

Planning Capacity Builder for Net Zero



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1. Introduction

The Proposal

Nottingham Trent University (NTU) and Bolsover District Council (BDC) were successful in their bid to the East Midlands Investment Zone Sprint to explore the development of a new planning qualification. EMCCA has ambitions to see the East Midlands be recognised as a national centre of excellence for green technology investment and to see growth underpinned by a commitment to Net Zero. The recruitment and retention of planners in local planning authorities is a barrier to these regional ambitions and growth in the East Midlands Investment Zone. This innovative project set out to explore the feasibility of creating a pathway into the planning profession through a Level 4 apprenticeship in Town and Country Planning that would create more opportunities for our young people to access higher skilled and higher paid jobs. The Level 4 Town Planning Assistant Apprenticeship is a new standard that is currently only offered in Chichester.

NTU received £45,521 to undertake Phase 1 of the project, a feasibility study with the following activity planned.

- An initial market analysis and 1st stage initial course design before working with BDC on employer engagement
- Employer engagement to test the course design and appetite
- Develop a final course structure and proposal and decide as to whether to launch the programme in the future (as part of Phase 2)
- Phase 2 of the Project – to be agreed in May 2025 – would be to decide whether to proceed with the delivery of a Level 4 apprenticeship with an anticipated minimum cohort of 12 apprentices.

In 2023 the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) published their State of Profession 2023 report¹, detailing an analysis of the current planning profession. That report indicated that planning backlogs, underfunding of local authority planning departments, and a labour shortages of planning professionals were challenges the planning system faced. In July 2024 the new Government announced plans to boost house building in the UK, creating a least 1.5million new homes over the next 5 years². Such an ambitious and radical plan would inevitably compound the professions current challenges, meaning all avenues and initiatives to grow the pool of planning professionals must be explored.

The Government is committed to boost capacity in the planning system with a manifesto target of recruiting 300 new Planners by 2026, and whilst level 7-degree apprenticeship initiatives had been promoted by the Local Government Association's (LGA) Pathways to Planning programme³ to start to achieve that target many local planning authorities report that this is not enough⁴. Therefore, the partnership between NTU and BDC recognised an opportunity looking towards the level 4 apprenticeship route to bolster these numbers and provide an entry level route into the planning profession.

This report details the activities undertaken by NTU and BDC. The report is structured as follows, first the market analysis is presented before, second, details and findings from the stakeholder engagement are

¹ RTPI | State of the Profession 2023

² Letter from the Deputy Prime Minister to local authorities Leaders in England: Playing your part in building the homes we need

³ Pathways to Planning | Local Government Association

⁴ How realistic is Labour's plan to recruit 300 new planners? | The Planner

presented. Thirdly, our approach to course design and an overview of the L4 apprenticeship is presented before finally, offering our conclusions and next steps.

2. Initial market analysis

The first part of the project was to understand the market demand for apprenticeships relating to town planning and NTU instigated a detailed market analysis for the Level 4 Town Planning Assistant Apprenticeship. The Standard was approved for delivery in June 2001, with a typical duration to gateway of 24 months not including the End Point Assessment (EPA) period and maximum funding of £12,000. The standard aligns with the following Royal Town Planning Institute professional recognition: Upon successful completion of the apprenticeship standard and following a period of relevant experience, an application for Associate membership of the RTPI can be made

The trailblazer group comprises the following organisations:

- East Suffolk Council
- CBRE Edgars Ltd
- Basildon Council
- Indigo Planning
- Savills
- Greater Cambridge Shared Planning
- South Cambridgeshire District Council
- St Albans City & District Council
- Brighton & Hove City Council
- Winchester City Council

The Occupation Summary is as follows: Town Planning Assistants work in various sectors, including planning, construction, architecture, infrastructure, environment, and local government. They may be employed by local authorities, consultancies, central government, or other planning organizations. Their primary role is to support Chartered Town Planners by providing technical and administrative assistance to facilitate new developments and create sustainable places. This involves helping the public and clients understand the planning system and its requirements, conducting site visits, researching site history, and performing initial site analyses. They also assist with community engagement, manage planning applications under supervision, and ensure compliance with relevant legislation and environmental designations.

Town Planning Assistants work under the supervision of Chartered Town Planners for more complex analysis and assessment tasks, including writing reports and processing major planning applications. They are expected to manage their workload to meet deadlines and adhere to health, safety, and environmental considerations. They must be willing to travel for site visits and interact with a wide range of stakeholders, including Chartered Town Planners, developers, clients, the public, local councillors, and various specialists such as architects and surveyors. They are responsible for their own work, which includes preliminary research, analysis of policy documents, case law, planning legislation, and site history, and making recommendations to Chartered Town Planners. Additionally, they must adhere to the Royal Town Planning Institute's Code of Professional Conduct and their employer's code of conduct. The role is diverse, combining office-based tasks with meetings and site visits.

At the time of writing (May 2025) Chichester College is the only provider running the apprenticeship. It has 44 starts on the course up until the end of 2024. Details on the course at Chichester can be found on their website⁵ which seems to indicate that the course is taught on campus on a block release basis. It also seems that there are two start dates per year, January and April. See Figure 1 below.

