



Haringey Quality Review Panel

Report of Formal Review Meeting: Omega Works

Wednesday 9 June 2021

Panel

Peter Studdert (chair)
Georgios Askounis
Louise Goodison
Iris Papadatou
Joanna Sutherland

Attendees

Rob Krzyszowski	London Borough of Haringey
Robbie McNaugher	London Borough of Haringey
John McRory	London Borough of Haringey
Richard Truscott	London Borough of Haringey
Sarah Carmona	Frame Projects
Kyriaki Ageridou	Frame Projects

Apologies / report copied to

Philip Elliott	London Borough of Haringey
Deborah Denner	Frame Projects

Confidentiality

This is a pre-application review, and therefore confidential. As a public organisation Haringey Council is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOI), and in the case of an FOI request may be obliged to release project information submitted for review.

1. Project name and site address

Omega Works, 167 Hermitage Road, Haringey Warehouse District, London N4 1LZ

2. Presenting team

Jessica Reynolds	vPPR Architects
Clementine Holden	vPPR Architects
Israel Gold	Datelink Ltd
Daniel Woolfson	D*Haus Company
David Ben-Grunberg	D*Haus Company
Uriel Kaplan	UKS Estates
Ian Feldman	UKS Estates
John Ferguson	Collective Planning

3. Aims of the Quality Review Panel meeting

The Quality Review Panel provides impartial and objective advice from a diverse range of experienced practitioners. This report draws together the panel's advice and is not intended to be a minute of the proceedings. It is intended that the panel's advice may assist the development management team in negotiating design improvements where appropriate and in addition may support decision-making by the Planning Committee, in order to secure the highest possible quality of development.

4. Planning authority briefing

The application site is part of site allocation SA32 – Omega Works and is allocated for an increase in mixed-use development, including warehouse-living accommodation with a requirement for improvements to accessibility. The site is 2.35 hectares and contains former industrial premises, with significant residential and some commercial occupancy. The site is split into three parts with 'Omega C' in the southwest corner, which falls outside of the site, Omega A to the west and Omega B to the east of the gated internal/vehicular opening. Omega B, which is predominantly formed of the sawtooth building and the right of the two gabled buildings, is currently in use as warehousing/storage.

To the south of the site are two-storey early 20th Century terraced houses with warehousing and industrial uses beyond. The Crusader Industrial Estate lies to the north with Arena Design Centre beyond and the London Overground Barking - Gospel Oak railway line beyond that. To the west of the site is a strip of land running north that is a Grade II Site of Importance for Nature and Conservation (SINC) - Haringey Stadium Slopes. The SINC land rises steeply from east to west before it meets the rear gardens of a housing estate built on the former Haringay Stadium.



The site falls within an Area of Change (Seven Sisters Corridor) and a Local Employment Area - Regeneration Area, as well as within a Creative Enterprise Zone. These designations acknowledge that the area is suitable for growth and intensification in order to facilitate renewal and regeneration but seek to protect and nurture existing industries, particularly the creative industries such as those based around fashion that have organically blossomed in this part of Tottenham.

The site has a PTAL rating of 2 and is a 10 minute walk from Haringey Green Lanes Overground Station and Manor House Underground which is served by the Piccadilly Line. It is approximately a 15 minute walk to the centre of Finsbury Park and Woodberry Wetlands; and a 5-10-minute cycle to Finsbury Park and Seven Sisters Stations which are served by the Victoria Line. It is also a short walk from the amenities and bus stops on Green Lanes and Seven Sisters Road.

5. Quality Review Panel's views

Summary

The Quality Review Panel applauds the impressive level of analysis undertaken so far and it is pleased to see how well both design teams have responded to previous feedback; the proposals have significantly improved, and promise high quality development.

The panel supports many of the strategic decisions taken so far within both schemes. While the overall scale, form and massing of the proposals have improved significantly, it will be very important to test the current proposals in terms of environmental impact on the central courtyard spaces and on the Crusader Estate to the north, as it is not yet fully convinced by the scale of the taller Omega Works A buildings to the north and west of the site.

As design work continues, the panel highlights some detailed areas for refinement of the architectural expression, layout and circulation arrangements of Omega Works A, and some aspects of the architectural expression of the Omega Works B building. It would also encourage the fine-tuning and reinforcing of sustainable design principles for both schemes, focusing on a 'fabric first' approach, embracing environmental technologies at roof level, allowing for adequate plant space, addressing issues of overheating and shading, and adopting a 'circular economy' model for the reuse of existing materials on site.

