



Haringey Quality Review Panel

Report of Formal Review Meeting: Berol Quarter Phase 2

Wednesday 13 July 2022
Berol House, 25 Ashley Road, London, N17 9LJ

Panel

Peter Studdert (chair)
Esther Everett
Louise Goodison
Andy Puncher
Craig Robertson

Attendees

Philip Elliot	London Borough of Haringey
Suzanne Kimman	London Borough of Haringey
John McRory	London Borough of Haringey
Richard Truscott	London Borough of Haringey
Joe Brennan	Frame Projects
Sarah Carmona	Frame Projects

Apologies / report copied to

Aikaterini Koukouthaki	London Borough of Haringey
Rob Krzyszowski	London Borough of Haringey
Robbie McNaugher	London Borough of Haringey
Elizabetta Tonazzi	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

Berol Quarter, Ashley Road, London, N17 9LJ (within the Ashley Road South Masterplan)

2. Presenting team

Jonathan Carkeet	Berkeley Square Developments
Malcolm Lea	Berkeley Square Developments
Paul Eaton	Allies and Morrison
Helena Gomes	Allies and Morrison
Angie Jim Osman	Allies and Morrison
Jasmin Lewin	John McAslan + Partners
Aidan Potter	John McAslan + Partners
David Finch	Churchman Thornhill Finch
Jonathan Hoban	Lichfields
Ben Kelway	Lichfields
Joshil Hirani	WSP
Silke Mason	WSP

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 falls within site allocation TH6 – Ashley Road South (as noted in the Tottenham Area Action Plan 2017). The site is allocated for the creation of an employment-led mixed-use quarter north of the new District Centre, as well as for facilitating a key part of the strategic east-west green route linking Tottenham High Road with the Lea Valley Regional Park. Development should also provide an enhanced public realm for Ashley Road. The allocation states that residential use will be permitted to cross subsidise improvements to employment stock. The Berol Quarter site sits within the central and southern eastern sections of the Ashley Road South Masterplan (ARSM) and covers an area of 1.02 hectares. The site forms part of the wider Berol Yard site.

Planning permission realised the site allocation with a hybrid application being granted that included the retention of Berol House, with outline proposals (all matters reserved) for the alteration/conversion of ground, first and second floors of Berol House with up to 3,685sqm of commercial floorspace and the introduction of a two-storey roof level extension introducing up to 18 residential units. In addition, the planning permission also included the erection of two buildings between 8 and 14



storeys providing 166 build to rent (BTR) residential units, 891 sqm of commercial floorspace and 7,275sqm of education floorspace.

The works to Berol House and the new building hosting the educational floorspace (meant for ADA as a National College of Digital Skills (NCDS)) has not come forward; however, the BTR residential building known as The Gessner and associated landscaping has been constructed and delivered. The panel has reviewed the proposals (and those for adjacent sites and the overall masterplan) a number of times since 2017.

In the context of the transformative regeneration experienced to date within the area – alongside the failure to secure another educational institution for the site – the current proposals for the Berol Quarter development comprise a mixed-use commercial and residential scheme covering 2 Berol Yard and Berol House. It is intended to complement emerging neighbouring developments in Tottenham Hale and to complete the Ashley Road South masterplan. The scheme would deliver around 200 homes, in the form of build to rent accommodation, and 500sqm of employment-generating floorspace at 2 Berol Yard, up to approximately 34 storeys. This development is alongside the refurbishment of around 3,800sqm of existing commercial floorspace and the addition of circa 2,000sqm of new additional accommodation at Berol House for employment space, as well as associated public realm and landscaping within the quarter.

Officers seek the panel's view on the design quality, scale and massing of the proposals, including the associated public realm and landscape, and all interfaces between public and private realms.