⁵ <https://www.chichester.ac.uk/courses/town-planning-assistant-level-4-apprenticeship-standard/>

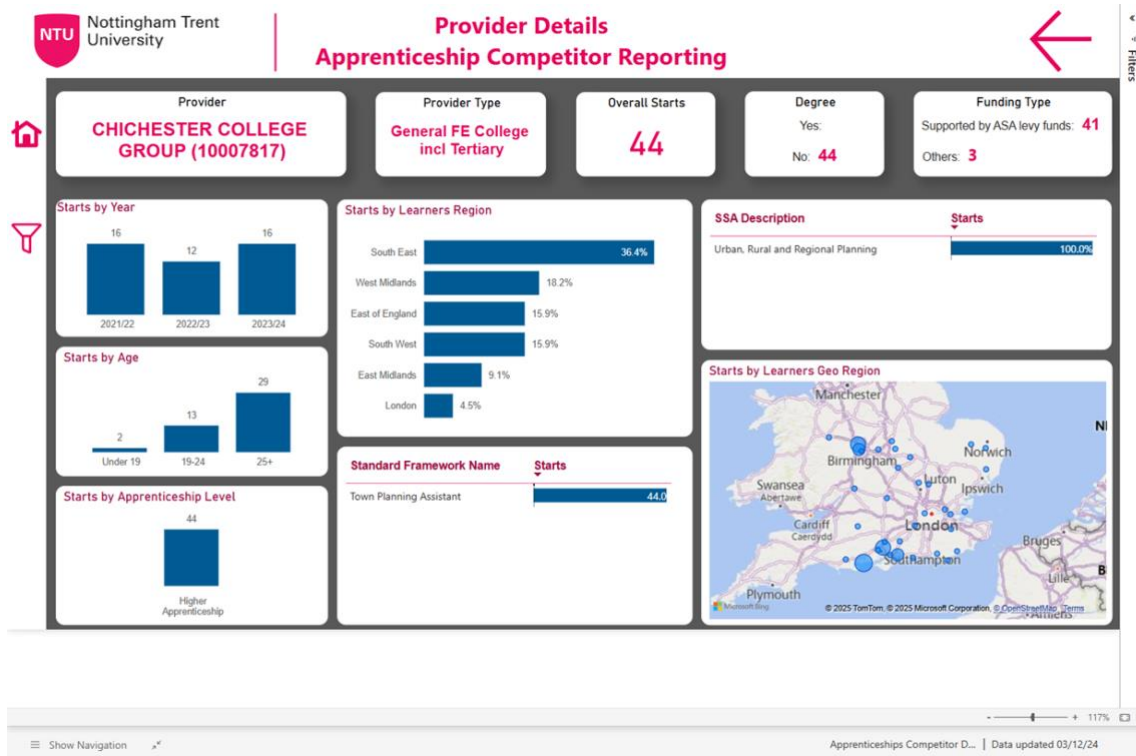


Figure 1: Details of the Chichester College L4 Apprenticeship.

Our analysis shows that all the delivery is in the Southeast, where most apprentices are also located. However, 19 (nearly half) are from the East Midlands, West Midlands and East of England, so within our potential catchment. Of the four East Midlands apprentices, one is from Leicester, one from Harborough and two from Northamptonshire. Course starts by year to date are 21/22 – 16, 22/23 – 12, 23/24 – 16 and the age profile of the apprentices is predominantly over 25. 41 of the apprentices are working for levy paying organisations – most likely local authorities, although not exclusively, which may imply that the other three are in small private sector organisations. Currently, Chichester is the only training provider offering this apprenticeship, and there is no evidence of any others looking to enter the market. This could be due to low demand, exemplified by there being only 44 starts to date, however this number could be due to the geographic location of Chichester for in person, albeit block release, course delivery. The opportunity for a course delivered from a more central location in the country, may therefore provide for greater take up and, as can be seen below, demand could be on the increase.

The demand for town planning assistant jobs tends to be stable, with consistent growth driven by urbanisation, environmental concerns, and the ongoing development of infrastructure and housing. Town planning is a key part of local government, urban design firms, environmental consultancies, and other sectors, and town planners—particularly assistants—are needed to support the planning process. Factors driving demand include:

- **Urban Growth:** As populations grow and more people move to cities or towns, there is an increasing need for town planners to design and manage development effectively. This leads to a demand for planning assistants to help with research, assessments, and drafting documents.
- **Housing and Infrastructure Development:** Housing shortages in certain areas and government initiatives to build new homes and improve infrastructure (roads, transport, utilities) can create opportunities in planning and development. Planning assistants often help manage these projects from a local level.

- *Environmental Sustainability:* Increasing awareness of environmental concerns such as climate change, green space, and sustainable development is driving the need for planners to incorporate eco-friendly designs into development projects. Town planning assistants may play a role in researching and implementing sustainability practices.
- *Regulations and Policy Changes:* New laws, regulations, and policies (such as zoning changes, environmental regulations, and transportation planning) frequently arise, and local governments and private organizations need planning assistants to help with compliance and ensuring that development projects meet all necessary criteria.
- *Local Government and Public Sector Employment:* Local governments are often the largest employers of town planners. Many town planning assistant roles exist within these organizations, which manage land use, public services, and development in their communities.
- *Urban Regeneration Projects:* Town planners are crucial in urban regeneration projects aimed at revitalizing rundown or underdeveloped areas. These projects often require detailed planning, and assistants are needed to manage tasks like mapping, surveying, and preparing reports.

