



FRAME PROJECTS

London Legacy Development Corporation Quality Review Panel

Report of Formal Review Meeting: Stratford Waterfront: cultural / education buildings

Thursday 16 November 2017

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

Panel

Peter Studdert (chair)
Teresa Borsuk
John O'Mara
Adam Khan
Mike Martin

Attendees

Anthony Hollingsworth	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Catherine Smyth	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Anne Ogundiya	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Richard McFerran	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Sara Dawes	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Carla Smyth	London Legacy Development Corporation
Thomas Powell	London Legacy Development Corporation
Yuan Sun	London Legacy Development Corporation
Tessa Kordeczka	Frame Projects

Apologies / report copied to

Leona Roche	London Legacy Development Corporation
Ben Hull	London Borough of Newham

1. Project name and site address

Stratford Waterfront, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park

2. Presenting team

Bob Allies	Allies and Morrison
Alex Wraight	Allies and Morrison
John Tuomey	O'Donnell + Tuomey
Sheila O'Donnell	O'Donnell + Tuomey
Eimear Hanratty	O'Donnell + Tuomey
Olga Felip	Camps Felip Arquitectura
Peter Maxwell	London Legacy Development Corporation
Irene Man	London Legacy Development Corporation

3. Planning authority's views

The planning authority welcomes the testing and refinements that continue to be made to the masterplan for Stratford Waterfront – including the four cultural and education buildings: Sadler's Wells; BBC Concert Studios; the London College of Fashion; and V&A East.

It continues to assess the townscape that will emerge from the scale and massing of the buildings across Stratford Waterfront – both the cultural and education buildings and the residential blocks. Also important are the spaces around and between the buildings – and their contribution to the coherence of the wider Stratford Waterfront public realm.

4. Quality Review Panel's views

Summary

The Quality Review Panel warmly welcomes the emerging designs of the four cultural and education buildings at Stratford Waterfront: Sadler's Wells; BBC Concert Studios; the London College of Fashion; and V&A East. It commends the design teams on the clarity and detail of their presentations and encourages them to continue to develop the designs in more detail, taking into account its suggestions for refinements provided below.

This report should be read together with the separate reports of reviews on 16 November 2017 of the masterplan, public realm and landscape; and the residential component of Stratford Waterfront.



Sadler's Wells

- The panel finds much to admire in the proposed design of Sadler's Wells, both its scale and massing, such as the bulk and opacity of the fly tower, and its finer details, such as the sculptural form of the brickwork.
- Successful spaces have been created throughout the building, each responding thoughtfully to its intended use. The foyers, for example, can be expected to be well used and full of life.
- The panel sees advantages in locating an entrance to Sadler's Wells on the chamfered corner of the elevation on the F10 Bridge – but at the same time it will be important to ensure that the entrance on the waterfront side is also clearly signalled to those approaching from Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park across the bridge.
- The panel repeats a point made in relation to the wider masterplan about extending the cultural uses of Stratford Waterfront down to the riverside (see separate report on Stratford Waterfront masterplan, public realm and landscape).

BBC Concert Studios

- The panel broadly supports the design of the BBC Concert Studios – which has the potential to result in a handsome small building sitting happily next to Sadler's Wells.
- The panel suggests that the relationship between the solid and opaque expression of the studios and the lighter, open expression of the more public spaces might be improved with some refinement. The ancillary accommodation may not require the degree of detail currently proposed. A tougher but quieter expression may have a more powerful impact.
- The panel particularly commends a design that succeeds in allowing light into studio spaces – and suggests that there may be scope to be slightly more daring in the configuration of windows.

London College of Fashion

- The panel welcomes the revisions to the design of the London College of Fashion. It finds the conceptual drawings of this highly complex building compelling.
- The scale of the building works well within the wider masterplan for Stratford Waterfront and the panel welcomes the fact that the London College of Fashion connects to the riverside, as well as having entrances at podium level and also at the lower level of Carpenters Road.



- The relationship of the London College of Fashion with its neighbours – the BBC Concert Studios and V&A East – should continue to be at the forefront of design thinking.
- The panel recommends, in particular, further thought to the elevation adjacent to the BBC Concert Studios. Some further articulation to this elevation is required to better acknowledge and respond to the adjoining building. At the moment, it appears to make little concession to this adjacency and could be perceived – including from Bridge F10 – as a rather overbearing sheer façade.
- The panel also questions the function and quality of those spaces that directly abut the BBC Concert Studios and will not enjoy daylight.
- The panel admires the robust, pragmatic approach taken to the design of the building – which, with its strength and repetition, reads well externally. The London College of Fashion provides an opportunity to create an amazing environment for students: out of this pragmatism should emerge some scope for exuberance.
- The practical approach informing the design should be rigorously applied to ensure optimum functionality of all spaces – for example, avoiding the potential of too much light to the outer bays and too little light to the central ‘heart’ of the building.
- The panel recommends continued interrogation of how successfully the central spaces will meet the needs of intended uses. It suggests that – without compromising the pragmatism of the concept informing the design – some simplification in its built form could be beneficial, including, for example, in resolving any issues around light levels.
- Further detail of the how the interface and interaction between the London College of Fashion’s public spaces and the central ‘heart’ might come together would be helpful.

V&A East

- The panel is impressed by the high quality of the design for V&A East – which promises to result in a particularly special and distinctive building at the heart of Stratford Waterfront.
- It is a beautiful and delightful building with a particularly well thought through plan and layout – including the location of the exhibition gallery at the top of the building, which will draw people up through the building.
- The design of the building contributes significantly to the character of the open space in front of it – Waterfront Square – which extends to the waterside.



- The panel looks forward to seeing how the details of the design – including the proposed materials – are developed.

Next steps

- The Quality Review Panel is encouraged by the progress made in developing the designs of the cultural and education buildings at Stratford Waterfront – and encourages the designs teams to continue in the directions in which they are going, while making refinements as suggested above.
- The panel looks forward to having another opportunity to comment on the designs for Sadler's Wells, the BBC Concert Studios, the London College of Fashion and V&A East as designs are developed further – and before planning applications are submitted.

