

London Legacy Development Corporation Quality Review Panel

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

Thursday 14 May 2015

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

Panel

Peter Studdert (chair)
John Lyall
Alex Ely

Attendees

Allison De Marco	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Anthony Hollingsworth	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Deborah Denner	Fortismere Associates

Report also copied to

Steve Tomlinson	London Legacy Development Corporation
Alison Rugg	London Borough of Newham

1. Project name and site address

Land at Cook's Road, London E15 2PN
Planning application reference: 14/00191/FUL

2. Presenting team

Phil King	Bellway Homes
Barry McCullough	Levitt Bernstein
Jayne Mills	Levitt Bernstein
Laura Gray	Savills

3. Planning authority's views

During the planning application process for Cook's Road, it has emerged that the waste site to the north west of the site has a history of complaints about odours associated with its operation. Newham's environmental health officer has objected to the application for Cook's Road on the grounds of its proximity to the waste site. Planning officers also have concerns relating to sunlight and daylight – analysis has shown that at least 26% of habitable rooms do not meet average daylight factor targets. Officers also have concerns about the privacy of bedrooms where flats have deck access, and about the proportion of flats that are north facing single aspect. Cumulatively, officers have concluded that the amenity offered by the development would not be sufficient, and will be recommending the application for refusal.

4. Quality Review Panel's views

Summary

The Quality Review Panel has been asked to comment for a second time on the planning application for Cook's Road, in the light of additional information about the neighbouring waste site, and sunlight and daylight analysis. Whilst assessment of the impact of the waste processing plant is a technical matter, the panel acknowledges the detrimental effect this may have on new homes on this site. The potential to phase the development, so that apartment blocks closest to the waste site are only built once this operation has been relocated should be explored. The panel also shares planning officers concerns about sunlight and daylight for some homes in this dense development. It will be for the design team to demonstrate that acceptable standards of sunlight and daylight have been achieved, through further analysis and adjustments to the layout, massing and detailed design. Planning officers also have concerns about privacy where deck access is proposed. The panel think this could be resolved through the detailed design. Adjustments to the layout could also minimise or avoid the number of north facing single aspect flats.

There are many positive aspects to the scheme, in terms of the environment it would create for residents, as well as employment space. However, the panel defers to the LLDC's technical advisors on environmental health, sunlight and daylight, and recognises that unless their concerns can be addressed, it may not

be appropriate to grant planning approval to the development. The panel recognises the difficulty of transforming an industrial area into a residential neighbourhood, and that some land uses will require relocation for this to be fully achieved. More detailed comments are provided below. Comments made at previous reviews, which remain relevant, are repeated for clarity.

Waste site

- The panel acknowledges the concerns of planning officers and Newham's environmental health officer about the impact of the waste site on the quality of residential accommodation this scheme would provide.
- The Quality Review Panel cannot arbitrate on this technical matter, but they would encourage the project team to consider whether phasing the development could address these concerns.
- For example, it may be possible for the portion of the site closest to the river to go ahead, subject to further assessment of the impact of the waste site on this area of land.
- Planning agreements could be put in place to require relocation of the waste site before the remainder of the development is completed.

Daylight and sunlight

- The panel also acknowledges that daylight and sunlight analysis carried out in support of the planning application for Cook's Road raises some concerns.
- Whilst again, the Quality Review Panel cannot arbitrate on this technical matter, it believes this could be addressed through further analysis and amendments to the layout, massing, and detailed design.
- For example, adjustments to the layout to remove pinch points, or provide larger windows, may be able to optimise sunlight and daylight in living accommodation.

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 – although it may be that relocation of the waste site is required before this vision can be fully implemented.
- The panel acknowledges that changes of level across the site – which require step access to the courtyards from the street – are necessary because of flood risk and notes that lifts will be provided in the blocks' cores.

- The panel thinks that planning officers' concerns about the privacy of bedrooms facing the deck access could be addressed through the scheme's detailed design.
- One solution could be to pull the deck away from the façade, with bridges to front doors.
- Adjustments to the layout to minimise the proportion of single aspect north facing flats would also be welcome.

Scale and massing

- The development proposes blocks ranging from 6 to 9 storeys – exceeding the guideline of 4 – 6 storeys.
- Analysis of daylight and sunlight has demonstrated that in some areas, the living accommodation will not meet average daylight factor targets. Adjustments to the scale and massing of the development may be needed to address this.

Detailed design and materials

- The panel supports the approach to creating a distinctive character for each block by using a variety of materials such as a range of different bricks.
- It will be essential that the quality of architecture suggested by the planning application is followed though in the scheme's detailed design and construction.

Car park access

- It is proposed that access to the ground floor level car park will be from the central 'wynd'.
- The panel continues to believe that priority should be given to providing the best possible environment for residents, including families, and that providing access to the car park from the 'wynd' will compromise its quality.
- It recommends therefore that car park access be relocated to Cook's Road. Although this would fragment the frontage of the block along Cook's Road, the panel does not think that this will significantly detract from the architectural expression of the façade.

Landscape design

- The panel thinks that the 'wynd' and communal courtyards – which will incorporate large trees – will provide an attractive heart to the scheme, supporting the success of family housing.
- The panel also supports the more urban character of the perimeter streets and riverside.

Next steps

- The Quality Review Panel defers to the LLDC's technical advisors on the issues of environmental quality, sunlight and daylight that have emerged during the application process.
- It will be for planning officers working in consultation with the design team to determine whether these issues can be adequately addressed.