

## APPENDIX 9 – QRP – Second Review: 18 January 2023

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### **London Borough of Haringey Quality Review Panel**

**Report of Formal Review Meeting: Haringey Civic Centre**

Wednesday 18 January 2023

Room 0:M1, Clockwise Wood Green, 50 Station Road, London N22 7DE

#### **Panel**

Peter Studdert (chair)  
Phyllida Mills  
Iris Papadatou  
Andy Puncher  
Craig Robertson

#### **Attendees**

Suzanne Kimman	London Borough of Haringey
Robbie McNaugher	London Borough of Haringey
John McRory	London Borough of Haringey
Sylvester Olutayo	London Borough of Haringey
Elizabetta Tonazzi	London Borough of Haringey
Richard Truscott	London Borough of Haringey
Samuel Uff	London Borough of Haringey
Joe Brennan	Frame Projects
Kirsty McMullan	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.

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## 1. Project name and site address

Haringey Civic Centre, High Road, Wood Green, London N22 8LE

## 2. Presenting team

Julia Galves	Hawkins\Brown
Jason Martin	Hawkins\Brown
Matt Pearson	Hawkins\Brown
Lucy Markham	Montagu Evans
Louisa Smith	Montagu Evans
Chris Churchman	Churchman Thornhill Finch
Damian Wines	Buro Happold

## 3. Planning authority briefing

The site is located within the Trinity Gardens Conservation Area. Statutory listed buildings within the immediate setting of the site include the adjacent Trinity Primary Academy School, St Michael's Church and the War Memorial. The site is occupied by the existing Civic Centre, which is a Grade II listed building. It is three storeys with a recessed fourth floor. The site is included in the Site Allocations DPD and draft Wood Green Area Action Plan. Both documents were published prior to the 2018 listing of the Civic Centre. There is a Traveller site to the west.

This scheme proposes refurbishment of the listed Civic Centre, redevelopment of the rear car park in the northwest corner of the site, and link buildings connecting the existing and proposed development. The extended Civic Centre will be used as council offices for London Borough of Haringey and invited visitors. There is indoor community space to the south of the site, opening onto a community garden. Selected events will open to the public and are likely to be held in the courtyard enclosed by the existing, proposed and link buildings.

Officers would welcome the panel's views on:

- the functionality of the site, including internal layout.
- scale, particularly in relation to the existing Civic Centre and parapet heights.
- setting back upper storeys and varying facades to respond to their settings.
- materiality.
- sustainability, balanced with heritage.
- plant and servicing locations.
- landscaping and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists, especially the staff entrance.

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### 4. Quality Review Panel's views

#### *Summary*

The panel warmly supports the proposals for the Haringey Civic Centre, which will give a valued heritage asset an extended lease of life in public service. The project team has responded well to the comments from the previous review (held on 27 April 2022) and presented a scheme that is sensitive, works well, and is in keeping with the spirit of the original building.

The height and massing are an appropriate response to both the existing Grade II listed building and the wider context. The east-west pedestrian and cycle route through the site needs further work to help encourage staff and visitors to travel sustainably. The amount of greenery in the scheme should be increased, particularly in the courtyard. There should be a direct connection between the indoor community spaces and the woodland garden. The suggestion of community co-design for the woodland garden is positive and should be developed. Mature trees should be retained where possible. This scheme has the potential to be an exemplar for incorporating passive sustainability in a site with heritage assets. The panel encourages the project team to continue to reduce the scheme's embodied carbon, perhaps through a hybrid ventilation system. The panel is not convinced by the introduction of brick to the elevations, which it considers to interrupt the purity of the original Scandinavian-inspired Civic Centre design. The setback of the plant on the roof and the faceted screening appear likely to conceal it well in views. The internal stairs would benefit from further work to ensure that they feel open and high quality. The staff entrance sequence works well. The bicycle stores are currently too prominent in front of the Civic Centre and resemble portacabins. They should instead be integrated into the landscaping using the site topography.

These comments are expanded below.

