



## Ben Aspinall, Managing Director

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Ben has over 25 years' experience in planning, development and funding of major residential and commercial projects throughout the UK. He is a Chartered Surveyor and a Chartered Town Planner, specialising in property investment and finance.

Ben has a broad range of professional experience across planning, development and regeneration. He has extensive experience in financial modelling, feasibility studies, options appraisal, business plan preparation, developer selection, procurement and delivery. He is the lead contract Director for AspinallVerdi on the Homes England Property Framework. Ben is also retained by National Lottery Heritage Fund. Ben has also acted for project sponsors to secure funding for some major regeneration and infrastructure projects.

Ben also provides commercial planning advice on: economic viability; S106 negotiations; Community Infrastructure Levy; affordable housing; Build-To-Rent; strategic land; and infrastructure. He acts for both private developers and Local Authorities at a policy and site-specific level and has given evidence at Planning Appeals and Examinations in Public.

### Qualifications\

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- Member Royal Town Planning Institute (2009)
- Member Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (1996) – Registered Valuer; Civil Commercial Mediator
- BSc (Hons) Land Management, University of Reading (1994)

### Career History\

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- Development Director, Montpellier Estates, Harrogate (2006 – 2009)
- Associate, Planning Development Regeneration, GVA Grimley, Leeds (2002 – 2006)
- Senior Consultant, DTZ Pinda Consulting, Leeds (1998 – 2002)
- Valuer, Weatherall Green & Smith, Leeds (1994 - 1998)

### Project Experience\

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#### Site Specific S106 Viability Appraisals\

- **S106 Viability Framework (City of Bradford MDC)** – Ben is framework manager AspinallVerdi's viability contract with Bradford Council. Applications appraised include: Hallmark House / Sharps Card Factory development of 385 flats comprising conversion of two existing buildings and a new build block; 17 units at land north of 79 to 111 Sappgate Lane, Thornton; Windhill Old Station, Leeds Road, Shipley 13 conversion apartments and 12 new-build dwellings; Sun Inn, Bradford Old Road, Cottingley (8 conversion apartments and 10 houses); 107 refurbishment apartments at Garden Mill and Junction Mill, Thornton Road; Ivy Bank Mill, Haworth 2 x conversion dwellings and 31 new-build units; Cousen Road, Great Horton 11 x executive homes; and 25 units at Manywells Brow, Cullingworth.
- **Ingfield Lane Settle (Craven District Council)** – Following Local Plan viability advice, Ben was retained to by the Local Planning Authority 'to review their review' of the scheme. The Council had procured external advice and required a second opinion on the key issues of the abnormal costs, appropriate due diligence, and the benchmark land value (BLV).
- **Kendal Magistrates Court (South Lakeland District Council)** – Following Local Plan viability advice, Ben was retained to review the application by Churchill Retirement Living for the redevelopment of the Magistrates Court to form 64 retirement living apartments for older people together with guest apartment and communal facilities etc. The key issue was the existing use value (EUV) of the redundant court house to inform the benchmark land value (BLV).

- **Milestone Road, Carterton (West Oxfordshire District Council)** – Ben carried out a review of this full planning application for 214 dwellings on a disused site of 5.66 hectares (14 acres) backing onto RAF Brize Norton. Applicant was a joint application between Partner Construction Ltd (a contractor) and Waterloo Housing Ltd (a Registered Provider). The scheme proposed 100% affordable housing, but the application did not provide for associated infrastructure contributions. We recommended due diligence on the site acquisition / EUV and the grant funding from Homes England.
- **Ellerby Road, Leeds (Harrison Developments)** – Ben led the viability assessment of this scheme for 322 apartments and ancillary flexible commercial space at Cross Green, Leeds. The site had been acquired out of receivership and the viability was challenging due to reduced height/density during design development with Leeds City Council and the challenging funding market (whereby funders would not commit until there is a deliverable scheme (hence the need to secure planning consent)). In order to provide flexibility, Ben appraised the scheme both on an Open Market Sale (OMS) and Build to Rent (BTR) basis.
- **Bull Street, Dudley (Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council)** – Ben was instructed to undertake an external financial viability appraisal of a planning application for up to 80 dwellings at the derelict site former MEB Offices and Depot, Bull Street, Dudley. The site was acquired from Receivers and is located adjacent to a major electricity substation and has a former industrial use which has required remediation. The scheme was not viable due to the comparatively low residential values in the area and the industrial legacy costs.
- **Oliver's Garage, Long Hanborough (West Oxfordshire District Council)** – Ben led a team to review the viability of this detailed application for demolition of the existing garage and ancillary buildings to make way for 25 new houses. The key issue was the value of the land and the value of the completed units. Long Hanborough is a high value area with affordable housing policy of 50%. The applicant had agreed to purchase the site at an unsustainable price and was not offering any affordable housing. We reviewed the scheme values and the land value and recommended 32% affordable housing.
- **Mill Field Nursery, London Road, Spalding (JoJo Beheer (landowner))** – Ben's team carried out detailed residential market research to appraise the planning scheme for 135 dwelling on an existing garden nursery site. The planning policy requirements were 33% affordable housing plus health and education contributions. We appraised the residual land value of the site and recommended to the landowner that he secured the planning permission and marketed the site as the residual value was in excess of the existing use value.
- **Woodstock East (West Oxfordshire District Council)** – Ben appraised this high-profile development on the edge of Blenheim Estate. The planning application was for outline 300 dwellings and a local centre, infrastructure, public open space etc and a detailed application for the development of Phase 1 comprising 46 residential dwellings. The application was in the joint names of the Estate and a local developer. The critical issue the value of the land and the level of profit share between the landowner and developer. We recommended that the scheme could afford the full 50% affordable housing required and that this should be subject to review at the end of phase 1 (subject to a 'floor' %).
- **Rossington Hall, Doncaster (Rossington Golf Developments)** – Working with European Tour Properties Ben prepared an economic viability appraisal of the proposals to develop a European Tour destination on land surrounding Rossington Hall Hotel at Rossington, near Doncaster. The scheme was for a new European Tour destination comprising: a golf club house; 18-hole golf course; 9-hole course; practice ground etc.; together with plots for 360 executive houses on c90 acres surrounding the course. The intention was to sell serviced residential plots / lots of c10 plots to local 'executive' house builders in order to fund the golf course development, infrastructure and prize money (for the 10-year Tour contract).
- **Bridge Street, Leeds (Ultra Asset Holdings subsidiary of Heeton Holdings, Singapore)** – Ben was introduced to this project by Deloitte Real Estate to provide specialist market research and financial modelling for this scheme comprising approximately 800 private rented sector units

together with a hotel, with ancillary café, gym, workspace etc. in four towers up to 40 stories. We carried out primary research into the PRS sector in Leeds and the demand for various unit sizes. We also prepared a bespoke cashflow model to appraise the IRR of development.

