

Folkeston
& Hythe



OTTERPOOL PARK PLACE PANEL

Terms of reference 2020

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

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CONTENTS

1	Introduction	3	10	Site visits	11
2	Principles of quality review	4	11	Meeting dates	11
3	Panel composition	5	12	Review agendas	12
4	Panel remit	6	13	Panel reports	13
5	Role of the Place Panel	7	14	Place Panel membership	14
6	Independence, confidence and probity	7	15	Key references	19
7	Conflicts of interest	8		<i>Appendix A: confidentiality</i>	20
8	Freedom of information	8		<i>Appendix B: conflicts of interest</i>	21
9	Types of review	9			

Cover image: Westenhanger Castle © Ian Knox



1. INTRODUCTION

Folkestone & Hythe District Council is working with local landowners, residents and partners to develop a new community at Otterpool Park. This will be a garden town that builds on existing assets, including landscape, location and infrastructure – as well as community aspirations.

Otterpool Park will open up opportunities for long term housing growth and contribute significantly towards the employment needs of the district, Kent and the South East more broadly. It will be defined by: distinctive, innovative design; cutting edge technologies; employment opportunities; accessible green space; and high quality public realm.

With a unique setting in the heart of Kent, Otterpool Park is planned along garden town principles. The natural environment will be enhanced by carefully designed homes and gardens, generous parks and an abundance of trees and woodlands.

Otterpool Park will be grounded in sustainability – in its broadest interpretation. There will be a wide range of mixed tenure homes and jobs for all age groups that are within easy walking, cycling and commuting distance. New technologies and innovative design will be exploited to achieve a low carbon, low waste and low water usage environment.

To help fulfil these aspirations, Folkestone & Hythe District Council has established a Place Panel. This will provide ‘critical friend’ advice to the planning authority as the policy framework and masterplan for Otterpool Park are taken forward.

The Place Panel brings together leading practitioners across those disciplines particularly relevant to development and delivery of a new garden town, including: urban design and masterplanning; town planning; landscape design; social infrastructure; sustainability and innovation; transport infrastructure and public realm; housing typologies; heritage; and development delivery.

The Place Panel’s composition and remit reflect a review process that is multidisciplinary, collaborative and enabling.



Land near Studfall Castle and Lympe Castle © Paul Wells

2. PRINCIPLES OF QUALITY REVIEW

Independent – it is conducted by people who are unconnected with the scheme’s promoters and decision makers, and it ensures that conflicts of interest do not arise.

Expert - the advice is delivered by suitably trained people who are experienced in design, who know how to criticise constructively and whose standing and expertise is widely acknowledged.

Multidisciplinary – the advice combines the different perspectives of architects, urban designers, town planners, landscape architects, engineers and other specialist experts to provide a complete, rounded assessment.

Accountable – the design review panel and its advice must be clearly seen to work for the benefit of the public. This should be ingrained within the panel’s terms of reference.

Transparent – the panel’s remit, membership, governance processes and funding should always be in the public domain.

Proportionate – it is used on projects whose significance, either at local or national level, warrants the investment needed to provide the service.

Timely – it takes place as early as possible in the design process, because this can avoid a great deal of wasted time. It also costs less to make changes at an early stage.

Advisory – a design review panel does not make decisions, but it offers impartial advice for the people who do.

Objective – it appraises schemes according to reasoned, objective criteria rather than the stylistic tastes of individual panel members.

Accessible – its findings and advice are clearly expressed in terms that design teams, decision makers and clients can all understand and make use of.

Design Review: Principles and Practice
Design Council CABE / Landscape Institute / RTPi / RIBA (2013)



Pond at Folkestone Racecourse © Folkestone & Hythe District Council



3. PANEL COMPOSITION

The Otterpool Park Place Panel brings together leading professionals working at the highest level in their fields. It is made up of around 15 members, including the chair.

