



FRAME PROJECTS

London Legacy Development Corporation Quality Review Panel

Report of Formal Review Meeting: Chobham Farm Zone 2

Thursday 26 January 2017

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

Panel

Peter Studdert (chair)

Peter St John

David Lindsey

Andrew Harland

Attendees

Hilary Wrenn

LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team

Alex Chrusciak

LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team

Steve Tomlinson

London Legacy Development Corporation

Tessa Kordeczka

Frame Projects

Apologies / report copied to

Anthony Hollingsworth

LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team

Ben Hull

London Borough of Newham

1. Project name and site address

Chobham Farm Zone 2, land north of Penny Brookes Street, Stratford, London E15 1DR

2. Presenting team

Carolina Ferrando	PRP
Manisha Patel	PRP
Ameya Bhusari	PRP
Angeli Ganoo-Fletcher	PRP (Landscape)
Kallina Bakali	PRP (Landscape)
Steve Hancocks	Higgins Homes
Ashley Powell	Higgins Construction
Rebecca Caines	Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners

3. Planning authority's views

Zone 2 is the third phase of the Chobham Farm development and is anticipated to form a link between Zones 1 and 4. It incorporates a substantial area of open space, as well as residential buildings. The site poses several challenges. These include a difficult topography, with significant level changes; and the need to provide access to the underground car park of the consented Zone 1 scheme, and also an effective interim response to the boundary with Zone 3 to the east of the site – the delivery of which, including timing, remains unclear.

It must be ensured that Zone 2, including its relationship to Zone 1, works well, regardless of eventual decisions on Zone 3.

4. Quality Review Panel's views

Summary

The panel commends the design team on a clear presentation and on the generally sound strategic responses to the site's challenges. The proposal has the potential to result in a successful development. A major issue to be resolved at this stage is securing a viable connection between Zone 1 and Zone 2 – independently of what may be decided on Zone 3. Achieving this has implications for the landscape design – requiring both effective integration with Zone 1 and also a strong boundary with Zone 3. The panel also recommends revisions to the podium courtyard to maximise its attraction for residents. The panel questions whether inclusion of office space is appropriate at the prominent corner of Penny Brookes Street and the shared surface route through Zone 2. It also strongly encourages maximising dual aspect units and avoiding north facing single aspect units, as far as possible. The panel would welcome further details of sunlight and daylight studies, and also strategies to prevent overheating where highly glazed elevations are proposed. These comments are expanded below.



Response to context

- A major issue to be resolved is providing a direct and usable route between Zone 1 to the north, through Zone 2, to Penny Brookes Street to the south.
- While an eventual route is envisaged along the boundary between Zone 2 and Zone 3, uncertainty surrounding the delivery of Zone 3 requires an alternative approach in the interim. The existing route between these two zones along Thornham Grove is particularly inhospitable.
- The landscaped green space proposed for Zone 2 is its defining asset – and should be conceived of as the linking device between Zone 1 and Zone 2. It should be seen as a public through route – rather than a private cul de sac for use only by Chobham Farm residents.
- In this context, further clarity is needed on whether the landscaped green space is considered to be a privately owned park or a public open space.
- The panel stresses the importance of securing a through route at this stage – regardless of what may eventually be decided on delivery of Zone 3 – and of making this explicit in the planning application for Zone 2.
- To achieve this, a solution should be sought for effectively integrating the northern end of the landscaped green space of Zone 2 with the existing upper deck of the Zone 1 landscaping.
- The panel supports the decision to bring the building line of the stacked maisonettes forward. While this reduces the area of land available for the landscaped green space, it succeeds in obscuring the entrance to the Zone 1 underground car park at the end of the shared surface route through Zone 2.
- This strategy has the added advantage of opening up the opportunity for allotments to the rear of the maisonettes – an appropriate location that provides good security for the allotments even though they are close to the railway.
- Minimal vehicular traffic is envisaged, and the panel thinks that the shared surface route will work well.
- The panel notes that provision of B1 managed space is required under a Section 106 agreement. This has been incorporated at the ground floor of the building at the corner of Penny Brookes Street and the shared surface route.
- This building is conceived of as a ‘feature’ indicating a gateway to Zone 2. The panel is not convinced that office space, with a highly glazed frontage, in this prominent location is sufficiently distinctive or interesting to define this corner.
- The panel thinks that office space would be better located in a less prominent location – with this corner presenting a more open, social character.



- This could be achieved through a revised architectural treatment. If B1 use is located at this corner, however, the panel recommends that the frontage is not extensively glazed.

Architectural expression

- The panel acknowledges that the architecture proposed for both the courtyard blocks and the maisonettes is at an early stage.
- It suggests, however, that the elevation of the courtyard block along Penny Brookes Street might benefit from more articulation.

Residential accommodation

- The panel regrets that the internal layout of the courtyard blocks – with access from central corridors – results in a comparatively high proportion of single aspect units. Generally, it considers north facing single aspect units to be unacceptable. It therefore encourages the design team to continue to explore ways to maximise the number of dual aspect units.

Landscape design

- The proposal for Zone 2 incorporates a particularly significant area of green space – and this merits a strong and confident response.
- The panel thinks that several components of the proposed landscape have the potential to be successful, including the incorporation of a sustainable urban drainage system feature and allotments adjacent to the railway line.
- The panel recommends that a more explicit strategy be sought for an interim solution to the boundary between Zone 2 and Zone 3. While the proposed tree structure at this boundary is supported, the panel thinks that this edge could be strengthened.
- A number of different ‘zones’ are proposed for the landscaped green space – sensory gardens, woodland gardens, ornamental garden, and ecological garden; as well play spaces for different age groups.
- Further development of the landscape design is needed to demonstrate how these various spaces might integrate with each other.
- Generally, the panel thinks that the interface between the buildings and the landscape could be strengthened.
- This appears particularly relevant at the junction between Penny Brookes Street and the shared surface route. The building at this point is conceived of as a ‘feature’: the entrance on this corner could therefore be expressed more emphatically (see comments above).



- While proposed tree planting at this junction works well, the panel would recommend a simpler approach to the ground plane.
- The panel recommends that further thought be given to the landscape design of the podium courtyard: this has the potential to be a more exciting and enjoyable space.
- The design should seek to create a heart to the space that will draw people in. More intimate and alluring spaces would encourage residents to sit and linger in the courtyard. Reducing the amount of paving proposed could help to create a more welcoming space.
- Sunlight and shading will have to be a particular consideration – the southern side of the courtyard will be permanently in shade.
- As a general point, while understanding the requirements of managing different tenures within the courtyard blocks, the panel thinks that it would preferable to provide access to the podium courtyard to all residents, not excluding those occupying socially rented accommodation.

Environmental sustainability

- The site is bounded to the west by the railway line. Analysis so far of noise levels suggests that double glazing will be sufficient to mitigate noise. The panel would welcome further information on the results of testing and the proposed response.
- Extensive glazing poses a considerable risk of overheating. The panel therefore recommends that this be fully tested at this stage. It would welcome more detailed information on the results of studies undertaken – and their impact on the design of windows, including how they open and how security is ensured.
- The panel welcomes assurances that detailed analyses of sunlight and daylight levels are being undertaken as the proposal is developed. Ensuring adequate levels of sunlight and daylight to residential units in the courtyard blocks and the podium courtyard presents a challenge.

Next steps

- The panel thinks that the scheme for Chobham Farm Zone 2 shows promise and it looks forward to having the opportunity to comment again, as the proposal is developed further, and before a planning application is submitted.