While the demand for town planning assistants may vary by region, major cities and urban areas typically offer more opportunities due to ongoing urbanisation. However, the growing focus on environmental sustainability and the need for balanced urban development means the field is expected to continue offering opportunities across a range of employment sectors:

- *Local Government:* Local authorities need planning assistants to help with policy development, public consultations, and planning applications.
- *Private Firms:* Urban planning, architecture, and consultancy firms often hire planning assistants to support their projects and help with research and planning tasks.
- *Environmental and Sustainability Agencies:* As sustainability becomes a bigger focus in development, agencies may need planning assistants to help implement green projects. Construction and development Companies: These companies also rely on planning assistants to ensure that projects comply with local regulations and zoning laws.

Market

- East Midlands local planning authorities – 37
- Local planning authorities outside of the East Midlands but adjacent to, including South Yorkshire, N/NE Lincolnshire, Staffordshire
- Planning consultants in the East Midlands – 15 ([according to RTPI search](#)) Some are SME's but others are national multidisciplinary organisations, e.g. Arup
- The proposed employer consultation workshops will not only assist in the prospective course's development, but can also provide an opportunity to gauge interest and demand from our target employers

Summary

NTU analysed the Level 4 Town Planning Assistant Apprenticeship, approved for delivery in June 2021 with a 24-month duration (excluding EPA) and £12,000 maximum funding. It aligns with Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) Associate membership eligibility upon completion and experience. The apprenticeship, supported by a trailblazer group of public and private planning organisations, prepares individuals to support Chartered Town Planners across sectors like local government, infrastructure, and environmental planning. Responsibilities include site visits, public engagement, research, and managing planning applications under supervision, adhering to RTPI and employer codes of conduct.

Currently, Chichester College is the sole provider, offering block-release campus delivery with two intakes per year (January and April). As of the end of 2024, there were 44 starts, with most delivery in the Southeast,

though 19 apprentices come from the East Midlands and surrounding regions—NTU’s potential catchment. Most learners are over 25 and from levy-paying employers. Despite this modest uptake, demand for planning assistants remains stable and growing, driven by urbanisation, housing needs, infrastructure development, and environmental sustainability goals. Employment opportunities exist in local authorities, consultancies, construction, and environmental agencies.

A centrally located delivery option, like one from NTU, could increase participation. Alongside the course development the next stage of the project was to undertake stakeholder engagement and employer consultation to both help shape the course and assess market demand in the East Midlands and adjacent areas.

3. Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder engagement was key to this project. For several years NTU has been approached by various bodies to explore the viability of town planning qualifications. For the course to be viable NTU and Bolsover needed to be clear that there is a market, and that any course that would be delivered would meet the needs of the local planning community. Stakeholder engagement is also integral to NTU's course approval processes. A three-part approach to stakeholder engagement was agreed:

1. *Part 1:* A public webinar to explore the wider challenges of planning and gauge general interest in the proposal. This would enable us to test the market and gather a pool of interested stakeholders who may be interested in helping develop the course and potentially take on future apprentices.
2. *Part 2:* An invitation only meeting with interested parties to contribute to the course design.
3. *Part 3:* A formal course approval event that would include external stakeholders plus students and the required NTU participants to sign off the course design.

Part 1 – Public Webinar: Planning for Net Zero

An interactive webinar hosted by NTU and Bolsover District Council was held on 13th March to look at the solutions to address recruitment and retention issues in local planning authorities and explore the challenges of the region relating to planning and Net Zero. This was a public event that was promoted via LinkedIn and the partners various networks.

Below is the invitation that was used. It was hosted on-line.

EMMCA has ambitions to see the East Midlands be recognised as a national centre of excellence for green technology investment and to see growth underpinned by a commitment to Net Zero. The recruitment and retention of planners in local planning authorities is a barrier to these regional ambitions and growth in the East Midlands Investment Zone.

You are invited to attend a webinar to explore the challenges of planning within the region and to discuss NTU's proposal to address these challenges through exploring the feasibility of launching a new Level 4 Town Planning Assistant Apprenticeship.

This innovative project aims to explore the feasibility of creating a pathway into the planning profession through a Level 4 Apprenticeship in Town and Country Planning creating more opportunities for our young people to access higher skilled and higher paid jobs.

This webinar is open to local authorities, policy makers and planning consultancies.

Contributors to include:

- *Professor Richard Bull. Deputy Dean, School of Architecture, Design and the Built Environment. NTU*
- *Andrew Grayson MRTPI. Planning Adviser, National Trust (Midlands and East of England)*
- *David Walker, Principal Lecturer, School of Architecture, Design and the Built Environment. NTU*
- *Sarah Kay MRTPI. Assistant Director of Planning & Planning Policy. Bolsover District Council*
- *Sam Maher, Director of HR, Learning and Development, East Midlands Council*

The session was well attended by a range of stakeholders. 43 people signed up from a range of organisations that included local authorities such as South Derbyshire, Amber Valley, Broxtowe alongside private sector

planning consultancies and interested individuals. 33 people attended the event which covered an introduction to NTU & the School of Architecture, Design and the Built Environment, an overview of the regional context including EMCCA alongside a discussion around the shortage of planners. A high-level overview of our proposal was then presented before an open conversation around determining the need for a new apprenticeship. We asked the following questions:

- What do you see as the main challenges for planning in the region?
- What do you see as the barriers for trying to recruit planners?
- What would be the key features of the course you'd be looking for and any additional features?
- Would your organisation be interested in this apprenticeship for your staff, or to recruit people on to it?

Word clouds of the responses are shown below:



Figure 2 What do you see as the main challenges for planning in the region?

