

London Legacy Development Corporation Quality Review Panel

Report of Planning Application Review Meeting: 304 – 312 Stratford High Street (The Collective)

Wednesday 23 November 2016

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

Panel

John Lyall (chair)
Adam Khan
Lindsey Whitelaw

Attendees

Anne Ogundiya	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Sophie Backhouse	London Legacy Development Corporation
Tessa Kordeczka	Fortismere Associates

Report also copied to

Anthony Hollingsworth	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 and two planning application reviews. Panel members who attended the previous meetings were: Peter Studdert (chair); Adam Khan; John Lyall; Lindsey Whitelaw; Tom Lonsdale; David Gilpin; David Bonnett; and Dan Epstein.

1. Project name and site address

The Collective Stratford, 304 – 312 High Street, Stratford

Planning application reference: 15/00515/FUL

2. Presenting team

Andrei Martin	PLP Architects
Sarah Christie	The Collective
James Armitage-Hobbs	DP9

3. Planning authority's views

At its previous meeting, the Quality Review Panel had supported in principle approval of the planning application for the Collective. It considered that the revised scale and massing proposed satisfactorily addressed concerns previously expressed by both the planning authority and the panel.

The planning authority continues to consider details of how the ground floor will work, including the servicing strategy. While there is a broad proposal for the public realm to the rear of the building – including rehabilitation of the historic water course of the Channelsea River – the planning authority would welcome more details.

The planning authority also looks for definitive information about the building's materiality. This should include details of the articulation of the canopy at the upper level, including construction and operation of its horizontal louvres. There is a concern that the canopy could appear rather flimsy.

4. Quality Review Panel's views

Summary

The Quality Review Panel again commends the design team's response to concerns previously expressed by both the panel and the planning authority about a development of this height in this location. It considers that the revised proposal would now meet the tests set by Policy BN.10. The panel would therefore support approval of the planning application in principle. It repeats its strong support of the concept underlying The Collective. These comments are expanded below and those made at previous reviews that remain relevant are repeated for clarity.

Conceptual design

- The panel remains supportive of the concept of creating a community within a single building, combining shared living accommodation with commercial and cultural space.
- This is an innovative and creative approach that could be an effective response to London's acute housing needs.

Scale and massing

- The reduction in the scheme's scale and massing over several iterations represents a significant improvement. The panel thinks that the revised design is acceptable – including in relation to the criteria set by Policy BN.10.

Architectural expression

- The panel considers the proposed architecture to be well considered, resulting in an elegant, sophisticated building.
- While windowless flank walls have precluded the option of dual aspect units, the panel accepts the logic of applying a different treatment to the flank walls, including impact on the conservation area. If beautifully detailed, the flank walls will result in slender, elegant elevations.

Detailed design

- The panel fully supports the revised materiality for columns supporting the double storey base of the building. The proposed ceramic glazed tiles – for both the columns and the soffit – have an attractive reflective quality. Careful thought will, however, have to be given to the corner edges of the tiles to ensure that they are sufficiently robust to withstand damage.
- The panel welcomes assurances that cleaning of the glazed louvres of the upper level canopy will be included as part of the building's maintenance strategy.

Inclusive design

- The panel notes that 10 per cent of co-living units are adaptable for wheelchair users.
- Two lifts are provided to co-living floors. The panel emphasises the need for adequate lift provision to meet the needs of those with disabilities. It encourages particularly efficient management of the lifts to ensure that the ambitious waiting times anticipated are realised.

Public realm

- Overall, the panel finds much to admire in the proposed landscape design – which it thinks will create attractive public spaces.
- The potential to create a significant asset from the remnants of the Channelsea River, a historic water course, partly within the development's 'red line' boundary, had been identified.
- The panel had encouraged exploiting the exciting opportunity to rehabilitate this channel – in its entirety, not restricted to the development's 'red line' boundary. It therefore welcomes initiatives currently being pursued, including in partnership with others, to enhance this asset.

- This will significantly add to the quality of the public realm associated with the development, by creating an attractive green, waterside space, encouraging biodiversity.
- A legally binding management and maintenance strategy will be essential to ensure the long term success of this initiative.

Sustainability

- The proposal clearly has benefits in relation to social sustainability.
- Careful consideration should also continue to be given to the environmental sustainability strategy for this development – including the energy strategy.

Next steps

- The Quality Review Panel reiterates its support in principle for approval of the planning application for the Collective.