



LONDON BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK  
OLD KENT ROAD  
COMMUNITY REVIEW PANEL

Handbook 2020

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

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# CONTENTS

1	Introduction	3	11	Expenses	10
2	Old Kent Road	4	12	Meeting dates	11
3	Panel composition	5	13	Briefing and training	12
4	Panel remit	6	14	Review agendas	13
5	Role of the Panel	7	15	Review reports	14
6	Independence and confidence	7	16	Review charges	15
7	Conflicts of interest	8	17	Panel membership	15
8	Freedom of information	8	18	Key references	16
9	Types of meeting	9		<i>Appendix A: confidentiality</i>	17
10	Site visits	10		<i>Appendix B: conflicts of interest</i>	18

Cover image: Brimington Park © Southwark Council



# 1. INTRODUCTION

Southwark Council is launching a new initiative to recruit local people for a Community Review Panel, which will comment on plans for future development on the Old Kent Road.

A 20-year programme of regeneration is underway along the full two miles of the Old Kent Road. Southwark Council's plans will change the street from an arterial road to a destination in its own right – a place for people to live, work and stay. The vision is based around a proposed extension to the Bakerloo Line, with stations on Old Kent Road, alongside new homes, jobs, schools, parks and community facilities. The plans will play a major part in tackling the Borough's housing crisis, delivering 20,000 new homes, 7,000 of which will be affordable including 5,000 at social rent. Regeneration will also double the 9,000 jobs already located along the Old Kent Road.

Southwark Council intends to support and develop the existing residential and business communities, and deliver this growth in a way that benefits the 35,000 people who already live along the Old Kent Road and in its surrounding neighbourhoods. To achieve this, it is essential that the views of people living, working and studying in the Old Kent Road area are heard, and local people have a voice in decision making.

The Community Review Panel is one of the ways through which the Council plans to better understand the needs of the local community. The panel will give independent advice on planning work along the Old Kent Road, discussing issues including housing, transport, public and green spaces, and the environment. This will help ensure that new developments are of the highest possible design quality, and meet the needs of people living and working in the area, now and in the future.

If you would like a summary of this Handbook in your language, please contact [tom@frame-projects.co.uk](mailto:tom@frame-projects.co.uk).



Launch of 231 Old Kent Road © Southwark Council





## 2. OLD KENT ROAD

The history of Old Kent Road stretches back more than 2,000 years. It's one of Britain's oldest roads and its origins can be traced back to an ancient route once used by the Celts. Since Roman times, the road has been the primary route between London and the Kent coast. In the medieval era the road was famous as being a major part of the pilgrimage route to Canterbury. It was later immortalised by Geoffrey Chaucer in his collection of pilgrim stories, *The Canterbury Tales*.

For most of its existence, Old Kent Road had been a rural thoroughfare which led in and out of London but wasn't considered part of the metropolis. During this time, the only significant development had been a handful of coaching inns, catering to the needs of travellers. In the early 19th century, all this began to change: first with the building of the Grand Surrey Canal; then the establishment of the gasworks and later with the arrival of the railways.

Victorian Londoners knew Old Kent Road as a place of industry; associated with the docks, the railway and the South Metropolitan Gasworks. In the late Victorian years, the street would secure its place in Cockney folklore with the 1890's Music Hall song "Knocked 'em in the Old Kent Road" and in the 20th century it became better known still as the starting point for a million rounds of the board game, Monopoly.

After the war, town planners set out to separate housing from industry. Many of the damaged streets and old buildings were replaced either with new council housing estates such as the Tustin (built on the site of terraced housing in the late 1960s) or with new industrial developments; particularly storage and distribution centres.

Post-war planning also saw the creation of the Bricklayers Arms junction and flyover and Burgess Park. By the 1970s the railway had gone into decline and the railway land was redeveloped.

By this time, the canal was also redundant and it was eventually filled-in. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, more housing and factories made way for retail warehouses as well as for the new Brimington Park. The Mandela Way Industrial Estate, which opened in 1984, provided wide, single-storey sheds for modern industry. In the 1990s, functional out-of-town retail warehouse units (with large areas for parking) were built for Tesco and other stores in the Southernwood Retail Park.

Now, 35,000 people live along the three mile length of Old Kent Road and its local neighbourhoods. More than 700 businesses are based in the area and 9,000 people work there.

