BE A PIONEER

“CITIES HAVE THE CAPABILITY OF PROVIDING SOMETHING FOR EVERYBODY, ONLY BECAUSE, AND ONLY WHEN, THEY ARE CREATED BY EVERYBODY.” JANE JACOBS, 1961
“Gardening by Underground” – Stanislaus S Longley (1933) © TFL from the London Transport Museum.
be a

PIONEER
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This submission is a collaboration between Barton Willmore LLP and a specially convened Think-tank comprised of industry professionals including former Government officials, built-environment charities, institutional land owners and academics together with experts on taxation, planning law and sustainable infrastructure. The document is edited by James Gross, masterplanning Director at Barton Willmore.

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A ROAD MAP TOWARDS A UK LANDSCAPE OF NEW GARDEN CITIES

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PREFACE

“His aim was the creation of self-sufficient small towns, really very nice towns if you were docile and had no plans of your own and did not mind spending your life among others with no plans of their own.”


A little unfair, but the Garden Cities were not without their critics.

Much of what has gone wrong with planning and development in the UK today has been due to the demise of the equality of making places. We live in estates designed by others, and in homes possibly not even designed at all. Jacobs criticised the planning profession for the creation of awful places, determined by some, to be better for everybody. However she also noted a vital ingredient in the evolution of great places namely:

“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.”

What’s inside the seed?

Pioneers  Specialists  Implementers  Followers
This difference between pre-determined places, set out according to some omnipotent plan and letting places create themselves (broadly the successful historical precedent that has formed almost every valued and cherished city on the planet) is a major distinction between Howard and Jacobs.

Our model will show how a return to the creative process, one of evolving communities organically, can be delivered. This requires taking the best of what Howard and Jacobs have to offer, revising it to the context of post 1948 planning legislation, the NPPF and the current housing crisis to encourage a new, dynamic generation of sustainable settlements that are simultaneously city, garden, British and egalitarian.

275 Words
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The world is not short of utopian visions or architecturally inspired dream-cities prescribing the ideal environments for living. From ancient history to Ebenezer Howard’s efforts of the Victorian/Edwardian era, there have been countless visions of urban perfection.

Beautiful architectural wallpaper, gilded with high-tech sustainable ‘bling’ might satisfy media wolves, but few such models have ever been grounded in reality.

With our globally unique set of typically British self-imposed, land-strangling planning policies, and intransigently-negative attitude towards development of almost any kind, too much focus on the product would be a mountainous waste of time verging on the profligate.

Instead we have focused on the process. Uncovering what we can use, with some amendment, from existing systems and legislation we already have.

We have set out to tackle the big barriers – peak debt, land assembly and popular, meaningful benefits for communities.

Our strategy is not to necessarily speed up planning. It is instead focused on slowing down the political process, improving longer-term certainty and correcting the imbalance between national growth strategies and constricted local implementation.

Our 10-point road map begins with a vision – the creation of a place by the people who will live and work there.

Looking to the existing Garden Cities, the likes of the TCPA continue to promote large-scale, comprehensive masterplanning. But the places we love and cherish as part of our heritage almost all developed organically, built by a host of players over generations with a masterplan rarely in sight.

We are advocating a return to this organic growth. Set within a framework to provide just enough guidance and certainty for the market, but allowing plenty of free reign for a model of neighbourhood-based city expansion.

London, our greatest city, grew out of a collection of villages, and this same building block remains the single-most trusted form of our developed landscape. We are pushing for cities, yes, and bigger than Letchworth, Welwyn or even Milton Keynes, but in chunks, and with identities that people can relate to.

We agree that Garden Cities should be beautiful, but we have scoured the UK landscape and not uncovered any examples of development built since the 1948 Town and Country Planning Act that can live up to this simple accolade, so gracefully achieved by historic market towns and villages up and down the country.

Neither local authorities, developers, nor house builders are trusted by politicians or the public to deliver beauty in our towns and cities. Economic downturns since 1976 have reduced the number of smaller house builders, therefore limiting local and regional choice for new homes. However, when people are asked what they mean by a home or what their ideal neighbourhood might look like, they consistently come up with timeless buildings and places designed in harmony with their surroundings.
This is not just our view. This submission is the work of an industry wide Think-tank, specially set up to answer the question of this year’s Wölfson Prize. The opinions in this submission are taken from Government, established land-owners, built environment and socially engaged charities and the affordable housing sector, supported by heavyweights on planning law, taxation, energy delivery and funding.

Many of the ideas in this submission need to be developed further. Liaison with the landed estates is something we have begun, but certain doors remain locked. Tens of thousands of acres across the UK sit within family trusts and institutions, some of the best managed and stewarded land in the country. Pooling these sites with big public sector holdings in areas where they intersect with existing or proposed infrastructure such as HS2 and using the land as the security to provide a bond for infrastructure delivery would create an investment opportunity for existing residents and new pioneers to facilitate genuine sharing in the successes of Garden Cities.

Some Patient Money needs to be found to finance this. But many of the bigger landowners are content to keep their land in the deal. Families with centuries of legacy developing, not accountable to shareholders are keen to maintain their association with a place. In an economic climate where land can become one of the largest costs of delivering development, leaving the value in the deal, and using this as a hook to attract investors at all scales could become a game-changer.

However this only functions where planning and other factors are de-risked at the outset. We consider that with the Green Belt having reached its 65th anniversary in 2013, and the abolition of regional plans, a high level review of growth in the UK should be provided from a cross-party base in the House of Lords, arriving at a National Spatial Plan, determining broad areas for Garden Cities.

Our submission has begun to map out where these areas might be, but delivery would remain at a local scale, resting with democratically elected Garden City Mayors, supported by Commissions with planning powers to determine actual locations.

We are recommending that these steps are not taken until a national campaign is commissioned to promote awareness of the dangers future generations will face if we do not tackle large-scale housing delivery now. The aim of the campaign is to come full circle, informing people of the progress on the Garden Cities (and we believe there will need to be several), and acting as a conduit for attracting the pioneers, the future DNA of the cities who will build and settle in these places in search of affordable lifestyles with a real chance of return on investment not offered by development elsewhere.

Finally, we cannot expect to find Patient Money willing to wait for returns on investment if we cannot demonstrate this ourselves, which is why, if we are successfully shortlisted we are committing to make any prize money available to students and apprentices in the built-environment who will become the very pioneers we are looking to attract to build our model.
OUR VISION

When he conceived his plan for Garden Cities of Tomorrow, Ebenezer Howard wanted nothing short of Utopia. His vision of new towns which offered the best urban lifestyle in a beautiful setting and in harmony with nature was aimed squarely at tackling the social issues of the day; impoverished residents living in inhumane conditions, the noxious, overcrowded Victorian slums where crime was rife and ill health was inevitable. His response to these issues – the “group of slumless, smokeless cities” – has served as an inspiration across the globe. The towns of Welwyn and Letchworth are held up as exemplars that demonstrate Britain’s humane and enlightened approach to housing its citizens.

But as Jane Jacobs so rightly points out, these were towns planned by the few for the imagined lifestyles of the many. Life for most people was, it was assumed, predictable and rhythmic. Daily lives revolved around going to work and being at home, the locations of both these things dictated by your geography and class. It was easy therefore to create ordered plans that supported this ordered lifestyle; residents’ routines sustained by the carefully regimented spatial plans and land use zones of the Garden City movement.

This approach worked in the 1930s when the acme of communication technology was the radiogram but Britain has moved on. The notion that any settlement must be first and foremost about the people that live there, and that those people should be the ones to shape it, is the foundation of our approach.

We believe a 21st Century Garden City should be as much about cooperation, communication and participation as it is about the buildings and spaces that make up the place. We need to create equitable places that offer opportunities for everyone to live fulfilling lives. Civic pride should be a key indicator of success, just as important as reduced energy consumption or thriving wildlife species. Everyone should own a stake in the prosperity of their town. In other words, we are not simply building houses to meet a need; we are offering the opportunity to live better.

In this aspiration we are echoing Howard whose motivation was improving people’s lives. As Jane Jacobs put it: “There is no logic that can be superimposed on the city; people make it, and it is to them, not buildings, that we must fit our plans.”
WHAT DO PEOPLE WANT TODAY?

According to Jacobs no city is going to work well unless it works for the people who live there. So what do they want? The answer to that is that we will not know for certain until we ask them. There are certain things that everyone agrees upon; good schools and decent homes and jobs, but that does not get to the heart of the matter. Deep down people want more than that, they want to feel safe and included, they want opportunities to learn and grow, and if they do not get them then they move, (assuming they can afford to). The first principle of our vision is therefore “ask the people”. If a Garden City is really going to work for all its residents then it’s going to have to be created by them too.

COOPERATIVE AND COLLABORATIVE

Today’s population knows how to collaborate to achieve things through the power of the crowd. Why not extend this attitude to where people live? It’s a natural step and one which could hugely benefit the town and its people. The second principle of our vision is therefore “cooperation trumps competition”. Our new city will be conceived as an ecosystem; an interrelated series of coexisting elements, including people, jobs, food production, transport and nature, that thrive through cooperation. Rather than competing with neighbouring towns and villages for resources, and aiming to be a standalone sustainable entity, the city would grow to complement its neighbours and improve the sustainability of all.

WELL LED

Although the development of the Garden City will be people-powered, the town will still require strong governance if the communal vision is to be realised. The most successful large scale developments of the last 30 years (e.g. regeneration in Manchester, Birmingham, Glasgow, Kings Cross and others) have all benefitted from strong personalities keeping the vision on track. Our vision therefore calls for an ‘elected Garden City Mayor’ to work with the community over an extended period of time to generate their unique vision and shepherd it to delivery.

ORGANIC AND WELCOMING

If you think of a city where you love to spend time it’s unlikely your first thought is a new town. More likely you are thinking of an older place, one that’s evolved over time to have a rich mix of buildings and spaces and an interesting range of shops, cafes and hospitable pubs. The attractiveness of these places has been acquired gradually, the streets growing slowly with the population and the density gradually increasing as larger plots were subdivided. Today’s developments are denied this opportunity to evolve. Instead they are completed in one go, with little room to flex and change. This reduces the opportunity to create visually rich places that can adapt to residents’ changing circumstances. Our vision will address this by actively encouraging ‘organic growth patterns’ through the planning mechanism of a Local Development Order (LDO).
ECONOMICALLY RESILIENT

Cooperation is not just reserved for the residential community – the business community would be founded on the same principle. The Garden City would aim to attract a ‘connected business ecosystem’; and encourage industrial ecology – a group of interacting organisations and individuals that co-evolve over time, feeding from each other’s by-products, energy excesses and producing complementary supply chains.

Rather than offering short term incentives, this tactic makes it beneficial for businesses to stay in proximity to one another and has the potential to create an economically resilient city with diverse job prospects requiring a broad skill base. In turn, this will encourage an economically sustainable population rather than simply creating business floorspace sufficient to create the ‘right’ number of jobs, with no consideration of what those jobs might be, who might fill them and what those people might want from their city.

DIVERSE

Britain has one of the most diverse populations in the world and we believe a Garden City should cultivate and celebrate that very British diversity. To do that we need to recognise the value of lifestyle amenities that everyone can and want to use often, such as parks and open spaces, bike lanes, small arts venues and halls that bring people together and encourage interaction. This is investment that bridges and lasts for generations. The city must attract young people now, grow up with them and still be attractive to them when they reach old age. It must offer a mix of housing choices and tenures, large, small and capable of expansion, social and private, and it must listen to and value everyone’s opinion.

