



FRAME PROJECTS

London Legacy Development Corporation Quality Review Panel

Report of Planning Application Review: 90 Monier Road

Thursday 17 January 2019

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

Panel

Neil Deely (chair)
Johnny Winter

Attendees

Richard McFerran	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Gwenaël Jerrett	London Legacy Development Corporation
Tessa Kordeczka	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 two pre-application reviews of the scheme for 90 Monier Road: Panel members who attended the previous meetings were: Peter Studdert (chair); Johnny Winter; Fergus Feilden; Keith French; David Bonnett; Simon Henley; Mike Martin; and Kelvin Campbell.

Declaration of interest

CMA Planning is the planning consultant for development at 90 Monier Road. Neil Deely, vice-chair of the Quality Review Panel, is Co-founder and Partner of Metropolitan Workshop, which is working on a separate project where CMA Planning is the planning consultant. There is no connection between these two projects.

1. Project name and site address

90 Monier Road, Fish Island

Planning application reference: 18/00325/FUL

2. Presenting team

Judith Stichtenoth	dRMM
Philip Marsh	dRMM
Tom Smith	Spacehub
Sam Caslin	Taylor Wimpey
Tim Gaskell	CMA Planning

3. Planning authority's views

The planning authority has welcomed revisions to the proposal for development of 90 Monier Road since the previous review by the Quality Review Panel. These result in considerable improvements to the design, including entrance lobbies to residential accommodation, quality of the western podium garden, and application of materials. The planning authority supports the triangular – rather than orthogonal – form of Building C to the east of the site.

The planning authority in particular seeks the panel's advice on compliance with LLDC Local Plan Policy BN.10 on tall buildings, which includes a requirement for 'outstanding architecture'. This applies not only to the taller Building C, but also to Building A and Building B which marginally exceed 20 metres.

4. Quality Review Panel's views

Summary

The Quality Review Panel finds much to admire in the proposal for development at 90 Monier Road. It promises to be a highly successful place to live and work, and has the potential to meet the requirements of Local Plan Policy BN.10. The panel supports approval of the planning application, contingent on some minor revisions to the design. The scheme's scale and massing are appropriate – the panel agrees that a triangular form for Building C is the best approach – and the buildings successfully relate to the street. The architecture, including materials, is distinctive – but the panel stresses that it will be essential to ensure high quality detailed design and construction. The panel recommends that residential entrances be designed to be more visible and clearly distinguishable from commercial entrances. It strongly advises against self-draining balconies. A strategy for integrating external elements such as rainwater goods and MVHR grilles into the architecture should be developed before determination of the planning application. The panel also recommends reconsideration of internal layouts of residential units in Building A to mitigate inadequate daylight levels and overlooking to bedrooms opening onto a lightwell. The panel commends the landscape design strategy.



These comments are expanded below and those made at the previous review that remain relevant are repeated for clarity.

Scale and massing

- The panel commends the design team for a well designed scheme. It supports the proposed scale and massing; this responds well to context, including the adjoining Fish Island and White Post Lane Conservation Area to the south of the site.
- The form of the buildings, including the roofscapes, result in an interesting composition. The panel had previously suggested further interrogation of the triangular form of Building C to the east of the site. It appreciates the design team's further analysis of the comparative qualities of a triangular / orthogonal form and agrees that a triangular form is the best option, resulting in a more intriguing and slimmer profile when viewed from the street.
- The panel welcomes the reduction in the width of the three town houses along Beachy Road. This modification provides more generous private amenity space, including play space, in the western podium garden.

Plan and layout

- The panel repeats its support for the revised plan and layout of the scheme – which conform to the southeast / northwest grain to the north of the site and the grid established by Monier Road and Beachy Road.
- The buildings successfully address the street along both Monier Road and Beachy Road and the ground floor plan works well. The panel repeats its strong support for the perpendicular pedestrian route that cuts through from Monier Road to Beachy Road.

Architectural expression

- The panel finds much to admire in the architecture proposed for the development and concludes that, overall, it complies with the provisions of Policy BN.10. While Building C is particularly distinctive with its triangular form, both Building A and Building B will also contribute significantly to an interesting street scene.
- The panel stresses, however, that exceptionally high quality detailed design and construction must be guaranteed if the development is to conform to and deliver on Policy BN.10. It therefore strongly recommends retention of the design team through to construction, and avoidance of any dilution of the quality promised by the proposal.



- The panel welcomes improvements to the sequence of residential lobbies – but thinks that scope remains to make these more legible from the street. It recommends increasing their visibility, and distinguishing them more clearly from the commercial entrances, and suggests that this be achieved through a specific architectural treatment, for example a canopy and / or integrated signage, rather than simply painted numerals.

Detailed design

- Generally, the panel supports the materials palette proposed for the three buildings making up the scheme – including the variation of brick colour and matched mortar. It points, however, to the importance of a carefully considered choice of black brick – suggesting a brick with more character, perhaps with a warmer tone and more variation.
- There are serious reservations about the proposed self-draining balconies – which risk water staining – and the panel strongly recommends an alternative approach, incorporating drainage to balconies or capturing rainwater in some other way, to be put forward pre-determination.
- The panel stresses the importance of explicitly designing in external elements such as rainwater goods and MVHR grilles at this stage, rather than addressing them as conditions to the planning permission. There should be a clear strategy to ensure that such elements are integrated successfully into the buildings' architecture.

Residential accommodation

- The panel welcomes the simpler, clearer design of the entrances to residential accommodation – which now enjoy wider lobbies and more legible access to lifts.
- It raises a question about the quality of internal spaces in Building A – specifically daylight levels to bedrooms opening onto the lightwell, particularly at first and second floor levels. Compromised daylight levels would be further aggravated if, as anticipated, there is subsequent development on the adjacent site. The panel therefore recommends reconsidering the configuration of internal layouts to avoid inadequate daylight levels to bedrooms.
- Daylight should be tested with the presence of a future building likely to be proposed to the west of the scheme facing onto Beachy Road.
- Although there are some single aspect units, these are predominantly west facing. The introduction of a saw-tooth façade along Monier Road is a clever device to maximise a west facing aspect.



Commercial space

- The panel thinks that the commercial spaces provided in all three buildings promise to be successful, offering variety and flexibility in use.

Landscape design

- The panel repeats its warm support for the landscape design strategy. It is encouraging that the scheme's design seeks to maximise retention of existing London plane trees: these will add significantly to the attractiveness of the development's setting.
- The landscape design for both podium gardens shows much promise – with the quality of the western podium garden now improved by the reduction in the width of the town houses.

Next steps

- The scheme for 90 Monier Road promises to be successful, contributing positively to the character of Fish Island and providing both high quality residential accommodation and employment space.
- While recommending some minor revisions to the design, the Quality Review Panel is pleased to support approval of the planning application.