5. Quality Review Panel's views

Summary

The Quality Review Panel welcomes the opportunity to review the proposals for the Berol Quarter at an early stage, and thanks the project team for the informative presentation. It is warmly supportive of the proposals for Berol House, subject to continued development of the details of the design. This should include work to clarify routes and openings, permeability, and ground floor uses. Further consideration should also be given to the expression, materiality and form of the proposed additional floors at roof level. This should be tested and illustrated within key views. Design for thermal performance and environmental sustainability should underpin the design of the new elements, and the refurbishment and repurposing of the existing elements: the panel would like to see Berol House become an exemplar for environmentally sustainable design and refurbishment.

The panel is unable to support the proposals for 2 Berol Yard and feels that a building of this scale and mass is not appropriate for the Berol Quarter. A more appropriate development should be explored that more closely references the 12-14 storey scale of the neighbouring buildings, as well as being more sensitive to the privacy and outlook of nearby flats in The Gessner. Microclimatic impacts at ground level, as well



as the environmental and thermal performance of the building should be carefully assessed. A key objective should be the creation of a distinctive and high-quality place, with a comfortable pedestrian environment, while ensuring that the development does not have a negative impact on the local neighbourhood. Reinforcing and facilitating the east-west green link within the site will be important, as will integrating the proposed pedestrian footbridge across Watermead Way and the railway. The panel would expect the development to facilitate the pedestrian bridge with a financial contribution.

Scope of the review

- Due to time constraints, the scope of the review was primarily at a strategic level. It is anticipated that the panel will consider the evolving proposals at a greater level of detail in future reviews.

Overall vision for Berol Quarter

- The panel notes that there is a tension between the strategic and local visions for the site. The current proposals for 2 Berol Yard seem to have been developed from the perspective of an arbitrary long distance view, rather than an understanding of how the development will be experienced at a local level: how the buildings shape the experience of the place. The panel feels that this local experience should inform and drive the early, strategic decisions about the massing and three-dimensional form of the new building.
- The panel would like to know more about the detailed vision for Berol Quarter, and what will make it a distinctive place. It highlights that a large part of the public experience is influenced by the design and quality of the public realm, and it notes the challenge of mitigating the hostile environment of the major roads adjacent to the site.

Berol House

- The panel welcomes the approach taken to repurposing the Berol House building; it is socially important, linking the existing and new communities, and could become an exemplar. It is an extraordinary building and presents a great opportunity to provide a focus for the masterplan.
- The reworked scheme is generally well-considered; the panel supports the move to make the ground floor more permeable and thinks that some further exploration of how this might be achieved would be beneficial. Options to consider include the creation of a central 'arcade', increased permeability through the ground floor uses with entrances on both facades, and a clear hierarchy of the routes through the building.
- Including some community uses at ground floor level could also help to integrate the different local communities within the new development; retail provision may not be particularly accessible for a wide demographic.



- Provision for flexibility in the size of units will also be important, so that Berol House can adapt to a wide range of occupants.
- The panel would encourage the project team to tease out and reinforce the 'delight' in the architectural expression of the heritage building. The original form was that of a central building with clear bookends, so visually reinforcing these and reflecting details like the false tromp l'oeil doorway into the stairwell at roof level would be welcomed. The Colourworks building in Ashwin Street, Dalston is a good example of a successfully repurposed industrial heritage building.
- The panel is not yet convinced by the architectural expression of the proposed additional storeys at roof level. A lighter and more delicate approach may be more appropriate; the current images render the uppermost storeys visually heavy. While the addition of two new storeys on the roof works well, the third, set-back level needs a lighter touch, including a more defined setback on its eastern face to avoid a sheer three storey roof addition facing Berol Yard.
- Designing for thermal performance and sustainability should underpin the approach to the form and expression of the new-build upper floors. Factors for consideration include solar gain, daylight and sunlight, embodied carbon and the LETI standards.
- The panel notes that the wall-to-ceiling glazing, and generally the quantum of glazing, would be detrimental in terms of thermal performance and solar gain / overheating. A holistic evaluation of the impact of the cladding material would also be welcomed.
- The panel would encourage the project team to explore innovative forms of construction on the upper floors, and to take environmentally sustainable design as a starting point, both in the new-build roof additions, and with the refurbishment and retrofitting of the existing building.

