationship with local

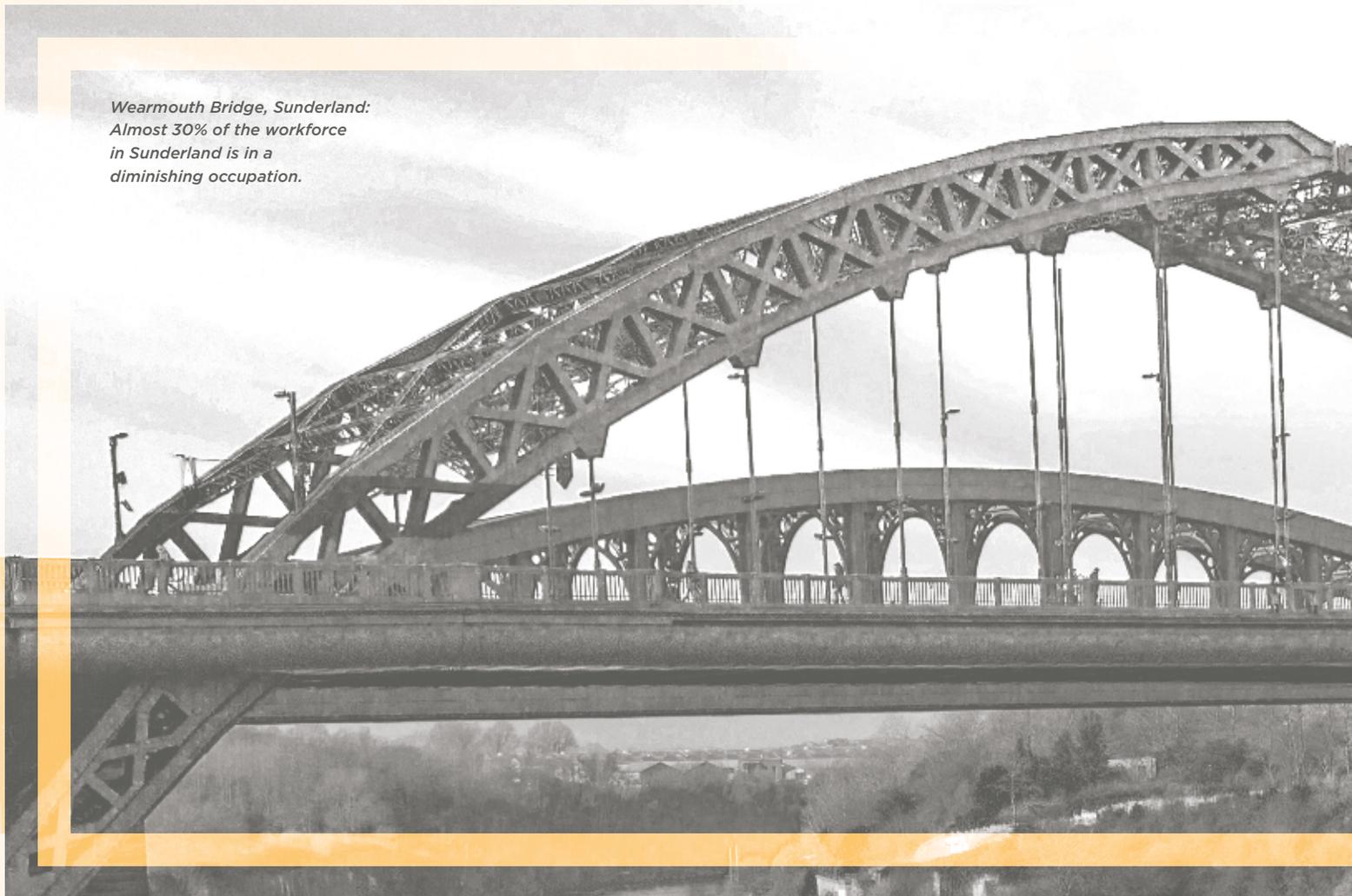
people across all schemes, taking into account this new groundswell, communicating the real value of regeneration and winning trust."