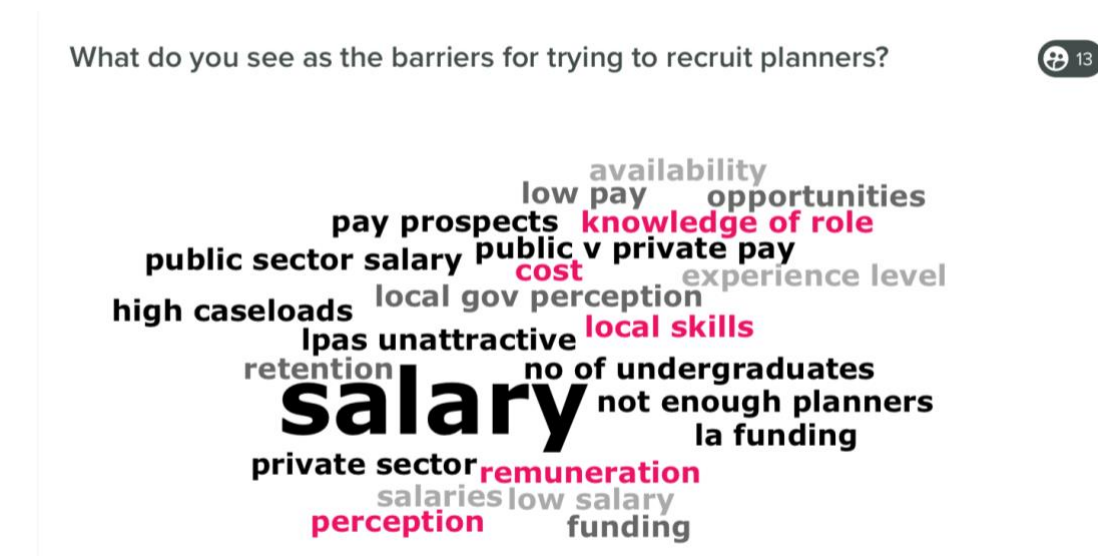


Figure 3: What do you see as the barriers for trying to recruit planners?

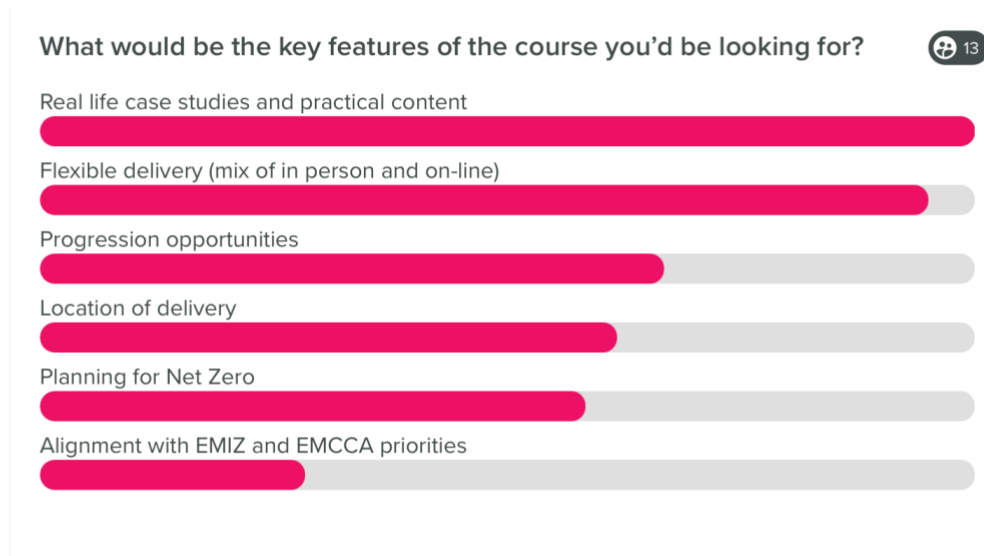


Figure 4: What would be the key features of the course you'd be looking for?

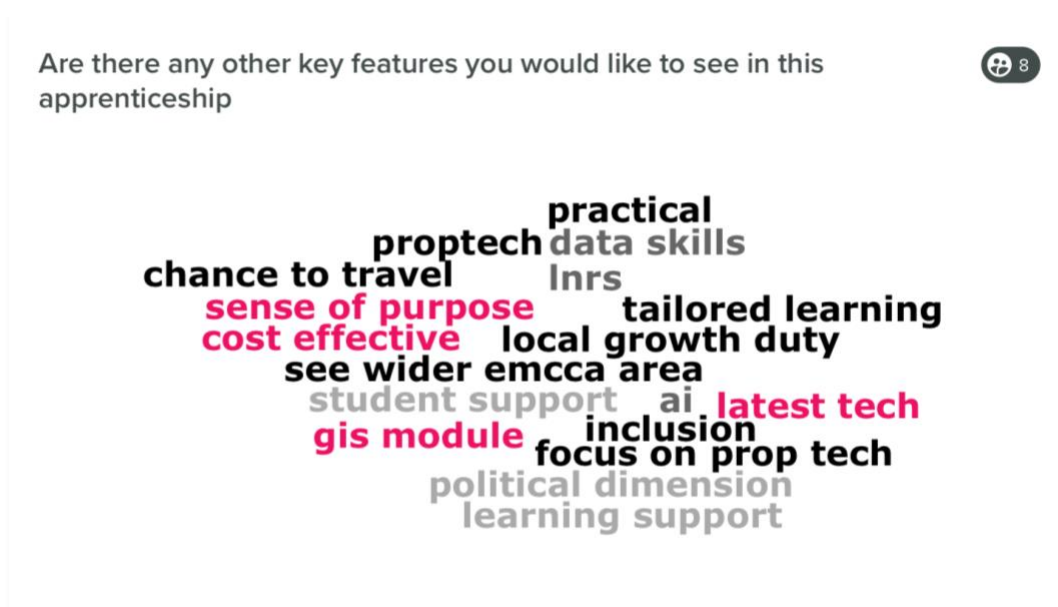


Figure 5: Are there any other key features you would like to see in this apprenticeship?

