



FRAME PROJECTS

London Legacy Development Corporation Quality Review Panel

Report of Planning Application Review: Queen's Yard

Tuesday 10 December 2019

Level 10, 1 Stratford Place, Montfichet Road, London E20 1EJ

Panel

Peter Studdert (chair)

Teresa Borsuk

Mike Martin

Johnny Winter

Attendees

Hilary Wrenn	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Rachel Hearn	London Legacy Development Corporation
Matthew Halsall	London Legacy Development Corporation
Kaiyil Gnanakumaran	London Legacy Development Corporation
Tessa Kordeczka	Frame Projects
Cindy Reriti	Frame Projects

Report copied to

Anthony Hollingsworth	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Catherine Smyth	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Jerry Bell	London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Jane Jin	London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Note on process

The Quality Review Panel comments below follow on from three pre-application reviews of Queen's Yard. Panel members who attended the previous meetings were: Peter Studdert (chair); Peter St John; Lindsey Whitelaw; David Gilpin; John Lyall; Catherine Burd; David Bonnett; Johnny Winter; and Tom Lonsdale.

1. Project name and site address

Queen's Yard, Hackney

Planning application reference: 16/00271/OUT

2. Presenting team

Chris Shaw	Shaw Corporation Limited
Fred Drabble	Shaw Corporation Limited
Alex Gordon	Jestico + Whiles
Heinz Richardson	Jestico + Whiles
Ewout Vandeweghe	Stockwool
Alan Peacock	Stockwool
Rob Wells	Spacehub
Jonathan Finch	Lichfields

3. Planning authority's views

Outline planning permission was granted in early 2019 for development of a number of sites within Local Plan Site Allocation SA1.1 (16/00166/OUT). A stand alone planning application had been submitted in 2016 for development at Queen's Yard.

While largely satisfied with designs developed by Stockwool for Blocks A, B and C, planning officers considered that there was scope to improve the design of Block D / E, on White Post Lane. Jestico + Whiles were subsequently appointed to join the design team and develop a fresh proposal for this block.

Planning officers broadly support the revised design. The Quality Review Panel's comments are particularly sought on: conformity with Hackney Wick Central masterplan, including height parameters, and with Local Plan Policy BN.10 on tall buildings; relationship of Block D / E to wider context, including Blocks A, B and C as well as retained heritage assets; success of podium / courtyard concept; quality of residential accommodation; landscape design strategy; and environmental sustainability.

4. Quality Review Panel's views

Summary

The Quality Review Panel welcomes the revised proposal for Block D / E developed by Jestico + Whiles and supports approval of the planning application for development at Queen's Yard. This promises to be a successful mixed use development within Hackney Wick, with generous, flexible commercial space and high quality residential accommodation. The scheme relates well to its context – including retained heritage buildings and new blocks designed by Stockwool. The panel fully supports the proposed form of four separate residential blocks set around a podium courtyard, with commercial units at ground level, and considers an increase in building heights acceptable. The proposed architectural expression shows much potential – but its success will depend on meticulous attention to detail and the



highest quality materials. The landscape design of the courtyard works well. The panel strongly supports ambitions to achieve a highly environmentally sustainable development.

These comments are expanded below.

Response to context

- The panel considers that the revised design for Block D / E responds well to its surroundings. It sits comfortably within the context of Queen's Yard, including retained heritage buildings, new blocks designed by Stockwool, the yard, as well as its prominent location on White Post Lane.

Scale and massing

- While in places heights exceed parameters established by the Hackney Wick Central masterplan, the panel considers this to be acceptable. It is satisfied that the proposal meets the provisions of Policy BN.10, including a requirement for 'outstanding architecture'.
- The spatial carving and composition of the scheme work well – resulting in tight urban spaces, appropriate to the character of Hackney Wick.
- While the distances between the four buildings, 7 metres at their narrowest, could be considered narrow, benefits for residents – light in, long oblique views out – and glimpses of sky between the buildings nevertheless result.

Plan and layout

- The panel fully supports the proposed form of four separate residential blocks, each with its own front door, around a central courtyard at podium level, with commercial units at ground level. The plan and layout, including disabled parking bays below podium level, cycle and refuse storage, work well.
- The panel welcomes provision of generous, flexible commercial space at ground level, promoting active frontages on all four elevations. Combining both commercial and residential entrances on all elevations will encourage active use throughout the day.
- The panel welcomes the high proportion – 94 per cent – of dual aspect units. It asks whether some reconfiguration of the plan and layout, perhaps including the number of units to residential cores, could avoid single aspect units altogether.
- Overall, the proposal promises to provide high quality residential accommodation: a place that will encourage a sense of community and where people will want to put down roots.



Architectural expression

- The panel finds much to admire in the proposed architectural expression of Block D / E, including the choice of materials. It considers that this block relates well to those designed by Stockwool.
- The slate roofs and brick façades of the residential blocks, with different colour bricks used for the street / yard and courtyard elevations, and precast concrete for the commercial units, promise to be successful. Details such as the corrugated concrete, including to soffits, and the treatment of residential entrances work well.
- While a question was raised about the use of a single colour brick – white – for the courtyard elevations, which could detract from the individuality of each building, on balance the panel agrees that this is appropriate.
- The panel also commented on the comparative merits of expressing the four buildings as coming down to the ground or as sitting on a podium level; it suggests that this might be further explored.
- High quality materials, including the bricks, and detailed design will be essential to the scheme's success.

Landscape design strategy

- The panel supports the manipulation of levels to allow planting for larger trees in the courtyard, providing a green outlook for residents and a welcome contrast to the grittier context of the yard. It encourages as much tree planting within the courtyard as possible.
- The multi-faceted design of the courtyard, with a central landscaped area and three adjoining garden / play spaces, each with level access to the buildings, is well conceived. The panel stresses that effective management and maintenance will be essential for the continuing success of the courtyard.

Environmental sustainability

- The panel commends aspirations to achieve a highly environmentally sustainable development, and the comprehensive strategy designed to achieve this. It asks whether Passivhaus might be considered, as detailed design is taken forward.

Next steps

- The Quality Review Panel offers its warm support for the revised proposal for Block D / E, which it considers meets the requirements of Policy BN.10. It supports approval of the planning application for the Queen's Yard development which promises to contribute much to the new Hackney Wick neighbourhood.

