

# DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

## *Terms Of Reference*

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### **The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 states that –**

Local planning authorities should have local design review arrangements in place to provide assessment and support to ensure high standards of design. They should when appropriate refer major projects for a national design review [currently provided by Design Council CABE]. In general early engagement on design produces the greatest benefits. In assessing applications, local planning authorities should have regard to the recommendations from the Design Review Panel.

### **Introduction**

#### 1.1

The purpose of the Design Review Panel (DRP) is to review key planning proposals and offer support and advice to the Council's officers, and planning applicants to deliver high quality architecture within Hammersmith and Fulham. The intention is to raise the design quality of schemes being submitted to and approved by the Council.

#### 1.2

The Panel is an advisory body only and has no formal decision-making powers. It does not replace planning officers and the Director of Transportation and Technical Services in their role of making recommendations to the Planning and Development Control Committee (PDCC). The advice is independent of the Council, but is a material consideration and is therefore taken into account by the Council in carrying out its statutory planning functions.

### **What We Do**

#### 1.3

The Design Review Panel helps to maintain design quality throughout Hammersmith and Fulham. A team of architects and other design professionals assess schemes, preferably before they are submitted for planning permission. Schemes taken to the Panel are by the invitation of a head of service or their nominee within the Planning Division. When selecting schemes to be presented to the Panel, the following criteria act as guidance:

- Significant major planning proposals that include large buildings or groups of buildings such as large scale housing schemes, religious buildings, museums or art galleries, hospitals, shopping and leisure complexes, and office or commercial buildings;
- Strategic or regeneration opportunity sites, including Hammersmith and Fulham-led regeneration projects;
- Infrastructure projects such as stations, and other transport interchanges;
- Sites with special significance or local interest or proposals which are out of the ordinary in their context or setting because of their scale;
- Schemes that by their nature, setting or location are likely to be seen as unusual, particularly controversial or setting a precedence. This includes proposals which are likely to establish the planning, form or architectural quality for future large scale development or redevelopment; and
- Schemes with a significant impact upon the public realm, such as major changes in the public realm or proposals to enhance public squares and civic open spaces.

#### 1.4

The Panel will also consider design elements of draft Supplementary Planning Documents, planning briefs and design codes within Hammersmith and Fulham. The panel will follow procedures and guidelines established by Design Council CABE, formerly the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE). The views expressed by members of the Panel and recorded in the DRP report are advisory and represent the collective view of the Panel.

#### 1.5

In general the Panel will not review schemes that have been presented to other design review panels, such as the Design Council CABE design review panel.

### **Panel Members**

#### 1.6

We aim to maintain a Design Review Panel pool of at least 12-15 recognised experts in architecture, urban design, landscape architecture, conservation and engineering. The highest calibre of panel members is required to ensure the appropriate quality of design advice. The panel should be made up of experts with a track record of achievements in their particular area of expertise. Ideally, members should live or practice locally

and have a good knowledge of, and keen interest in the built environment of Hammersmith and Fulham. Internal advisors can include a case officer dealing with scheme under review, and team leaders from Development Management and the Urban Design and Conservation team.

#### 1.7

Whilst the role of the Panel is purely advisory, the Panel's comments carry a significant amount of weight. Any comments from the Panel will be relayed to the PDCC and, where relevant, to planning inspectors and any planning inquiry.

#### 1.8

There will be an established group of Panel members who will be given the opportunity to renew their panel membership and sign a code of conduct in April each year. Should a panel member wish to opt out of the panel, new members will be recruited as and when necessary. Selection is a transparent process undertaken by the Planning Division

#### 1.9

Meetings will be composed of a Chair from the panel pool, and at least 3 other panel members. The Chairman's role is to draw out the comments of the panel members for discussion; summarise the panels conclusions; verbally report back to the presenting teams; and agree and sign off the Notes from the meeting to be issued as a response letter.