BEAUTIFUL

Garden Cities conjure up a certain architectural style in the mind’s eye that is very English and very much of its time. Our vision does not dictate aesthetics because we believe that should flow from the character and culture of the city’s location, but it does envisage a city that is beautiful due to its relationship with nature, the rhythm, proportion and scale of its buildings and spaces and its attention to detail and craftsmanship in particular. Beauty is important but it could take many forms. We want to create a city that celebrates its gritty bits as well as its beauty and recognises the need for both.

SUMMARY

Our vision for Garden Cities is as revolutionary in its own way as Howard’s was to the Victorians. We must effect a step change in quality, a seismic shift in attitude and a revolution in delivery to really make a difference for the generations to come. Our vision of a Garden City is that the city be conceived in terms of the social experience it can offer rather than the house types for sale. Rather than being designed by ‘experts’ it will be encouraged to grow organically to a communal vision owned by its residents and other stakeholders. It will celebrate the diversity of British culture and challenge the preconceptions of what a new city might be.
These symbols are used throughout the document to demonstrate how our ideas respond to the 3 (4) criteria set out in the prize prospectus.
THE ROAD MAP TO DELIVERY

The housing crisis in the UK is such that a single city is unlikely to be the solution, not unless it is on the scale of Greater London. As much as we love our capital, we feel the British public’s sympathy is for places of scale they can identify with. Cities built up from neighbourhoods, in sympathy with the landscape within which they sit.

Our vision is for an extended family of new Garden Cites across the UK. There will need to be a considerable number.

Year on year growth at Milton Keynes since 1967 averaged around 5,000 completions per annum until 1991 when growth slowed to almost half that number. To deal with the national housing shortfall alone, it would take 9 Garden Cities, each the size of Milton Keynes (calculating growth since 1971 only), 25 years to catch up. This is without even contemplating the accumulating shortfall in housing numbers which since the Barker Review has been building at an average of some 130,000 homes per annum.

Immediate action is required – this document is our road map to delivery.
'The number of households in England is projected to grow to 27.5 million in 2033, an increase of 5.8 million (27 per cent) over 2008, or 232,000 households per year'.

Communities and Local Government, based on 2008 population predictions (Office of National Statistics)

5.8 MILLION DWELLINGS
Estimated Demand by 2033 (22yrs)

POPULATION PREDICTIONS TO 2033: SOURCE ONS
Within the UK today we have a very negative attitude to development. Proposals are supposedly judged by their impact on society and the environment. Land allocations and designs are challenged and disputed. From the outset we are defending the development proposal, countering negativity and distrust.

This is a major barrier to development delivery and to any positive demand for development from our wider communities. A step change in national attitudes to development is required, hand in hand with an upwards transformation in the quality of the built environment – beauty to be believed in.

We are aware of efforts to bring the need for new homes and communities to the attention and hearts of the general public, but greater effort is needed. An open campaign is needed to give a voice to those who are not sticking their heads in the sand to growth, but concerned about housing future generations and creating lasting communities for all.

The objectives of this campaign will therefore be to:

- Understand and directly address the key issues and emotive feelings all sections of society have with development.
- Seek to educate all in the benefits local development can have for them as an individual and a community. This should focus in particular on the long-term generational benefits of affordable local homes.
- Motivate the public to engage and contribute to these future places through active participation in construction, community building and ongoing social sustainability to create cohesive neighbourhoods. And finally
- Move new communities and Garden Cities from potential controversy to potential vote winners for all political parties.

The first step of any Garden City proposal must therefore be to understand the impact the housing crisis is having and will have with worsening effect on everyday life.

Adapted from internet meme http://popculted.com/2011/08/hipsters-vs-old-people-chart/
A National Poll could elicit concerns from the population around the housing crisis and be used to inform the campaign going forwards.

This could focus on the small scale of UK homes, together with growing concerns around how much households spend on housing, heating and transport, all problems familiar to the majority of the population.

Alongside this, a comprehensive online platform should be built, integrating key messages and providing a forum through which to present the Poll results, focus discussion and debate, and present issues and ideas.

The results of the Poll will trigger the beginning of a wider awareness campaign, around the big issues, broadcasting the stark statistics emerging and securing wide press coverage which, in turn, will begin to build momentum in favour of growth.

TV, radio, advertising and social media activity will focus upon single, strong messages and driving conversation through the online platform. Alliances with national community networks, both on and offline, e.g. Mumsnet, Women’s Institute and Young Farmers Network, or, on the business community side, Local Enterprise Partnerships, Chamber of Commerce, etc., will be utilised to promote and encourage discussion around the issues and communicate the economic opportunities development will present for the individual.

Social media will be at the heart of this campaign, as we seek to seed and drive debate, particularly amongst the younger population, via Facebook, Twitter, Linked-In, You Tube, Instagram, as well as emerging apps such as WhatsApp.

The level of campaign required to turn around the negative perception and reach a sufficient audience to influence political thinking and motivate involvement cannot be underestimated. However when revered young celebrities begin securing column inches on the housing crisis, and solutions for the generations of tomorrow appear in the broadsheets, politicians will struggle to ignore it.
It is not the legislative nature of the planning system that is at fault, but the way in which the system is implemented. After all, the legislation still exists for large scale development through the New Towns Act, Enterprise Zones, Local Development Orders, and National Strategic Infrastructure Projects (NSIPS) etc. However, the culture of planning in the last 30+ years has focussed minds upon the small, least-contentious proposals meeting development needs. As a result, supply has been restricted, development unmixed, house prices inflated, while land values have extracted the majority of development value due to the limited supply of allocations. There has been little investment in opportunities beyond a 10 year window, due to the perceived risks involved.

Whilst not seeking to open a ‘free-for-all’ of unrestricted development, providing greater certainty of return on investment (‘Patient Money’) for the long-term by planning for the next 20-30, if not 40 plus years, provides the key to unlocking larger scale developments such as Garden Cities.

POLITICAL CYCLES

As part of our submission process, we organised a ‘Think-tank’ event comprised of 20+ experts on various aspects of housing delivery, from institutional land ownership and social sustainability to harmony in design and tax increment finance (see Appendix 1 for details). The Think-tank considered the above constraints and concluded that we need to make Garden Cities less party political - give them the time needed to be championed, planned and then implemented without changes in political direction.

In other words, long term investment requires long term certainty.

Consequently it is not the planning system that needs to speed up, but the political process that needs to slow down.

Instead of having a Minister based in the House of Commons, typically with a 2-3 year opportunity to implement change before Cabinet re-shuffles or a change of Government, why not pass the opportunity to a nominated Peer (or Peers) in the House of Lords, potentially with a 10 year window of opportunity to drive through the change needed.

This would offer the following benefits:

- A 10-year “run” to bring forward Garden Cities and major growth locations
- Less party political influence / an ability to secure cross-party support
- Ability to challenge Government planning and housing policy (e.g. Green Belt) if needed to ensure successful implementation
- Set the framework to consent a Garden City through a bespoke Housing NSIP (this would require an amendment to the current NSIP provisions.)
The objectives of the Peer would be to establish the framework for Garden Cities and major growth, including the infrastructure provision to support growth through a “National Spatial Plan” (NSP) within 18 months of appointment. This would become part of the development plan (although this requires a minor change to primary and secondary legislation) and identify spatial requirements and cross-sector implications (education, transport, energy, water) across a 30-50 year horizon.

The NSP would be tasked to identify broad strategic locations for Garden Cities according to the following criteria:

- Places where infrastructure already exists
- Proximate to economic drivers
- Away from environmental constraints
- Areas where there is demand for homes
- Large estates, public sector land holdings or areas where the two collide
- Local skills profile
- Opportunities to link to Higher Education

The NSP would identify the mechanisms for promoting and delivering Garden Cities. Our suggestions for these are set out in the remainder of this document. The NSP would provide a policy hook to the national campaign supporting the growth of Garden Cities.

The Plan would recommend the establishment of City Mayors and their remit (as outlined in Step 4) within 3 years of appointment and oversee the amendments to the following legislation to enable the Garden City Commission to obtain compulsory purchase powers (see Step 7):

- Town Planning Act 2008, as amended by the Localism Act 2011, relating to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs)
- New Towns Act 1946
- 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act
If Garden Cities are to be successful for both the short and long-term, they need to be in locations where people want to live. The commercial viability of a Garden City is dependent on making the new place as attractive to the new community as possible.

We have examined criteria that are relevant to the location of a Garden City and identified suitable broad locations. This has been achieved through a two stage “sifting process”.

Our Think-tank event identified a number of key factors reflected in our assessment below. We concluded we should run with a location-led process, considering where Garden Cities are needed rather than where the planning process might find least resistance.

Criteria examined under the two-stage process were as follows:

**STAGE 1 SIFTING: SUB-REGIONAL AREAS:**
- Economic and social
- Housing supply and demand
- Physical and geographical
- Strategic connectivity (water, energy etc.)

**STAGE 2 SIFTING: LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES**
- Landownership
- Other Deliverability Criteria
- Context and site constraints and opportunities
STAGE 1 SIFTING

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL

For Garden Cities to be viable they need to be in locations with sustained demand for housing and commercial development.

Cities should relate economically to other centres of employment. Residents will be able to take advantage of existing infrastructure to access employment opportunities. Local economic benefits will arise from the spending power of residents at home or the nearby regeneration of existing places where they find work. Other Garden City locations may require a greater proportion of embedded employment and self-containment. However in time the Garden City should seek to function as a generator of growth through the formation of new businesses, creation of “hot houses” for innovation and by providing a seedbed for emergent sectors.

Garden Cities should be analysed to establish what economic ‘additionality’ they might offer, considering how they might relate to growth sectors, specialisms in local skills (and how these can be transferred or improved) and the flow of commodities through local supply chains to establish more meaningful economic models.

HOUSING SUPPLY AND DEMAND

Matching demand to supply is a basic premise of economics. The UK planning system has restricted supply in areas of high demand and planning reform is the obvious mechanism to relieving pressure on housing supply. A review of non-environmental constraints as part of an NSP could address the big issues, such as the environmental quality of the Green Belt and provide for more meaningful and better quality land preservation in areas of lesser demand, releasing land in the most accessible locations for sustainable growth.

National data provides useful information on demand to feed into this element of the sifting process including information on:

- Affordability ratios
- Predicted Population Growth
- Population Density Growth
- Job growth
- Economic regeneration
- Indices of economic deprivation

All of these are outlined in greater depth within the Appendices and have fed into the summary of results for Stage 1.
PHYSICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Geographical constraints in the form of national designations such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Parks and Green Belts significantly impact upon potential Garden City locations. At a more detailed scale, under Stage 2 of the sifting process, constraints such as flood plains will also rule out specific geographical areas. Positive considerations such as the availability of good transport connections form a part of this assessment. These factors are considered below.

STRATEGIC CONNECTIVITY

Drawing on one of the key ingredients of successful historic towns and cities, it is important that new Garden Cities are accessible and well-connected. In the UK this means that the new settlement should be located close to either a main line railway station (or close to a railway line with the potential for a station to be added), as well as within easy reach of a motorway or major ‘A road’. Proximity to HS2 rail links would capitalise on investment in station infrastructure and the associated economic ‘ripple effect’.

PLAN 1 - POTENTIAL LOCATIONS TO BE IDENTIFIED IN THE NATIONAL SPATIAL PLAN
STAGE 1 SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

Plan 1 shows the areas within the UK that are outside of AONBs and National Parks and within 5 miles of an existing train line and 20 miles of either a motorway or major ‘A road’. These may be regarded as the fundamental baseline locations for a successful Garden City.

Social and economic factors indicate that a Garden City should be located within the ‘zone of influence’ of an existing major town or city where there is likely to be a very high demand for both housing and jobs.