- **Rauceby Hospital, Greylees, Sleaford (North Kesteven DC)** – Ben was retained to provide economic viability, heritage and expert witness services in respect of the appeal inquiry for redevelopment of the former Rauceby Hospital ‘central core’. The site comprised the final phase of the Rauceby Hospital development. The buildings proposed for refurbishment/redevelopment were not listed, however the site and surrounding residential development falls within a conservation area and a Registered Park and Garden. The original proposal for the central core comprised the refurbishment of the former hospital buildings to dwellings along with limited new build units within the surrounding grounds (totaling 59 units). However, the developer argued that this scheme was no longer viable and sought consent to demolish the buildings and redevelop the site for 106 new units. The key issues for the public inquiry were: the relationship between the heritage policies of the Local Plan and the NPPF vis-à-vis the viability policies; the quantum of land value and developer’s profit – given the developer was arguing the original scheme to be ‘not viable’; the sales values and the ‘premium’ attached to being located in a conservation area; the condition of the buildings/cost of restoration; and whether the complete demolition proposal was the only viable solution or the ‘optimum viable use’ of the designated heritage assets as required by the NPPF.
- **Frolseworth Road, Leire, Leicestershire (Harborough DC)** - This was an unusual economic viability case in that the scheme did not attract any specific S106/S278 obligations and the Applicant was not seeking to argue that the scheme is not viable. In this case the Applicant was seeking to make the case that the scheme was viable over the longer term. The Council was not seeking any planning obligation but one cannot use ‘viability’ as an argument to over-rule other planning policies (e.g., Development Limits).
- **Railway Yard, Kibworth (Harborough DC)** – Ben was retained to appraise the viability of this scheme comprising 26 residential dwellings off Isabel Lane, Kibworth. The development was a further phase of an earlier development comprising 19 units. The key issue was the land value vis-à-vis profit given that part of the site was owned by the Directors Pension Fund and was currently used as a builder’s yard. However, part of the site access had to be assembled by the acquisition of 24A and 24B New Road on the frontage.
- **Verdonis Works, Lutterworth (Harborough DC)** – Ben was retained to appraise the viability of this scheme comprising 57 units on the buildings and curtilage of Verdonis works which is an industrial building/complex extending to c 75,000 sqft / 6,970 sqm on a site of 3.4 acres / 1.38 ha. The issue was that the policy compliant residual land value with 30% affordable housing was below the benchmark existing use value. However, the contracted purchase price was way above both the RLV and the EUV (even allowing for a premium).

### Local Plan and CIL Viability – Examination in Public\

- **Black Country Plan Viability and Delivery Study (Dudley BC, Sandwell BC, Wolverhampton City Council, Walsall BC)** – Ben and his team (including Stantec) has been appointed by the four Black Country Authorities to produce an up-to-date viability assessment of the new Black Country Plan that ensures sufficient land is allocated to meet the Black Country’s needs up to 2039. The aims of the commission are to assess: whether the housing and employment sites being considered as site allocations are financially viable and deliverable; and whether the requirements for developer contributions in the emerging Draft BCP policies are not set at such a level that they would undermine the deliverability of the plan as a whole. We have worked closely with 16 consortia of landowners and site promoters to assess the deliverability as well as viability of key large sites (both greenfield and brownfield).
- **Charnwood Local Plan Viability (Charnwood Borough Council)** – Ben has been retained to produce an up-to-date viability assessment, which will form a robust and sound evidence base. This was to include: an assessment of the cumulative impact of the proposed policy requirements on the viability of development across a range of site typologies and locations; and to advise on affordable housing, in terms of quantum and mix that can be delivered, in the

context of the emerging Plan. This work has been an iterative process including the detailed review of the delivery of key large sites.

