



BRENT COUNCIL  
COMMUNITY REVIEW PANEL

Handbook 2024

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

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Cover image: Charteris Street Party © Brent Council



# 1. INTRODUCTION

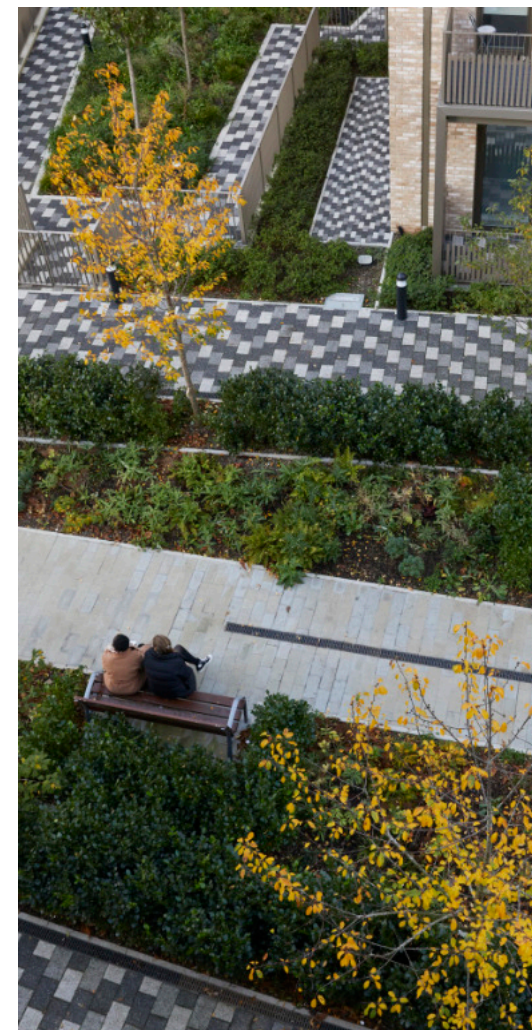
As one of the most diverse and culturally rich boroughs in London, Brent is a dynamic and engaging place, with much to be proud of and celebrate. The council is adopting a design-led approach to address the increasing challenges posed by climate change, the housing crisis and need for strategic infrastructure, to support our residents of today and tomorrow.

The council's aim is to deliver high quality, sustainable places that people are proud to live in and to maximise opportunities to access good quality housing, employment, education and culture. The Community Review Panel plays an important role in furthering the council's commitment to securing high-quality design, which complements and celebrates Brent's diversity, heritage and culture. The panel has a vital role in ensuring that growth in the local area delivers benefits for all and serves the needs of people living, working and regularly visiting the area.

Brent has signed up to the London Design Review Charter, which supports the council's commitment to good design and ensures that new developments create places of high quality and lasting value. Securing high-quality development requires rigorous, early and effective dialogue between all those involved. The appointment of an independent Community Review Panel is part of the Borough's process for ensuring effective testing of development proposals.

The panel will not duplicate or replace existing mechanisms for securing high-quality design and is intended to provide additional expert advice to inform the planning process, in line with Policy D4, paragraph E of the London Plan (2021) and Section 12 of the NPPF, which states that: 'Local planning authorities should ensure that they have access to... design advice and review arrangements... These are of most benefit if used as early as possible in the evolution of schemes, and are particularly important for significant projects such as large scale housing and mixed use developments.' (Para. 138, NPPF, 2023).

By offering advice to applicants during the pre-application process and by commenting on planning applications, the Community Review Panel supports Brent's planning officers and planning committee. The panel will provide a rigorous review process, to ensure exemplary design in all areas of the borough, enhancing Brent for all those who live, work, and visit here.



Unity Place, Gort Scott © Paul Riddle



## 2. PANEL COMPOSITION

The Brent Community Panel brings together people with a passion for and knowledge of the London Borough of Brent. It is made up of 15 group members, plus the chair.

Community Review Panel members are chosen to:

- bring a strong understanding of Brent, the way it works, its history and its inhabitants
- provide positive advice from a community perspective on proposals for development and change
- advise on the needs of existing and new residential and business communities.