## “OVER THE PAST FOUR YEARS NEGRINI HAS BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN DRIVING CROYDON'S GROWTH”

Councils up and down the country have set up their own development vehicles, some partnering with developers, others with investors. But the strength of Brick by Brick is that the Council has provided the initial capital funding, which, recycled internally, enables a continual investment in affordable housing.

So is this model only suitable for wealthier councils? "It's not so much about wealth as attitude towards risk. We are very lucky in Croydon that the administration set affordable housing as its top priority and was prepared to speculate to achieve this.

*Wearmouth Bridge, Sunderland:  
Almost 30% of the workforce  
in Sunderland is in a  
diminishing occupation.*



**Political and social pressures mean that our UK cities are facing a faster pace of change than ever before, increasing the north and south divide. So what are the issues impacting on our northern cities and how can the planning and development industry use changing trends to implement positive change?**

Our cities are the lifeblood of our economy, but they are also very volatile. Centre for Cities' Cities Outlook: a study of how UK cities are changing shows that productivity fell in 83% of cities last year, putting jobs at risk.

Overall, 1 in 5 jobs in cities across Great Britain is in an occupation that is very likely to shrink. This amounts to approximately 3.6 million jobs, or 20.2% of the current workforce in cities. Cities outside the South of England are more exposed to job losses. In Mansfield, Sunderland, Wakefield and Stoke almost 30% of the current workforce is in a diminishing occupation, which contrasts sharply with southern cities such as Cambridge and Oxford where fewer than 15% of jobs are at risk.

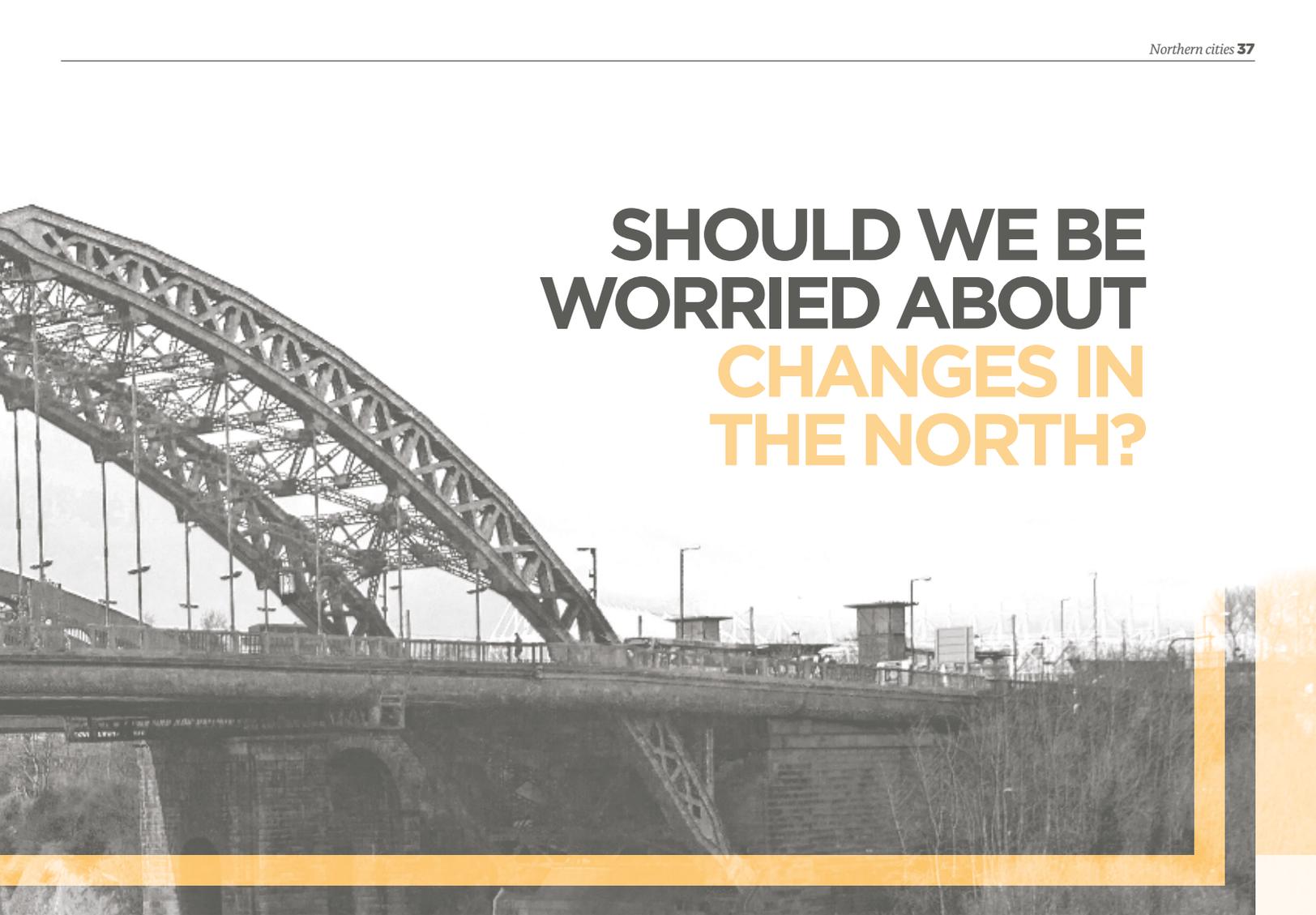
In the Cities Outlook study published in January 2018, Northern England and Scotland were hardest hit as home to 8 out of the 10 slowest-growing cities.