Regeneration plans present a unique chance to tackle Southwark's housing crisis – 20,000 high quality, new homes will be built to suit people from all walks of life. 35 per cent of all the new housing will be affordable – around 7,000 new affordable homes including 5,000 at social rent.

The Bakerloo line extension from Elephant and Castle to Lewisham is fundamental to Southwark Council's plans. Extending the tube line and building three new stations along Old Kent Road will provide a big boost to the local economy. It will create new jobs and enable many more new homes to be built and at a faster rate.



### 3. PANEL COMPOSITION

The Old Kent Road Community Review Panel brings together ‘local experts’, local people from a non-design background with a passion for and knowledge of the Old Kent Road area. It is made up of a chair, and 12 members drawn from across the community who:

- bring a strong understanding of the area, the way it works, its history, its inhabitants, and local needs
- can provide constructive advice from a community perspective on proposals for development and change, as well as the needs of existing residential and business communities
- will make confident contributions in meetings
- will collaborate and respect the contribution of others in panel discussions

The panel will operate for an initial one-year pilot run, during and after which it will be reviewed, in order to assess whether the panel is performing its intended role effectively. This will also provide the opportunity for panel members to decide if they want to carry on being involved.

The panel will be chaired initially by Gurmeet Sian, an architect and community engagement expert. The longer-term objective, once the panel’s remit and working processes have been fully tested and established, is that the panel may appoint a chair from among its members.



Northfield House © Southwark Council



## 4. PANEL REMIT

The Old Kent Road Community Review Panel has been established to support Southwark Council in achieving high quality placemaking that reflects the priorities of local people.

The panel performs a public role and the Handbook is therefore published on the Southwark Council's website, including the names of the panel's members. However, the individuals in the panel do not perform a representative role, on behalf of a community group, for example. They are not required to have professional planning skills or experience. They are appointed so that they can contribute their own personal experience of living or working in the Old Kent Road area and the surrounding neighbourhoods.

The Community Review Panel will provide independent advice to the planning authority as a 'critical friend' to support the delivery of high-quality development in Old Kent Road. The Community Review Panel will review and comment on development proposals and strategic documents across the Old Kent Road area – both those where Southwark is the client or landowner, and also those brought forward by third party

developers, where Southwark is the planning authority but not the client or landowner.

Southwark is likely to refer schemes to the Community Review Panel at an early design stage to ensure that local priorities and concerns can inform the design process. Advice is likely to be most effective before a scheme becomes too fixed. Early engagement with the Community Review Panel will help test and understand the appropriateness of the proposals to the area and the needs of its communities.

The panel considers significant development proposals in the Old Kent Road area. Significance is not necessarily only related to scale but may also fall into the following categories:

Significance related to size or use, for example:

- large buildings or groups of buildings
- infrastructure projects such as bridges or transport hubs
- large public realm proposals
- masterplans, design codes or design guidance

Significance related to site, for example:

- proposals affecting sensitive views
- developments with a major impact on their context
- schemes involving significant public investment

Significant social infrastructure, for example:

- schools or other education buildings
- parks and open spaces
- streets, cycle and footpaths
- public buildings, for example libraries

As with normal pre-application procedure, review advice given before an application is submitted remains confidential, seen only by the applicant, the planning authority and any other stakeholder bodies that the council has involved in the project. This encourages applicants to share proposals openly and honestly with the Community Review Panel – and ensures that they receive the most useful advice.



Old Kent Road Gas Works © Southwark Council



## 5. ROLE OF THE PANEL

The Community Review Panel provides local views and recommendations to Southwark Council at key stages of the planning process.

The panel plays an advisory role in the planning process. It is for the Southwark officers and elected councillors to decide what weight to place on the panel's comments and recommendations – balanced with other planning considerations.

If any comments made by the Community Review Panel require clarification, it is the responsibility of the presenting team, whether project promoters or Southwark officers, to draw this to the attention of the panel chair (if during the meeting) or the panel manager, Frame Projects (if the report of the meeting requires clarification).