Place Panel members are chosen to provide a broad range of expertise with particular relevance to Otterpool Park, including:

- urban design / masterplanning
- town planning
- landscape design
- social infrastructure
- sustainability / innovation
- transport infrastructure / public realm
- housing typologies
- heritage
- development delivery

Many of those appointed to the Place Panel will have expertise and experience in more than one of these areas. The composition of each panel meeting will be chosen as far as possible to suit the project / issue being reviewed.

Membership of the Place Panel is reviewed regularly (at least once a year), to ensure that it provides all the necessary expertise and experience to undertake its work effectively.

From time to time, it may be of benefit for specialist advice to be provided beyond the Place Panel membership. In such cases, a professional with the relevant expertise may be invited to attend a review meeting, participating in the discussion with the status of an adviser to the panel.



Panel site visit © Edward Bailey





Military Canal in Hythe © Immanuel Giel / Wikimedia Commons

4. PANEL REMIT

The Otterpool Park Place Panel has been established to support Folkestone & Hythe District Council in achieving high quality, innovative and sustainable placemaking.

A Charter for Otterpool Park has been drawn up by Folkestone & Hythe District Council (see section 15). This sets out strategic development principles for creating a new town that is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.

The Place Panel provides independent, objective expert advice to the planning authority as a ‘critical friend’ to support delivery of the vision set out in the Charter. This includes formulation of planning policy and development strategies. The Place Panel evaluates development proposals across the Otterpool Park area – both those where Folkestone & Hythe District Council is the client or landowner and also those brought forward by third party developers where Folkestone & Hythe District Council is the planning authority but not the client or landowner.

Generally, schemes are referred to the panel by planning officers at an early design stage to identify and consider the key assumptions of the proposed design. The independent advice given by the panel is likely to be most effective when given before a scheme becomes too fixed. Early engagement with the Place Panel should reduce the risk of delay at application stage by ensuring that design quality has reached an acceptable standard. The planning authority may also request a review once an application is submitted.

The panel’s advice may assist the planning authority in negotiating design improvements and may support decision making by the planning committee, including refusal of planning permission where design quality is not of a sufficiently high standard.

The Place Panel provides this support to Folkestone & Hythe District Council through both place review and specialist support.





5. ROLE OF THE PLACE PANEL

The Place Panel provides independent and impartial advice on development proposals, at the request of planning officers, and plays an advisory role in the planning process.

It is for Folkestone & Hythe District Council planning officers and the planning committee to decide what weight to place on the panel's comments, balanced with other planning considerations. Applicants should consult planning officers following a review to agree how to respond to the panel's advice.

If any points made by the panel require clarification, it is the responsibility of the presenting team, whether planning officers or Otterpool Park promoters, to draw this to the attention of the chair of the panel (if during the meeting) or the panel manager, Frame Projects, (if the report requires clarification).



6. INDEPENDENCE CONFIDENCE & PROBITY

The Place Panel is an independent and impartial service provided to Folkestone & Hythe District Council by Frame Projects, an external consultancy.

The processes for managing the Place Panel, appointing members, including the selection of the chair, and the administration of meetings are agreed in partnership with Folkestone & Hythe District Council.

Panel members shall keep confidential all information acquired in the course of their role on 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 Place Panel is intended to provide a constructive forum for applicants, their project teams, and Folkestone & Hythe District Council planning officers seeking advice and guidance on strategy, policy and design quality.

In order to ensure the Place Panel's independence and professionalism, it is essential that 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 Place Panel.

Members are asked to ensure that any possible conflicts of interest are identified at an early stage, and that appropriate action is taken to resolve them.

Meeting agendas provided in advance of reviews will include sufficient project information to allow any potential conflicts of interest to be identified and declared.

In cases where there is a conflict, a member may be asked to step down from a review. In other cases, a declaration of interest may be sufficient. If in doubt, members should contact Frame Projects to discuss this.

Further details on the process for managing conflicts of interest are provided at Appendix B.

8. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

As a public authority, Folkestone & Hythe District Council is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act). All requests made to Folkestone & Hythe District Council for information with regard to the Otterpool Park Place 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.



