

OXFORD STREET
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

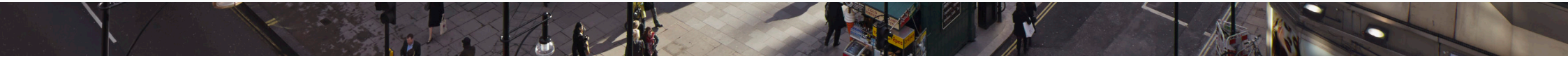
OXFORD STREET COMMUNITY PLACE SHAPING PANEL HANDBOOK

Handbook 2026

FRAME PROJECTS

In partnership with
OSDC

020 8164 9980
office@frame-projects.co.uk
www.frame-projects.co.uk



CONTENTS

1 OSDC foreword *3*

2 Introduction *4*

3 Panel composition *5*

4 Role of the panel *6*

5 Panel remit *7*

6 Independence and probity *8*

7 Freedom of information *8*

8 Types of meetings *9*

9 Expenses *10*

10 Briefing and training *10*

11 Review agendas *11*

12 Panel reports *12*

13 Panel charges *13*

14 Confidentiality *14*

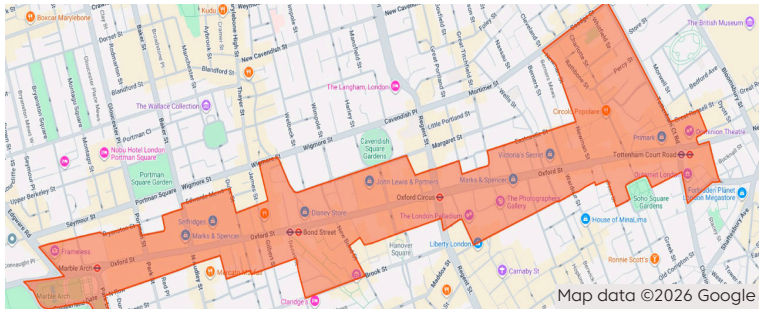
15 Conflicts of interest *15*

1. OSDC FOREWORD

Who is the OSDC?

Oxford Street has long been recognised as the nation's high street. Once the jewel in London's retail crown, it has played a central role in the city's cultural and economic life for generations. However, in recent years the area has faced significant challenges. The effects of the pandemic, the rapid growth of online shopping, and other changes in consumer behaviour have contributed to a period of decline.

Following public consultation in 2025, the Oxford Street Development Corporation (OSDC) has been established to lead the transformation of Oxford Street. The OSDC will act as the local planning authority (LPA) for the development area shown on this map, taking responsibility for determining planning applications for schemes within its boundary.



The OSDC will lead the regeneration of Oxford Street with a clear ambition to create a place that is extraordinary, everyday, for everyone, recognising that Oxford Street must serve the needs of local residents, workers and businesses, as well as global audiences. The LPA will work closely with local stakeholders, developers, businesses, and the community to support the emerging vision for the street and surrounding Mayoral Development Area (MDA), reestablishing Oxford Street as the economic and cultural centre of London.

What are the opportunities for the Community Place Shaping Panel's influence?

As the OSDC's Community Place Shaping Panel (CPSP), we want you to bring your lived experience to the panel, ask questions, and consider how different projects can contribute to wider improvements along Oxford Street and the West End. The CPSP will be an integral part of the design development process. The panel will not be seeing final proposals, but a moment in time, as the design continues to evolve and change. The proposals reviewed by the panel will not be the final version of the scheme, but will be at a stage where the panel's input can genuinely influence change.

On Monday 26 October 2026, the first phase of Oxford Street's pedestrianisation commenced. While the pedestrianisation of the street will open up countless opportunities for the public realm and future development, the works that comprise the scheme itself do not form part of the OSDC's role as the local planning authority. However, the implementation of the scheme will be a key consideration in the assessment of future development proposals, given its significant influence in the character, operation and accessibility of the area.

We are excited to work with the panel in shaping the future of Oxford Street, supporting development, and influencing positive change in the area.

2. INTRODUCTION

Frame Projects is a design focused project management consultancy. We are leading experts in design and community review - providing independent advice to clients, design teams and planning authorities on development proposals. We manage several community review panels, which take a new approach to engaging local people in decisions about the development happening in their neighbourhood.

Community review panels consist of residents appointed through open application, to review development proposals and local authority strategies. Community review places the expertise of residents – who understand what works about their place and what needs to change – on the same level as the design expertise needed to deliver high quality buildings, and ensures it is taken as seriously.

The Government's National Planning Policy Framework states that: 'Proposals for major development should: a. Be informed by early engagement with neighbours and the local community...' (NPPF Section 3 DM1) and: 'Development plans should, at the most appropriate level set out clear expectations by: a. Ensuring the vision of the plan reflects the desired design and placemaking outcomes. This should be informed by an evaluation of the area's existing characteristics and potential, and proactive engagement with communities and other interests.' (NPPF Section 14 DP1).

Since 2018 Frame Projects has been helping to pioneer community review - allowing people to share local expertise with developers and planning authorities. We currently manage community review panels on behalf of five planning authorities: Brent; Ealing; Tower Hamlets; Southwark; and Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation. Some of these panels provide advice across the whole planning authority area, and others are more focused in their remit where there is substantial regeneration or development potential.
Community panels can have real influence, and contributions are often highly nuanced and detailed, and overwhelmingly constructive. The nature of the discussion at a community review meeting is very different to the standard models of developer engagement and local consultation, which are often oppositional.

