

HERTFORDSHIRE CHARRETTE

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE
TUESDAY 24 JUNE – TUESDAY 1 JULY 2008
HOW SHOULD THE COUNTY GROW?



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We are delighted to tell you that the University of Hertfordshire has invited urban planner Andrés Duany and the design team from Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) to run the Hertfordshire Planning Charrette – a week-long urban design workshop – the purpose of which is to engage the general population in a debate about the county’s future design and growth.

This initiative has the support of Hertfordshire County Council and numerous Hertfordshire-based companies, organisations, developers and landowners. The initiative, which starts on Tuesday, 24th June and runs until Tuesday, 1st July, will take place at the University of Hertfordshire. It will be the first of its kind within London and the Home Counties, and will show what role universities can play in public participation process within the UK.

We are writing now to alert you to the initiative and to invite you to participate throughout the week.

Andrés Duany first visited the University of Hertfordshire last year when he gave the Chancellor’s Lecture. His subject was the “Threat of the American Suburb” which addressed the question of regeneration in urban areas. The event was so well-received that we decided to invite him to return last Autumn for a series of seminars on development practice in the US and UK. After the success of that event, we formally engaged him to lead this summer’s Charrette, which will focus on the specific challenges of population growth and housing demand in Hertfordshire. Throughout the Charrette, Andrés Duany and his design team will work with participants directly to develop ideas and models intended to achieve attractive, sustainable growth patterns in Hertfordshire for the future. The team’s work, produced during the course of the Charrette as a result of these discussions, will include plans, illustrations, diagrams and design codes and will offer ideas and design solutions

specifically relevant to Hertfordshire with its legacy of historic Market Towns, Garden Cities and New Towns.

The process will be most productive if we are able to gain the experience and perspective of as many interested parties as possible. Accordingly, we are sending this pre-charrette paper to a range of individuals and organisations, including local Councils, local Planning Authorities, developers, businesses based in the county, environmental, residential and civic associations. We are also working with a diverse group of professionals within the University, and aim to engage faculty, the students and other University community members.

Whatever happens, substantial development will take place in Hertfordshire over coming decades. The quality of that development will be of crucial importance to all of us who live and work in the County. We believe the Charrette is a valuable opportunity for people of Hertfordshire actively to share their views and participate in discussions on how future development can be brought forward in the most sustainable way.

If we succeed, it is at least possible that the exercise will lead to a new approach that will provide a model for other parts of England. It is interesting that a similar exercise in different circumstances has already been launched in Scotland.

You will find more details of the structure of the Charrette in this leaflet. If you need further information, do not hesitate to contact the University. We very much hope you will consider participating and voicing your opinion and look forward to welcoming you to what we believe will be an exciting and important contribution to the future of our County.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Salisbury'.

Marquess of Salisbury
Chancellor
University of
Hertfordshire

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Wilson'.

Professor Tim Wilson
Vice-Chancellor
University of
Hertfordshire

THE DESIGN INITIATIVE

Characterised by its picturesque countryside, charming towns and cities and close proximity to London, Hertfordshire has long been considered to be an extremely desirable place to live, work and visit. As a 'Green County' with about seventy percent of the land identified as Green Belt, the region is known for its contrasts – from farmlands, forests and valleys to the historic market towns of Hitchin and Hertford and the Garden Cities of Welwyn and Letchworth. Today the region is famed for its quality of life, and accordingly has been subject to continuous population growth and housing development.

Indeed, Hertfordshire is currently one of the fastest growing areas within the UK, and the East of England Plan, produced by the Government Office of the East of England, has mandated that the entire eastern London Arc region accommodate a substantial number of new residences by 2021. Specifically, the published Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England identifies a requirement for a minimum of 83,200 homes and 68,000 jobs in Hertfordshire in the period 2001-2021, and identifies four 'Key Centres for Development and Change' (Hatfield/Welwyn Garden City, Hemel Hempstead, Stevenage and Watford), three of which are targeted for strategic scale housing and associated growth. In addition, very substantial growth associated with Harlow expansion is proposed to the north of the town within East Hertfordshire.

HERTFORDSHIRE IS CURRENTLY ONE OF THE FASTEST GROWING AREAS WITHIN THE UK

Letchworth, the County's first Garden City, features stately tree-lined footpaths and avenues (below)



Hertford, a royal borough for more than 1000 years, is the administrative capital of the county and well-known as an antiques centre



If the Plan goes forward as proposed, changes in the County's landscape could be substantial, and, to prepare for this growth, local property owners, Councils and planning professionals will require development mechanisms to enable the region to accommodate future housing in a sustainable and graceful manner.

To explore the development and design challenges created by such growth, the University of Hertfordshire is inviting individuals and groups from the County – including local Council members, planners, business owners, community leaders, and the general public – to participate in a regional planning charrette. This exercise will offer all interested parties the opportunity to work together to address the challenges of growth and to engage in discussion regarding the practice and quality of recent development in the County. Working in the presence of the public and soliciting feedback and suggestions from any and all interested parties, a team of architects, planners and engineers will search for creative solutions to commonly-cited development problems, which could enable the County to accommodate future residences whilst maintaining

its unique character. All studies will focus on general approach, rather than addressing development of specific sites.