The panel feels that it will be important to retain the quality and distinctiveness of the proposals through the planning process and into technical design and construction; it would support officers securing this through planning conditions.

Further details on the panel's views are provided below.



Massing and development density: Omega Works A and B

- The broad principle of private residential development cross-subsidising warehouse-living and commercial accommodation, including affordable workspace, seems a very positive approach. The panel applauds the impressive level of analysis undertaken on the existing commercial networks, and the typological aspects of existing warehouse-living units.
- At the previous review on 23 September 2020, the panel expressed concerns about the scale and massing of the proposals for Omega Works A and B.
- It welcomes the reduction in height of the Omega Works B buildings made since that review, and thinks that the massing of this section of the overall site is now working well, especially in terms of the reduced impact of the proposals in the key views shown.
- The panel welcomes the reduction in height and stepping back of the upper levels of the Omega Works A buildings, which will serve to mitigate some of the problems; the scale of the building fronting onto Hermitage Road is now working well, and will allow more light into the centre of the site. However, panel members expressed different views concerning the massing of the Omega Works A buildings at the north and west of the site; these parts of the scheme may require further consideration - and possibly reduction - as the panel is not yet entirely convinced by the proposed heights in these locations.
- In this regard, the panel agrees that the impact of the proposed massing of both Omega Works A and B requires further testing in terms of the environmental impact (daylight, sunlight, overshadowing and microclimate), with regard to both the central courtyard and the Crusader Estate to the north of the site. Consideration of the impact that the form and massing (particularly of Omega Works A) will have on any potential redevelopment plans within the Crusader Estate will be especially important. The panel highlights that if an open space is planned within the Crusader Estate immediately to the north of the Omega Works A site, then this could become very overshadowed and inhospitable.
- Community consultation will also be very important, as local residents may have strong views on the scale and height of the proposed buildings.
- The panel welcomes the significant reduction in the size of the basement-level accommodation within the site.

Design for inclusion and sustainability: Omega Works A and B

- Cycling will be an important mode of transport for the residents of the development; the panel would encourage the design team to further explore the arrangements for cycle parking, to ensure that it is convenient and secure.



Lifts suitable for carrying cycles, in addition to cycle stores accessed via lobbies from the landings on different floors, should be considered.

- The panel highlights the need to have two lifts serving accommodation within taller buildings with larger numbers of units, and to provide access to wheelchair units above ground floor level.
- Adopting a 'fabric first' approach to ensure sustainable environmental design for the development would be laudable; the panel notes that this sometimes results in thicker walls, which should be taken into consideration at an early stage.
- The incorporation of photovoltaic panels and green roofs is welcomed; the design team could also explore the potential for biosolar green roofs (where both technologies are seamlessly integrated) to further maximise biodiversity.
- Early consideration of the locations, space requirements and visual impact of the air source heat pumps would be encouraged, to ensure that they are well-integrated.
- The use of shading balconies and external curtains to achieve thermal comfort within Omega Works A is supported. As design progresses, careful consideration of construction details will be required to ensure that these elements perform well.
- There are areas of full-height glazing within both Omega Works A and B, some of which do not have any shading. The panel notes that the bottom 0.8m of a full-height glazed area does not contribute to light levels internally, however it increases both energy loss and overheating. Further consideration of the size and configuration of glazed areas would be supported. Ensuring good levels of shading will also be important, especially on west-facing elevations.
- The courtyard within the centre of the development is quite compact, so wind modelling will be needed to ensure that residents will be comfortable within the space.
- The panel wonders whether the concrete wall 'memory cast' (of the original saw tooth roofline) of the Omega Works B building could be constructed from materials sourced during demolition of some of the existing buildings on site. A comprehensive audit of existing materials within the site that could be re-used during the redevelopment would be welcomed.
- Where building facades will be retained, it will be important to consider the technical design implications at an early stage, to overcome challenges encountered when keeping the retained wall section within the thermal envelope of the building.



Place-making, public realm and landscape design: Omega Works A and B

- Clarity on pedestrian circulation through and around the site should be provided, including the detailed design of any routes and spaces.
- It is not clear what the servicing arrangements will be within both sites; further work to establish service vehicle circulation would be welcomed.