Plan 2 shows the areas identified as benefiting from excellent rail and road connections overlaid with the following ‘zones of influence’ of major towns and cities:

- London – 60 miles
- Birmingham – 40 miles
- Manchester – 40 miles
- Leeds – 30 miles
- Liverpool – 30 miles
- All of the rest 25 miles

Plan 2 is a summary of the broad areas of investigation that could be the first consideration in identifying suitable locations for Garden Cities through an NSP.

If shortlisted to Stage 2 of the Wolfson Prize, we propose to investigate locations identified in this sequence adding additional filters such as areas of water stress, and availability of natural resources such as C16/C24 timber, mineral deposits and proximity to renewable energy installations.
Mandated through the NSP to accommodate Garden Cities, our vision promotes the election of local Garden City Mayors (campaigning on a pro-growth only agenda as required with neighbourhood plans), and appointed to champion Garden Cities with the remit of:

• Establishing a Garden City Commission
• Appointing Board Members (potentially elected) for the Commission from:
  • Local businesses
  • Local Enterprise Partnership
  • Local Planning Authority
  • Community representatives
• Identifying candidate locations for the Garden City
• Securing funding from Government if required (paid back later through TIFs etc.)
• Overseeing the initial (flexible) planning and delivery of the Garden City through preparation of the Garden City Plan and Local Development Order
• Managing the running costs of the Commission (recouped from the development of the Garden City)

The establishment and running of the Commission will require financial support (estimated £3-5m per annum) to cover staff and expenses, administration, legal costs and consultancy fees. This would need to be financed by the Government following the establishment of the Commission, with the ability to draw down additional finance for land acquisition / CPO if required and no private funding can be initially secured. This would be paid back through receipts generated from local assets and ground rents over time.
It is envisaged that the Mayor (and potentially Board Members) for the Commission would be in place for 10 years. Step-in procedures by the Secretary of State may be considered necessary in the event of non-performance.

The primary objective for the Mayor and Board Members is to act as champions for the Garden City – working with local stakeholders, infrastructure providers etc., to jointly plan a framework and deliver the positive planning and economic climate for the Garden City. The output will be a neighbourhood-based framework for growth to be designed by the community as the city evolves.

In common with the Think-tank event we convened prior to this submission and a similar process gained from our work on the ‘EcoCité’ programme in France, a Mayoral Advisory Think-tank could be established, where all Mayors for each Garden City could share ideas and learn from each other so as to ensure delivery of a place that is attractive, successful and prosperous. We are clear that this would not just be a ‘talking shop’, but rather something that results in outcomes. At the end of the day actions speak louder than words.
Having identified the broad locations for Garden Cities, the locally elected Mayors and the Garden City Commission would be required to identify specific large-scale opportunities in limited land ownerships and promote the concept of the Garden City locally.

The availability of land with capacity to support growth for several generations through its scale and adjacency to other potentially available sites will be a key determinant in the location of a Garden City as will the advanced sieving of environmental and technical constraints (further to the regional exercise undertaken at Step 3). This would precede any Strategic Environmental or Appropriate Assessment and need to determine headline issues as set out in the table below.

### Stage 2 Sifting Assessment

#### Local Context Considerations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proximity to an airport</th>
<th>+Score awarded on the basis of the distance in miles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to a major university</td>
<td>+Score awarded on the basis of the distance in miles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Site Features and Constraints

| Flood Zone | -Scored on the basis of the extent of any flood zones |
| Landscape & Visual Impact | -Score awarded on the basis of the extent of any impact |
| Topography | +/- Scored on the basis of the suitability of the site in terms of topography |
| Access and connections | + Score awarded on basis of the suitability and deliverability of Strategic access solutions |

#### Land Ownership and Deliverability

| Land within a manageable number of owners | + Scored on the basis of the proportion of the site within land that is immediately available and within a manageable number of landowners |
HOW MUCH LAND?

Letchworth Garden City began as an estate of 3,500 acres / circa 1,400 hectares, acquiring a total estate of some 6,500 acres / circa 2,600 hectares into which it is now looking to expand. This land-holding supports a modest population of 33,000 people, significantly lower than the 220,000 population of Milton Keynes which required an initial ‘area of designation’ of 21,863 acres / 8,850 hectares.

This seems remarkably close to the 20,000 acres / 8,100 hectares cited by Lord Wolfson in the Times in December 2012 as a possible scale for 4 Garden Cities in the UK. Noting that although the original design premise for Milton Keynes was to become a city, in the almost 50 years since its designation in 1967 it still remains a town.

However as the only large-scale recent precedent for development approaching city-scale, Milton Keynes and the land-take associated with it suggests a pattern and extent for growth that should be considered when identifying land opportunities for Garden Cities; (noting that we have already established that at least 9 developments of this scale would be required to meet the current housing shortfall within a 25 year period).

The lessons from many of the New Towns, such as the expansion of Harlow demonstrate that even in the face of clear demand, longer term collaboration with landowners to secure space for growth well beyond the initial boundaries is essential.
IDENTIFYING MAJOR ESTATES

The contribution that public sector or institutional land could have to the creation of Garden Cities is significant.

The scale of land required for both the initial investment, and, more significantly, for the long term is such that it is unlikely any single landowner will have sufficient land in a qualifying location to service the Garden City for its lifetime. However catalytic sites, that make it through the sieving process and fulfil the site selection criteria, could form the initial nucleus of a future city.

These sites might be underutilised defence sector establishments, or wider public sector land holdings in proximity to urban centres with existing access to the movement network.

The register of surplus public sector land identifies holdings owned by Central Government and its agencies which is surplus to operational requirements. The Register is part of e-PIMS (Electronic Property Information Mapping Service), administered by the Government Property Unit (GPU); part of the Cabinet Office. Although currently only available to public sector agencies, the GPU is looking at the benefits of land pooling public sector land with adjacent ownerships and access may be made to the database on a wider basis from the end of this year.

To this should be added cooperation from the UK Land Registry, an agency of Government who is able to make land register data available under licence.

General land-pooling could be coupled to a review of the holdings of the members of the Estates Business Group, which represents the top 20 Landed Estates in the UK, as well as the circa 550,000 acres under the control of major pension funds.

Whilst these latter two groups control land which is often harder to determine, the localised nature of sub-regional searches will enable a tighter net to be drawn to facilitate land-owner searches.
TRADITIONAL ESTATES AND TRACK RECORD OF STEWARDSHIP

Some reports suggest the total combined land investments of landed estates represent a significant landholding across the UK, possibly up to a third of the rural UK estate. Their interests, frequently administered through trust funds, often take a long-term approach to investment, looking for returns for future generations. Their existing assets often contain residential properties, local business space, schools, shops, some of which are subsidised for the benefit of the community, financed from the proceeds of the estate. As a result, there is a long-term commitment to existing settlements / villages.

The estate model might offer tax incentives and a shareholding in a trust in partnership with the existing and future community, resulting in a longer term interest and yield. If the landowner did not wish to retain their long-term interest, this could be sold to an investment vehicle looking for a long-term yield ("Patient Money"), thereby realising their full asset value.

The Community / Garden City Estate provides the vehicle for communities, landowners and other stakeholders to plan and deliver Garden Cities not just from the outset but in perpetuity, each receiving a dividend for their interest.

PENSION FUNDS - POTENTIAL ROLE

Alongside the estates, Pension Funds are listed as major UK landowners. L&G has recently publicly expressed interest in promoting a number of Garden Cities in the UK and others may now follow suit.

The diversification of risk presented by a whole-city scenario might present the investment opportunity that many of the funds have been holding out for. Providing the ability for funds to retain a stake in the long term, e.g. through securing commercial development yield, or potentially an investment stake in a future Garden City Estate, may unlock further interest from Pension Funds in the creation of new Garden Cities.
The local promotion stage is primarily concerned with popularity and governance. This stage, driven by the Mayor and Garden City Commission, focuses on developing an understanding at a local level, encouraging engagement that will become a fundamental plank of the Garden City governance system, and generating interest and support across the immediate and wider locality for the premise of development.

Promotional activity is required on two fronts:

1. **The big sell**: promoting the site locally to gain support and attract pioneers; and,

2. **The hard sell**: promoting the site regionally, nationally or even globally to secure the high quality employers, retailers, funders and service providers necessary to support the growth and long term well-being of the emerging population.

**THE ‘BIG’ SELL**

The Mayor’s primary concern must be to build trust in the hearts and minds of local people. The existing community needs to believe in the vision to grow a new community out of the aspirations and commitment of local people, whilst welcoming growth and investment from outside.

A robust engagement strategy will be required to identify the composition of the existing community around which the Garden City is to evolve and communicate openly with them. Key tasks will include:

- Careful identification of, and outreach to all members of the community. Young, old, all ethnicities, etc.

- Provision of a range of creatively considered engagement channels to suit the challenges of diverse work life balances in the existing community.

- Identification of local ‘plants’ - willing, active believers to foster supporting ‘grass roots’ initiatives.
Through this engagement the Mayor and Commission will seek to build consensus for the establishment of the Garden City, giving all a deeper understanding of what makes existing communities tick socially and culturally and how this could be carried forward into the Garden City, to create a place that is rooted in the psychological and physical landscape. This process will set the agenda for long-term governance and develop a transparent and inclusive process that demonstrates a culture of cooperation and a commitment to collaborative decision making.

Undertaken in earnest, in a genuinely, collaborative milieu, open local promotion will establish the beginnings of a Garden City’s social and business network encouraging early adopters by providing a fledgling community for them to plug into. This same network can have a full and active role in shaping the place and can adapt and grow over time from a handful of proactive residents’ and/or employers into a fully fledged Garden City social and business ecosystem that encompasses all aspects of Garden City life. But in order to do that, the Mayor will have to get out there and get people interested.

The Commission must also court business and commercial interests to establish a mix of uses at the earliest opportunity. Simply building houses until there is enough critical mass to support a local Tesco will not suffice; there must be a commitment to delivering jobs and services hand-in-hand with new homes so that truly mixed use neighbourhoods emerge organically. In this, local businesses can play a key role, perhaps by offering ‘pop-up’ shops or mobile services in the early days. But the Mayor and the Commission now need to start the hard sell in earnest to provide confidence in the medium and long term that good jobs will be available within the Garden City and it will not be another dormitory town.
THE ‘HARD’ SELL

To promote the site to a broader audience and begin to build a brand for the Garden City, the Mayor and the community need to agree the identity of this place. A lot of identity comes from the ideals of Garden Cities and the vision we have already established here. Promoting the opportunity to feed into a dynamic, evolving organic place, that is well led and conceived in terms of employment and work/life balance, while also offering a high quality environment for all to live are strong messages that can be presented in a brand and campaign. As the design and community begin to evolve though, there will be all sorts of additional benefits and messages which can inform the wider brand and campaign, in order to present a resilient sound investment, as well as a great opportunity for a high quality of life, employment and education.

The location itself will inform and shape the messaging too. If there is a strong employment or education association for the town, this needs to be fully exploited to not only support the Garden City’s population in terms of jobs, etc., but also support the unique sense of place that will be created.

A programme of events and activities related to the location or the culture of the existing community will also further reinforce an identity and brand for the Garden City. From farmers markets to music festivals, pioneers in the community can assist through their passions, in creating a vibrant and identifiable brand for the city.
MARKET ACTIVITY, FOOD HALL, URBAN BEACH
With the principle of development in place, a local campaign in full swing and a driving body elected, the Commission now needs to prepare its Garden City Development Plan, identifying the location, broad framework for evolving land use and rudiments of design.

Our aim is to de-risk the planning process. The National Strategic Plan will set the context for housing, economic-growth and infrastructure across the country, and the Garden City Development Plan at a location specific level. Beneath this, we see the delivery of Garden Cities through the planning system by way of a bespoke (large-scale) Housing NSIP. This can be achieved by way of an amendment to the current legislative framework.

