NORTOFT

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RTPI Chartered Town Planners

Sue O'Neil and David O'Neil are both very experienced MRTPI's with a good success rate in development planning including sport & leisure, and major house building schemes.

Our nationally recognised specialties include all planning for sport, open space and leisure. We have significant experience of: sports development in the Green Belt; making the sports case for housing developments (including sports land loss, relocation and provision); s106 negotiations, business plans and feasibility studies. We act as expert witnesses at EIPs and Planning Appeals.



SUE O'NEIL BSc (Hons), MRTPI, Director

Sue is a highly experienced sports planner, and MRTPI and leads our work on EIPs and Planning Appeals. Sue has an extensive track record in sports strategy development, and previously worked for Sport England as a regional planning manager and a national lead NGB officer. Sue has strong active contacts in, and respect from, the national and regional sports sectors including her close links with Sport England at national and regional level.

2000 - present **Director, Nortoft Planning:** Specialties: Sport, recreation and leisure facility planning and development; planning applications; strategic planning; evidence base for applications; project feasibility studies; and planning policy development.

1993 - 2000 **Regional Facilities Lead, Sport England (then 'English Sports Council'):** Lead planning advisor and team leader in West Midlands planning for sport. National Lottery project development, advice and assessment.

1989 - 1993 **National Countryside & Water Sports Officer, Sport England (then 'English Sports Council')** Co-ordinating water and countryside-based sports including NGBs.

1986 - 1989 **NFU Political Adviser:** Adviser on land use policy to the National Farmers Union.

Qualifications and Other Experience:

- Village Hall Treasurer and Trustee.
- Sue also cycles, runs, swims, and publishes technical books on the workings of stone circle calendars.



DAVID O'NEIL BSc (Hons), DipEd, DipTP, MRTPI, Director

David is a very experienced MRTPI with a good success rate in planning and development including employment, residential, retail and other commercial land.

LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/david-o-neil-b501b612?trk=nav_responsive_tab_profile

2000 - present **Director, Nortoft Planning**

Specialties: Sport, recreation, leisure and environmental projects; planning applications; strategic planning; evidence base for applications, consultation, s106 negotiation; project feasibility and business plans; planning policy development; planning appeal/expert witness.

1998 - 2000 **Regional Manager of The National Millennium Exhibition Company (NMEC Ltd)** Helped plan and manage the nation's millennium celebrations; adviser on the Earth Zone at The Dome; VIP Management on Millennium night; lead role on regional marketing and sponsor relations.

1997 – 1998 **Chief Executive, Sports City Development Ltd** Led £200m bid onto shortlist of 3 for the then New National Sports Centre.

1993 - 1998 **Head of Major Environmental Projects, Northamptonshire County Council** Planning and development of urban improvement and regeneration schemes, major green infrastructure, leisure and tourism projects; lead on County cycling policy and implementation.

1989 – 1993 **Regional Planning Officer, Sport England**

1983 - 1989 **Countryside Manager, Lee Valley Regional Park Authority**

Qualifications and Other Experience:

- Vice Chair Parish Council; Village Hall Trustee; Neighbourhood Plan lead; Church Restoration Group planning adviser.
- Former: Member of the National Countryside Recreation Group; LGA Lead Member on the DoT National Cycling Strategy Group; National Executive Chairman of the British Mountain Bike Federation.
- Hobbies include staving off the effects of age by travelling, cycling, local history and selling his artwork.

Some of our Clients:



SELECTED RECENT NORTOFT PROJECTS:

Treledan, Cornwall (2026) Sports masterplanning, costing and deliverability advice for this 1,000 homes SUE. At pre-application stage.

Arborfield, Wokingham (2026). Planning advice in relation to s106 for sports facilities, supporting a successful Appeal. The advice challenged the approach taken by the LPA, resulting in much lower s106 levels for the Appellant.

Wokingham (2025). Planning advice relating to s106 for playing fields. Challenge resulted in the LPA dropping all sports related s106.

Cala Homes Site Assessment (2025). Pre-application advice on the deliverability of existing playing fields for housing.

Loddon Garden Village (2023- 2026) c4,500 dwellings: A new strategic site, part of Wokingham BC's emerging Local Plan. University of Reading, Beaulieu Homes and Gleeson. Nortoft lead needs assessment and masterplanning for playing fields and indoor sports for the proposed sports hub. Application submitted.

Nuneaton & Bedworth Council (2024). Update of highly successful Developers Contributions (Sports) s106 SPD planning policy, resulting in major capital funding for public sports facilities.

St Alban's School & Hallam Land (2022 - 26): Redevelopment of playing fields in the Green Belt, including moving and enhancing cricket and rugby playing fields for community and school use, enabling major 'North St Albans' housing development by Hallam Land

Obsidian Homes, Land East of Chichester (2024). Planning advice for the balance between on-site versus off-site playing field provision. Consented.

Miller Homes, Frimley, Surrey (2024). Sports planning support for 170dw brownfield development adjacent to a sports ground in a public park. Consented.

Yardley, Birmingham (2024). Lead expert witnesses in Appeal for single reason for refusal (sports) against refusal of 87 dwellings on one part of former, disused private playing field land. Included significant reinvestment into failing cricket ground, and essential investment into other local sports sites.