In hopes of encouraging environmentally-sound and aesthetically-pleasing development, the Hertfordshire charrette design team will generate possible development strategies for the County and engage in discussion regarding international best practice. Specifically, they will promote sustainable planning principles, including the development of lively, pedestrian-friendly neighbourhoods with compact developmental footprints, the design of which will be tailored to the specific landscape of the County and its legacy of market towns, Garden Cities and New Towns. These design proposals – intended to encourage mixed-use, sustainable development – will offer an alternative to the single-use suburban-sprawl style building which has become more and more commonplace in the UK, and which has little relevance to Hertfordshire's history or urban landscape.

To prepare for the initiative, the design team surveyed the County to identify the region's most common design typologies and to seek out the types of sites which



Hertford's Parliament Square functions as a community gathering space in the heart of the commercial centre



Welwyn Garden City is well-known for its parks and planned public civic spaces

will likely be considered for future development and regeneration. At the charrette, the team will create plans and proposals for these various types of sites, with the materials ultimately useful for Councils, Planning Authorities and developers across the County. Specifically, the design team will generate sustainable development approaches for

- Means of sensitively expanding a Garden City, whilst maintaining its historic character
- Methods of expanding a historic settlement, whilst preserving historic street networks and preserving the scale and sense of character
- Methods of regenerating a New Town Neighbourhood Centre, incorporating retail, residential development and civic space, and creating a pedestrian-friendly environment conducive to community gatherings
- Means of expanding a New Town upgrading community spaces and revitalising commercial areas whilst maintaining greater regional thoroughfare networks

The planning team will generate plans and illustrations for each of these various development scenarios, and will also gauge the potential infrastructural needs any new building will require. Designers' final products will include illustrations of these various concepts, as well as master plans, diagrams, codes and other specific implementation mechanisms formatted to best suit the needs of local planners.

Beyond studying the various typologies, the design team will also undertake studies aiming to

- Analyse thoroughfare use, aiming to make streets safer and more appealing to pedestrians
- Propose means of reinforcing and revitalizing existing employment centres and the town centres
- Create specific plans for local retail and business development and revitalization
- Design new community spaces, including civic centres, parks and other open spaces
- Consider an appropriate standard development which could be effective for large house builders

By addressing these and other planning issues, the Hertfordshire charrette could set a national precedent for the planning of regionally-specific, context-sensitive development and town expansion. In addition, by offering a forum for all interested parties to participate in the planning process, the charrette could offer a new model for public-sector planning work throughout the UK.

The success of the charrette depends on the participation of Hertfordshire planners, business owners and citizens, and so the charrette team and the sponsors at the University of Hertfordshire, urge all parties to attend and contribute their opinions. More specific information on the charrette, the design and planning team and the Hertfordshire context itself is included within this pre-charrette paper.

FROM THE COUNTY COUNCIL



Hertfordshire faces major challenges over the next 20 years. The majority of the county lies within the Government's housing growth areas and the recently published East of England Plan targets the county for significant housing, employment and associated growth over the period to 2021 and beyond.

The implications of this growth will have to be taken forward by local government in Hertfordshire through the formal planning processes, in consultation with their partners and communities but the role of other, less formal initiatives cannot be underestimated. That is why the county council supports the Charrette and congratulates the University of Hertfordshire in bringing together and securing the services of Andrés Duany.

The implications of the growth agenda in Hertfordshire cannot be underestimated. How can it be integrated into the established pattern of communities? How can Hertfordshire's environment be protected? How can we ensure growth is supported by the required infrastructure and services? And how can the growth be made of the highest possible quality and truly sustainable?

The Charrette is a major opportunity to bring together a wide range of stakeholders to come to a common understanding of the issues before us and to draw on home-grown and international expertise in helping to identify the range of solutions that needs to be pursued. As such there is no doubting its importance in addressing the challenges ahead.

I would like to encourage all those who share my concern about the future of our county to engage actively in making the Charrette a success and to learn from it for the good of Hertfordshire.

Robert Gordon
Leader, Hertfordshire County Council

FROM THE DESIGN TEAM

It appears that Hertfordshire will be growing by 83,000 dwellings within the next 13 years. This figure is the result of a long process by the Government Office of the East of England. The figure has been duly debated and has now been officially accepted.

Yet, Hertfordshire's share is only a portion of the 508,000 dwellings that must be absorbed by the East of England. This growth is natural, the evolution to accommodate the needs of a successful region, but it can nevertheless be worrisome. This increment of growth allocation could signify incoming strangers, more traffic congestion, loss of beautiful open vistas and of farmland, and extraneous-looking new buildings.

