

Appendix 4: Quality Review Panel report 05 March 2025

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London Borough of Haringey Quality Review Panel

Report of Full Review Meeting: Wood Green Timber Yard

Wednesday 5 March 2025

Alexandra House, 10 Station Road, London N22 7TY

Panel

Andrew Beharrell (chair)

Phil Askew

Angie Jim Osman

Paddy Pugh

Craig Robertson

Attendees

John McRory	London Borough of Haringey
Ruth Mitchell	London Borough of Haringey
Joshua O'Donnell	London Borough of Haringey
Biplav Pagéni	London Borough of Haringey
Catherine Smyth	London Borough of Haringey
Richard Truscott	London Borough of Haringey
Samuel Uff	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
Saloni Parekh	London Borough of Haringey
Gareth Prosser	London Borough of Haringey
Roland Sheldon	London Borough of Haringey
Ashley Sin-Yung	London Borough of Haringey
Tania Skelli	London Borough of Haringey
Kevin Tohill	London Borough of Haringey
Elisabetta Tonazzi	London Borough of Haringey
Bryce Tudball	London Borough of Haringey

Report of Full Review Meeting

5 March 2025

HQRP146_Wood Green Timber Yard

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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

Wood Green Timber Yard, 289-295 High Road, London N22 8HU

2. Presenting team

Alan Peacock	Stockwool Architects
Ewout Vandeweghe	Stockwool Architects
Warren Standerwick	Standerwick Land Design
Frances Young	SY2 Planning
John Silvester	Wood Green Timber Yard
Tom Silvester	Wood Green Timber Yard

3. Planning authority briefing

The 0.22 hectare site is currently in use as a timber merchant. Whether or not the loss of employment space would be acceptable needs to be justified by the applicants and agreed with the council. The site is not allocated, and is outside the designated town centre.

The site is bounded to the north by Morant Place, a staggered four-storey development, and to the south by the back gardens of two-storey houses on Trinity Road. The rear of the site is on Neville Place, which is an adopted highway and contains a row of two-storey employment buildings. The highway is currently used as a controlled parking zone. London Borough of Haringey Highways Department is unable to formally release the land in front of the Timber Yard for landscaping and amenity space.

The south of the site, up to the highway of Neville Place, is located within Trinity Gardens Conservation Area. The site adjoins the locally listed former public house (Fishmongers Arms), and there is a Grade II listed fountain in front of the pub. The Grade II listed Civic Centre and Trinity Academy primary school are also nearby.

A mixed-use development is proposed in two buildings, three to five storeys tall (plus a basement level) on the High Road frontage, and a three-storey mews building on Neville Place. This will provide 36 homes and 100 square metres of commercial use, alongside parking and landscaping.

Officers asked for the panel's comments on the quality of accommodation, relationship to neighbours, response to heritage, public realm and landscaping.



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4. Quality Review Panel's views

Summary

The Haringey Quality Review Panel welcomes the site layout, height and massing, and building typologies, which are well considered and respond appropriately to the historic setting. However, the conflicts between amenity, play, parking, and servicing on the ground plane are symptoms of the intensity of development, and need to be resolved. It may be necessary to alter the quantum of development to find the optimum that the site can support without compromising on quality.

The panel supports the relationship with the conservation area but asks that long views of the church spires are protected as the scheme develops. Significant further work is needed to ensure that the ground plane will deliver for the people who will live and work here, as well as for the wider community. An alternative solution should be found for the children's play space, which is next to refuse and parking, and likely to be overshadowed. Neville Place could be remodelled as a shared surface mews, the Blue Badge parking reduced and relocated, and the play space extended. The highway land and the land in front of the former Fishmongers Arms should make a significant contribution to the high street setting and public realm greening. The project team is encouraged to work with Haringey officers and neighbours to resolve the land ownership and use issues for public benefit.

The project team should consider replacing the proposed mews flats with a terrace of mews houses on Neville Place. This would resolve many of the design issues, and provide more suitable family housing than upper floor flats. The panel suggests carrying out a detailed review to check that all rooms are of an appropriate size and shape to be usable, and that entrances are welcoming. The panel suggests that a community use, in the proposed wing adjoining the former Fishmongers Arms, would be more successful than a commercial space. The success of the architecture will depend on the quality of the detailing and execution. A simple brick materials palette is recommended, with further articulation to create a distinctive external appearance, especially on the High Road elevations.

