

London Legacy Development Corporation Quality Review Panel

Report of Formal Review Meeting: International Quarter London (IQL) Plot S9

Thursday 20 October 2016

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

Panel

Peter Studdert (chair)

Neil Deely

Johnny Winter

Mike Martin

Lynne Sullivan

Attendees

Hilary Wrenn

LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team

Josh Hackner

LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team

Steve Tomlinson

London Legacy Development Corporation

Deborah Denner

Fortismere Associates

Tessa Kordeczka

Fortismere Associates

Apologies / report copied to

Anthony Hollingsworth

LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team

Allison De Marco

LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team

Ben Hull

London Borough of Newham

1. Project name and site address

Plot S9, International Quarter London (IQL)

2. Presenting team

Ivan Harbour	Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners
Mimi Hawley	Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners
Ana Abram	Gustafson Porter
Lesley Perez	Gustafson Porter
Helena Malcolm	Lend Lease
Jos Borthwick	Lend Lease
Steffan Rees	Quod
Helen Rodger	Quod

3. Planning authority's views

The planning authority confirms that the proposal for the building on Plot S9 conforms to agreed parameters. Issues that remain under discussion – including ground floor uses and the service road to building S9 – have also been considered in the wider context of the landscape design strategy (see also the separate report on Carpenters Square).

4. Quality Review Panel's views

Summary

The Quality Review Panel finds much to admire in the design of building S9. Its composition, articulation and materiality have the potential to create a high quality building that will contribute significantly to the wider context of IQL. The panel provides detailed comments below, including on: refinements to the composition; the location of plant on the roof; the adaptability of the ground floor to eventual uses; the articulated façade of the low level component; and the frontage along the service road to the southwest of the building.

The panel's comments should be read together with those on the IQL landscape design strategy (see the separate report on Carpenters Square).

Form and massing

- The panel strongly supports the direction in which the design of building S9 is developing. It has the potential to be highly successful. While smaller in scale than the buildings to the northeast of the site, it will make a strong impression. The panel also thinks that it will relate well to buildings proposed for the cultural and education district at Stratford Waterfront, notably V&A East and Sadler's Wells.
- The building's composition of linear expression with strong vertical elements creates a counterpoint to the buildings to the northeast of the site, while at the same time providing continuity in architectural language.

- The panel suggests, however, that minor refinements could further strengthen the composition and its impact when viewed, in particular, from International Square. Increasing the height of the vertical elements – even if only slightly – would enhance the building’s articulation.
- The roofline will be highly visible from both International Square and neighbouring buildings. It will be essential to ensure that plant located on the roof does not detract from the integrity of the composition and the quality of the townscape. Inclusion of plant on the roof will therefore have to be particularly carefully detailed at an early stage.

Architectural expression

- When previously reviewed, the design of building S9 was at an early stage. The panel welcomes the additional detail provided and thinks that the design has developed well.
- A more humane quality has been sought for buildings on the southwestern side of IQL South, as compared to those on the northeastern side. The panel thinks that the design for building S9 meets this objective.
- The panel welcomes the diversity in architectural treatment and materials proposed for the different elements of the building.
- The panel notes that ground floor use has yet to be determined – both office and gallery space are under consideration. While this remains undecided, it is important to allow the flexibility to introduce additional entrances – that are easily accessible – along the frontage of the building. As currently designed, the floor level of the ground floor and inclusion of upstands would make this difficult.

Detailed design

- Some questions are raised about the function of the vertically articulated façade of the low level component – and, specifically, whether it will be effective in providing shading on the southwest elevation. While details have yet to be developed, the panel notes that the fins will be angled.
- The choice of materials will be important – a hard, steely, reflective appearance should be avoided.
- The materiality of the lower level frontage along the service road, where loading bays and plant are located, should also be carefully considered in order to avoid any downgrading of the environment along this road.
- The panel suggests that some planting – possibly a green wall – along this frontage could soften it and make the asphalted service road more pleasant.
- The green roof at level 6 is an excellent move – and could become an even more important asset if access by those occupying the building were possible.

Sustainability strategy

- The panel notes the ambition to achieve at least BREEAM 'excellent', if not 'outstanding', and to meet London Plan low energy targets.

Next steps

- The panel is encouraged by how the design for building S9 has developed and is confident that the design team will be able to refine it in response to its comments, in consultation with planning officers.
- It would welcome the opportunity to comment again, once a planning application is submitted.