

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

### **Report of Planning Application Review Meeting: Strand East Plot R4**

Tuesday 8 November 2016

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

#### **Panel**

Peter Studdert (chair)  
John O'Mara  
Lindsey Whitelaw

#### **Attendees**

Sara Dawes	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Natalie Dobraszczyk	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Hannah Lambert	London Legacy Development Corporation
Tessa Kordeczka	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 two pre-application reviews of reserved matters proposals for Strand East Plot R4. Panel members who attended the previous meetings were: Peter Studdert (chair); John Lyall; Catherine Burd; Lindsey Whitelaw; Tom Lonsdale; Peter Lainson; Dan Epstein; Lynne Sullivan; and Mark Brearley.

## 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: 15/00327/REM

## 2. Presenting team

Michiel van Soest	Vastint UK B.V.
Hilary Boyle	Vastint UK B.V.
Martin Ebert	Studio Meda
Matteo Ricci	Studio Meda
Antony Nelson	Planit-IE
Christopher Schiele	GL Hearn
Jennie Bean	GL Hearn

## 3. Planning authority's views

Since the review of the scheme for Strand East Plot R4 by the Quality Review Panel in March 2015, Historic England had objected the height of the nine storey 'accent' tower to the south of the plot. The scheme was subsequently revised to reduce the height by two storeys – and to adjust other aspects of the design in response. The planning authority is assessing the impact of these changes on overall design quality.

## 4. Quality Review Panel's views

### *Summary*

The Quality Review Panel is pleased to support the planning application for Strand East Plot R4, subject to refinements of the architectural expression of the east elevation. The reduction in the height of the 'accent' tower, together with other subsequent changes, results in some loss of vitality in this elevation's composition. The panel makes some suggestions for addressing this, including by reconsidering the continuous ground floor plinth and strengthening the differentiation between the elevation's different components. The panel welcomes the revised landscape design of the courtyard, suggesting minor amendments. These comments are expanded below.

### *Architectural expression*

- Reducing the height of the 'accent' tower to the south of Plot R4 by two storeys has resulted in a revised composition. The panel thinks that impact of these changes to the west elevation along Sugar House Lane and the south elevation facing the 'Hub' are acceptable.
- There are some reservations, however, about the east elevation fronting 'River Walk' and Thee Mills Wall River. Some of the vitality apparent in the initial design has been lost.

- While the combination of the components of this elevation – commercial, apartments, town houses and maisonettes – works well, reduced differentiation between them in the revised proposal could result in the elevation appearing rather slab like.
- The verticality of the architectural language of the initial proposal has been diluted. The brick ground floor plinth that now extends across the elevation sets up a stronger horizontal expression than that of the previous scheme.
- The panel therefore suggests exploring ways to strengthen the verticality of the composition. This might, for example, be achieved by reconsidering the unifying ground floor plinth, and also differentiating the separate components of this elevation more explicitly.

#### *Landscape design*

- The panel welcomes the simplified landscape design for Plot R4 – which it thinks results in a much improved courtyard space.
- Details have yet to be developed for the threshold between the town houses and the courtyard; some defensible space will be required.
- The panel thinks that placing a communal table in the courtyard is an attractive idea. It questions, however, including planting right up against the table. Planting will be vulnerable to residents' coming and going and, if included, will have to be protected in some way.
- Locating cycle racks to the west of the courtyard – where there will be the least sunlight – is a rational move. The panel asks, however, whether they may be overly dominant and how they might appear when empty. It is reassured that a bespoke design is being developed for the cycle racks – and that they can be expected to be attractive when not used.

#### *Next steps*

- The Quality Review Panel is confident that the design team will be able to refine the design for Strand East Plot R4 in the light of its comments, and in consultation with planning officers.
- Subject to those refinements, the panel is pleased to support approval of the planning application for this scheme.