

**Wandsworth Design
Review Panel
c/o Wandsworth Council**

Environment and Community Services
Department
The Town Hall
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Our ref: DTS
Your ref:
Date: 27 April 2012

Dear [REDACTED]

Wandsworth Design Review Panel: Peabody Housing, St. John's Hill, SW11

I am most grateful to you, Peabody and your development team for participating in the first Wandsworth Design Review Panel held on 19 April 2012.

It was clear from the presentation that Peabody and its consultants have been engaged in longstanding discussions with the Council over recent years about the development of this site. We noted that the scheme had been presented to the Greater London Authority and they had fed back useful comments on the emerging proposals. The presentation revealed the history of the proposals and demonstrated that the scheme had evolved over the last 2-3 years in response to the discussions with the Council.

Overall it was encouraging to see a scheme that was committed to meeting the standards set by the Mayor's Housing Design guidance, and one that sought to meet the aspirations of its tenants through improvements to the quality of housing, particularly through increased floorspace per unit, and improved energy audit. It was also encouraging to see a scheme that sought to overcome the failings of the current 1930's development, notably its poor relationship with the surrounding urban fabric with improved street frontages. Peabody has had a presence in Clapham Junction since the 1930's and it was pleasing to see a housing developer who is committed to the local community in the long term.

Public Realm

The panel were pleased to see that the proposals sought to overcome the insularity of the existing estate with its perimeter wall and lack of permeability with the inclusion of new streets that were well connected to the existing street pattern of the surrounding area.

Director of Environment and Community Services: A G McDonald, BA (Hons) Dip TP MRTPI
Assistant Director (Planning and Environmental Services): Seema Manchanda, MA, M Phil, MRTPI



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

In particular the new north-south route was welcomed, which would provide a new access to the recently opened second entrance to Clapham Junction Station.

However, we were concerned about the vision for the design of the public spaces. The hierarchy of the spaces appeared to be undermined by being too specific to the site rather than seen as integrated with the wider street network. We would suggest a clear landscape structure is required that links the new station entrance to the north with a new central public space and Wandsworth Common to the south. The clarity of an urban tree lined street coupled with a public square is a strong vision, whereas the sub-division of the public spaces into a series of tightly designed spaces with numerous planters runs the risk of introducing a degree of complexity that might discourage public use. It is important that the spaces are designed for all users of the public spaces. We would suggest that the northern end of the development requires a gesture to invite people into the space. The inclusion of complex arrangement of landscape design elements suggests there may also be issues with long term management and maintenance, including cost.

Massing

Your presentation showed that the scheme has clearly been subject to revision with the heights of buildings being reduced. The panel were generally comfortable with the overall massing of the buildings across the site. Whilst we were encouraged by the formation of street frontages to integrate the scheme with the surrounding residential terraces the break in the proposed urban block to Comyn Road appears inconsistent with the general approach.

Layout

We are aware of the potential re-development of the adjoining TA site and feel it is important that the proposals for the Peabody site anticipate this with the prospect that the two sites can be integrated with one another. Whilst we recognise the importance of the commercial units to the north of the site we do feel that the layout at this end of the site could be tightened up to strengthen the route through to the Common. To the south fronting Wandsworth Common the scheme might consider the potential benefits of designing a robust building form that was flexible to adapt to both commercial and residential at ground floor level.

There was a lack of clarity about the landscape treatment of the private amenity area adjoining the railway particularly with regard to the security and privacy of residents. We suggest that discrete landscape elements relate to individual blocks.

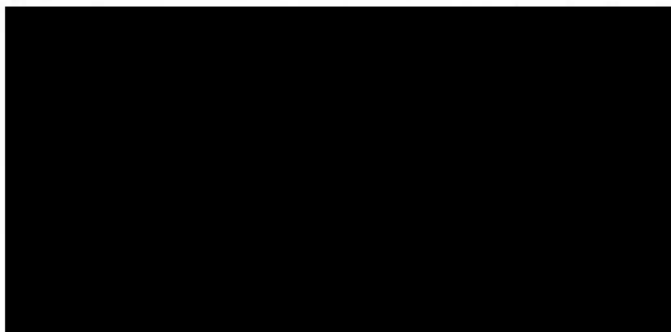
It was felt that further evidence about how the proposed community building adjoining the central public space functioned should be made explicit particularly as it was suggested that a café could be included.

Architecture and design

The language of the buildings is generally good insofar as a strong architectural statement is not called for in this location. However the finer details were not evident. Although five different brick types were mentioned there was not much visual evidence for this. We would encourage a stronger appreciation of the architectural cues from the surrounding established buildings being represented in the detailed treatment of the proposed buildings.

We hope you find these comments constructive and useful in helping you further evolve the scheme. We look forward to seeing how your scheme progresses.

Yours sincerely



Selina Mason (Chair)
(Wandsworth Design Review Panel)

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Panel Members

Selina Mason (Chair)- Director of Design Integration Legacy Transformation Team
Joanna Averley- Chief Executive - LandAid.
Deborah Saunt- DSDHA
Debbie Flevomotou – South London Society of Architects
Marcus Wilshire - Urban Initiatives Ltd.
Renato Benedetti – McDowell + Benedetti Architects

Panel Secretary

Barry Sellers