



DESIGN
COMMISSION
FOR WALES
COMISIWN
DYLUNIO
CYMRU

Consulting the Commission through the Design Review Service

December 2020

Consulting the Commission through the Design Review Service

Table of contents

1	Introduction
2	About the Design Review Service
2.1	Overview
2.2	Why consult the Commission?
2.3	The Design Review Panel
2.4	Which projects benefit from the Design Review Service?
2.5	When is the best time to consult the Commission? Early and ongoing engagement
2.6	Who can register a project for Design Review?
2.7	The design approach we advocate
3	The Design Review Process
3.1	The Design Review Process – before the meeting
3.1.1	Registering a project: the important first step
3.1.2	Cancellation policy
3.1.3	Submitting pre-review information
3.1.4	The role of the Lead Panellist
3.1.5	Site visit
3.2	The Design Review Process – on the day
3.2.1	How will the meeting be structured?
3.2.2	Who should attend?
3.2.3	Project presentation and what to bring on the day
3.2.4	Discussion
3.3	The Design Review Process – after the meeting
3.3.1	Written Comment
3.3.2	Additional information
3.3.3	Confidentiality and publicity
3.3.4	Documentation
4	Welsh Government ‘call in’ procedures and planning inquiries of the Planning Inspectorate of England and Wales
5	Conflicts of interest
6	Contact information

Introduction

Our vision is for a Wales that is simply a better place.

We promote good design for the built environment, across sectors, by connecting the design disciplines.

We support local planning authorities, developers and clients to capture the value of high-quality design and place-making for better outcomes and better return on investment.

We nurture design talent for a skilled workforce necessary for growth and innovation.

By promoting good design and communicating its benefits, we add value and help to support well-being and enhanced quality of life for people throughout Wales.

One of the ways we promote good design is through our national Design Review Service which provides early, strategic, and ongoing opportunities for clients, designers, developers, local planning authorities and others, to seek an independent view and draw on the Commission's multi-disciplinary expertise, to add value and maximise design quality on development proposals throughout Wales. You can find out more about our other services for Client Support, Training and other activities on our website: www.dcfw.org

This guide provides you with the information you need if you are considering using the Design Review Service or preparing for a Design Review meeting.

We are happy to help with any questions or provide further information, so please contact us at connect@dcfw.org or telephone us on +44 (0) 29 2045 1964.

2

About the Design Review Service

2.1

Overview

The Design Review Service provides for a flexible, constructive and strategic engagement process that is recognised as robust and authoritative.

Projects are presented to the Design Commission for Wales' (DCFW) multi-disciplinary panel of experts and, through constructive discussion, the Commission helps clients, developers, design teams and local planning authorities deliver the best design quality and value.

Since 2004 we have reviewed well over 500 projects of varying type and scale throughout Wales, from single dwellings in a National Park to large transport and energy infrastructure projects. The Commission's input is regularly sought and adds greatest value at the earliest stages, well in advance of public consultation and the submission of planning applications.

Early consultation with the Commission is recommended in Planning Policy Wales and is associated with good practice. We recommend and welcome early consultation and strategic, multiple reviews for very complex or significant projects.

The Commission is a non-statutory consultee. However, its comment represents material considerations in a local planning authority's determination of planning applications. DCFW's comment is recognised as authoritative by the Planning Inspectorate.



Design Review discussions in progress

Why consult the Commission?

DCFW's aim is for Design Review to create time for design, help reduce error, and enhance the overall design quality of development in Wales. Good design adds value in many ways and well-designed proposals will:

- Maximise efficiency and value for money
- Focus on users, maximising ease of use, accessibility, inclusiveness and public value
- Use resources and energy efficiently, contributing to carbon reduction
- Contribute to significantly improved patient recovery times in healthcare
- Contribute to healthier places
- Reduce maintenance, costly refurbishments and running costs
- Make products, places and buildings more attractive
- Add value and enhance long term public good

The expertise contributed through the Design Review Service is a constructive part of the design process. Through the Design Review Service we aim to:

- Capture early opportunities to add value by optimising design quality
- Support and encourage the delivery of genuinely sustainable places, buildings and infrastructure which enhance well-being and quality of life
- Assist local planning authorities, public bodies and other agencies to support aspiration and ambition for design quality, to strengthen their own design guidance, and review procurement approaches and development practices
- Ensure that any projects involving public funding delivery public value

The Design Review Service facilitates access to expert design input that will provide:

- Independent, practice-based professional comment
- Identification of opportunities for improvement and added value
- A breadth of expertise which may not be available to the project team, the local planning authority, or stakeholders, which may highlight opportunities that have not previously been identified
- A reasoned basis for design and procurement decisions
- Knowledge of previous and current development projects in Wales that can assist coordination, collaboration, and knowledge sharing
- An opportunity to take a step back and a fresh look at the design process to give clarity to the design story

“Our interaction with DCFW was creative and collaborative at all stages of the process. The conversation at the review meeting was very interesting and led to changes being made to the design which the scheme has benefited from. We enjoyed the dialogue and thought it was a good example of how DCFW can help.”