So does this mean the Northern Powerhouse has run of steam already?

Potentially. While the northern cities eagerly await new initiatives to drive growth, they face several challenges in the form of the revised NPPF.

Simon Grundy, head of northern planning, explains, "In November the Government launched what was positioned as a radical solution to calculating housing need, the Planning for the right homes in the right places consultation. The associated formula and methodology for assessing housing need is predicted to form part of the revised NPPF, expected to be published in 2018. The methodology indicates a substantial reduction in housing figures for the north, contrary to the spirit of the Northern Powerhouse."

"As with many parts of the UK, new housing development flat-lined during the recession. We need more good quality homes to support and attract a modern, growing workforce. In recognition of this the Northern Powerhouse needs to unlock residential



# SHOULD WE BE WORRIED ABOUT CHANGES IN THE NORTH?

development opportunities, and yet targets for new the delivery of new homes could be slashed for most northern authorities. For some housing markets in the north this is a major concern, although a good number of councils have indicated a pro-growth agenda and a willingness to allocate more housing land than the baseline methodology would require.

## “DOES THIS MEAN THE NORTHERN POWERHOUSE HAS RUN OF STEAM ALREADY?”

So, what are policymakers doing to address rising concerns and rejuvenate tired towns?

New leadership is one of the ways in which policymakers have looked to address the variety of challenges facing cities. However, city leaders need the powers to tackle these specific problems.

Paul Swinney, head of policy and research at Centre for Cities, comments,

“In the last year, six metro mayors have taken office for the first time, with powers including skills, planning and transport. Along with the Mayor of London, they have a mandate which covers one third of England’s population and their powers are already expanding. The Transforming Cities Fund provides direct allocations of money to the mayors’ offices. Cities in the north of England will directly benefit from this, for example Greater Manchester is soon to put in place a local industrial strategy.

So will these regional policies play an important role in revitalising our concerning job market? Centre for Cities has drawn on some interesting research by The National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (The future of skills: employment in 2030). Paul Swinney comments, “UK charity Nesta has found that there are likely to be more jobs nationally in 2030, but this will play out differently across the country.”

