



FRAME PROJECTS

## **London Legacy Development Corporation Quality Review Panel**

### **Report of Planning Application Review Meeting: Hackney Wick Masterplan – public realm, Plots J East, K2 North**

Thursday 28 April 2022  
video conference

#### **Panel**

Hari Phillips (chair)  
Mary Bowman  
Catherine Burd

#### **Attendees**

Daniel Davies	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Richard McFerran	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Cindy Reriti	Frame Projects
Marina Stuart	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
Andrew Cunningham	London Borough of Hackney
Deborah Denner	Frame Projects

#### **Note on process**

The Quality Review Panel comments below follow on from two pre-application reviews. Panel members who attended the previous meetings were: Peter Studdert (chair); June Barnes; Catherine Burd; Mary Bowman; Keith French; Simon Henley.

## 1. Project name and site address

Hackney Wick LLDC sites: public realm, Plot J East and Plot K2 North

## 2. Presenting team

Mike Judd	Hawkins\Brown Architects
Marko Neskovic	Hawkins\Brown Architects
Alice Hardy	Studio Weave
Sam Gooch	Notting Hill Genesis
Martin Bates	Engie
Adam Williams	CMA Planning
James Halsall	London Legacy Development Corporation
Pippa Henshall	London Legacy Development Corporation

## 3. Planning authority briefing

The site comprises Plots E, F, J East and K2 North of the Hackney Wick Central Outline Masterplan (2019). It currently includes a collection of low-rise industrial buildings and large areas of open yard space covering an area of 0.88 hectares in a key location adjacent to the Hackney Wick Station.

This review concerns Plot J East, Plot K2 North and the public realm.

The sites are owned by LLDC who have partnered with Notting Hill Genesis / Engie. The proposals seek reserved matters approval (for all matters except access) to deliver 193 residential units, including 50 percent affordable, above a mix of retail, light industrial, community space, and workspace including affordable workspace, at ground level.

The Hackney Wick Masterplan covers an area of 5.95 hectares to the north and south of the Hackney Wick Overground Station, excluding the station and rail lines. To the north of the station is the London Borough of Hackney and to the south is Tower Hamlets. It is largely located within two overlapping conservation areas, the Hackney Wick Conservation Area and the Hackney Wick & White Post Lane Conservation Area. However, Plot K2 North falls outside of the designated conservation area boundaries. There are a number of non-designated heritage assets, both inside the boundaries of the Hackney Wick Masterplan, and within close vicinity.

Planning officers request the panel's comments on whether the design proposals for the public realm and plots K2 North and J East are of the high quality required to meet Local Plan Policy BN.5 for tall buildings.



#### **4. Quality Review Panel's views**

##### *Summary*

##### *Public realm and landscape – Studio Weave Architects*

The panel feels that the design team is moving in the right direction, to provide public realm and landscape proposals that have the potential to meet the requirements of Local Plan Policy BN.5 and will sit comfortably in the unique character of Hackney Wick. It welcomes the improved access to Hackney Wick Station and supports the suggested implementation of a raised table in White Post Lane, to facilitate pedestrian flow and to improve the quality of the public realm. The panel requests additional information and drawings be provided to planning officers, to ensure that the design team's aspirations are delivered onsite, and offers suggestions for how the proposals can be further refined as design development progresses.

##### *Plot K2 North – Hawkins\Brown Architects*

The panel welcomes the improved architectural expression and materiality of this key building with its north elevation adjacent to the public open space and as the book end of the North-South Cut, seen when emerging from the Hackney Wick Station. The panel feels that the scheme will meet the criteria of Local Plan Policy BN.5 if the comments in this report are addressed, in consultation with planning officers, and if quality materials are specified and careful detailed design is carried through to construction. Refinements to simplify the proposals should also be considered as the detailed design progresses.

The panel was not presented with updated drawings of the internal plan and layout of the building, as the focus of the review was on the architectural expression and materiality of the building. However, it offers comments based on the previous review and the elevation drawings presented.

##### *Plot J East – Studio Weave Architects*

The panel supports the clear diagram of the proposals for Plot J East and feels that the scheme will meet the requirements of Local Plan Policy BN.5 provided that quality materials are specified, and careful detailed design is carried through to construction. Refinements to simplify the proposals should also be considered as the detailed design progresses.



## Public realm and landscape – Studio Weave Architects

### *White Post Lane*

- The panel questions whether the linear bench and two seating blocks, on the pavement to the north of the K2 North plot, are needed. While the set back of the K2 North building from the corner is welcomed, the pavement is still narrow given the likely pedestrian flow in front of the Hackney Wick Station and removing the bench and seating blocks would make this space more generous.
- The panel suggests that people walking north along White Post Lane to the station are likely to cross at the corner as this is the natural desire line. It suggests that the proposed crossing points be reconsidered.
- The panel supports the proposed implementation of a raised table in White Post Lane, adjacent to the station entrance. This would facilitate pedestrian flow and improve the quality of the public realm, including the potential to accommodate more greening.
- Even though this has yet to be agreed with London Borough of Tower Hamlets, the panel suggests that the raised table be included in the drawings, to keep the idea visible and to facilitate ongoing discussions.
- Further, the panel suggests that the drawings illustrate the benefit that the removal of one car parking space from White Post Lane would make to the public realm.
- The White Post Lane corner is a significant part of the public realm and the panel feels that there would be a lot of benefit if the implementation of the raised table coincides with the delivery of the buildings on Plots K2 North and J East.

