



Infrastructure Sustainability Rating Tool Design Review Guide

Developed By the Infrastructure Sustainability Council of Australia.
Version 0

Document Control

Version	Date	Prepared	Reviewed and Revised	Approved
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This guide has been written by Infrastructure Sustainability Council of Australia (ISCA). The main purpose of this guide is to assist assessors, design reviewers and other key stakeholders with the design review process. Where any constructive feedback can be provided to improve the application or guidance provided in this document, such feedback can be emailed to info@isca.org.au with the subject line Design Review Guide – Feedback.

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PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

This guide provides guidance, in addition to the guidance provided in the Infrastructure Sustainability (IS) Rating Tool Technical Manual, for those applying the Urb-2 and Urb-3 credits in the Urban and Landscape Design Category of the IS Rating Tool and refers specifically to the requirement for a design review.

OBJECTIVE OF DESIGN REVIEW

The purpose of an Urban and Landscape design review is to provide expert and impartial design advice to project/asset teams, project proponents and owner/operators. When applied well, design review can improve a project by testing the quality of its scheme, identifying opportunities for improvement at an early stage, and by providing objective expert advice.

The inclusion of the design review in the Urb-2 and Urb-3 credits is to encourage and recognise projects that undertake a design review process designed to facilitate sustainable urbanism. For Level 2 and Level 3 of the credits, design review is required. The design review must be undertaken by a Design Review Panel.

In applying design review, there are three key elements to consider:

- The design review must be included in the design and planning process
- The design review must use comprehensive terms of reference
- The design review panel must be diverse and experienced

The IS rating tool does not require a specific design review meeting to be held for the sole purpose of an IS rating submission. In cases where regulatory design review processes and panels are required by government organisations or approval authorities, these will be sufficient for compliance, provided that all other compliance requirements are met.

BENEFITS

A successful design review can foster collaborative engagement between clients, contractors and other built environment professionals. It can also strengthen the broader community's confidence in the ability to achieve best practice community-based planning and urban design outcomes.

Additionally, design review can result in the following outcomes:

- Greater consistency in the quality of design
- Alignment of design outcomes with national / international policy objectives
- Promotion of big picture community benefits
- Greater transparency and rigor in the planning and design process
- Provision of an objective viewpoint
- Identification of opportunities for improvement at an early stage
- Support to good design

- Provision of best practice expertise and experience that may not be available to the project team
- Provision of best practice expertise on complex design and sustainability issues

TEN PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN REVIEW

For design review to benefit the project and general community it has to provide consistently high standards of advice. These high standards have been distilled into the following ten principles (CABE, 2009).

1. **Independent:** It is conducted by people who are separate from the project and it protects against conflicts of interest.
2. **Accountable:** It records and explains its advice and is transparent about potential conflicts of interest.
3. **Expert:** It is conducted by suitably trained people who are experienced in design and know how to criticise constructively. Design Review is usually most respected where it is carried out by professional peers of the project's designers, as their standing and expertise will be acknowledged.
4. **Advisory:** It does not make decisions but acts as a source of impartial advice for decision makers.
5. **Accessible:** Its findings are clearly expressed in terms that decision makers can understand and use.
6. **Proportionate:** The approach should be appropriate to the size and significance of the urban design impacts of the project.
7. **Timely:** It takes place early in the life of a design in order to save time and money if/and when changes are required. If a planning application has already been made, review happens within the timeframe for considering the application, and is repeated when a further opinion is required.
8. **Objective:** It appraises projects in accordance with reasoned, objective criteria rather than the subjective tastes of individual panel members.
9. **Focused on outcomes for people:** It asks how this project or place can better meet the needs of the people that will use it, and takes into consideration everyone who may be affected by it.
10. **Focused on improving quality:** It constructively seeks to improve the quality of architecture, urban design, landscape, highway design and town planning.

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

The panel must be comprised of one panel chair and a minimum of two panel members. Members of the panel must possess project relevant skills and experience, and be recognised experts in their discipline, with a minimum of 10 years' experience.

Members are required to be registered by a relevant professional peak body and will be bound by that institute's code of ethics in relation to objectivity, integrity and accountability.

The same panel chair and members should be present in all design review panel meetings. If, at any point, the chair, or a panel member is replaced, their replacement must comply with the requirements of this guide.

PANEL INDEPENDENCE

To achieve Level 3 for Urb-2 and Urb-3, the panel members are required to be independent. All conflicts of interest that may arise from their involvement must also be disclosed by panel members.