Alun Jones - Dow Jones Architects for Maggie's South East Wales

The Design Review Panel

The Design Commission for Wales' Design Review Service draws on a panel of 38 practising professionals, each with their own specialist expertise. The multi-disciplinary profile of this team means that a range of experience is available, including architecture, urban design, commercial property development, landscape, transport, energy, civil and structural engineering, sustainability, and carbon reduction, planning and environmental design.

A list of panel members is published on our website at www.dcfw.org

The Design Review Panel are appointed through competitive application and interview. Reappointments are subject to individual biennial reviews to maintain the quality of the service and ensure a balance of relevant expertise. Panellists are unpaid and collectively represent significant private sector support for DCFW's work.

As current practitioners, members of the Design Review Panel are constantly updating their knowledge and expertise. DCFW also provides training and development to continually improve the review process and to ensure that we are well informed of design innovation, developments in planning and sustainable design practice, changes to regulation and policy, new legislation, guidance, and other relevant issues. We place great emphasis on learning from the review process and sharing the experience and knowledge we gather.



Design review discussions in progress



Which projects can benefit from the Design Review Service?

Our Review service is open to anyone and is operated in the context of our commitment to good place-making and to the objectives of the Well-being of Future Generations Act Wales. The Commission reviews schemes which:

- Are significant because of their site and/or context
- Are significant because of their size, complexity, or public impact
- Exemplify persistent design problems facing developers, local planning authorities or community and neighbourhood groups

We consider projects of varying type and scale throughout Wales including:

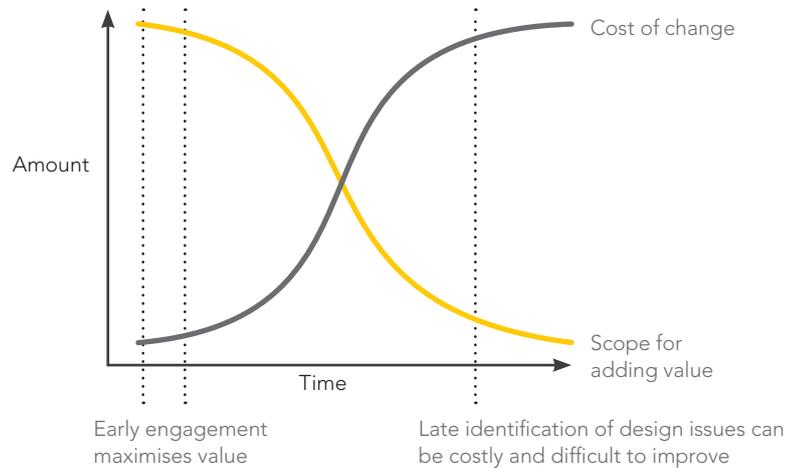
- Strategic sites, masterplans, and urban design frameworks
- Village, town, and city centre regeneration
- Public realm and landscape projects
- Heritage, conservation, and cultural projects
- Individual buildings
- Residential and mixed-use developments
- Healthcare, schools, and public service buildings
- Transport and energy infrastructure projects

The significance or impact of a project can belie its scale. Smaller projects are equally important to us where there is potential for significant impact.

Local authorities may use the service to workshop and test masterplan proposals and/or strategic development opportunities.

When is the best time to consult the Commission? Early and ongoing engagement

Cost/value graph shows how engagement at an early stage in the design process can add value, whereas late identification of design issues can be costly and cause delays



Early engagement is essential to maximise the benefits of Design Review. When proposals are at a formative stage the expertise available through the Commission can be most effective as a constructive part of the design process. The early stages of design development and decision making offer the greatest opportunities for securing good quality, adding value and avoiding the costs of re-working or making changes later. Typically, this will be early in the pre-application stage, during RIBA Stage 2 Concept Design, once strategic design approaches have been defined.

Early consultation with the Commission is recommended in *Planning Policy Wales (PPW10)* and *Technical Advice Note 12: Design (TAN 12)*. You can find links to these documents on page 24 of this publication.

Please note, that Design Review should not be seen as a substitute for pre-application consultation with the local planning authority.

For strategic sites, complex or larger scale projects, Developments of National Significance (DNS), Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs), transport or other infrastructure we recommend an initial scoping meeting to establish the nature and needs of the project, the timescale within which you are working and how the Commission can best assist.

The Commission welcomes longer term engagement and may review a project several times through its design and development process. Teams are welcome to return when it is clear that additional reviews would be helpful.

The Design Review Service is flexible and, whilst a minimum number of meetings each month are planned in advance, we regularly supplement these to accommodate projects in a timely manner and to allow for longer term engagement, full or half day sessions sometimes for individual schemes. We also offer our services online and via a range of video conferencing facilities.

Please Note: In order to ensure the privacy of all attendees and to meet GDPR requirements DCFW does not record video conferenced meetings regardless of which platform is used (Zoom, MSTeams, Webex etc). Neither does DCFW authorise any attending person or party to record all or part of any meeting.

Design Review Reports that are generated following a review meeting are not intended as a set of minutes, rather a constructive precis of the Panel's position in regard to issues discussed during the meeting.