#### 1.10

The panel members roles are to critically review the information presented at the panel meeting, seeking clarification where relevant and required; contribute to the panel discussions of the merits of the proposals and actively encourage the positive amendments to proposal to ensure a high quality design. Panel members should endeavour to attend all meetings that they have indicated they will attend. If they are unable to attend they should send an apology in advance of the panel meeting to the council officer organising the meeting.

### **Operation of the Panel**

#### 1.11

The Panel will meet monthly with meetings starting at approximately 5.30pm. Emails will be sent to the Panel by the Planning Service Delivery team 3 weeks in advance of a meeting to request attendance.

### **Panel Meetings**

#### 1.12

Each scheme will be allocated an hour slot comprising a presentation by the scheme's architect or designer [with a maximum of 3 persons presenting], predominantly from design boards (guidelines for those presenting to the

panel have been provided in **Appendix 1**); an opportunity for the panel to ask questions for points of clarification; a closed panel discussion; and feedback to the applicant.

#### 1.13

The applicants are required to withdraw from the room following the presentation and question sessions to allow free discussions by the panel members. The discussions will conclude with the Chair summarising the panel's advice, which will take place in the presence of all those invited to the meeting.

#### 1.14

The timings for the DRP for each scheme are set out below:

Presentation by scheme's architect/designer	15 minutes
Panel questions for points of clarification	15 minutes
Closed panel discussion	25 minutes
Panel feedback to applicants	5 minutes

#### 1.15

The relevant case officer(s) will attend the presentation and be available to clarify any matters. They may present the proposals to the Panel in those cases where the scheme architects or agents are not available. Officers will remain for the panel discussions so that the full range of issues can be understood.

#### 1.16

Where case officers deem necessary, relevant officers from the Greater London Authority, Historic England and neighbouring planning authorities may be invited to attend and address the Panel.

#### 1.17

Planning Committee members and ward members may attend panel meetings as observers. They will be able to listen, but not contribute, to the presentations or debates. All observers are made known to the panel members before the meeting begins.

#### 1.18

The public is excluded from the panel meetings and no third party representations can be made, but relevant agendas and DRP reports will be made available to view via the Council's website once a full planning application has been submitted.

## Inputs

### 1.19

Panel members will receive an agenda and relevant site location maps within 5 working days before the panel meeting. It is open to panel members to visit the site(s) prior to the panel meeting, though no special access arrangements are made by the Council and it does not bear any responsibility or liability during the visit.

### 1.20

The scheme architects are expected to describe the site context as part of their presentation. A planning officer that has visited the site will be present at the panel meeting so that they can provide background information if required.

### 1.21

For each proposal considered by the panel, information will be sent a week in advance of the meeting. The information will generally include:

- One A4 page written summary describing the scheme
- Four images
- Site plan
- OS extract

### 1.22

When the proposal is for a more complex scheme. It will be possible to submit more information than the items specified above in order to give panel members a full introduction to the scheme

### 1.23

Given storage and distribution issues, agents and architects are recommended to submit the information pack in less than 1Mb files.

### 1.24

The scheme architects and/or agents presenting information to the panel at the meeting are advised to cover:

- Contextual analysis
- Scheme purpose
- Development form – layout (urban structure and grain), density (including mix), scale (height and massing), appearance (materials and details) and landscaping
- How the proposals promote high quality architecture
- How the proposals promote good urban design – character, continuity and enclosure, public realm, ease of movement, legibility, adaptability and diversity
- How the proposals address the relevant UDP and London Plan design

policies.

1.25

Illustrative information must be sufficiently clear and visible to enable the panel to understand the proposal properly and to the necessary level of detail. Photographs, photomontages and videos showing the sites are considered appropriate, as are drawings and 3-D illustrations, showing the proposals. A model of the proposal and its context is highly recommended. Further information on presentations to the Panel is available in **Appendix 1**.

