FRAME PROJECTS

London Legacy Development Corporation Quality Review Panel

Report of Formal Review Meeting: Legacy Wharf Phase 3 design code

Thursday 22 June 2023
Auditorium 1, Level 10, 5 Endeavour Square, London E20 1JN.

Panel

Hari Phillips (chair)
Keith French
Simon Henley

Attendees

Alexander Cameron	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Pippa Henshall	London Legacy Development Corporation
Paul Taylor	London Legacy Development Corporation
Cindy Reriti	Frame Projects
Patrycja Karas	Frame Projects

Apologies / report copied to

Anthony Hollingsworth	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Catherine Smyth	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
James Bolt	London Borough of Newham
Ben Hull	London Borough of Newham
Deborah Denner	Frame Projects

Note on process

The Quality Review Panel comments below follow on from two pre-application reviews, and one planning application review. Panel members who attended the previous meetings were: Peter Studdert (chair); Hari Phillips (chair); Julia Barfield; Teresa Borsuk; Catherine Burd; Keith French; Barbara Kaucky; and Johnny Winter.

1.   Project name, site address and application reference

Legacy Wharf Phase 3, Barbers Road, Pudding Mill, London, E15 2PW
21/00460/FUL

2.   Presenting team

Adam Hewgill	Allies and Morrison
Luke Coe	Camlins Landscape Architects
Jamie MacArthur	Bellway Homes Limited (Thames Gateway)
George Daniel	Savills
Laura Fletcher-Gray	Savills

3.   Planning authority briefing

The site is located within the Pudding Mill area, within sub area 4 of the Local Plan, and is identified in site allocation SA.4.3 'Pudding Mill' with the allocation including an area to be provided as play space. The site formerly contained a waste transfer centre, which has now ceased operation.

Following the submission of an application in October 2021, officers raised concerns about the proposal and the applicants sought to amend the scheme. Revised proposals were presented to the Quality Review Panel in August 2022 and March 2023. In the latest review, the panel noted the improvements to the overall layout and detailed design, but did not feel confident that the proposal would meet Local Plan Policy BN.5. Since the last review the applicant has developed a detailed design code.

The proposal comprises new buildings, ranging from six to 14 stories, to provide approximately 343 residential dwellings and circa 1,656 square metres of commercial floorspace. The proposal would include a detailed element for the public square and for two blocks, part eight / part nine storeys with commercial uses at ground floor and residential units on the upper floors, with the remainder of the site proposed in outline.

Planning officers would welcome the panel's comments on whether it considers the design codes are in sufficient detail, to ensure that the scheme will meet the requirements of Local Plan Policy BN.5.

4. Quality Review Panel's views

Summary

The panel feels that greater ambition is needed to provide a design code that will be able to guide a design team to deliver a masterplan of exceptional design quality, that meets the requirements of Local Plan Policy BN.5. Clear intent, specific language and quantifiable requirements, in both the design code and parameter plans, are required to ensure that key aspects of the scheme can be tested and measured, and to limit the potential for misinterpretation by the developer, design team and Local Planning Authority Officers. The panel encourages the design team to use the Pudding Mill Lane design code as a reference.

The comments in this report should be considered alongside the report of the previous meeting, held on 23 March 2023, where the panel stated that it was broadly supportive of the scheme, but that it did not consider either the detailed or outline scheme were of sufficient quality to meet the requirements of Local Plan Policy BN.5. It also noted that, given the proposed hybrid application, a clear and robust design code would be needed to guarantee the delivery of a high-quality design.

A design code for high-quality design

- The design code would benefit from an introductory section that outlines the aspiration for this new neighbourhood and how the public realm and landscape will contribute to its unique character and a sense of place. The introduction should be supported by reference images that reinforce high-quality placemaking.

- Similarly, the introduction should include a summary of the different characters of the buildings and how they come together to make a new piece of the city, including height, detailing and articulation of roofscapes.

- Given that the design code is the tool that will be used to measure the success of the outline scheme, the panel suggests that any relevant information in the Design and Access Statement should be repeated here, rather than referenced.

