

London Legacy Development Corporation Quality Review Panel

Report of Planning Application Review Meeting: Cook's Road (Bellway Homes)

Thursday 11 February 2016

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

Panel

Peter Studdert (chair)

John Lyall

Attendees

Allison De Marco

Deborah Denner

Tessa Kordeczka

LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team

Fortismere Associates

Fortismere Associates

Report also copied to

Sarah Birt

Eleanor Fawcett

James Bolt

Ben Hull

LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team

London Legacy Development Corporation

London Borough of Newham

London Borough of Newham

Note on process

The Quality Review Panel comments below follow on from a pre-application review and three planning application reviews. Panel members who attended the previous meetings were: Peter Studdert (chair); John Lyall; Adam Khan; Alex Ely; Neil Deely; Tom Holbrook; Martin Stockley; and Liam Bond.

1. Project name and site address

Land at Cook's Road, London E15 2PN

Planning application reference: 15/00392/FUL

2. Presenting team

Barry McCullough Levitt Bernstein
Diana Thomson Savills

3. Planning authority's views

The Quality Review Panel has commented several times on proposals for the development at Cook's Road, including the current planning application.

This is a revised planning application, relating only to the southern part of the development. This was submitted while further analysis of environmental quality, principally in relation to a waste transfer site to the northwest of the site, was undertaken. Following a recent decision to relocate the waste transfer operation, the planning authority considers it appropriate to move ahead with Phase 1 of the development, which will provide 194 residential units and commercial space in four separate blocks.

4. Quality Review Panel's views

Summary

The Quality Review Panel supports the decision to proceed with the planning application for Phase 1 of the Cook's Road development. The commitment of Bellway Homes to relocate its head office to this development – which will also provide a large number of homes – is welcomed as an important step towards transforming a former industrial area into a new residential neighbourhood. The panel considers this to be a high quality scheme and strongly supports approval of the planning application. Some detailed comments on the design of the four blocks included in Phase 1 are provided below.

Plan and layout

- The panel thinks that the layout of the development has the potential to support both employment use and housing – including family homes.
- Adjustments to elevations and internal layouts have improved levels of daylight and sunlight. The orientation of living rooms, length of balconies and depth of deck access are designed to optimise sunlight and daylight.

Detailed design and materials

- The panel supports the approach to creating a distinctive character for each block by using different materials such as a variety of bricks, and metal cladding.
- At the base of the buildings – and particularly around entrances – it would be preferable to use brick, as the anodised aluminium proposed will be more vulnerable to damage.
- Discreet, low-level lighting will contribute to the special character of the 'neighbourhood wynd'.
- The panel also supports the simple, rational architectural expression of the block on Cook's Road, including the glazed roof element at the top storey.
- Equally, the panel finds much to admire in the architecture of the block forming Bow Back Riverside – which forms a key frontage to the scheme.
- Where 'Bellway' signage is proposed at the corner of Cook's Road and Bow Back Riverside, the panel recommend further thought about integration of the signage and architecture. This could be addressed through the use of a planning condition.
- It will be essential that the quality of architecture for Phase 1 suggested by the planning application is followed through in the scheme's detailed design and construction.
- The panel would therefore recommend retention of the design team throughout the detailed design and construction stages.

Landscape design

- The quality of the landscape design for this dense development will be critical to its success – and the panel supports a robust approach that responds to the urban character of the scheme.
- The 'neighbourhood wynd' will provide an attractive asset to the scheme, supporting the success of family housing, and the central courtyard successfully unifies the blocks around an amenity space for both residents and the public.

Next steps

- The panel supports approval of the planning application for Phase 1 of the Cook's Road development. This promises to provide high quality residential accommodation and commercial space, making a significant contribution to regeneration of this area.