

## **DESIGN REVIEW PANEL** REVIEW 2021

Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel 23 February 2021





## Hello

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#### **Presentation summary**

- DRP's role
- Context
- Need for review
- Proposals
- Next steps



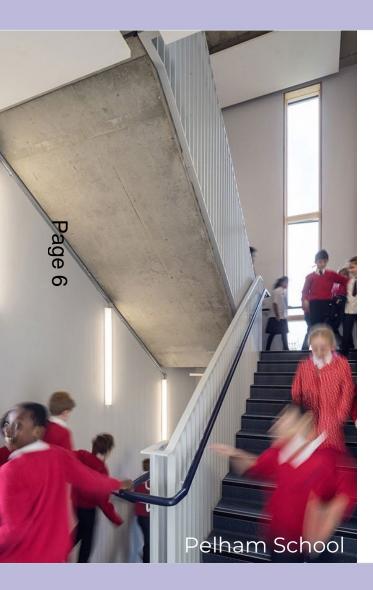


## **DRP: HISTORY**

Merton DRP has been in operation since June 2007. Things were different back then:

- The first iPhone was launched in July
- Public funding for design review
- Design Champions initiative (2004-2006) beginning to wane with CABE
- Local Authority design review beginning to emerge
- Average London house price was £297,994, compared to £490,936 in 2020 (a 165% increase).



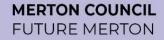


## **DRP: FACTS & FIGURES**

Merton DRP has reviewed many proposals on numerous sites since June 2007:

- 2020 is the Panel's 14<sup>th</sup> continuous year of operation
- There have been a total of 285 reviews for 189 different sites
- A number of sites have been reviewed more than once, with two sites having been reviewed 5 times
- Of the sites reviewed, 74 have been completed and 13 are under construction
- DRP have also reviewed Wimbledon and Mitcham public realm projects, Future Wimbledon SPD and emerging SPDs (small sites + character studies)
- Distribution of verdicts since 2007:
  Red = 20%, Amber = 52%, Green = 28%







#### **DRP: ACHIEVEMENTS**



Brenley Park



Y-Cube





Raynes Park Health Centre



Colliers Wood Library



Atkinson Morley







#### **DRP: ACHIEVEMENTS**



Hollymount School



Merton Hall/Elim Church



AELTC Covered Courts



Kingston Road Quadrant



Ravensbury Estate



Harris Wimbledon





## **POLICY CONTEXT 2021**

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- National Planning Policy Framework
  - London Plan 2021 London Quality Review Charter – 2018 Reviewing Design Review in London – 2017 Mayor's Housing SPG 2020
- National Design Guide
- Merton Local Plan 2021

SIGNIFICANT CHANGE – Much stronger and clearer guidance of how to do DRP





## **DRP CONTEXT 2021:**

- Increased public interest and scrutiny
- Private companies offering design review services (Design Council, Frame, DSE)
- Most London boroughs now have design review of some kind
- Design Review is accepted and valued by the development industry and councillors
- Design review has become more professionalised
- Most Panels pay panellists and charge applicants
- Most Panels have independent chairs
- Design review is embedded in planning policy from the NPPF, through the London Plan to the London Quality Review Charter





#### THE NEED FOR CHANGE

**Q:** How does Merton DRP fare in the 2021 context and compared to other council and private providers?

A: <u>Merton DRP needs to "catch-up" – the context has changed</u> and the DRP must reflect this

- Merton DRP is the same as it was in 2007
- Terms of reference are brief, and out of date
- No published code of conduct
- No public guidance on conflicts of interest
- No public information on panel members or how the panel operates
- No remuneration for panel members
- Currently a free to use service





# What should the Merton DRP aim for in its review?

- 1. To be as good as, and as professional as private providers
- 2. Be in accordance with, and sign up to the London Quality Review Charter

## How to do this?

- 1. Make changes based on good practice of other panels (public and private)
- 2. Implement changes based on the research Reviewing Design Review in London.
- 3. Ensure robust and transparent processes & procedures





#### The Proposals:

- A new **Code of Conduct** all DRP members will sign up to, but also covers all groups involved in the process
- Key changes to the structure and operation of the Panel, including daytime reviews, online, paying panellists and charging applicants.
- Council will be asked to approve the changes, subject to any amendments, and these will be incorporated into a new **Terms of Reference** document.
- Changes will be introduced as soon as possible thereafter.







## Indicative Timetable 2021:

Launch Review Consultation Period Finalise proposals Cabinet decisions Implementation New format DRP March April-May May June July-Oct October 2021+







# **Thank You**

Questions from the Panel



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