

Company Profile

Collins & Coward was established in July 2007 by the founding Directors, Tony Collins, Sally Collins and Ian Coward. The consultancy operates throughout the whole of the UK. Our office is based in Westwood Business Park in Colchester. We advise on some of the most challenging and innovative projects in the UK. Projects are undertaken from inception to delivery across a wide spectrum of professional services for clients. The practice is an independent planning and development consultancy. Our clients include landowners, investors, international and national companies, Government Departments and other public bodies.



Our Approach and Role

Our approach is based on a comprehensive knowledge of town planning focused on client needs. We believe that working with our clients in close partnership delivers valuable and practical solutions for their projects.

We are fully committed to our clients' needs. We bring integrity, professionalism and a partnership approach to all our instructions. We often take on different roles dependent upon the particular circumstances of the project:

- lead consultants
- environmental co-ordinators
- specialists within multi-disciplinary teams
- expert witnesses

Blending and balancing commercialism with environmental objectives is the challenge for society and is reflected in our practical approach to problem solving. The Government's rapidly changing sustainability agenda often requires a creative or innovative approach to development. We are results driven and find our best contribution can be made when commissioned at the outset.

The Practice has established links with a range of specialists including archaeologists, architects, chartered surveyors, consulting engineers, cultural heritage experts, environmental consultants, landscape architects, lawyers, quantity surveyors, regeneration specialists and renewable resources consultants.

We are often requested to put together and lead a team of experts to meet the needs of specific projects. Our teams are tailored to ensure the client receives the best expertise in each and every technical field.

Our Values

Although we are a young and growing consultancy we bring experience and knowledge gained over many years working on leading-edge and major projects in the UK. We are proud to be advocates for some of the country's leading businesses, developers and organisations.

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Services

We advise in relation to the full remit of town and country planning matters and deal with a range of projects from large scale infrastructure projects through medium sized development schemes to smaller scale planning matters. Our professional advice ranges across the spectrum from financial viability and planning obligations through to litigation and expert witness work. No project is too big or complex for our services.



Occupiers

For occupiers, property issues are inextricably linked to business needs. Whether a business is expanding or rationalising its operations, property is an essential component of such consideration. Our approach is to assist in the property approach by ensuring that any property or land assets work best for the organisation with through efficient operational use or simply maximising the value of surplus assets.

Working often as the client's lead consultant and working with property agents and other specialists we can construct strategies that deliver value or business efficiency by ensuring that town planning requirements deliver client needs in the overall project. Our approach is to ensure that any property and land assets perform best for the organisation through efficient operational use or simply maximising the value of surplus assets.

"The competence and professionalism that you have both exhibited in dealing and negotiating on our behalf with both City and County Council has been a very significant feature in a favourable decision reached - for that we are grateful."

Mike Searle, Commercial Director - European Metal Recycling Group

Investors

Our approach to investment is to ensure that the client has available the detailed technical knowledge of town planning to ensure returns are maximised from property and land assets. Often this means working property portfolios to ensure each and every property offers the best return. Changes of use, planning applications, certificates of lawfulness are examples of important town planning processes essential to underpinning value. We advise a number of funds on their property portfolios.

"Collins and Coward have provided invaluable strategic and practical town planning advice to enable Moto Hospitality Ltd to get the best performance from its property assets."

Tony Raven, Property Director - Moto Hospitality Ltd

Developers

The cyclic nature of the property market has often resulted in significant impacts on the development industry. This coupled with governmental policy initiatives on environment, planning, transportation and economics is directing developers and local authorities toward a sustainable future. Our approach is to work with developers at every step in the process whether for commercial or residential projects to maximise the potential of sites and seek to negotiate the best planning permission and planning obligations. Our input to planning obligations

is to negotiate the details of relevant mitigation measures which are fairly and reasonably related to the proposed development. In some cases such obligations required by local planning authorities are not appropriate. We assist Councils with the drafting of conditions to ensure planning permission can be properly and satisfactorily implemented.

