



London Legacy Development Corporation Quality Review Panel

Report of Planning Application Review Meeting: Bow Goods Yard

Thursday 4 July 2024

Auditorium 1, Level 10, 5 Endeavour Square, London E20 1JN

Panel

Teresa Borsuk (chair)
Keith French
Shashank Jain
Angie Jim Osman
Nisha Kurian

Attendees

Alex Cameron	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Giselle Ottley	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Frances Madders	London Legacy Development Corporation
Patrick Tse	London Legacy Development Corporation
Cindy Reriti	Frame Projects

Apologies / report copied to

Anthony Hollingsworth	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Catherine Smyth	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Rita Adeoye	London Legacy Development Corporation
Ruth Lin Wong Holmes	London Legacy Development Corporation
James Bolt	London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Ben Hull	London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Halil Yorel	London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Jerry Bell	London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Jane Jin	London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Deborah Denner	Frame Projects

Declaration of interest

Nisha Kurian, panel member, used to work for Maccreeanor Lavington, but was not involved in this project.

Note on process

The Quality Review Panel comments below follow on from two pre-application reviews. Panel members who attended the previous meetings were: Teresa Borsuk (chair); Fergus Feilden; Keith French; Helen Hough; Shashank Jain; and Nisha Kurian.



1. Project name and site address

Bow East and Bow West, Bow Goods Yard, Marshgate Lane, London, E15 2PJ

24/00122/OUT

2. Presenting team

Blazej Czuba	Maccreeanor Lavington
Irene Frassoldati	Maccreeanor Lavington
Kevin Logan	Maccreeanor Lavington
Judith Loesing	East
Steven Crutchley	Innova Partnership
Isobel McGeever	Innova Partnership
David Clarke	Network Rail
Ushma Samani	Network Rail
Nancy Smith	Network Rail
Simon Marks	Montagu Evans

3. Planning authority briefing

The site comprises two sites: Bow West, located to the west of the Stanstead Mill Stream, in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, and Bow East, which is located to the east side of the river and is within the London Borough of Newham. Access to Bow West is via Wick Lane, while access to Bow East is via Marshgate Lane. The Greenway runs along the east end of the site and a railway line, with access into the site, lies to the south. Pudding Mill DLR station is to the south of the railway viaduct, with the Bobby Moore Academy along Sidings Street to the northeast, and the Olympic Stadium beyond that, to the north.

Currently there are a range of heavy industrial uses within the site, including concrete batching plants and aggregate stores, most of which are located within open air enclosures. The site also includes an existing railhead function for Stratford Station, which operates as part of the concrete and aggregate distribution. The proposed development consolidates and intensifies the concrete batching and aggregate activities onto the Bow West site, providing a Rail Hub Maintenance and Delivery Unit for Network Rail and rail distribution hub. This would allow for a managed release of the eastern-most part of the Bow East site for a mixed-use commercial and leisure development. Officers would welcome the panel's comments on the design code and parameter plans, including scale, height and massing, and on the proposed site layout, public realm and landscape, transport and sustainability. Officers would also value the panel's comments on whether it feels that its previous comments have been addressed.



4. Quality Review Panel's views

Summary

The Quality Review Panel thanks the presenting team for their clear and thorough presentation, and commends its ambitious and laudable aspirations for a masterplan that has the potential to be an exemplar for a new urban industrial typology. It acknowledges the challenge of designing to allow flexibility for a changing market and for viability, and welcomes the work undertaken to develop the design code. However, further work is needed to ensure that the control documents are adequately robust to successfully deliver this new typology. Given the potential 15-year delivery period, a worst case scenario should be illustrated to planning officers. This process should help to further tighten up the parameter plans and design codes. The panel considers that it is essential that a design guardian is appointed to champion the overall aim and the control documents and it supports planning officers' use of a Section 106 Agreement to retain Maccreanor Lavington in this role through to the scheme's delivery.

The spaces between the plots, including the roads, infrastructure, lighting and signage must be safeguarded as they will be fundamental to the success of this place, particularly given that most buildings will be over the ten metre parameter height. The charm bracelet of open spaces around the site has the potential to provide joyful moments within the development and an opportunity to showcase the industry on the site. It is essential that the infrastructure, utilities, roads, public realm and landscape are delivered in a timely and cohesive manner and further clarity is needed regarding how these will be phased and managed alongside the delivery of the architecture. Clarity should also be provided on how their delivery fits with the potential deviation allowance on each of the development plots as set out in the parameter plans.

Strategic approach

- Network Rail's ability to secure the ownership and management of the whole site will be key to the implementation of the masterplan.
- Detailed testing is required to understand the viability of the public spaces, including the proposed animation of the railway arches on the perimeter of Red Rose Circus.
- Safeguarding the public realm and landscape proposals is key to achieving the vision of the masterplan and a design guardian should be appointed to ensure the delivery of a successful and cohesive masterplan. The panel supports officers' use of a Section 106 Agreement to retain Maccreanor Lavington in this role.



