



CONFIDENTIAL

ATT: Rosemarie Jenkins
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Our ref: DRP/136

Date: 25 September 2017

Dear Rosemarie Jenkins,

ISLINGTON DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

RE: Hathersage & Besant, Newington Green, London N1 (pre-application ref. Q2015/4128/MJR)

Thank you for attending Islington's Design Review Panel meeting on 13 September 2017 for a first review of the above scheme. The proposed scheme under consideration is for the retention of all buildings on site and the erection of a series of new buildings to provide 47 new dwellings across the estate in three new 4-6 storey buildings around a central garden courtyard, a new 4-storey building fronting onto Newington Road and two further 2-storey buildings along the estate's southern boundary as well as the replacement of 3 commercial units on Mildmay Park Road. It is also proposed to deliver significant landscape improvements including courtyard gardens, new playspace, new entrances into the estate and an improved route through the estate (officer's description).

Review Process

The Design Review Panel provides expert impartial design advice following the 10 key principles of design review established by Design Council/CABE. The scheme was reviewed by both Design Review Panel Chairs (Dominic Papa and Richard Portchmouth) on 13th September 2017. They were provided with the presentation document submitted by your design team and met at the Islington Town Hall to review the proposals and to discuss their views on the design development of the scheme. The views expressed below are a reflection of the Panel's discussions as an independent advisory board to the Council.

Panel's observations

The Chairs welcomed the scheme for a fifth review and were pleased to see various key issues had been resolved following comments made in the previous review. In particular, the Chairs were satisfied that previous concerns in relation to the landscape, paving, roof balustrades and lack of internal layouts had been addressed. They also welcomed the submission of details in relation to the junctions of new and existing buildings.

The Chairs raised concerns that the submitted presentation seemed to indicate that there are numerous types of brick now proposed for various elements across the site. It was unclear from the submitted material whether the different tones were a matter of the light on the images or intended different bricks. The Chairs recommended a simple palette in this regard, with a clear strategy devised for each sub area to be submitted as part of a forthcoming planning application.

The discussions were mainly focused on Blocks F, H and K, as sites which would benefit from further discussion. The following comments were made:

Block F

- The Chairs were of the opinion that the rooftop element still remains an issue; the proposed pitched roof does not abate previous concerns. As a tacked on, separate element, it would represent the introduction of another typology to the site, confusing legibility. They thanked the design team for exploring an alternative form but unfortunately were unable to support this resolution.
- They discussed the possibility of providing a building of four storeys without a setback top floor resulting in a higher parapet line. However, they concluded that maintaining the existing parapet height is important in order to retain the alignment with the existing terrace on Newington Green Road and to respect the strong character of this section of the conservation area. For this reason, although they appreciate that the design team had attempted to resolve this aspect of the design, they recommended that the top storey should be omitted given the difficulty in achieving a successful resolution to this issue.
- They suggested that with the omission of the top floor, either the duplex should be turned into a 1-bedroom unit or the first and second floors amalgamated to provide the larger family unit.

Block H – ground floor fronting Newington Green Road

- Although this would not normally be considered a suitable site for a commercial unit, considering that it is hidden away, it could work well as a surgery.
- However, the creation of a separate entrance would be a considerable improvement, rather than users having to enter past the bin and bike stores which would not be a successful piece of urban design.
- In light of previous comments regarding the materials of the commercial unit, and options of a glazed brick and green wall having been explored, the choice of a darker brick is supported. However, it must be part of the simple palette of materials mentioned above.

Block K

- This was considered to be much improved, though some issues remain unresolved.
- The zinc clad fire escape enclosure was felt to be successful, but further consideration needs to be given to the continuation of the fins to form a balustrade at the top given that it would be difficult to create this element in zinc, or match it in another material. The detailing of this part of the design is therefore very important.
- As proposed there would be a first floor opening onto a flat roof, representing a potential security issue which should be resolved.

Conclusion

The Chairs felt that further work/clarification is needed on the specific issues raised above and on site wide materials generally; they recommended that these should be resolved in consultation with planning/design and conservation officers and should be submitted as part of a planning application to enable officers to make a proper assessment of the proposals.

Thank you for consulting Islington's Design Review Panel. If there is any point that requires clarification please do not hesitate to contact me and I will be happy to seek further advice from the Panel.

Confidentiality

Please note that since the scheme is at pre-application stage, the advice contained in this letter is provided in confidence. However, should this scheme become the subject of a planning application, the views expressed in this letter may become public and will be taken into account by the Council in the assessment of the proposal and determination of the application.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lucy', written in a cursive style.

Luciana Grave

Design Review Panel Coordinator
Design & Conservation Team Manager