The findings were not especially surprising for the project team. Barriers around recruiting and retaining planners are well known but it was useful confirmation. It was surprising to see Net Zero and EMMCA priorities feature lower down the priority list but that may not necessarily mean they are not valued, but that the immediate practical planning priorities local authorities simply take precedence. It is indeed for this reason that this L4 apprenticeship is of interest as it increases capacity in planning teams to be able to think strategically.

At the end of the workshop attendees were encouraged to contact NTU or BDC if they were interested in attending an in-person workshop in Mansfield to offer feedback to more detailed course development plans.

Part 2 – In person workshop

Following on from the webinar, an in-person stakeholder workshop was held on the 10th April in Mansfield at our University Hub to present a more detailed course plan and to get clear stakeholder input into key features of the apprenticeship, for example, delivery patterns, location and module content. The location was important as we wanted to underscore this was a regional offer, not a local 'Nottingham based' one. This event was part of NTU's formal course approval process and colleagues from NTU's Centre for Academic Quality (CADQ) were there to observe and document the process. Alongside colleagues from NTU and BDC 9 externals attended from a range of local authorities and private sector companies such as Asbury Planning, Derby City Council, South Derbyshire District, Northeast Derbyshire District Council, Rushcliffe Borough Council and Charnwood District Council. The agenda was as follows:

12.30p.m	Arrival and lunch (12.30-1p.m)	
1p.m	Welcome and introductions	NTU Bolsover District Council
1.05pm	Introducing the project and reflections from the Webinar	Richard Bull
1.20p.m	Presentation from Course Team covering, but not limited to: • The rationale and USP of the course • Proposed course structure • Student personas & target audience • Course delivery • Course content, coherence, scaffolding • Student experience	NTU
2.20	Open Discussion to cover . . . • Course Aims and USP - Does the course align with stakeholder expectations? • Curriculum Design, coherence, Intent • Benchmark mapping to Apprenticeship standard • Learner experience (delivery patterns, personal tutoring etc.) • Course start date & funding constraints	All
2.50p.m	Recruitment and progression of learners - Expectations of LA's - Commitment from others - Recruitment opportunities and challenges	Bolsover District Council
3.30	Close and agreement of Post-Meeting Actions and Completion Deadlines	

Below is a summary of the outcomes of that consultation from the report that CADQ made.

An initial stakeholder consultation meeting was held in-person on 10 April 2025 with attendees from local councils and planning consultant firms. Attendees received a presentation which outlined the strategic intention and key features of the proposed apprenticeship training programme. Following the initial presentation, stakeholders were invited to share their thoughts on a number of key areas including proposed course content, apprenticeship delivery plan and apprentice experience. Stakeholders agreed that the proposal would support apprentices to develop the following core competencies:

- *Site study analysis*
- *Technical skills*
- *Analysing and assessing development proposals*
- *Monitoring and enforcement*
- *Understanding legislation and planning policy*
- *Caseload and project management*
- *Engaging and collaborating with stakeholders*

The development team provided a variety of delivery models for consultation. Stakeholders were overwhelmingly supportive of an in-person day-release model but welcomed further conversation on hybrid delivery options to improve the reach of the course.

Stakeholders were extremely supportive of the proposal and the potential career opportunities for both existing and new employees. Stakeholders particularly liked the inclusion of an academic award but thought that the content could be enhanced to ensure that aspects of both public and private sector organisations are included within the course content, highlighting that town planning is an interactive profession whereby apprentices would be able to learn from each other. Stakeholders also provided feedback as to the scheduling of modules and suggested that year one is themed around 'how' with year two focusing on the 'why'. The development team noted this as a positive enhancement.

In summary, the stakeholder consultation highlighted several key strengths of the proposed apprenticeship, and stakeholders were satisfied that this is a much-needed development for the sector.

This summary from CADQ encapsulates the very positive tone of the meeting and the strong sense in the room and within the course team that this was a proposal worth pursuing. The proposed course design is discussed next before outlining the next steps in the summary at the end.

4. Course design

Introduction to course design

Accountable to the Office for Students, NTU takes a rigorous approach to course design and follows a structured and collaborative approach to course design, ensuring high-quality standards and positive outcomes for students. Our Centre for Academic Development and Quality (CADQ) oversees the course design process, providing structures and guidance for course development and approval. They provide a designated Senior Quality and Standards Advisor (SQSA) supports course teams, ensuring the process remains collaborative and enhancement led. NTU's Quality Handbook governs learning and teaching regulations at NTU, providing a framework for course design and delivery. It includes policies, procedures, templates, and forms related to course changes, specifications, curriculum mapping, and external examiner reports. Once a course has followed a full approval process – from the business case, course design and stakeholder engagement it forward to a final formal approval by the Academic Course Approval Sub-Committee, a central NTU committee that provides governance and oversight, ensuring all newly designed courses and significant changes to existing courses are academically sound and viable. NTU's approach ensures that courses are developed to the highest standards, benefiting all students across the university.