- **Local Plan and CIL Viability (Selby District Council)** – Ben's team was originally appointed by Selby District Council to provide a 'high-level' review of the District's affordable housing targets and provide initial strategic advice in respect of the delivery / implementation of the policy target. We carried out analysis of the development monitoring data and primary research of RPs and developers. We engaged with Members and senior Officers. Key Lines of Inquiry (KLOIs) were delivery mechanisms; types of sites; locations and dynamic approaches (as recommended by the Elphicke-House report). We were subsequently retained to provide economic viability advice in respect of the Site Allocations Plan on development. We have further been retained to provide a full Local Plan and CIL viability assessment including detailed delivery review of key large sites.
- **Local Plan and CIL Viability (Richmondshire District Council)** – Ben was appointed to provide a viability assessment in respect of: to advise on affordable housing, in terms of quantum and mix that can be delivered, in the context of the emerging Plan and to provide an update to the affordable housing commuted sum calculation; to provide an assessment including the cumulative impact of the proposed policy obligations on the viability of development across a range of site typologies and locations; to review and update the CIL Viability Study (2016), taking account of the proposed policy obligations in the emerging Plan. to provide recommendations to the Council that will enable it to determine whether it should pursue CIL or S106 Planning Obligations or a combination of both to collect contributions to infrastructure. We also carried out detailed appraisal on the key strategic site a Catterick Garrison.
- **Local Plan and CIL Viability Assessment (City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council)** – Ben's team was appointed to provide financial viability advice in respect of the Council's Core Strategy Partial Review (CSPR) and the current CIL Charging Schedule. We carried out a review of the market for development land and new build residential sales values in Bradford District. We also carried out a review of the commercial property market for retail and business (B1, B2 and B8). We made recommendations in terms of affordable housing and CIL across four value zones and both greenfield and brownfield sites. We also carried out a separate confidential viability and delivery report relating to 5 x strategic and key large development-sites (totaling 5,685 units).
- **CIL Viability Assessment (Carlisle City Council)** – Ben has been appointed by CCC to provide a baseline Community Infrastructure Levy viability assessment to determine whether there is any scope to introduce CIL to contribute to infrastructure and support development across the District. We have also been commissioned to prepare a specific viability assessment for St Cuthbert's Garden Village Masterplan (10,000 dwellings). This includes: the viability assessment of three options and a preferred option; and to advise on viability and deliverability matters related to the preparation of the St Cuthbert's Garden Village Masterplan Framework.
- **Local Plan Financial Viability Assessment (Northumberland National Park Authority)** - Economic viability advice in respect of the cumulative impact on development of the new Local Plan policies 2017-2037. This included the consideration of Local Connection and / or Principal Residency housing and grant funding for affordable housing sites. The results showed that grant funding was required of between £20,733 - £65,731 per unit, depending on the specific typology and tenure assumptions.
- **Vale of White Horse CIL Review (Vale of White Horse District Council)** – Given our extensive track record in West and South Oxfordshire, we were appointed by the VOWH District Council to review their CIL Charging Schedule. This was to take into consideration the cumulative impact of the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 Strategic Sites and Policies – Adopted December 2016 and the emerging Local Plan 2031 Part 2 Detailed Policies and Additional Sites, Publication Version October 2017. We have carried out two industry consultation events and briefing events for Members as part of this commission.

- **Local Plan Viability Assessment (North York Moors National Park Authority)** - Economic viability advice in respect of the cumulative impact on development of the new Local Plan policies 2016-2035. This included the consideration of Local Connection and / or Principal Residency housing as a means of cross-subsidising affordable housing and Homes England grant funding.
- **Central Bedfordshire Local Plan Viability Assessment (Central Bedfordshire Council)** - Ben was appointed by CBC to provide economic viability advice in respect of the cumulative impact on development of the emerging Local Plan policies. We appraised c 50 residential development typologies to reflect the type of sites coming forward in the emerging Local Plan and specifically the preferred housing allocations. This included rural exceptions sites and supported living typologies. The Council had a very tight timeframe and we were able to provide the final report and recommendations within two months of appointment. Ben gave evidence at EIP.
- **Local Plan and CIL Economic Viability Assessment (South Oxfordshire District Council)** – Ben is retained to provide economic viability advice in respect of the South Oxfordshire District Council new Local Plan to 2033. The local plan will identify a housing target that will be delivered through a strategy consisting of one or potentially two new ‘strategic allocations;’ a large scheme to support specific regeneration proposals; and policies to support the delivery of the ‘Garden Town’ at Didcot. The work is based around three phases as follows: phase 1- Assessment of likely development delivery to support the Local Plan 2033; phase 2 - Full plan viability; phase 3 - Identification of suitable obligations: CIL and S106. Ben gave evidence at ‘virtual’ EIP.
- **Local Plan and CIL Economic Viability Assessment (South Lakeland District Council)** – Ben is retained to provide economic viability advice in respect of the SLDC new Local Plan. This includes various Development Plan Documents, namely: (1) Core Strategy DPD – sets an annual housing target of 400 dwellings per annum and an employment land requirement of 60ha (2) Land Allocations DPD - allocates enough land to meet the housing and employment land targets (3) Development Management Policies DPD, and (4) Arnside and Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) DPD. We are retained to test the full suite of emerging policies including: is the affordable housing policy viable; are the ANOB policies viable; and, having regard to the above, are the CIL rates viable? Ben gave evidence at EIP.
- **Local Plan and CIL Economic Viability Assessment (Craven District Council)** – Ben has been appointed by CDC to provide economic viability advice in respect of the cumulative impact on development of the new Local Plan policies. The new Local Plan will set out the spatial strategy and policies for change, development and conservation in Craven District outside the Yorkshire Dales National Park for the period 2012 to 2032. The new Local Plan includes policies on affordable housing, education contributions and open space contributions (amongst others). Ben is testing the cumulative impact of these policies including various affordable housing tenure mixes – e.g., to include the potential of starter homes within the definition of low-cost home ownership. Ben gave evidence at EIP.
- **Local Plan and CIL Economic Viability Assessment (Harborough District Council)** – Ben has been appointed by Harborough District Council to provide economic viability advice in respect of the preparation of a new Local Plan to govern planning across the District up to 2031. The Council took an approach to consider viability early in the plan-making process. Ben initially carried out an interim Viability Assessment of the residential alternative options. He subsequently updated this report and carried out further research to appraise the viability of the preferred option / Local Plan and to inform the viability of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Ben led a stakeholder consultation on a Pre-Consultation Draft report to validate the development appraisal assumptions and has been working on the viability of the various Strategic Development Area (SDA) sites (including 2,750 units at Lutterworth).
- **Local Plan and CIL Economic Viability Assessment (West Oxfordshire District Council)** – Ben was commissioned to prepare an Economic Viability Appraisal of development across the District to be used as evidence to: (i) inform a Charging Schedule for CIL; (ii) assess the

cumulative impact of the Local Plan; and (iii) assess the viability of the proposed Strategic Development Areas (SDA's) – namely East Witney, North Winey, Chipping Norton and RAF Brize Norton. We carried out a review of Plan policies and monitoring data, stakeholder consultation on the appraisal assumptions, agreed development typologies to be tested, prepared bespoke viability financial models and detailed cashflows of the SDA sites. Ben gave evidence at EIP.