Beneath a Housing NSIP, a range of existing tools can be applied that already exist in current legislation and are significantly under-utilised. These ‘delivery’ tools, if properly used can make a significant contribution (whether in terms of setting the quality level required, disposition of uses and their relationships to each other and speed of delivery) to the day-to-day delivery of Garden Cities on the ground. These include the following:

Local Development Orders (LDOs) enable the traditional planning permission process to be bypassed through the implementation of Orders that permit certain types of development. They control the form and quality of development through the associated use of design requirements and compliance with the Garden City Development Plan. If the proposals comply with the necessary plans, there is no need for additional detailed planning consent. However, under existing legislation, the issuing local planning authority can withdraw an LDO at any stage. In order to provide certainty and give the appropriate powers to the Garden City Commission, (which the local planning authority would be Board Members of), a change to secondary legislation will be required.

Action Area Plans (AAPs) comprise policies and requirements relating to specific developments given statutory weight (S38(6)) whereby all development shall be in accordance with the AAP/Plan unless material considerations determine otherwise. An AAP could form part of the Garden City Development Plan.
What changes would be required to the New Towns Act 1981, to enable a new development corporation (Garden City Commission) to assemble land using CPO and deliver a Garden City in England?

The New Towns Act 1981 identifies the use of Development Corporations for the purpose of compulsory purchase. However, these have fallen out of fashion. Therefore, if Garden City Commissions are to be empowered for CPO, the 1981 Act will need amending to allow Garden City Commissions to be established by ministers and then become more accountable, so as to finance, build and manage Garden Cities e.g. by providing for some of their members to be appointed onto the commission by the constituent local authorities.

In practice we think that the Act would also need to be modernised so that it both takes into account subsequent legislative changes in relevant areas (e.g. the Human Rights Act 1998) and is also able to deal with today’s policy issues such as Localism, good design, sustainable development and equality.

What changes would be required to the Planning Act 2008 regime to bring a Garden City in England within the NSIP regime?

Minor amendments would be required to the Planning Act 2008 if it was considered that Garden Cities would be best brought forward through the NSIP regime. This would include amending sections 35(2), 35(5), 115(2)(6) and regulation 2(2)(b)(ii) in order to allow Garden Cities to be included, where the current legislation currently excludes the construction or extension of one or more dwellings.

Enterprise Zones (EZs) focus on economic growth. They allow for tax relief for specified developments as well as deemed consent for pre-determined developments, within identified parameters. Although typically commercial, investigations could determine how an EZ could be applied to a Garden City to afford tax relief for investors and promote accelerated housing growth.

On this basis, there are sufficient tools within the existing planning system, which if used more creatively and effectively could enable the granting of a flexible planning permission for a Garden City.

The above suite of consenting procedures would need to be subject to Environmental Assessment under European Habitats Directives, but this would not prevent a Garden City coming forward.
THE GARDEN CITY ESTATE

The role of the Garden City Estate will differ from that of the Garden City Commission. Whereas the Commission is charged with identifying the site, collaborating with landowners and de-risking the planning process by producing and securing a Garden City Development Plan and LDO, the role of the Garden City Estate is primarily concerned with day-to-day governance.

FOUNDING THE ESTATE

The Estate would be founded under the mantle of the City Mayor and Commission. Members of the Estate would comprise:

- Elected members: local community (existing and new) representatives; local planning authority representatives; and
- Non-elected members: landowners; developer; potentially affordable housing providers and utility companies.

The objectives of the Estate would be:

1. To establish an “Estate Bond” from which the community would benefit in both the long and short term;
2. To secure a dividend from which existing and new community members can personally benefit. This may assist in overcoming concerns over loss of property value etc.;
3. To enable the community to work with the landowners and developers for the long-term to plan, deliver, manage and grow the city; and
4. To establish estate management guidelines and principles to safeguard appropriate regimes for maintenance and renewal of buildings and amenities.

When planning the Garden City, existing property owners would be offered a shareholding proportionate to their property value (this would need to be determined by Council Tax band for ease of reference). If taken up, affected property owners would have:

- A financial stake in the Garden City - to a value of say £10,000 invested in the Estate Bond;
Voting rights and a stake in how the Garden City evolves.

If property owners decided to sell their property and not be involved, the shareholding interest would be retained in the property so new purchasers could take advantage of it.

The shareholders in the Estate would include:

- Principal developer, who, if different from the landowner, would fund the promotion and planning costs in exchange for a shareholding value equivalent to a typical “option”, e.g. 15-20%;

- Landowner, who would place their land interests into the Estate in exchange for a significant shareholding. When land is sold for development, 20% of the land value would be placed into the Bond for its longer-term interests. In the short-term, the landowner receives less capital value, but with tax incentives this could be attractive. Alternatively, the landowner could sell their retained interest to an investor, who would purchase the shareholding interest in return for a dividend;

- Existing property owners (i.e. the affected existing community) would be given 1 share to a value of (say) £10,000 at the outset, which would increase in value as land is sold for development;

- New property owners would each be given 1 share to retain an interest in the longer-term planning, delivery and management of the City. There is also an option for occupiers to pay into the Bond in place of estate management charges;

- An affordable housing provider would benefit from discounted land and would work alongside the Estate to bring forward affordable housing; and

- An appointed utility partner would partner with the Estate to deliver community infrastructure requirements, e.g. reservoirs, waste water treatment, energy plants. A shareholding interest could off-set their risk and ensure their long-term interest.

The Garden City Estate would subsequently comprise local shareholders and be regulated by an internal Management Board appointed by the principal shareholders and elected representatives from the existing and new community.

In addition to the Management Board, the Estate would appoint key staff:

- City Architect - to advise and implement the community’s wishes (via the Estate) working on area design and architecture across the Garden City, developing standards and maintaining design quality throughout all phases.

- City Manager - to implement the communal spaces and support local enterprise through encouraging development and commercial interests e.g. by promoting the establishment of local shops and business re-location opportunities and
cross-subsidising community assets of value etc.

HOW IT COULD WORK

All major settlements require substantial infrastructure and hence large capital funding. A 10,000 new home mixed scheme might need circa £50m rolling finance as work in progress for many years. A city of Milton Keynes’ size would need many times this.

Rather than use a bank loan, an Estate Bond could be issued by the Garden City Estate as rolling finance that, as a priority, would attract investment from local residents, building popularity. This bond might pay a dividend of 7% annually, tax free. The dividend would be financed by the sale of serviced land.

This provides all local people with the opportunity for a financial return on the development even if they do not directly benefit from its improved services, while also offering an attractive investment opportunity, giving a competitive return that could last 30-40 years.

A percentage of the land value (say 10-20%) could be put into the Estate Bond (this would be ongoing as sales receipts from land purchases are realised) in exchange for a shareholding interest. As the Fund grows in value:

- 50% of the interest would be reinvested in the Fund itself.
- 25% would be spent on community projects (determined by the Estate) and management of communal space, e.g. parks etc. And
- 25% would be paid out as dividends to shareholders.
PEAK DEBT AND PHASING

We have shown a mechanism of identifying Patient Money by collaborating with landowners and suggesting de-risked planning strategies to attract other investors, e.g. Pension Funds. This can resolve the issue with delivering a viable Garden City, namely the early provision of funding and the significant levels of peak debt required for infrastructure and place, ahead of the completed development.

There is still a funder perception that Garden City development may be high risk due to its association with house building. However up to 75% of the peak debt does not relate to house building, but infrastructure. Therefore there is an opportunity to create a proposition which separates high and low risk items - sourcing a blend of long term and short term money.

The lack of existing assets against which to secure investment remains a barrier. However security can be provided through the uplift in consented land value via a separately issued infrastructure bond secured against the land. This can be the same Estate Bond as issued to the community and remaining invested with the landowner. Viability is achievable but the key is creating an investable proposition. It requires the ability to reduce the planning risk early creating a reasonable risk profile for long term funders.

An investment mechanism which could prove attractive to the Garden City Estate might be the Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) which offer the opportunity for tax free investment. Consideration will need to be given to how REITs can be adapted to allow for smaller scale, tax free “development vehicles” in a tax-transparent manner.

In addition, so as to avoid shareholders being liable for tax on their investment (including households with a minor shareholding interest), tax breaks should be considered to enable tax only to be charged on income/financial returns, in a simple manner, i.e. a minor adjustment to self assessment etc., as opposed to tax charged on change of land/property ownership. This could also include the removal of Stamp Duty Land Tax on any Garden City shareholding vehicle.
Having established a participatory funding model and set up a governance mechanism via the Garden City Estate work needs to continue on the creation of place.

The Garden City Estate would be tasked with creating the ‘growth medium’ wherein the seeds of the new city can flourish. A receptive planning climate, supportive and invested local community, willing land owner and a connected, resourced and funded landscape will provide the atmosphere for accelerated and dynamic growth not seen in the UK outside of the New Towns or Enterprise Zones of the Docklands.

This will be the first time in the process that the success of efforts made in Step 1 – our national campaign – are truly tested, as we seek those interested in ‘seeding the community’. Many of the pioneers will be drawn from the ranks of the existing Garden City Estate; however the investment in the early stages (stage 1 in particular) will be designed to encourage a deluge of interest from a wider cadre of participants.

These ‘early adopters’ will provide the DNA for the creation of the Garden City. They are likely to share a pioneering approach to life. They may be at any stage of life but are likely to be risk takers; people who prefer to lead rather than follow, who value individuality and the new, the original and the different. These are likely to be people unafraid of a challenge and who are ready to step up. They are going to need something to step up to.

However, everyone in the city during these early stages will have a genuine reason to be there. The pioneers will inspire a generation of contributors, with each playing their part in a growing, symbiotic association, supported by earnest investment houses and national will.

Making the creation of the place the reason to be in the city is a simple, yet transformational modification of attitude that could see Garden Cites grow as rooted, indigenous settlements, rather than outwardly imposed structures that bear little or no relationship to their surrounding communities. The opportunity to be involved in the creation of a new city is something magical that is regularly reflected in the media through interest in self-build. Whole programmes of community development could begin that capture potential community members and invite them in to participate in the ‘creation’.
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

In terms of planning for growth and development on a meaningful scale, we are suggesting a model of participation and evolution on a neighbourhood basis. Beginning with a focus on ‘social sustainability’ providing a more effective delivery agent than an obsession with targeting environmental criteria or development controls.

There is a strong link between the social performance of the place and the economic dynamism of the city. Better alignment of local people and local jobs would reduce pressure upon transport infrastructure and help to encourage local pockets of prosperity. There are many “internal” jobs required to make new communities succeed (e.g. education, healthcare, retailing and leisure) but it would also be prudent to incorporate employment that is there in its own right.

Our economic analysis provides a general rule of thumb that every new dwelling provides 1.5 jobs for the local economy. Although initial jobs are more directly linked to the construction market, these soon develop needs for support services.

Crossover with local skill sets, particularly around the construction trade and manufacturing as have been achieved in places such Priory Vale in Swindon, (one of the primary feeders and growth neighbourhoods adjacent to the Honda Automotive plant) could be used to gain popular local support, whilst relating to a captive labour market.

Self-build could also become a key driver. Some 15% of all new build in the UK is estimated to be provided by the self-built market. For a Garden City this is no small percentage, but other countries in Europe manage to achieve self-build levels of 62% and higher. Whilst such uplift is unlikely in the UK for the foreseeable future, strategies to grow built-environment skills can be put into place to ensure that alongside local and regional builders, self-build can become a key part of every Garden City.