In the first instance, **we strongly recommend that you telephone or email us** so that we can register your project and discuss what form of engagement will work best for your scheme.

2.6

Who can register a project for Design Review?

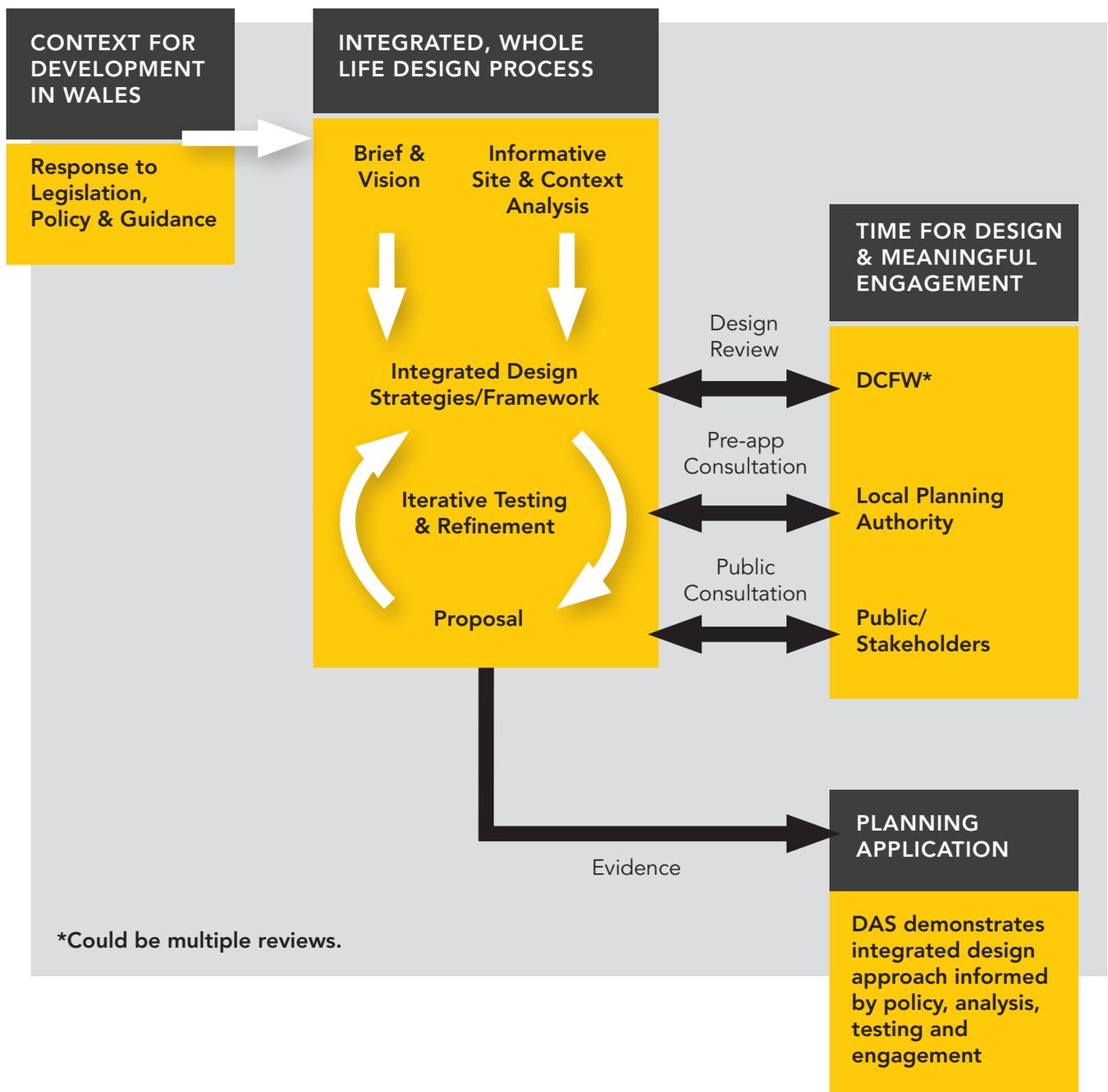
The service is available for developers, clients, designers, planning authorities, stakeholders and other public bodies, community groups or members of the public who wish to seek an independent expert view, and to draw upon the expertise of the Commission. Any of the above can benefit from review, request that DCFW be consulted and in most cases register a project for Design Review.

In all cases a review is carried out ideally with the client, design team and local authority present. At times, the Commission may decline to review a project which is too far advanced in the process or where there is little scope to add value.

If you are involved in a project which you think would benefit from the Design Review Service, please contact us to discuss your project and register for a review meeting.