Fountains at Folkestone Harbour © Folkestone & Hythe District Council

9. TYPES OF REVIEW

Three types of review are offered:

- a place review
- a workshop review
- a mentoring session

Typically, the chair and four panel members would normally attend a place review. The chair and one panel member attend workshop reviews. One panel member, with the required specialist expertise, would normally attend a mentoring session.

PLACE REVIEWS

A place review will be offered to provide advice and support to Folkestone & Hythe District Council at key points in the masterplan, policy development, planning application and delivery programme.

A place review will normally take place when fundamental principles are established, and preferred options are identified, and when there is sufficient information, including documents, drawings and models, as appropriate, to inform a comprehensive discussion.

Large projects / topics may be divided into smaller elements for the purposes of review to ensure that each element receives an adequate amount of time for discussion.

There may also be a second or subsequent pre-application review to allow discussion of more detailed design matters, before submission of the planning application.

In addition to planning officers, where appropriate, other relevant stakeholders / organisations may be invited to attend and asked to give their views after the project / topic has been presented.

The project / topic will be presented by a member of the design team, normally the lead architect, landscape architect or engineer, as appropriate. Presentations may be made with drawings and / or pdf or PowerPoint and models. At least one printed copy of the presentation should be provided, for ease of reference during the discussion.

A site visit will take place before the first place review for each project / topic to ensure that the Place Panel has a solid understanding of the context.

A place review will normally last for 120 minutes: 5 minutes introduction; 10 minutes briefing by Folkestone & Hythe District Council planning officers; 45 minutes presentation; 55 minutes discussion; 5 minutes summing up by the chair.



Seafront at Hythe © Folkestone & Hythe District Council



WORKSHOP REVIEWS

Workshop reviews may be arranged on projects / topics such as planning policies and design guidance where draft strategy and other documents are available for comment and there is sufficient information to inform a comprehensive discussion. Where relevant, Folkestone & Hythe District Council planning officers will brief the Place Panel on its discussions with other relevant stakeholders / organisations – including any public consultation.

The project / topic may be presented by Folkestone & Hythe District Council planning officers or a member of the design team. Presentations may be made with drawings and / or pdf or PowerPoint and models. At least one printed copy of the presentation should be provided for ease of reference during the discussion.

Site visits are not usually required for workshop reviews – although may be arranged where relevant. Alternatively, a Place Panel member who has attended a site visit in relation to a place review may be invited to attend a workshop review.

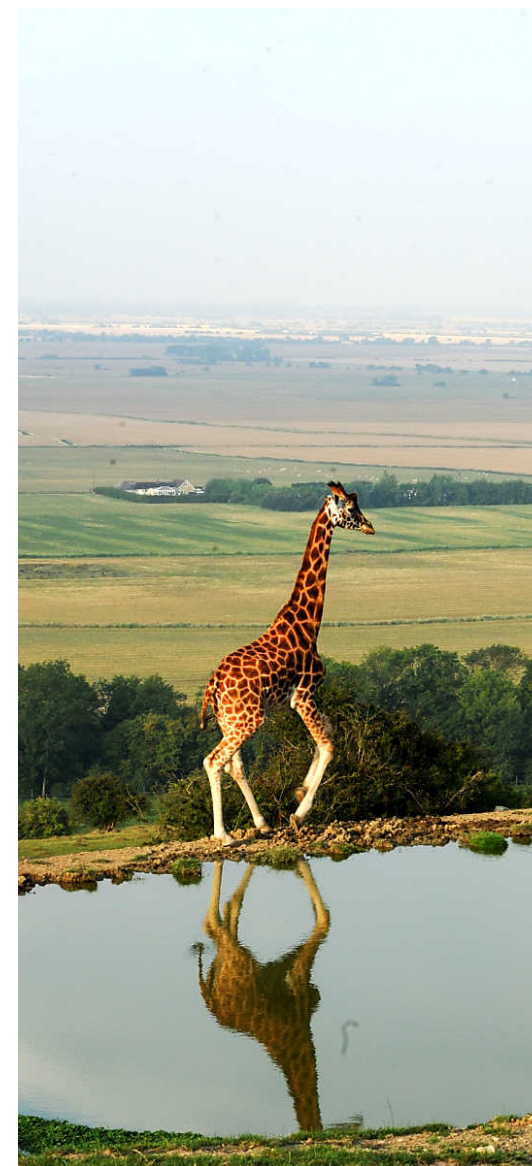
A workshop review will normally last for 90 minutes: 5 minutes introductions; 5 minutes briefing by Folkestone & Hythe District Council planning officers; 35 minutes presentation; 40 minutes discussion; 5 minutes summing up by the chair.

