

City Executive Board response to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee on the Oxford Design Review Panel

Provided by the Board Member for Planning & Regulatory Services

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Recommendation	Agree?	Comment
1. That the ODRP has (or has access to) on-going heritage expertise where schemes are in conservation areas or adjacent to or affect listed buildings in order to better understand the local heritage context of development schemes, and that consideration is given as to how this can best be achieved.	Yes	The Council and CABE will be reviewing this over the next twelve months, looking at options and consequences.
2. That consistency of the ODRP's membership is guaranteed as far as possible for repeat reviews.	In part	Agreed, but with the proviso that this is not wholly in the control of the Council as it depends on third parties and their availability.
3. That proposals for a review of the effectiveness of the ODRP should be drawn up that includes a social impact element.	Yes	The next 12 months will be used to review the effectiveness and operation of the ODRP across a range of criteria
4. That elected members are alerted to the fact that they may submit suggestions for review by the ODRP.	Yes	A guidance note will be sent to all members setting out the principles for design review and which type, scale and nature of schemes would normally go through a design review process; it will also make clear the independent position of the ODRP, and the relationship between the Panel, the Council and the developer/applicant.
5. That a mechanism is established to alert Councillors to pre-application proposals in their Wards, recognising that pre-application discussions are normally confidential and that this notification may only happen with the prior-agreement of the scheme developer/promoter.	In Part	Pre-application proposals are confidential, and can only be made public with the prior agreement of the applicant. Officers will also need to consider how such proposals – which would sit outside the normal automated planning application notification workflow – could be notified to members without the need for a cumbersome or manual workaround. Any system that relied on individual officers having to notify members manually would be at risk of human error, and would likely be unsatisfactory.
6. That the advisory status of the ODRP and its advice is made clear to planning committees, elected members and the public.	Yes	This would be covered by the same guidance note referred to above, which would be made publicly available.

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