



**Governance meeting of the Old Kent Road Community Review Panel**

**Meeting note**

26 April 2021                      18.30 – 20.30

Zoom Video Conference

**Old Kent Road Community Review Panel attendees**

Gurmeet Sian (chair)  
Tyreece Asamoah  
Hugh Balfour  
Hazel Flynn  
James Glancy  
Muyi Kazim  
Aaron Mo  
Victoria Oluwables  
Saidat Oketunde  
Peter Warren  
Madison Westwood

**Attendees**

*London Borough of Southwark*

Cllr Richard Livingstone	London Borough of Southwark
Cllr Evelyn Akoto	London Borough of Southwark
Alicia Chaumard	London Borough of Southwark
Tim Cutts	London Borough of Southwark
Colin Wilson	London Borough of Southwark

*Frame Projects*

Tom Bolton	Frame Projects
Penny Nakan	Frame Projects

**Apologies**

Lucy Atkinson  
Shelene Byer

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## Review of the Community Review Panel's first year

Gurmeet Sian thanked group members for their commitment and contributions, especially in the difficult context of Covid-19 with all meetings held virtually. He has been particularly impressed by the panel's success in holding developers to account on a range of sophisticated issues. He also thanked London Borough of Southwark officers for commissioning a pioneering panel (only one other London borough was operating a community review group when the panel began work in July 2020).

Tim Cutts, Senior Regeneration Manager at the London Borough of Southwark presented an update from the past year:

- Parks and Recreation Strategy – the first project to be reviewed by the panel was delayed by the pandemic, but work to complete it will recommence soon. The first phase will be a linear park on Bianca Road and Malt Street, with work starting in 2022 or 2023.
- The new pedestrian crossing on Old Kent Road is due for consultation during 2022, and discussions are still being held regarding funding.
- The Rich Industrial Estate application reviewed by the panel is still live.
- Following the panel's review of the Jewson Facility, the applicants re considering reducing the overall height of the main block, and changing the profile of the development.
- Affordable housing is averaging around 37 per cent in Old Kent Road developments since the start of 2020.
- Southwark Council are looking to provide a better sense of the context for developments by providing information that sets schemes for review more clearly within the context of the future masterplan.

## Group discussion

A group discussion was held, with everyone asked to identify what they thought had gone well, and less well, during the group's first year. Comments were collated and used to inform discussion during the meeting

Aspects of the year identified as have gone well included:

- quality of chairing
- quality of group comments and the safe space the group provides
- successful reviews despite only meeting online
- variety of perspectives and range of people in the group
- comprehensive presentations from applicants
- clear reports from Frame Projects
- organisation of the group
- training and development sessions



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Areas identified as having gone less well included:

- lack of context provided for schemes being reviewed, to help the panel understand how they will work alongside planning permissions or proposals for other sites in the area
- 3D visualisations would be useful in understanding the schemes
- limited information on sustainability measures needed to reach zero carbon target by 2030.
- the challenges of meeting on Zoom, which have made it hard to hold informal conversations
- not being able to visit sites because of Covid-19
- the regular changing of scheme names
- ensuring all the discussion points included in the agenda are covered during reviews
- clarity over whether points made by individuals are minority or majority views, especially at the end of meetings when time is running out
- the possibility of meetings being shorter v the lack of time to cover all relevant issues

There was also discussion about whether it would be helpful for panel members to know what is and is not changeable about a scheme. It was agreed that it is important for panel members to understand, for example, whether a site has been allocated for a tall building. However, the panel should always feel free to tell applicants and the council what it thinks should happen, regardless of whether their opinion contradicts others.

## **Review meetings and practicalities**

- Gurmeet Sian left the room while group members discussed whether they wished him to continue as Chair of the CRP for a further year. There was unanimous appreciation for his work, and agreement that the group would like him to continue in his role. Group members offer him their support in cutting developers short if they show a tendency to focus on selling rather than explaining their proposals, and in encouraging debate among group members once meetings are possible in person.
- The current meeting arrangements were discussed, and it was agreed that the current systems for managing meetings work well. Meetings will continue to be held via Zoom on Monday evenings. Southwark Council are keen to use the community hub at 231 Old Kent Road as a venue for future in-person meetings. Work on the venue is expected to be completed by the end of June.
- The group asked whether models and maps can be provided, once in-person meetings resume, to help supply more context for the schemes coming forward.
- It was suggested that the group would benefit from a higher proportion of younger people, who would be able to provide different perspectives on the way the city is used.



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- Meeting agendas will show the distinction between group questions and group comments. This will formalise the need to make best use of time by structuring discussion and will help the Chair to guide group members.
- The benefits and practicalities of group site visits was discussed. The possibility was raised of group site visits, or a tour of the area looking at various sites, led by Southwark Council once social restrictions are lifted.
- The question of whether panel members should receive payment for attending meetings was raised. This is not included in the current charges to applicants, which would have to increase to fund stipends and the cost of administering them. If enough panel members consider this an important issue, Frame and Southwark will discuss further.

## *Southwark Council communication*

- It was agreed that more regular updates should be provided on the progress of schemes previously reviewed by the group.
- The group felt that more contextual information would be helpful to ensure reviews can consider individual schemes as part of Southwark Council's plans and ambitions for the whole area.

## *Group membership*

- The combination of backgrounds, professions and perspectives on the group was discussed, and it was generally agreed that the existing combination has been a success. However, it was suggested that further representation could be sought from younger adults in the area, who would provide different insight into the area.

## Training and development

- The group suggested the priority for a future development session should be urban design principles and interpreting plans and drawings.

## **Actions**

### *Actions for Community Review Group members*

- All group members to respond to the email they have received from Frame Projects, to formally confirm whether they would like to continue their group membership for a further year from July 2021 to July 2022. Frame will then provide new contracts in June.



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## *Actions for Frame Projects*

- Frame to confirm with group members whether they wish to continue for a further year from July; and formalise continuing membership with everyone who wants to remain on the group.
- Frame to discuss with Southwark Council options for future group site visits.
- Frame to arrange an urban design training session for the group, in discussion with Gurmeet.

## *Actions for Southwark Council*

- Southwark will update the panel and Frame on the use of the community hub at 231 Old Kent Road for future in-person meetings.
- Southwark will give more clarity to the panel members during briefings over whether aspects of developments cannot be changed.
- Southwark will provide more regular updates on the progress of proposals reviewed by the group.
- Southwark will supply more information on the context for development proposals, including virtual and physical 3D information.