MENTORING SESSIONS

Mentoring sessions may be arranged where Folkestone & Hythe District Council planning officers require advice in order to formulate the approach to a specific thematic issue. Mentoring sessions will most often be appropriate where development of the approach to a specific issue is at an early stage and / or where an initial draft of a document is emerging.

Presentations may not be required – but draft documents may be circulated to the panel member in advance to allow them to prepare before the meeting. Any presentation should generally be kept short to maximise the time for contributions from the panel member.

A mentoring session will normally last for 60 minutes, with the format / timing of the session tailored to the subject being considered.



Rothschild Giraffe © Port Lympne Reserve





Panel site visit © Edward Bailey

10. SITE VISITS

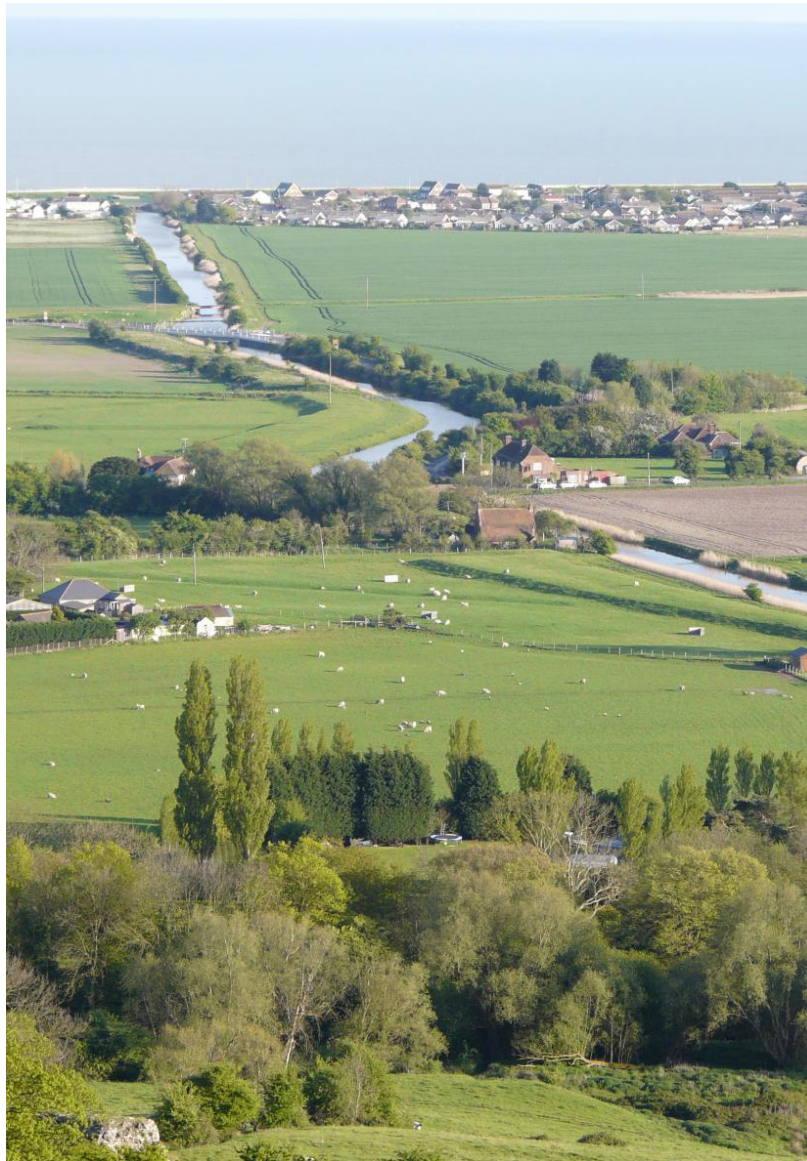
Wherever possible, a site visit will be arranged for place reviews (unless a site visit has already taken place before an earlier review of the scheme). All panel members participating in the review are required to attend.