2 Berol Yard

- High quality placemaking should be the key driver for the Berol Quarter development and careful consideration should be given to what characteristics will make it a distinctive and liveable place.
- The panel thinks that the proposed height and mass of the building, in terms of the impact upon the public realm and adjacent buildings, is unsuitable in this location, which has been identified as the 'final piece of the jigsaw' of the Ashley Road South Masterplan.
- Further consideration of the massing and height is therefore needed, to increase and improve the amount of open space on the site, while framing the



space and the spaces to which it links. In addition, extensive wind modelling will be required.

- The building height should relate more closely to the scale of buildings immediately adjacent, at 12-14 storeys, although some additional height could potentially be justified if the development clearly facilitates and contributes to the implementation of the proposed pedestrian bridge and its landing area. However, the design and integration of the landing area will be critically important in this regard.
- It will be important to define a clear brief for how the building should work, in terms of orientation, daylight, sunlight, wind modelling and microclimate, which can drive the iterative design process.
- Constraints within and around the site are also important and should also underpin the developing design. The 12m gap to The Gessner building to the north is very problematic, resulting in north-facing single aspect units with reduced daylight, as well as obstructing the outlook and amenities of the south-facing balconies on The Gessner. A different response to these constraints could result in a narrower, more compact building, without single aspect units.
- The panel notes that the Victoria line tunnel also presents constraints for construction above it. It wonders whether adoption of a diagonal in the building line at the northern façade could open up the 12m gap, improve access to daylight for the accommodation, and improve neighbourliness.
- The panel would encourage the project team to consider future adaptability of the proposed building; it notes that 'build to rent' may become less appropriate in 20 years' time.
- The panel also expresses some concerns about the proposal to locate parking at the 'back of house', adjacent to Watermead Way.

Place-making, public realm and landscape design

- The overarching vision of a green link (from the High Road to the Tottenham Marshes and Lee Valley Regional Park) is a very important strategic initiative for the local area. The panel would like to see how this can be further reinforced and enhanced, giving character and distinctiveness to the development. For example, greater provision of soft landscape could be made within the site and key elements of the link could be integrated within the proposals, including the potential pedestrian bridge over Watermead Way and the railway. The panel would expect to see this type of greening strategy illustrated within the CGI views of the scheme.



- The current proposals for 2 Berol Yard are not at a human-scale at ground level, and the panel would like to see refinement to the design of the lower part of the building and the public realm to humanise the scheme and to provide protection from the challenging microclimate, and major road adjacent.
- The panel would like to know more about both the strategic and detailed approaches to landscape within the Berol Quarter, especially in terms of how these spaces might be used by children, and how the different spaces will be used by different age groups.
- The panel would expect the development to make a financial contribution to facilitate the connections that form part of the green link, in particular the proposed footbridge.
- The cafes on the waterfront at Hale Wharf, the Tottenham Marshes and Lee Valley Regional Park are important destinations, both for the development itself and for the wider community. The panel notes that there are still uncertainties about the detailed design of the footbridge because of Crossrail 2; however, it feels that the scheme needs to show how this link will be made.

Environmentally sustainable design

- The panel would like to consider the approach to environmentally sustainable design for the proposals in greater detail at a future review.
- While the inclusion of a wall to capture energy within the development is supported, the panel would encourage the project team to adopt ambitious targets for the environmental performance of the buildings, for example the LETI targets.
- The panel questions whether an approach to urban greening has been considered within the site.
- Attention will need to be paid to the mitigation of the noise created by the very busy road immediately adjacent.

Next steps

- The panel would like to see the proposals again, at a greater level of detail. It will be important to allow enough time to consider each part of Berol Quarter individually, and from different perspectives, including sustainable design, so separate review slots on the same day for Berol House and 2 Berol Yard may be appropriate. It will also be important to have sustainable design panel expertise in each of the reviews, so formal review slots for both buildings may be appropriate.



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.