## **Outputs**

1.26

Following the panel meeting a response summary setting out the Panel's findings will be issued to the scheme architects and/or agents and copied to relevant council officers, and panel members, as appropriate. Summary issue is made within 15 working days. The summary issue report will comment on the architectural, urban design qualities and implications of each proposal, and may recommend actions or options to improve the design quality of the proposal.

1.27

The aim of the Panel's report is to assist and encourage the potential to achieve high quality design. With regard to formal planning applications, the contents of the Panel's report will be conveyed to the PDCC through the planning officer's report and will be regarded as a material consideration. The Panel's report on pre-application enquiries will be confidential until such time as a full planning application is submitted.

## **Administration**

1.28

Panel meetings are facilitated by the relevant panel Chair, who is also responsible for finalising and signing off the Panel's findings. Administration, panel co-ordination, minute taking, and response letter drafting are the responsibility of the Planning Division.

## **Publicity**

1.29

The names of panel members and chairman for a given panel meeting are not given out in advance. Furthermore, the dates and agendas are not notified to the public as the meetings are closed.

### 1.30

Panel membership is not confidential and a list of panel members is available on request to the panel co-ordinator.

### 1.31

The panel's findings, and those members attending the specific panel are not confidential and will be available to view on the Councils website once a planning application for the proposal has been submitted.

## **Costs**

### 1.32

Prospective developers appearing at Design Review Panels will receive an invoice to cover the DRP costs and an email setting out the fee will be sent to the developer in advance of the DRP. This is separate from any pre-application enquiry fee. The costs invoiced for will be based on officer time, room and equipment hire and the costs of a note-taker for proceedings. Invoices raised do not include any costs for Panel Members, as they give their time voluntarily.

## **Conflict / Declaration of Interest**

### 1.33

Panel members are expected to act in the public interest and adhere to the seven Nolan Principles of Public Life (see **Appendix 2**).

### 1.34

It is important that panellists avoid any conflict of interest that might arise from the schemes they consider. Panel members who in the preceding 12 months have been personally or professionally involved with a particular proposal under discussion, or who may otherwise be considered to have a conflict of interest are required to notify the Council officer coordinating the panel in respect of the scheme concerned. A list of the schemes to be reviewed will be provided up to a week prior to the meeting and panel members will be expected at this stage to declare any direct or indirect interests in the scheme.

### 1.35

Panel Members should declare any interest by email prior to any DRP and not participate in design reviews where they have an interest. In the case of a direct interest the panel member shall leave the room during the panel's private discussion of the project and shall take no part in the forming of the Panel's views. Conflicts of interest will be recorded in the minutes. The Panel will review proposals which may be refused by the Council. If members are approached to become involved in sites / schemes that have been presented to the Panel which they sat on, they should not do so until at least 24 months after the Council has determined the scheme.

## Code of Conduct

### 1.36

Panel members are reminded of and expected to abide by The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Code of Conduct (2005), particularly Principle 1 (Honesty and Integrity). Members found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct will be dismissed from the Panel, and RIBA will be notified of the breach.

### 1.37

Panel members are asked to inform the panel co-ordinator if he/she is approached by the scheme architects or agents regarding 'live' proposals or panel discussions outside of the panel meeting. Scheme architects or agents making such an approach forfeit the opportunity to present the current scheme and/or future scheme(s) to the Panel, leaving planning officers to make the presentation(s).

### 1.38

During panel meetings all are reminded:

- That mobile phones are switched off or on silent;
- That one person speaks at a time; and
- Of the importance of respecting one another's views.

### 1.39

Panel members may attend meetings as part of a team presenting a project; however they should not attend any other part of the same meeting in their capacity as a panel member. Further information relating to the DRP code of conduct is provided in **appendix 2**.



# Appendix 1

## Design Review Panel - Presentations

### Presenting to the Panel

Schemes presented to the panel are allocated an hour slot of which the architect or designer should allow a maximum of 15 minutes for the presentation, which will be followed by questions, closed panel discussion and recommendations from the Panel. The presentation should include a brief introduction to the scheme, background, aims, concept and describe the scheme with reference to the plans and drawings.

