



Haringey Quality Review Panel

Report of Formal Review Meeting: Wat Tyler

Wednesday 22 April 2020
video conference

Panel

Peter Studdert (chair)
Stephen Davy
Esther Kurland
Andrew Matthews
Craig Robertson

Attendees

John McRory	London Borough of Haringey
Laurence Ackrill	London Borough of Haringey
Richard Truscott	London Borough of Haringey
Sarah Carmona	Frame Projects
Kiki Ageridou	Frame Projects

Apologies / report copied to

Emma Williamson	London Borough of Haringey
Dean Hermitage	London Borough of Haringey
Robbie McNaugher	London Borough of Haringey

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

Wat Tyler House, Boyton Road, N8 7AU

2. Presenting team

Anna Blandford	London Borough of Haringey
David Doherty	London Borough of Haringey
Samantha Jones	London Borough of Haringey
Martin Cowie	London Borough of Haringey
Russell Walker	Walker Construction Consultants
Kiran Curtis	KC+A Architects
Colin Merifield	KC+A Architects
Manual Filippi Farmar	KC+A Architects
Francis Christie	Remapp Ltd Landscape Architects

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 proposals form one of a number of development opportunities the Council is currently exploring on Council owned land across the borough to deliver new Council homes at Council rents. The redevelopment of previously developed land across the Borough offers the opportunity to ensure that the mix of new residential development is appropriate to its local context, as well as targeted to meeting specific local housing needs and improving housing choice.

The application site is currently used as a car parking area for local residents. It adjoins Wat Tyler House, an existing six storey residential building with an additional undercroft area, located on the eastern side of Boyton Road. None of the buildings and structures on or adjacent to the site are listed. Although the site itself is not within a conservation area, the Alexandra Palace and Park and the Campsbourne Cottage Estate Conservation Areas are located within 200 metres of the site to the north and west respectively.

The area surrounding the application site is characterised predominantly by larger blocks of self-contained flats, but there is also a scattering of smaller, single family dwellings located along Boyton Road and the adjoining streets.



The proposed works involve the construction of a part-four, part-five and part-seven storey building that would adjoin the southernmost elevation of Wat Tyler House. This would provide 15 self-contained residential units with associated cycle, refuse storage and landscaping provision. All of the units will be Council homes to be let at Council rents.

Officers asked for the panel's views on the scheme's design quality, the proposed massing and scale of the building forms, and the design of the landscape and public realm.

5. Quality Review Panel's views

Summary

The Quality Review Panel welcomes the opportunity to comment on the evolving proposals for the development site adjacent to Wat Tyler House. This infill site represents a good opportunity for the development of new Council homes. The panel also welcomes the project team's commitment to a comprehensive local community engagement process concerning the proposals (when current restrictions are lifted) and highlights that residents' input and agreement will be extremely important.

The panel supports the broad principles of the scheme, subject to some improvement and refinement. It feels that the scale of the proposals is ambitious but nonetheless broadly acceptable. As design work continues, the panel would encourage further work to refine the residential layout, its circulation cores, and relationship to the public realm adjacent. Consideration of future potential phases of work will also help to inform this process. While the panel generally supports the approach taken to the architectural expression, this could be made more distinctive by drawing on the character and qualities of Wat Tyler House, and by giving the main entrance more emphasis.

A clear strategy for pedestrian, cycle and vehicle movement around the estate will be critically important to the success of the scheme. A lot of potential exists for the development to improve the quality, safety and design of the public realm adjacent to the development. It highlights that the wider benefits of this work can help to establish a strong justification for the scheme. Further details on the panel's views are provided below.

Massing and development density

- The site represents a good opportunity for the development of new Council homes. The panel feels that the scale of the proposals is ambitious, but nonetheless broadly acceptable, subject to the resolution of issues around the quality and design of the accommodation (with particular reference to the ground floor) and the detail and design of the public realm adjacent.
- The panel considers that the architectural concept of three interlocking volumes seems sensible.



- The project team should explore the scope for a similar infill development at the northern end of Wat Tyler House. Consideration of how both 'bookends' might work together (in massing, detail and townscape terms) could help to inform the ongoing detailed design of the initial 'bookend' development.