- **Stratford-upon-Avon Local Plan EIP (McCarthy & Stone)** - Ben prepared written representations and attended the Stratford Local Plan Examination in Public in order to present the fundamental difference between general needs housing viability and extra-care viability. The Council had not differentiated its approach between extra-care and general needs and following our appearance the Council changed its policy to exclude extra-care from affordable housing.
- **National CIL Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule (PDCS) Representations (WM Morrison Supermarkets PLC)** - Ben acted for Morrison's to make representations to all PDCS's across the country with a CIL rate above a particular threshold. This involved reviewing the Economic Viability Statement and critiquing the appraisals and evidence base.

### Strategic Sites and Garden Communities Delivery\

- **Garden Communities Wave II (Homes England)** – Ben led a team to assess the delivery and viability of 68 Garden Communities bids. The MHCLG invited bids from ambitious Councils to propose a second wave of garden communities. The aim is for local authorities and their private sector partners to deliver ambitious, locally supported, proposals for new garden communities at scale. Ben and his team have assessed 68 bids for garden communities including 10 garden towns (each over 10,000 homes). Ben's role as Project Director was to advise Homes England on the assessment of the deliverability and viability of the proposals including delivery models, timescales, infrastructure, values, costs, land value capture and funding etc. Many of the Garden Communities proposals involved a parallel Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) bid.
- **Salt Cross Garden Village AAP Viability (West Oxfordshire District Council)** – Ben was retained by WODC to appraise the viability of the Area Action Plan for this garden village near Eynsham. Salt Cross Garden Village is a key element of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 which allocated land to the north of the A40 for development. This area is to form a new garden village to include around 2,200 new homes, around 40 hectares of business land (comprising a new science and technology park), together with a range of supporting services and infrastructure including extensive green spaces and community facilities including new schools. Policy EW1 of the Local Plan requires that the development of the garden village is led by an Area Action Plan (AAP). We have appraised the viability of the AAP policies working with Gardiner & Theobald and Grosvenor (site promoters).
- **New Garden Communities Viability and Delivery Report (Swale Borough Council)** - Ben was commissioned to: engage with Garden Community landowners, strategic land promoters and developers; carry out a high-level appraisal of the 4 x New Garden Community proposals; and make recommendations in respect of the viability and deliverability thereof. The schemes reviewed were: NS1: South East Sittingbourne (8,000 units); NS3: Land at Bobbing (2,500 units); NS4: South East Faversham (2,500 units) and NS5: Ashford Road, South of Faversham (5,000 units). In order to establish the strategic infrastructure and S106/S278 costs for the New Garden Communities Ben consulted explicitly with the site promoters, landowners and developers through a series of structured workshop meetings based around site assessment proformas. These workshops were specifically designed to gain a good understanding of the proposals in terms of market/uses; financial viability and funding; planning; design; community engagement and delivery mechanisms.
- **St Cuthbert's Garden Community Masterplan Framework Viability Assessment (Carlisle City Council)** – Ben has been appointed by CCC to prepare a viability assessment for the St Cuthbert's Garden Community Masterplan comprising 10,000 dwellings. This has required the initial viability assessment of three options followed by a more detailed appraisal of the preferred option. Ben has also advised on CPO and land value capture matters related to delivery. He

has also supported the Council with the discharge of Homes England HIF funding conditions in respect of the £134 million Carlisle Southern Link Road which is required to unlock the highways capacity for the Garden Community. AspinallVerdi has also provided a baseline Community Infrastructure Levy viability assessment to determine whether there is any scope to introduce CIL to contribute to the CSLR and support development across the District.

- **Central Bedfordshire Local Plan Viability Assessment – North Luton SUE (Central Bedfordshire Council)** - Ben was appointed by CBC to provide economic viability advice in respect of the cumulative impact on development of the emerging Local Plan policies. As part of this work Ben has prepared various appraisals of the North Luton SUE. Ben originally appraised a scheme for 4,000 units. This was subsequently appraised based on a reduced 3,100 units before being appraised again for 3,600 units. The appraisal includes 50% of the £66 million funding required for the A6-M1 Link Road through the site. Ben also gave evidence at EIP.
- **Northern Arc, Burgess Hill (Mid-Sussex DC)** - The Northern Arc strategic site is located to the north of Burgess Hill and comprises up to 3,500 new dwellings. There is a Town Wide Strategy for Burgess Hill, which plans holistically for new residential and employment development, regeneration of the town centre and provision of new facilities in the town. Homes England has acquired the site from the control of three strategic land promoters: Wates, Gleeson and Rydon. The promoters/Homes England have prepared a comprehensive masterplan for the site and an Infrastructure Delivery Plan amounting to sum £165 million of strategic infrastructure. Ben was retained by the Council to provide residential property market analysis; review the IDP; prepare a holistic financial viability appraisal for the 3,500 units; and to provide 'Red Book' site valuation advice.
- **Newcastle Western Expansion (Keele University / Newcastle Under Lyme Council)** – working with Wolfson Prize Winners, Urbed and PBA, Ben led the market research and financial appraisal of the options for this proposed Green Belt release for 3,000 new units. The challenge was to research and appraise the aspirations of the scheme which was to diversify the town's existing stock to provide executive homes, private rented sector housing, custom build plots as well as affordable housing.
- **City Fields Masterplan, Wakefield (Wakefield MDC / HCA)** – Ben worked as part of a team with WYG to provide property market research and appraisal advice in respect of the revised masterplan for 2,500 homes along the new Wakefield Eastern Relief Road (WERRs). Ben coordinated the timing and phasing of infrastructure and prepared three detailed Argus appraisals for each of the three landowning consortiums.
- **Sleaford West Quadrant SUE (North Kesteven DC)** – Ben was originally retained jointly by the Council and landowners to mediate the S106 affordable housing for this greenfield strategic urban extension comprising c. 1,400 homes, c. 3 ha of employment land, a primary school, a secondary school including sixth form, public house / family restaurant, care home, local centre etc. Key issues include the benchmark land value and the sales values.
- **Middle Deepdale (Scarborough Borough Council)** – Ben was retained to provide economic viability advice in respect of this 650-unit development between Keepmoat and the Council. This involved appraising the residual land value and S106 affordable housing given the significant infrastructure including a new school and bridge link. Ben provided specific advice on the mechanisms for land value capture including inter alia: land draw-down mechanisms, Overage / Clawback, phased affordable housing economic viability appraisal, and/or ransom strip to the road.

