



Design Review Panel Terms of Reference and Operational Procedures

The Role of the Design Review Panel (DRP)

The role of the DRP is to provide independent expert advice on the design quality of certain development proposals.

The DRP assists Council by bringing high quality design expertise to this task in a manner that adds value for both the applicant and Council.

The ultimate aim is the delivery of high-quality built environments and design excellence, as well as the efficient processing of development applications (DAs).

What Types of Development Does the DRP Provide Advice On?

The DRP will provide expert advice on DAs, planning proposals or policies relating to major commercial and residential development in the Camden local government area.

The following types of development will be considered for referral to the DRP:

- Residential accommodation that is three or more storeys high.
- Commercial developments that are three or more storeys high.
- Any other developments that are considered by Council staff to require advanced urban design assessment.

DRP Membership

The DRP comprises three design professionals, selected from a pool of experts, who have demonstrated experience and knowledge in urban design, architecture, landscape architecture, sustainable design, State Environmental Planning Policy No 65 - Design Quality of Residential Apartment Development and the Apartment Design Guide.

DRP Members Role and Responsibilities

Panel members are expected to demonstrate:

- Broad experience in their design discipline.
- An evident understanding of good design.
- An evident commitment to projects of high design quality that benefit the public.
- Experience in designing, delivering or critiquing projects of the scale that would typically be seen by the DRP.
- The ability to be analytical and critical while maintaining a constructive and professional tone.
- An appreciation of the general context of the project, including commercial considerations, the target end users and the long-term future of the area.



Panel members are expected to:

- Complete a thorough review of the development proposal package prior to the meeting.
- Provide independent, impartial, constructive and respectful feedback and advice.
- Meet deadlines for reviewing draft DRP meeting minutes.
- Abide by the code of conduct and declare any conflicts of interest.

DRP Meeting Chair Role and Responsibilities

The Chair will be selected from the pool of DRP representatives for each meeting. The relevant DRP representative who will undertake the role of Chair will be advised in advance of the meeting.

The Chair facilitates the design review panel session and is responsible for ensuring:

- The discussion stays within the framework of the panel's terms of reference and is constructive, clear and relevant.
- The discussion is respectful.
- That all panel members views are heard and understood and that, if possible, a consensus is reached.
- Where a proposal requires more than one panel meeting:
 - The advice given across the series of sessions is consistent.
 - The advice does not introduce entirely new areas of focus or concern, except where this is a result of new information being provided.
- The session runs on time.

After the panel meeting, the Chair is responsible for the final approval of the DRP meeting minutes.

Applicant / Design Team Role and Responsibilities

The applicant and/or design Team are expected to:

- Present clear and relevant information about the proposal.
- Describe to the DRP the general context of the project, including commercial considerations, the target end users and the desired future character of the area.
- Participate constructively in the design review process.

DRP Operational Procedures

Pre-DA Advice

DRP advice is of the greatest value whilst a proposal is in the early concept and schematic design stages when the time and cost of incorporating valuable ideas from the Panel can be minimised.

A development proposal that has been considered by the DRP at pre-DA advice stage may not need to be assessed by the DRP again at DA stage. This applies if the development proposed by the DA has adequately responded to the feedback provided by the DRP.



Where an applicant fails to get advice from the DRP at the pre-DA stage, such advice will be sought at the DA stage. Should the DRP recommend significant redesign, the applicant may be requested to withdraw the DA or the application may be refused (at the discretion of Council staff).

Information required by the DRP

The applicant must provide the following electronic documents to Council at least 14 days prior to a DRP meeting:

- A survey plan.
- Architectural plans (or sketches at pre-DA advice stage).
- A landscape plan (or sketches at pre-DA advice stage).
- A compliance table that details the development's relationship with the applicable planning controls.

Site visits

The DRP may inspect the site and surrounds of each matter it considers. If an inspection will occur it will be carried out before the DRP meeting.

DRP Meetings

The DRP will meet on an as needs basis. The DRP will be notified at least 14 days prior to the meeting with the applicant's information provided at least 7 days prior to the meeting.

DRP meetings may be held via audio-visual link (e.g. MS Teams or Zoom) or in person with the format being at the discretion of Council staff.

The meetings will be attended by Council staff, the applicant and/or their representatives. The applicant's architect or designer must also attend the meeting.

The purpose of the meeting is to enable the DRP to understand the reasons for decisions taken during the development's design process and enable the exchange of information and ideas between the applicant and the DRP.

DRP meetings provide feedback and highlight issues which must be considered prior to the submission of a DA and which will allow for its more efficient assessment.

DRP Meeting Minutes

DRP meeting minutes are recorded by Council staff. The Chair, in consultation with the DRP members, will confirm the accuracy of the minutes before they are finalised. The minutes will be provided to the applicant following the meeting.

Code of Conduct and Conflicts of Interest

DRP members must comply with the applicable provisions of Council's Code of Conduct in carrying out their functions. Any declarations of a conflict of interest must be disclosed prior to the acceptance of meeting attendance.