Membership of the panel will be reviewed after the first year of operation, so that panel members have the opportunity to decide if they want to carry on being involved, and Brent Council can assess whether the group is performing its intended role effectively.

The panel is chaired by Daisy Froud, a consultant and strategist specialising in brief-development and participatory design.



OPDC Community Engagement © Frame Projects



### 3. PANEL REMIT

The Brent Community Review Panel has been established to support Brent Council in achieving high quality design and placemaking that reflects the priorities of local people. It performs a public role, and the Handbook for the panel is therefore published on Brent Council's website, including the names of the panel members. However, the individuals on the panel do not perform a representative role, on behalf of a community group for example, nor are they required to have professional skills or experience. They are appointed so that they can contribute their own personal experience of living or working in the Brent area.

The panel will provide independent advice to the planning authority as a 'critical friend' to support the delivery of high quality development in Brent.

The Brent Council aims to refer schemes to the Community Review Panel at an early design stage, to ensure that local priorities and concerns can inform the design process. Advice is likely to be most effective before a scheme becomes too fixed. Early engagement with the Community Review Panel will help test and understand the appropriateness of the proposals to the area, and the needs of its communities. The panel is expected to review both schemes proposed by developers and planning approaches initiated by Brent Council as part of the Community Review Panel.

The panel considers significant development proposals in Brent. Significance is not necessarily only related to scale – but may also fall into the following categories.

#### **Significance related to size or use, for example:**

- large buildings or groups of buildings
- infrastructure projects such as bridges or transport hubs
- large public realm proposals
- masterplans, design codes or design guidance.

#### **Significance related to site, for example:**

- proposals affecting sensitive views
- developments with a major impact on their context
- schemes involving significant public investment.

#### **Significant social infrastructure, for example:**

- schools, or education buildings
- parks and open spaces
- streets, cycle and footpaths
- public buildings for example libraries
- arts and cultural projects.

As with normal pre-application procedure, community review advice before an application is submitted remains confidential with the applicant and the planning authority. This encourages applicants to share proposals openly and honestly with the Community Review Panel – and ensures that they receive the most useful advice.

Once an application has been submitted, the Community Review Panel's comments will form part of the summary document included in the planning report published on Brent Council's website.



## 4. ROLE OF THE PANEL

The Community Review Panel provides local views and recommendations to Brent Council at key stages of the planning process for developments in Brent.

The Community Review Panel plays an advisory role in the planning process. It is for Brent Council to decide what weight to place on the panel's comments and recommendations – balanced with other planning considerations. Applicants should consult planning officers following a review to agree how to respond to the panel's advice.

If any comments made by the Community Review Panel require clarification, it is the responsibility of the presenting team, whether project promoters or Brent Council officers, to draw this to the attention of the panel chair (if during the meeting) or the panel manager at Frame Projects (if the report of the meeting requires clarification).



Brent Civic Centre © Brent Council

## 5. INDEPENDENCE & CONFIDENTIALITY

The Brent Community Review Panel is facilitated on behalf of Brent Council by Frame Projects, an external consultancy. Brent Council has appointed Frame Projects to manage the panel, and to maintain its independence. This means that review meetings are arranged and managed by Frame Projects staff, and the panel is chaired and the discussion managed by Daisy Froud, who is employed on a consultancy basis by Frame Projects. All reports and formal recommendations are written by the Community Review Panel manager, and issued with the approval of the chair, with no prior approval from Brent Council.

The processes for managing the Community Review Panel, the appointment of panel members, including the selection of the chair, and the administration of meetings are agreed in partnership with Brent Council.

Panel members are required to keep confidential all information acquired in the course of their role on the panel, with the exception of reports that are in the public domain.

Further details are provided in the confidentiality procedure included in Appendix A.

## 6. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Brent Community Review Panel is intended to provide a constructive forum for applicants, their project teams and Brent Council planning officers who would like to understand the views of local people.

In order to ensure the panel's impartiality, it is essential that panel members avoid any actual or perceived conflicts of interest in relation to schemes considered during the meetings that they attend.

