



FRAME PROJECTS

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

**Report of Formal Review Meeting: 304 – 312 Stratford High Street (Collective Hotel)**

Thursday 23 May February 2019

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

### **Panel**

Peter Studdert (chair)  
Keith French  
Simon Henley

### **Attendees**

Grant McClements	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Steve Tomlinson	London Legacy Development Corporation
Tessa Kordeczka	Frame Projects

### **Apologies / report copied to**

Anthony Hollingsworth	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Catherine Smyth	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Anne Ogundiya	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Josh Hackner	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Ben Hull	London Borough of Newham

## 1. Project name and site address

The Collective Hotel, 304 – 312 High Street, Stratford, London E15 1AJ

## 2. Presenting team

Jermaine Browne	The Collective
Sofie Ellice-Flint	The Collective
Andrei Martin	PLP Architecture
Akis Stephanides	PLP Architecture
Dafydd Coe	Hyland Edgar Driver Landscape Architects
James Armitage-Hobbs	DP9

## 3. Planning authority's views

The LLDC's Planning Decisions Committee resolved in June 2017 to approve a planning application for a co-living scheme – known as the Collective – on this site, subject to referral to the Mayor of London. A formal Greater London Authority Stage 2 response has yet to be received. A short stay hotel of some 285 rooms is now proposed.

The scale and massing of the building derive largely from the previous co-living scheme – with the height remaining broadly the same and considered acceptable for this location. Several pre-application meetings have been held with the applicant, with discussions focusing on the street frontage and use of the building by the public; the architectural expression of the elevations; and the public realm and landscape design.

The proposal for the Collective Hotel is subject to the provisions of LLDC Local Plan Policy BN.10 on tall buildings, which includes a requirement for 'outstanding' architecture.

## 4. Quality Review Panel's views

### *Summary*

The Quality Review Panel repeats its support for the proposal for the Collective Hotel. The revised design responds well to its previous comments – in particular the now consistent treatment of the southeast and northwest elevations. The panel repeats the importance of achieving substance and depth to the façade and thinks that this might be best achieved by a simpler approach to the masonry panels expressing the grid. Success will depend on exceptionally high quality detailed design, materials and construction. This includes the precast concrete proposed for the masonry panels. The principal moves informing the public realm and landscape design strategy are sound. The panel again strongly encourages maximising the opportunities presented by the Channelsea River. The choice of species for planting to both the area between the building and the neighbouring public house and the roof garden will need to be carefully considered. The panel recommends some rethinking of the surfaces proposed for the public realm – to achieve robustness and consistency.



The panel concludes that the scheme for the Collective Hotel would comply with Policy BN.10.

These comments are expanded below.

#### *Development concept*

- The panel repeats its support for the concept informing the Collective Hotel – a short stay hotel in this location appears appropriate. It appreciates the careful thinking that has gone into developing the design.
- Recognising that demands and needs may change over time, assurances that the building is designed to be flexible and adaptable, if necessary, are welcome.

#### *Architectural expression*

- The building is elegant and sculptural, with a pleasing simplicity and sleekness. Composition and proportions are well judged and the treatment of the top of the building works well.
- Revisions to the building's architectural expression respond well to the panel's previous comments, in particular applying a consistent treatment to the elevations, with the northwest elevation now expressed in the same way as the southeast elevation. This represents a considerable improvement.
- The panel had previously stressed the importance of achieving substance and depth to the façade. Several options for the masonry panels expressing the grid – some more complex than others – were presented. The panel suggests that the option of overlapped panels with inclined surfaces (presented as iteration 04) – which creates a woven effect – may in fact reduce the perception of depth. Creating a more playful façade perhaps undermines its depth.
- Enhancing the depth of the façade, especially for the southeast elevation, should be the priority – and the panel thinks that this might be best achieved by a simpler, crisper approach (possibly that presented by iteration 01).
- In considering possible options, how each might weather over time should be taken into account.
- The success of the building will depend on exceptionally high quality detailed design, materials and construction. The panel urges that there be no dilution of the quality promised by the proposal as presented, for example through value engineering. Precast concrete is proposed for the masonry panels. The panel stresses the imperative of ensuring that this material is used in construction.



### *Landscape and public realm design*

- The landscape and public realm strategy seeks to make the most of a constrained site and to maximise the benefits that the proposal brings to the public realm. The principal moves informing the strategy are sound.
- In previous reviews, the panel stressed the importance of exploiting to the full the asset of the Channelsea River to the rear of the site. Its potential contribution to the public realm is great, offering an exciting opportunity to create an attractive green waterside space and to encourage biodiversity.
- The panel suggests a number of initiatives that could be pursued, for example, using storm water run-off to re-introduce water to the Channelsea River or introducing a reed bed.
- It remains unclear, however, how the Channelsea River will be revived and put to good use. The panel strongly encourages and supports initiatives, including in partnership with others, to enhance this asset. A clear management plan to ensure that the Channelsea River is maintained and does not degrade over time will be essential.
- Tree planting in the area between the building and the Builders Arms public house is supported – but given the relatively restricted dimensions of this space, careful consideration will need to be given to viability and choice of species. The panel agrees that, if the tree canopy extended into and was visible along Stratford High Street, this would contribute positively to the public realm.
- A green wall is proposed along the side of the public house. Careful analysis of daylight / sunlight penetration will be needed to ascertain whether this space could support both tree planting and a green wall.
- The panel also encourages making the most of the roof garden at seventh floor level. This offers another opportunity to encourage biodiversity – and therefore careful thought should be given to the choice of species.
- This is a very substantial development – with a relatively modest amount of associated public realm. There is therefore a strong argument for investing in exceptionally high quality for the public realm.
- In this context, the panel recommends further thought to surface materials – these are proposed as resin bonded gravel, timber decking and tarmac. The building is large and a more solid material with a more urban character would be appropriate for where it meets the ground. This could, for example, be stone, granite or concrete. The panel appreciates and supports the design intent for the surface to flow from outside to inside the building, but thinks that this could also be achieved with an alternative material.



- The panel also points out that resin bonded gravel would degrade over time. It strongly advises against the use of tarmac – this would serve to reinforce the notion of service yard and ‘back of house’ which the design otherwise seeks to counter. If using timber decking, it will be important to avoid any impression of a marina walkway.
- The panel therefore recommends rethinking surface materials – and looking for consistency and robustness. It thinks that opening up the area around the base of the building as far as possible and treating it with a consistent material could be more successful.

*Next steps*

- While recommending some further refinements, the Quality Review Panel considers that the proposal for the Collective Hotel meets the criteria of LLDC Local Plan Policy BN.10. It will be essential, however, to ensure that the quality promised by the proposal is fully realised.
- The panel offers its warm support for the Collective Hotel – and wishes it success.