The proposed course: Level 4 Certificate in Urban Planning and Sustainable Development

It is important to note at the offset that the current apprenticeship standard is just that, an apprenticeship standard as opposed to a qualification. During the stakeholder development workshops it was decided to include a Level 4 qualification in the apprenticeship delivery for the following reasons:

1. **Regulatory or Legal Requirement: Recommended for Professional Practice:** If a qualification is required by a regulator or legal body to practice a profession This ensures that apprentices meet all legal standards necessary for their occupation
2. **Professional Body Requirement: Professional Registration:** Some professions require specific qualifications for registration with a professional body. Including these qualifications in the apprenticeship ensures that apprentices can achieve the necessary professional status upon completion
3. **Labour Market Requirement: Employer Demand:** employers in the labour market widely require a specific qualification, including it in the apprenticeship ensures that apprentices are competitive and meet industry standards. This is crucial for their employability and career progression
4. **Enhancing Skills and Knowledge: Comprehensive Training:** Including qualifications can provide a structured and comprehensive training program, ensuring that apprentices gain both theoretical knowledge and practical skills. This dual approach enhances their overall competency and readiness for the job market
5. **Meeting Industry Standards: Quality Assurance:** Qualifications often come with established curricula and assessment standards, ensuring that the training provided is of high quality and meets industry benchmarks
6. **Career Progression: Pathway to Higher Education:** Qualifications can provide a clear pathway for further education and career advancement, allowing apprentices to pursue higher-level qualifications and roles within their industry. These justifications ensure that apprenticeships remain relevant, valuable, and aligned with both regulatory requirements and industry needs.

To that end, NTU is proposing a L4 Certificate in Urban Planning and Sustainable Development that meets the requirements of the occupational standard for the L4 Assistant in Town Planning as outlined by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) ⁶. For full details of the proposed course mapped to the apprenticeship standard and KSBs (knowledge, skills and behaviours) please see Appendix 1.

This occupation is found in the planning, construction, architectural, infrastructure, environmental and local government sectors. Town Planning Assistants may work in local authorities, small consultancies, large multi-disciplinary consultancies, central government or other organisations undertaking planning work. The broad purpose of the occupation is to work with and provide technical and administrative support to Chartered Town Planners to deliver new developments and to shape and create sustainable places for the benefit of the public. They also help members of the public and/or clients to navigate the planning system and explain its rules and requirements. The work includes both office-based work and site visits. Town Planning Assistants need to be willing and able to travel for site visits. Town Planning Assistants research and compile site history and undertake initial site analysis for developments including producing documentation and graphical representations as well as checking compliance with legislation and environmental designations.

Course features

The course delivery will be day release

The course design will include an emphasis on planning for net zero and progression paths following the apprenticeship to allow further training in specialised subjects related to addressing climate change and net zero. This will address the skills gap around the decarbonisation of commercial development, with limited capacity, resource and knowledge within local planning authorities to properly plan for the supply of clean energy to buildings, energy efficiency of buildings both in respects of heating and cooling large spaces, designing in carbon neutral for the lifetime of the development both on site and through the supply chain, and in the construction and operational stages of the development, local nature recovery and bio-diversity net gain, dealing with flood risk, and surface water and sustainable drainage.

Alignment with EMIZ: The EMIZ has a focus on the development of the Advanced Manufacturing and Green Industries sectors across Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. Three sites have been designated as IZ sites including Infinity Park Derby, Hartington Staveley and the Explore Advanced Manufacturing and Research Park near Worksop. Bespoke course content will support and accelerate the delivery of these sites within the EMIZ to enable both increased planning capacity, and greater understanding of various environmental constraints that need to be planned for at an early stage of the development.

Specific engagement will be made with real life case studies and with the region that align with EMCCAs priorities. For example, we already have strategic partnerships with Arc Partnership and Morgan Sindall who are delivering the new Notts County Council offices at Top Wighay. We also well connected with partners looking at the Toton development via our presence on the Clifton Towns Board and have new links with Laing O'Rourke and the West Burton site for STEP. These case studies will enable the course to include continued professional development for planners in the local planning authorities and teaching for the cohort of apprentices to produce exemplars of good practice and practical solutions and appropriate mentoring and support from the University.

Assessment

The Level 4 Certificate in Urban Planning and Sustainable Development assessments would be coordinated and managed by NTU. The L4 Town Planning Assistant Apprenticeship end-point assessment would be carried out by

⁶ <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/town-planning-assistant/>

an external assessment organisation, Training Qualifications UK, who are the only end-point assessment organisation for Town planning assistant (level 4)⁷. Full details of the end-point assessment requirements can also be found on the IfATE website.⁸

Routes to Professional Recognition and Membership

Students would be encouraged to join the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) as student members whilst studying. Upon successful completion of the course and apprenticeship students would be eligible to join the RTPI as Affiliate members, with further development options open depending on intended career progression. The development of CPD opportunities, linked with the RTPI, would be embedded throughout both the course and apprenticeship. There is a general emphasis on working with, supporting, and understanding the role of Chartered (MRTPI) professionals throughout.

