

**Environment and Housing Response to  
SCRUTINY REVIEW OF PLANNING ENFORCEMENT – Grosvenor Estate; and  
Northfield House, Peckham Park Road**

1. What processes are in place to check if there is a possible planning issue before works are undertaken?

Response:

For every major works refurbishment scheme where there are proposed changes to materials, layout, elevation or design, planning requirements are first discussed with the Planning Team before a formal planning application is submitted. Clear procedures are in place to ensure planning considerations are an intrinsic part of the scheme design and the feasibility stage of all new projects.

2. What lessons have been learnt from the planning breaches that have occurred on these occasions?

Response:

The two case studies mentioned, Grosvenor Estate and Northfield House date back to original works in circa 2001. In both instances it would appear the planning process was not fully followed as there was conflicting information as to whether planning permission was actually required. Internal procedures have since been tightened which now means that before any refurbishment scheme can proceed there must be evidence to show whether planning permission is needed and if so confirmation that it has been received. Planning requirements are integral to the scheme design and formal applications are systematically submitted in accordance with planning regulations. In addition for all completed schemes a lessons learnt or 'wrap-up' meetings are held which review the strengths and weaknesses of schemes including any learning from the planning process.

3. What changes have been made to the Department's approach to minimise incidents of this type in the future?

Response:

As mentioned above, procedures have been improved to ensure planning applications are made in good time and in every instance where they are required.

4. Any policies/ joint working arrangements you have in place to facilitate your work with the planning enforcement process and team.

Response:

Good working relationships have been developed with planning colleagues and it is proposed that quarterly meetings are established to review proposed schemes and to discuss planning issues, problems and new ideas.

5. Any ideas you have for how the policies and systems could be improved-

Response:

Quarterly meetings are to be established between Investment delivery and colleagues in Planning. This will lead to even earlier discussions of emerging schemes, for instance, the major works refurbishment programme has been agreed to 2012 and discussions can (and in many instances are already) take place about planning requirements. A subsequent five year programme is planned post 2012 so again this can be discussed and agreed at the earliest possible stage.

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