



FRAME PROJECTS

## **London Legacy Development Corporation Quality Review Panel**

### **Report of Planning Application Review Meeting: Stratford Waterfront Residential**

Thursday 21 March 2024

Howells, Middlesex House, 34-42 Cleveland Street, London W1T 4JE

#### **Panel**

Hari Phillips (chair)  
Neil Davidson  
Jonathan Hagos  
Nisha Kurian  
Nathan Millar

#### **Attendees**

Richard McFerran	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Pippa Henshall	London Legacy Development Corporation
Frances Madders	London Legacy Development Corporation
Shona Henry	Frame Projects
Cindy Reriti	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. Panel members who attended the previous meetings were: Hari Phillips (chair); Teresa Borsuk; Neil Davidson; Jonathan Hagos; Adam Khan; Nisha Kurian; and Nathan Millar.

## 1. Project name, site address and planning reference

Stratford Waterfront Residential, London E15 2DU  
24/00067/REM

## 2. Presenting team

Areta Soare	Howells Architects
Reinhold Schmaderer	Howells Architects
John Tuomey	O'Donnell + Tuomey
Eimear Hanratty	O'Donnell + Tuomey
Matt Wooding	LDA Design
Tristan Stout	Ballymore
Peter Maxwell	London Legacy Development Corporation
Esther Everett	London Legacy Development Corporation
Martina Kennedy	London Legacy Development Corporation
Katie Harris	London Legacy Development Corporation
Rachel Hearn	London Legacy Development Corporation
Eve Ladden Timbers	London Legacy Development Corporation
Matt Eyre	Quod
Ryan Newham	AECOM

## 3. Planning authority briefing

The site is in a prominent location within the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, at the prow of the Stratford Waterfront site, northwest of the London Aquatics Centre. The subject of this review is the outline element, which comprises 0.96 hectares at the northern end of the 4.25 hectare site. It is bounded by the Waterworks River to the west, by Carpenters Road to the north and east, and by the detailed element of Stratford Waterfront, to the southeast. The site is situated in the London Borough of Newham, close to the boundaries with the London Boroughs of Tower Hamlets and Hackney. The PTAL rating for the site is 3, but improves to 6B for the Detailed Element.

The site benefits from outline consent as part of the Stratford Waterfront Hybrid Planning Application, approved in July 2019. The outline is for up to 65,000m<sup>2</sup> of development, comprising up to 62,800m<sup>2</sup> of residential floorspace, together with private amenity spaces and ancillary uses, and up to 2,200m<sup>2</sup> of retail/food and beverage uses. A planning application has been submitted.

Officers would welcome the panel's comments on whether the scheme meets the requirements of Local Plan Policy BN.5, particularly the architectural expression of the buildings, including the height of the brick parapets to Blocks A2, B1 and B2, wind mitigation to the balconies, the appropriateness of the plant screens to the shoulder blocks and the impact that they will have on the outlook and quality of the adjacent homes. Comments are also sought on the proposed tone and materiality of the brickwork and metal elements of the buildings, as well as on the retail strategy.

#### 4. Quality Review Panel's views

##### *Summary*

The design of the towers is progressing well and the panel thanks the design team for addressing many of its previous comments. However, further work is needed in key areas, including the tone of bricks, the crowns of the buildings, wind mitigation to the balconies, and the impact of plant on the shoulder blocks of buildings B1 and B2, to ensure that all four buildings will attain the exceptional design quality necessary to meet the requirements of Local Plan Policy BN.5. It is crucial that the design details are locked into the design code, to ensure that the design team's aspiration for an exemplar scheme is delivered.

The tone of the bricks to be used for the four towers needs further consideration to meet the design team's aspiration for a family of buildings with a shared character and distinctive identities. Samples of the proposed texture and tone of bricks should be provided to officers and details included in the design code. Further work is needed to comprehend the results of the microclimate analysis and to understand what, if any, wind mitigation is needed on the balconies. Wind mitigation to both inset and projecting balconies should be fully integrated into the architecture.

The top of the buildings requires stronger definition, to accentuate the double and triple height crowns, to match the aspiration shown in the diagram. Additional drawings are requested to show the impact that the plant enclosures, on the top of the shoulders of blocks B1 and B2, will have on the residents in the adjoining bedroom, when viewed from above by other residents, and when viewed from the terrace of the V&A building.

##### *Architectural expression, materiality and tone*

- The specification of high-quality brick will be essential to the quality of these very tall buildings. Samples of the proposed texture and tone of the bricks to be used, for each of the four towers should be provided to officers, to give confidence that the exceptional design required to meet Local Plan Policy BN.5 will be delivered.
- The 'scratched' horizontal brick banding on building A1, works well to distinguish the prow building from the other three buildings in the family. The panel feels that the depth of the recessed brick should be accentuated, to ensure that the banding will be clearly read from a distance. A suggested reference is Tony Fretton Architects' Westkaii residential towers in Antwerp.
- The extension of the glazed brick, to the edge of the splayed balcony walls, on building A1 works well. However, further consideration should be given to how the glazed brick meets the base of the balconies.