5. Conclusions and next steps

This short pilot study set out to answer two simple questions. 1) Is there a market for a L4 apprenticeship in Town Planning and if so; 2) Are NTU interested in developing and delivering it. This report has outlined the thorough approach the project team, a partnership between NTU and Bolsover District Council. Our conclusions are as follows

1. Our initial market analysis has shown the potential for a reasonable market, especially given that half of the current learners on the Chichester apprenticeship are East Midlands based.
2. Stakeholder engagement has been very positive and there is widespread support for this course.

Therefore, the project team are recommending that **NTU proceed towards a full validation of the course** that we have proposed (see Appendix 1). However, the original application noted a possible start date of September 2025. The stakeholders and course team agree that this deadline is too tight, and we propose finalising the course design aspects over the next three months and then the course would finally be approved in October/November 2025 ready for a start date of September 2026. This is in line with NTU's course approval guidelines and allows for a full marketing and recruitment cycle to maximise recruitment for September 2026.

⁷ <https://www.tquk.org>

⁸ https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/media/5093/st0936_town-planning-assistant_l4_ap-for-publication_04052021.pdf

Appendix 1: Proposed course structure

Level 4 Certificate in Urban Planning and Sustainable Development (Module Overview)	Assessment	L4 Town Planning Assistant Apprenticeship (ifATE Role Duties)	L4 Town Planning Assistant Apprenticeship (ifATE KSBs – ‘Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours’)
Year 1 (September to August)			
Module: Site Analysis and Sustainable Development (20 credits) Students will be able to conduct initial site analysis, relating this to planning processes and development proposals. Also, considering the meaning and role of sustainability in proposed site development. The module will enable students to analyse sites, considering both opportunities and constraints. Including associated site history, environmental restrictions, policy, guidance and legislation. This will involve the use of digital tools and mapping which enable site research. Students will also understand and carry out site visits. This includes the importance of site photographs, evidence gathering and relating	100% Coursework Site assessment project and critical reflection.	Core Duties 1,2,4 1. Research and compile site history including any land use policy restrictions and constraints. 2. Undertake initial site analysis through site visits, taking site photographs, analysis of maps. 4. Summarise policy constraints, site research and baseline analysis with regards to planning applications or proposal for developments and present the information clearly and concisely in written and verbal format to Chartered Town Planners. 5. Review environmental and other specialist designations and reports to	K1 K3 K4 K5 S1 S2 S4 S7 S9 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 K8 K9 S2 S3 S8 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 K1 K2 K3 K4 K5 K11 S1 S2 S4 S6 S9 S11 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 K4 K5 S2

development proposals to built and landscape contexts. Also, understanding and implementing relevant health and safety procedures. The core concepts of sustainability and sustainable development will be critically explored in relation to site analysis, development proposals and effective planning decisions. Students will also understand the role of planning in addressing sustainability and achieving carbon neutrality.		provide a preliminary assessment of the environmental and physical impact of planning applications and/or development proposals.	B1 B2 B3 B4 B5
Module: Technical and Professional Skills (20 credits) Students will understand and apply project, time and case management skills in relation to planning processes. This includes assessing relevant timeframes and deadlines alongside understanding the importance of records and evidence gathering. The context for this is supporting effective, robust planning recommendations and decisions at an appropriate level. The module will allow students to interpret digital and physical maps and drawings, including those for development proposals. This is to enable scaling and interpretation alongside an assessment of scale, mass and form in built and landscape contexts.	100% Coursework Portfolio project and critical reflection.	Core Duties 3,11,13 3. Measure proposals for development, as represented on a site plan or in elevation, to understand the size and scale of the proposed buildings and structures. 11. Attend and speak at planning meetings, in an office environment and on site, and keep an accurate record of meetings. 13. Describe and code plans, planning documents, and supporting material accurately within a relevant workplace document filing system or casework management system.	K8 K10 S2 S8 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 K1 K2 K4 K7 K9 S3 S5 S9 S10 S11 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 K2 K6 S6 S7 S11 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5

Internal and external stakeholders in planning will be introduced. Enabling students to understand the varied expectations of planning processes and how this relates to decision making. This includes internal and external meetings, both in an office and site environment. Students will appreciate the role of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) within the profession. Also, understanding ethical practice, the RTPI Code of Conduct and the importance of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in reflective practice.			
Module: Planning Policy and Legislation (20 credits) Students will understand, interpret and analyse the spatial planning and legislative contexts that underpin planning processes. This is to support effective, robust planning recommendations and decisions at an appropriate level. The module will enable students to assess national, regional and local planning policy and guidance. Allowing an understanding of its role and application in planning processes. Also, understanding and engaging with the procedures of policy consultation, adoption and implementation. This includes the role of policy in the allocation, assessment and	100% Coursework Policy assessment project and critical reflection.	Core Duties: 7, 9 6. Monitor and check proposals for development, planning applications and/or completed proposals for compliance against relevant local, strategic and national planning requirements including statutory obligations and conditions. Commence Enforcement investigations under the supervision of a Chartered Town Planner. 7. Apply relevant legislation and national and locally adopted policy when working on planning projects and casework. 9. Manage a caseload of straight-forward planning applications and	K1 K2 K3 K4 K5 K6 K7 K10 S1 S2 S11 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 K1 K2 K4 K6 K11 S1 S2 S4 S6 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5