A site visit may also be required for workshop reviews, if relevant to the project / topic under consideration.

11. MEETING DATES

Dates for Place Panel meetings during 2020 will be set to meet specific requirements for advice at key points in the masterplan, policy development, planning application and delivery programme. Panel members will be given advance notice of meetings where their expertise is required.





Land near Studfall Castle and Lympe Castle © Paul Wells

12. REVIEW AGENDAS

Agendas will be issued to panel members in advance of each review.

For place reviews, a detailed agenda will be provided that includes notes on the planning context, details of the project to be considered, applicant and consultant team, as appropriate.

Information provided by Folkestone & Hythe District Council planning officers will include relevant planning history and planning policies that officers consider essential for assessing the scheme. Advice may be specifically sought on design quality assessed against these policies.

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

For workshop reviews and mentoring sessions, the agenda will be briefer, providing details of the project to be considered, applicant and consultant team, as appropriate.

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



13. PANEL REPORTS

During the Place Panel meeting the panel manager will take notes of the discussion - these form the basis of panel reports. Reports will be drafted, agreed with the chair, and issued within 10 working days.

At pre-application stage, reports will provide clear, independent advice on ways in which the quality of development proposals could be improved, referring where appropriate to Folkestone & Hythe District Council's planning policies in relation to expectations of high quality design.

The Place Panel has an advisory role in Folkestone & Hythe District Council's planning process, and the project team should consult planning officers following a review to agree how to respond to points raised in the report.

Once planning applications are submitted, the report may provide guidance to Folkestone & Hythe District Council's planning committee in determining the planning application. This may include suggesting planning conditions or refusal of planning permission if the placemaking or design quality is not of an acceptably high standard.

Place Panel reports may be included in committee reports on planning application schemes – in which case planning officers will put this in the context of other planning matters, which the panel's advice neither replaces nor overrules.

Panel reports are only made public at the planning application stage, at which point the report will be a public document kept within the proposal's case file and published on Folkestone & Hythe District Council's website. However, only the final report is made public.

At the end of each year, the Place Panel manager will draft an annual report. This will be a brief document describing and reflecting on the

panel's activities over the past year. As part of this annual review process, a meeting will be held with key Folkestone & Hythe District Council officers and the panel chair to discuss the report and consider any recommendations for the following year.



Folkestone White Horse © Tony Hisgett



14. PANEL MEMBERSHIP

The Place Panel brings together around 15 professionals, covering a range of disciplines and expertise. Each review panel will be selected from the people listed below, according to the requirements of the project / issue being reviewed.



Joanne Cave (chair)
Urban designer
Partner, David Lock Associates

Joanne Cave is a planner and urban designer, and joined David Lock Associates in 1997. She specialises in leading complex masterplan projects from concept through to development on the ground, working closely with multidisciplinary teams to ensure an integrated approach.
www.davidlock.com



Tony Burton
Social infrastructure expert
Consultant

Tony Burton works on community, design and environmental projects, including as a leading neighbourhood planner. Previous roles include Director of Strategy and External Affairs at the National Trust and Director of Policy and Communications at the Design Council. He is vice chair of the HS2 Independent Design Panel.



Nicole Collomb
Landscape Architect
Consultant

A chartered landscape architect with over 25 years' experience in the public, private and voluntary sectors, Nicole Collomb is an influential advocate for high quality, landscape led development. She is currently working with the Greater London Authority, to help deliver the Mayor's ambition for a Greater London National Park City.