In all cases, panels will be considered as an internal panel should any panel member not be independent. Being a contributing member of a Design Review Panel is not considered to be 'employment' for the purposes of the rating.

The following provides additional guidance related to the 'independent review' requirement and to demonstrate independence the following criteria must be satisfied:

1. The person(s) must not work directly on the project or asset
2. The person(s) must be engaged to act independently of the project or asset. This could be demonstrated through a scope of works, signed contract, charter, Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), services agreement, commitment statement etc.
3. The person(s) may be from a client, parent company or third party

If a panel is not considered independent, based on the above, but still meets the general requirements of a Design Review Panel above, then the review is considered 'internal'.

TIMING OF THE REVIEW

Where possible, Design Review for Urb-2 should be undertaken during the planning stage and the Design Review for Urb-3 should be undertaken during the design stage, although in some cases (e.g. small projects) it may be more practical for these design reviews to be undertaken at the same time.

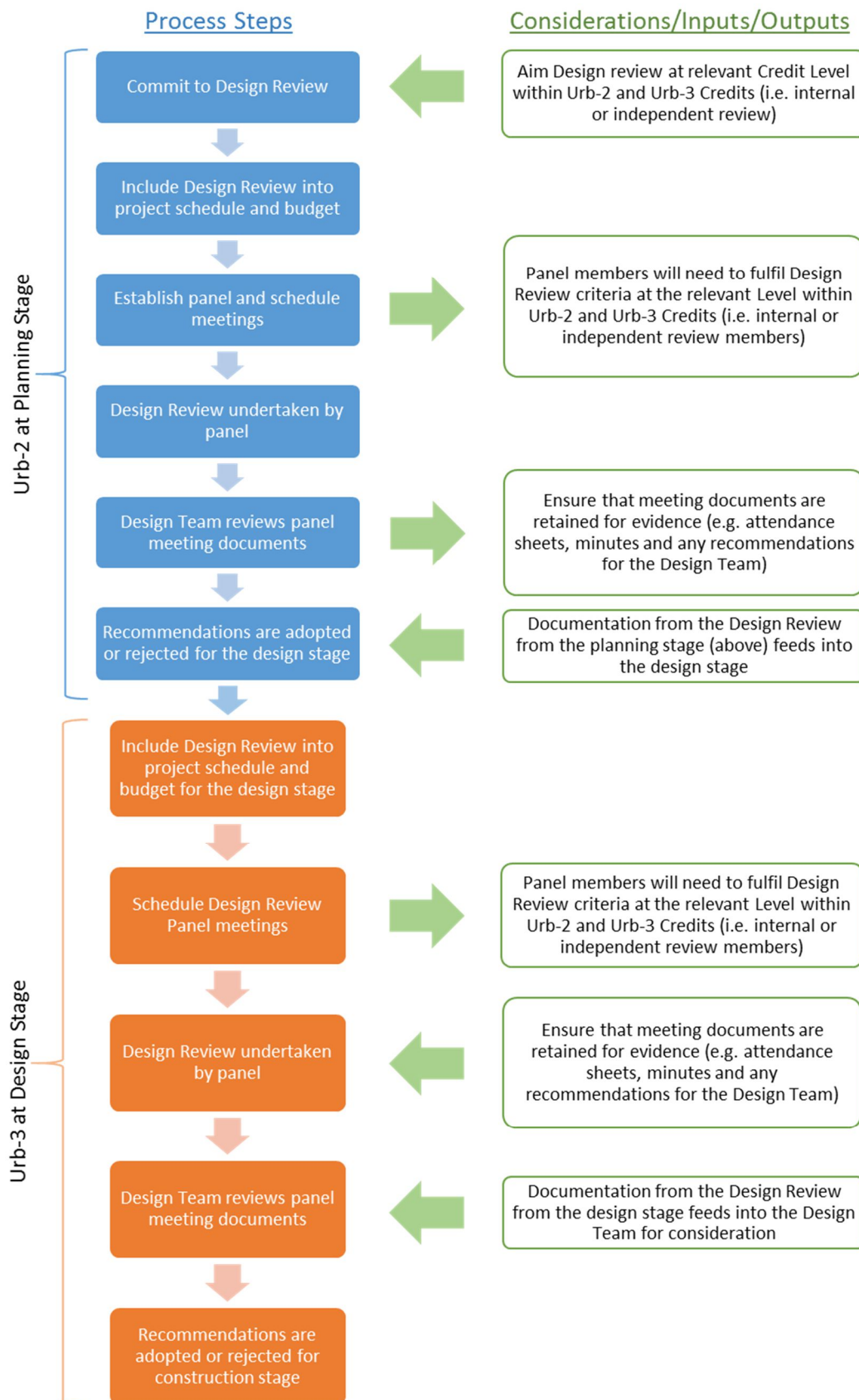
Figure 1, on the following page, provides a suggested approach to the Design Review process.