“Tony Collins has been part of the client team providing comprehensive planning and commercial property advice to the Wood Wharf Partnership and assisting in leading the large professional team on this project for in excess of three years. His breadth of experience has been invaluable in steering this multibillion pound development through numerous complex issues and ultimately achieving outline planning permission for the Wood Wharf Masterplan.”

Jason Larkin, Executive Director (Planning) - Wood Wharf Partnership

Private Clients and Landowners

Collins and Coward act for a number of private clients. Our advice covers the whole spectrum of planning consultancy from dwellings in the green belt to alterations to listed buildings often with works amounting to several million pounds. Our role is to provide practical and technical solutions for their projects and assist in engaging other specialists as required. Often landowners wish to see their land developed and we can assist by devising and executing strategies from inception to realisation that maximise the prospects of success.

Public Sector

Public Sector organisations are required to increase efficiency and reduce costs in a context of greater demands on their services. Efficiency requirements in the sector are driving organisations. The need to release surplus land to meet other policy objectives such as housing supply requires the public sector to further scrutinise their property portfolios. We advise on how to release such land and maximise its potential through either planning permissions or allocations in the Development Plan system.

Many organisations such as local authorities are being proactive in trying to stimulate their local economies. In some cases local regeneration companies have been established to work alongside investors and developers to regenerate towns in decline. We can assist by producing market-driven technical solutions that maximise the potential but meet the objectives of local communities.

We act as planning consultants and expert witnesses in planning projects to support appropriate development for public sector organisations. This covers both asset realisation in the disposal of land and property or operational development to meet business objectives.

“The Asset Management Service of Essex County Council has used the services of Tony and Ian to provide planning consultancy advice on a variety of successful projects over an eight year period. Their advice has always been of a high standard rapidly delivered at reasonable cost to provide implementable solutions to enable us to pursue planning permissions for development.”

David Hall, Head of Capital Receipts Group - Essex County Council

- Amazon Properties
- Ballymore Properties Ltd
- Bowdens
- British Waterways
- Canary Wharf Group
- The Carphone Warehouse
- Champneys Group
- Colne Housing Association
- Comer Homes
- The Court Group
- DB Schenker (formerly English Welsh and Scottish Railway)
- Dunn Bros
- EFS Property Holdings
- Essex County Council Property Services
- European Metal Recycling
- Exeter College, Oxford University
- Freightliner
- Haven Health
- Heveningham Hall Estate
- Hewlett-Packard Ltd
- Infinite Energy
- ING Real Estate Investment Management
- INTend Regeneration Company
- ISIS Waterside Regeneration
- Kennedys Solicitors
- Leathwaite Developments
- Lenta Properties
- London Basement Company
- London Eastern Railway
- Moto Hospitality
- National Express East Anglia
- National Express East Coast
- Network Rail
- Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust
- Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire Mental Health NHS Trust
- Pelham Associates
- Property Merchant Group
- Pyramid Properties
- Regional Property Investment
- Secretary of State for Health
- Skanska
- South Central Strategic Health Authority
- Stoneforce
- Swansea Drydocks Ltd
- Tendring District Council
- Tower Hamlets PCT
- Vextrix Management Limited
- Vision Homes
- Waste Recycling Group
- Wood Wharf Limited Partnership



Champneys

Champneys is the leading health resort provider in the UK. Its quintessentially English approach to relaxation and health is renowned internationally as a high quality retreat for private clients, VIPs and Royalty. Champneys health resorts are located in the best areas of the English countryside, often in the Green Belt and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Our role as planning advisers is to secure the necessary planning permissions to enable the business to offer the best facilities to its customers.

Recent projects include securing guest accommodation at Forest Mere and various facilities at Tring as part of an on-going major improvement and expansion of the Health resort.



European Metal Recycling

European Metal Recycling is a global leader in recycled products and environmental services. The company has 100 locations worldwide and recycles over 10m tonnes of commodities annually. This is principally in ferrous and non-ferrous metals but with a growing business in plastics and other materials recycling. We are retained to advise on all planning aspects concerning the business operation, to protect property interests and to maximise the value of surplus assets.