'The Design Commission for Wales provides a free Design Review Service, which allows early consultation with its independent expert panel. The Commission also publishes case studies and produces good practice guides on design related issues, which may be useful for pre-application discussions.'

p. 13, Practice Guide: Realising the potential of pre-application discussions, published by the Welsh Government in May 2012



2.7

The design approach we advocate

2.7.1

Response to legislation, policy and guidance

DCFW's approach to evaluating design quality is independent, expert and informed by relevant Welsh Government legislation, national and local planning policy, guidance, and standards. These set the context for development in Wales and encourage good design practice. At Design Review we look for evidence that proposals are being designed in response to the following:

Legislation, Policy & Guidance	Design Response
Planning (Wales) Act 2015	Planning context and process
Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015	<p>Responds to Seven Well-being Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A prosperous Wales – A resilient Wales – A healthier Wales – A more equal Wales – A Wales of cohesive communities – A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language – A globally responsible Wales <p>Upholds the Five Ways of Working:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Long term – Prevention – Integration – Collaborations – Involvement
Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013	Improve opportunities for cycling and walking for everyday journeys
Equality Act 2010	Promote equal opportunities for all
Planning Policy Wales 10	<p>Land use planning</p> <p>Excellent place-making</p> <p>Sustainability through good design and planning</p>
Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12: Design	Sustainability through good design
TAN 18: Transport	Efficient, sustainable, healthy transport systems
Practice Guide: realising the potential of pre-application discussions	Informed by discussion with local planning authority
Site and Context Analysis Guide: Capturing the value of a site	Early, informative analysis of site and guidance
Practice Guidance: Planning for Sustainable Buildings	Integrated approach to sustainable design and planning
Inclusive Design in the Built Environment	Design for all
Manual for Streets Volumes I & II	People orientated streets
Design Guidance: Active Travel (Wales) Act	Better opportunities for cycling and walking for everyday journeys

2.7.2

Integrated, whole-life design

The Commission advocates an **integrated** approach to design rather than separate consideration of different issues. To achieve this, different expertise is needed in an integrated design team from the outset, including architects, landscape architects, urban designers, environmental designers, engineers, and cost consultants.

Good design is not only about what a building, space or place looks like, but also how well it performs. The design of landscape and public realm is equally important as the design of buildings, and the relationship between the two is crucial. Environmental design and engineering cannot be effectively added to a project at a later stage of the design process.

We advocate maximising the 'whole life' value of a development by promoting sustainable design that:

- Reinforces social cohesion and a sense of community
- Contributes to economic prosperity
- Minimises negative environmental impact
- Contributes to de-carbonisation
- Contributes to health and well-being
- Enhances long-term public value
- Enhances place identity/sense of place.

2.7.3

Time for design and meaningful engagement

To achieve best quality and value, sufficient time is required for design and meaningful engagement.

From experience, the Commission knows that investing in the early design stages and allowing time for an iterative process of analysis and testing leads to better design and helps minimise risks and cost later in the project.

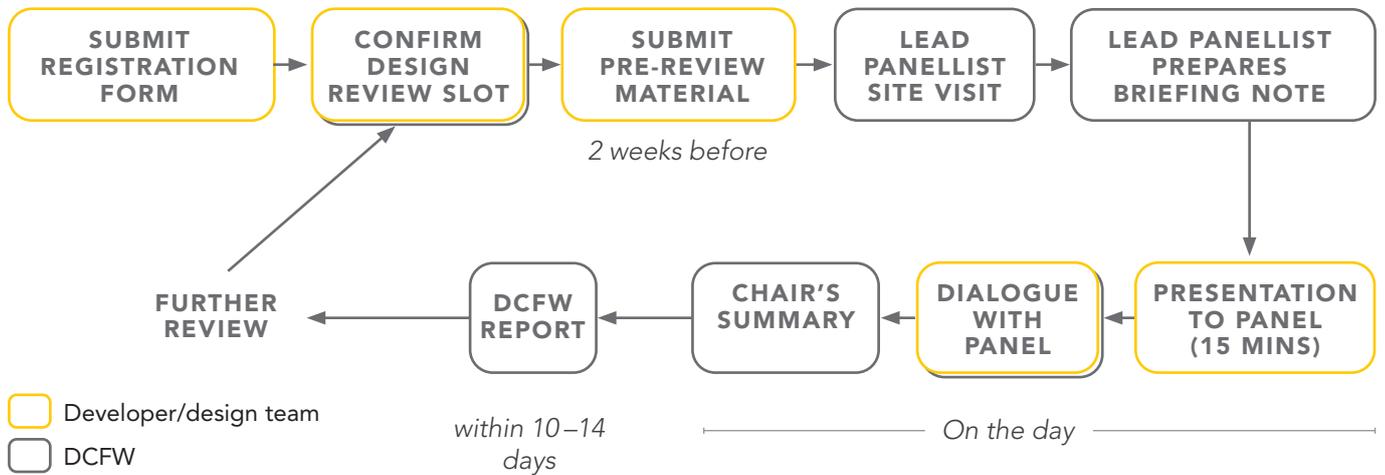
The Planning (Wales) Act 2015 introduced a statutory period of Public Consultation prior to the submission of a planning application. Public consultation and engagement with other stakeholders is only meaningful if it informs the design process. This requires time to analyse feedback and incorporate changes before a planning application is made. The Commission will expect this to be fully programmed.