Place-making, public realm and landscape design

- Currently, pedestrian routes through the estate are typified by narrow alleyways that lack passive surveillance and represent opportunities for crime and antisocial behaviour. Addressing these issues - within an overall strategy for movement around the estate, and within the current proposals - will be very important.
- An overarching strategy for movement should consider access points for different modes of transport, alongside parking and the relationship to play areas. It should prioritise routes for cycles and pedestrians that are broad, light and well-surveilled.
- This strategy should also consider potential future phases of development - which may include infill of the undercroft in addition to further possible 'bookend' developments.
- The panel thinks that relying on existing narrow and poorly overlooked pedestrian routes is not an acceptable approach to take.
- Options for exploration include providing a better primary pedestrian route, and either closing the alleyways or retaining them as secondary, secure routes for adjacent residents, accessible only via fobbed access at secure gateways.
- The panel would encourage the project team to consider how the open space to the rear of Wat Tyler House could be improved. It has potential to help to punctuate and reinforce the townscape qualities and legibility of local pedestrian routes.
- The panel expresses concern about the loss of green open space and trees. It feels that the scheme should protect and enhance all of the existing green and open spaces within the estate, to enable greener streets.
- This will help reduce urban heat island effects, and improve air quality – which would be especially valuable within the vicinity of the school.
- The intention should be to maintain and improve the ecological value of all of the open, green areas, in accordance with biophilic design principles for health and wellbeing.
- In this regard, the panel would encourage the project team to undertake a parking survey to establish what additional parking may be needed, where it can be located, and how to minimise the impact on existing green spaces and trees.



- The panel understands that the Council is planning a comprehensive local community engagement process for the scheme, for when current restrictions are lifted. The movement strategy, parking within the estate, landscape design and the issue of alleyways would benefit from being considered as part of this process.

Scheme layout, access and integration

- Because of the alleyways adjacent to the scheme – both existing and planned – the scheme has no ‘back’. This risks compromising the privacy and quality of homes at ground floor level, and their external amenity spaces.
- Potential solutions include either closing off the alleyways or gating them with fob-access for residents’ use only.
- The panel also notes that a one metre high gate or boundary wall would not be effective in providing security or privacy for ground floor homes and gardens.
- The panel recommends that the ground floor flat at the east of the block should have its primary entrance directly from the communal core, rather than from the rear alleyway. This would be safer and would enable the external amenity space to be more private. It would also improve the practicality of issues like accessing the bin store.
- There may also be scope to arrange the bedrooms and living spaces differently within the eastern ground floor flat (whilst relocating the primary access to the communal core) to optimise the quality of the accommodation.
- The panel wonders whether there may also be potential to explore an alternative location for the circulation core that may facilitate further improvements to the amenity and orientation of the accommodation on all levels of the scheme.

Architectural expression

- The panel considers that Wat Tyler House has some character and qualities, and could be a striking example of its time, if refurbished.
- While the panel generally supports the approach taken to the architectural expression of the infill development, reflecting some of the qualities of Wat Tyler House could make it more distinctive.
- For example, the taller section of the proposed building could reference Wat Tyler House, with the block standing forward of this building line being conceived as a ‘pavilion’ with a more unique architectural expression.



- The panel also wonders whether the taller section of building could also visually reflect some of the horizontal alignments seen within the elevations of Wat Tyler House in some way.
- The panel highlights that if a future project is undertaken to develop the space within the undercroft of Wat Tyler House, this should be done carefully and should try to respect (and reflect) some of the special qualities of the block.
- It would also support further consideration of how the scheme engages with the street at a detailed level; options to celebrate the main entrance and enliven the main entrance frontage would be supported.

Design for inclusion, sustainability and healthy neighbourhoods

- The panel welcomes the creation of much-needed new homes in underutilised areas of the existing housing estate.
- The aspiration for zero carbon development and a 'fabric first' approach is supported.
- The design and location of fenestration will play an important role in achieving energy efficiency, and the way the balconies help protect west facing glazing from overheating is helpful.
- As mentioned above, the panel advocates that a biophilic design approach to the landscape, public realm and parking strategy should be adopted. This should aspire to maintain and improve all existing green spaces, thereby reducing the urban heat island effect while improving health, wellbeing and air quality.
- The panel notes that communal cycle stores can sometimes be underused if too large and remote from residents' homes. However, it considers that as the development is reasonably compact, then two communal cycle stores as proposed could be acceptable, if they are designed and integrated well.
- It notes that cycles are often accommodated in a similar fashion to bins and would encourage the project team to explore options to make them a pleasure to use.

Next steps

The Quality Review Panel is confident that the project team will be able to address the points above effectively, in consultation with Haringey officers. It would be happy to consider the revised proposals in addition to the wider landscape strategy in more detail at a Chair's Review, if required.



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.

