

MADE Design Review : GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

1. Introduction

The MADE Design Review process provides a professional and independent service that assesses and advises on the design quality of schemes being developed in the West Midlands.

The schemes we review range from large regeneration projects, master plans, housing layouts down to single dwellings.

Submitting schemes for local Design Review is specifically encouraged in the NPPF and can be a key element assisting the client and the local planning authority in the determination of major or sensitive planning applications.

MADE has an expert Panel of architects, urban designers, landscape architects, planners, engineers, sustainability professionals and other experts in the built environment fields that can be drawn upon as appropriate depending on the nature of the scheme.

The process should be a positive experience for the participants where the aim is to support and improve the quality of the proposal through comment, advice and practical suggestions.

2. When to submit for a Design Review

Clients or their agents should initially contact the MADE office at an early stage of the design process. For the review to have the greatest benefit, there should be enough flexibility and time available to enable the findings of the review to be considered and hopefully taken on board prior to the submission of a planning application.

It may be appropriate to resubmit the scheme for a follow up review just before or at the time of submission for planning permission where changes have been made to the original scheme.

3. The Process

- Agree a date for the review that suits all parties. This should be at least three weeks prior to the review date. These are usually arranged for a morning start (around 10am), Mon-Thurs inclusive, although an afternoon slot or a Friday can on occasions be arranged if necessary.
- The fee will be confirmed by MADE (sliding scale according to the nature and scale of the proposal – see section below on fees)
- Applicants should complete and return to MADE the Design Review Submission Form available on our website under the Design Review section.
- An invoice will be sent out for the full fee in advance and this must be paid prior to the date of the review
- A Panel will be appointed and an agenda sent out to participants
- Applicants need to submit their drawings and supporting information at least a week prior to the review date

- The review will commence with a site visit followed by a discussion on the proposals which should take place at or near the site. The session normally lasts 2-3 hours in total. Please note: The client/agent should arrange for a suitable venue for the Review discussion to take place which should be in the vicinity of the proposed development site.
- A written report will be drafted and sent out to the applicants by MADE following the Review. This normally takes about 10 days.

4. Information required

The information provided prior to the Review session should focus on the following :

- Site description and context – the topography, surrounding landscape and the setting of the proposal, site constraints and the character of the adjoining built environment
- The planning context – planning history, status of the site, and relevant policies affecting it
- The client's brief - objectives, accommodation requirements, constraints, design preferences
- The design rationale – the design concept and the thinking behind it, How the site and its context has informed this process should be a central part of the development of the concept (this analysis should be well illustrated as it will be critical to the Panel's considerations)
- The proposal itself – plans, elevations, sections and perspectives where possible.

Please Note: The Panel should not be overwhelmed with information or background data and the focus should be on communicating the essence of the site, the concept and the design of the proposal.

5. Involvement of the Local Planning Authority

MADE strongly supports the involvement of the local planning authority in the Design Review process. The attendance of one or more representatives at the Review discussion can be very helpful in highlighting the key planning issues and clarifying points of policy interpretation or background as well as other relevant planning matters. Attendance at the discussion can also help their general understanding of design as well as the thinking behind the Panel's observations.

6. The Panel

The Panel consists of a Chair (a senior member of the Design Panel membership) and two or three Panel members depending on the scale and complexity of the scheme being reviewed. The expertise of the Panel will be tailored to the nature of the proposal but would likely include an architect, a planner and a landscape architect.

7. The Design Review day

Site visit (up to 1 hr)

The review commences with the Panel meeting the client and/or their agents at the site of the proposal. The Panel is shown around the site where the context for the proposals can be explained and any queries from the Panel responded to.

Please note : there is no discussion of or comment made on the merits or otherwise of the proposals at this stage.

Venue for discussion

The applicants or their agents are asked to provide a suitable venue for the review discussion. This is normally in close proximity to the site or sometimes at the offices of the local planning authority.

Please Note : It is considered helpful to have a representative of the Local Planning Authority in attendance. Applicants are encouraged to arrange this if possible.

Short presentation (15 mins)

The applicant's agents (usually the architects) give a short presentation which covers the site context, design rationale and the essential elements of the proposal.

Please note: It is important that this is kept brief to maximise the time available for discussion which is the focus of the review.

Discussion (approx. 1 hr)

The session will be chaired by the Chair of the Design Panel. If representatives of the local planning authority are present they are usually asked if there are points they would like to make at the outset or aspects they would like the Panel to cover.

The Panel will seek clarification on points they are unsure about or ask for additional information where needed. The Chair of the Panel will identify what the Panel members consider to be the key issues and the subsequent discussion will focus on these aspects.

The Panel will highlight positive aspects of the scheme as well as any shortcomings they perceive. Suggestions or alternatives will be put forward where possible to provide some direction to the client and /or agents as to how they might proceed.

The Chair will summarise the key points that have arisen which will then feature in the final written report that MADE will issue.

Please Note: The final report will only cover points raised at the discussion and so there should be no surprises contained within it.

8. Desk Top Reviews

A follow up Desk Top Review can be arranged where proposals have been refined in response to the MADE Design Review report. The revised proposals are considered remotely (usually by email) and is led by the Chair of the original Design Review Panel. This option is undertaken at the discretion of the Panel Chair. If the scheme is considered to have been amended significantly or re-

designed completely then this process will not be available. In such cases a full Design Review would be considered appropriate.

9. Fees

The following represent the fees charged by MADE as at May 2019.
Fees are to be paid in advance of the Review session.

- a) Small schemes e.g. individual houses inc Para 79 schemes - £3,000+VAT
- b) Medium sized schemes e.g. small complex or smaller housing estates - £3,500+VAT
- c) Large schemes e.g. mixed use schemes, master plans, town centre projects - £4,000+VAT
- d) Follow-up Desk Top Reviews - £1,000+VAT

10. Feedback

Clients and/or their agents are encouraged to provide feedback on the Design Review process and the extent to which it has helped the design process.

11. Contact

Email : meredith@made.org.uk
Tel : 07976100058

MADE
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