But it can also be otherwise. After all, growth has historically been capable of very tremendous positive attributes. In Hertfordshire, there are examples of both good and bad growth - ranging from the glories of St Albans, the two garden cities the marvelous old market towns, villages and hamlets that dot the countryside to the disappointment of the post-war new towns and the alien intrusions of strip shopping centers and the merchant builder's ranch houses on cul-de-sacs.

Because the outcome of this growth can be positive only if the citizens are vigilant and informed to the point of expertise, the University of Hertfordshire, as a service to the community, has engaged Duany Plater-Zyberk to run a series of hypothetical design studies - to see what we can all learn from the situation and from each other. We will attempt, together, to develop proposals for the type of development that the population of Hertfordshire would like to see built, rather than being forced to respond to the initiative of others.

The coming exercise, while theoretical, intends to be the forge and the training ground for the future guardians of Hertfordshire. Join us.

Andrés Duany

LOCAL HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

From its historic Iron Age and Roman settlements, to its pioneering Garden Cities and its modernist New Towns, few other counties can boast as vast a range of landscapes as Hertfordshire.

A region of great diversity, the influences of Stone Age, Anglo-Saxon, Roman and Norman times can all be felt in the county's towns and villages. Modern history exerted an equally strong impact on the county's profile, with the Industrial Revolution and World War II both forcing Hertfordshire to adjust to a changing national environment. Throughout these periods, Hertfordshire has always embraced the opportunity to adapt itself to the challenges it faces.

Although human relics in Hertfordshire date back to the early Stone Age, the first settlements were not developed until the arrival of the Romans. After being succeeded by the Anglo-Saxons, the new rulers founded their own towns such as Hertford, which was built as a fortress, and the county became a major frontier in the struggle against the Danes. The

Normans, creators of the Domesday Book, were the next major settlers in the county leaving their mark in a series of castles such as those at Hertford, Bishop's Stortford and Berkhamsted. Over the next few centuries and the Early Modern Period, proximity to London made the county a popular retreat for the nobility, whose grand homes often welcomed visiting royalty. Indeed, Elizabeth I grew up in Hatfield House, and was even informed of her accession to the throne in the stately home.

As England's towns and cities changed in the Victorian era of mass mechanisation, so did those in Hertfordshire. In fact, the county took on a particularly innovative urban planning approach in response to the Industrial Revolution, accommodating the need to absorb London's spiralling population whilst also providing an environment to attract skilled workers. Ebenezer Howard, founder of the England's first environmental charity, Town and Country Planning Association, was one notable urban planner who provided an alternative vision of how urban areas should be developed. Howard's Garden Cities of Tomorrow proposed numerous means of reforming England's cities, advocating the benefits of healthy living and open space, and the

THE CHALLENGE THE COUNTY NOW FACES INVOLVES RECOGNIZING THE ANTICIPATED GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT NEEDS WHILST PRESERVING THE UNIQUE ELEMENTS OF THE LANDSCAPE.

import of community and infrastructure to rural areas. Letchworth Garden City, which was designed after a competition in 1903, was intended to translate these ideals of social and architectural form into a reality.

Whilst reaction to Letchworth was mixed, the town was considered to be a sufficient success to inspire plans for a second model, Welwyn Garden City, which commenced soon after World War I. Today, over a hundred years after the publishing of Ebenezer Howard's landmark text 'A Peaceful Path to Real Reform', the currency of 'the Garden City ethos' in promoting community harmony and engagement whilst resisting urban sprawl remains strong. Academics and planners continue to site the movement as an inspiration to urban planners today.

Hertfordshire has also responded to more recent housing shortages in various ways. The need to accommodate overcrowded households in London, a growing population and communities displaced by the destruction of World War II led to the "New Town" movement, with Stevenage, Hatfield, Welwyn and Hemel Hempstead chosen as sites for major new settlements or expansions in 1946

and 1947. Offering a marked contrast to the aesthetics focus of the Garden Cities movement, the "New Towns" movement primarily focused on re-settlement and the attraction of industry. These towns, which were constructed or expanded under the auspices of the New Towns Act of 1946, grew significantly and are now amongst Hertfordshire's most populated settlements.

Alongside the development of these New Towns, other market towns and villages in Hertfordshire continued to grow and expand, often retaining the provincial character of their historic settlements. St. Albans, for example, grew extensively after World War II, with development spreading out from its historic centre. Likewise, Hertford has grown steadily whilst preserving its historic core.

With its great range of towns and villages, heritage sites and prominent industrial centres, the Hertfordshire landscape has been as diverse as it has dynamic over the years. The challenge the County now faces involves recognizing the anticipated growth and development needs whilst preserving the unique elements of the landscape.

COUNTY TIMELINE

10,000 – 6,500 BC

First known Mesolithic settlements in Hertfordshire, near to Broxbourne

10 AD

Verluninium, adjacent to present day St. Albans, is established as an important political centre and the third largest city in Roman Britain.

43 – 410 AD

Smaller towns and villages develop along the principal Roman roads at Ware, Welwyn, Bishop's Stortford and Cow Roast, Northchurch.

