

# Suffolk Design Review Panel

## Terms of Reference

### **1.0 Declaration**

- 1.1 Informed design review is recommended in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published by the government in 2012 paragraph 62. *'Local planning authorities should have local design review arrangements in place to provide assessment and support to ensure high standards of design'*.
- 1.2 The NPPF section 7 'Requiring Good Design' is the base line which informs the remit of the Panel in judging good design.
- 1.3 The Panel's primary objective is to improve the quality of place in Suffolk by helping Local Planning Authorities and applicants in the planning process to realise and appreciate the best design in their planning application.
- 1.4 The Panel is independent and advisory and acts as a consultee in the planning process, however the decision whether to grant or refuse planning permission rests with the Local Planning Authority.
- 1.5 Members of the Panel will have established design training, experience and recognition in their particular field. It is expected that the recommendations of the Panel will be given due regard in the determination of applications.
- 1.6 It should be borne in mind that good design is qualitative and open to interpretation and debate. In other words, members of the Panel may not always agree, and neither will the Council or Public always endorse their advice.
- 1.7 The Panel will encourage high quality design of its time and place.

### **2.0 Membership**

- 2.1 The members of each panel will be drawn from a pool of suitably qualified professionals with experience of working in Suffolk. It is expected that a quorum of four members plus a Chair will be required for any panel meeting.
- 2.2 Panel members will be selected on the basis of their expertise and availability. In addition, members of the local planning authority will usually be in attendance to provide background information and policy considerations.
- 2.3 It is expected that the Chair of each Panel will be an Architect with national/regional design achievements. The Chair is the only member of the Panel who will receive a set remuneration per panel sitting. All other members of the panel provide their time voluntarily.
- 2.4 Prospective Panel members will apply for consideration and the appointments will be made by the Chairs of the Panel and the RIBA Suffolk SDRP Steering Group.
- 2.5 Members will be required to declare any conflicts of interest in respect of any applications to be considered.

### **3.0 Criteria of Schemes to be considered by the Design Review Panel.**

- 3.1 The Suffolk Design Review Panel is intended to sit alongside the Ipswich Borough Council Design and Conservation Panel.
- 3.2 Ideally, proposals should be presented to the Panel at pre-application stage in order to allow sufficient time for the recommendations of the panel to be incorporated into any subsequent planning application. Such proposals may go back to a Panel for further consideration at application stage. Schemes may be reviewed by the Panel more than once.
- 3.3 Listed Building and Conservation Area Consent applications are expected to be presented to the Panel, and the pool of members will include suitably qualified specialists.
- 3.4 Proposals may be put to the Panel by;
  1. The Local Planning Authority whether Officers or Council Members.
  2. Applicants.
  3. Parish or Town Councils.
- 3.5 Schemes reviewed by the Panel at pre-application stage will be considered as confidential, unless otherwise agreed by the applicant. The review report will be issued as Point 4.6.6.

### **4.0 Procedure**

- 4.1 Generally the Panel will be convened in response to demand, but typically at approximately 2 month intervals.
- 4.2 Applicants should contact the Panel Coordinator Paul Kirkham in order to apply for review by email at [paul@kirkhamsheidow.co.uk](mailto:paul@kirkhamsheidow.co.uk) or by telephone 01787 211670 / 07976 298123.
- 4.3 The applicant is requested to provide brief preliminary information at least 10 days prior to the Panel meeting.
- 4.4 Where practical, members may visit the site prior to the Panel sitting.
- 4.5 Panels are generally held in the Seminar Room at The Jerwood DanceHouse, Foundry Lane, Ipswich IP4 1DW.

#### 4.6 General procedure

- .1 The planning case officer presents the project's basic facts: location, the nature of the project and the current position in the planning system. The case officer may highlight any specific aspects that they would like the panel to comment on.  
Time allowed: 5-10 minutes.
- .2 The applicant or agent presents the project. They will be expected to present sufficient site photographs for the panel to understand adequately the context. If the both the applicant and agent are present, the applicant may be asked to explain their aims.  
Time allowed: 15-20 minutes.
- .3 The panel will ask questions and seek to understand and clarify the scheme in relation to the Design Review Criteria.  
Time allowed: 15-20 minutes.
- .4 The applicant/agent and representatives of the Local Planning Authority are asked to retire while the panel debate the scheme in private.  
Time allowed: 10-15 minutes.
- .5 The applicant/agent and representatives of the Local Planning Authority are asked to return for a summing up of the panel's position.  
Time allowed: 10 minutes.

Total time approx. 1 hour 15 minutes.

The time may be increased for larger schemes.

A maximum of 4 schemes would be considered by a Panel at any one session.

- .6 A written report as a summary of the Panel's comments and conclusions will be prepared and issued to the applicant/agent, and the Local Planning Authority within approximately 2 weeks of the review.

#### **5.0 Design Review Criteria**

##### Appropriateness

Legibility – well-structured layout, clarity of movement, orientation.

Density, use and mix – scale of development, variety; local needs, masterplan realisation.

Context – wider regional; response to setting; impact on adjacent sites.

Accessibility and permeability – patterns of movement; safety; integration of car parking; service access; public transport.

##### Character

Scale, height, massing and grain – relationship to existing buildings.

Quality of architecture – coherence, integrity, imagination; functional requirement.

Details and materials – quality of materials; design integration.

##### Landscape

Quality of the public realm – landscape strategy integral to the scheme: clearly defined purpose of spaces.

Public and private spaces – clearly defined boundaries, orientation.

##### Sustainability

Energy efficiency – carbon footprint, strategy and orientation.

Biodiversity - recyclable and materials with low embodied energy; construction technologies.