National Express

We are retained by National Express as planning advisers to their East Coast and East Anglia railway operations. Over the last 18 months we have secured planning permission for development including car parking and other operational facilities. This has been mainly through the use of Certificate of Lawfulness for statutory railway undertakers but on occasions when express planning permission has been required. Working in conjunction with Network Rail many of these projects are now being constructed.



Hewlett Packard

Tony Collins has been advising Hewlett Packard on planning matters in the UK for over 20 years. He has achieved planning permissions for operational development to enable HP to meet its business objectives and to maximise the value of surplus assets on disposal. His planning work enabled the disposal of land at Bristol to the value of around £100m. He has advised on the development of business recovery space and data centres as well as protecting HP's property interest through the Development Plan system.



Moto Hospitality Limited

We act for the country's principal provider of motorway service areas (MSAs). The advice covers a full town and country planning service from the submission of planning applications, appeals, strategic development plan representations as well as seeking to guide Government policy on MSA provision. We assist in seeking to maximise the operational potential of Moto's property portfolio which is mainly located within the Green Belt.



Epping St Johns School

This instruction, acting on behalf of Essex County Council, involved the promotion of a "call-in" planning application for a new secondary school in the Essex Green Belt.



The existing school suffers from a number of fundamental building and design deficiencies in terms of the delivery of the quality of educational facilities required by the County. The proposal involved entering into a deal with a developer who would build the new secondary school (900 pupil places) in the Green Belt in exchange for the residential development of the current school site which lies primarily within the urban area (the outline proposal envisaged 155 units with a negotiated contributions towards affordable housing).

The First Secretary of State gave approval by means of a decision letter dated December 2007 following a six day inquiry at which we gave evidence.

Residentially-led mixed use scheme, Ashford, Kent

Acting on behalf of Denbay limited we are currently objecting to the Ashford Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP) through the Local Development Framework (LDF) process.



The objection relates to the site of the former "B&Q Store" which lies in close proximity to Ashford's International station and is part of the envisaged regeneration of the town's "international quarter".

We have agreed a great deal with the local planning authority in terms of the principle of a landmark bundling of high architectural quality on the site however there is an ongoing issue as to the level of office development that the site can support.

We have submitted evidence, in conjunction with a local office agent, to support our view that a residentially-led scheme is the only viable option and that this can only deliver a modest component of office floor space in addition to a ground floor retail or leisure use.

We shall be appearing at the hearing into the AAP in due course to argue the case in relation to the appropriate and viable mix of development on the site.

Apethorpe Hall

We advised in relation to the planning and development assumptions underlying the compulsory purchase of Apethorpe Hall, a Grade I listed Jacobean mansion. This involved establishing the extent of redevelopment and conversion to residential development that would be permitted within the curtilage of the listed building. This advice underlay the valuation assumptions as to the amount of compensation to be paid to our clients following the compulsory purchase of the property. Evidence was prepared and given at the Lands Tribunal although in the event both English Heritage and the DCMS agreed to our client's terms of the value to be paid in compensation before the case was finally determined.

Work undertaken by Tony Collins whilst at CGMS Ltd



Wood Wharf

Acting for the Wood Wharf (General Partner) Ltd which comprised Canary Wharf Group, Ballymore Properties Ltd and British Waterways we were seconded into the project team to manage sub-consultants and advise on the technical requirements to obtain outline planning permission for a mixed-use development of circa 7.5 million ft² on a site immediately east of Canary Wharf. Working to support the Executive Director of Wood Wharf we assisted and advised on every aspect of the planning and

development process for one of the UK's largest regeneration projects. The £3bn project comprised 14 tall buildings up to 200 metres in height on a 6.9 hectare site on the Isle of Dogs. The scheme comprises a master plan set within a stunning waterscape (almost completely surrounded by water):