### Presentation Materials

Presentation materials must be clear and legible allowing the scheme to be clearly viewed and understood. Schemes should be presented using A1 design boards; these will allow flexibility, particularly when comparing various aspects of a scheme, whilst discussions are taking place around the display boards.

Supporting materials including drawings, photographs, models are encouraged where they provide a greater understanding of the scheme. PowerPoint presentations or electronic realisations are also permitted and should be emailed to the organising officer 24 hours in advance of the panel meeting for setting up purposes

The presentation should be clear on the aspirations of the scheme as well as the understanding of the context and how the projects sits and relates within its surroundings. The following points can serve as a general guide of what is expected from a presentation:

- **Contextual analysis** showing the site in relation to its surroundings;
- **Movement** systems including pedestrian, cycle and road networks;
- **Accessibility** links to public transport;
- **Urban and street patterns** if relevant. (Usually applicable to masterplans and projects of a larger scale);
- **Building context** including ownerships, conservation areas, existing buildings to be retained and/or demolished, listed buildings and new buildings;
- **Building mass**, particularly for new buildings with regard to their height, size, scale and relation to adjoining sites;
- **Open spaces** both existing and proposed, especially how they relate to the buildings and the public realm as well as movement patterns and orientation;
- **Public realm treatment** and orientation and site sections to show its relationship to the proposed building and adjoining areas;

- Plans, sections and elevations of proposed buildings should be sufficiently annotated to explain the **purpose of spaces**, orientation and scale. These plans can be sketches or diagrams;
- **Views and panoramas** to and from the building (especially if it lies within a conservation area). It will be useful to show both existing and proposed views for the scheme;
- Detailed drawings or visual examples of use and treatment of **materials:** and
- **Energy efficiency** proposals (where applicable).

Further Information

We strongly advise presenting projects at an early stage so that any changes and recommendations can be taken on board. We are not looking for detailed plans, but an overall understanding of the project and its relationship with its context.

For further guidance on a project framework and a thorough explanation of key issues for quality projects, please see the “Design Review” from CABI, which is available at: <http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/ourwork/CABI/Services/Review/>

## **Appendix 2**

### Code Of Conduct

#### **Key Principles underpinning this Code of Conduct**

The Hammersmith and Fulham Design Review Panel has adopted a Code of Conduct based upon the best practice recommendations of the Nolan Report on Standards in Public Life.

#### **The Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life:**

##### **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

##### **Integrity**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

##### **Objectivity**

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

##### **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

##### **Openness**

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reason for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

## **Honesty**

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

## **Leadership**

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

## **Breach of Code of Conduct**

A breach of this Code of Conduct will be followed by a verbal warning from the Chair on behalf of the Panel.

Ongoing failure to comply with the Code of Conduct will be followed by a written warning from the Chair on behalf of the Panel.

If a panel member still fails to comply with the Code of Conduct and / or cannot offer a satisfactory explanation for his / her behaviour a motion will be put to the Panel to suspend the person from the Panel. Future participation by that person will be dependent on a commitment being given in writing to the Chair that such behaviour will not recur.

Any panel member can and should alert the rest of the Panel of a breach in the Code of Conduct by raising this issue with the Chair and/or the Council officer either at the time or immediately after a meeting. A breach of this Code of Conduct is understood as follows:

- A breach of any of the nine rules outlined above as judged by a majority of the Panel's members.

Panel members are expected to maintain confidentiality regarding the schemes presented and discussed until a planning application is submitted, the notes will then be published online.

## **Declaration**

I accept and agree to abide by the rules set out in this Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct and understand that if I breach any of these rules, I may be asked to leave the Hammersmith and Fulham Design Review Panel.

Name.....

Signed.....

Date.....