Old Kent Road © Southwark Council

## 6. INDEPENDENCE & CONFIDENCE

The Old Kent Road Community Review Panel is facilitated on behalf of Southwark Council by Frame Projects, an external consultancy. The Council has appointed Frame Projects to manage the panel, to maintain its independence. This means that review meetings are arranged and managed by Frame Projects staff and the panel is chaired, and the discussion managed, by Gurmeet Sian, an architect specialising in community engagement, who is employed on a consultancy basis by Frame Projects. All reports and formal recommendations are written by the Community Review Panel manager, and issued with the approval of the chair, with no prior approval from Southwark Council.

The process for managing the Community Review Panel, the appointment of panel members, including selection of the chair, and the administration of meetings, are agreed in partnership with the Council.

Community Review Panel members are required to keep confidential all information acquired in the course of their role in the panel, with the exception of reports that are in the public domain.

Further details are provided in the confidentiality procedure included at Appendix A.



## 7. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Old Kent Road Community Review Panel is intended to provide a constructive forum for applicants and their project teams and Southwark planning officers to understand the views of local people.

In order to ensure the panel's independence and professionalism, it is essential that panel members avoid any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may arise in relation to schemes considered during the meetings that they attend. Minimising the potential for conflicts of interest will be important to the impartiality of the panel.

Panel members are asked to ensure that any possible conflicts of interest are identified before each meeting. For example, if a panel member or a close relative is directly involved, has a financial interest in, or would directly benefit from a scheme or site being reviewed, this may be a conflict of interest. Members should declare potential conflicts of interest to the Community Review Panel manager. This does not include panel member's homes, as the Community Review Panel has been set up to provide the perspective of local residents, among others.

Appendix B contains more detail on what constitutes a conflict of interest. Meeting agendas provided in advance of reviews will include information on the project and who is involved. When these are sent out, each panel member will be asked to check for any conflict of interest, and to contact the Community Review Panel manager straight away if they believe that there is a conflict.

In cases where there is a conflict, a panel member may be asked to step down from a review. In other cases, a declaration of interest may be sufficient. If in any doubt at all, panel members should contact the Community Review Panel manager at Frame Projects, Tom Bolton – [tom@frame-projects.co.uk](mailto:tom@frame-projects.co.uk) – to discuss.

## 8. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

As a public authority, Southwark Council is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act). All requests made to the Council for information, with regard to the Community Review Panel, will be handled according to the provisions of the Act. Legal advice may be required on a case by case basis to establish whether any exemptions apply under the Act.



Burgess Park © Southwark Council



# 9. TYPES OF MEETING

Two types of Community Review Panel meeting are offered:

- Community Reviews
- Governance and development sessions

## COMMUNITY REVIEWS

A Community Review Panel meeting will be held for major development proposals, masterplans, significant planning policy or guidance documents. Meetings will take place for schemes from outline design stage onwards, either at pre-application or application stage, so that the panel can provide advice to the scheme promoter and to Southwark Council.

All members of the Community Review Panel, including the chair, will be invited to attend. Southwark officers and appropriate stakeholders / organisations may also be invited and asked to give their views after the scheme has been presented.

Community Review Panel meetings will usually take place at a stage when a client and design team have decided their preferred option for development of a site, and have sufficient drawings, models, etc. for a comprehensive discussion. There may be a second pre-application review to provide an opportunity for the panel to comment on more detailed design matters, before planning submission.

The scheme will typically be presented by a member of the design team, normally the lead architect, following a brief introduction by the client. Presentations may be made with drawings and / or pdf or PowerPoint and models, as appropriate. At least one paper copy of the presentation should be provided, for ease of reference during the panel discussion. Individuals, with professional expertise relevant to the topic of the meeting, may be invited to provide facilitation or specific advice.

A typical Community Review Panel meeting will last 120 minutes: 10 minutes of introductions; 10 minutes briefing by planning officers; 30 minutes presentation by the design team; 60 minutes discussion; 10 minutes summing up by the chair.

## GOVERNANCE & DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS

To support the Community Review Panel's role in the planning process, governance meetings may be arranged to provide an opportunity for reflection among the panel on emerging themes and issues. This would also be an appropriate forum for discussions to inform the development of the panel after its initial one-year pilot. Governance meetings will be facilitated by the Community Review Panel chair, and all panel members will be invited to attend.

Training will be provided to equip the panel members with the skills required to understand and constructively input to the review meetings. Development sessions may take a variety of formats, beginning with a panel induction meeting, and with potential to provide training on other topics such as: sustainable design, landscape design or more practical topics such as how to read and interrogate architectural drawings. Topics will be identified with input from the panel members.



