



BARKING AND  
DAGENHAM  
QUALITY  
REVIEW PANEL  
ANNUAL  
REPORT

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

Frame Projects  
Unit 14 Waterside  
44-48 Wharf Road  
London N1 7UX  
020 3971 6168  
office@frame-projects.co.uk  
frame-projects.co.uk





# INTRODUCTION

---

The Barking and Dagenham Quality Review Panel was set up in 2019 by Frame Projects on behalf of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham. It is chaired by Neil Deely and includes 26 professional experts, selected through an open recruitment process in collaboration with Barking and Dagenham officers.

Terms of Reference, available on the Council's web site, set out the role and remit of the panel, and the way in which it supports the planning process. Schemes requiring advice are identified by planning officers and referred to the panel for a review. Officers provide a briefing on planning context and key issues, both in writing for the meeting agendas, and in person at the panel meeting. Advice given by the panel is recorded in a report, to assist with continuing pre-application negotiations, or advise the planning committee on submitted schemes.

The Barking and Dagenham Quality Review Panel advised on 19 schemes in the year from July 2019 to June 2020. Three of these schemes have been reviewed on more than one occasion. First reviews usually take place at a stage when a client and design team have decided their preferred option for development of a site, and have sufficient drawings, models, etc. for a comprehensive discussion. There will often be a second pre-application review to provide advice on more detailed design matters, before a planning submission is made.

Frame Projects has developed a process for monitoring and evaluating the impact of design review panels. This process allows us to obtain insight into the effectiveness and performance of each of our panels, as well as valuable information on significant emerging issues from panel reviews. It also provides public transparency and allow for continual improvement of our services. This process includes collecting quantitative information based on the reviews carried out from July 2019 to June 2020. It also includes feedback from panel members, applicants and local authority representatives gathered through anonymous surveys.

This framework builds on the initial work done by Public Practice to develop a monitoring tool for design review.

Quantitative data was gathered from reviews that took place from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.

## PANEL

---

Authority

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

Review Panel name

Barking and Dagenham Quality Review Panel

Panel management

Externally managed, Frame Projects

Contact name for panel

Adela Paporisto, Frame Projects

Contact email address

[adela@frame-projects.co.uk](mailto:adela@frame-projects.co.uk)

Report produced by

Frame Projects, Panel Programme Manager



## REVIEW TOTALS

---

Total number of reviews

**19**

Number of follow up /  
second reviews

**3**

Number of site visits (in person)

**11**

Number of formal reviews  
(5 panel members)

**16**

Chair's reviews  
(1-2 panel members)

**3**

Other reviews

**0**

## PANEL COMPOSITION

---

### PANEL MEMBERS USED THIS YEAR

No. of different panel  
members used

**21**

Male panel members

**57%**

Female panel members

**43%**

BAME panel members

**8%**

### PANEL EXPERTISE USED

Urban design

**17**

Architecture

**20**

Landscape

**10**

Heritage / conservation

**1**

Community  
engagement

**3**

Industrial design

**1**

Sustainability

**3**



# PROPOSALS REVIEWED

---

## APPLICANT TYPE

Private developer

**6**

Local authority

**13**

Joint venture

**0**

---

## STAGE OF PROPOSAL

Pre application

**18**

Planning application  
submitted

**0**

Policy / strategic  
document

**1**

---

## TYPE OF PROPOSAL

Masterplan

**2**

Mixed use

**6**

Policy or strategic document

**1**

Residential (1-50 units)

**0**

Residential (50+ units)

**10**

Commercial


**0**

Healthcare

**0**

Education

**0**



Frame Projects has worked with the local planning authority to identify schemes to assess as part of the monitoring and evaluation process. These consist of schemes that have been reviewed by the Quality Review Panel, and where a planning decision was determined between 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.

The schemes used for feedback in this evaluation are:

- Gascoigne Estate West Phase 1
- Beam Park Phase 2B
- Former Job Centre
- Fresh Wharf Phase 2
- Oxlow Lane

Anonymous survey responses were collected from the applicants (planning agent and lead architects), panel members who attended the reviews, and local authority representatives (planning officer and design officer) who were leading on the schemes. Surveys took the format of yes/no questions with options to provide further specific feedback. Participants were sent an e-mail inviting them to take part in the survey on 3 September 2020 and given two weeks to provide feedback, with a follow up reminder on 10 September 2020.