A number of catalysts are available to render this a greater reality. The Garden City has a captive market of countless future households. Materials supply in the construction industry to each city will keep significant numbers of persons employed for decades. Where transport infrastructure and supply of source materials permit, a primary aim of each Garden City should be the investigation of on-site pre-fabricated, modular methods of manufacturing facilities to accelerate growth, reduce cost, create a leading local employment generation source and an exportable product.

WHAT’S INSIDE THE SEED?

Pioneers  Specialists  Implementers  Followers

GARDEN CITY DNA

THE DNA OF THE PLACE – ACHIEVING EARLY GROWTH

2. PIONEER STAGE

3. EARLY GROWTH
The eventual aim is to create a resilient Garden City economy by attracting businesses that can work together in a connected business ecosystem. This approach encourages a diverse range of employment opportunities with a broad skill base requiring workers with many different types and levels of skill which in turn supports a diverse community. To some extent once the initial companies are in place, this will grow and regulate itself.

A growing and important segment of the economy relates to “home working”. This early stage activity in the life of a community can use targeted, incremental technology infrastructure to support initial economic enterprise in advance of the establishment of wider networks. This can be attractive for the self-employed as well as for large corporates that offer staff flexible time-management.

CREATION OF PLACE

Pioneers joining the Estate will instinctively establish the area’s social and cultural identity. Initially work-based, different events throughout the year could showcase many different interests, e.g. book fairs, music festivals and markets could all be deployed to attract people. Careful marketing by the Garden City Manager will reinforce the essence of the brand.

Creating ‘meanwhile places’ that breathe new life to buildings and spaces that are underused or establish role and purpose to new spaces, is a rather more low key approach to site promotion which can address short term needs, provide start-up business premises or temporary leisure facilities that benefit the area. These uses generally require relatively small investment but can generate huge amounts of goodwill as they demonstrate a commitment to invest in the community’s well-being.

The former Westbury (now Persimmon Space4) production facility in Castle Bromwich, Birmingham) has an annual capacity of some 3,500 timber-frame units. There is the potential in the Garden City to systemise much of the construction, to reduce costs, improve affordability, speed of delivery and subsidise local craft training to generate a workforce capable of providing meaningfully crafted details married to an energy efficient shell. This combination matches modern efficiency and the environmental performance of new buildings with the locally crafted charm and beauty that the original Garden Cities sought to achieve as well as relating to the kind of house many people aspire to live in.
SOCIAL LIFE BUILDING BLOCKS FOR SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

INFRASTRUCTURE
Schools, nursery & childcare; flexible, adaptable housing; low carbon infrastructure; good transport & communications connections.

SAFE PLACES
Eyes on Street; well lit open spaces.

COMMUNITY ASSETS
Shops; food production; gardens; buildings.

COMMUNITY ADVOCATE FOR FUTURE RESIDENTS

COLLECTIVE SERVICES
Wireless networks; credit unions; childcare co-ops.

CREATIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY GROUPS
Community champions.

COMMUNITY NEWS & INFORMATION
Neighbourhood websites.

LOCAL IDENTITY
Street parties; festivals; distinctive architecture; local rules.

NEIGHBOURHOOD NETWORKS
Babysitting circles; car clubs; lift share schemes.

AMENITIES & SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

SOCIAL & CULTURAL LIFE

SUPPORT FOR SOCIAL INTERACTION
Community development workers; well maintained public & congregational spaces.

SPACE TO GROW

VOICE & INFLUENCE

MEANWHILE SPACE

FORMAL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

COMMUNITY-DRIVEN STEWARDSHIP

FLEXIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE & FLEXIBLE MASTER PLANNING

PARTICIPATORY DECISION MAKING

DESIGN FOR SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY, SOCIAL LIFE, 2011/2012
SLOW ROAST VS. FAST FOOD

As a broad rule of thumb, slow cities are beautiful, they take time to create, exhibit organic patterns of growth that change over time, densify, preserve old buildings which become treasured ‘relatives’, and uses are mixed in over hundreds of years, collectively establishing genuine cultural quarters with long historic associations.

In contrast ‘fast’ cites have no time to learn. Mistakes, if not permanent are left for the population to rue for decades, in the shadow of mega highways, defensive buildings, and zoned uses where mixing is the exception not the rule.
Garden Cities cannot afford to take centuries to evolve and grow – they will of course inevitably change, but the real challenge, if one has managed to leap the various hoops set out in the preceding steps, will be to embody the pioneering and collaborative spirit of the city founders, into the architecture and layout of the place.

We call this the ‘geography of life’. Cities comprised of ‘villages’ with distinct identities. We explored this in 2011 when we launched our New Market Towns initiative (www.newmarkettowns.co.uk). It became apparent that for all the distrust of new development forms, there are still patterns of growth that remain embedded within the psyche of ‘the trusted’.

This notion of the city as a community of villages has been largely neglected by the advent of the ‘sustainable’ urban extension. Yet Britain is an island of villages. Our greatest cities including our capital comprise a collection of villages each with distinctive roles and identities, sense-of-place and unique function in the connected city-ecosystem.
Many of London’s villages have taken hundreds of years to achieve primacy; others such as the Old Street Roundabout Technology Cluster have achieved rapid growth by stealth. Thus the lesson is for the allowance for creative flexibility in the design, planning, growth and composition of neighbourhoods, all of which can be set within the idiom of a garden neighbourhood.

In terms of a method for facilitating such organic growth, one approach may be the ‘Sky’ method promoted by US Urbanist Steve Mouzon of Miami, Florida. Having mapped the gradual historic build up of Italian squares and spaces, the Sky method seeks to apply a worked model of organic phasing to new schemes.

The method adopts an *infrastructure-light approach*, focusing disposals on key blocks and nodes necessary to start creating the ‘skeleton’ of a place – the key junctions, main building alignments are then densified over time. This allows individuals to purchase initial lower density blocks and then ‘upgrade’, in this instance, making an additional payment to the Garden City Estate for each stage of densification.

This allows for investment in the Garden City to occur at a variety of speeds, and according to the availability of finance. Development is maintained during economic downturns – the city building continues, gradually delivering the key buildings and locations, (not mothballing sites as per the last recession) and picking up again, infilling and expanding in times of growth.

Furthermore this approach works extremely well with the notion that planning is limited to the level of the LDO. A framework is set for growth of the city, but not a detailed plan.
FOCUS ON INFRASTRUCTURE

Solutions will be planned incrementally and financed from the outset by utility providers who would retain an interest in the Garden City through the Estate. Their own funds would be used to front-load the infrastructure provision as necessary and phase the delivery through the development process.

The Garden City energy market needs to be able to connect customers in a 2-way relationship rather than a top down ‘power station to the customer’ scenario. Over time the energy and infrastructure demands of the city will change. Initial demands will require a much heavier demand on smart metering and small scale renewables, scaling up and investing in more municipal scale infrastructure over time as growth accelerates.

Trials of this approach are already being undertaken in Yorkshire and the Northeast, via a £54m Ofgem funded trial which seeks to establish if consumers and the Grid can harmonise their usage and co-ordinate with the local power grids and power stations. British Gas are working on the deployment of ‘Smart’ Grid, Meters, Tariffs and appliances as part of the trial and an integrated and co-ordinated geographic area such as a Garden City could move this from vision to reality.
CONCLUSION:

The ideas presented in this submission have emerged from an industry-wide Think-tank, including Government officials, leading developers, landowners representatives and specialists in each field. Our approach has been to work with the existing system and propose innovations where they are needed to make Garden Cities happen.

Our approach has focused on designing a process for creating places that can grow organically over time – identifying a road map for delivery that starts and ends with the people who will live there. We believe this people powered approach is as revolutionary now as Howard’s top-down approach was in his day. Ultimately our aim is the same: create better places for people to live better lives.

The precise Vision for each Garden City will be created by those who will live and work there. However, key principles include:

- Planning for organic growth – a local identity that flows from people and place
- Creating beauty
- Designing with people … for people

Our road map starts with a National Campaign to secure support for the principles as well as acting as a conduit for pioneers to invest and take up the challenge and opportunity.

We have advocated that Garden Cities are promoted by an appointed Peer so as to offer a longer-term political manifesto and progression.

Following cross-party support, the appointed Peer would establish the framework for growth and Garden Cities and ensure the mechanisms are in place for their delivery, including changes in legislation as necessary.

A National Spatial Plan will be prepared, consulted upon and adopted which identifies the broad locations for growth, infrastructure and Garden Cities.

Once broad locations have been identified, elected City Mayors will establish Garden City Commissions and identify specific location(s). The Commissions will then be responsible for planning and delivering each Garden City.

This will involve collaborating with landowners and investors and identifying the specific location. Following this, the Mayor and Commission will promote the Garden City to gain support and secure pioneering investors.

The Garden City Commission will have its own planning powers to prepare a development plan. The Garden City can then be delivered through Local Development Orders, Action Area Plans, or Enterprise Zones.

Whilst this approach may require minor changes to existing legislation, the framework for delivery already exists and therefore avoids protracted debates and discussions over a wholly new legislative framework.

Our approach also seeks to find new solutions for all involved or affected to work together, reducing peak debt and cash flow by sharing in uplifts in land value and creating a Garden City Estate Bond.

The Garden City Estate would be tasked with making the creation of the place the reason to be in the City.

The final stages in the process are to build the new place, manage it through the Garden City Estate and allow it to grow organically, led by the community itself, for itself.

We believe our approach highlights some simple, yet innovative approaches to delivering Garden Cities. We do not seek to throw out the rule book but rather to make smarter use of what we already have so that our approach is both deliverable and innovative.

We intend to use the Wolfson £250,000 prize money to fund tomorrow’s Garden City Pioneers to investigate, test and explore our ideas further, working with our Think-tank to ensure the final proposals are deliverable in the short-term and resonate with generations to come.

Our proposals will deliver great places for today’s and tomorrow’s generations ….. with everyone ….. for everyone.

9,722 words + Preface 275 Words = 9,997Words
APPENDICES
APPENDIX 1 - THINK TANK MEETING NOTES

THINK-TANK ATTENDEES

FOR BARTON WILLMORE:

James Gross Masterplanning Director
Mark Sitch Senior Planning Partner
Robin Shepherd Planning Partner
Kathryn Anderson Urban Design Director
Jenni Montgomery Business Development Director
Kevin Parker Urban Design Director

EXTERNAL ATTENDEES:

Ritu Raja Shekar KLH Sustainability
Henry Cleary OBE Ex DCLG
Tom Aylmer Darley Developments
Iain Gilbey Pensor Masons
James Watts KPMG
Sir Paul Clarke Ex Duchy of Lancaster
Ben Bolgar Prince’s Foundation for Building Community
Andy Cameron WSP
Tony Reddy Reddy Architecture
Michelle Hannah EC Harris
Bob Beaumont Affinity Sutton
Saffron Woodcraft Social Life/Young Foundation
John Weir Church Commissioner’s
Richard Guise Context 4D
Nick Keeble Development Intelligence

WELCOME AND PRESENTATIONS

MXS welcomed delegates to the think tank and introduced JG who presented our current knowledge on the Wolfson Prize, followed by illustration of a number of different spatial models supported by KP who focused on aspects of location selection.

INTRODUCTIONS

JG invited delegates to introduce themselves and raise any initial issues, points of discussion they would like to see raised during the morning.

A variety of early issues were raised for consideration for discussion during the morning with the primary topics addressing:

- Applying lessons from the Eco-towns
- Achieving quality
- De-risking the planning process
- Scale – towns and villages rather than cities?
- Reducing peak debt to enable scheme delivery
- Functioning with grant or public sector support
- Adopting some of the radical social innovations from the original garden cities
- Role for public sector land
- Opportunities provided by ‘tottering’ [failing] towns
- Managing political support

INITIAL ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

HC opened with the lessons he had learned from the Eco-Town experiences, noting that providing a community with genuine (and indeed simple) choice was a critical component of successful schemes. Such choices might include (using a 6,000 project at Fareham as an example) asking the local populous whether they would like to see lots of little urban extensions or one new community?