So what can the planning industry do to close the productivity gap, and in doing so reduce the north and south divide? Simon Grundy, summarises the necessary change: “We need an alternative approach to employment, one which reflects the inevitable change. We need to think beyond the flourishing individual tech cities and re-badge the UK as a tech nation, this is where the opportunity lies. This, along with the delivery of major infrastructure investment, would involve effective devolution and regional planning powers which are tailored to specific regions. This would ultimately make efficient use of the Transforming Cities Fund. We also need local industrial strategies which offer a coordinated set of actions to deal with the challenges and opportunities that areas face. This cannot be achieved overnight, but we need to act swiftly.”

– *Simon Grundy, partner, based in Leeds, is head of our northern planning team. His career spans across both the public and private sectors.*

# IS THE UK'S ROUTE TO REGENERATION BRAVE ENOUGH?

**The spotlight is on large-scale infrastructure projects and has been for some time. Crossrail is soon to succeed in its aim of transporting people across central London. As such, investment is already being ploughed into the potential development projects associated with the delivery of HS1 and HS2. However, are we really getting the most out of the £150bn currently scheduled to be invested?**

Robert Smith, partner at Carter Jonas, comments "If we are to capitalise on the real value of major new infrastructure projects, we need a strategic approach. We must ensure the billions spent on new infrastructure enables regeneration and redevelopment across the whole of the UK. If the creation of value is the key driver for investment to take place, infrastructure projects could be confined to areas of high value only, causing an increase in the divide between affluent and poorer areas."

If the required strategic thinking prevails, there are many opportunities on the horizon. For example the East West Rail link, also known as the 'Varsity Line'. "This has to be one of the most exciting new infrastructure projects, linking two of the UK's economic powerhouses which are currently both restrained by Green Belt policies. This investment will not only provide better linkages between the two cities but a number of sustainable new settlements along the route."

In the case of HS1 and HS2, Smith says, "The regenerative benefits are already being reaped before the first train has even departed. It is a refreshing change to visit Birmingham or Sheffield and find a reinvigorated neighbourhood in place of the chaos of a building site, the benefits of which stretch substantially beyond the transport hub itself."

But is a lack of strategic thinking the only limitation currently placed on the UK's future infrastructure projects? "No," says Smith, "our industry needs to adopt an approach to largescale development which is not fettered by traditional thinking - less cyclical and more progressive."

"Take Crossrail for example, at the feasibility stage they sought to explore the regenerative effects of new and redeveloped stations, including the impact further afield. For example, on the outskirts of the M25 and beyond. But will the scheme have this extensive benefit once it is operational? My concern is that as a country, we are simply not bold enough when it comes to maximising the value of major new infrastructure projects. Often our industry needs to be more creative."

So what could Crossrail have done differently? "A more radical approach would have been to entirely re-think the street level between Bond Street and the increasingly tired eastern end of Oxford Street, to level it to the ground and create a 'mini Manhattan' which would have potentially generated significantly more investment and opportunities for regeneration and development."

## **“OFTEN OUR INDUSTRY NEEDS TO BE MORE CREATIVE”**

"Admittedly, daring strategies are difficult in restrained, urban locations where listed buildings or landmark viewing corridors restrict new development."

So could a more strategic approach to infrastructure help address the current housing crisis? There is an irony, Smith explains, in the fact that while transport infrastructure is not always linked to plans for development, in reality new developments often struggle to succeed because of a lack of infrastructure. "Just as the value of a housing scheme is multiplied with the

benefit of good infrastructure, it can also attract huge investment if the wider environment is taken into account at conception.”

“However, we’re heading in the right direction”, says Smith. “There is a new breed of ‘master-developers’ looking to capitalise on the investment in major infrastructure as a core component of some significant new housing-led developments. Lets not forget that we are also seeing a more strategic, long term approach from the Government, the new Ministry of Housing, the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) and Homes England. Yet we still need to realise our weaknesses and address them with further joined up thinking. Does the Ministry of Deference sit down with the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government to jointly determine how they could resolve many social and logistical problems together? And where does the NIC fit in?”