700

All of Hertfordshire is controlled under the large Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia, ruled by King Offa.

9th Century

Much of Hertfordshire is conquered by the Danish Vikings.

912-3

King Alfred's son Edward the Elder begins to reconquer the Viking Danelaw region, founding Hertford as a fortress settlement. The town is a vital frontier in the fight against the Danes.

10th Century

Hertfordshire as a "shire" begins to take shape out of the reconquered Danelaw region. Berkhamsted, Hitchin and St Albans are developed as important Anglo-Saxon settlements

1066 – 1349

A time of rapid population growth in Hertfordshire. Many of the traditional landscape features still in view today are constructed such as Hertford and Berkhamstead castles, moated sites and medieval churches.

TOWN PROFILES

Hertfordshire’s villages, towns and cities have a range of urban structures, which reflect the history of development and urban theory in the UK when taken collectively. Towns and cities which offer precedents for the charrette design team include:



Letchworth Garden City:

The prototype development of Ebenezer Howard’s Garden City development ethos, Letchworth Garden City was designated as the site for the first experiment in town planning in 1903. The site – which is located outside of Hitchin, and which once held the villages of Norton, Willian and Old Letchworth – was built in accordance with Howard’s vision, and has grown steadily ever since, expanding from its planned 30,000 capacity population.

Letchworth Town Centre remains a popular gathering place, featuring a network of wide, tree-lined commercial streets in close proximity to the town train station.

Stevenage:

The first of the post-World War II ‘New Towns’, Stevenage has rapidly grown into a major commercial centre with an area of 2,532 ha in the heart of the commuter belt. Today, the town is known as an economic centre for electronics, light engineering, aerospace, information technology, pharmaceuticals and financial services.

The town’s commercial centre has continued to grow over the years, and features a network of pedestrian shopping areas and plazas.



Welwyn:

Although the first buildings on Welwyn’s site date back to the Iron Age, the town first became an important settlement in the 17th Century as a staging post along the Great North Road to Edinburgh and York. The settlement remained of a small size until the late 20th Century, only experiencing expansion recently, through construction of estates to the south, west and north of the village.

Today, Welwyn’s village centre is characterised by intimate, narrow residential streets and a lively High Street featuring small shops, pubs and restaurants.

1349

The “Black Death” devastates Hertfordshire. Estimates suggest the population was reduced by between a third and a half. Many farms and villages were left abandoned, particularly in the areas of poorer farming, leaving the ‘deserted medieval villages’ seen today.

1500

The legacy of Hertfordshire as a countryside retreat for aristocracy and nobility from London is founded.

1558

A young Elizabeth I grows up in The Royal Palace of Hatfield and learns of her accession to the throne whilst sitting under an oak tree in the garden.

1613

The “New River” opens near Ware, a man-made waterway providing fresh and clean drinking water to London.

1800

The paper-making and breweries develop in the county, serving the great demand from London.

1903

Letchworth is chosen as the site for the first Garden City town planning experiment.

1946

Stevenage is designated as the first post –World War II “New Town”.

1986

Construction of the M25 is completed, providing commuters near Hemel Hempstead and Watford with easy access to Central London.

PLANNING POLICY TODAY

Growth and the East of England Plan:

Hertfordshire is currently experiencing growth, and proposals within the East of England Plan may shape the county's development over the upcoming years. Accordingly, the potential implications of the Plan will be addressed by local government within the County through formal planning processes, in consultation with their partners and communities. In addition, the charrette is intended to produce sustainable planning and design strategies which could be of use to these local authorities and developers, working in today's development climate.

Published by the Government Office of the East of England, the East of England plan offers a regional, spatial strategy for growth beyond Hertfordshire, with the scope including Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire. The plan will guide the region's growth over the next 15 years, offering specific policies for housing development, economic development, recreational development, transportation expansion, infrastructure, and waste and mineral extraction. This broad development strategy and framework will provide the region with comprehensive means of managing the challenges of expansion over the upcoming decades.

The London Arc sub-region addressed within the plan comprises the districts most closely related to Greater London, including

the Essex Districts of Epping Forest and Brentwood, and the South Hertfordshire Districts of Three Rivers, Dacorum, Watford, Hertsmere, St. Albans, Broxbourne and Welwyn Hatfield. Within these areas, the minimum housing growth is projected at 56,000 dwellings. The target in the Plan is that at least 60% of this growth will take place on brownfield sites and other sites identified for urban regeneration, with new neighbourhoods designed to encourage pedestrian-activity and the use of public transport. Other growth will be allocated for greenfield sites, after reviews of the green belt. Policies in the Plan will require, all new development to be water efficient, energy efficient and supported by the provision of additional public green space and other positive "green" uses.

Specifically, the plan allocates 83,200 new dwellings to Hertfordshire and identifies Stevenage, Watford, Hemel Hempstead and Welwyn Garden City/Hatfield as Key Centres for Development and Change. Recognized as 'Key Centres' on account of their capacity for economic growth and the scope to improve their infrastructure, these towns have been designated to become residential, retail and employment hubs for the county at large, accommodating local expansion and general population growth. Each centre is allocated a specific development strategy, addressing topics ranging from transportation links to employment growth opportunities to housing growth opportunities.



