

Design Review

This document outlines the operation of the City of Melville Design Review Group.

If you are searching for general information in relation to planning requirements, please refer to the Planning Services page of our website <https://www.melvillecity.com.au/> or alternatively you can speak to one of our planning officers either on the phone 9364 0666 or in person at 10 Almondbury Road, Booragoon during business hours, 8.30am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday.

Policy Type: Local Planning Policy Policy Owner: Director Urban Planning	Policy No. LPP1.2 Last Review Date: 17 March 2026
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Citation

This is a Local Planning Policy prepared under Schedule 2 of the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015* (Regulations) and the City of Melville Local Planning Scheme No. 6 (LPS No. 6). This Local Planning Policy may be cited as Local Planning Policy No. 1.2 – Design Review (LPP 1.2).

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear and consistent framework for the operation of the City of Melville Design Review Group. The policy seeks to ensure that design review is undertaken in a transparent, accountable and timely manner, providing high-quality, independent and expert advice on the design quality of development proposals.

Design review is a measure supporting the implementation of State Planning Policy 7.0 – Design of the Built Environment (SPP 7.0). Design review is an evaluation process that raises the design quality of development proposals and planning instruments which deal with built form. Design review is conducted by a panel of trained, multi-disciplinary specialist and brings additional insight to each proposal to ensure alignment with SPP 7.0. Design review benefits developers and design teams in offering expert feedback and fresh perspectives in design development, which are valuable for complex or unique proposals. It also benefits assessors and decision makers in providing robust and independent professional insights on the design quality that aid in assessing proposals and making balanced, informed decisions. Design review has been demonstrated to enhance community spaces, and ensure major development leaves a positive legacy for the community compared to proposals which have not gone through this process.

Policy Objectives

To ensure the administration of the City of Melville Design Review Group (DRG) is aligned with the process outlined by the State Government Local Government Design Review Manual to set up and operate design review processes.

To augment the provisions of the Local Design Review Guide where required.

Policy Scope and Application

The Design Review Group is to:

- Provide independent expert advice on certain development proposals and other planning instruments against the 10 Design Principles within SPP 7.0
- Provide, through the Chairperson, independent, impartial, expert advice on design quality which will be provided to proponents, decision-makers and the community in a formal written report and recommendation against the 10 Design Principles of *State Planning Policy 7.0 – Design of the Built Environment*.
- Adhere to the requirements of this Local Planning Policy, the associated Terms of Reference and the City's Code of Conduct.

This policy applies to the role and function of the City of Melville Design Review Group and the Canning Bridge Design Review Group for sites within the City of Melville. The Design Review Group is an advisory body only and not a decision maker. Design Review is not a development or planning assessment, and the advice that comes from design review is not binding in the planning process.

Definitions and Abbreviations

Chair

The design review panel member appointed as Chair. They will usually be the Session Chair for a project review unless they are unavailable or have a conflict of interest.

Deputy Chair

One to two design review panel members appointed as Deputy Chairs. They can be the Session Chair for a project review depending on availability, conflicts and expertise.

Design Advice

Professional advice provided by an appropriately qualified individual typically relating to a specific design element of a proposal.

Design Review

A process of review conducted by a multi-disciplinary panel of qualified professionals established by a regulatory authority and typically addresses an entire proposal rather than specific elements.

DRG

Design Review Group

Design Review Group Pool

A discrete selection of panel members identified to provide design review services the City's Design Review Group.

Minutes

Administrative minutes capture details of the design review session including attendance, apologies, meeting time and duration. Design Review Report: A record of the Panel's critique and advice against the SPP 7.0 Ten Design Principles. It is not a verbatim record of the design review session.

Session Chair

A Chair or Deputy Chair who will chair a design review session for a specific project. The Session Chair should remain the same for all reviews of a project unless completely unavoidable.

SPP 7.0

State Planning Policy 7.0 – Design of the Built Environment

Terms of Reference

An associated document outlining the administration and operational requirements of the City's Design Review Group.

Policy Requirements

1 Status of the Design Review Group:

- 1.1 Design Review Group (DRP) members either collectively or individually are not authorised to speak on behalf of the City or provide comment to the media in respect of any item under consideration.

2 Membership:

2.1 The DRG will comprise a maximum of ten members including:

- Six essential members in Architecture, Landscape architecture and Urban design
- One heritage architecture specialist (ideally with aboriginal cultural heritage expertise as well);
- One sustainability / environmental specialist (including environmental design, systems ecology, urban water expertise); and
- One community representative (with preference for this representative to have design or specialist expertise).

Additional specialist members may be considered in the following fields:

- Accessibility and universal design;
- Transport planning;
- Public art; and
- Civil, structure and services engineering.

- 2.2 Of the above, there will be preference for positions to be made up of local residents to ensure appropriate community representation and consideration, with at least one member of each panel to be a resident. Each meeting is required to have at least one member as a local resident. Appointed by Council to fulfill the requirements outlined in this Policy and the City's Terms of Reference. The term of appointment of a Panel Member will be for a maximum of two years. Temporary extension of the term may be approved by the Chief Executive Officer.
- 2.3 The Chief Executive Officer may terminate the appointment of a Panel member prior to expiry of their term if it is considered that the member is not providing a positive contribution to the intended function of the Panel or if the member has not demonstrated a satisfactory level of attendance at Panel meetings.
- 2.4 Where a project requires specific design expertise which is not available on the nominated panel or where conflicts of interest prevent the City from achieving a quorum of panel members in respect of a specific matter, the City reserves the right to appoint a member from the State Design Review Panel for the duration of that project.
- 2.5 In appointing the Panel, the City will seek to ensure one of the professional members is a City of Melville resident or ratepayer to provide local input into designs.
- 2.6 In the event that a pool member resigns their membership, has their appointment terminated, or is unable to continue to serve due to other unforeseen circumstances prior to the expiry of their term of office, the City of Melville may appoint a replacement pool member with equivalent qualifications and expertise to serve for the remainder of the original member's term of appointment.