'Good design can save money, reduce risks, add value, deliver more projects on time and create infrastructure that looks good and works well for everyone. All nationally significant infrastructure projects should have a board level design champion, and use an independent design panel to maximise the value provided by the infrastructure.'

**Assessment Report of the UK National Infrastructure Commission 2018,
Chaired by Sir John Armitt, CBE FREng, former chair of the Olympic Delivery
Authority and President of the Institution of Civil Engineers 2015-16**

3

The Design Review Process



3.1

The Design Review Process – before the meeting

3.1.1

Registering a project: the important first step

The **first step** in the process is to register your scheme so that we have basic information about the proposal and understand its nature, planning status and timescales. Please call or email us to obtain a registration document at the earliest opportunity. Email connect@dcfw.org or Telephone +44 (0) 29 2045 1964.

Once a completed registration document is received, we will contact you about your project and programme to arrange how much time and how many meetings you may need and when they should take place..

We cannot make any arrangements until the scheme is registered. Completing and returning your registration is the first step required.

3.1.2

Cancellation policy

DCFW's preparation for consultation through the Design Review Service is intensive and requires significant administration resources and agreeing the diary commitments of many professionals.

For this reason, once you have confirmed, we operate a cut-off date for cancellation which falls **two weeks** before the review. We will advise you of the cut-off date when we confirm arrangements with you. We will aim to re-arrange meetings only if we are informed of changes or cancellation before the cut-off date.

Cancellation on or after the cut-off date, will attract a **£500 administration charge**.

3.1.3

Submitting pre-review information

You will need to submit a package of pre-review material to DCFW **two weeks** in advance of the date of the meeting. We will confirm the date by which this information is needed when we confirm your meeting date and time. We will need **one hard copy** and **one electronic copy** of the pre-review information.

The purpose of submitting pre-review material is to enable the DCFW team to understand the context and proposals. This understanding is useful for our site visit and aids a constructive, in-depth discussion at the review meeting.

The material and information you provide will reflect the stage of development of your project - we understand that design processes remain fluid and are likely to change. The material should be concise but clearly communicate the fundamentals of the project and the approach being taken. The level and type of information will depend on the scale and nature of the scheme, but as a guide for most projects you should include:

- An outline of the project vision, objectives, and brief
- A location plan and existing site layout (this helps facilitate a site visit)
- Plans, sections, and elevations that show context (structures and landscape) – larger bullet?
- Relevant analysis of site and context, showing how this has informed the design approach
- Plans showing how the design has developed and why
- Strategy drawings to show your approach to:
 - access and movement
 - environmental design for comfort and sustainability
 - layout, density, and orientation
 - landscape design
 - form and massing etc.
- Current plans, sections and elevations for the proposal showing context. All plan drawings should clearly indicate a north point and contain a scale bar.
- A clear, concise draft Design and Access Statement (DAS) if applicable. This should be visually rich and explain the design approach through diagrams and drawings rather than text. Please refer to *Design and Access Statements in Wales*, published by Welsh Government

Any precedent images used within the presentation should cite the name of the architect, the project name, and the project location.

Materials and information for significant infrastructure projects should include what is listed above, as well as:

1 Key facts

- Simple outline project programme showing key dates and work stages from project start to anticipated completion of construction
- Project brief and objectives, including any wider aspirations or standards to be achieved (e.g. associated developments by other parties, CEEQUAL etc).
- Details of the consenting process e.g. planning application, Development Consent Order (DCO), Transport & Works Act Orders (TWAO), and relevant consenting authority, and a succinct outline of key applicable policies
- Expected source of funding and status (e.g. subject to further decision, must be spent by specific date, etc.)
- Current client, consultant, and contractor team

2 Analysis

- Site location plan
- Site 'as existing' drawings (plans, sections, elevations as appropriate to explain current topography, landscape and structures)
- Relevant analysis of site and context, showing how this has informed your design strategy

3 Strategy

2D and 3D diagrams and illustrations to show your approach to:

- Routes for people, transport modes, vehicles, and transport systems
- Where new works are located and why
- Layout, scale, form, and visual impact of the design
- Social and environmental impact (including energy and embodied carbon)
- Landscape design
- Any temporary works and future re-instatement
- Appropriate changes to existing infrastructure (especially where the new works replace or supplement existing provision)

4 Design proposals

- Plans, sections and elevations of the proposals, location and General Arrangement drawings
- 3d images of the proposals, showing context (where tree-planting is significant images should show 'year 1' and views after substantial tree growth)
- Design Statement, which should include information from all items shown above. It should be visually rich and explain the design approach through diagrams and drawings rather than text. It should not duplicate the contents of any Planning Statement that considers detailed aspects of planning policy

The type of 'Design and Access Statement' used for detailed planning applications for buildings may not be a strict requirement for all consent processes, but we strongly encourage preparation of clear, visually rich design statements and design intent documents for all infrastructure projects.

3.1.4

The role of the Lead Panellist

One of our Design Review panellists will lead the review of your project. They will make a site visit and study the material you send prior to the meeting, identifying key design issues where quality can be enhanced, performance and user experience improved, and value added. They will lead the dialogue and discussion around these key points at the Design Review meeting. The lead panellist will share observation and importantly open up the dialogue at the outset of the discussion.