HC noted that the only 4 Eco-towns that survive as live projects do so because they have LPA backing and such political buy-in is needed from the start. For example at Bicester, the focus was on the identification of benefits to the existing community, helping to build local legitimacy.
TA noted that in his view the mismatch between the aspirations usually at outline stage for a high quality scheme, and the reality of what is actually delivered results in the loss of aspirations quality and replacement with house builders’ concern about reaching short-term objectives and de-risking costly/complicated aspects of projects. This is ironic given the demand for details at the outline stage and the relatively level of interest in design at the detailed or reserved matters stages.

TA suggested a different approach, working with landowners as active participants in the delivery process and focusing on the delivery of serviced sites.

However RS countered that land owners had been led into believing in hope and aspirational values for land and as such when push comes to shove might be more closely aligned with the financial views of the house builders. Notwithstanding this, he cited comments made recently by Lord Heseltine that more ‘Buccaneer’ spirit is required from private individuals/industrialists to lead on this issue.

PC queried the practicality of a land-owner led model due to the Leasehold Reform Act which maintains the position that everyone has the right to buy land and property under enfranchisement laws. As such this particular act would need to be reformed if land-owners were to take a position as private landlords on longer leases as well as put up significant land holdings as part of a project which they might be in danger of losing down the line [as opposed to maintaining in a trust going forward].

IG suggested there were more compatible forms of tenure that could resolve this issue and that there were a number of investors giving new consideration to leasehold and private rented sector models (PRS).

PC noted the difficulty of responding on a city scale [both in terms of popularity and deliverability] and suggested refocusing on garden towns and garden villages. Either way no single form of tenure should be used, whether 20 year leases, private rented, a mix is required.

RG suggested that the location of a new Garden City could be informed by the regeneration needs of one or more ‘tottering towns’ so that they could receive the benefits of new investment and growth.

IG suggested that there were three mechanisms to address popularity as getting local support is key:

1. Re-invigorating a tottering town
2. Establishing garden cities as a long-term political high-priority
3. or ignoring the populous and riding roughshod over the process via a mechanism such as NSIP

NK responded that bribery of sorts, as mentioned in terms of proper compensation in the Prize brief was worthy of consideration, but did not dismiss IG’s point 3 of progressing new settlements by Government diktat.

IG responded that philanthropic (benign – PC) dictatorship of the original garden cities would not be adopted by the Government [note the original garden cities were private initiates not carried forward by the Government of the time of instead adopted the Tudor Walters Report – garden cities were seen as too slow and too prescribed as a form of delivery].

NK expanded on some of the root issues with scheme popularity (of any scale), citing fear of change as the major factor. This fear, either of change for change’s sake, or of defined issues such as perceptions of house price reduction is hard to counter unless matched with positive benefits.

(NK) People have got to get something out of development, relating to HC’s opening point. In the US tax mechanisms are used to capture taxes from development and plough these directly back into the communities where development is taking place. Benefits can be direct or indirect but must be clearly identified.

IG queried how such new settlements are to be progressed through the planning system if there is no regional planning structure unless NSIP is used. Housing must go in the right location and the local planning system should not be used to determine where housing should go.

AC suggested looking at locations which don’t feature large existing populations [although still in proximity to urban centres and infrastructure]. Elsick estate is one such example where the City of Aberdeen required a location for circa 8,000 new homes and the large estate in fairly close proximity to the City proved a viable location in a single ownership. A review of similar land holdings and their proximity to urban centres could yield other such candidates.
IG noted his concern on how the infrastructure for anything of city scale is to be delivered. The CIL mechanism removes the direct link between development and strategic associated infrastructure, an issue made worse by the fact that not having delivered strategic infrastructure for many years, the UK LPA’s no longer have the skills required to manage and procure this effectively or timed to the demands of development.

SA spoke of sites which already had strategic infrastructure, in particular large MOD sites, which have some operational role but of which large portions are under utilised. These may in isolation not be large enough (citing RAF Waterbeach in Cambridge, PC noted Minley Manor in Hampshire) to locate a new city but land pooling with the likes of the Church Commissioners and the Crown Estate might yield some adjacent opportunities for acquisition or collaboration.

JG noted a discussion with a senior HCA executive who has suggested the discounting of land to provide an investment fund which in turn could be recycled to provide infrastructure. SA indicated this could be of interest.

(B) There is national target for the HCA to deliver 100,000 new homes by 2015, and as part of this there is an ongoing Strategic Land and Property review with a view to identifying sites. This is an exercise and a target that will transcend political boundaries and which will be going live at the end of the year as a public data resource.

BBo sought to remind the group that we should be looking at grand properties and bespoke single houses as well as new estates as great places are combination of these but queried whether the skills rally exist to make such places anymore. Investors should be sought who take a long-term view to place creation, noting L&G’s recent announcement to invest £5bn in 5 sites in the UK as new settlements. Figures from Poundbury suggest an uplift of up to 40% [source?] over adjacent property values as an incentive for long-term investment.

JW suggested such an approach would be too sophisticated for the majority of people to understand, and echoed NK point that fear of change is the main driver for local people opposed to development. Developments should either hidden out of sight, or imposed. Bribes of £10,000 per household are not going to be effective.

IG suggested more important is to establish the principle of the City and seek investors and the population to buy into major delivery.

RS queried whether or not DevCo’s Development Corporations were therefore coming back en vogue?

IG gave examples DevCo’s at Old Oak Common where the principle had already been accepted, noting Docklands/Olympics/ Milton Keynes. These could seemly be applied to green field sites but are a good idea for rescuing ‘tottering towns’.

RG shifted the debate back onto distinctiveness, which can also be viewed from a perspective of sustainability [the most distinctive places sustaining themselves over long periods]. Coupling ‘tottering towns’ together with new university campuses (of which there seems to be an endless supply) [reference Swansea University’s alliance with the Coed Darcy development] or technical universities could secure popularity by attracting votes and opportunities from younger families. The ‘tottering town’ could supply the social and physical distinctiveness attractive in traditional places.

SA noted that people do like distinctiveness!

JW offered commentary on a study undertaken before he joined the Church Commissioners where he suggested people were most drawn to traditional (mock Tudor!) homes including features such as a garage and chimney but not a functioning fire.

IG suggested house builders find it hard to get funding for much else.

RG countered with a lot of people will buy distinctiveness and that people only want what they know.
Iain presented the need for ‘patient money’, recognising that the house builders (by their nature) do not have patient money. It is more of a conveyor belt, and they look to make sure there is no on-going liability once they have built the last house. The market does not deal with sustainability, but profit.

There are three sources of patient money:-

1. Via Government tax revenue, but perhaps this will not be popular with The Treasury
2. Pension funds and alike (L&G, for example), who are likely to be more patient
3. Landowners, whether public sector (including the HCA), the Church Commissioners, The Crown Estate and Estate owners.

There is a need to de-risk the front end, which ties back in to the planning process and certainty (see below).

Could the land be given at a discount to the house builder, who then puts in the infrastructure early? Tom, the landowner could take that role, but who is going to take on the planning risk role/ sponsor? Who has the risk money?

JW - James made the observation that the rate of return is such that no one really interested in long term investments. Michelle felt that the private rented sector could provide one element of patient money.

It was agreed there would be a need for a range of patient money, perhaps reflecting the different stages in the process – planning and then delivery in its simplest form. A basket of funders to take on the different elements of investment, depending on the risk they were willing to take, was referred to. Could an institutional funder look 10 years ahead?

IG - Iain then explained that patient money was Stage One, and helping to de-risk the planning was Stage Two. This could be de-risked in a number of ways.

1. The NSIPS regime and its provisions for the use of CPO could be applied (MXS made the point this was not now, but could be post May 2015 Election). It is recognised this route currently provides for infrastructure. Iain said that we all talk about a housing crisis, but not an infrastructure crisis.

2. Do we create a Development Corporation or use the New Towns Act, to provide some sort of body to deal with planning? Both would be bold.

3. To submit a hybrid planning application – part outline and part full for Phase 1. An Enterprise Zone, LDO would be more around delivery and require a supportive LPA (for example, Thurrock).

MS - MXS asked whether there was any merit in the LPA have an element of ownership and therefore return, and could they keep separate their planning and property functions?

Could an LPA have a vote on the Steering Group or Board?

John, among others was not keen on this idea.

JW – John, felt the NSIPS route was open to challenge and could be seen as riding rough shot over the community. Was this a benign dictatorship? This created a tension with localism. N Economic viability and governance and speed could perhaps be achieved, but it would not be popular under this route.

Time was a factor and it was recognised we needed to maximise popularity. In terms of site selection, could we look to where the Estates are and set these against the problem with housing? This could become quite complicated.

This needs to be fed in to Treasury.

JW – John referred to ‘picking on a bird with a broken wing’. We need to de-risk the process, and end with a stable yield on private dwellings. Do we simply end storing up toxic debt? Can they secure a loan?

TA - Tom felt the tottering town approach provide for less economic risk, but we still needed some planning status to de-risk planning. MXS consider this could more difficult to deliver with the likelihood of an array of difficult landowners involved. Land pooling could become difficult.

Could a body buy out the land? There was a figure between the development value and the existing use, which could buy the land at, rather than best value. This would need either one or both i.e. a patient landowner or patient money.

There was no real political will to invest in ‘clever’ tax relief mechanisms.

The way forward needs to be determined, to a large part, by the choice made; whether a New Garden City, large SUE or tottering town. Iain felt a freestanding new settlement could end up being a dormitory town to London. This affects the economic viability.
BREAKOUT GROUP - GOVERNANCE

JG - opened the session, reading some of the initial questions posed in the pre-think tank paper distributed to delegates. In particular, the group was asked to focus on the types of independent (private or otherwise) bodies who might assume responsibility for the governance of the new settlement and whether or not this might include historic or institutional estates?

TR - queried whether or not there might be a role for a responsible minister in Government to take on a lead role; however, the mood of the group suggested that whoever takes the grief for new settlements needs to be the primary beneficiary, which suggests this role is not for Government.

PC - spoke of managing community interest downstream, and ensuring that the community and the land owners are sufficiently incentivised throughout the process of growth. There needs to be a mechanism whereby wealth created in the new city is re-captured.

(PC) - Perhaps the best place to start would be with the existing residents, and consider these as stakeholders in the community. Once mechanism might be to identify local needs and address these through a H.I.D (Housing Improvement District, as opposed to a B.I.D. Business Improvement District) (although this has been used elsewhere via the Pathfinder programme).

BB - cited his own organisation’s experience of setting up not for profit (NFP) vehicles ploughing the profits from private development, undertaken by the RP/RSL back into affordable housing and development infrastructure.

SA - spoke of how a wider role for public sector ownership could be considered providing the public sector [or any such body] with the capital assets from which to derive receipts to re-invest in the community. An example of the is at Milton Keynes where the former New Towns Commission (HCA) transferred its remaining stake in the town back to the local authority and this is an approach that could be followed in other New Towns.

BB - gave an example of a NFP scheme in action at Chichester where income from the project is being reinvested into the scheme.

PC - noted that this seemed to be a pre-requirement to achieving buy in from local community but that investment needed to be captured within communities as a whole [including the existing residents].

HC - noted the difficulties with prejudicing governance arrangements by losing popularity before a real scheme has even begun. Miles Gibson the Prize Director has confirmed the judges will be looking for a location but this is likely to compromise popularity and a fair hearing, as well as not allow sufficient time to consider constraints.