Charrette Design Vision

The charrette design team will offer Hertfordshire their experience planning cities, towns, urban districts, and neighbourhoods. This diverse portfolio includes design assignments of many contexts; however, all master plans undertaken adhere to the principles of traditional urbanism and sustainable design. These planning principles, which are intended to foster a sense of community and discourage the monotony of suburban sprawl, have been embraced by private and public sector developers in the U.S. and internationally.

Notably, characteristics of traditional urbanism which will be advocated by the charrette team include:

- Neighbourhoods include a mix of uses, with residences, shops and businesses located in close proximity
- Neighbourhoods feature discernible centres and edges, with the centre often featuring a large civic gathering place
- Most dwellings are within a ten-minute walk of the centre, enabling residents to easily access their daily needs on foot



Facts and Figures*

Population

- The current population of Hertfordshire is just over 1 million, in approximately 430,000 households
- The county is the most densely populated in the country with 6.3 people per hectare compared to the national average of 3.4
- 1.3% of the county's population is currently unemployed, compared with a national rate of 5.2%.
- 47.23% of workers aged 16-74 in Hertfordshire are employed as senior management or officials in technical and professional occupations, compared with a 40.02% England and Wales average.

Geography

- There are 30 towns in Hertfordshire and one city, St. Albans.
- Approximately 70% of Hertfordshire has Greenbelt status, compared with 13% of England as a whole.
- 95% of the county is covered by one or more planning constraints (such as identified Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty)
- According to the 2001 Census, of people aged between 16 and 74, 26% more people are employed in agriculture, hunting and forestry in Hertfordshire than the rest of the England and Wales.

Transport

- There are 590,000 vehicles owned in the county, or 1.34 per household
- The county's population owns 0.558 cars per head, which is 24% higher than the national average
- 18% of households in the county have no car, whilst 40% households have 2 or more cars
- 100,000 people commute out of the county daily, whilst 80,000 people commute into the county daily

*All figures obtained from official census information and County Council records, unless otherwise stated

- Thoroughfares, footpaths, and pedestrian pathways are designed within a well-connected network, allowing for a variety of entry and exit points and a smooth flow of traffic
- A transportation system includes a framework of alternatives to the automobile, often including but not limited to rail systems, bus systems and bicycle trail networks
- Streets are designed to encourage pedestrian activity and to shield citizens from oncoming traffic

- Parks and civic community spaces are located within close proximity to all residences
- Cars are accommodated through ample car parks and car parking facilities, most of which are shielded from the street to improve neighbourhood aesthetics and pedestrian experience
- Prominent sites within neighbourhoods are set aside for civic buildings intended to benefit the general population, including schools, churches and community facilities

An aerial view of St Albans offers a glimpse of both the urban centre and the surrounding green belt; image courtesy of Pete Stevens

- Dwellings include units of many sizes and typologies, in order to provide housing for a diverse range of residents of many ages and incomes
- Architecture and landscape designs utilise strategies specific to local climate, topography, history and building practice

THE DESIGN TEAM

The Hertfordshire charrette will be led by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ), which is one of the leading town-planning firms in the U.S., having designed over 300 communities in North America and across Europe, Asia and South America.

With prominent urban design projects including New Towns, regional plans, downtown revitalizations, urban extensions and brownfield regenerations, the firm has planned a great range of communities of many sizes, locations and compositions.

THE FIRM CONDUCTS ALL WORK USING THE CHARRETTE METHODOLOGY, WHICH ALLOWS FOR INTENSE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND COLLABORATION BETWEEN ALL PARTIES AFFECTED BY A PLAN.

DPZ's work has received numerous awards, including two National American Institute of Architects Awards, the Vincent Scully Prize, the Thomas Jefferson Medal and two Governor's Urban Design Awards for Excellence, and most recently, the Richard Driehaus Award for Classical Architecture. The firm has also been widely featured in the media in both the U.S. and the U.K., and has been featured in Newsweek, the New York Times, the Washington Post, and the New Yorker, the Guardian, the Telegraph, the Sunday Times, the Scotsman and the Glasgow Herald.



Recent urban design assessments undertaken by DPZ include the planning of the new town of Tornagrain in the Scottish Highlands (below), the hurricane recovery scheme for St Bernard Parish, Louisiana (top right), the regional planning scheme for Onondaga County, New York (bottom right)



The firm is led by its Principals, Andrés Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, who are co-founders of the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU), recognized by the New York Times as "the most important collective architectural movement in the United States in the past fifty years." The movement, which currently has more than 3,000 members in 20 countries, promotes the design of mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly communities.