- Further thought should be given to whether the undercroft meets the design team's aspiration to provide a civic space. Public art or sculpture could be used to signify the importance of the space and give people reason to pause.
- Refinements should be made to the private amenity balcony railings, within the undercroft, to increase their transparency.
- The panel supports the removal of the planter from the Point, and the additional emphasis this gives to the carved topography of the undercroft steps. However, it is crucial that the tree, or trees, planted in the ground, complement the scale of building A1 and is able to perform all the functions required of it.
- The horizontal banding of Block B1 contrasts well with the vertical banding of Blocks A2 and B2 in views from the waterfront.
- The solid corners of the shoulder blocks work well to differentiate the lower buildings from the towers. However, further work is needed to determine what wind mitigation is needed to allow the panel to comment fully.
- Consideration should be given to the detail of how each of the four brick towers will meet the ground and whether the detailing will be consistent or distinctive for each of the buildings.
- The panel supports the clear and legible crowns of the buildings presented in the diagram. However, the illustrations show parapet-like crowns and further work is needed to ensure that there is a stronger datum and/or definition to accentuate the proposed double and triple height crowns.
- A façade drawing should be provided, to show how the proposed combination of solid and slatted metal grilles will look alongside the glazing.
- The tone of the brick proposed for buildings B1 and B2 is currently too similar and the panel feels that the two buildings will appear as one large mass.
- Further thought should be given to how the tone of buildings A2 and B2 can support the prominence of the Prow building, Block A1, and the V&A East building. The panel feels that the buffed white tone of Block A2 works well alongside the dark earthy tone of the Prow building. Similarly, a buffed red tone for Block B2 will work well adjacent to the V&A East building.
- Detailed drawings of the proposed metal plant enclosures, on the top of the shoulders of blocks B1 and B2, should be provided, as well as drawings to show the visual and spatial impact that the plant enclosures will have on the occupants of the two adjacent bedrooms. Sections should also be provided, to give a sense of how the enclosures will be experienced from inside the bedrooms. Acoustic impact should also be considered.

- In addition, drawings should be provided to show the views of residents living directly above the shoulder blocks and in elevated units in neighbouring buildings, as well as from the terrace of the V&A East building.
- A window cleaning strategy should be provided, to give officers confidence that there will be no visual impact from equipment located on the tops of the buildings.

#### *Wind mitigation to balconies*

- The panel is unable to comment on the proposed wind mitigation to balconies until the design team has resolved what type(s) of mitigation, if any, is needed and on which balconies. The mitigation of any acoustic impact should also be considered. Further work is needed.
- The panel suggests that a similar approach to wind mitigation should be applied to Buildings A2, B1 and B2 as used for building A1, so that there is some continuity in the facades of all four buildings.
- Consideration should be given to the provision of alternative ventilation in instances where microclimate analysis indicates a balcony door is unable to be opened beyond the permissible time.

#### *The relationship between buildings A1 and A2*

- The shadow gap and recessed junction details work well to create a distinction, at ground level, between buildings A1 and A2. However, further work is needed to ensure that residents occupying the first and second floor units of building A1, adjacent to building A2's podium amenity on the Carpenters Road, have adequate privacy. Drawings are requested, to show that there will be no adverse impact on residents' homes or their private amenity space.

#### *Landscape design*

- The proposed scale of planting and the inclusion of seating outside the building entrances in Carpenters Yard provide a welcome sense of arrival for residents. The planting palette is moving in the right direction and the next stage of design should include the consideration of seasonal planting to provide year-round interest.
- Further thought should be given to the species, maturity, and number of trees to be planted in the Point, at the base of prow column. The tree(s) should be large enough to complement the scale of the building and robust enough to ensure maximum mitigation of wind from day one. Careful thought should also be given to a fitting ground treatment at the base of the tree(s).

- Consideration should be given to the materiality of planters in the public realm, particularly those in close proximity to building A1, to ensure that their materiality is complementary.
- The panel questions whether the change in ground treatments alone is sufficient to mark the transition from civic space to residential areas and to the park. Further thought should be given to how these thresholds could be detailed to emphasise their significance.
- The panel acknowledges the existing ground level constraints restricting the provision of equitable access to the residential entrance on the east side of building B2. However, it has concerns that the removal of stepped access will compromise access for all residents.
- The change to the fire tender route and the proposed greening provide welcome improvement to the pavement on the south side of Carpenters Road. The route could be further improved if the small areas adjacent to the buildings, which are proposed for planters, are incorporated into the roadside greening.
- The panel encourages the design team to explore ways in which vertical greening could be creatively applied to the facades of the podiums, in line with fire regulations. Alternatively, the tall walls of brick could be articulated to provide some relief.

#### *Podium amenity*

- The podium amenity offers an opportunity to provide high-quality space that creates a unique sense of place, unconstrained by waterfront precedents. Further information and detailed drawings should be provided to officers to give a sense of how the podium spaces will be experienced by residents.

#### *Retail Design Code*

- The retail strategy should apply to all four buildings so that there is a consistent language in, for example, the signage and louvres, for all of the commercial spaces along Stratford Waterfront.
- A drawing of the waterfront elevation should be provided to officers, to show the relationship between the landscape, the ground floor commercial spaces, and the lower levels of the buildings.
- The design code should include details on the management of servicing where large units are split into smaller units.

### *Quality of accommodation*

- Further thought should be given to the detail of the curtain line in the bedrooms, to ensure that the space is not diminished when the curtains are drawn.

### *Next steps*

- The Quality Review Panel would welcome the opportunity to review the scheme again, as the design is developed in consultation with planning officers.
- In particular, the panel would like to see further information and drawings on the detailing and colour of the brickwork, the proposed wind mitigation for inset and projecting balconies, the plant enclosures on the shoulder blocks, and the crowns of the buildings.