The panel suggests that the basement is removed to reduce embodied carbon and encourage residents to use the bicycle store. Further work is needed to improve the form factor and reduce heat loss. The windows should be sized in relation to noise, daylight, resident quality of life, and the wider context, as well as overheating.

Site layout

- The panel supports the site layout, which will help to repair the urban fabric. The two mansion blocks fronting onto the High Road and a mews terrace on Neville Place are an appropriate solution for the site, and could relate well to the existing context while also referring back to the historic building footprints.
- However, the ground plane is under significant pressure to meet the scheme's amenity, play, parking and servicing needs, and the highway land to the front of Block A shows amenity space that may not be deliverable. The panel is also



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concerned that the floor layouts will not have sufficient flexibility to accommodate any adjustments needed for Building Regulations compliance at the next stage of design development.

- The project team is asked to reconsider the intensity of the development and to find a level that will optimise the site's potential. It suggests that the scheme would be more successful if the quantum is slightly reduced.

Response to heritage

- The panel supports the relationship that the scheme establishes with Trinity Gardens Conservation Area. It thinks that the proposed footprint has been extended as far as it can be, but nevertheless forms a positive response to the heritage setting of the high street and the locally listed Fishmongers Arms.
- As the scheme is refined, the project team should ensure that long views of the nearby church spires and the cupola of Trinity Primary Academy school are not lost. These are an important characteristic of the conservation area.
- The panel is comfortable with the idea of moving the sign on the exterior of the Fishmongers Arms building so that it can be retained when this scheme abuts the flank wall, as long as it remains on the former pub building. Views should be tested to ensure the sign is clearly visible in its new location.

Landscape

- The conflicts between servicing, amenity and parking needs have led to a compromised set of conditions on the ground plane, particularly for the children's play space which is squeezed between the buildings, the refuse store and the Blue Badge parking bays. As well as requiring children to play next to refuse and vehicles, this leftover space is likely to be overshadowed. The panel asks for an alternative solution that will create a high-quality, green and sunny play space, with a place for parents to sit.
- The panel understands that curb-side parking has already been allocated, but strongly encourages the project team to explore (in collaboration with planning officers) whether Neville Place could be pedestrianised or shared surface. If the number of Blue Badge parking bays could be reduced to reflect the minimum provision, it may also be possible to relocate them to a more suitable kerbside location. This would allow the play space to extend to Neville Place, prioritising the quality of the outdoor environment for residents over vehicles.
- The ownership and legal use for the highway land to the front of Block A is not clear. This space could make a significant contribution to greening the high street, providing a suitable setting for the buildings, doorstep amenity, and green relief from the busy High Road. If the land in front of the Fishmongers Arms could also be released and integrated, it would deliver a continuous, green public realm. The project team, highways officers and landowners are

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encouraged to collaborate to resolve the current issues and transform the high street frontage.

- The panel recommends further work to ensure that the tree planting strategy can be delivered. The highway land is the only space on the site that would be sufficient for planting trees of stature, which will be important to provide shade and screening for residents.
- Neville Place mews is dominated by hard landscaping in the visualisations. The panel suggests finding ways to soften the threshold space in front of the homes so that it will feel safer, more human, and will allow residents the opportunity to take ownership of the space for gardening. This has been achieved in similarly constrained urban spaces in Amsterdam simply through greening and seating.
- A significant amount of space on the private terraces is consumed by the air source heat pumps. The panel advises reviewing whether this is the best location for them, and providing accurate figures for the amount of space remaining for resident amenity.

Quality of accommodation

- The panel is concerned about the strategy of splitting the mews houses along Neville Place into flats. Ten flats with the larger family homes on the upper floors is overly complex, and requires families to climb a staircase as soon as they arrive home, with inadequate space for arrival and storage at ground level.
- Seven houses could be cheaper to build, easier to market, and help the project team to provide affordable family homes. This solution would also mean that each house would deal with its own refuse, removing the need for the bin store at the end of the mews next to the children's play space. The panel thinks that this alternative solution is worth exploring for its multiple commercial, design and planning benefits.
- Further work is needed to check that all home layouts will work in terms of both functionality and welcome. Practicalities such as a space to store prams or shopping should be considered, particularly for the upper floor homes. The entrances would also be improved by adding a threshold space.
- The internal views are welcome, and help to convince the panel of the usability of the living rooms in some cases. However, many of the homes are tightly planned, with little flexibility.
- The external massing, angled in response to the context, has led to unusual room shapes inside many of the flats. The panel is concerned that these homes will be difficult to furnish. The flat in the southeastern corner of Block B is particularly challenging as the bathroom, bedroom and balcony doors all open onto the open plan kitchen-living room.