The firm's method of integrating master plans with project-specific design codes and regulations is currently being applied to sites ranging from 10 to 10,000 acres throughout the United States and Europe. The firm's international portfolio includes design work in Spain, Canada, Germany, Belgium, Australia, the Philippines, Mexico, India and Turkey. In the U.K., the firm recently designed Tornagrain, a 500-acre New Town in the Highlands developed by Moray Estates. DPZ has also taken a leading role in the rebuilding of Louisiana

and Mississippi after hurricanes Katrina and Rita, generating plans for rebuilding cities across the Gulf Coast at the regional, local and neighborhood scales, and working for the Mississippi Governor's Commission on Recovery, Rebuilding and Renewal, the Louisiana Recovery Authority and the Unified New Orleans Plan.

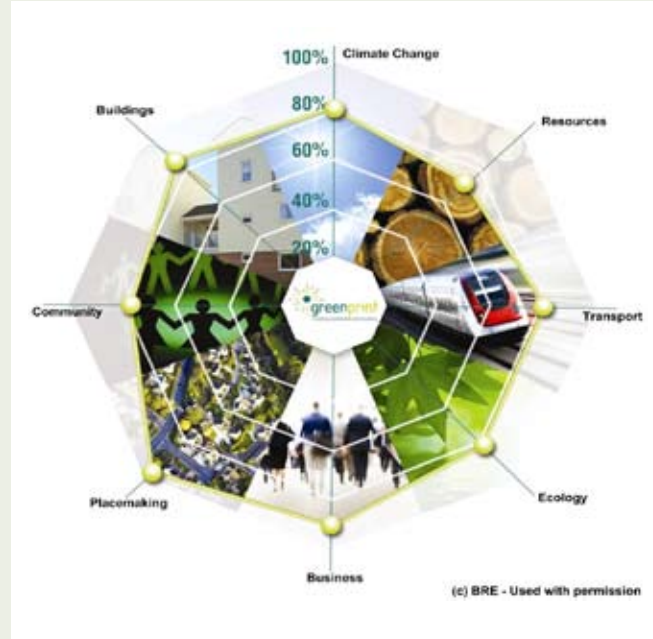
A significant aspect of DPZ's work is its innovative planning regulations which accompany each design. Tailored to the individual project, the codes address the manner in which buildings are formed and located to ensure that they create useful and distinctive public spaces. Local architectural traditions and building techniques are also codified within the regulations. In the last five years, DPZ has also been continually developing a new model, form-based zoning code called the SmartCode, which has been adopted by cities and municipalities across the United States, including the City of Miami, Florida.



DPZ's recent urban planning initiatives in North America include the regional growth plan for Oakville, in Ontario, Canada (above)

The New Urban principles of planning and design were developed under the leadership of Duany Plater-Zyberk, and are aligned with many of the strategies advocated by environmental agencies such as the U.S. Green Building Council and the Building Research Establishment. Specifically, DPZ's projects employ sustainable development strategies including, but not limited to, redevelopment and infill; transit-oriented development; pedestrian-friendly development; and the integration of development with open-space frameworks. DPZ has also been involved in the development and fine-tuning of the first and only environmental design and performance standard for neighbourhood development in the United States.

The firm conducts all work using the charrette methodology, which allows for intense public participation and collaboration between all parties affected by a plan. The Hertfordshire charrette would be the second charrette the firm has conducted in the UK.



The BRE's innovation park features numerous buildings constructed using environmental design measures and energy-efficient materials (above)

The BRE's Green Print system is designed to measure a development's sustainable performance (left)

THE BUILDING RESEARCH ESTABLISHMENT

Consultants from the Watford-based Building Research Establishment (BRE) will also join the DPZ design team to contribute expertise pertaining to environmental design and architecture.

The BRE is a world-leading research and consultancy organisation specialising in sustainability and innovative building and development practices. Specific areas of expertise include energy efficiency, renewable energy sources, construction quality, process and productivity, low-impact

construction, fire prevention and general building performance. With clients including multinational companies, government departments, construction companies and individual architects and builders, the organisation operates as a consultancy, a research think-tank, a product-testing centre and a training centre. A complete review of BRE's services can be found on the organisation's website at www.bre.co.uk.

BRE's approach and involvement in the Herts Charrette will ensure that sustainability considerations are embedded throughout the delivery process from the very beginning of the Charrette. Throughout the week outputs from the sessions and meetings will be continually assessed using BRE's sustainability assessment framework (GreenPrint), which was designed to measure the sustainability of the proposed design strategies for the different typologies.

The GreenPrint will address a comprehensive series of issues under eight categories:

- **Climate change** - Ensuring development types in Herts mitigate, and are appropriately adapted to, present and future climate change impacts.
- **Resources** - Promoting the sustainable use of resources including water, materials and waste, both in construction and operation.
- **Transport** - Ensuring transport hierarchy issues are fully addressed and catered for across different development types in Herts.
- **Ecology** - Ensuring the ecological value of Herts is conserved and enhanced.
- **Business** - Ensuring that all development contributes to the sustainable economic vitality of the Herts region.
- **Community** - Ensuring that development strategies support a vibrant, diverse and inclusive community across Herts that integrate with surrounding communities.
- **Placemaking** - Ensuring the overall design process, layout structure and form provide development types that are appropriate to the local context.
- **Buildings** - Ensuring that the design of individual buildings does not undermine the sustainability of the overall Herts strategy.