There will always be a balance to be struck between capitalising on planned infrastructure and providing infrastructure to deliver regeneration. But, as always, there is room for improvement and with more strategic thinking, the UK can capitalise on this rather than lose the potential value of major new infrastructure. If, as a country we can be bolder, then perhaps the substantial investment in major new infrastructure projects can be a genuine route to regeneration for the whole of the UK.

*–Robert Smith leads the national strategic land team. He has over 25 years’ experience as a developer and consultant advising private, corporate and public sector bodies on how to extract value from strategic property assets.*

## HS1

### ABOUT:

A 109 km high speed route from St Pancras International to the Channel Tunnel reaching maximum speeds of 300 kph

**COST:** £5.8 billion

**DELIVERY:** Opened on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007

## HS2

### ABOUT:

A planned rail network between London, the west midlands and the north. Trains will reach speeds of 250 mph and seat up to 1,100 people.

**COST:** £55.7 billion

**DELIVERY:** 2018-2033

## CROSSRAIL

### ABOUT:

Also known as the Elizabeth Line, Crossrail will run from Reading and Heathrow in the West, through 42 km of new tunnels under London, to Shenfield and Abbey Wood

**COST:** £14.8 billion

**DELIVERY:** Projections state the line will be fully open by 2019

## CROSSRAIL 2

### ABOUT:

A proposed railway linking the national rail networks in Surrey and Hertfordshire via an underground tunnel through London

**COST:** Expected cost is currently around £30 billion

**DELIVERY:** If plans are approved, projections state the line will open by 2030

## EAST WEST RAIL

### ABOUT:

A strategic railway connecting East Anglia with central, southern and western England

**COST:** £530 million

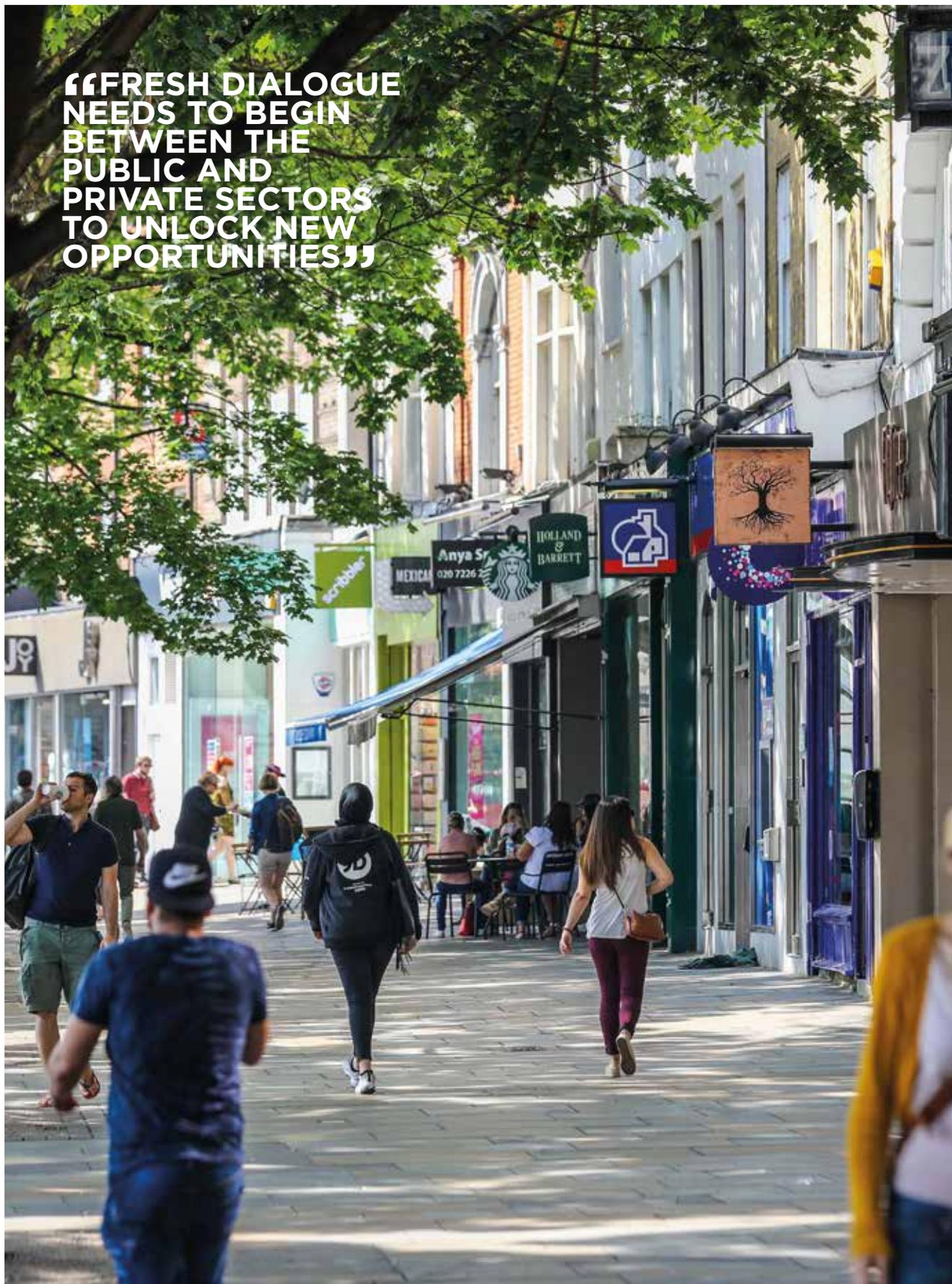
**DELIVERY:** Projections state the line will be fully open in 2030