- Further details should be provided to officers, to give confidence that the quantum of floorspace needed to animate and safeguard the maintenance of all the proposed green spaces can be secured in the event of market changes and, for example, Network Rail do not occupy all of the office space and it instead becomes a mass storage facility.
- The panel commends the design vision to provide stacked industry without ramps. However, key to this will be finding operators that will be content to accept the design vision and respond flexibly to their operational requirements. It cannot be assumed that this will necessarily be the case.
- The panel encourages the design team to consider alternative uses for the yards and to provide a management strategy so that they can be used for meanwhile uses, such as film screenings, outside of their normal operating hours.

The control documents

- The parameter plans and design code must be robust enough to safeguard the delivery of the aspirations for the masterplan as illustrated in the design team's information and drawings. Given the potential 15-year delivery period, a worst case scenario of a market that supports, for example, the delivery of light industrial in place of the proposed leisure use must be considered and illustrated for planning officers.
- Further work is needed on the parameter plans to reduce the extent of flexibility permitted in regard to the buildings' height and massing. Consideration should be given to how the site will be viewed from the Greenway.
- Similarly, greater control is needed over the yards in the parameter plans, to ensure that how they will be delivered and used will meet the design team's aspiration for the site.
- The control documents should safeguard the character of Bazalgette Yards to ensure that what is delivered will meet the design team's aspirations, whether it is the intended leisure use or light industrial reaching to a height of 40 metres. The worst case scenario should be considered and presented to officers.
- The provision of gaps between the buildings in Zone A, along the Greenway and Bazalgette Way, should be a 'must' within the design code. The panel suggests that a linear parameter should be added to the length of the building, to provide some flexibility, while also ensuring permeability along this edge.
- The panel encourages the design team to increase its target and aim to achieve 25 per cent green roofs.



Movement and circulation

- Further clarification is needed regarding the movement and circulation of heavy goods vehicles around the site at all times of the day, given that industrial operations will likely be 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- The knock-on effect of an increase in the number of heavy goods vehicles on the neighbourhoods in the surrounding area should also be considered and a strategy put in place to manage potential conflicts with other vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.
- Details should be provided on how heavy goods vehicles will be separated from pedestrians and cyclists, particularly in the Bow Works area, where workers may choose to cycle/walk to work.
- Consideration should be given to an overall servicing strategy for the masterplan and particularly with regard to refuse collection, to avoid additional large vehicles accessing the site if, for example, all of the individual tenants had their own refuse arrangements. In particular, consideration should be given to blocks in Zone A, adjacent to the Greenway, to ensure that an excessive number of vehicles do not use Bazalgette Way.
- Thought should also be given to strategies for concierge, management and maintenance, as well as lighting and wayfinding, to ensure that it is easy for visitors to navigate around the site throughout all phases of the development and on completion of the masterplan.

Public realm and landscape

- The panel supports the public realm and landscape proposals, but requests that details be provided to officers outlining the timing for the delivery of each area and how that fits in with the phased delivery of the buildings, as well as details on who will deliver it.
- A commitment should be made to the number of trees to be planted on the site, to support the aspirations shown in the illustrations.
- The panel supports the design team's aspiration to widen the towpath, to provide welcome moments of respite with the proposed new seating, as well as a sense of openness and dense greening with the new riparian edge and planted embankment.



- Given Transport for London's requirement for a three-metre access area around its assets, further drawings should be provided to officers to show the density of planting that can realistically be achieved on the embankment above the towpath, and also the acoustic box wall in its bare, non-planted state.
- Confirmation is needed that the irregular shaped areas of public realm between buildings will be safeguarded from being 'squared off and built over', to give officers confidence that the public realm delivered will meet the amount of greening aspired to in the illustrations.
- A detailed section through the north edge of the site, including the Greenway, should be provided to officers to clarify how both the Greenway and Bazalgette Lane will be animated and used.
- The panel feels that Red Rose Circus has the potential to become an attractive public space. Further drawings should be provided to officers to show how the space will look and feel during the day and in the evening, given its close proximity to a busy road. The panel suggests that additional greening should be provided in case it is not as festive as hoped.
- Further clarity is needed on what is public and what is private space, including which streets and yards will be gated and their proposed days and times of closure.

Architectural quality

- The scale of industrial buildings can be overwhelming and careful treatment of the street elevations will be essential to creating human-scale spaces. The required human-scale of the buildings should be defined, with the need for façade articulation specified within the control documents.
- This could include a requirement for façade grids that support this or, alternatively, the details of reference façades could be described as well as illustrated within the code, to enable design teams to achieve the intended character of the buildings.
- The panel supports the use of colour to add interest to the façade treatment. Further details should be provided to officers on the texture of the proposed materials.



Environmental sustainability

- The design code should provide details on expectations and requirements for external comfort and weather protection. Using analysis of environmental conditions, including conditions created by the building envelopes within the parameter plans, the design code should ensure that spill out and dwell spaces within the public realm are located in sunny, comfortable locations, to provide year-round comfort.

Next steps

- The panel encourages the design team to develop the designs and control documents further, taking into account their comments and in consultation with planning officers.

