



FRAME PROJECTS

London Legacy Development Corporation Quality Review Panel

Report of Formal Review Meeting: Vulcan Wharf

Thursday 23 June 2022

Via video conference

Panel

Hari Phillips (chair)

Julia Barfield

Barbara Kaucky

Mike Martin

Attendees

Richard McFerran

LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team

Pippa Henshall

London Legacy Development Corporation

Frances Madders

London Legacy Development Corporation

Charlotte Walker

London Borough of Newham

Lucy Block

Frame Projects

Patrycja Karas

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Report copied to

Anthony Hollingsworth

LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team

Catherine Smyth

LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team

Rita Adeoye

London Legacy Development Corporation

James Bolt

London Borough of Newham

Ben Hull

London Borough of Newham

Deborah Denner

Frame Projects

Cindy Reriti

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Note on process

The Quality Review Panel comments below follow on from three pre-application reviews and one planning application review. Panel members who attended the previous meeting were: Peter Studdert (chair); Julia Barfield; Keith French; David Gilpin; Simon Henley; Barbara Kaucky; Mike Martin; Johnny Winter.

1. Project name and site address

Vulcan Wharf, Cooks Road, Stratford, London, E15 2PW

2. Presenting team

Mark Smith	London Square
Catherine McKenzie	Peabody
Wahidur Rahman	Peabody
Tom Mitchell	Metropolitan Workshop
David Mulligan	Metropolitan Workshop
Tom Banfield	Assael Architecture
Lois Wheller	Tavernor Consulting
Chris Gascoigne	DP9
Michael Green	DP9

3. Planning authority briefing

The site is located within the Pudding Mill Lane area of the London Borough of Newham and currently comprises a number of single storey industrial and commercial uses. Cook's Road is to the north, with a major substation to the north west, the River Lea is to the south, and the Bow Back River to the south east. The site is divided into two plots: V1 and V2. Within the scheme, the latter comprises a 'last mile' delivery and distribution centre at ground floor level, with five residential buildings on an upper podium.

Planning permission (ref: 20/00307/FUL) was granted in December 2021 for approximately 470 new homes, of which 35 per cent will be affordable, and 8,830 sqm of employment space. Building heights range between 9 and 14 storeys, including a double height podium over the ground floor uses.

This subsequent proposal seeks to provide an additional six storeys of residential floorspace on Plot V1; increasing the height from 14 storeys to 20 storeys. The number of units increases from 457 to 496 and Plot V2 will be altered to incorporate the proportionate uplift in affordable housing to maintain the provision of 35 per cent. The scheme maintains the employment / industrial use plot ratio of 65 per cent as required by the London Plan.

Officers welcome the panels views on the additional height, as well as the associated impact of a taller building on the quality of the public realm, amount of amenity and play space. It also invites the panel to consider the environmental impact, particularly potential overshadowing, reduced daylight and wind effects on the surrounding area.



4. Quality Review Panel's views

Summary

The panel welcomes the opportunity to review the amended scheme, however it feels that the additional height proposed is inappropriate and will result in overdevelopment of the site. The panel notes that there is very clear guidance within the Pudding Mill Lane Masterplan and SPD, which states that this area should be clearly distinct from the character of Stratford High Street.

The panel also feels that a taller building in this location will have a negative impact on the quality of the public realm in terms of reduced access to daylight and overshadowing issues, as well as potentially negative microclimate effects. The additional quantum of development is not balanced against provision of enhanced public realm, communal amenity and play space.

While the panel notes that the approved scheme is well-designed, the updated townscape views clearly demonstrate that the 14-storeys originally proposed were at the limits of acceptable height in this location. As such, it finds the proposal for an additional six storeys problematic and not reasonably justified.

Site context

- The character of the Pudding Mill Lane area as set out in the SPD and Local Plan is predominantly low to mid-rise with the potential for additional height located around the station. The panel notes that this site is on the periphery of the Pudding Mill Area and is not allocated for tall buildings.
- The case for the site as a transition to Stratford High Street is not supported by the panel. Policy clearly defines these as two distinct areas that should be clearly differentiated.
- The case for the site as a landmark is not supported by the panel and is contrary to policy which concentrates height around the transport node of Pudding Mill Lane Station.
- It also cautions that the CGI aerial view shows tall buildings for sites within the Pudding Mill Lane area that have yet to be approved for development. It urges the applicant to address this and make sure that the renders shown are accurate representations of the context.

Height and massing

- The Pudding Mill Lane SPD and Local Plan sets the expected height for development in the area at 21 metres. The previous scheme significantly exceeded this datum and was supported by the QRP, on balance, by meeting the exceptional design standards required by Policy BN5 of the Local Plan.



- The panel is firmly of the view that the townscape views demonstrate that increasing the height from 14 storeys to 20 storeys would result in negative townscape impact – therefore no longer meeting the standards of Policy BN5.

Public realm and amenity

- The panel feels that the provision of play space and public realm has not been enhanced, as would be necessary to help justify the additional quantum of development proposed.
- The argument put forward, that the podium level plinth garden provides sufficient amenity space is not accepted. The panel notes that this space can only be accessed via internal stairs and lift, and will not be accessible to residents within Plot V1 where the additional homes will be added.
- In the panel's view the microclimate and environmental impact of the revised proposals have not been considered adequately, particularly in relation to daylight and wind modelling. It feels that the quality and comfort of the public realm would be negatively impacted by the additional height proposed.
- Previous concerns were raised regarding the relationship between Plot V1 and the Bow Back River. The panel feels that the updated townscape views demonstrate that the additional height would be too dominant and have a negative impact in views along the river.

Next steps

- The panel is unanimous in its view that the additional height proposed is unacceptable, and does not meet the requirements of Policy BN5. It urges the design team to continue working with LLDC officers to address the concerns noted above.