RS - questioned who was going to be responsible for providing these benefits, whether this would fall to a developer?

PC - suggested 2 ‘classes’ of ownership, the first being those residents already in the vicinity of new development who might be gifted a £10k initial share in the development – no return would be calculable on this but it would infer voting rights, additional opportunities for investment at an undetermined rate of return would also be available. New residents could also opt into the share scheme [at the same £10k / share].

JG - noted a similar mechanism promoted by Terry Fuller (invited to the think tank but who could not attend). He has suggested discounting development by the cost of the land (encouraging take up) but taking this discounted sum and issuing bonds (within the scope of the HCA) at a 6-7% rate of return to encourage investment to capture local investment in a fund that would be used to finance scheme infrastructure. Although this suggestion is targeted at the post-retirement generation looking to down-scale with a decent level of equity, it could be expanded to more diverse communities.

BB - noted that communities with a vested interest in the place tend to be well run, clean and better functioning.

RS - questioned how this would work in practice, how any assets would be realised?
TR - thought that an agency of sorts would need to manage such an enterprise and would have the patience to wait for a long term income. This would seem to be a model that could be applied to existing cities.

HC - cautioned the use of holding Letchworth up as a model as it had to be financially rescued after the private sector sought to wrestle control from the general community of the governing body by acquiring votes/shares and safeguards would be needed against this.

HC - noted the example of Peterborough which has been quite progressive with recent developments splitting private/public infrastructure and cited schemes where only major roads and secondary schools were in public ownership.

HC - suggested dusting down new town legislation as a delivery mechanism, and cited examples of development where even the likes of the CPRE were represented on boards. The general approach might consider a hands off approach for the public sector and instead seek an enlightened land owner. Issues will be how much land/assets can be given away and what rateable income should be applied. It will be necessary as part of any submission to state where the boundaries between public and private/independence governance should be drawn.

PC - suggested a key focus for continued stewardships of estates would be the ongoing agricultural management of strategic open space.

JG - noted that utilities providers were in the market for the private provision of supplying sewage treatment, water supply gas and electricity to new development.

PC suggested land owners might be prepared to take on additional service provision.

HC - considers that a new model of co-operation between landowners and councils is required to overcome fear and distrust of local authority management

TR - suggested encouraging land owners as parties to the development of new settlements by identifying tax relief on specific community benefit activities

PC - repeated the point form the main discussion which concerned the issue of Tenure and leasehold reform as well as questioning the attraction of managing large scale residential

BB - suggested that RSLs/RPs could assume this role and there was currently no problem attracting funding/bonds, indeed these were commonly oversubscribed.

SA - considered that landowners are not reinvesting in major residential schemes at the moment.

SA - also noted the language of any submission would need to be punchy, full of sound bites and easily transferred to Policy if it was going to have any effect, and queried the role for an Advertising agency partner

PC - suggested that the submission or strategy look at the House of Lords for a champion/sponsor, someone who can run across election period into at least a 10 year span of involvement.

HC - noted that the next Government Minister to pick up the role of planning and housing delivery will have a huge legacy problem. Of particular concern are options for London which currently include high cost brown field or liberalisation of land availability [Green Belt review]. There are external pressures being brought to bear from both landowners and funds.

PC - noted that the process should be made apolitical, suggesting Labour continue to support Dev Co’s, the Liberals Garden Cities and there remains a backlash from Tory back benchers.
SA - suggested considering opportunities focused on the link to HS2 – Northern extension, and commented on whether there should be a northern focus, capturing new votes from Labour supporters.

PC - considered the concept of City ownership might be an attraction to Labour

SA - noted the case of Peel Holdings investment at Ellesmere Port.

PC - reminded the participants that Ed Milliband had been a former chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and as such should understand landowner requirements

HC - noted the lessons that could be drawn from the Growth points, e.g. Tamworth

• Strong economic Aspirations
• University
• UTC
• National infrastructure

BB - explained that there is more support for affordable housing grants away for London when an economic case can be made.

PC - suggested a push on MOD land.

RS - spoke of the convoluted experience of Gov Disposals

TR - refocused on London as key global city to stay

• competitive
• Affordability
• Quality of life
• 80,000 net loss PA

TR - stated that new towns and cities should be focused transport network as per US Transit Oriented Development (TOD)

TR - suggested a focus on knowledge economy workers but queried how to get them to

To move to towns and whether those towns want to grow. Is it possible to reverse urbanisation?

PC - noted that there was still a great deal of fluidity of population in the UK. Perhaps a Greenbelt Commission should be set up to review to role of the Green Belt and its ability to support growth, noting that LPA’s don’t understand rural issues.
The team agreed that the discussion should focus on how to promote / sell New Garden Cities to a wide audience and on what would be popular in terms of the Vision. Interestingly, (and without prompting from the facilitator), much of the discussion focused on using existing towns. This is possibly indicative of the group’s feeling that Greenfield development is difficult to make popular in the UK. In the latter part of the discussion the focus switched to Greenfield and the group talked about how to get buy-in from communities and what developments need to offer in order to make them popular in the long term. Main points as follows. (Note that most points were discussed by the whole group. Initials attributed to the group member who initially raised the point.):

**SW** - Proper consultation is essential to win people over. General agreement from the group that consultation must be inclusive and engaging in the long term. Start very early in the process. Don’t tell people about what you’ve already designed; ask them what they want to see and find out what would benefit them. This was a topic that the group returned to throughout the discussion, emphasising the need for innovative methods to reach people and bring them on board. Also the need to engage over the long term; start early and continue through the process and beyond.

**RG** - Places with inherent character and social need seem a good fit with creating places that are popular both in the short and long term. General discussion around existing places and popularity. Residents of declining towns benefit from inward investment and improved life chances in the long term. In the short term, capitalising on existing infrastructure (eg train stations) and cultural assets (sports teams, music venues etc.) can help to attract incomers.

**SW** - Think about what people really want; jobs, good schools and good housing. If you want a place to be popular then it must provide these 3 basic things.

**BB** - Why don’t people like the standard housebuilder product? Something like 70% (?) of people would prefer not to buy new build houses – why not?

**NK** - Need to broaden engagement.

The people who turn up to consultation events aren’t always the people you need to speak to. Make an effort to ID the population. Really get under the skin of a place. Not just the standard ‘hard to reach’ groups but also the people in the middle with everyday issues but little time.

**NK/BB** - Need strong leadership with vision and long term political will.

The group talked about planning policy cycles and the problems of 5 year plans in delivering a large scale development like an NGC. Concluded that 15 years was the minimum timescale a plan should be in place, possibly outside of the ‘normal’ system. Also required a new/improved delivery body such as the New Towns Commission but with a very local focus.

**BUILD BIGGER, BETTER HOUSES**

**RG** - Britain has the meanest new house sizes in Europe. Many people prefer to buy old houses because the rooms are bigger, the gardens are bigger (so if you extend you don’t build over the whole garden) and there is more storage. New Garden Cities need to deliver similar quality. Look to the Georgian/Victorian ‘rated’ system where streets have lots of houses of the same plan but with different external detailing and opportunities to personalise. Also shouldn’t be afraid to create some streets with much bigger homes and some with smaller. Mix up the density and massing much more. Average UK density is 42dph but this reflects a huge variety.

**A NEW TOWN NEEDS A ‘GENERATOR’**

**RG** - Towns are mixed places, they don’t consist solely of housing; the housing is there in support of other uses. New towns therefore should not be housing led. They need something to drive growth such as a university (suggest a technical college teaching skills) and big employment. People want jobs so starting with those would be more popular. (Although need to avoid building employment campus that isn’t urban).
CONNECTIVITY IS HUGELY IMPORTANT; TOWNS NEED TO BE WALKABLE

RR - The groups discussed connectivity generally and agreed that the concept needs to extend to walking, cycling and public transport but also digital connectivity (SmartCity) and social networks. [SW] Must embrace Smart City ideas. This is a huge opportunity to ensure everyone is digitally connected and places are hardwired for sustainability.

NK - “Positive bribery”; the notion that people will like something if there’s something in it for them. We shouldn’t rule out bribery - there may be incentives that can be offered to people that don’t only benefit the individual but also the developers and the town in general. NK gave an example: People don’t like change. With the current system you are effectively consulting your opposition because the people you are consulting are those who will be most affected by the change and therefore will be those most likely to object. Perhaps you could offer those people a discount on buying a new home in the new neighbourhood? That way you would be offering them something but also helping to seed the new neighbourhood with established members of the community.

NGCs need to have great parks

BB - The group discussed the original garden cities and the idea of creating green, leafy places. Agreed that a large town park is essential. Something similar to central park in NYC (on an appropriate scale) where the quality of the landscape and the layout allow you to feel you are in a much bigger space that you really are. Also discussed the need for diversity of public space in terms of character and scale.

RR - Diversity should be extended to all aspects of the town and include diversity of opportunity.

The town should welcome diversity and offer a wide range of opportunities in terms of jobs, homes, education, leisure, lifestyle.

NK/SW - Money/funding; needs to be a mechanism to give money directly to the governing authority.

This is partly a point about bribery; the notion that planning authorities may be in favour of a new town if they know they will get good amounts of funding (from the land receipts or from build profit if not possible from the public purse. BB pointed out that this is a typical approach in the US and is quite successful in encouraging growth. The other aspect of this is ensuring that there is enough money in the pot to support the community in the long term.

BB - What if the NGC were designed as a resort? Could that help with quality and popularity?

The example of Bath was discussed where developers built beautiful, quality buildings around a spa because they were showing off to one another. Could that form of friendly competition coupled with enhanced value brought by the resort aspect work? The group agreed it could be a good model given the right site. Then went on to discuss how the ‘right’ site could be created…

BB/RG - Use the landscape to create value and also function

Investing in the landscape to create a beautiful setting can also improve sustainability. For example, it is possible to use water in ways that make it functional as well as beautiful, (balancing, SUDs, habitat, leisure, energy creation, add value etc).

RG - The form of the submission could take the form of a prospectus for the town. With illustrations of how it could be.

SW - Need to find innovative affordable housing models

The group agreed that affordable housing would be fundamental to the success of a NGC (but left the economics to the group looking at viability).

SW - Return to long term lease/management along the lines of traditional estates but move away from top down governance
The group agreed they liked the idea of the ‘estate’ or ‘trust’ model, (modern version, Argent at Kings Cross because it implies long term investment and a vested interest in creating something of quality). Bourneville and Port Sunlight both cited as good examples. It was agreed that these could to resonate better with the public than the normal developer approach of build and run.

NK - Speed up the process. Need to aim for a timescale of 5yrs from concept to build. Remove long term uncertainty, get things moving quickly. Current system takes too long and is hampered by political cycles.

RR/SW - We should think of it this way; we are not selling new towns we are selling opportunities. Conceive of the new town as a social experience.

This needs to offer a similar sort of step change to that offered by the original garden cities – but one which is appropriate to the 21st century. These towns should be opportunities for people to improve their quality of life. Opportunities for innovation in housing types and tenures, in ways of working, in infrastructure and management of place and in governance and localism. Involve people early, design for their long term well being. Think about how people will live and what they will need to live well.
WHERE SHOULD NEW GARDEN CITIES BE LOCATED?

For new Garden Cities to be successful for both the short and long-term, they need to be in a location where people want to live and the commercial viability of a new settlement is dependent on making the new place as attractive to new residents as possible.

To advance this process, and in support of our proposals for a National Spatial Plan (NSP) we have examined the criteria that could be relevant to choosing a suitable location for Garden City and identified suitable broad locations using these criteria through a two stage “sifting process”.

