

London Borough of Haringey Quality Review Panel

Report of Chair's Review Meeting: Newstead, Denewood Road

Wednesday 6 March 2024

Alexandra House, 10 Station Road, London N22 7TY

Panel

Peter Studdert (chair)

Linsey Whitelaw

Attendees

John McRory	London Borough of Haringey
Roland Sheldon	London Borough of Haringey
Richard Truscott	London Borough of Haringey
Kirsty McMullan	Frame Projects
Bonnie Russell	Frame Projects

Apologies / report copied to

Suzanne Kimman	London Borough of Haringey
Rob Krzyszowski	London Borough of Haringey
Robbie McNaugher	London Borough of Haringey
Tania Skelli	London Borough of Haringey
Elizabetta Tonazzi	London Borough of Haringey
Bryce Tudball	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.

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1. Project name, site address and planning reference

Former Newstead Nursing Home, Denewood Road, London N6 4AL
Planning permission ref. HGY/2018/3205 (February 2021)

2. Presenting team

Eoghan O'Brien	Reddy Architecture + Urbanism
Alun Dawson	Eagle Street
Charlotte McManus	Gerald Eve
Caoilfhionn McMonagle	Gerald Eve
Eddie Beer	IN2
Sukanya Ravi	IN2

3. Planning authority briefing

The site is accessed from the northern side of Denewood Road, and abuts the boundaries of properties to the north, east and west. It is well served by public transport, with both Highgate and Archway stations located close by. There are gentle level changes across the site. It was previously occupied by a single storey 1960s nursing home, which has since been demolished.

Outside the site, fronting onto Denewood Road, is Goldsmiths Cottage – a locally listed building. The site and its surroundings are within the Bishops sub-area of the Highgate Conservation Area, characterised by large houses with vast landscaped gardens amidst mature trees. Immediately around the site there are a variety of late 20th century buildings, late 19th century Victorian Gothic houses, and 20th century Arts and Craft houses.

There is an extant permission for three buildings of between two and three storeys in height to provide 13 residential units plus amenity space. Before planning permission was granted in 2021, the proposal had been presented at two Quality Review Panel meetings (May 2018 and October 2019). Following a review of the panel's comments and officer considerations, the scheme was amended to incorporate substantial changes to the architectural form and style from the original submission, which included Arts and Crafts design principles. The site has been sold since the extant planning permission was granted.

The new applicants propose a revised scheme for the erection of three buildings of between two and three storeys in height, to provide 11 terraced homes with private and communal amenity spaces. The proposal seeks to move away from the consented flatted accommodation, towards family sized dwellings in three separate terraces across the site.

Officers are broadly supportive of the scheme and asked for the panel's comments on the site layout (including overlooking on neighbours), architectural character, landscaping, and sustainability.



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4. Quality Review Panel's views

Summary

The Haringey Quality Review Panel welcomes the proposals for terraced housing on the site, and commends the project team for the significant improvements made on the extant permission. Further work is needed to resolve some issues around overlooking of the neighbouring properties, usability of the landscaping, architectural character and servicing, but the scheme is in a good position to move forward.

The relationship between Terrace Two and the property to the north requires urgent attention to prevent privacy issues. Alternative arrangements, such as moving Terrace Two further south and reconfiguring the internal layout, should be tested while avoiding adverse impact to the existing trees and proposed community kitchen garden. The project team should explore other locations for the communal amenity spaces where they will be less overshadowed. The landscape proposals require interrogation to ensure that they are achievable, considering site constraints, and a management strategy should be put in place to maintain quality. The panel understands that the architecture is still in development, but finds the proposals lacking in interest. It encourages the project team to ensure that the architecture brings a sense of identity and vibrancy to the scheme. A contemporary interpretation of the detailing from the surrounding conservation area would help to add richness. The project team is encouraged to resolve the refuse collection strategy. The panel suggests communal collection from Denewood Road to remove the visual clutter of individual bins. Air source heat pumps could then be located in an elegantly designed enclosure in the front gardens, rather than disturbing residents' enjoyment of their back gardens.

