

# Design PAD Terms of Reference

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South Kesteven is committed to ensuring that development in the District is delivered to the highest standard by raising the quality of design, placemaking and sustainable development.

To help ensure that these aspirations are fulfilled, the Council has established a Design Review Panel which brings together experts to provide advice and guidance for developers to help shape development.

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## Aims of the Design PAD

To improve the efficiency of the planning service and raise the design quality of new developments by facilitating multi-disciplinary discussions on planning applications with direct feedback to developers in a collaborative setting.

To avoid the pitfalls of separate, isolated and sometimes contradictory comments from key consultees such as highways, drainage, design, heritage, landscape, ecology, planning that also arrive at different stages of the pre-application or application period. These various disciplines have the potential to be complementary to one another if they work together – In order to achieve well designed places, it is essential to pull these elements together (as advised in Manual for Streets paragraph 1.3.3).

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## Role of Design PAD

The role of Design PAD is to assess and improve the design of development. In accordance with paragraph 133 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) the Design PAD would be considered to be a 'design advice and review arrangement'. This would work alongside Design Midlands Design Review services.

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## Stage in the planning and design process

It is strongly encouraged that schemes are taken to Design PAD as early in the planning process as possible, therefore at the Pre-Application stage.

Development proposals should follow the guidance on the design process set out in the Design Guidelines for Rutland and South Kesteven Design SPD (2021).

Planning applications can still be assessed at Design PAD but additional fees will be charged. Please see the fees on our [website](#).

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## **What schemes should come to Design PAD?**

Schemes are selected at the discretion of the case officer. Most major (10 dwellings or more or 1,000 sq m of non-residential development) and/or schemes considered to be sensitive are taken to Design PAD.

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## **Panel site visit and pre-meet**

Prior to the Design PAD meeting, the panel will undertake a site visit together (usually a few days before the Design PAD meeting). The site and context will be looked at and discussed along with the proposals themselves. A pre-meet will also be undertaken should this be required in addition to the site visit and to discuss and align thoughts.

If it is felt necessary and/or beneficial to hold a joint site visit with the development team and the Design PAD panel team then this will also be arranged.

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## **Meeting format**

Design PAD will be chaired by the relevant case officer, a Principal Development Management Officer or the Development Management Manager.

The format isn't prescriptive – a common structure would usually be:

- 1) Introductions;
  - 2) Introduction of the scheme by the case officer and key issues identified (5 minutes);
  - 3) Developer presentation – describing the proposed scheme and ensuring that the design process is worked through, with particular focus on the response to context and design rationale (10 -20 mins)
  - 4) Panel questions of clarification;
  - 5) Panel feedback – highways, drainage, urban design, landscape for example or under themed topics as a roundtable discussion such as the Building for a Healthy Life criteria;
  - 6) Final additional opportunity for panel members to comment;
  - 7) Summary of main points / next steps by the chair
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## Meeting length

Each scheme will usually be given about an hour, but may be shorter or longer depending on the complexity and nature of the proposal.

On average, four schemes are taken to Design PAD each month and are held consecutively throughout the duration of a morning.

In some circumstances, for larger or more complex schemes, it may be appropriate to hold a half or full day Design PAD and/or workshop that may also include a joint site visit.

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## Meeting Notes

Notes of the meeting will focus on the panel feedback and will be issued within two weeks of the Design PAD meeting to all participants.

Supporting information may also be distributed, such as any sketches, photographs or annotated plans of key design points, where it is effective to do so.

A Building for a Healthy Life assessment may also accompany the comments where appropriate.

Design PAD meeting notes will not form or replace the official pre-application response and this will be provided separately, with reference made to the Design PAD process and feedback.

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## Assessment criteria

A range of National and local planning policy and guidance will be used to assess development proposals, these include:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
- The National Design Guide;
- The National Model Design Code;
- Building for a Healthy Life;
- Manual for Streets;
  
- South Kesteven District Council Local Plan;
- Neighbourhood Plans when present;
- The Design Guidelines for Rutland and South Kesteven - Design SPD (2021);
- Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans;
  
- Lincolnshire Development Roads and Sustainable Drainage Design Approach (2021).
- Lincolnshire Sustainable Drainage Design and Evaluation Guide (2018)

Adhering to the guidance on the **design process** in the above documents will be a fundamental consideration when assessing schemes. Please refer to the Design SPD (section 1.5 and chapter 3) and the National Design Guide sections on Context and Identity.

