



OPDC  
PLACE REVIEW  
GROUP

1 SEPTEMBER 2024

31 AUGUST 2025

ANNUAL  
REPORT

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

Frame Projects  
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OPDC  
OLD OAK AND  
PARK ROYAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
CORPORATION



# INTRODUCTION

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The Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC) Place Review Group was set up in 2018 by Frame Projects on behalf of the OPDC. It is chaired by Peter Bishop, Professor of Urban Design at University College London, and includes 23 professional members, selected through an open recruitment process in collaboration with OPDC officers.

Terms of Reference, available on the planning authority's website, set out the role and remit of the panel, and the way in which it supports the planning process. Schemes requiring design advice are identified by planning officers and referred to the panel for review. Officers provide a briefing on the planning context and key issues, both in writing for the meeting agenda, 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 to advise the planning committee on submitted schemes.

The OPDC Place Review Group has advised on eight schemes in the year from September 2024 to August 2025. Two 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 the 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 planning submission.

Cover image: Aerial View of One Portal Way, North Acton © Pilbrow & Partners  
Image: Railway Cottages © Zute Lightfoot Photography



# PANEL

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**Authority**

Old Oak and Park Royal  
Development Corporation

**Review Panel name**

OPDC Place Review Group

**Panel management**

Frame Projects

**Contact name for panel**

Reema Kaur, Frame Projects

**Contact email address**

Reema@frame-projects.co.uk

Image: Old Oak Commons © Maccreanor Lavington



## REVIEW TOTALS

Number of reviews

**8**

Number of site visits

**6**

Number of first reviews

**6**

Number of follow-up reviews

**2**

Full reviews  
(chair plus four panel members)

**8**

Chair's reviews  
(chair plus one panel members)

**0**

## PANEL COMPOSITION

### PANEL MEMBERS USED THIS YEAR

No. of different panel members used

**16**

Male panel members

**56%**

Female panel members

**44%**

Members of a diverse ethnic background  
(based on 23 diversity forms)

**19%**

### PANEL COMPOSITION

Total panel member attendance for each area of expertise during the reporting period

Architecture

**9**

Urban design / town planning

**8**

Transport infrastructure

**7**

Landscape / public realm

**7**

Sustainable design

**7**

# PROPOSALS REVIEWED

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## APPLICANT TYPE

Private developer

5

Local authority

3

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## STAGE OF PROPOSAL

Pre-application

7

Draft policy document

1

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## TYPE OF PROPOSAL

Masterplan

2

Mixed use

3

Policy / strategic  
document

1

Energy / data centre

2

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Image: OPDC Place Review Group site visit © Frame Projects



## EMERGING THEMES AND ISSUES

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The OPDC Place Review Group saw fewer schemes during 2024/25 than in previous years. This reduction in workload partly reflects ongoing viability issues with development across the UK, and particularly in London. The consensus is that the requirement for second staircases in buildings over 18 metres in height, the impact of inflation on construction costs, interest rates that have been slow to fall, and wider economic uncertainty, have all combined to dampen development activity and, in particular, reduce residential starts. The Greater London Authority's decision to temporarily reduce the proportion of affordable housing required in new developments, announced just after the period covered by this report, is intended to help counter this trend and reveals how seriously it has been taken by policymakers.

However, the OPDC project is a long-term investment, and development on public land, where the core of a new place will be built on sites currently in use for HS2 tunnelling, is the context in which the panel will make its most important contribution. It will continue to provide independent advice to OPDC officers, as it has done throughout its existence, to help them achieve the highest possible design quality for a future neighbourhood that will be based around one of the UK's busiest stations. Construction at Old Oak Common is well underway, with advice from a separate review panel also managed by Frame Projects – the HS2 Independent Design Panel – and the close involvement of OPDC.

Frame Projects has managed the Place Review Group since 2018, and a limited refresh of the panel membership will take place in 2026. It is important to ensure that a wide range of built environment professionals have the opportunity to contribute their views, especially in the context of a project that is so important to London, and will be designed and delivered over many years to come.