### Heritage Projects\

- **Sheerness Dockyard Church (National Lottery Heritage Fund)** – Ben was retained to advise on the Heritage Enterprise grant application by The Sheerness Dockyard Preservation Trust to rescue the building and transform it into a business/events centre for the local community. The project includes a hybrid incubator and skills centre for local young people, a community café and event space venue for hire.

- **Fitted Rigging House, Chatham (National Lottery Heritage Fund)** – Ben appraised this Heritage Enterprise grant application by Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust for c£4.8 million. The FRH is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and Grade I listed building that occupies a landmark position on the Anchor Wharf, The Historic Dockyard Chatham.
- **Royal Gunpowder Mills, Waltham Abbey (National Lottery Heritage Fund)** – Ben appraised this £5 million Heritage Enterprise grant application by The Waltham Abbey Royal Gunpowder Mills Charitable Foundation Limited for the Waltham Abbey Royal Gunpowder Mills. The principal focus of the application was to restore four former gunpowder incorporating mills and one cordite press house. It was proposed to let the completed refurbishment to PGL Travel Limited.
- **Cultybraggan Prisoner of War (POW) camp, Perthshire (National Lottery Heritage Fund)** – Ben was retained as Heritage Enterprise appraiser and enabler for the Comrie Development Trust project to restore 11 x B listed Nissen huts to high quality self-catering accommodation (Visit Scotland 4\* quality).
- **Briggait, Glasgow (National Lottery Heritage Fund)** – Ben was retained as appraiser and enabler for The Briggait. The Briggait is a Grade `A` listed building on the north bank of the Clyde immediately adjacent to The Clutha bar. The Briggait, formerly the city of Glasgow's fish market, comprises a series of large market halls, dating from 1873, 1889 and 1904 respectively. It has been part converted by Wasps Artists' Studios (Workshop and Artists Studio Provision Scotland) for the production and display of visual arts. The current project is to complete the refurbishment of the 1889 and 1904 market halls to provide dance and circus event space.
- **Finsley Gate, Burnley (National Lottery Heritage Fund)** – This project was promoted by the Canal and River Trust (as landlord) and Finsley Gate Wharf Limited as commercial operator. The site lies within the Weavers Triangle area of Burnley at the end of the 'straight mile' on the Leeds-Liverpool Canal. The site consists of: 3 x Warehouses (listed); c1700 Canal Cottage (listed); Canal Cottage Outbuilding; Forge (listed); Hardstanding area, including a historic slipway. Once restored, the site will be managed by Finsley Gate Wharf Ltd operating a boat hire and repair service; café/bar and micro-brewery; letting cottage; visitor/community centre and outdoor terraces/grassed areas.
- **Ashton (Old) Baths Manchester (National Lottery Heritage Fund)** - Ben advised on the Ashton (Old) Baths Heritage Enterprise scheme being developed by PlaceFirst and Thameside Council. Ben provided the valuation and appraisal advice. The project comprises the refurbishment and conversion of the 'Old Baths' building in the Ashton Town Centre Conservation Area. The original building dates from the late 18th Century and is Grade II\* listed.
- **Northern Counties, Londonderry (National Lottery Heritage Fund)** – Ben provided appraisal advise on the Northern Counties Heritage Enterprise scheme which is being developed by the Derry Inner City Development Trust. The project comprises the refurbishment and conversion of the existing "Northern Counties" building in the historic centre of L/Derry walled city. The original building dates from the late 18th Century and is Grade B1 listed.
- **Melville Building, Royal William Yard, Plymouth (Historic England)** – Ben was instructed by Historic England to carry out a review of the appraisal by developer, Urban Splash (US) in connection with an application for Historic England Covid funding. We provided a report detailing: how the assumptions and inputs differ from those in the earlier pre-Covid development appraisal; how appropriate/accurate the updated assumptions and inputs were; the overall profitability of the project; and what impact Covid has had on the financial viability, and how Historic England might clawback any uplifts should market conditions improve.
- **Chestnuts House (London Borough of Waltham Forrester)** – Chestnuts House is a Grade II\* listed building on Hoe Street, Walthamstow. The Council's vision is to convert the building into a multi-purpose hub for creative businesses, with community access at its core including: a public café/bar, performance space, pop-up exhibitions and events spaces. Ben is working with



Tricolour - Heritage Development and Design on soft-market testing and a feasibility options appraisal.