The sustainability performance attained by the different design strategies that come out of the Charrette will be illustrated in an open house forum each day, using the GreenPrint radar diagram and other techniques. The process will highlight the areas where sustainability has been optimised, and where there are further opportunities for improvements.

WHAT NEXT: CHARRETTE PROCESS AND PRODUCTS

What is a charrette?

The Hertfordshire Charrette has been designed to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and offers the unique advantage of enabling participants to offer immediate feedback to the designers. The discussions begun by the charrette, including those amongst Councillors, planners, environmental experts, business leaders, community activists, may also lead to further understandings amongst the groups and enable the various parties present to take on a more united front in terms of their opinions on development.

The charrette programme – introduced on the back cover of this pre-charrette paper – offers a comprehensive list of the public meetings occurring throughout the week. With participants including planners, the development community, transportation specialists, business owners and the public at large, the meetings are intended to provide the opportunity for a great range of professionals and citizens to participate in a planning process and work directly with the design team.

Designers work with members of the general public at the Tornagrain charrette in Inverness



Specifically, these meetings and events throughout the charrette will include:

An opening presentation, introducing the history of planning and development in Hertfordshire, and placing current development in historical context. The presentation will also provide background information on DPZ's previous urban design initiatives, and provide an introduction to current sustainable development practices in the UK and US.

Site tours during which planners and designers visit villages, towns and cities in the county in the company of local planning experts. The site tours conducted at the Hertfordshire charrette will be led by the University of Hertfordshire geography faculty.

One mid-term "pin-up" open to the public at large, during which the design team presents preliminary concepts and receives feedback.

A closing presentation, during which the design team presents plans, renderings, architectural drawings and codes, all of which were produced on site during the charrette process.

Meetings throughout the week between the planning team and specific interest groups and groups of professionals. Meetings scheduled during the Hertfordshire charrette include:

- A meeting with local Councillors, to discuss the general region growth strategy and the current local development climate
- A meeting with Hertfordshire environmental activists, professionals and sustainability experts, to discuss the current ecological and preservation strategy in Hertfordshire and merits of a comprehensive environmental strategy
- A meeting with local planners, to discuss current planning practice at the District and County levels and current policy changes at the national level
- A meeting with transportation engineers and the traffic authority, to discuss the County's thoroughfare network and capacity, as well as means of calming traffic and alleviating congestion
- A meeting with local business leaders and representatives from the local Chamber of Commerce, to discuss the current economy and means of encouraging retail and business activity in newly developed areas
- A meeting of developers and local property owners, to discuss current development practice and plans for growth over upcoming years
- A meeting with social and community leaders, to discuss community needs in the County and means of providing civic resources in newly developed areas
- A meeting with local and national design professionals interested in observing the charrette process and becoming more familiar with the design and implementation strategies

THE TERM “CHARRETTE” IS DERIVED FROM THE FRENCH WORD FOR “LITTLE CART.” IN PARIS IN THE 19TH CENTURY, PROFESSORS AT THE ECOLE DE BEAUX ARTS CIRCULATED WITH LITTLE CARTS TO COLLECT FINAL DRAWINGS FROM THEIR STUDENTS.



By engaging this diverse group of professionals and citizens, the design team will have access to a range of opinions and perspectives. In turn, the team will use the knowledge gleaned through the various meetings to inform the plans and codes generated for each Hertfordshire development typology. These products generated throughout the charrette – including plans, illustrations, codes and diagrams – are intended to be directly relevant to planners and developers working in the area, and will be keyed up to national and local planning policy.

All of the products created by the design team will be presented at the interim and final presentations, as well as the numerous small meetings leading up to the public presentations. The work will also be compiled into a book or manual, to be made generally available to the Hertfordshire design, planning and development community, as well as the public at large.

Pre-Charrette Visit

The Hertfordshire charrette was preceded by a lecture series event in October 2007, during which Andrés Duany spoke to a series of groups assembled at the University about growth and development in the County. The success of the lecture series – and the enthusiasm of the participating planners, policy makers and community leaders – led the University to invite Mr. Duany to return for the charrette.

The sessions, which were primarily held at the University's Fielder Centre, included briefings and seminars tailored for local government members, planning professionals, business leaders, and property professionals. Engaging the various groups in lecture and seminar sessions, Mr. Duany primarily discussed Hertfordshire's need to grow sensitively in the upcoming decades,

accommodating the demand for affordable housing while maintaining the county's local character and landscape.

Mr. Duany also described his efforts to encourage mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly development on sites of diverse sizes and geographies, throughout the U.S. Other general topics discussed included means of preserving the greenbelt, the market viability of different types of development, the need for well-designed public open space, and the differences between top-down versus bottom-up planning practices. Mr Duany also described his work in both the U.S. and the U.K., as well as his experience working in both the private and public sectors.