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- The panel suggests carrying out a detailed review of every home to check that all rooms are of an appropriate size and shape to be usable. It may be necessary to remove some habitable rooms, or for two smaller flats to be combined into one.

Commercial space

- The panel recognises the planning policy to retain employment uses on the site, but is concerned that the commercial space may not be attractive to a suitable tenant compatible with the residential setting, and could lie empty.
- If this could provide space for a community use, then the panel recommends relocating the space to the southern part of the ground floor of Block A. A generous community space here could benefit from light at both the front and back of the building, connecting the children's play space to the potential landscaped frontage on the high street, and creating a more sophisticated junction with the former Fishmongers Arms.

Architecture

- The proposed massing with angled corners could work well, but its success will depend on the quality of the execution and the panel has not yet seen enough details to comment. The panel advises further work to ensure that the buildings' complex stepping is well resolved. Details such as material junctions, rainwater pipes and soffits should also be considered, as these will make a significant difference to the quality of the completed buildings.
- The panel suggests using a simple materials palette to avoid complex detailing where possible. The change in material for the upper floors of the mews terrace may not be necessary.
- Brick works well as the primary material and the panel welcomes the articulation of the soldier course around the building parapets. However, the façades have a relatively austere appearance at present, particularly at ground floor level where the base of Blocks A and B should be more distinctive in response to the adjacent former Fishmongers Arms and the wider conservation area.
- The panel recommends further articulation of the front elevations of Blocks A and B to create buildings with appropriate stature and presence for the high street's historic setting. This could be achieved through increasing the floor to ceiling height of the ground floors, as well as through detailing and materials. The panel also recommends elaborating the entrances to create a sense of dignity and arrival.
- The proportions of the windows are small relative to the neighbouring existing buildings. If the overheating assessment results mean that they cannot be



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increased in size, then the panel recommends articulating the plane of brickwork surrounding the windows to better respond to the context.

- The panel discourages the use of screens on the mews windows fronting Neville Place. While resident privacy is important, curtains or blinds would achieve this with greater flexibility than fixed screens. The panel accepts that privacy at the rear of the mews is more sensitive because the existing back gardens have established privacy. However, the distance is sufficient to not require screens. The strategy of creating mews houses rather than stacked flats could also help to mitigate this, as the kitchens and living rooms could be rearranged to reduce overlooking.
- The balconies could be more elegant, with the corner posts made slimmer or eliminated. The panel also asks that the balustrade height and detailing are designed to consider privacy. This will reduce the likelihood of residents on the more exposed frontages erecting unsightly screens on their balconies.

Sustainability

- The proposed basement is an expensive and carbon intensive solution for bicycle storage and plant space. The panel asks for a whole life carbon assessment to be completed to inform the best possible solution.
- The panel suggests that having all bicycle storage on the ground floor will make access easier for residents, encouraging active and sustainable travel. Bicycle stores can also become a positive point of activation for the streetscape. There are precedents of bicycle stores with windows, rather than dead frontages, in Cambridge and Scandinavia that could be useful.
- The scheme's energy use intensity figures are unexpectedly high despite low U-values, which suggests that the proposed form factor could be causing heat loss. The panel advises further work to resolve and improve this. Passivhaus design should be considered.
- The panel understands that the building regulations on overheating have led to the proposed window opening sizes. However, these do not feel sufficiently generous for good resident quality of life, or to respond to the grandeur of the high street context. The window openings should be shaped in relation to noise and daylight assessments as well as overheating.
- The project team is encouraged to ensure that the sustainable drainage system, including permeable paving, are embedded in the landscape designs to improve the scheme's climate resilience.

Next steps

- The Haringey Quality Review Panel would welcome the opportunity to review Wood Green Timber Yard again at an Intermediate or Chair's Review.



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