Panel members are asked to ensure that any possible conflicts of interest are identified before each meeting. For example, if a panel member or a close relative is directly involved, has a financial interest in, or would directly benefit from a scheme or site being reviewed, this may be a conflict of interest. Members should declare potential conflicts of interest to Frame Projects. This does not include panel members' homes, as the Community Review Panel has been set up to include the perspective of local residents.

Appendix B contains more detail on what constitutes a conflict of interest.

Meeting agendas provided in advance of reviews will include information on the project and on who is involved. When these are sent out, each panel member will be asked to check for any conflicts of interest, and to contact Frame Projects immediately if they believe that there is a conflict.

In cases where there is a conflict, a panel member may be asked to step down from a review. In other cases, a declaration of interest may be sufficient. If in any doubt at all, panel members should contact the panel manager at Frame Projects to discuss.

## 7. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

As a public authority, Brent Council is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act). All requests made to Brent Council information with regard to the Brent Community Review Panel will be handled according to the provisions of the Act. Legal advice may be required on a case-by-case basis to establish whether any exemptions apply under the Act.



Burnt Oak Town Centre © Brent Council



# 8. TYPES OF MEETINGS

## COMMUNITY REVIEWS

A Community Review Panel meeting will be held for major development proposals, masterplans, significant planning policy or guidance documents. Review meetings will take place from outline design stage onwards, so that the panel can provide advice to the scheme promoter and to Brent Council.

All members of the Community Review Panel including the chair, will be invited to attend. Brent Council officers and appropriate stakeholders may also be invited to attend and asked to give their views after the scheme has been presented.

Community Review Panel meetings will 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 an opportunity for the panel to comment on more detailed design matters before a planning submission.

The scheme will be presented by a member of the design team, normally the lead architect, following a brief introduction by the client. Presentations may be made with drawings or PowerPoint and models as appropriate.

A typical Community Review Panel meeting will last 120 minutes: 5 minutes of introductions; 10 minutes briefing by planning officers; 30 minutes presentation by the design team; 65 minutes discussion; 10 minutes summing up by the chair. Large projects may be split into smaller elements for the purposes of review, to ensure each element receives a fair share of discussion time, e.g. schemes with several development plots.

## ANNUAL MEETINGS

To support the Community Review Panel's role in the planning process, annual meetings will be arranged to provide an opportunity for reflection amongst the group on emerging themes and issues. This will also provide an opportunity for the council to provide feedback on the impact of the panel's advice on schemes reviewed. Annual meetings will be facilitated by the Community Review Panel chair, and all panel members will be invited to attend.

## DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS

Training will be provided to equip panel members with the skills required to understand and constructively input to the review meetings. Development sessions may take a variety of formats, beginning with a panel induction meeting, and with potential to provide training on other areas such as: sustainable design, landscape design or more practical issues including how to read and interrogate architectural drawings. Topics will be identified with input from the panel members.



## 9. EXPENSES

Brent Community Review Panel members are entitled to claim reasonable expenses for travel to review meetings and site visits, and for other costs incurred in order to attend meetings. Frame Projects will provide an expense form which should be completed and sent to the Community Review Panel Manager with receipts or other evidence of expenditure, before the date of the next panel meeting.



London Borough of Culture 2020 opening ceremony © Brent Council

## 10. MEETING DATES

One Community Review Panel meeting is provisionally scheduled every month. These may be used to review development proposals, or for an annual meeting or development session. Meetings may also be required to provide advice on non-application matters such as planning policy development.

The panel will meet between 18.30 and 20.30 on a Monday evening. The following dates are currently set for Brent Community Review Panel meetings in 2024:

- 13 May
- 3 June
- 1 July
- 2 September
- 7 October
- 4 November
- 2 December



Seen and Heard Workshop, London Borough of Culture 2020 © Brent Council

## 11. BRIEFING & TRAINING

All Community Review Panel members are required to attend an induction meeting before taking part in review meetings. This includes briefings on the context in which development is taking place, and on the schemes likely to be reviewed. It also includes briefing on the panel's role, how it will be governed, and on practical arrangements.

