

London Legacy Development Corporation Quality Review Panel

Report of Planning Application Review Meeting: Wallis Road South

Tuesday 18 November 2014, 12.00 – 13.00

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

Panel

Peter Studdert (chair)

Neil Deely

Attendees

Anthony Hollingsworth

LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team

Allison De Marco

LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team

Will Steadman

LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team

Hannah Lambert

London Legacy Development Corporation

Deborah Denner

Fortismere Associates

Report also copied to

Kathryn Firth

London Legacy Development Corporation

Esther Everett

London Legacy Development Corporation

Matt Payne

London Borough of Hackney

Alison Biggs

London Borough of Hackney

Note on process

The Quality Review Panel comments below follow on from two pre-application reviews of the proposals for Wallis Road South. Panel members who attended the previous meeting were: Peter Studdert (chair); Neil Deely; Tom Lonsdale; John Lyall; Catherine Burd; and Peter Lainson.

1. Project name and site address

Stone Brothers, 80 – 84 & 88 Wallis Road, London E9 5LN
Planning reference 14/00387/FUL

2. Presenting team

Andrew Beharrell	Pollard Thomas Edwards
Hamish Kilford-Brown	Pollard Thomad Edwards
Noel Farrer	Farrer Huxley Associates
Richard Rothwell	Grovetworld
Ben Kelway	Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners

3. Planning authority's views

Planning officers noted that the scheme must demonstrate its compatibility with the Hackney Wick Area Action Plan. They also emphasised the need for the scheme to be deliverable, independently of the possible future development of neighbouring sites. The LLDC is bringing forward proposals for one adjoining site, but designs for this are at an early stage.

4. Quality Review Panel's views

Summary

A number of the concerns raised by the Quality Review Panel at previous meetings have not been addressed in the current scheme. The panel is therefore unable to support the planning application, despite finding much to commend in the arrangement of buildings across the site and the architectural language proposed. The main outstanding issue is the lack of clarity surrounding assumptions about the development of adjoining sites. The successful implementation of this scheme will depend on the resolution of its relationship with neighbouring developments. The panel therefore recommends that the design team and planning authority continue efforts to clarify these relationships. The panel also questions the lack of any affordable housing. More detailed comments are provided below on this, as well as on the residential accommodation, workspace, and landscape design.

Relationship to neighbouring sites

- The Stone Brothers site is one of several incorporated into the Hackney Wick masterplan, currently being developed to provide guidance to the land owners of these sites for the creation of a well integrated new neighbourhood.
- The success of the scheme as proposed will depend to a significant extent on how neighbouring sites are to be developed.

- In relation to Wallis Yard, the panel supports the principle established by the Hackney Wick Area Action Plan that a new public space should be created in this location.
- If this can be achieved, the 7 storey building heights proposed alongside Wallis Yard could be acceptable. However, if this space is reduced in width to the proportions of a street, the panel thinks this height should be reduced.
- The panel also thinks that a convincing case has been made for the scale and arrangement of development alongside Main Yard.
- As a general point, the proximity of buildings will have an impact on the quality of the environment, including sunlight and daylight, overlooking, and the generosity of public space.
- While the panel generally finds the proposals for this site well thought through, they will need to be tested further as the relationship with adjoining sites is clarified.
- In this context, the panel refers to the possible relevance of 'Grampian conditions', whereby development authorised by a planning permission is precluded until a specific action is undertaken on land not controlled by the applicant.

Scheme plan and layout

- The panel thinks that the scale and massing of the buildings are well considered and reflect the traditionally dense character of the site, while creating attractive spaces and views through the site.
- The panel thinks that the scheme has the potential to create a successful mix of residential accommodation and employment space, in particular for creative industries.
- The quality of the scheme will, however, depend on successful resolution of the relationship with adjoining sites, as described above.

Residential accommodation and affordable housing

- The panel thinks that, overall, the residential accommodation is well designed and will provide high quality, well-proportioned homes.
- However, no affordable housing is proposed. Whilst this is principally an issue for the planning authority, the panel finds this surprising given the high density of development proposed.

- The panel notes that the site was purchased only a year ago, and it must therefore be assumed that the price paid took into account the full policy context, including the requirement for affordable housing.
- The panel also notes that residential sales values in London have risen by 18% over the past year, and that the site will benefit from the significant public investment being put into improvements to Hackney Wick station.
- Based on these factors, the panel's view is that the development should meet the affordable housing requirement in full.

Workspace

- The panel welcomes the inclusion of affordable workspace in the development proposals, and the allocation of a whole block to this use.
- The panel stresses the importance of this workspace being genuinely affordable and would welcome further detail of how this will be secured over the long term.

Architecture

- The panel thinks the design and detailing of the architecture, including the extensive use of brick, is sound.
- Maintaining the quality promised by the planning application drawings will be key to the success of the scheme, and conditions relating to the quality of materials and construction should be used to ensure this.
- For example, profiled metal cladding is proposed at roof level to create an industrial aesthetic. However, this is a material which can appear poor quality, without careful specification and detailed design.
- Some of the proposed uses may also require external signage, and an approach to the design of this should be illustrated.

Landscape design

- Detailed proposals for the landscape design of Wallis Road South were presented for the first time at this review.
- In some areas, the panel thinks the landscape would benefit from further thought – for example, to reflect materials in the approved scheme for Hackney Wick Station.

Next steps

- The panel continues to recommend that the design team and the planning authority pursue initiatives to resolve the uncertainties around plans for adjoining sites.
- In the absence of agreement with the developers of neighbouring sites, further testing and revision of the proposed designs may be necessary in order to ensure high quality accommodation and public realm.