# CAN WE TURN THE TIDE AND FIX OUR TOWN CENTRES?

For over a decade, our high streets have been battered by the 'perfect storm' of recession, rising business rates and increased competition online.

Carter Jonas is working with Revo, the national membership organisation for retail property and placemaking, on a long term project to understand the extent of the problem and identify some potential solutions.

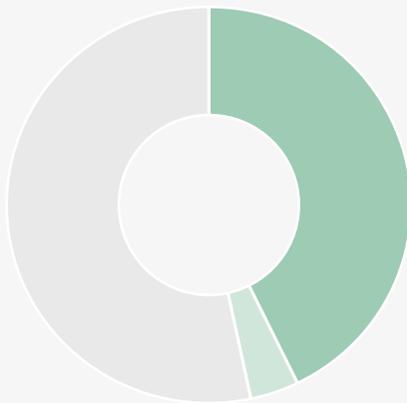
“FRESH DIALOGUE  
NEEDS TO BEGIN  
BETWEEN THE  
PUBLIC AND  
PRIVATE SECTORS  
TO UNLOCK NEW  
OPPORTUNITIES”



**WE SPOKE TO A SELECTION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES, INVESTORS, DEVELOPERS AND OTHER KEY STAKEHOLDERS.**

**BELOW IS A SELECTION OF THE FINDINGS, TO DOWNLOAD THE FULL REPORT VISIT [CARTERJONAS.CO.UK/FIXINGTOWNCENTRES](http://CARTERJONAS.CO.UK/FIXINGTOWNCENTRES)**

### RESPONDENT PROFILE



- Local Authority
- Other Public Sector
- Private Sector

### TOP 3 CHALLENGES FACING BRITAIN'S HIGH STREETS\*

**13.6%**

BUSINESS RATES



**13.6%**

REDUCED RETAILER/ MARKET DEMAND FOR SPACE



**28.4%**

COMPETITION FROM ONLINE SHOPPING



### MOST IMPORTANT INITIATIVES REQUIRED TO DELIVER TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION\*

Respondents could pick multiple answers, the below were ranked the highest.



