



DESIGN REVIEW BRIEFING SUFFOLK PLANNING AUTHORITIES

June 2023

SUFFOLK
DESIGN
REVIEW
PANEL



BACKGROUND TO DESIGN REVIEW
ROLE OF IN THE PLANNING PROCESS
HOW IT WORKS
WHAT IT CAN ADVISE ON
BENEFITS



NPPF

SECTION 12 - ACHIEVING WELL DESIGNED PLACES

'Local planning authorities should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development. These include workshops to engage the local community, design advice and review arrangements, and assessment frameworks such as Building for Life... In assessing applications, **local planning authorities should have regard to the outcome from these processes, including any recommendations made by design review panels.**'

(National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 129)

DESIGN REVIEW PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE

'Design Review is focused on outcomes for people. It explores **how a building or place can better meet the needs of the people who will use it and of everyone who will be affected by it.** It does this by constructively endeavouring to improve the quality of architecture, urban design, landscape and highway design.'

(Design Review Principles and Practice, chapter 1, page 7)

Design Review is:

Independent

It is conducted by people who are unconnected with the scheme's promoters and decision makers, and it ensures that conflicts of interest do not arise.

Expert

It is carried out by suitably trained people who are experienced in design and know how to criticise constructively. Review is usually most respected where it is carried out by professional peers of the project designers, because their standing and expertise will be acknowledged.

Multidisciplinary

It combines the different perspectives of architects, urban designers, urban and rural planners, landscape architects, engineers and other specialist experts to provide a complete, rounded assessment.

Accountable

The Review Panel and its advice must be clearly seen to work for the benefit of the public. This should be ingrained within the panel's terms of reference.

Transparent

The panel's remit, membership, governance processes and funding should always be in the public domain.

Proportionate

It is used on projects whose significance, either at local or national level, warrants the investment needed to provide the service.

Timely

It takes place as early as possible in the design process, because this can avoid a great deal of wasted time. It also costs less to make changes at an early stage.

Advisory

A design review panel does not make decisions, but it offers impartial advice for the people who do.

Objective

It appraises schemes according to reasoned, objective criteria rather than the stylistic tastes of individual panel members.

Accessible

Its findings and advice are clearly expressed in terms that design teams, decision makers and clients can all understand and make use of.

