

### ***Building Masterplans***

URBED are a specialist masterplanning practice and since 1999 we have worked on a range of high-profile masterplan-led outline planning applications including more than 15,000 homes.

For a number of years URBED has also run masterplanning courses for communities and professionals called Design for Change. As part of the course we tell participants not to let on that masterplanning is easy! Connect up the surrounding streets, follow a few simple rules and anyone can do it. Indeed after a three day residential course we can get community groups to produce good professional, plans lovingly modelled in plasticine.

This begs some important questions such as: Why do so many professionals find it so difficult to produce good masterplans? and... Why do so few masterplans, even the good ones, ever get built? The reason is that in the real, rather than the plasticine world, masterplanning is actually a complicated, collaborative process that is quite unlike architecture or indeed town planning.

It is easy enough to draw the perfect plan, but as a masterplanner it is necessary to find common ground between a wide range of competing interests. These include commercial clients and their agents, local communities, politician, highway engineers, ecologists, flood specialists etc... This is before you even speak to the planning authority and are told that everything needs to change. Reconciling these interests and not ending up with a compromised plan is the first layer of difficulty.

However even when a planning permission is granted and it feels like you have achieved something, the work has only just started. Most plans take many years to build and in that time a host of things can go wrong and usually do. Personnel move on, sites are bought and sold, markets change and new architects are appointed who see it as their role to change everything that came before. It is no wonder that most plans never get built as they were conceived.

At URBED we are therefore very proud that our first two major masterplans, the New England Quarter in Brighton and Temple Quay 2 in Bristol, have been built pretty much as we designed them. It was the Brighton scheme that allowed us to break into masterplanning in 1999. A local developer QED, backed by Railtrack and Sainsburys had been refused permission for a supermarket on a site next to Brighton Station. When the local campaign group used URBED's Sustainable Urban Neighbourhood work to suggest an alternative vision for the site the

### News

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### Urban Design Award 2012 Winners

URBED were joint winners in the Practice category for our work on Brentford Lock West, [please see here for more information](#), David attended the evening to collect the award. A big thanks to Johannes Tovatts, Klas Tham, Tibbalds and Stockleys who worked so hard on the project!

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### New Website

URBED's shiny new website went live a few months ago. Our past projects are showcased on the [Archive](#) portfolio page where you'll find many images and reports; this database of projects can be easily filtered to meet your interests. In our [Current work](#) you will find a project blog for each project, allowing us

developer gave us a ring and asked what we would do. Within a couple of months we were appointed as masterplanners and two years later managed to secure planning permission.

Since that time we have worked on a range of major masterplans for commercial and public sector clients (some of the highlights are listed below). When we were appointed in Brighton we had no clear idea how to turn a masterplan into an outline planning application and we therefore developed our own set of techniques. These are based on an illustrative scheme, used in discussions with planners, stakeholders and the community which is then abstracted into a set of Regulatory Plans. These define the parameters of the outline consent and provide a clear set of tools that future architects can pick up and use. The regulatory plans don't tell future architects how to design their building, but they do create a three dimensional envelop to ensure that their scheme fits into the masterplan.

Too many masterplanners design everything in too much detail, like large scale architecture. This however only works where the architect/ masterplanner is retained to design everything. In contrast our plans create a framework into which future buildings can fit while allowing each design team to add their own level of detail and creativity. This is nothing particularly new; it is the way that masterplanning was practiced by Nash and Hausermann. In this way we are pleased to have played a small part in rediscovering the art of masterplanning.

## *Masterplanning Highlights*



### Brighton New England Quarter

Above is the very recent aerial photograph of the built scheme, which has a remarkable likeness to our original masterplan. The scheme includes around 800 homes, a language school, Sainsbury's and a hotel. The 40,000sqft store is below a residential block with parking in the basement. The scheme includes the new townhouses, rooftop allotments, and a new green corridor.

to keep you up to date on progress, so do check back and see how the projects are developing. We want to say a big thank you to the designers at Creative Concern who brought the vision into reality! If you have any comments on the new look website please email [emily@urbed.coop](mailto:emily@urbed.coop)

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## Masterplanning Project Updates

### **Brighton New England Quarter:**

Client: QED, Railtrack and Sainsburys, 800 homes, a college, hotel and supermarket. Status: Complete except for final site.

### **Bristol Temple Quay 2:**

Client: Castlemore Securities, SURDA, 600 homes, 60,000m<sup>2</sup> of office space, hotel and new bridge. Status: 2/3 complete.

### **Southall Gas Works:**

Client: Castlemore Securities, 3,500 homes plus a range of other uses. Status: Planning application submitted but withdrawn after the Bunsfield fire.