## 10. SITE VISITS

Old Kent Road Community Review Panel members are drawn from the local area, and so we anticipate that they will be familiar with the locations where development is proposed. Formal site visits will therefore not be arranged in advance of reviews, but the aim will be to circulate agendas a week in advance of each meeting, to allow panel members to visit the sites independently if they wish to do so.

## 11. EXPENSES

Community Review Panel members are entitled to claim reasonable expenses for travel to review meetings, and for other costs incurred in order to attend meetings. Frame Projects will provide an expense form which should be completed and sent to the Community Review Panel manager, with receipts or other evidence of expenditure, before the date of the next panel meeting.



Old Kent Road opening © Southwark Council



## 12. MEETING DATES

One Community Review Panel meeting is provisionally scheduled every month. These dates may be used for full meetings or workshop meetings, as appropriate. Exceptionally, additional meetings may be required to respond to specific requirements for advice at key points in the masterplan, policy development, planning application and delivery programme.

The panel will meet between 18.30 and 20.30 on a Monday evening. The following dates are currently set for Old Kent Road Community Review Panel meetings in 2020:

- 27 July
- 24 August
- 28 September
- 26 October
- 23 November
- 21 December



Ormside Street © Southwark Council





Ilderton Road © Southwark Council

## 13. BRIEFING & TRAINING

All Community Review Panel members are required to attend an induction meeting before taking part in review meetings. This includes briefings on the Southwark Council context, and on the schemes likely to be reviewed. It also includes a briefing on the panel's role, how it will be governed, and on practical arrangements.

Development sessions may be arranged for panel members, for example on urban design and planning process, and professionals may be invited to contribute to these sessions. Occasionally, professionals may also be invited to attend Community Review Panel meetings to provide additional briefing and to ensure that the panel has all the information it requires.

The induction meeting and governance meetings provide opportunities to discuss the wider needs of panel members, including training needs, to ensure that they can fulfil their roles effectively.



## 14. REVIEW AGENDAS

Agendas will be issued to panel members in advance of each meeting. The agenda and its contents are confidential and should only be read by members of the panel.

For Community Review Panel meetings, a detailed agenda will be provided that includes notes on the planning context, details of the project to be considered, the applicant and consultant team, and those presenting the project, as appropriate.

A scheme description provided by those presenting to the panel will set out factual information about the project. Key plans and images will also be provided to help to give a sense of the scope and nature of the project under review.

Where a project returns for a second or subsequent review, the report of the previous review will be provided with the agenda.



Northfield House © Southwark Council





Pilgrims Way © Southwark Council

## 15. REVIEW REPORTS

During a Community Review Panel meeting the panel manager, Frame Projects, will take notes of the discussion – to form the basis of a report. Reports will be drafted, approved by the panel chair and issued within 10 working days to only those individuals attending the meeting. This ensures that any panel members who are not attending a specific meeting due to a conflict of interest, will not receive a copy of that particular report. The report summarises the comments and advice provided by the Community Review Panel and clearly sets out specific recommendations.

At pre-application stage, reports will provide clear advice on the appropriateness of the proposals to the area, and the needs of its communities. This may assist officers in negotiating improvements.

The report at this stage is not normally made public and is shared only with Southwark Council, the applicant and design team, and any other stakeholders that Southwark officers have involved in the project. Once planning applications are submitted, the report may provide guidance to Southwark officers in reviewing the planning application with regard to community views.



## 16. REVIEW CHARGES

Applicants are referred to the Community Review Panel by Southwark Council as an external service. They pay fees to Frame Projects for delivering this service.

The charges for Community Review Panel meetings are reviewed every year; from 1 January 2020 to 1 January 2022 the charge is:

- £3,000 + VAT Community Review Panel meeting
- £2,500 + VAT governance or development sessions

The cost of venue hire, if required, would be in addition to the charges above.

Payment should be made by the applicant in advance of the review, and the review may be cancelled if payment is not received five days in advance of the meeting. Full details of payment will be provided when an invitation to present to the panel is confirmed.

