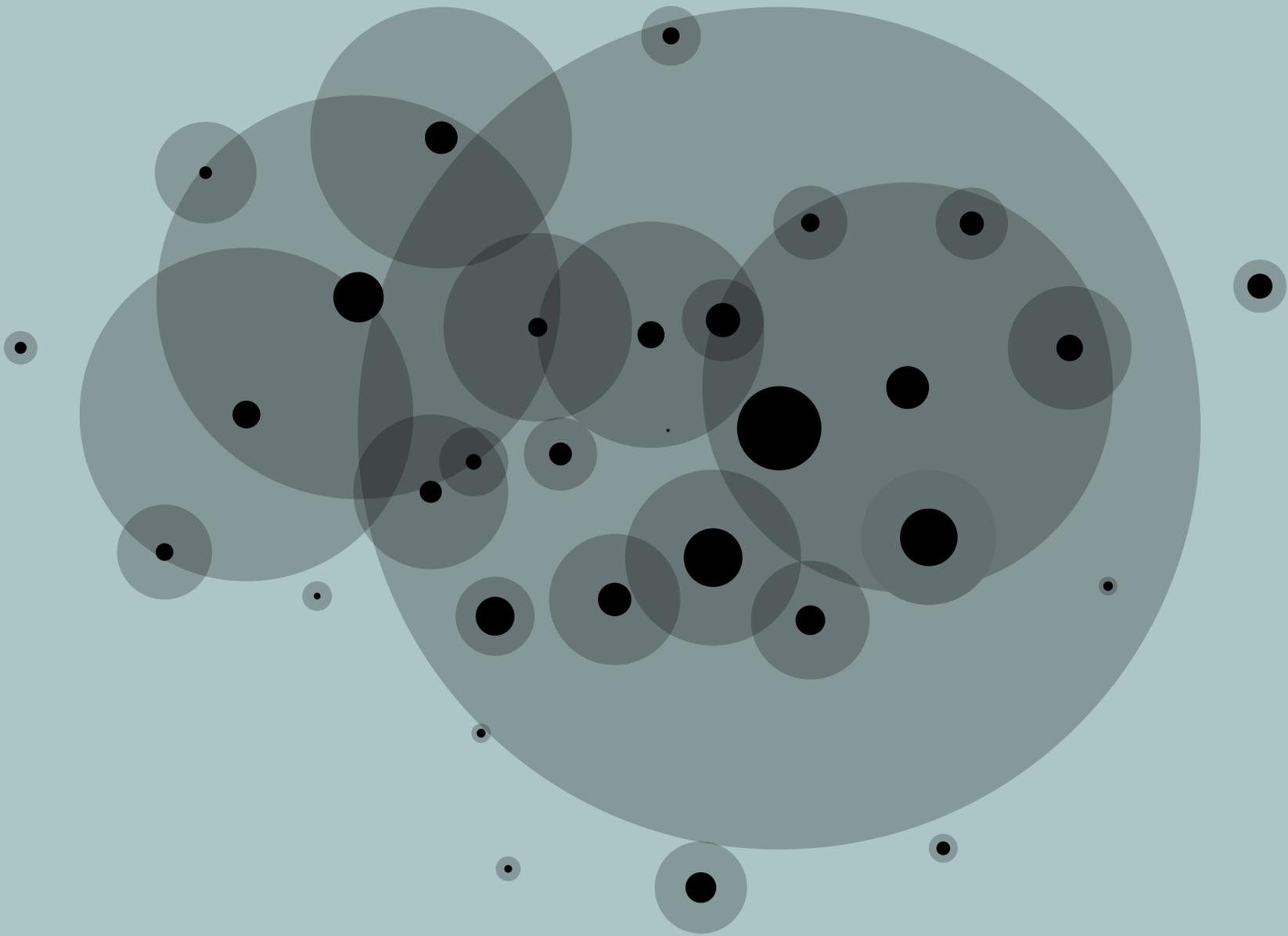




PUBLIC PRACTICE

What are the best ways to structure the pre-app process to achieve design quality?



The diagram maps potential income from pre-applications (light grey) against London Plan housing targets (black). In both instances, size reflects quantum. This shows that for Boroughs with similar housing targets there are very different income potentials. The research will explore how this relates to resourcing and ability to assess quality.

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Given that the pre-application process often sets the likely quality outcome for a building or place, it is fundamental that it is promoting the highest quality. Done well, it can lay the foundations for achieving award-winning buildings and places. Done poorly, the results are often hard to change and can leave a legacy of a poor built environment. Evaluating and reviewing the pre-application process is particularly pertinent given high housing targets facing Authorities and the challenge of resourcing planning services in the context of funding constraints. The emphasis the new NPPF places on design quality and the request for Authorities to sign up to the London Review Charter are additional reasons why it is a relevant time to review the pre-application process. This research project explores strategies for locking-in design

quality at the pre-application stage. The first phase of the project involves interviewing and surveying stakeholders involved in the pre-application process to build a picture of what the current situation is like, what is working and what isn't. It also involves reviewing pre-app material on Authorities websites. Through the research, it is becoming clear that there is a wide range of different service qualities being offered, for widely varying prices, with variable processes and capacity in place to achieve quality. The aim of this research is to make a series of tangible and directly actionable recommendations – for the short and long-term – that Authorities can use to ensure their pre-application process achieves the highest design quality.