- **Old Haugh End Cottage, Sowerby Bridge (Charnock Bates)** – Ben was recommended by Historic England to provide an appraisal of the enabling development comprising 11 new build houses to cross-fund the refurbishment of the main Grade II\* listed building and associated historic cottages/stables.
- **Park Hill Flats, Sheffield (Historic England)** – Ben was retained to review the grant application by Urban Splash for funding towards the refurbishment of the Phase 2 block including workspace on the lower levels with residential apartments above. He recently repeated the exercise to provide Historic England with due diligence on additional Covid funding. Ben was also retained to provide a formal Red Book valuation of land and buildings in Phase 4 to be acquired by S1 Artspace from Urban Splash. S1 will fit-out the accommodation to provide artist studios and residencies. There is also a proposal for a new-build gallery.
- **Eureka! Children’s Museum Halifax (Eureka! and Heritage Lottery Fund (as was))** – AspinalVerdi are part of a team led by Bauman Lyons architects to advise on the masterplan for the Eureka! site including 3 x listed buildings comprising the 1855 station building, the Great North Shed and Shaw Sykes Goods Yard. Ben provided the commercial property market, real estate advice and viability/funding advice.
- **Grove House, Harrogate (Springfield Healthcare)** – Ben was retained to prepare a report into the Optimal Viable Use of this Grade II\* listed building on Skipton Road in Harrogate formally owned by the R.A.O.B. (Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes). We carried out a qualitative assessment of a long list of options before appraising the shortlisted options.
- **Cookridge Hospital, Leeds (Chartford Homes)** – Ben carried out a financial viability assessment of the Grade II listed hospital site in order to release the current planning conditions preventing the development from continuing. This included revisions to phase 2 of the scheme to include 103 new build units; 23 refurbished units in the main building and 64 units in the Ida Wing.
- **Southend Pier, Southend (Southend on Sea BC)** – Ben carried out a soft market testing exercise to identify occupiers and investors for a new leisure deck on this Grade II listed structure, which is located in a SSSI and RAMSAR area.
- **Saltdean Lido, Brighton (Saltdean Lido CIC)** – Ben provided formal RICS Red Book valuation advice and a separate Development Appraisal report to support the CIC’s application for c£7.6 million of funding to restore this Grade II\* listed art-deco lido.
- **St Lukes Chapel, Chelsea (Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea)** – Ben was retained to undertake a commercial review of the developer’s viability evidence to support their application for conversion of this Grade II\* listed chapel to residential. The Chapel forms part of the ‘The Bromptons’ gated community development of the former Brompton hospital site where the first phase of flats has resold for between £1.7 million to £10.5 million each. We reviewed the developer’s viability evidence including the viability of continuing the use as a private chapel and an assessment of the alternative uses in the context of Historic England’s guidance on enabling development.
- **Spanish City, Whitley Bay (North Tyneside Council)** – Ben was appointed on the detailed financial appraisals and business plan for a Heritage Enterprise application. Spanish City was built in 1910 with a large rotunda hall and outdoor pleasure grounds - immortalized by the band Dire Straits in their 1980’s single, “Tunnel of Love”. The building was Grade II listed in 1986 and the scheme will be the main catalyst for the regeneration of the sea front area of Whitley Bay.
- **Parsonage Hotel Estate (Selby District Council)** - Ben was commissioned to review the case for ‘Very Special Circumstances’ in terms of the economic viability of a proposal to develop a spa building in the Green Belt. Ben analysed the proposed development, the historic hotel’s trading performance, undertook detailed market analysis of the competition and prepared a

detailed viability appraisal. We found the investment had the potential to generate additional turnover and profit for the hotel and was sustainable as a business.

### Town and City Centres – High Streets\

- **Scunthorpe Town Investment Plan (North Lincolnshire Council)** – Ben is providing sub-contract property expertise to support the preparation of a FHSF (Future High Streets Fund) bid and TIP (Town Investment Plan) for the Towns Fund. We have provided property market advice and appraisals. Given the short timescales we have also been available to provide key interventions on the projects and deliverability. Scunthorpe has received a conditional FHSF offer of 10,675,323.
- **Gateshead Exemplar Neighbourhood Development Framework (Gateshead Council)** – Ben is part of a multi-disciplinary team providing sub-contract development consultancy services for the production of an updated Exemplar Neighbourhood Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The previous SPD predated the adoption of the NewcastleGateshead joint Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan (CSUCP). Ben has provided property market research, soft-market testing and appraisal services to demonstrate the new SPD is viable and deliverable.
- **Halifax Future High Streets Fund (Calderdale Council)** – Ben was appointed to provide commentary on the local property market in the town centre - issues, weaknesses and potential strengths. Ben also appraised the wider impact of the proposals (including improvements to the theatre and market, along with public realm) on property values in the town centre. This assessed the wider impact on land values in the FHSF area (e.g. through reduced vacancy rates, increased rental values). Ben carried out town-centre-wide uplift in land value appraisals. Halifax has received a conditional FHSF offer of £11,762,823.
- **Elland Future High Streets Fund (Calderdale Council)** – Ben was appointed to provide development appraisals of four Council owned projects for new build residential redevelopment on high street gap sites. Ben also provided comments on deliverability and risk and uplift in land value calculations. Elland Town Centre has received a conditional FHSF offer of £6,310,812.
- **The Citadels, Carlisle Outline Business Case (Carlisle City Council, Cumbria County Council, University of Cumbria, Cumbria LEP)** – Ben has been retained as part of a multi-disciplinary team to prepare an OBC for the redevelopment of the Carlisle Citadels, located at the southern extent of Carlisle City Centre. The site comprises the street block encompassing English St, Victoria Viaduct and English Damside including the Grade 1 listed Citadel buildings (Crown Court Citadel to the west and Nisi Prius to the east). Ben has provided check-and-challenge to the client team in respect of deliverability, risk and viability. Ben carried out extensive soft market testing to consult with potential occupiers, developer partners and investors. Ben has also provided options appraisals for the OBC.
- **Blyth Future High Streets/Town Fund (Northumbria County Council)** – Ben is part of a multi-disciplinary team to develop the FHSF application and wider Town Investment Plan. Ben has provided commercial input and property market research/soft market testing to the portfolio of development projects. Ben also prepared existing use valuations and residual appraisals to calculate the uplift in land value for the Green Book appraisal. Blyth Town Centre has received full FHSF funding of £11,121,059.
- **Wakefield Town Investment Plan (Wakefield MDC)** – Ben is working alongside Farrells to update the masterplan for Wakefield City Centre to inform the TIP. This has been a true multi-disciplinary approach with highways and cultural experts. The project has coincided with the Covid pandemic and we have used innovative approaches to consultation in order to remain on programme. Ben has added considerable value by identifying various development opportunities for redevelopment and new neighbourhoods.
- **Goole Town Centre Conservation Area (East Riding of Yorkshire)** – Ben provided 'before' and 'after' Red Book valuations for a sample of 8 properties in the Goole Town Centre CA. The valuations were required to provide evidence to support funding bids (e.g. Humber LEP High

Street Challenge Funding) and to enable wider dialogue with property owners as part of the adoption process for the draft CA Management and Maintenance Plan. We also worked with specialist conservation architects and cost consultants to prepare surveys and cost estimates.