Melissa Dowler
Architect
Director, Bell Phillips Architects

Bell Phillips Architects specialises in housing, in particular designing high quality affordable housing for local authority clients. Melissa Dowler has over a decade of experience of housing and regeneration, and also significant experience in public realm design, most notably the award winning Gasholder Park at King's Cross Central. www.bellphillips.com



Barney Evans
Sustainability expert
Sustainable Places, Energy, Waste, WSP

Barney Evans is a specialist in sustainable development and energy with over 13 years' experience, working on schemes of all scales both in the UK and internationally. He runs WSP's Sustainable Places, Energy and Waste team and is a CIBSE Low Carbon Consultant and Certified Measurement and Verification Professional. He also writes articles and delivers training in these areas. www.wsp.com



Louise Goodison
Architect and heritage expert
Director, Cazenove Architects

An architect and heritage design adviser, Louise Goodison has been director of Cazenove Architects for over 20 years. She advises local authorities, developers and communities throughout London and the South East. As a conservation architect, she works with the Diocese of London, advising at local level on church and community buildings. www.cazenove-architects.net





Paul Hudson
Development delivery expert
Former Chief Planner

Paul Hudson has worked in planning and economic development throughout his career, including for Kent County Council, the South East England Development Agency, and central government where he was Chief Planner and Director of Thames Gateway. He continues to work part time for the government on proposals for national infrastructure.



Phil Jones
Transport infrastructure/public realm expert
Managing Director, Phil Jones Associates

A chartered engineer, Phil Jones has over 30 years' experience in the planning and design of development infrastructure. He contributed to Manual for Streets, as well as other influential publications, and has carried out research for government and local authorities on residential car parking and cycling infrastructure design.
www.pja.co.uk



Selina Mason
Development delivery expert
Director of Masterplanning, Lendlease Europe

A masterplanner and architect, Selina Mason has delivered complex urban masterplans. She now drives high quality design and masterplanning across Lendlease's urban regeneration portfolio. She previously led LDA Design's urban regeneration masterplanning team in London, and the design and delivery of the post Olympic Games masterplan.
www.lendlease.com/uk





Stephen Proctor

Architect

Founding Director, Proctor & Matthews Architects

Stephen Proctor has over 25 years' experience as an architect and urban designer. The practice's portfolio includes award winning mixed use regeneration projects, new residential neighbourhoods, education and community buildings. He has been a lecturer, visiting critic and external examiner at schools of architecture across the UK and abroad.
www.proctorandmatthews.com



Sam Richards

Transport infrastructure/public realm expert
Consultant

As Head of Urban Integration at Crossrail from 2008 to 2017, Sam Richards led an urban realm improvement programme for 31 stations as part of a £100m programme. He is a member of the HS2 Independent Design Panel and also a design adviser to Transport for London.



Glen Richardson

Town planner

Associate Partner, Carter Jonas

A masterplanner and urban designer, Glen Richardson has over 27 years' experience in the public and private sectors. He has developed large scale frameworks for new growth sites in and around Cambridge. He now advises private and public sector clients on a wide range of housing and commercial development projects.
www.carterjonas.co.uk





Dinah Roake
Development delivery expert
Consultant

Dinah Roake has worked for the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), Advisory Team for Large Applications (ATLAS), and on some of the country's largest developments, including eco-towns and Northstowe, Cambridgeshire. She is an expert in the comprehensive development of a new town and its social infrastructure.



Judith Sykes
Sustainability expert
Director, Expedition Engineering

Judith Sykes is a civil engineer with expertise in the design and delivery of smart and sustainable built environments. She has a background in major infrastructure projects, including Heathrow Terminal 5 and the London 2012 Olympic Park. Her work includes infrastructure planning for sustainable regeneration projects.
www.expedition.uk.com



Gus Zogolovitch
Housing typologies expert
Managing Director, Unboxed Homes

Gus Zogolovitch has some 20 years' experience in property development. He set up London's first custom build developer, Inhabit Homes, to help people build their own homes; and Crowdestates, a peer-to-peer lending platform for small developers and communities. He is an executive committee member of the National Custom & Self Build Association.
www.unboxedhomes.com



15. KEY REFERENCES

Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Otterpool Park

www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/more-homes/more-jobs/otterpool-park