A number of the documents listed above are referenced within the SKDC Local Plan which states that compliance with them must be demonstrated.

**DE1: Promoting Good Quality Design**

*All major development (as defined in the Glossary) must demonstrate compliance with:*

*g. Neighbourhood Plan policies;*

*h. Manual for Streets guidance and relevant Lincolnshire County Council guidance*

*i. Village design statements, where approved by the Council.*

*j. For new residential proposals, development should perform positively against Building for Life 12;*

**Building for a Healthy Life (BfHL)**

Due to its simple format as an assessment tool and Local Plan requirement for schemes to perform positively against it, a Building for a Healthy Life assessment may be undertaken for residential developments of 10 dwellings or more.

SKDC have produced a BfHL assessment sheet and will be responsible for recording performance against the criteria. The extent to which each criteria has been met will be discussed collaboratively and the Design PAD panel will aim to clearly explain, either in the meeting or afterwards in written comments, what is expected to secure a green light against each criteria.

The BfHL assessment sheet may also be appended to the Design PAD meeting notes.

Building for a Healthy Life will be used throughout the course of a development proposal. Beginning at the start of the design process (pre-application stage) and then used as a discussion tool and updated as the scheme is improved and refined as it passes through the Full or Reserved Matters Application stages towards determination.

The intention is for all schemes to perform positively, with no reds and as many greens as possible for that scheme. It is aspirational for a scheme to secure 9 greens and no reds, allowing it to be eligible for a BfHL Commendation.

Please see the BfHL document for more information.

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## **When**

Monthly, usually the Thursday prior to Planning Committee (see our website for list of forthcoming dates);

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## **Where**

Meetings will be held virtually on Microsoft Teams and this is being monitored to ensure it remains to be the most effective format.

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## What to submit

- Site location plan (1:1250/1:2500 scale) with the site outlined in red;
- The planning context: planning history, status of the site and relevant policies;
- \*A thorough and well-illustrated:
  - a) site and contextual analysis (including site constraints)
  - b) response to context, design rationale and design concept
  - leading to c) a broad structure of layout;

(\*In accordance with the Design SPD (section 1.5 and chapter 3) and the National Design Guide sections on Context and Identity)

- Indicative proposed Landscape Strategy – annotated to broadly describe both the proposed character (what will they look like?) and functionality (how will they be used and by whom?) of streets and spaces;
- Indicative drainage strategy; and (including infiltration, based on SuDS principles);
- Flood Risk Assessment;
- Highway access proposals.
- A description of the proposal;
- Sketches/plans of your proposal - these do not need to be to scale but draft measurements are required; (sections illustrating levels will be important where topography is an issue);
- The relevant fee;

**Please note:** plans will not be printed to scale and should be submitted at a suitable scale that is readable on a laptop or monitor screen (A4/A3).

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## When to submit

The material to be considered at Design PAD should be submitted to the case officer at least two weeks before the Design PAD meeting.

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## Required attendees from the development team

In order to make the session as productive as possible, the complete developer design team should attend the meetings, including for example, as appropriate, urban design, heritage, landscape, highways, drainage, planning and when appropriate, the client/landowner.

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## Panel Members

The panel will consist of:

- Case Officer;
- Chair (if not the case officer);
- Design Officer;
- Lead Local Flood Authority and Highways Authority;
- Other members where required (Conservation Officer, consultant architect, landscape consultant, Drainage Boards / IDB, Anglian Water, Environmental Health, Ecology, Tree Officer, Planning Policy Officer, Affordable Housing Officer, Police Architectural Liaison Officer, Climate Change Officer).

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## Revised schemes and subsequent Design PAD meetings

If a developer has received any previous comments from Design PAD or through other means, they should set out clearly and comprehensively how they have responded to these comments, giving reasons should any comments not have been met.

Schemes can be taken to Design PAD multiple times in order to assess revisions (see the fees on our [website](#)).

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## Follow up meetings

In addition to the option of returning to Design PAD, it is also possible and may be more appropriate in some circumstances, to hold a follow up meeting/s in addition to Design PAD. For example when a specific issue or topic needs to be discussed at length.

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## Design Midlands Design Review Panel

We may recommend certain schemes to also be taken to Design Midlands Design Review for an independent assessment (in line with our Local Plan policy DE1);

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## Fees

At present, a Design PAD meeting is included within the fee for major pre-application consultations.

Although there is a strong preference for schemes to be taken to Design PAD at the pre-application stage, it is also possible to take planning applications to Design PAD.

Please see the fee structure on our [website](#).