3.1.5

Site visit

To enable the lead panellist's site visit, contact details and information regarding limitations or special access arrangements related to the site must be provided in your registration document.

If you arrange to meet a member of the DCFW team on site, discussion must be restricted to clarifying the pre-review material and NOT pre-empting the review meeting or making a promotional case for the scheme.

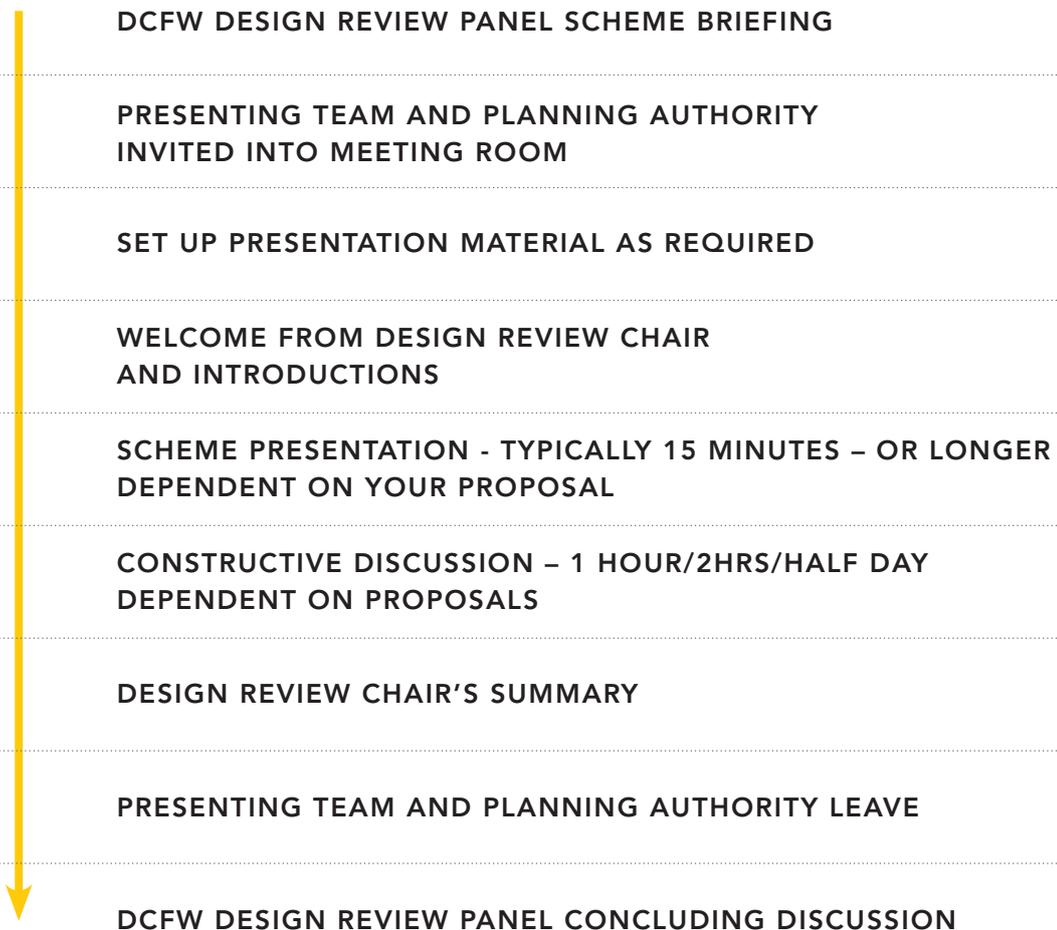
3.2

The Design Review Process – on the day

3.2.1

How will the meeting be structured?

Your review meeting will follow the same structure where you and your team join us online or in person. The diagram shows how a typical Design Review meeting is structured:



Very large or complex schemes may be given more time, and this will have been discussed when you registered the project. You will be advised in advance of the timings for your meeting and provided with all the details you need if you are joining us online.

Please Note: In order to ensure the privacy of all attendees and to meet GDPR requirements DCFW does not record video conferenced meetings regardless of which platform is used (Zoom, MSTeams, Webex etc). Neither does DCFW authorise any attending person or party to record all or part of any meeting.

Design Review Reports that are generated following a review meeting are not intended as a set of minutes, rather a constructive precis of the Panel's position in regard to issues discussed during the meeting.

3.2.2

Who should attend?

It is most beneficial if the meeting is attended by:

- client/developer
- key members of the design team
- planning consultant
- local planning authority
- other significant stakeholders

DCFW will usually invite a representative of the local planning authority to the meeting and to provide a written Planning Context Briefing in advance, in order that we are aware of their views and any concerns.

It is usual that approximately five representatives of DCFW's Design Review Panel will be present, including at least one of our Design and Place Advisors from the staff team, as well as our Chief Executive. One of the panellists will chair the meeting.