- full cost within one week of the scheduled review
- £600 + VAT between one and four weeks before the review

## 17. PANEL MEMBERSHIP

### Chair, Gurmeet Sian

Gurmeet is an architect and director of Office Sian Architecture + Design. Most of his commissions have been for clients from the community and charity sectors. He has also been involved in community education projects throughout his career, in particular in partnership with the Victoria and Albert Museum, Open House and the ICA. He runs architecture workshops for SPID Youth Theatre in Kensal House, and has organised building visits for Open City, in London.

### Community Review Panel members

Tyreece Asamoah  
Lucy Atkinson  
Hugh Balfour  
Shelene Byer  
Hazel Flynn  
James Glancy  
Muyi Kazim  
Aaron Mo  
Saidat Oketunde  
Victoria Oluwables  
Peter Warren  
Madison Westwood



# 18 KEY REFERENCES

## **Southwark Council**

Old Kent Road Area Action Plan (2017)

[https://oldkentroad.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/okr\\_area\\_action\\_plan.pdf](https://oldkentroad.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/okr_area_action_plan.pdf)

Old Kent Road Social Regeneration Charter (2019)

<https://oldkentroad.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/OKRSRC.pdf>

New Southwark Plan (2020)

<https://www.southwark.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-transport-policy/development-plan/local-plan>

## **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

## **London Plan**

<https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/current-london-plan>



Burgess Park © Southwark Council





# APPENDIX A

## Confidentiality

The Old Kent Road Community Review Panel provides a forum for advice and guidance to be provided at an early stage in projects, before proposals are public, when advice can have the most impact. Confidentiality is therefore important.

1. Panel meetings are only to be attended by the panel's members, Southwark officers, and officers from stakeholder organisations involved in the project, as well as the applicant and their design team. If anyone else attends, it must be approved by the Community Review Panel manager.
2. Members of the Old Kent Road Community Review Panel will keep confidential all information provided to them as part to their role on the panel, and shall not use that information for their own benefit, nor disclose it to any third party (with the exception of reports that are in the public domain – see points 5 and 6).
3. The Old Kent Road Community Review Panel's advice is provided in the form of a report written by the panel manager, containing key points from the panel's discussion. If any applicant, architect or agent approaches a panel member for advice on a project subject to review (before, during or after), they should decline to comment and refer the inquiry to the panel manager.
4. Following the meeting, the Community Review Panel manager writes a draft report, circulates it to the chair for comments and then makes any amendments. The panel manager will then distribute it to all those included on the meeting agenda.
5. As with normal pre-application procedure, review advice given before an application is submitted remains confidential, seen only by the applicant, the planning authority and any other stakeholder bodies that the council has involved in the project.
6. If a panel member wishes to share a final report with anyone, they must seek approval from the Community Review Panel manager, who will confirm whether or not the report is public.



## APPENDIX B

### Conflicts of interest

To ensure the integrity and impartiality of advice is given by the Old Kent Road Community Review Panel, potential conflicts of interest will be checked before each panel meeting. The following process will apply.

1. All panel members are required to declare any conflicts of interest, and these will be formally recorded at each meeting.
2. Panel members are notified of the schemes coming before the panel at least one week in advance. At this time panel members should check the meeting information provided to them and contact the Community Review Panel manager if they have an interest in a project, or believe they have an interest. If in doubt, the Community Review Panel manager should be consulted.
3. The Community Review Panel manager, in collaboration with the panel chair and Southwark officers, will determine if the conflict of interest is of a personal or prejudicial nature – that is, whether it will prevent the panel member from giving impartial advice.

4. A panel member may have a prejudicial interest in a proposal if s/he has:

a financial, commercial or professional interest in a project that will be reviewed, its client and / or its site;

a financial, commercial or professional interest in a site that is adjacent to the project (not including a panel member's own home) that will be reviewed or upon which the project being reviewed will have a material impact;

a personal relationship with an individual or group involved in the project, or a related project, where that relationship prevents the panel member from being objective.

5. If it is deemed that a conflict of interest is of a prejudicial nature, the panel member should not take part in reviews for the proposal. S/he should also not take part in private discussions of the project and should not be in the room during the discussions of the project.
6. If it is deemed that a conflict of interest is personal, but not prejudicial, the panel member may be allowed to participate in the review. In this situation, the interest will be noted at the beginning of the review, discussed with the presenting teams and formally recorded in the review report.