Community review is also an effective way to inform local policy, such as a public realm and green infrastructure strategy or tall buildings policy. Community panels provide local planning authorities with a valuable resource to test and refine their planning policies and guidance to maximise public benefit.

The appointment process for community panels allows a panel to be established, with committed members who reflect the demographic character of their local area. Meetings are chaired by an expert in community engagement, ensuring all participants are able to contribute, and key issues are covered in the discussion.

Community review panels provide comments that are often complementary to those made by professional design review panels. The perspectives of local people encompass different aspects of the proposals they review from the skills-based input provided by professionals. Their perspectives often provide input and ideas that prove equally valuable to the success of development proposals.

This handbook describes the community review service that we offer to local planning authorities, which are provided as part of ongoing collaborative working with a planning authority.

3. PANEL COMPOSITION

The community panels managed by Frame Projects bring together people with a passion for and knowledge of the local area. Panel members are chosen to:

- bring a strong understanding of the local area, 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 each of our panels is reviewed regularly, to ensure that the group is fulfilling its intended role effectively, and to bring fresh perspectives into the process.

The individuals on each 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 local area.

The panels are chaired by a community engagement expert who has a background in the built environment and experience of engaging local people in the design process.



Community Review Panel meeting © Frame Projects





Community Review Panel governance meeting © Frame Projects

4. ROLE OF THE PANEL

The community panels that we manage provide local views and recommendations on development proposals, at the request of planning officers, and play an advisory role in the planning process.

It is for the local authority 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 panel require clarification, it is the responsibility of the presenting team, whether project promoters or planning 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).

5. PANEL REMIT

The community review panel's role is to support the planning authority in achieving high quality placemaking that reflects the priorities of local people. However, its members are not required to have professional built environment skills or experience. They are appointed so that they can contribute their own personal experience of living or working in the area.

Generally, schemes are referred to the panel by planning officers at an early 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 may be expected to review schemes proposed by developers, as well as planning approaches initiated by the local authority.

The panel considers significant development proposals. Significance may 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, 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 the planning authority's website.



Community Review Panel model © Frame Projects

6. INDEPENDENCE & PROBITY

The community review panel is an independent and impartial service provided by Frame Projects, an external consultancy.

The processes for managing the panel, appointing members, including the selection of the chair, and the administration of meetings, are agreed in partnership with the planning authority.

All reports and formal recommendations are written by the panel manager, and issued with the approval of the chair, with no prior approval from the planning authority.

Panel members shall 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 Section 14.

7. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

As a public authority, the planning authority is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act). All requests made to the planning authority for information with regard to the 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.

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 the planning authority.

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

Community review 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 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 require a series of community reviews, 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 planning authority 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

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 panel manager with receipts or other evidence of expenditure, before the date of the next meeting.



Community Review Panel meeting © Frame Projects

10. 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.

11. 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 scheme. 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 Panel meeting © Frame Projects



Community Review Panel meeting © Frame Projects

12. PANEL REPORTS

During a community review panel meeting the panel manager, Frame Projects, 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 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 planning officers in negotiating improvements.

The panel has an advisory role in the 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 planning officers, the applicant and design team, and any other stakeholders that the planning authority has involved in the project.

Once planning applications are submitted, the report may provide guidance to 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 the planning authority'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.

13. PANEL CHARGES

Information about individual panel fees are outlined on our website: www.frame-projects.co.uk/community.

Applicants are referred to the community review panel by the planning authority as an external service and fees are paid by the applicant to Frame Projects for delivering this service.

In some cases, the meeting charge includes a contribution to a pool 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 meeting fee. However, where possible we will book meeting rooms at council offices.

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.



Community Review Panel site visit © Frame Projects

14. CONFIDENTIALITY

The 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, planning 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.

2. Members of the 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 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 planning officers, the applicant and design team, and any other stakeholder bodies that the planning authority 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 the planning authority'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.

15. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The community review panel is intended to provide a constructive forum for applicants, their project teams and 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.

Following the selection of community review panel members, each panel member will be asked to fill out a declaration of interest form to identify if there are any conflicts which may preclude an individual's participation in the community review panel. Once the panel is fully established, potential conflicts of interest will be checked before each meeting.

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.

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 at Frame Projects, in collaboration with the panel chair and planning 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.

Financial, commercial or professional situation

If the panel member...

is currently working for the client, design team, consultants or site owners on a different project.	
is currently working with the client, design team, consultants or site owners on a different project, but not appointed by them.	
has a business connection to the site, or adjacent site on which the project will have a material impact.	

Personal situation

If the panel member...

is related to a member of the client, design team, consultants or site owners.	
is a friend of a member of the client, design team, consultants or site owners.	
has a home directly affected by a project	

Formal situation

If the panel member...

holds an elected position, or is a member of a society or group, that has a formal role in making representations on the project.	

Key

Conflict of interest - meaning the panel member must be stood down from the review.	
Declaration of interest - there is the potential for others to incorrectly perceive that a conflict exists. A declaration should be made at the start of the review meeting, and included in the meeting report.	
No conflict of interest - either real or perceived, and the panel member is free to take part in the review.	