### **Marshall's Mill, Leeds:**

Client: Igloo, 300 homes plus studio space and other uses. Status: Planning consent granted, mill converted, remainder of the site in abeyance.

### **Telford Millennium Community:**

Client: Taylor Wimpey, 800 homes plus new school. Status: planning consent granted first phase and infrastructure complete

### **Anfield, Liverpool:**

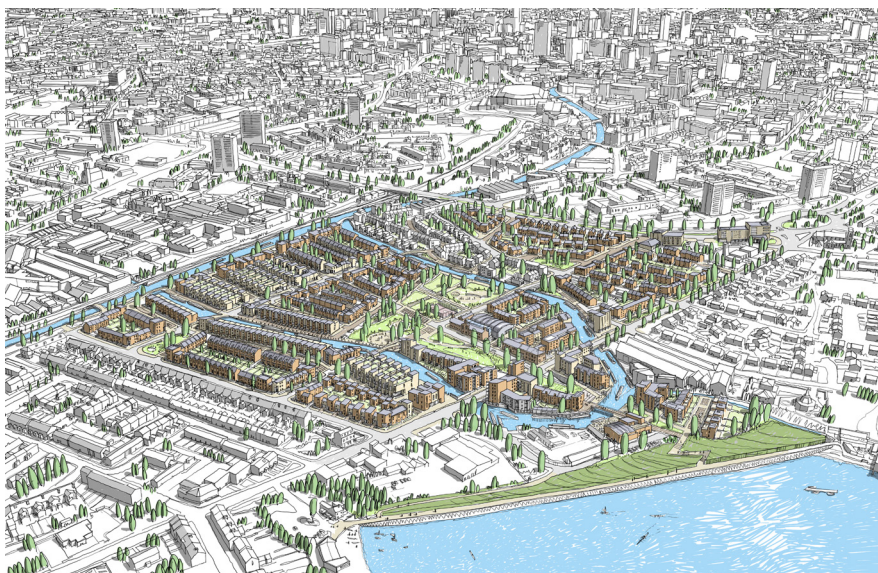
Client: Keepmoat, 1,500 homes as part of the HMR programme. Status: Outline planning granted, phases 1 and 2 complete.





### Bristol Temple Quay

This was won as a competition and developed as a masterplan for Castlemore Securities. The proposed scheme planned to provide around 500 new homes and 50,000m<sup>2</sup> of commercial space to create, as CABE said, 'a new quarter with a distinct character'. The picture above shows the new waterfront with an office building by Stride Treglown and a tower by Glen Howells. A central spine has been designed by Landscape Projects.



### Icknield Port Loop Birmingham

This masterplan started in Autumn 2010 and was based on a shared vision of the land owners, British Waterways, Birmingham City Council and The Homes and Communities Agency: 'To create by 2025, a high-quality, family orientated, sustainable and mixed-use waterside neighbourhood'. The design included 1000 new homes focussed around a new park with a community sports facility, canal-side pub and hotel. The masterplan has been submitted for planning and we are awaiting a decision.

### **Sheffield West Bar:**

Client: Castlemore and Sheffield Council, 450 homes plus 100,000m<sup>2</sup> of office space, hotel and student accommodation. Status: Outline planning granted but Castlemore went into liquidation, Sheffield Council have agreed a new Joint venture with URBO and we are to be retained as masterplanners.

### **Leicester Waterside:**

Client: Blueprint (Igloo, EMDA and HCA), competition scheme for 400 homes in a high density low rise waterside community. Status: Client sign off but scheme in abeyance.

### **Brentford Lock West:**

Client: Isis, A masterplan developed with Tovatt Associates and Klass Tham from Stockholm for 600 units and a mix of uses. Status: Outline Planning granted, detailed design work underway. URBED were the joint winners in the Practice category at the 2012 Urban Design Award for this masterplan.

### **Leigh, Wigan:**

Client: Longport, 2,000 units on a number of sites. Status: One outline consent granted, a second in preparation.

### **Old Trafford Manchester:**

Client: Trafford Housing Trust, Masterplan for a large social housing estate including the demolition of 4 towers, the refurbishment of 3 more and 1700 new units. Status: Masterplan adopted and refurbishment of the 3 towers underway.

### **New Bolton Woods, Bradford:**

Client: URBO and Bradford Council, Masterplan for up to 2,000 units. Status: work in progress.

**Liverpool University:**

Masterplanning work for the University for 3,000 student rooms on the campus and one of its suburban sites. Status: work in progress.

**Icknield Port Loop, Birmingham:**

Client: British Waterways, Birmingham City Council, HCA, Masterplan for 1,000 units. Status: Outline Planning application submitted October 2011, awaiting decision.

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