Development sessions will be arranged for the panel on request, after discussion with members. This will be provided by professionals, who can also be called on by the Community Review Panel to provide additional briefing at review sessions, to ensure that the panel has all the information it requires.

The induction meeting and annual meetings provide opportunities to discuss the wider needs of panel members, including training needs, to ensure that they can fulfil their roles effectively.



## 12. REVIEW AGENDAS

Agendas will be issued to panel members in advance of each meeting. The agenda, and its contents, are confidential and should only be read by members of the panel.

For Community Review Panel meetings, a detailed agenda will be provided that includes notes on the planning context, details of the project to be considered, the applicant and consultant team, and those presenting the project, as appropriate.

A project description provided by those presenting the project will set out factual information about the project. Key plans and images will also be provided to help to give a sense of the scope and nature of the project under review.

Where a project returns for a second or subsequent review, the report of the previous review will be provided with the agenda.



Community review meeting © Frame Projects



The Granville, RCKa © Jakob Spriestersbach & Kit Oates

## 13. PANEL REPORTS

During a Community Review Panel meeting the panel manager will take notes of the discussion to form the basis of a report. Reports will be drafted, approved by the panel chair and issued within 10 working days. The report summarises the comments and advice provided by the Community Review Panel and clearly sets out specific recommendations.

At pre-application stage, reports will provide clear advice on the appropriateness of the proposals to the area, and the needs of its communities. This may assist council officers in negotiating improvements.

The Community Review Panel has an advisory role in Brent Council's planning process, and the project team should consult planning officers following a review to agree how to respond to points raised in the report.

The report at this stage is not normally made public and is shared only with Brent Council, the applicant and design team, and any other stakeholders that Brent Council has involved in the project.

Once planning applications are submitted, the report may provide guidance to Brent Council officers in reviewing the planning application with regard to community views.

If the proposal is reviewed at an application stage the report will be a public document kept within the proposal's case file and published on Brent Council's website. Where the final review of a scheme takes place at a pre-application stage, the report of this meeting may also be made public once an application is submitted.



## 14. PANEL CHARGES

Applicants are referred to the Community Review Panel by Brent Council as an external service and fees are paid by the applicant to Frame Projects for delivering this service.

The current charge for an Brent Community Review Panel meeting is:

- £4,750 + VAT Community Review Panel meeting

The meeting charge includes a £700 contribution to a float which is used to fund development and training sessions for panel members, and future panel recruitment.

The cost of venue hire, if required, would be in addition to the charge above.

Payment should be made by the applicant in advance of the review, and the review may be cancelled if payment is not received five days in advance of the meeting. Full details will be provided when an invitation to present to the panel is confirmed.

Where a scheduled review is subsequently cancelled or postponed by the applicant, an administrative charge will be applied:

- 50% of full cost : less than two weeks before the review
- £725 + VAT : between one and four weeks before the review

## 15. PANEL MEMBERSHIP

### Chair, Daisy Froud

Daisy Froud is a consultant and strategist specialising in brief development and participatory design. Daisy has extensive experience serving on design review panels across London and currently serves on the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham and GLA panels, regularly chairing the latter. Daisy is a Teaching Fellow at The Bartlett School of Architecture, where she lectures on the history and theory of spatial politics.

### Community Review Panel members

Adrian D'Enrico  
Alia Karim  
Andrzej Wielenczyc  
Cristina Antonini  
Denton Brown  
Emma Ko  
Ikram Benzila  
Louie Mendoza  
Manoj Mishra

Michaela McKay  
Noreen Muir  
Olufunmi Sowunmi  
Pedro Ferreira  
Peter Wortsman  
Rama Khatri  
Sarah Al-halfi  
Sid Nazef  
Ugochukwu Njoku



# 16. KEY DOCUMENTS

## Brent Council

### Local Plan

[www.brent.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-guidance/brent-local-plan](http://www.brent.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-guidance/brent-local-plan)