CREDIT ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

The Additional Guidance in the IS Technical Manual for the credits provides criteria for design review to be used by the design review panel. However, other acceptable criteria can also be found in the National Urban Policy (Australian Government, 2011). Where a project team uses alternative criteria to undertake the design review a Credit Interpretation Request (CIR) must be submitted providing a comparison of the alternative criteria against the examples provided in the IS Technical Manual, or the criteria found in the National Urban Policy.



Figure 1: A suggested approach to the Design Review process





GLOSSARY

Note that some credit specific terms are defined in the credit description sections in the IS Technical Manual rather than this glossary.

Community	A community can be defined across the following divisions: communities of place (within a one – five kilometre radius of the infrastructure asset); communities of interest (e.g. specific groups such as elected representatives, traditional owners, and affected landowners) and communities with specific issues (e.g. cycling groups or local businesses etc.).
Design Review Panel	A panel comprising one panel chair and a minimum of two panel members, with the purpose of reviewing the design.
Landscape character	The combination of built, natural and cultural aspects which together form a unique context and aesthetic for a place.
Opportunities	Benefits which might be delivered by, or for, the project or asset. In the context of this rating scheme, these are specifically sustainability related opportunities.
Sustainable Urbanism	The application of sustainability and resilient principles to the design, planning, and administration/operation of cities.



REFERENCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

- Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (2009), *Design Review Principles and Practice*, Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, London
- Farr, Douglas (2008). *Sustainable Urbanism: Urban Design with Nature*, Wiley.
- Jones, E. (2005), *Towards Sustainable Urbanism*, Environment Design Guide, GEN 71
- Australian Government (2011). National Urban Policy - Our Cities, Our Future - A national urban policy for a productive, sustainable and liveable future

Further information on design review may be found in:

- Design Review Panel: Terms of Reference, Integrated Design Commission, 2011
- How to do Design Review, Creating and Running a Successful Panel, 2006 CABE
- Design Review, How CABE evaluates quality in architecture and urban design, 2006 CABE

Further information on panel setup and administration may be found in:

- Design Review, Principles and Practices, 2009 CABE
- How to do Design Review, 2006, CABE



DESIGN REVIEW PANEL: REPORT TEMPLATE

Design Review Report

This report can be used by the Design Review Panel to demonstrate compliance with both Urb-2 Site Planning and Urb-3 Urban Design.

Project Name:	
Design Review Date:	
Location:	

Design Review Organising Body (if relevant)

Name:	
Description:	
Report Issued By:	
Signed:	
Date:	
Revision:	

Panel Members Attendee Register

Panel Review Chair

Name:	
Area of Expertise / Experience	
Declarations of Interest	
Signed:	



Panel Member #1

Name:	
Area of Expertise / Experience	
Declarations of Interest	
Signed:	

Panel Member #2

Name:	
Area of Expertise / Experience	
Declarations of Interest	
Signed:	

Panel Member #3

Name:	
Area of Expertise / Experience	
Declarations of Interest	
Signed:	

Panel Member #4

Name:	
Area of Expertise / Experience	
Declarations of Interest	
Signed:	





Design Team Attendee Register

	Name	Organisation	Project Role	Signature
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				

Documentation Reviewed





Agenda

Time	Activity
e.g. 10am – 10:05am	Introduction to the development team by the client





Panel Chair statement of review outcomes and recommendations:





Comments related to the credit guidance

Site Planning and Layout (Urb-2)

Principle	Panel Comments And Recommendations
Integrating with Existing Development	
Urban Form	
Public Transport	
Activity Centre's and Employment	
Landscape and Green Infrastructure	





Urban Design (Urb-3)

Principle		Panel Comments And Recommendations
Place: Productivity and Sustainability	Enhancing	
	Connected	
	Diverse	
	Enduring	





Principle		Panel Comments And Recommendations
People: Liveability	Comfortable	
	Vibrant	
	Safe	
	Walkable	

