

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

### **Report of Planning Application Review Meeting: Strand East Plot R2**

Thursday 8 September 2016

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

#### **Panel**

Peter Studdert (chair)  
Teresa Borsuk  
Tom Lonsdale

#### **Attendees**

Will Steadman	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Sara Dawes	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Pippa Gueterbock	London Legacy Development Corporation
Deborah Denner	Fortismere Associates

#### **Report also 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

#### **Note on process**

The Quality Review Panel comments below follow on from a pre-application review of reserved matters proposals for Strand East Plot R2. Panel members who attended the previous meeting were: Peter Studdert (chair); John Lyall; Teresa Borsuk; John O'Mara; and Lindsey Whitelaw.

## **1. Project name and site address**

Strand East / Sugar House Lane redevelopment: land to south of High Street, Stratford, east of River Lea Navigation and west and north of Three Mills Wall River

Planning application reference: 16/00440/REM

## **2. Presenting team**

Michiel van Soest	Vastint UK
Isabel Da Silva	Mae Architects
Alex Ely	Mae Architects
Antony Nelson	Planit-IE
Emma Gill	GL Hearn
Christopher Schiele	GL Hearn
Edward Kitchen	Montagu Evans

## **3. Planning authority's views**

Planning officers briefed the Quality Review Panel on comments made by Historic England, who are likely to object to the planning application for Strand East Plot R2. Whilst the principles of the development are established through an outline planning approval, recently produced visualisations have raised a concern that the development will be visible above the ridge line of historic buildings at Three Mills. Planning officers are liaising with the design team to explore potential solutions to this issue – for example by reducing the height of the tower element by two storeys.

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

### *Summary*

The Quality Review Panel supports the reserved matters application for Strand East Plot R2, and welcomes the way in which the designs have developed since the previous review. The panel is aware that Historic England have raised concerns about the visual impact of the development on Three Mills – but is not able to comment on this without a further site visit and briefing on views analysis. However, the quality of architecture promised by the scheme, should overall, have a beneficial effect on the conservation area. The panel also thinks that the design of the top of the tower, with translucent glass cladding, is convincing as a subtle marker for the bridge and route through Three Mills. The scheme will provide unusually high quality residential accommodation, with a high proportion of dual aspect flats, and clever use of levels to give privacy to ground floor units. The panel suggested some minor amendments to the landscape design, including on the route to the pedestrian bridge. More detailed comments are provided below, and comments made at the previous review which remain relevant, are repeated for clarity.

### *Impact on views of Three Mills*

- The panel understands that Historic England have raised a concern about the impact of the development on views of listed buildings in the Three Mills conservation area.
- To give a fully informed view on this, the panel would need to visit the site and receive a comprehensive briefing on views analysis.
- However, it could be argued that the development will create a more attractive setting for Three Mills.
- The reserved matters proposals build on the outline planning approval, with attention to detail in the architecture, materials and construction, that should overall, have a beneficial effect on the conservation area.

### *Architecture*

- The panel finds much to admire in the architecture proposed for Plot R2, and thinks that the design of the residential tall building is particularly successful.
- The design of the top of the tower, with translucent glass cladding, is convincing as a subtle marker for the bridge and route through Three Mills.
- Where prefabricated cladding materials are proposed, careful thought about detailing and construction will be required.
- The panel also think that the relatively austere design of the Mews would benefit from more planting beds – rather than relying on residents to look maintain plants in pots as shown in visualisations.

### *Residential accommodation*

- The panel congratulates the design team on achieving a high percentage of dual aspect residential units across the scheme; there are no north facing single aspect units.
- It also welcomes strategies proposed to address issues of privacy for ground floor residential units, which include split level units with steps to raised bedrooms.

### *Landscape design*

- Plot R2 benefits from generous courtyards and a communal riverside garden, with direct access from the residential accommodation.
- To the south east of the site, close to the footbridge, the panel agrees that one large and one small tree will be more successful than the four trees previously proposed, which would have blocked views to the river.

- The panel suggested moving the large tree slightly further south, so that it is glimpsed from the route between Plots R2 and R3.
- Where the pedestrian route to cross the bridge dog-legs at the south east corner of Plot R2, it would be helpful to maximise the width of paving, by omitting the planting bed in front of a reception area.
- Continuity of paving materials, could also help visually link the east west route to the public right of way along the river.
- Maintenance of the landscape will be essential. For example, the panel noted that trellis planting screening the car park ramp, and roof gardens for residents on Blocks A and B will require effective management and maintenance to be successful.
- The panel thinks that introducing some planting to the mews street would soften what could appear a rather bleak environment. With a width of eight metres, there is sufficient scope for planting. This could also potentially add to privacy.
- Relying on residents to add planting in pots is unlikely to be a successful solution, particularly if a high proportion of the houses are rented rather than owner occupied.
- Carefully considered lighting could also add to the character of the mews street.

#### *Public realm*

- The panel supports the use of clay pavements for streets within the scheme. These lend a particularly attractive quality to the public realm. It asks, however, how this quality might be maintained over the longer term, especially if access to utilities is required.
- The panel therefore recommends that particular attention be paid to ensuring that the quality of the paving does not deteriorate over time.
- It notes that, while adopted roads such as Sugar House Lane and Hunts Lane fall within the remit of the London Borough of Newham, management and maintenance of all other streets will be the responsibility of the developer, Vastint.

#### *Next steps*

- The panel offers its support to the reserved matters application for Strand East Plot R2. It is confident that the design team will successfully address the minor comments above, in consultation with planning officers.