### Supplementary planning documents and guidance

[www.brent.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-guidance/supplementary-planning-documents-and-guidance](http://www.brent.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-guidance/supplementary-planning-documents-and-guidance)

### Growth areas

[www.brent.gov.uk/business/regeneration/growth-areas](http://www.brent.gov.uk/business/regeneration/growth-areas)

## Greater London Authority

### Mayor of London, The London Plan 2021

[www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan/london-plan-2021](http://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan/london-plan-2021)

### Greater London Authority Good Growth by Design Outline

[www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/good\\_growth\\_web.pdf](http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/good_growth_web.pdf)



Wembley Park © Brent Council



# APPENDIX A

## Confidentiality

The Brent Community Review Panel provides a forum for advice and guidance to be provided at an early stage in projects, before proposals are public, and when advice can have the most impact. Confidentiality is therefore very important.

1. Panel meetings are only to be attended by the panel's members, Brent Council officers, and officers from stakeholder organisations involved in the project, as well as the applicant and their design team. If anyone else attends, it must be approved by the Community Review Panel manager, Frame Projects.
2. Members of the Brent Community Review Panel will keep confidential all information provided to them as part of their role on the panel, and shall not use that information for their own benefit, nor disclose it to any third party (with the exception of reports that are in the public domain – see points 5 and 6).
3. The Brent Community Review Panel's advice is provided in the form of a report written by Frame Projects, containing key points from the panel's discussion. If any applicant, architect or agent approaches a panel member for advice on a project subject to review (before, during or after), they should decline to comment and refer the inquiry to the panel manager, Frame Projects.
4. Following the meeting, the Community Review Panel manager, writes a draft report, circulates it to the chair for comments and then makes any amendments. The panel manager will then distribute it to all those included on the meeting agenda.
5. If the proposal is at a pre-application stage, the report will not be made public and will only be shared with Brent Council, the applicant and design team, and any other stakeholder bodies that Brent Council has involved in the project.
6. If the proposal is reviewed at an application stage the report will be a public document kept within the proposal's case file and published on Brent Council's website. Where the final review of a scheme takes place at a pre-application stage, the report of this meeting may also be made public once an application is submitted.
7. If a panel member wishes to share a final report with anyone, they must seek approval from the Community Review Panel manager, who will confirm whether or not the report is public.



# APPENDIX B

## Conflicts of interest

Following the selection of Community Review Panel members, each potential panel member will be asked to fill out a Declaration of Interest form. The form will identify if there are any conflicts which may preclude an individual's participation in the Community Review Panel.

An individual may be conflicted from becoming a panel member if they have a financial, commercial or professional interest in participating in the Brent Community Review Panel.

Once the panel is fully established, to ensure the integrity and impartiality of advice given by the Brent Community Review Panel, potential conflicts of interest will be checked before each panel meeting. The following process will apply:

1. All panel members are required to declare any conflicts of interest.
2. Panel members are notified of the scheme coming before the panel at least a week in advance. At this time panel members should check the meeting information provided and declare any possible interest in a project to Frame Projects.
3. The Community Review Panel manager, Frame Projects, in collaboration with the panel chair and Brent Council officers, will determine if the conflict of interest is of a personal or prejudicial nature – that is, whether it will prevent the panel member from giving impartial advice.
4. In general, a panel member should not attend a review meeting if they have:
  - a financial, commercial or professional interest in a project that will be reviewed, its client and / or its site;
  - a financial, commercial or professional interest in a site that is adjacent to the project (not including a panel member's own home) that will be reviewed or upon which the project being reviewed will have a material impact;
  - a personal relationship with an individual or group involved in the project, or a related project, where that relationship prevents the panel member from being objective.
5. If it is deemed that a conflict of interest is of a prejudicial nature, the panel member should not take part in reviews for the proposal. They should also not take part in private discussions of the project and should not be in the room during the discussion of the project.
6. If it is deemed that a conflict of interest is personal, but not prejudicial, the panel member may be allowed to participate in the review. In this situation, the interest will be noted at the beginning of the review, discussed with the presenting teams and formally recorded in the review report.
7. Councillors and council employees are not eligible to be panel members.