Ultimately, a charrette was determined to be a tool for continuing the debate, as well as a general instrument which could enable the public to contribute their opinions of local development practice.

Andrés Duany engages with Councillors, students and planners at the University of Hertfordshire lecture series in October 2007



HERTFORDSHIRE CHARRETTE PUBLIC MEETING SCHEDULE

Tuesday 24 June

7pm

Opening Presentation; to be attended by the general public. Weston auditorium, de Havilland campus

Wednesday 25 June

10am

Meeting 1: Current Planning Practice; to be attended by local planners. Charrette studio, MacLaurin building, de Havilland campus

2pm

Meeting 2: Environmental Strategy and Sustainability; to be attended by environmental professionals and activists. Charrette studio, MacLaurin building, de Havilland campus

4pm

Meeting 3: General Regional Strategy; to be attended by local Councillors. Charrette studio, MacLaurin building, de Havilland campus

Thursday 26 June

10am

Meeting 4: Transportation; to be attended by transport professionals and local highway authority. Charrette studio, MacLaurin building, de Havilland campus

2pm

Meeting 5: Economic Development; to be attended by business leaders and Chamber of Commerce representatives. Charrette studio, MacLaurin building, de Havilland campus

Friday 27 June

10am

Meeting 6: Real Estate; to be attended by local landowners, developers and property professionals. Charrette studio, MacLaurin building, de Havilland campus

2pm

Meeting 7: Social and Community Development; to be attended by community leaders, civic leaders and community development professionals. Charrette studio, MacLaurin building, de Havilland campus

Saturday 28 June

2pm

Mid-term Pin-Up & Review; to be attended by the general public. Weston auditorium, de Havilland campus

Monday 30 June

10am

Meeting 8: Design & Implementation; to be attended by local and national design professionals. Charrette studio, MacLaurin building, de Havilland campus

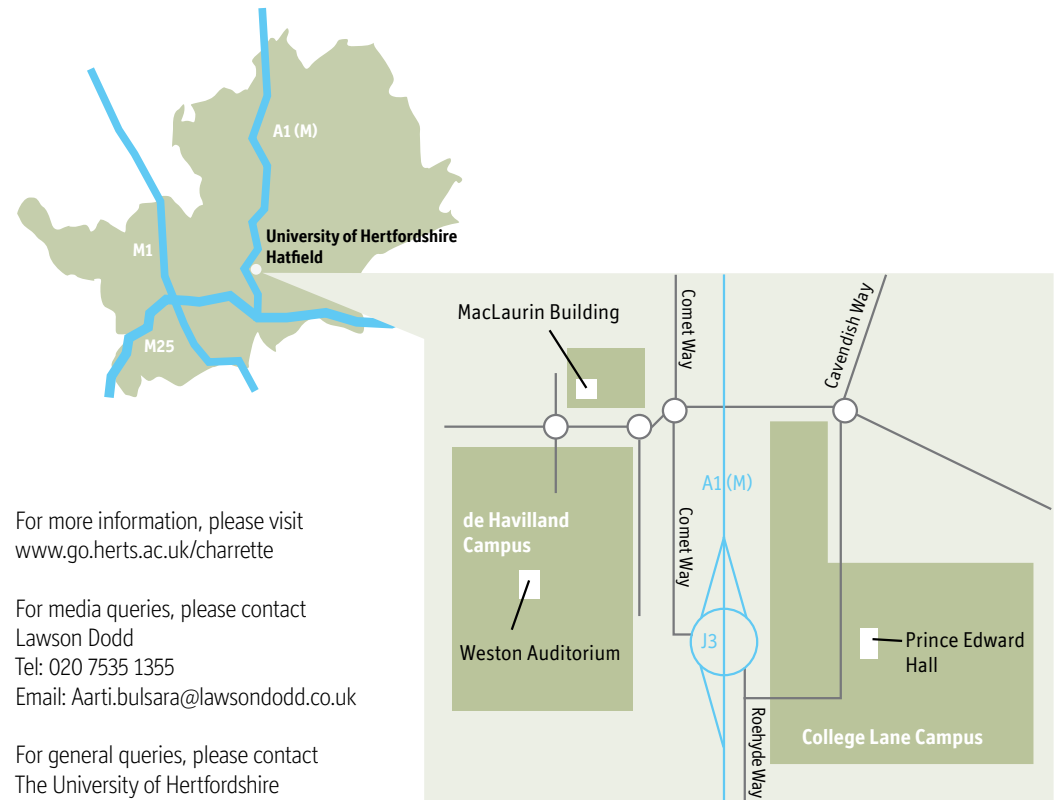
Tuesday 1 July

7.30pm

Closing Presentation; to be attended by the general public. Prince Edward Hall, College Lane Campus

HERTFORDSHIRE CHARRETTE

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE
TUESDAY 24 JUNE – TUESDAY 1 JULY 2008



For more information, please visit www.go.herts.ac.uk/charrette

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