# APPLICANT QUESTIONNAIRE

---

10 applicants were contacted twice to complete the feedback questionnaire.

3 out of 10 applicants responded to the following questions:

1. Did you find the review sessions were conducted in a constructive manner?
2. Were you clear about the information you needed to provide prior to the review?
3. Did you consider that the advice from the panel helped to improve the proposal?
4. Did you feel that the panel reports accurately captured review discussions?
5. Did you think that the panel's advice assisted with officer and council discussions?
6. Would you recommend using the Quality Review Panel?
7. Any other comments?

## APPLICANT FEEDBACK

---

The majority of applicants who responded to the questionnaire considered that the review sessions were conducted in a constructive manner and that, in most cases, the panel's advice assisted with officer and council discussions. All respondents felt that the reports captured review discussions well and would recommend using the quality review panel – in particular, one applicant highlighted the useful combination of comments relating to landscape, urban design and architecture.

# LOCAL AUTHORITY QUESTIONNAIRE

---

5 local planning authority representatives were contacted twice to complete the feedback questionnaire. 3 out of 5 local authority representatives responded to the following questions:

1. Were you clear about the information you needed to provide and your role in the review process?
2. Did you find the panel's comments during the review clear and constructive?
3. Did you find the review session and report clear and useful?
4. Did you find the panel's advice helped support negotiations on design quality?
5. Did you incorporate the panel's comments into a delegated planning report or reported to committee?
6. Did you feel that the planning committee gave weight to the design review advice during decision making?
7. Any other comments?

## LOCAL AUTHORITY FEEDBACK

---

Local Authority officers unanimously agreed that the panel's comments during the review were clear and constructive, and that the report helped to support negotiations on design quality. Officers also agreed that the planning committee gave weight to the design review advice during the decision-making process.



# PANEL QUESTIONNAIRE

---

15 panel members were contacted twice to complete the feedback questionnaire. 8 out of 15 panel members responded.

1. Did you feel that the level of information provided prior to the review session was appropriate?
2. Did you consider the site visits a benefit to the review session?
3. Did you consider the information presented at the review to be sufficient to enable a thorough review?
4. Did you consider planning officer written and verbal briefings provided clarity on design and policy issues?
5. Did you feel that panel reports accurately captured review discussions?
6. Did you feel that you could contribute your advice fully?
7. Any other comments?

## PANEL FEEDBACK

---

75 per cent of panel members who responded to the questionnaire considered that planning officer briefings helped provide clarity on design and policy issues, and that the reports accurately captured review discussions. One respondent mentioned that it would be helpful to have a better understanding of all emerging developments within the borough to enable schemes to be reviewed in a wider context.

All those who responded felt that the site visits were beneficial to the review sessions, and most considered that the level of information provided prior to the review was appropriate and that they were able to contribute their advice fully. There was general consensus, however, that more detailed landscape and public realm information would have allowed for a more thorough review of the design proposals.

## EMERGING ISSUES AND NEXT STEPS

---

In analysing data around panel composition, it has emerged that although the panel has a broad range of expertise and good gender balance, it is lacking in sustainability experts and BAME diversity. In response, Frame Projects is working with Barking and Dagenham Council representatives to recruit new panel members specialising in sustainability and microclimate, as well as panel members who are from groups that are currently under-represented throughout the built environment professions.

Local authority representatives were happy with the review process and the panel's contribution. Panel members were generally positive about the review sessions but felt that there was sometimes a lack of landscape and public realm information provided by the applicants. Frame Projects has reviewed the guidance note sent to presenting teams to ensure detailed instructions are included about the information required prior to and during the review.

Frame Projects will encourage schemes that have only been brought to the panel once to return for a follow-up review. This will allow the panel to provide advice on the way schemes have evolved in response to its previous comments, as well as discussing more detailed designs. Frame Projects will also liaise with Barking and Dagenham Council to ensure panel members are aware of updated planning policies within the borough. Arranging an annual meeting of the Quality Review Panel in early 2021 would be a good way to provide a policy briefing to panel members.