- Six commercial buildings providing approximately 454,000 m² (4.9 million square feet) of office space
- Six residential buildings providing up to 1,668 homes including a significant proportion of family housing and 35% affordable housing
- A new waterside community park
- Community amenities which could include a new health centre, nursery, faith centre, specialist markets and recreational facilities
- A new High Street providing a variety of shops, independent retailers, restaurants, bars and cafés
- A hotel fronting the water providing approximately 120 rooms
- A new canal, waterfront boardwalks, ecology walks and moorings
- New bridge links connecting Wood Wharf to Canary Wharf
- £150m+ planning obligation package



DB Schenker (formerly EWS Railways)

Collins and Coward advises DB Schenker on a range of operational development. This includes ensuring facilities are permitted at transshipment sites. This includes aggregate and concrete handling projects. We have advised and obtained planning permission for a new rail transshipment facility at Beam Reach, Dagenham. We have secured development through the submission of Certificates of Lawfulness for DB Schenker as a statutory railway operator.



Mews Development: private individual

In conjunction with a historic building consultant we are currently working on a mews development in Knightsbridge, London. This involves lifting historical planning restrictions in terms of the requirement to use the ground floor of the property as a garage as well as seeking permission for a mansard extension to provide a new master bedroom and en-suite.



The Court Group

In conjunction with Studio Sutherland Architects we worked to achieve permission for a low energy unique "podium" style residential scheme in Crystal Palace for The Court Group to be placed on the local rental market.

The scheme involved the redevelopment of a redundant garage site in the urban area and is an example of modern style architecture successfully integrating with more traditional development. The issues raised included impact upon neighbours, design, car parking and precedent.

Construction on site is anticipated to start late 2009.

Illustration courtesy of Studio Sutherland



Vision Homes

We are retained by Vision Homes to provide planning consultancy advice across their portfolio.

This work involves planning applications, CLOPUDS, CLEUDS, appeals, development plan representations, informal views as to development potential, often working with a range of complimentary consultants.

We are currently advising in relation to varying residential schemes in Southwark, Bean, Kemsing and Bexley.



Chigwell County Primary School

We have recently been involved in an enabling development proposal on behalf of Essex County Council for the re-provision of a new County Primary School to be funded by enabling residential development in the Green Belt.

The existing school site lies alongside a redundant school which presents a quantum of built form in the Green Belt and open land owned by another party.

The scheme involved a joint venture with this other party and following a long public consultation exercise a master plan evolved which promoted the new school, an area of public open space, a new community car park to relieve pressure in the local area and further measures to facilitate public access into the Green Belt. This was to sit alongside the enabling residential development primarily on the site of the redundant school as part of a comprehensive master plan for the whole area.



Former Woolworths Stores

Acting on instructions issued by Pelham Associates we are currently dealing with a variety of planning issues surrounding the letting of a number of the former Woolworths units across the Country.

As these are comparatively large units a number of instructions have involved sub-division of the main unit and associated shop front changes.

The former store in Otley lies within the conservation area designation which covers this historic market town and adjacent to a number of listed buildings. A permission was obtained in the summer of 2009 to enable two new retailers to take this space.

We are also currently advising on sites in Peckham, Rayleigh, Hove and Sidcup.



Registered Social Landlord consultancy work

We are currently working with Colne Housing Society in relation to the re-development (together with part refurbishment of existing dwellings) of a former garrison site in Colchester for a 100% affordable housing scheme.

The scheme involves the promotion of two complimentary applications for separate phases of the development.

The housing is currently being built.

We have recently obtained permission, at appeal, for Colne in relation to 30 new affordable housing units outside the settlement limits of Heybridge. The permission was granted on the basis of the over-riding need for affordable housing. Funding has been obtained and the development will be commenced this year, to be completed in 2012 at which point 30 families current on the Council's waiting list will have a new home.



Haven Health Footpath Diversion Order

Having obtained planning permission for a new GP surgery in Belper, Haven Health were faced with the need to divert the local footpath which ran directly through the site of the development. There was a clear conflict between the line of this path and the ancillary patient car park.

