



The professional's guide to the fine art of property planning

How did a craftsman of bespoke furniture carve a glittering career out of solving complex planning applications? *Garnet Currie* finds out what makes Tim Garland-Jones such hot property.

HE EMERGES FROM BEHIND HIS FUTURISTIC TRI-SCREENED COMPUTER WITH A CRISP, READY SMILE AND A DETERMINED DISPOSITION THAT IMMEDIATELY SUGGESTS 'LET'S MAKE IT HAPPEN'.

By his very manner and appearance it is obvious that Tim Garland-Jones leaves nothing to chance. With disarming clarity he fields calls from clients or answers colleagues' queries.

The Garland Group's spacious, contemporary work environment (which would not be out of place at the Tate Modern) makes perfect sense as they apply their tailored skills to the complexities of property planning.

Free of superfluous mannerisms their delightful Cobham office subtly employs space, light and textures. But a closer look at the clean lines and low furniture reveals a softer, more accessible touch beyond hard, cold minimalism.

It all seems a perfect allegory for the burgeoning force of the Garland Property Planning Group.

No one would be surprised to discover that Tim is also a designer of handcrafted bespoke furniture. It is with the same

attention to detail and craftsmanship that he has made his company a major player in the competitive South East property arena.

In the past year they were responsible for over 10 percent of all planning applications in the affluent Elmbridge Surrey and Wimbledon SW19 post codes and it is no secret that, no matter how difficult the application, the Garland Property Group achieves success time and time again.

"I am one of those who strongly believes that anything worth doing is worth doing well," points out Tim, who openly admits that he is motivated by the opportunity of success rather than the fear of failure.

"I look for the positive in every situation. If anything, I tend to get a bit too emotionally involved."

One senses that this is yet another strength in Tim's ability to commit to any task and make it a success.

At the top level the company has strong support from Wimbledon property developer Paul Capra. A non-executive Director of the Garland Property Group he plays a vital role promoting the business.

He is one of those entrepreneurs who liked a product so much he bought into it – in fact a 25% stakehold.



Left: Paul Capra and Tim Garland-Jones - building partnerships in the South East through the Garland Property Group

Top: Two of the many projects in the Garland Group's growing portfolio;
Above: Team work - Steve Anderson, Paul Capra, Tim Garland-Jones (front) and Ellen Cullen



In the heart of the Wimbledon Village - After two failed planning applications, the Garland Group were brought on board. Not only did they achieve full planning permission but also a much enhance planning gain. A 3,000 sq. ft. cottage was transformed into a magnificent 5,000sq ft. prestigious dwelling. It is now one of the foremost properties in the charming Wimbledon village

Initially, he was a client but after Tim brought home the bacon on two previously failed applications on his behalf they soon became friends and then business partners. "At Garland we view each application on its own merits," says Tim. "Every one has its own story and we provide the beginning, the plot and the ending. We go to the ends of the earth to ensure that most of our stories have happy endings."

The success of the Garland Property Group has as much to do with their knowledge of this specialist field as the nurturing of time-honoured relationships with developers, local planning authorities, architects, solicitors and estate agents. "We've found that over the years we are working that much more closely with local authorities. It's no longer us and them. We all have a mandate and often it's about finding common cause."

Ironically, Garland's success has even attracted overtures from various Resident's Associations who now realize 'if can't beat 'em, join 'em!'

It is their success with difficult and previously failed applications that built their reputation and the confidence of clients.

"I am totally committed to this business. I've put myself 100% into making it a success - not only financially but also in terms of time and effort," says Tim.

Academically he admits to overkill with four degrees under his belt. It was an inherent talent for furniture design unearthed while he was still at Cheltenham Grammar School that determined his initial direction. After Brunel and Loughborough Universities he went into bespoke furniture manufacturing and soon developed a fine reputation for his handmade pieces.

After working with two notable design companies he launched his own interior design practise in London in 1992 and counted many top names as clients.

"It has all been a lateral progression to where I am now with the Garland Group and property planning," he explains.

Today his experience and skills include a unique approach in negotiating with local authorities in the process of preparing, submitting and securing valuable planning permissions and related agreements.

"Amongst other things, we help with the development of planning strategies, appeals against the refusal of planning permission and offer advice on all aspects of enforcement notices, development laws, conservation areas, listed buildings and Green Belt policies."

Another large part of the Garland Group's business is appraising the potential of sites for property and land development,



Paul Capra and Tim Garland-Jones - a hands on approach to property planning



Tim Garland-Jones - Directing the planning consultancy team, Tim's hands-on approach and eye for detail ensures that every aspect of the planning process is delivered in line with the aspirations of their clients



Steve Anderson - The Group's senior planning consultant. Steve has broad-based experience working closely with Local Authorities as a planning consultant, a civil engineer and a valuations and estates officer



Ellen Cullen - With her strong local grounding in the property market, Ellen provides office administrative support to the Garland Group. She gives much-needed cohesion to a very active team.



Oliver Watkins - Schooled locally, with a degree in building surveying Oliver brings added vigour and a fresh outlook to the Garland Group's planning consultancy services

Photography: Garnet Currie

and establishing the principle for development gains.

Tim insists that it is mere coincidence that the Garland Property Group operates out of a wealthy borough that tops the National 'standard of living' polls year in and year out.

It is home to many of the mega rich Chelsea footballers and a tour bus-load of music stars.

"This is an affluent area but we don't just operate at the high end of the market. There are so many different aspects to property development. We are proud to find solutions

for anyone who has a planning issue." Creating beautiful bespoke furniture is still high on Tim's Wish list "if only there were more hours in the day".

That said he is an avid tennis player and footballer and is chairman of the football section of the Oxshott Village Sports Club.

Tim is also very active in the realm of good causes and is honorary patron of both the St Raphael's Hospice and Article 25, an international-concerned disaster relief charity.

Last year he was bestowed the honour of

Freedom of being given the freedom of The City of London and, through his work with the Worshipful Company of Furniture Makers, he was appointed as a Liveryman.

No wonder the Garland Property Planning Group has become a finely chiseled outfit that has perfected a clinical, minimalist approach to achieving success for their clients.

It would be no surprise if, hanging above Tim's bed at home, is a framed plaque with the Mies van der Rohe edict 'less is more'.

"Every application has its own story and we provide the beginning, the plot and the ending. We ensure that most of our stories have happy endings!"

Tim Garland-Jones, Managing Director, Garland Property Planning Group

www.garlandgroup.co.uk
01932 863739



Out of the Garland Property Group portfolio - Left: Chestnut House, Coombe; Middle: St George's Hill, Weybridge, and; right: Sandy Lane, Cobham.