3 Referral Requirements:

- 3.1 Development applications for Complex Development as defined by Local Planning Policy 1.1 Planning Process and Decision Making will be referred to the DRG.
- 3.2 Non-major development may be referred to the DRG for review at the discretion of the City such as:
- Multiple and grouped dwelling developments comprising 10 or more units/tenancies (dwellings and/or commercial).
 - Development that is three or more storeys in height.
 - Development of a property on the State Register of Heritage Places or a Local Government Heritage List established under the Local Planning Scheme unless the proposal is for Single House Development or other minor additions.
 - Substantial development within centre zones.
 - Major works undertaken by the local government.
- 3.3 Structure plans, activity centre plans, planning strategies, local planning policies, local development plans, precinct plans, design guidelines or amendments to the City's Local Planning Scheme No. 6 or any other matter relating to design of buildings and places may be referred to the DRP.
- 3.4 The below development types are excluded from design review group consideration:

- Single houses
- Two to nine unit grouped dwellings
- Child care centres within the residential zone
- Warehouses
- Industrial buildings
- Public works undertaken by a public authority other than the local government
- Projects eligible for referral to the State Design Review Panel or any other design review panel.

4 Operations

- 4.1 DRG meetings will generally follow the meeting procedures, roles and responsibilities outlined in the City's Design Review Group Terms of Reference unless otherwise modified in this policy.
- 4.2 A DRG meeting cannot proceed unless a quorum comprising a minimum of three panel members is in attendance.
- 4.3 Notes of the DRG meeting should be maintained and reported in accordance with the City's Design Review Group Terms of Reference.
- 4.4 The DRG will examine design elements of development applications and other planning proposals having regard to the statutory environment of the particular proposal. The DRG will ensure the proposed design meet the City's published policies including the provisions of the City's Local Planning Scheme No. 6, the Residential Design Codes Volume 1 and 2 and relevant Local and State Planning Policies. The DRG will also place an appropriate emphasis on the need for proposed designs to be environmentally sustainable.
- 4.5 The number of reviews required will depend on the complexity of the proposal and the quality of the initial design/proposal. However, two to three design review sessions are generally recommended.
- 4.6 The first design review should occur during concept design stage, enabling proponents to benefit from advice while the design is still flexible enough to accommodate changes. Subsequent review scheduling will be based on the time required to respond to feedback. The final review will usually be undertaken after lodgement of the application and informs the statutory assessment and decision-making processes.
- 4.7 For amendments and minor changes following initial reviews and lodgement of a development application, the DRG chair may provide design advice in lieu of a full design review group meeting.

5 Code of Conduct:

- 5.1 Each member of the DRG is required to observe the City of Melville Code of Conduct.

6 Conflict of Interest

- 6.1 Where a member of the DRG has a financial interest (as defined by the *Local Government Act 1995*) in a matter to be considered by the DRG, the member must disclose the interest to the convenor of the meeting (in writing) and must not participate in or be present during any discussion on the matter.
- 6.2 Where a member of the DRG has an impartiality interest in a matter to be considered by the DRG (an interest that could, or could reasonably be perceived to adversely affect the impartiality of the person having the interest arising from kinship, friendship or membership of an association), the member must disclose the nature of the interest to the convenor of the meeting, prior to any discussion on the matter. This extends to recent professional associations (i.e. engaged by the developer for other past projects).
- 6.3 As there are also DRG members who may have proximity interest if they are also residents within the City of Melville – this should also be disclosed to the City prior to any discussion on the matter.

7 Confidentiality

- 7.1 Proceedings of a meeting of the DRG and details of any proposal before the DRG are to remain confidential unless such details are disclosed in an authorised manner by a City officer to the applicable applicant or presented in a recommendation report which is available to the public.

8 Financial

- 8.1 As per the City's Terms of reference, a sitting fee is payable to each member of the DRG for attendance at the meeting. The sitting fee will be reviewed annually.

References that may be applicable to this Policy

Legislative Requirements:	Planning and Development Act 2005 Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015
Procedure, Process Maps, Work Instructions:	Planning Application Directorate Procedure
Other Plans, Frameworks, Documents Applicable to Policy:	Local Planning Scheme No. 6 State Planning Policy 7.0 Design of the Built Environment Residential Design Codes Volume 1 Residential Design Codes Volume 2 – Apartments Local Government Design Review Manual
Delegated Authority No:	DA-020: Planning and Related Matters

ORIGIN/AUTHORITY

Development and Neighbourhood Amenity Committee

11/03/03

Item No.

P03/1001

Reviews

Ordinary Meeting of Council
Ordinary Meeting of Council
Ordinary Meeting of Council
Ordinary Meeting of Council
Ordinary Meeting of Council
Ordinary Meeting of Council

20/09/2011
15/04/2014
20/09/2016
17/09/2019
20/06/2023
17/03/2026

P11/3246
P14/3485
P16/3718
P19/3809
UP23/13
UP26/102