### *The north-south cut – Phoenix Square and Phoenix Cut*

- The panel welcomes the provision of spill-out space in front of the buildings along either side of Phoenix Cut and Phoenix Square. The occupation of these spaces will help to loosen up the formal arrangement of the plots of planting and informal play and imbue them with the typical character of Hackney Wick.
- Additionally, the panel wonders if there is scope for the ground surface between the buildings and the planting and play plots to be more reflective of the industrial nature of the site by, for example, the introduction of moss or planting between paving.
- The panel suggests that a guideline be provided, to promote the provision of any additional greening that can be accommodated once the buildings are occupied and the external spaces laid out.



- The panel welcomes the plots of integrated play along the north-south cut. It suggests that the play spaces could be further embedded by making each plot distinct, but linked by an overarching story to encourage children to move between them.

#### *Podium amenity and play spaces*

- A long-term maintenance plan should be implemented to ensure that the landscaping remains well cared for regardless of whether the residents chose to be involved in managing the amenity spaces.

#### *Specification and maintenance of greening*

- The soft landscape in the public realm should include carefully selected species that add to distinctiveness and seasonal variation. Planting should also be robust enough to withstand the footfall associated with the proposed elements of play within the planted areas.
- The panel would like to see semi-mature trees planted that will provide an immediate impact and improve the likelihood of their survival.
- Detailed drawings are requested illustrating species and the depth of growing medium on terraces should be submitted to planning officers, to ensure that the design team's aspirations are delivered onsite.
- While the addition of greening could make a valuable contribution to the area, it is crucial that both the London Boroughs of Tower Hamlets and Hackney are consulted regarding their ability to maintain this in the long-term.

#### *Urban Greening Factor*

- The panel welcomes the inclusion of sustainable drainage systems. Given the challenge to reach the required Urban Greening Factor for the site, the panel urges the design team to carefully consider any areas that would support vertical greening where a small footprint will increase the score and it will be relatively easy to maintain.

#### *Plot K2 North – Hawkins\Brown Architects*

#### *Architectural expression and materiality*

- The panel recognises the design team's work to improve the presence and delight of this prominent building, and of the key north-facing façade in particular.
- However, it feels that the north elevation would benefit from some simplification. The landmark presence required for the building can be derived from its proportions, the distinctive corduroy brickwork of the ground floor, the



'punchy' white window surrounds, and the 'Wick' wording integrated into the brickwork at the top of the building.

- Beyond the differentiation of the ground floor with its corduroy brickwork, the panel feels that a building of eight storeys in height does not need its massing further broken up to distinguish the middle and the top of the building.
- The panel likes the white window frames, but it suggests that they be simplified by continuing the wider frames of the top three storeys down through all storeys above ground level.
- It feels that the scheme will meet the requirements of Policy BN.5 for tall buildings if the comments in this report are addressed, in consultation with planning officers, and if quality materials are specified and careful detailed design is carried through to construction.

#### *Entrances*

- The panel welcomes the bold materiality of the proposed red glazed brick for the recessed reveals of the building entrances. It feels that the entrances could be further improved if a smooth brick was used in place of the corduroy in these areas.
- The panel encourages the design team to extend the use of the glazed brick around the base of the building, to the areas below the windows, in place of the proposed aluminium.

#### *Elevations, plan and layout*

- The panel likes the solid to void ratio and the consistent fenestration on the north elevation, but it has concerns about the amount of glazing, should bedrooms be located behind any of the three large windows adjacent to the corner balcony.
- While the focus of this review is the visual appearance of the building, the panel feels that additional detailed information and drawings should be provided to planning officers, to give them confidence that the plan and layout will provide a high quality of life for residents. This should include detailed drawings that demonstrate that the internal layout works well with the recessed corner balconies.
- The panel urges consideration be given to the use accommodated in the ground floor corner unit, to ensure that this prominent location at the end of the north-south cut is maximised and the corner street frontage activated. The panel would like to see, for example, a maker space with a retail element and it suggests that safeguards be put in place, and a guideline provided, to ensure that there is a visual presence on this corner.



## Plot J East – Studio Weave Architects

### *Architectural expression and materiality*

- The panel supports the design team’s clear diagram of a frame, with windows set into infill panels. It feels that the building would benefit from some simplification, to accentuate the diagram and reduce the types of decorative brickwork used.
- For example, a variation in the brick bond could be used to add richness to the façades, or the infill panels could be slightly set back from the frame, rather than having textured brickwork underneath the windows in addition to the vertical dog tooth brickwork.
- The panel suggests that, as proposed for the K2 North building, the dog tooth brickwork piers would benefit from courses of plain brickwork, from ground level up to a height that is level with the bottom of the windows, to emphasise the sturdiness of the building.
- The height of the horizontal banding, above the ground floor and at the top of the building, could be reduced to give a lighter appearance to the façades.
- Consideration could also be given to the provision of a splay to the inset balconies, to offer some relief from the grid.
- The panel notes that the windows for the London Affordable Rent block feel small in comparison to the generous glazing of the private and shared ownership block on Plot K2 North.
- The panel considers that the scheme will meet the requirements of Policy BN.5 for tall buildings if the comments in this report are addressed, in consultation with planning officers, and if quality materials are specified and careful detailed design is carried through to construction.

### *Tenure*

- As noted in the previous report, the panel still has significant concerns that the child density of the scheme will be challenging to manage, with issues such as noise likely to escalate as the children become teenagers.
- The combination of family units and one bedroom units, that are likely to be occupied by vulnerable people, could also be reconsidered.

### *Plan and layout*

- The panel welcomes the design team’s assurance that it has carefully considered the factors that could have an impact on the success of the commercial frontages including the location of plant, services, lighting and signage.



*Next steps*

- The panel considers that the proposals for the public realm and plots K2 North and J East will meet the requirements of Local Plan Policy BN.5 provided that quality materials are specified and careful detailed design is carried through to construction.