In view of the local opposition to the scheme the diversion Order had to be considered at a full local inquiry which was held in July 2008 and the matter was appraised by an Inspector against the provisions of this specific aspect of the town and country planning legislation.

We appeared at the inquiry and the Order was subsequently confirmed in October 2008.

We also act for Haven Health in terms of seeking permission for new surgeries across the Country, having advised in relation to a multi-faceted healthcare facility in Brighouse.



Student scheme in Southwark

We have worked to achieve an agreement with the local planning authority as to the principle and form of a high density student scheme in Southwark.

The need for student accommodation is a material planning consideration and its appropriate delivery enables London's Colleges and Universities to attract and retain students from within the UK and overseas.

The proposal involved a range of issues to include establishing the principle of student accommodation as opposed to 'conventional' residential use, the management of the student population, the impact upon the local environment, the issue of whether the accommodation is 'affordable', the loss of employment floor space associated with the site, archaeology, flooding, design in the context of adjoining conservation area designations, impact upon neighbours, and day/sun lighting issues.



Comer Homes

We were retained by Comer Homes to secure through the appeal process an additional 19 residential units in Phase 6 of Princess Park Manor, a residential refurbishment and conversion of a former Victorian hospital complex. The building complex is statutorily listed Grade II. Our evidence at the Inquiry provided planning and financial Section 106 obligation advice that saved our client many millions of pounds.

Agreement was reached at the Planning Inquiry with the Council on planning and financial matters and the appeal was allowed by the Planning Inspector on the agreed basis with the Council.



Stable Cottage, Upper Farringdon

This is a bespoke residential scheme within the settlements limits of Upper Farringdon (within the remit of East Hampshire Council). Part lies within the conservation area and part outwith. The scheme is being contested locally and one of the issues relates to the principle of the development on garden land in view of the PPS3 revisions of 2010 and potential conflict with the newly introduced central Government policy setting a default presumption in favour of new development, particularly housing.



Farningham Mill, Kent

This site is exceptional and raises every planning issue under the sun.

Farningham Mill comprises a number of Grade II* and Grade II listed buildings which are in a state of disrepair. A residential conversion of the main building and the curtilage is the only means by which the future of the heritage asset can be secured. The scheme raises design, listed building, conservation area, viability (to include enabling development), residential amenity, arboricultural, Green Belt, flooding, ecological and highway issues. We are currently involved in an extensive consultation process with the local residents, parish council, local planning authority and English Heritage. The scheme will be led by quality and will create one of the most attractive residential environments in the south-east.



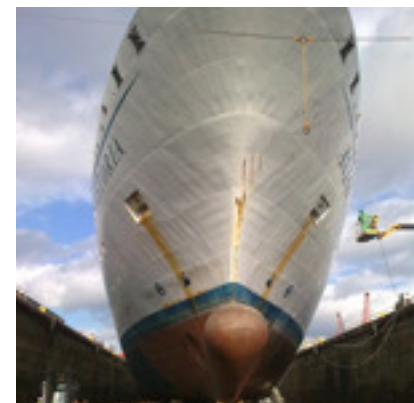
Lambeth based Building Schools for the Future

We are currently working with SEH Architects in supporting their applications for new BSF projects within Lambeth; the first in relation to Sunnyhill Primary School and the second New Norwood School. The high quality development proposed will create a top quality, sustainable school environment which will benefit pupils and parents alike for many years. The image shows the heritage structure which will be retained and form part and parcel of the New Norwood School together with a new build extension.



Swansea Drydocks Ltd

On behalf of Swansea Drydocks Ltd we have secured a certificate of lawfulness at a public Inquiry for the Prince of Wales Drydocks within Swansea Docks for Class B2 use for the repair, recycling, dismantling of marine units including ships. This will allow the recycling of ships within the UK rather than sending them to other parts of the world.



Tony Collins, Director

Retired 2023



Sally Collins, Director

Retired 2023



Ian Coward, Director



Please see our web-site at <http://www.collinscoward.co.uk/people.asp> to view individual CVs and to contact the directors.

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