- Greater consideration must be given to the distinction between *must* and *should* in the design code, to ensure that it can be used as a tool against which the Local Planning Authority can measure the quality of the detailed design. For example, in section 7 Appearance, clauses 7.2.1 through 7.2.5 should all be changed from *should* to *must,* as they are essential for a high-quality scheme.

- Further thought should be given to the terminology used, to better define the intent and remove any chance of misinterpretation. For example, rather than stating 'where possible Bow Back Street must maximise urban greening', further detail and a quantifiable measure should be given.

- The panel would like to see clauses included that will help to achieve the highest quality of design. While it welcomes reference to standards that must be complied with (for example, 6.1.5 mentions the LLDC inclusive design standards) these are the minimum requirement.

- The panel welcomes the use of precedent images in the design code, and would like to see more, but it emphasises that they must be of exceptional design, to clearly illustrate that the ambition is for a scheme of the highest quality.

- Images should be annotated, to clearly specify the aspects of exceptional design that are being referenced and how they should be used.

Quantum of development

- The panel notes that maximum and minimum limits must be established on the development and uses, based on the illustrative scheme, which will provide the developer with a degree of flexibility, but ensure that the site does not become over-developed. This must be agreed with LLDC and set out in the Development Specification.

- Details on the nursery should be included in the design code, to ensure that a high-quality community facility is included in the scheme.

Section 3 Layout

- Language used within the design code must be clear and specific. For example, clause 3.1.4 requires further clarification. Stating that the buildings must be broken into a number of blocks is open to interpretation, where the clause should state exactly what is meant and give a quantifiable measure.

Section 4 Scale and massing

- Clauses should leave no room for misinterpretation. For example, 4.1.4 states that the ground level floor-to-ceiling height must predominantly be no less than 3.5 metres. The design code must make it clear that the 3.5 metres is, for example, clear of any service zone.

- There should be more clauses specifically addressing the status and hierarchy of tall buildings within the urban setting and the specific requirements for each tall building. For example, clauses should address the treatment at the top of the building, the quality of details, the visual treatment of roof plant etc. Any details included in the Design and Access statement should also be included in the design code so that the success of the new scheme is measurable.

Section 8 Landscape and public realm

- Section 8 Landscape and Public realm requires an introduction, to outline the design ambition, character and identity for the development.

- To ensure the quality of the detail phase is carried through the whole scheme, clause 8.1.5 should be changed from *should* to *must*, to require all key landscape and public realm areas to comply with the specification of the public realm which forms part of the Detailed Element of the Barber Road Hybrid Planning Application.

- Further details should be included on the aspiration for each of the specific character areas of the scheme. Rather than generic comments, each area should have specific requirements, to guarantee the quality of the public space and to ensure that each area will be an enjoyable space to inhabit.

- The panel would like to see greater ambition for tree planting throughout the scheme, including legacy trees. If included in the Design and Access Statement, it must also be included in the design code.

Parameter plan 02 Public realm

- Parameter plan 02 Public realm shows development parcels 1 and 2 butting up to the red line boundary. The panel suggests that a reasonable building line is shown with maximum / minimum privacy area included between the building line and the streetscape.

- Similarly, maximum and minimum limits of deviation should be specified for each of the development parcels, to ensure adequate privacy relevant to the articulation of each façade, for example, where bay windows or recessed balconies are provided.

- It is not clear what the L-shaped white area on the plan is, to the north-east of the Garden Courtyard. This should be clearly labelled, to avoid any misinterpretation.

- It is essential that the dimensions of Pocket Parks 1 and 2 are included on the plan, as they have been for the Garden Courtyard.

- The panel noted that the plan identifies the potential location of the electrical sub-station within Pocket Park 1. The panel reiterates that the sub-station should not be located within the public realm.

Next steps

- The panel would welcome a further opportunity to review both the scheme and the design code once the comments in this report, and in the report of 23 March 2023, have been addressed, in consultation with planning officers.