Omega A: architectural expression and scheme layout

- The panel supports many of the strategic design decisions that have been made during the design process to date. However, it feels that a process of refining some of the details – in terms of the scheme layout and architectural expression – is still required.
- Further consideration should be given to the gable ends of the buildings. In the current proposals, the gable elevations of the Omega Works A buildings present an uncomfortable transition between the heavier brick façade on the outer faces, and the lighter elevational treatment fronting onto the courtyard.
- Most of the gable ends have no windows or articulation; the panel would encourage the design team to explore different ways of activating these facades. Locating bin stores in prominent elevations is problematic; the configuration of the ground floor should be adjusted to minimise areas of 'dead' frontage on key elevations (including gable ends) and introduce 'active' frontage instead - perhaps through inclusion of corner units.
- As design work progresses, greater clarity is needed on the detail of the curved entrance areas, to ensure that they are buildable, functional, and visually attractive while avoiding the creation of awkward left-over external or internal space.
- Greater clarity and consistency in the strategic circulation diagram would also be welcomed, in terms of the relationship of the circulation cores to the street and to the courtyard, and to ensure that there are no conflicts between residential entrances and circulation and that of the commercial accommodation.
- The panel thinks that the deck access on the building to the west of the site works well.
- Further refinement of the materiality and composition of the elevations would be supported, in terms of the visual relationship between 'lighter' and 'heavier' sections of the building envelopes. The panel notes that, typically, visually 'heavy' walls are found at lower levels, with 'lighter' walls above.



- The panel welcomes the aspiration for playfulness within the architectural expression of Omega Works A, and thinks that retaining this sense of playfulness within the facades during the detailed design and construction phases will be critical to the success of the scheme.
- The panel would like to see playfulness reinforced within the architectural expression of the scheme. Exploration of opportunities to highlight important elements of the buildings with playful elements would be welcomed; this could include artwork within the frontages, loosening up the symmetry within the elevations, or utilising visual flourishes to celebrate entrances.
- The panel would encourage the design team to explore how the courtyard could be used in different ways, including how space could be enclosed through mobile planters and what opportunities this would facilitate.

Omega B: architectural expression and scheme layout

- The panel is pleased to see how the proposals for the Omega Works B building have progressed since the previous review. The design team have responded well to the previous feedback, and the scheme now has a robustness and simplicity that feels well resolved.
- The adjustments to the height and massing have been very successful; the three-dimensional form and the courtyard space created by the buildings are all working well.
- The panel welcomes the level of activation of the ground floor elevations and supports the adjustments to the building footprints which have pulled back and opened up the courtyard space, creating strong visual links with Hermitage Road.
- The detail of the elevations is robust and well-considered; the retention of the front façade – to form part of the new buildings and also to enclose the courtyard space – is very successful, and evokes a sense of the site's history in a contemporary way.
- The inclusion of a 'memory cast' in concrete of the original saw tooth roofline on the northern elevation of Omega Works B provides a good level of articulation and interest. The panel also likes the subtle curved sweep of brickwork fronting onto the courtyard, which could also provide a backdrop for some artwork.
- Further consideration should be given to the configuration of the windows at first floor level fronting onto Hermitage Road; currently there is a visually awkward relationship with the retained façade immediately below.
- The panel welcomes the proposed palette of materials and the variation of different hues within the masonry and hard landscaping. It also likes the depth



of reveals shown within the presentation drawings, and hopes that these are achievable through the detailed design stage.

Next steps

- The panel highlights a number of action points for consideration by the design team, in consultation with Haringey officers. It would be happy to consider the proposals again at a chair's review, if required.
- It also offers a focused chair's review specifically on the approach to low carbon design and environmental sustainability.



Appendix: Haringey Development Management DPD**Policy DM1: Delivering high quality design****Haringey Development Charter**

- A All new development and changes of use must achieve a high standard of design and contribute to the distinctive character and amenity of the local area. The Council will support design-led development proposals which meet the following criteria:
- a Relate positively to neighbouring structures, new or old, to create a harmonious whole;
 - b Make a positive contribution to a place, improving the character and quality of an area;
 - c Confidently address feedback from local consultation;
 - d Demonstrate how the quality of the development will be secured when it is built; and
 - e Are inclusive and incorporate sustainable design and construction principles.

Design Standards

Character of development

- B Development proposals should relate positively to their locality, having regard to:
- a Building heights;
 - b Form, scale & massing prevailing around the site;
 - c Urban grain, and the framework of routes and spaces connecting locally and more widely;
 - d Maintaining a sense of enclosure and, where appropriate, following existing building lines;
 - e Rhythm of any neighbouring or local regular plot and building widths;
 - f Active, lively frontages to the public realm; and
 - g Distinctive local architectural styles, detailing and materials.