- **Radcliffe Town Centre Masterplan (Bury Council)** – Working with Urbed, Ben was appointed to undertake a review of the property market in Radcliffe in order to inform the masterplan update. Ben was specifically instructed to review the residential, commercial and retail/leisure market in Radcliffe. Ben added value by identifying some key delivery principles for the Opportunity Sites within the town centre.
- **Chesterfield Town Centre Masterplan (Chesterfield Borough Council)** – Working with WCEC Group Ben reviewed and updated the masterplan for the historic town centre of Chesterfield, which was originally produced in 2009 by Urbed. The objective was to establish whether the vision was still relevant following the credit crunch, as well as to identify a clear set of priorities for projects to be delivered. We also addressed structural challenges facing the high street given the pace of technological change. We identified a series of cross-cutting themes including 'town centre management', 'public realm', 'major projects and gateways', and 'big changes in small-spaces'.
- **Bridlington Quay Townscape Heritage (East Riding of Yorkshire Council)** – Ben provided sample 'before' and 'after' Red Book valuations for this Townscape Heritage (TH) bid. The project is to restore and enhance the Bridlington Quay Conservation Area (BQCA). The BQCA covers the historic harbour and quay mainly built in the early 19th century which played an important role in the development of the town and its hinterland. There are some 20 listed buildings within the CA. The TH project is to facilitate investment in the area through capital funding property improvements of heritage buildings and public spaces.
- **Crosby Masterplan (Sefton Borough Council)** – Ben was appointed alongside Broadway Malyan to prepare an investment strategy for Crosby. The Crosby Investment Strategy is intended to kick start investment and development, and sets out a clear long-term vision and ambition for Crosby Village that provides it with a purpose and a direction as a destination for future investment purposes. Ben was specifically appointed to provide Red Book valuation advice for the acquisition of key freehold properties.
- **Beverley Road Townscape Heritage, Hull (Hull City Council)** – Ben led a team at AspinallVerdi together with Rider Hunt Cost Management and Holland Brown Conservation Architects to complete the stage 2 application for the Beverley Road TH scheme. This involved condition surveys, cost plans and valuations for a sample of 12 properties. We then completed a detailed conservation deficit appraisal for the sample and extrapolated our findings to complete the financial framework.
- **Brentford Town Centre – Property and Valuation Services (LB Hounslow)** - AspinallVerdi have been acting for LB Hounslow with respect to the Council's property holdings which will become part of a larger regeneration and development project for a new and extended Brentford Town Centre. Ben was responsible for the formal Red Book valuation and delivery advice to negotiate a sale to the developer – Ballymore.
- **The Ruth Gorse Academy, Leeds (The Morley Academy)** - Ben was on the Board of Directors of the Leeds Academy Community Interest Company that was established to deliver a 1,500-place mainstream free school in Leeds City Centre. Following a competitive bidding process, a funding agreement was signed between the DfE and the Morley Academy (as education provider) for £20+ million to build and open the school.

### Public Sector Funding - Unlocking Development\

- **Colchester Tendring Borders Garden Community HIF Detailed Due Diligence (Homes England)** – Ben carried out detailed due diligence on this garden community on the eastern side of Colchester between the A120 and the University of Essex campus. The project includes: (i) the delivery of a new Link Road between the A120 and A133; (ii) the delivery of a dedicated bus RTS (Rapid Transport System) through the site; and (iii) delivery of the bus RTS from the A133

through Colchester town centre to the existing park and ride at junction 28. Without investment in this infrastructure only circa 1,000 units could be delivered. The delivery of the Link Road and RTS unlocks an additional 6,500 homes to allow a total capacity for c. 7,500 houses. Essex County Council had applied for c £100 million of HIF funding to deliver the above works out of a total cost of £ 110.81 million.

- **Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community HIF Detailed Due Diligence (Homes England)** – Ben carried out detailed due diligence on this project to deliver further improvements to the strategic highways network which are already proposed to the A12 around Kelvedon and Marks Tey on the Braintree Colchester boarder in Essex. Highways England have a current proposal (funded without HIF) for improvements to the A12 between Chelmsford, Boreham Junction 19 and Marks Tey Junction 25. The total cost of this RIS1 scheme is c. £1 billion. This scheme would allow highways capacity for c. 6,000 houses on land at Marks Tey. The additional improvements proposed as part of the HIF would unlock capacity for an additional c. 15,000 homes which will result in a total development capacity of c. 21,000 units. Essex County Council had applied for c.£230 million of HIF funding to deliver additional improvements to the A12.
- **Kingsway North Team Valley (North East LEP)** – Ben provided due diligence on the business case for the c £2 million gap funding required to deliver the speculative development of three new industrial units, creating a total floor area of 11,273 sq m GIA. As well as constructing the new units, the project also includes associated land remediation works, site access and highways improvements needed to bring this redundant site back into use. A key issue was the impact of Covid on the construction and letting market.
- **Trinity Farm, Knottingley (Caddick Developments)** – Ben was retained by Caddick Developments to prepare a development appraisal and business case for Business Growth Programme (BGP) funding to deliver a new 127,277 sqm / 1,370,000 sqft state-of-the-art distribution centre for TK Maxx. The project was ‘oven-ready’ with an occupier, institutional funding, planning consent and site assembly agreed. However, the project was not commercially viable due to the site servicing and abnormal costs (£6.85 million). This was an important project for Wakefield given the closure of Kellingley Colliery and the funding help to create 1,440 new jobs.
- **Black County Business Property Investment Programme Technical Advice (Black County Local Authorities)** – Ben was retained as technical advisor to the Black Country Local Authorities in terms of administering this ERDF programme targeting SME manufacturing companies. This role has involved: raising the profile of the funding opportunity; designing the application process; liaising with potential bidders; and evaluating bids for the accountable body (Walsall Council).
- **St Paul’s Place, Heart of the City Sheffield (CTP Developments)** – Ben was retained by CTP Developments to prepare a detailed Business Plan for ERDF. No. 3 St Paul’s Place is a 100,000 sqft Grade-A office comprising the final phase of ‘heart of the city’ Sheffield. Ben secured a grant of £6.9 million as well as a loan from JESSICA. The funding concludes over 4 years of business planning and negotiations with DCLG. This has led to further work on No. 4 St Paul’s Place.
- **Whitby Business Park (Scarborough Borough Council)** – Ben was retained to provide development consultancy and public sector funding advice to ‘unlock’ infrastructure investment to enable the expansion of the business park. We provided initial advice in respect of a Regional Growth Fund bid and a business plan for ERDF which involved establishing a detailed month-by-month cashflow for the project to establish the ‘viability gap’. We introduced high value private sector end-users to the site which were able to ‘pump-prime’ the first phase of infrastructure supported by a Growing Places Fund loan from the North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership.
- **Victory Higher Manufacturing Park, Lower Don Valley (Property Alliance Group)** – Ben was retained to prepare the Business Plan and appraisal for the first phases of this development