**53.1%**

SAID IMPROVEMENTS TO, & INVESTMENT IN, THE PUBLIC REALM

**49.4%**

SAID REDUCE BUSINESS RATES

**48.1%**

SAID STRENGTHEN LOCAL & NATIONAL TOWN CENTRE FIRST POLICIES

### HOW ACTIVE ARE TOWN CENTRES IN PRIORITISING REGENERATION?

**76.5%**

OF ALL RESPONDENTS HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN PLANNING, FUNDING AND/ OR DEVELOPING TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION PROJECTS OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS

## PREFERRED FUNDING MODELS FOR REGENERATION PROJECTS

Respondents could pick multiple answers, the below were ranked the highest.

66.1%

SAID  
JOINT  
VENTURES/  
PARTNERSHIPS

51.6%

SAID  
PUBLIC  
SECTOR  
FUNDING

40.3%

SAID  
GRANTS

## TOTAL LOCAL AUTHORITY INVESTMENT INTO COMMERCIAL PROPERTY SECTORS

£3.8 bn

The sector breakdown

SHOPPING  
CENTRES

£0.6 bn

OFFICES

£1.9 bn

RETAIL  
WAREHOUSES

£0.4 bn

OTHER  
SECTORS

£0.9 bn

## WHAT DO THE EXPERTS THINK OUR RESEARCH REVEALS?

**Dr Steve Norris, head of regeneration, Carter Jonas:**

“The future of many of our town centres is under threat from the growth in online shopping, rising occupancy costs, increasing store closures and a lack of private sector investment. Notwithstanding this, our research with Revo has highlighted that the scale of local authority investment in commercial property and town centres has increased over the last five years. Why is this and what are the risks? It can, in part, be attributed to the availability of affordable credit, but it is also born out of a need for local authorities to protect and improve their struggling town centres. But the acquisition of these assets needs to be informed by a broader masterplan or regeneration framework to ensure the investment potential is fully realised and delivers long term social, economic and environmental benefits. The research has also identified that around two-thirds of respondents view joint venture partnerships as the preferred development/funding model. If this is the case then fresh dialogue is needed between the public and private sectors to better understand the different options available to help unlock new opportunities and investment.”

**Ed Cooke, chief executive, Revo:**

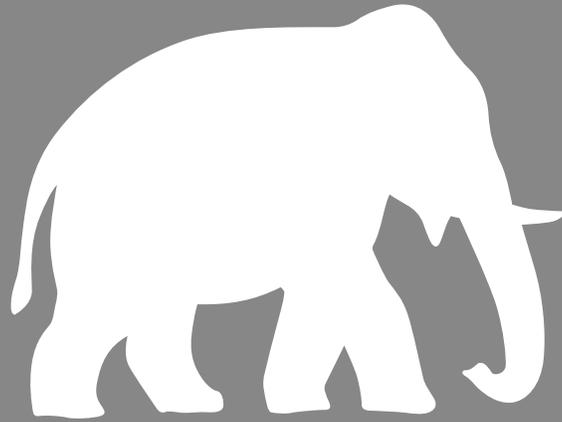
“The statistics show that councils have emerged as significant owners of commercial property. Owning commercial property not only generates long-term income for local authorities, it enables them to play a more active role in reshaping their urban environment to ensure they remain at the heart of communities. Given the pace of change in the retail sector in particular, it is essential that the public sector draws on the expertise and resource available in the private sector to manage and re-position these assets, so they remain relevant, vibrant and income-producing. The future success of the UK’s urban environments relies on better collaboration between the public and private sectors.”

*\*over the next 5 years*

*\*\*by local authorities, 2013-2017*

*Source: Property Data*

*carterjonas.co.uk/fixingtowntowncentres*



# NELLY

## IF SHE'S THERE, WE'LL TELL YOU

Some people only tell you what you want to hear. We're a little different. With the world of property changing as quickly as it is, you need a team smart enough to recognise any issues in the room – and brave enough to tell you they exist...

[carterjonas.co.uk/insite](https://carterjonas.co.uk/insite)

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