Neighbourhood Planning and Urban Design Course: Planned Community Models

4 – 8 October 2027
Madrid

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Programme Summary

Neighbourhood planning and urban design, drawn from garden suburbs, planned seaside towns and new urbanism, is the subject of this one-week training course for property developers, planning officers and real estate asset leaders, ending in a community design brief for one site. New communities are often laid out from habit, and owners carry the cost of poor patterns for decades. The programme moves from planned community models to layout, density, mixed use, value and delivery, using prepared plans. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this programme on neighbourhood planning and urban design to mixed-organisation cohorts.

The Business Case

Developers, public landowners and asset owners commit land for decades, and early choices on streets, blocks and uses are costly to change. Leaders who can read why a planned model worked, and test a new brief against it, decide density, phasing and the mix of uses before capital is spent.

- Land Value: Is protected when layout, density and mixed use match the demand a neighbourhood can support.
- Delivery Risk: Falls when phasing, approvals and design rules are agreed against a clear brief.
- Long-Term Management Cost: Reduces when street, open space and building patterns are chosen with upkeep in mind.

Principles and Evidence Base

- Garden City Model: The historical reference for the garden suburb, balancing town and country with limits on size, applied in Session 1 to read early layouts.
- Charter of the New Urbanism: Principles set at the scale of the region, neighbourhood and block, applied in Sessions 3 and 5 to test walkability, mixed use and housing diversity.
- New Towns Research: Studies of planned settlements worldwide, applied in Session 2 to compare how planned places have performed.

Intended Participants

- Developers who prepare site briefs and decide layout, density and the mix of uses.
- Planning officers who assess proposals for new neighbourhoods against design principles.
- Asset leaders who hold and manage residential and mixed-use estates over the long term.
- Feasibility leads who test the value of layouts.

Typical settings include private development, local government planning, housing associations and sovereign land holders.

Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to compare planned community models by layout, density and civic space.
2. Participants will be able to analyse a street and block pattern for walking distance and activity.
3. Participants will be able to construct a density and mixed-use allocation for a site.
4. Participants will be able to evaluate how layout choices affect property value and upkeep.
5. Participants will be able to prioritise phasing and approval steps for a new community.
6. Participants will be able to justify a community design brief to investors and approving bodies.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Neighbourhood Planning and Urban Design Foundations

What problem was each planned neighbourhood model built to solve?

- Planned Community Model Timeline
- Garden City Model Review
- Garden Suburb Layout Study
- Charter of the New Urbanism Overview
- New Community Brief Template

Day 2: Planned Seaside Towns and New Towns

What do planned towns show about layout and civic space?

- Seaside Town Plan Reading
- New Towns Comparison Matrix
- Street and Block Pattern Analysis
- Civic Space Inventory
- Edge and Greenbelt Review

Day 3: Density, Mixed Use and Walkability

How do density and the mix of uses set walking distance and demand?

- Density Calculation Sheet
- Mixed-Use Allocation Grid
- Walkability Catchment Mapping
- Housing Diversity Mix
- Transit Stop Spacing Check

Day 4: Property Value and Delivery

How do layout choices affect value, phasing and long-term management?

- Land Use Value Appraisal Model
- Development Phasing Plan
- Upkeep and Service Charge Review
- Stakeholder and Approval Map
- Design Code Outline

Day 5: Community Design Brief for One Site

Do the findings join into a brief that a developer can take forward?

- Applying the Session 1 Brief Template
- Testing the Session 2 Street Pattern
- Checking the Session 3 Density Sheet
- Reviewing the Session 4 Phasing Plan
- Completing the Community Design Brief

Methodology

The programme is a case analysis built on prepared plans of a garden suburb, a planned seaside town and a recent mixed-use neighbourhood. Participants read plans, measure blocks and densities, compare outcomes, then apply their findings to a prepared site.

- Suggested activity: Measuring block sizes and walking distances on two prepared plans.
- Suggested activity: Allocating homes, shops and civic space across a prepared site.
- Suggested activity: Defending a phasing plan to peers acting as investors.

Capstone Output

Each participant completes a community design brief for one site. It holds a model comparison, a street and block pattern, a density and mixed-use allocation, a phasing plan and an outline design code. At work it opens the discussion with designers, investors and approving bodies and sets the test for later proposals.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is neighbourhood planning and urban design training suitable for developers without a planning background?

Yes. Neighbourhood planning and urban design is taught from the planned models upwards through prepared plans and templates. You need a role in briefing, assessing or managing neighbourhoods, but no design qualification.

Which models does neighbourhood planning and urban design rest on in this training?

Neighbourhood planning and urban design here rests on the garden city model, the Charter of the New Urbanism and research on planned new towns, each used to test a layout or a brief.

How is the community design brief from neighbourhood planning and urban design training used at work?

You take the community design brief to designers, investors and approving bodies, use its allocation and phasing plan to frame decisions, and keep its tests for later proposals.

How does neighbourhood planning and urban design differ from a programme on property valuation?

Neighbourhood planning and urban design concentrates on how layout, density and mixed use shape a place and its value, while a programme on property valuation concentrates on appraising individual assets.