SUFFOLK DESIGN REVIEW PANEL



Meredith Bowles
Mole Architects

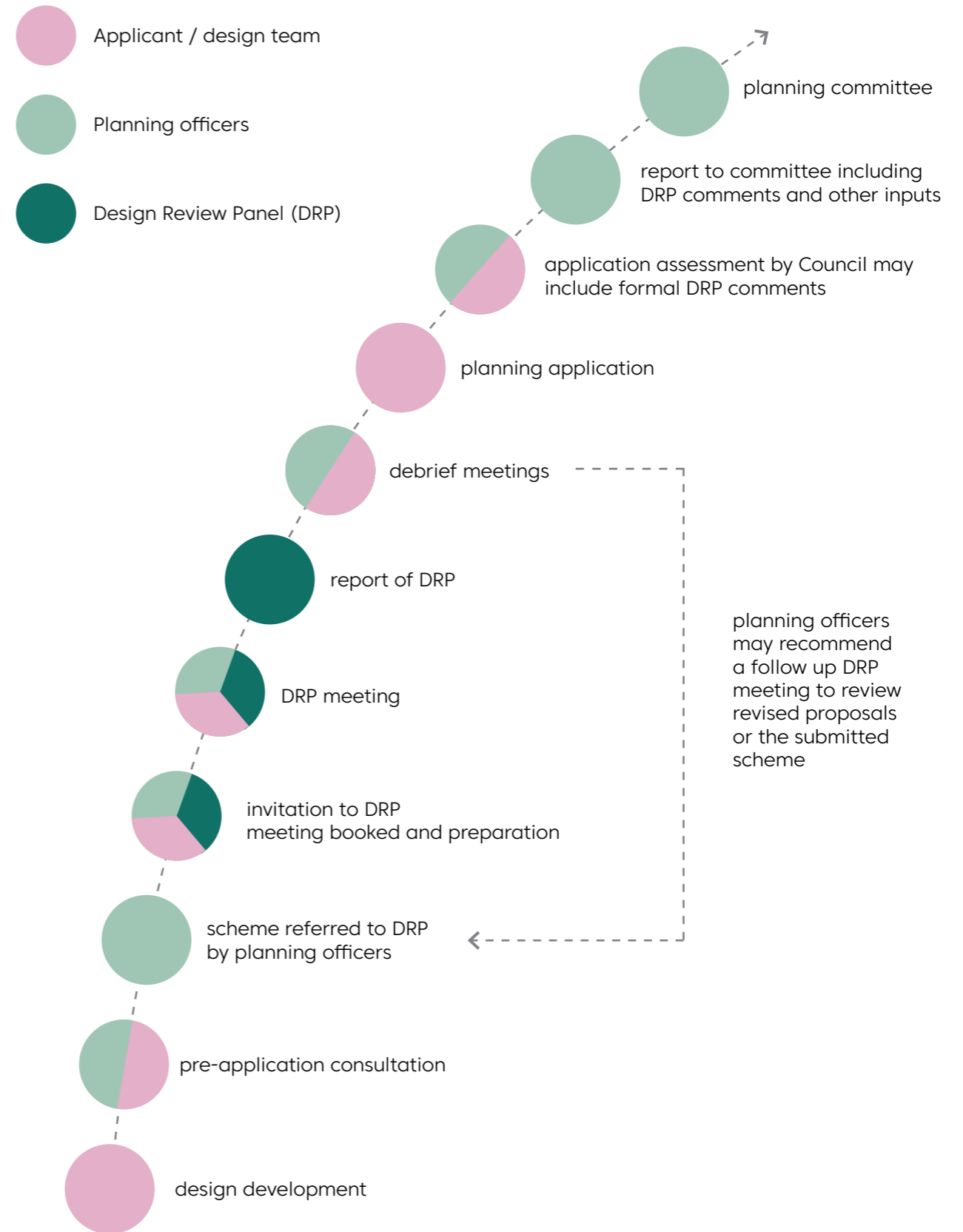


Anthony Hudson
Hudson Architects



Hannah Loftus
HAT Projects

DESIGN REVIEW IN THE PLANNING PROCESS





ROLE OF OFFICERS IN THE DRP PROCESS

- **Referring** schemes for review - pre-application and submitted
- **Briefing** the panel
- **Negotiating** improvements
- **Briefing** the planning committee



REFERRING SCHEMES

It is most helpful for the panel to provide advice at a **pre-application** stage, when designs are still fluid and you can negotiate improvements.

Important to **target panel dates early**, work into programme discussions with applicant.

Submitted schemes - target review date in **first half of application** to allow to report back to committee.



PRE-REVIEW

Step 1 (4 to 6 weeks in advance)

Confirmation of schemes by planning officer and applicant team

Step 2 (as soon as request confirmed)

Invitation confirmed requesting agenda information and providing terms of reference

Planning context note for agenda from planning case officer

Applicant returns agenda information 2 weeks in advance with scheme description

Step 3 (1 week in advance)

Agenda issued to panel members to allow them to prepare for the review meeting and identify any conflicts of interest





AT THE REVIEW

- In person or virtual site visit
- Briefing by planning officers
- Presentation by the design team
- Questions and discussion by panel
- Design team responds as appropriate
- Chair sums up the panel's views
- Panel's views confirmed in a report
- Confidential at pre-application stage
- Public when submitted scheme

LOCAL PLANS

Bespoke review format

Preparation by panel members

Commenting on design aspects

Policy officers present issues

Panel gains understanding of policy

Can define schemes requiring DRP

Can provide framework for DRP comments





STRATEGIES

SPDs and guidance documents

Garden Town Visions

Transport Strategies

Water, Energy and Waste

Green Infrastructure

Design Code

Framework Masterplans





SINGLE DWELLINGS



PARAGRAPH 80 HOUSE

Modece Architects

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS



HOUSING AT MELTON HILL

Hoopers Architects

BENEFITS

- For developers - it should speed up the planning process if done well, helping resolve design issues, reducing risk and costs
- For planning officers - it provides independent expert advice, and access to a wide range of professional expertise, to support the pre-application process
- For the planning committee - panel reports offer analysis of design quality issues to support decision making
- For Suffolk residents - the panel's role is to champion good design that contributes to quality of life

ANY QUESTIONS?

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