Site layout

- The changes made to the scheme constitute a significant improvement. The removal of the large basement car park is a positive decision, reducing both the carbon footprint of the scheme and a source of tension with neighbours. The rotation of the southernmost building to make it parallel with Denewood Road helps the proposal to sit comfortably as part of the existing street. Providing terraced houses rather than flatted accommodation is also more appropriate in this location.
- While the scale of the proposal is in keeping with its setting, the relationships with neighbouring properties have not been resolved to avoid privacy issues. In particular, the northern windows of Terrace Two currently overlook No. 6 View Close, immediately to the north.
- The project team is encouraged to explore alternative site layouts to resolve this, such as moving Terrace Two further south, and reconfiguring the internal layout to prevent any windows from directly facing habitable rooms.



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- If Terrace Two is moved further south, efforts should be made to avoid clashing with the existing trees and reducing the size of the sunken community kitchen garden. Alternatively, this could be provided elsewhere on the site.

Landscape

- In light of site constraints, the panel encourages the project team's landscape architects to work through the detail of the landscape proposals to ensure that they are feasible to construct and maintain.
- For example, further investigation is required to determine whether the sunken community kitchen garden is possible without causing detrimental damage to the roots of the existing trees, retained along the western site boundary.
- It is also apparent that the site frequently experiences standing water, particularly on the eastern side. The panel suggests investigating this further to ensure that the soakaway strategy will work with the site's clay soil.
- There is a concern that many of the outdoor amenity spaces will be overshadowed. The private back gardens of all terraces face northeast; the community kitchen garden is behind Terrace One and sunken into the ground; and the play space is bordered by a few large mature trees to the south. The car park, meanwhile, is likely to receive good sunlight from the southwest.
- The panel understands that the car park has been located to reduce the land taken by the access road. However, it encourages the project team to test out other locations for the communal landscaped areas that can provide more sunlight for enjoying the spaces, and growing food.
- The terraced housing layout works well with the street grain, and there may not be a satisfactory way that brings more light to the private gardens. In the panel's view, this is not detrimental, provided residents have the option to enjoy the sun elsewhere on the site.
- The panel notes that the western boundary wall is in a poor condition and will reduce the quality of the completed scheme if left as it is. The project team should identify the owners of this wall, and work with them to repair and improve its state. There may also be a need to increase its height along the northwest edge to improve resident privacy.
- The concept precedent images for the community kitchen garden include play equipment and ornamental rocks in grassed areas. In the panel's experience, the grass surrounding these features often becomes worn away, leaving patches of mud and detracting from the desired aesthetic. Constant ongoing maintenance will be required to manage this.



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Architecture

- The idea of integrating textured brickwork into the façades is promising, but a more thoughtful approach is required to create homes that will lift residents' spirits when they arrive home.
- The panel recommends drawing inspiration from the surrounding conservation area. The Edwardian Highgate vernacular, for example, uses white painted or stone details to add richness to the elevations. This can inform a contemporary approach, rather than becoming a pastiche.
- More effort could be put into the terrace fronting onto Denewood Road to create interest in the streetscape, while the terraces behind could take a calmer, mews-like approach.
- The panel agrees with the project team's reflection that the yellow brick shown in some visualisations is out of place in this context. A red or orange brick would sit more comfortably in the conservation area.

Servicing

- For the individual bin collection strategy to work, lorry tracking and drag distances will need to be tested, which may affect the design of the access road. Sufficient space will also be needed in front gardens to store the bins.
- The panel suggests considering communal collection from Denewood Road instead, as this would remove the visual clutter of individual bins and any need to enlarge the access road. It advises integrating a communal bin store into the landscape design. This could be an elegant timber structure to screen the bins, as found in the Mulberry Court scheme in Hampton Wick.
- It is also challenging to find space for noisy air source heat pumps in narrow fronted terraced housing. The panel recommends locating the heat pumps inside well-designed brick enclosures in the front gardens, rather than interfering with the residents' enjoyment of their back gardens. Marmalade Lane, a co-living scheme in Cambridge, is a successful example of this.

Next steps

- The Haringey Quality Review Panel is confident that the issues outlined above can be resolved in collaboration with officers. The scheme does not need to return to design review again.



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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.