Otterpool Park Expression of Interest

[www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/media/3726/Otterpool-Park-Expression-of-Interest/pdf/Folkestone & Hythe_District_Council_EoI.pdf](http://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/media/3726/Otterpool-Park-Expression-of-Interest/pdf/Folkestone%20%26%20Hythe_District_Council_EoI.pdf)

A Charter for Otterpool Park

www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/news/charter_otterpool_park

Folkestone & Hythe Growth Options Study Phase 2 report

[www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/media/4328/Folkestone & Hythe-Growth Options-Phase-Two-Report/pdf/Folkestone & Hythe_Growth_Options_Phase_Two_Report_FINAL_260517.pdf](http://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/media/4328/Folkestone%20%26%20Hythe-Growth-Options-Phase-Two-Report/pdf/Folkestone%20%26%20Hythe_Growth_Options_Phase_Two_Report_FINAL_260517.pdf)

Government

Locally led garden villages, towns and cities

www.gov.uk/government/publications/locally-led-garden-villages-towns-and-cities

Principles of design review

Design Review: Principles and Practice, Design Council CABI / Landscape Institute / RTPI / RIBA (2013)

<http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/resources/guide/design-reviewprinciples-and-practice>



APPENDIX A

Procedure regarding confidentiality

The Otterpool Park Place Panel provides a constructive and reliable forum for applicants and their design teams to seek guidance at an early stage, where the panel's advice can have the most impact. It is therefore essential that appropriate levels of confidentiality are maintained. The following procedure shall apply.

1. Panel meetings are only to be attended by the panel members, Folkestone & Hythe District Council officers, and officers from stakeholder organisations involved in the project, for example statutory consultees, as well as the applicant and their design team. If any additional individual is to attend, it should be approved by the Place Panel manager.
2. Panel members shall keep confidential all information provided to them as part of 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 7 and 8).
3. The panel's advice is provided in the form of a report written by the Place Panel manager, containing key points arrived at in discussion by the panel. If any applicant, architect or agent approaches a panel member for advice on a scheme subject to review (before, during or after), they should decline to comment and refer the inquiry to the panel manager.
4. If, subsequent to a review of a scheme in which a panel member has participated, s/he is approached by any applicant, architect or agent to ascertain a potential interest in contributing to the project team for that scheme, s/he must decline. Professional work in a scheme previously reviewed by a panel member is not permitted.
5. Panel members are not restricted from professionally working on projects within the area. However, if such a scheme comes up for review, that panel member should not be involved and must declare a conflict of interest.
6. Following the meeting, the Place Panel manager will write a draft report, circulate it to the chair for comments and then make any amendments. The agreed report will then be distributed to all relevant stakeholders.
7. If the proposal is at a pre-application stage, the report is not made public and is only shared with Folkestone & Hythe District Council, the applicant and design team, and any other stakeholder bodies that Folkestone & Hythe District Council has consulted on the project.
8. If the proposal is reviewed at an application stage, the report will be a public document kept within the proposal's case file and published on Folkestone & Hythe District Council's website. However, only the final report is made public.
9. If a panel member wishes to share a final report with a third party, they must seek approval from the Place Panel manager, who will confirm whether or not the report is public.



APPENDIX B

Procedure regarding conflicts of interest

To ensure the integrity and impartiality of advice given by the Place Panel, potential conflicts of interest will be checked before each review meeting. The following process will apply.

1. All panel members will be 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 a week in advance. It is expected that at this time panel members should declare any possible interest in a project to the Place Panel manager.
3. The Place Panel manager, in collaboration with the panel chair and Folkestone & Hythe District Council staff, will determine if the conflict of interest requires the panel member to step down from the meeting, or if a declaration of interest would be sufficient.
4. In general, a panel member should not attend a review meeting 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 project, its client and / or a site that is adjacent to the project 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. Personal interests that should be declared, but which would not normally prevent a panel member participating in a review meeting, might include current work with a member of the consultant team for a project that will be reviewed. In this situation, the interest will be noted at the beginning of the review, discussed with the presenting design teams and formally recorded in the review report.

