

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

### **Report of Planning Application Review Meeting: Strand East Plot R3**

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 R3. 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: 16/00412/REM

## **2. Presenting team**

Michiel van Soest	Vastint UK B.V.
Joe Morris	Duggan Morris Architects
Adam Hiles	Duggan Morris Architects
Eva Cmarova	Duggan Morris Architects
Antony Nelson	Planit-IE
Michael Westlake	ARC-ML
Fiona Young	ARC-ML
Christopher Schiele	GL Hearn
Emma Gill	GL Hearn

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

LLDC officers are broadly supportive of the planning application for Strand East Plot R3. Issues that remain to be resolved in discussion with the design team include: the design of riverside communal gardens; the public space between R2 and R3; and the roof form of the mews. In particular, planning officers note that the riverside garden was identified as a public route at the outline application stage – whereas the current scheme proposes that this should be a shared private garden for residents.

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

The Quality Review Panel finds much to admire in the scheme for Strand East Plot R3, finding the architecture to be particularly distinctive and attractive – and supports the planning application for approval. The use of different colour tones in the palette of materials for each block, adds character and delight. The panel is also supportive of the landscape design, including the proposal to create a private riverside garden, where a public route was shown at outline application stage. There is already a public footpath on the other side of the Three Mills Wall River, and new pedestrian bridges are being built as part of the Strand East development. The panel thinks public access on one side, and private gardens on the other will be successful. The main issue that the panel thinks requires further thought is the ongoing management and maintenance of the landscape. More detailed comments are provided below, and comments made at the previous review are repeated for clarity.

### *Architectural expression*

- As a general comment, the panel thinks that the development of Strand East as a whole has benefited immeasurably from the contribution of several different talented design teams, including Duggan Morris Architects.
- The panel warmly welcomes the architecture proposed for all elements of this scheme. The architecture successfully blends an industrial and domestic aesthetic resulting in a highly distinctive – and delightful – character.
- Particularly successful are the proposed pitch roofs of Block B along the riverside. The panel also thinks that the strategy to use the roof of Block A as amenity space is sound.
- The central mews – more a semi-private yard than a street – promises to become a particularly distinctive component of the scheme.
- Flat roofs are now proposed on the mews blocks, and the panel would encourage further thought about the appearance of these from surrounding taller buildings.

### *Detailed design and materials*

- The panel supports the materials proposed, and the use of different colour tones in the palette of materials for each block.
- Success will, however, depend on the quality of detailing, such as jointing, consistency of colour, and resistance to weathering. It would support the planning authority in using conditions to protect the quality of the detailed design.

### *Residential accommodation*

- The panel strongly supports the arrangement of residential units in the Block A perimeter blocks. This includes a clever use of levels to address privacy issues.
- For example, at ground floor level, both bedrooms and kitchens are raised, with kitchens benefiting from a secondary entrance with stepped threshold.

### *Riverside communal garden*

- The panel welcomes the concept of a communal riverside garden, with a series of landscaped ‘rooms’.
- Interaction with the water could make this garden a very attractive place, especially if railings at the water’s edge could be avoided.

- If there is an aspiration that residents adopt the garden as their own, there will be a need for storage for gardening equipment and supplies.
- Access to the riverside garden is from each end, with no direct access from the residential block. Because of this, careful thought will be needed about landscape design and maintenance, to ensure it does not become a neglected space.
- As a detailed comment, the panel is not convinced that sun loungers will be well used in an east facing space.
- The panel also thinks that ramped access routes would be best located away from the building, so that people are kept at a distance from residential ground floor windows.

#### *Mews*

- The narrow dimension of the mews, which are 9m from building to building, will make these challenging spaces. Additional planting beds, could help soften this space.
- The proposed tree at the heart of the mews will, provide a strong focal point. The tree will require sufficient space, including a deep bed, to become a dominant feature.

#### *Communal courtyard*

- Some areas of the communal courtyard receive limited daylight – and play areas and seating have rightly been located in the sunniest areas.
- The panel also welcomes the use of low hedges to define private patio areas within the courtyard.

#### *Landscape management*

- The panel highlighted the importance of a robust strategy for the future management and maintenance of the landscape at Strand East.
- For courtyards, and communal gardens, a management strategy will be needed to avoid conflict between residents enjoying these spaces, and those overlooking them – perhaps with access gates locked at in the evening.
- Shared gardens at Strand East offer the potential to foster a sense of community, with the right degree of support from an estate management team.
- The aim should be to encourage residents to participate in looking after gardens, but with failsafe plans for intervention by Vastint if needed.

- The panel would the governance plans for Strand East should be clarified as part of reserved matters submissions.

*Next steps*

- The panel offers its strong support for the reserved matters application for Strand East Plot R3 which it is confident will result in a high quality, distinctive residential development.