for the Advanced Manufacturing Sector. The scheme comprises the servicing of 6.16 ha / 15.23 acres of brownfield land and the construction of 48,500 sqft / 4,509 sqm of high-quality business accommodation in 2 units carefully targeted at the Advanced Manufacturing and Materials sector. We secured £2.8 million of ERDF funding, managed the draw-down and wrote the Project Learning Review report for final sign-off. Ben also advised on the grant draw-down and post evaluation report.

- **ERDF (GOYH, Yorkshire Forward, DCLG)** - Messers Aspinall and Verdi have a long track record of public sector funding. We have facilitated approximately £750,000,000 of capital development projects. We have secured £41,500,000 of funding from ERDF (Objective 1 and 2; the current programme; and Partnership Investment Programme/Single Pot). We have also evaluated £66,880,000 of funding on behalf of the grant awarding Agencies. Recent project evaluations for DCLG include: Green Park Newport by Horncastle Group PLC; Priory Park Hull by Henry Boot Developments; Penistone town centre gateway; The Lighthouse Centre of Excellence Phase II (WNYCC); and Bradford University Sustainability Centre.

### Feasibility Studies\

- **Kirkleatham Stables (Redcar & Cleveland Council)** - Kirkleatham Hall Stables and Garden Features are listed as buildings of special architectural or historic interest and are individually classified as Grade I, II and II\*. AspinallVerdi completed a feasibility study examining the future use options for the Stables and undertook a robust examination of the current property market context for various uses. Ben then prepared bespoke financial appraisals of use options and in-depth delivery approaches were developed to facilitate action by the Council.
- **Westcliffe District Centre, Scunthorpe (North Lincolnshire Council / North Lincolnshire Homes)** – Ben was commissioned to carry out a feasibility study for the redevelopment of this 1960s shopping parade. Key requirements were the re-provision of a retail parade, the development of new housing for the over 55s and the construction of a new community centre and library. Ben carried out comprehensive soft market testing with retailers/developers and prepared appraisals and sensitivity analysis to inform the scheme development. Ben also provided vacant possession and decant strategy for the site; delivery structures; procurement routes; and a comprehensive risk matrix.
- **Stoke-on-Trent Private Rented Sector (Stoke-on-Trent City Council)** - Ben was retained to provide development consultancy and feasibility advice in respect of a portfolio of four city centre sites for development of private rented sector homes. The commission involves advising on the viability appraisal, funding and delivery model(s) for PRS. As part of the project Ben has met with and questioned numerous Institutional Funds about their investment approach for PRS.
- **Claro Barracks, Ripon (Harrogate BC)** - AspinallVerdi was commissioned alongside Genecon economists to assess the impact of the closure and future use options for the MoD Barracks site. We assessed the development potential of the surplus Barracks and identified a range of strategic responses to the economic baseline findings and opportunities presented by the Barracks site. We carried out a comprehensive assessment of residential, retail and employment premises and sites. This research involved both desk and field-based research to establish supply, demand and values.
- **St Catherine's Hospital (Rotherham Doncaster and South Humberside (RDaSH) NHS Trust)** – Ben worked alongside the Trusts Estates Director to implement an estates strategy review. Ben provided input and direction to the architects' scheme options for surplus land. Ben prepared financial residual land value appraisals on a policy compliant basis for each option and recommended a disposal strategy. AspinallVerdi acted as agents to market the site and made recommendations on the various 'subject to planning' and unconditional offers received.

### Conferences and Best Practice\

- **De-risking Strategic Sites at Plan Viability Stage (Homes England)** – Ben presented to over 100 Homes England Officers at their 'lunch and learn' webinar series to: share his experience of

Garden Communities and Strategic Sites – concept stage planning and development; explain what to look for at Due Diligence; and to discuss Land Value Capture.

- **Rebooting National Planning Policy – Viability Creating Certainty (Contact Property Training)** – Ben presented a paper at this commercial conference in London on: the emerging best practice following the 2019 NPPF/PPG review; Greenfield / Brownfield site typologies; and policy differentiation and Strategic Infrastructure on greenfield sites.
- **Planning Law Conference (RTPI)** - Ben presented a paper on land economics, plan viability and CIL (LIT and SIT). This discussed why financial viability is relevant in the planning context, current best practice, the CIL Review finding and the proposed new approach to developer contributions i.e., Local and Strategic Infrastructure Tariff (LIT and SIT).
- **Planning for Infrastructure Conference (RTPI)** - Ben presented a paper on the reality of Development Economics and context for the move from S106 to the (now defunct) Planning Gain Supplement (PGS) to CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy). This discussed the principles of macro land economics in the context of land supply, economic rent and taxation. The different micro-economic effects of S106 for both greenfield and brownfield land were addressed. Finally, the lessons from the Barker Review, PGS and historical betterment taxes were considered in the context of CIL rate setting.
- **Regeneration Momentum (The Northern Way)** – Working with the University of Leeds, Ben led the research into the question, *‘does affordable housing planning policy act as an impediment to housing delivery and is there a better way of regulating the market?’*. Our report advocated a fundamental re-think of the financial, institutional and planning systems, to improve the possibility of households gaining access to, and being able to retain their position, in housing. A copy of this report is available upon request.

#### Pro-bono\

- Connect Housing Association, Non-Executive Director (September 2014 – July 2017)
- Leeds Civic Trust, Trustee (November 2011 – May 2017)
- West and North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce Property Forum, Steering Group Member (August 2008 – June 2016)
- The Leeds Academy Community Interest Company, Director (November 2012 – Dec 2014)

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