Occasionally, observers may be present to observe the process for professional development purposes, practice experience or study. DCFW has robust protocols for observers that apply for all projects, especially where teams have requested confidential consultation.

3.2.3

Presenting your scheme and what to bring on the day

Following a welcome from the Chair and introductions, you will need to clearly and succinctly communicate your current development proposals and the process you took to get there. You will usually be allocated **15 minutes** to do this, dependent on your proposal. It is important to keep to time, as the value of the meeting is in the discussion and dialogue with the expert panel.

We recognise that a significant amount of progress may be made between the submission of pre-review material and the meeting itself, so you should aim to bring DCFW up to date, identifying areas that have changed or progressed.

Your presentation should cover:

- A **succinct** outline of the project vision, objectives, and brief
- A concise overview of the procurement and planning context, including key dates
- How the project fits into any wider regeneration strategy and/or strategic vision or masterplan
- Relevant analysis of the site and context, showing how this has informed the design approach
- Demonstration of your strategic approach to:
 - access and movement, including Active Travel
 - contribution to the requirement of the Well-being of Future Generations Act
 - environmental design for comfort and sustainability
 - inclusive design
 - layout, density, and orientation
 - landscape design
 - form and massing etc.
- An overview of the design proposal, including place-making, public realm/ landscape design. Make sure all drawings show context and a north point is clearly indicated on plans
- The detail of the scheme as appropriate for the current design stage
- Planned next steps

You are welcome to use boards or sheets (DCFV will provide easels if you join us in person) and/or a PowerPoint or a single, succinct PDF presentation for video conference platforms and screen sharing.

Our audio-visual smart screen equipment will be made ready if you are joining us in person. You can bring your presentation on a USB or send it to us electronically so that it can be pre-loaded. This can be sent by email (up to 20mb), Dropbox or other commonly used file sharing programmes.

Video conferencing arrangements require that you provide us with a single PDF in advance of the meeting to allow screen sharing during presentation and discussion.

Physical models are welcomed and are particularly useful in conveying scale, massing, and local impact. They need not be complex, and we welcome working models if you are meeting with us in person, or good photographs of models using multiple viewpoints if you are joining us online. We cannot store physical models, so please bring them with you on the day.

Please note: *Our building has ground floor access steps, an alternative accessible entrance, a Grade II listed elevator and standard width doors to our office.*

Animations or 'fly-throughs' should not be relied upon as the main material for the meeting and the design team should check that they are compatible with the computer equipment at the DCFV in advance and effectiveness for use in video conference meetings.

Following the presentation, the local planning authority, if present, will be invited to comment.

3.2.5

Discussion

The Design Review meeting is structured to promote dialogue between DCFW and the project team, allowing a constructive yet frank exchange based on mutual knowledge of development, planning, design methods, commercial viability, and procurement practices. The discussion is necessarily rigorous and, in the time available, our questions and evaluation are likely to be direct, robust, and incisive, whilst being constructive and courteous.

In closing, the Chair will endeavour to summarise the key points to be distilled in the Design Review Report.

“Just to let you know that today I got approval for my passivhaus homes development in West Wales. Needless to say, I’m delighted by this result and would like to thank you and your team for all the support during the process. I’m convinced that the Design Review significantly helped in the development of the scheme and I firmly believe that if I had not taken this approach the scheme would be of a far lower quality than that which has been approved.”

Green Gull Ltd

Panel members, design teams and developers in dialogue at a review meeting



3.3

The Design Review Process – after the meeting

3.3.1

Written Comment

DCFw's comment will be set out in a written report which will be issued to those who attended the meeting within 10 – 14 working days. The report will distil and constitute our official comment and will place emphasis on the areas which are most important in the evolution of the scheme to achieve the best quality and value.

The report should not be treated as a set of meeting minutes. It will be as brief as possible, using clear language and emphasising key, material issues arising from the discussion. It will be set out in such a manner as to be useful for all parties, including the wider public and other stakeholders, local planning authorities and the Planning Inspectorate.

3.3.2

Additional information

The comment of the Commission constitutes its independent, expert view at the time it was consulted and based on the material made available. The comment of the Commission is a material consideration in the determination of a planning application and is recognised by the Planning Inspectorate. The comment of the Commission and complete Design Review Reports may be used in submissions to the Planning Inspector at Public Inquiries and Planning Appeals.

The Commission does not offer an analysis of whether a proposal should be granted planning permission. This is a matter which is properly the remit of local planning authorities. However, we may ask questions or express a view upon such matters, including the planning context, relation to national and local planning policy and guidance, and the quality of the application. These comments are recognised as material considerations in the planning process.

If for any reason DCFw does not wish to be further involved in a project on which it has been consulted, it will say so in writing. In such cases, there is no need for DCFw to be consulted formally again as part of the planning process. **In all other cases DCFw should be notified when a planning application is submitted.**

3.3.3

Confidentiality and publicity

In most cases the written comment is immediately made public via the Design Commission's website, social media, press releases and other platforms. The Commission comments in this way for the purposes of public record and in the public interest.