Golden Valley Garden Community/Cyber Central UK (2024). Sports planning for this 2,500 homes St Modwin development, supporting integrated planning across four development parcels in West Cheltenham, including playing fields, and s106 funding.

Bellway Homes, London Borough of Merton: Former Playing Fields (2023): Development of c100 dwellings on part of a former works playing field (LESSA). Fenced and unused for many years. Change of use to mixed sports and housing. Secured consent, including a £1.8m for: off-site sports investment package for community sport (football, cricket and rugby); on-site public open space & sports hub (public open space, play, outdoor gym, tennis courts and MUGA). Full planning permission granted despite Sport England's objection and its request for SoS Call-in (rejected).

Hounslow Cavalry Barracks, consented 1,525 dwellings (2020-22):
Nortoft led on-site and off-site planning for sport and recreation, relocation of playing fields, upgrade of neighbouring park, relevant s106 negotiations, and enabled Sport England to remove its formal objection.



Redrow Homes and Carden Group/Treasbeare Residential Ltd (2022): Treasbeare Garden Village, Cranbrook, East Devon: 1035 dwellings; approved.
Nortoft led the planning of the main Sports Hub for this major dwelling application, having previously led on the wider Cranbrook Town. Input into Local Plan Modifications, masterplanning, facility costs, and s106 negotiations. Consented.

Bloor Homes, Bedford River Valley Sports Assessment (2023, 2026):
Feasibility study and masterplanning for a major water sports river valley park, to be funded by a large housing development. Currently at pre-application stage.

Basildon (2020-21): consented 600 dwellings. Nortoft led sports and leisure planning, which included the loss, relocation and enhancement of football, cricket and other sports.

Bath Rugby Club (2023): Sports planning advice for the redevelopment of the Bath RFC/Arena 1865 stadium improvements, including the implications for playing pitch and open space changes. Consented.

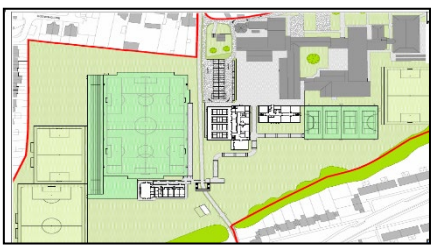
Stevenage Urban Expansion (2021):
Assessment of need for on-site cricket pitches for a 1,350 dwelling development, including masterplanning matters.

Kibworth: new Community Hub. 2022/23. Planning & project lead for the innovative for £1.3m 'Community Hub' includes social wellbeing, meeting place, recreation, theatre and library. Nortoft led the successful planning application, as well as feasibility and business planning, governance, and partnerships. *"Your perseverance, professionalism and patience has been outstanding*". Kibworth Beauchamp Parish Council Chairman.

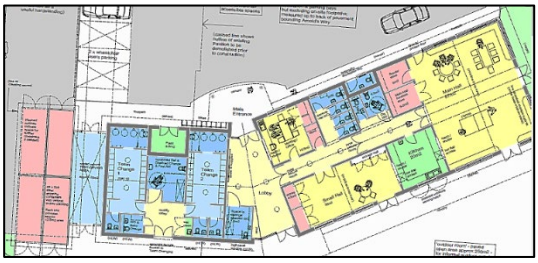


Danescroft Homes (2022): Wealden District. Development of c180 homes on former playing fields. Overcame Sport England's initial objection. Secured planning via Appeal.

Epsom & Ewell High School, Bellway (2019)
Selling off a former school playing pitch in a dense urban area for housing, with 1,000 letters of objection. Overcame Sport England objection. Consent achieved, with over £1m re-investment into new school and community sport.

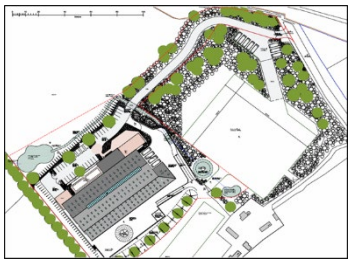


Earls Barton PC (2021) Business Plan: Nortoft re-masterplanned the buildings, prepared a detailed business plan and secured an £800,000 grant from Wellingborough Council towards enhanced playing fields, clubhouse and new 'Active Lifestyles Community Hub'. *"Wellingborough Council Members supported the request for a capital grant noting this facility would greatly enhance the quality of life for those living in Earls Barton and the nearby area. Congratulations were extended to the parish council for the work that they had undertaken. the progress made so far, and the excellent business plan provided".*



Community Hall & Sports Pavilion in the Green Belt (2019) North Hinksey Parish Council now have planning permission for their new facilities, including: large community hall, changing rooms, improved access and parking, and extensive outdoor adventure youth play facilities. Nortoft led and secured consent from Vale of White Horse DC, despite a vociferous 'NIMBY' campaign.

Sport England National Planning Policy Documents (2019): Nortoft, with DLP, provided lead advice to Sport England on its update of "Planning for Sport Guidance". This followed advice to them on CIL/s106 policies, and on practical and deliverable application of the policy.



International Training Equestrian Centre in the Green Belt, Caldecote Farm, Hertfordshire (2019): Successful consent against strong officer advice. International level equestrian training centre (indoors and outdoors) within Green Belt. Detailed business plan to help prove viability and deliverability. Nortoft's robust evidence base of the sporting and wider need and our securing of the support from National Governing Bodies of Sport, made the NPPF 'Very Special Circumstances' case, and successfully passed SoS Call-in.