Stage 1 seeks to identify the initial broad locations within the UK where Garden Cities could be situated, with reference to a number of strategic and geographical considerations and this is explained in Step 3 of our submission. Stage 2 of the sifting process (addressed at Step 4 of our submission) looks at more detailed criteria relating to delivery.

Our Think Tank event in January 2014 identified a number of key factors in considering the location of Garden Cities. One of these was that they should be ‘location-led’ and go where it is needed rather than where the planning process might find least resistance. It was also felt that towns that were in a state of deprivation or economic decline could potentially benefit from the introduction of a Garden City where this coincided with an identified need. These considerations have fed into our assessment process below.

The criteria relevant to selecting a suitable location Garden Cities have been considered under the two-stage process as follows:

STAGE 1 SIFTING:
• Economic considerations
• Social considerations
• Physical and geographical considerations
• Connectivity

STAGE 2 SIFTING:
• Landownership considerations
• Other Deliverability considerations
• Context and site constraints and opportunities

The evaluation of factors under each of these headings will inform the decision-making process for selecting the best location for one or more Garden Cities in the UK.

STAGE 1 SIFTING
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

For a Garden Cities to be commercially viable and economically robust it needs to be in a location where there is likely to be a sustained demand for housing and commercial development as well as social and community infrastructure.

In considering the economic climate, it is useful to review indicators of supply and demand these are considered below in order to define areas where a Garden City is likely to be of most benefit.

HOUSING SUPPLY

The level of supply of housing is an important consideration in determining the best location for a Garden City. There are areas of the UK where housing supply is restricted as a result of geographic constraints and this restricted supply places pressures on the housing market in that area. A potentially good location for a Garden City could be in an area where there is a severe restriction on supply that cannot be overcome under the current planning framework and an increasing demand for housing.

There is not a national database of supply of new homes as defined by Local Plans. Although the majority of LPA in the UK have a 5 year supply many of these will face issues in meeting their long term housing needs over the next 30 years – 50 years. It is this long term supply that a Garden City can address in a highly effective way, as well as meeting immediate housing shortfalls.

There is a general pattern emerging across all large conurbations where LPA boundaries are tightly drawn around the urban area. London, Birmingham, Bristol,
Stevenage and York are examples of “land-locked” authorities looking to export a significant amounting of future need to neighbouring authorities.

A new Garden City placed within the zone of influence of one or more of these land-locked local authorities could make a significant contribution to the deficit in long-term housing supply in that area and in responding to an identified demand, would ensure that the viability of the new city would be maximised. We have overlaid the potential economic and social ‘zone of influence’ of the major towns and cities in England and Wales as part of our Stage 1 sifting analysis.

HOUSING DEMAND
Demand for housing is also an important consideration. There are a number of indicators based on national data that provide useful information on demand which are considered below.

AFFORDABILITY RATIO
The affordability ratio compares lower quartile house prices to lower quartile earnings to provide an index rating from sub-75 (most affordable) to over 125 (least affordable). Plan A attached within this appendix shows a clear distinction between north and south, with none of the local authorities in the south having an affordability ratio of less than 90. In contrast, only a small proportion of authorities in the north having a ratio of more than 110.

This would suggest that demand is outstripping supply in much of the southern part of England and this would suggest that the greatest need for a new settlement or settlements would be in these areas.

However, there are pockets of low affordability in the Midlands and north of England that should also be considered as potential locations.

PREDICTED POPULATION GROWTH
Plan B, attached, shows predicted population growth across the UK. Generally and with few exceptions, population is predicted to grow by between 10 and 20+% in local authorities in the south, east and central eastern areas. Central western areas of England are estimated to see lower growth or a net decline in population.

The areas with the highest levels of predicted growth (over 20%) are around London as well as around other large towns and cities in the southern part of the UK such as Bristol, Cambridge, and Oxford as well as around northern cities of Leeds and Sheffield.

POPULATION DENSITY GROWTH
Plan C shows the predicted population density growth in population per square mile. This indicator, which highlights particular pressures in respect of the supply of houses, shows that high levels of population density growth are predicted for central London and Greater London.

Outside London there are a number of ‘hotspots’ around cities such as Bristol, Southampton, Cardiff, Plymouth, Birmingham and Manchester but otherwise the pattern is relatively neutral. This suggests that an effective potential location for a Garden City could be close to an existing city or large town predicted to have high levels of population density growth.

JOB GROWTH
Plan D shows the estimated growth in jobs by local authority. High levels of growth 20 -25+% are predicted for London and the areas surrounding the capital, extending into the central midlands.

This is a useful indicator in the consideration of a Garden City because locating a new town or city in an area of high predicted job growth is likely to ensure that new employment opportunities are viable and in demand, thus contributing to the economic viability and success of the new settlement.

SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS
As well as economic factors, the success of a new settlement depends on achieving a balanced and sustainable society (see our Vision preceding the roadmap). A Garden City offers the opportunity to contribute to the economic regeneration of areas suffering economic and/or social deprivation.
INDICES OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION

The Index of Multiple Deprivation measures seven social and economic factors: income, employment, health & disability, education & skills, barriers to housing & services, living environment, and crime. Plan E shows the pattern of deprivation across the UK at a small (sub local authority) level.

A clear pattern is evident from the plan. Large areas of central England outside London extending up to the Midlands and to the west of England appear to have generally low levels of deprivation, suggesting a generally more affluent population where is most likely to be a strong demand for new housing and employment opportunities. However, the plan also shows a high number of the most deprived areas in urban areas within this broad area.

Large areas of London, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds and Sheffield are classified as within the most deprived category.

GREEN BELTS

Green Belts have a specific planning purpose. The land use designation is used to retain areas of largely undeveloped land around urban areas preventing unconstrained growth and any potential for coalescence of settlements.

However, unlike AONBs and National Parks, Green Belts comprise areas with a wide range of environmental quality. By example some ¾ of the Cambridge Green Belt is comprised of high intensity agricultural land, less bio-diverse than parks and gardens. The same land use occupies 1/3 of the London Metropolitan Green Belt.

Moreover, as Plan F demonstrates, Green Belts are in locations where a Garden City is likely to be highly successful (in close proximity to a major town or city where demand for housing has been constrained). For the purposes of this Stage 1 sifting assessment they have been included as potential locations, subject to meeting requirements for connectivity.

PHYSICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The location of a Garden City will be influenced by geographical constraints in the form of national designations such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Parks and (potentially) Green Belts. In addition, at a more detailed scale, under Stage 2 of the sifting process, constraints such as flood plains will also rule out specific geographical areas. The identification of positive considerations such as the availability of good transport connections also form a part of this assessment. These factors are considered below with reference to a series of plans.

NATIONAL PARKS AND AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

A significant proportion of the UK is covered by AONBs and National Parks (see Plan F). These are important national assets comprising high quality landscapes protected for their special beauty and amenity benefits within which very large scale development, in the form of a Garden City, would be inappropriate and unacceptable. For these reasons, AONBs and National Parks have been excluded as part of the Stage 1 sifting analysis.

STRATEGIC CONNECTIVITY

Drawing on one of the key ingredients of successful historic towns and cities, it is important that Garden Cities are accessible and well-connected. In the UK this means that the new settlement should be located close to either a main line railway station or close to a railway line with the potential for a station to be added as well as within easy reach of a motorway or major ‘A’ road.

RAILWAY NETWORK

Plan G shows the mainline railway network and stations across the UK as well as existing settlements.

For a Garden City to be a success, it is important that a train station is within walking and cycling distance of the majority of residents and within an easy bus journey of all residents.

The majority of existing train stations are within existing towns and cities (see Plan G). However, there a number of stations on mainline railway routes that are either within small villages or in rural or relatively undeveloped areas. These stations provide potential sustainable and viable locations for a Garden City.
STRATEGIC ROAD NETWORK
As more sustainable forms of road-based transport are developed in the form of electric vehicles, the need for good connections to the motorway network will continue to be important.

Plan H shows the motorway and main A-road network in the UK. Proximity to this road network has been a key consideration in the Stage 1 sifting assessment.

STAGE 1 SIFTING ASSESSMENT: SUMMARY OF RESULTS
Plan I shows the areas within the UK that are outside of AONBs and National Parks and within approximately 5 miles of an existing train line and approximately 20 miles of either a motorway or major ‘A road’. These may be regarded as the baseline ‘fundamentals’ for a successful Garden City.

The final consideration in the initial sifting assessment considering social and economic factors indicates that a Garden City should be located within the ‘zone of influence’ of an existing major town or city where there is likely to be a very high demand for both housing and jobs.

Plan J shows the areas identified as benefiting from excellent rail and road connections overlaid with the following ‘zones of influence’ of major towns and cities:

- London – 60 miles
- Birmingham – 40 miles
- Manchester – 40 miles
- Leeds – 30 miles
- Liverpool – 30 miles
- All other settlements - 25 miles

Plan J is a summary of the broad areas of investigation that should be the first consideration in identifying a suitable location for a Garden City and this type of plan could form the basis of a National Spatial Plan.

STAGE 2 SIFTING
LOCAL CONTEXT CONSIDERATIONS
Within the broad geographical areas defined through the Stage 1 sifting there will be some sites that are more suitable than others in terms of suitability, viability and deliverability.

A second, more detailed sifting assessment is therefore recommended in order to rule out any areas that are not suitable and to identify the best potential locations for a new Garden City.

An objective appraisal of a range of geographic, planning, economic, physical and landownership factors would be necessary at this stage. The table below summarises key, more-detailed local context considerations, site features and constraints that will need to be scored or ranked as part of the sifting appraisal.

The results of this sifting assessment would be a table or ranking of the most suitable, viable and deliverable sites for the new Garden Cities which could then be promoted as suggested in Step 6 of our submission.

### Stage 2 Sifting Assessment

#### Local Context considerations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proximity to an airport</th>
<th>+ Score awarded on the basis of the distance in miles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to a major university</td>
<td>+ Score awarded on the basis of the distance in miles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Site features and constraints

| Flood zone | - Scored on the basis of the extent of any flood zones |
| Landscape and visual impact | - Scored on the basis of the extent of any impact |
| Topography | +/- Scored on the basis of the suitability of the site in terms of topography |
| Access and connections | + Scored on the basis of the suitability and deliverability of strategic access solutions |

#### Land ownership and deliverability

| Land within a manageable number of owners | + Scored on the basis of the proportion of the site within land that is immediately available and within a manageable number of landowners |
Index
- Less than 75 (most affordable)
- 75 - 90
- 90 - 110
- 110 - 125
- Greater than 125 (least affordable)
Population Growth
2011 - 2031

-15.0% - 0.0%
0.0% - 5.0%
5.0% - 10%
10% - 15%
15% - 20%
20% +

2. PLAN B: POPULATION GROWTH
Legend
Population Density Growth
2011 to 2031 (population per sq mile)

-250 - 000
000 - 250
250 - 750
750 - 1,250
1,250 +
4. PLAN D: JOB GROWTH PERCENTAGE
IMD 2010 Percentage Ranking - All Domains

- 0% - 20% (Most Deprived)
- 20% - 40%
- 40% - 60%
- 60% - 80%
- 80% - 100% (Least Deprived)
5. PLAN F: NATIONAL PARKS-AONB'S & GREENBELTS
6. PLAN G: RAILWAYS, STATIONS & SETTLEMENTS
8. PLAN H: MOTORWAYS & MAJOR A ROADS
9. PLAN I: POTENTIAL LOCATIONS TO BE IDENTIFIED IN THE NATIONAL SPATIAL PLAN

(Areas outside national designations, within approximately 5 miles of a railway line and within approximately 15 miles of a motorway or major road)
10. PLAN J: POTENTIAL LOCATIONS WITHIN INFLUENCE OF MAJOR TOWNS & CITIES