#### *Height and massing*

- The panel supports the refinements to the height and massing made since the previous Quality Review Panel meeting.
- Reducing the height by one storey by removing the central atrium and atrium lantern has helped the scheme to sit comfortably in its surroundings and has alleviated concerns about impact on the listed Civic Centre building.
- The removal of the atrium from the previous design iteration is logical, as the scheme already benefits from a courtyard. It also helps the building to be more outward looking, and to better address its urban setting.

#### *Wider connectivity*

- The panel is not yet convinced that the east-west pedestrian and cycle route through the site will be well used. The width of the path and cycle route should

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be increased to match the ambition of the transport access diagram and successfully promote this route.

- The service yard to the north should be open to allow overlooking, helping to ensure it is a safe space. Further consideration is needed of how access to the smaller service area to the south is managed while maintaining the public east-west through route.
- The panel asks the project team to avoid double-stacked bicycle storage, which is difficult to use and may put staff and visitors off travelling sustainably to the Civic Centre.

### *Landscape design*

- The panel supports the ambition to create lush, green landscaping, but thinks that the design could do more to achieve this, particularly in the fully paved courtyard.
- The courtyard should have a relationship to the adjacent woodland garden, allowing greenery to permeate deeper into the scheme. This would help the space to be more welcoming and comfortable at all times of year, increase its urban greening factor, and support the health and wellbeing of Haringey staff and visitors.
- The panel encourages the project team to continue discussions with London Borough of Haringey to better understand their requirements for the courtyard space, as it may be used for large events more suited to hard landscaping.
- Alternative ways to meet Haringey's needs should be investigated, such as pavilions in the courtyard that provide hard standing but allow greenery to take over the rest of the space.
- The indoor community spaces should have a stronger connection to the outdoor woodland garden (also for community use).
- The panel understands that there is a vent to the basement of the existing Civic Centre that makes direct access between the garden and community spaces difficult. It encourages the project team to work with planning officers and heritage experts to come to a resolution that balances heritage concerns with community benefits. For example, the vent could be grated over.
- The idea that the woodland garden space could be co-designed with the local community is positive. The panel would like to see this taken seriously and developed further, considering which communities will be approached, the management strategy, and involving them as early as possible in the design process to help with engagement.
- The panel's concerns about the impact of the service yard in the northwest corner of the site on the neighbouring primary school have been addressed.

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The project team should ensure that sufficient space is allowed along this boundary for mature trees to help mediate this relationship.

- The panel suggests that the trees required for this scheme should be purchased as soon as possible to give them time to grow, and ensure that the landscape proposals will work from day one. This strategy has been already successfully tested in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

### *Sustainable design*

- The panel commends the project team's work on the sustainability narrative and proposals. It thinks that this scheme has the potential to be an exemplar for others to follow, especially for incorporating passive sustainability into a listed building.
- The panel is pleased to see a realistic figure for the scheme's embodied carbon, especially considering the heritage constraints on this site. The project team should continue to work to reduce embodied carbon where possible.
- The analysis of the way the building's design responds to different conditions on each side of the scheme is a positive factor, but the variations are subtle.
- The panel encourages the project team to take this further by exploring the potential for a hybrid, natural and mechanical ventilation system. This will help to cool the building where there are large windows allowing solar gain. As there is no longer a central atrium and only the perimeter of the building can benefit from natural ventilation, this potential should be maximised where possible.
- The mature trees to the front of the existing Civic Centre should be retained, as they will help to provide solar shading.

### *Architectural language and materiality*

- The panel largely supports the architectural language and materiality proposed for the existing building.
- However, it considers that the introduction of brickwork on the ground floor elevations interrupts the purity of the elevations. This makes the ground floor plinth appear recessed behind the white fins, which is a departure from the original Scandinavian-inspired design. The material treatment of the elevations within the courtyard should also wrap around all sides.
- The panel is convinced that the faceted design of the screening to the services on the roof of the building will help it to disappear into the sky. While the approach is different to the clean horizontality of the existing building, the ragged top edge of the screen seems likely to catch the light, and successfully evokes the playfulness of the existing building.