DCFw recognises that the early, informative stages of design, when Design Review can be of most value can often be well in advance of detailed planning discussions, public consultation, and planning submissions. Therefore, at times, we offer projects which are not yet in the public domain a confidential meeting, for a limited time and until such time as it becomes public, via any platform including websites,

media, public consultation materials and planning submissions. We will assess this on a case by case basis and in order to protect the interests of the design team and allow them to explore different ideas and approaches with us at an early stage.

In all cases, however, DCFW will make its views known to the local authority and where appropriate to other public bodies.

In cases where the applicant or others publicise or promote the project through artist impressions, other images or verbal comment, or by quoting the comments of the Commission, before a planning application is submitted, DCFW will also make its views public. This includes the period of statutory public consultation.

When a planning application has been submitted, DCFW will make its views on the scheme available to the public. This includes schemes that have been considered in confidence by the Commission prior to a planning application being submitted, but which subsequently become public. In this case, the Design Review report will be made public with the provision that it applies to the scheme at the time it was reviewed. If a scheme has changed significantly, the team should inform DCFW of the nature of the changes or return for further consultation.

3.3.4

Documentation

DCFW will store and may make copies of material submitted pre-review and presented at the Design Review meeting.

DCFW will, from time to time, photograph Design Review Service meetings and workshops in progress, to provide visual material for publication in its literature, case studies and/or for advocacy, educational, dissemination or other purposes.

In the event that materials and images are not already in the public domain, DCFW will seek permission of the relevant parties prior to the publication of any images and will explain its reasons for usage. DCFW will not publish any material prior to the project entering the public domain without consent.

DCFW observes copyright law as it applies in England and Wales and does not exploit images gathered in this way for commercial gain.

DCFW periodically publishes overviews and lessons from the Design Review Service. This often requires the use of images from material submitted for review meetings. Such material will only be published with the permission of the owners and written consent will be obtained beforehand. The Design Review publications can be downloaded from our website: <http://dcfw.org/?category=publications>

Welsh Government 'call-in' procedures and Planning Inquiries of the Planning Inspectorate of England & Wales

Whatever DCFW's position on relevant applications, local authorities should notify DCFW if those applications are subject to a 'call-in' procedure by the Welsh Government, or are the subject of a planning Appeal, as DCFW may wish to draw attention to particular issues that might be considered or provide evidence at an inquiry.

DCFW's comments represent 'material considerations' in the planning process. Our written reports are recognised as authoritative by the Planning Inspectorate and may be referred to or included in evidence submitted at an inquiry. In certain circumstances the Commission will be represented and/or give evidence at an appeal hearing in its capacity as an independent expert body. The Commission will not appear on behalf of an appellant or local planning authority.

It should be noted that reports are comments on schemes as presented at the time of the review. Proposals may change significantly between the review date and planning submission.

DCFW is fortunate to benefit from the expertise of practitioners from the wide range of built environment and property professions. It is recognised that securing such expertise may present potential conflicts of interest and/or perceptions of such conflicts.

As a national body in receipt of public funding via the Welsh Government, DCFW takes its responsibilities toward public probity very seriously and ensures that any conflicts are identified, declared and recorded at an early stage, and that appropriate action is taken to address them.

The Chair, Commissioners, Staff and Design Review Panel are required to declare any personal or business interests that may conflict with their responsibilities.

DCFW maintains a Register of Interests appropriate to the Commission's activities, which lists direct and indirect interests which members of the public might reasonably think could influence their judgment.

Commissioners and Design Review Panel members update their register annually and as changes occur. DCFW's register of interests is available to the public.

In addition to the public record of interests, Commissioners and Design Review Panel members must ensure that:

- Open declarations of any conflict of interest arising in the time between annual declarations, are recorded in DCFW's register. This means they must be declared immediately they arise
- Invitations or intentions to join other organisations in whatever capacity are declared as soon as they occur
- Declarations must be made regarding any direct or indirect relationship with any company, individual, agent or other party involved in presenting a project to the Commission. Knowledge of or involvement in the same project, or one on the same site for an alternative client, must also be declared. Such declarations are recorded in the Design Review report. If a conflict of interest is deemed to exist, then the panel member must withdraw from the meeting
- Information gained by DCFW team members and the panel, in the course of their service, should not be used for personal or political purposes, to gain financial or non-financial benefits, nor should Panel members, staff or Commissioners seek to use the opportunity of service to promote the private interests of connected persons, firms, business or other organisations

Contact information

For further information about the Design Review Service please contact us:

Comisiwn Dylunio Cymru / Design Commission for Wales
4th Floor, Cambrian Buildings
Mount Stuart Square, Cardiff, CF10 5FL

+44 (0) 29 2045 1964
connect@dcfw.org
www.dcfw.org

Appendices

References and Resources

- Planning Policy Wales 10
- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12: Design
- Placemaking Wales Charter and Resources
- Practice Guidance: Planning for Sustainable Buildings
- Design and Access Statements in Wales, published by Welsh Government
- Site and Context Analysis Guide: Capturing the value of a site



DESIGN
COMMISSION
FOR WALES
COMISIWN
DYLUNIO
CYMRU