delivery of development proposals. Furthermore, the principles of sustainable development and how this is addressed through policy. Students will be able to interpret and assess the role of legislation in planning processes. This is to understand the underpinning principles of development. Also, the regulatory context of planning processes and how this relates to decision making at an appropriate level. The module will also introduce the management of heritage and environmental assets. This is alongside urban design principles. Students will understand the interaction of planning with wider environmental legislation and strategy, including links to sustainability and carbon neutrality.		representations to development plans under supervision.	K1 K2 K3 K4 K5 K7 K10 K11 K12 S1 S2 S4 S6 S7 S9 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5
Module: Planning Application Processes (20 credits) Students will understand and be able to manage case work to support planning application processes. Also, able to relate this to planning enforcement and appeals. This is to support effective, robust planning	100% Coursework Planning officer report project and portfolio.	Core Duties: 5, 6, 7, 9, 16 5. Review environmental and other specialist designations and reports to provide a preliminary assessment of the environmental and physical impact of planning applications and/or development proposals.	K4 K5 S2 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5

recommendations and decisions at an appropriate level. The module will take a holistic approach to planning application processes enabling students to engage with pre-application, decision making, reporting and post-application matters. This includes conditions, condition discharge and appeals. Students will also understand the role of planning obligations and enforcement procedures. Students will be able to analyse relevant planning policy, guidance, legislation, stakeholder views and wider material considerations in forming reports and professional recommendations. This includes addressing planning balance and applying relevant weight in the decision-making process. Students will understand and be able to engage with the reporting process for planning applications, enforcement and appeals at an appropriate level. This includes case and time management in the context of relevant deadlines.		6. Monitor and check proposals for development, planning applications and/or completed proposals for compliance against relevant local, strategic and national planning requirements including statutory obligations and conditions. Commence Enforcement investigations under the supervision of a Chartered Town Planner. 7. Apply relevant legislation and national and locally adopted policy when working on planning projects and casework. 9. Manage a caseload of straight-forward planning applications and representations to development plans under supervision. 16. Assist Chartered Town Planners with planning appeals, collating casework materials and supporting documentation and responding to written evidence and other planning information presented by the opposing side.	K1 K2 K3 K4 K5 K6 K7 K10 S1 S2 S11 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 K1 K2 K4 K6 K11 S1 S2 S4 S6 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 K1 K2 K3 K4 K5 K7 K10 K11 K12 S1 S2 S4 S6 S7 S9 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 K1 K2 K6 K10 S1 S2 S4 S6 S7 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5
Year 2 (September to April)			
Module: Planning, People, Society and Space (20 credits)	100% Coursework	Core Duties: 8, 10	K1 K2 K3 K4 K6 K7

Students will understand the role of internal and external stakeholders in planning processes. Also, able to communicate with stakeholders at relevant times, understanding the position of planning professionals as negotiators and mediators. This is to support effective, robust planning recommendations and decisions at an appropriate level. The module will enable students to understand the often-varied expectations of planning processes from stakeholders. Including exploring and examining community and political engagement with planning. Also, the role of public consultation, schemes of delegation and committees. Students will understand the contested nature of development proposals alongside the important role of communication and negotiation with stakeholders. The module will also enable students to explore the varied approaches to achieving sustainable development and carbon neutrality through planning processes. Including the wider role and contribution of stakeholders.	Essay and critical reflection.	8. Provide clear and relevant advice to members of the public, councillors, agents and/or clients on planning issues, face to face, by phone and by email and other communications. 10. Assist Chartered Town Planners with consultation and/or community engagement on planning applications and/or strategic or local plans including taking part in technical discussions on proposals for development with members of the public and/or councillors and justifying the stance you take.	S1 S5 S10 S11 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 K7 K9 S5 S10 S11 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5
Module: Sustainable Development Project (20 credits) Students will draw together their understanding and skills to support project	100% Coursework	Core Duties: 12, 14, 15 12. Support Chartered Town Planners to deliver projects including following a	K12 S1 S2 S6 S9 S11 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5

and report preparation. This is with a particular focus on analysing sustainability and carbon neutrality from a planning perspective. The module will support individual and team work to analyse a range of case study sites in the East Midlands. This is with a focus on understanding how these case studies contribute to sustainable development and carbon neutrality. Also, critically engaging with the associated planning processes and wider spatial planning context. This is to understand the role of planning in helping achieve holistic, sustainable outcomes. Students will be able to understand and appreciate major development proposals at an appropriate level. Furthermore, students will be enabled to undertake research as individuals and teams. This is to support the preparation of reports (including graphics and mapping), recommendations and presentations. This module is also intended to support students prepare for the apprenticeship end-point assessment, including the project to be prepared and submitted. Formative assessment opportunities for knowledge test and professional discussion will be included.	Individual and/or group presentations and portfolio.	project plan and ensuring key timescales are met. 14. Work as part of a multidisciplinary team, knowing who to consult and seeking advice from other disciplines where relevant 15. Prepare documentation including graphical representations, maps and site plans and present to clients and/or local authority committee under supervision.	K2 K3 K4 K5 K7 K9 K10 K11 K12 S1 S2 S5 S6 S9 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 K8 S4 S5 S8 S10 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5
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Year 2 (April to September)			
Support: Apprenticeship End-Point Assessment (note this only applies to the L4 Town Planning Assistant Apprenticeship)	Knowledge Test 60 minute test based on 20 multiple-choice questions (both knowledge and scenario based) Professional Discussion 60 minute two-way discussion based on a range of questions and supported by student portfolio of evidence Project 4,000 word project report focusing on specific planning matter (e.g. site assessment, policy area or planning issue) with a business/organisation benefit.	All role duties.	All KSBs.