

APPENDIX 5. Quality Review Panel Report

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Haringey Quality Review Panel

Report of Chair's Review Meeting: Drapers' Almshouses

Wednesday 15 June 2022

Video conference

Panel

Peter Studdert (chair)

Tim Pitman

Attendees

John McRory	London Borough of Haringey
Elisabetta Tonazzi	London Borough of Haringey
Richard Truscott	London Borough of Haringey
Suzanne Kimman	London Borough of Haringey
Sarah Carmona	Frame Projects
Joe Brennan	Frame Projects

Apologies / report copied to

Rob Krzyszkowski	London Borough of Haringey
Robbie McNaugher	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.

Report of Chair's Review Meeting
15 June 2022
HQRPB8_ Drapers' Almshouses

1. Project name and site address

Drapers' Almshouses, Edmanson's Close, Bruce Grove, London N17 6XD

2. Presenting team

Mark Imms	Turner and Townsend
Polly Damen	d+b studios
Pippa Nisbet	JLL Inc
Paul Crisp	Smith Jenkins

3. Aims of the Quality Review Panel meeting

The Quality Review Panel provides impartial and objective advice from a diverse range of experienced practitioners. This report draws together the panel's advice and is not intended to be a minute of the proceedings. It is intended that the panel's advice may assist the development management team in negotiating design improvements where appropriate and, in addition, may support decision-making by the Planning Committee, in order to secure the highest possible quality of development.

4. Planning authority briefing

The site is located to the north eastern side of Bruce Grove and accessed from Edmanson's Close. The almshouses are laid out around three sides of a rectangular green space with short detached wings to either side, fronting Bruce Grove. The housing units are owned by the Drapers' Almshouse, a charitable housing provider, and provide accommodation for the elderly. Most units are empty, with many of the residents decanted to other properties. The almshouses are Grade II statutorily-listed and located within the Bruce Castle Conservation Area, within which the almshouses are considered an Important Frontage.

The site has a PTAL of 5 and there is existing informal parking around the perimeter of the green space. The surrounding area consists of predominantly residential land uses, in the form of terrace houses and low-rise flats, together with some commercial uses and the Grade II statutorily-listed former Tottenham Magistrates' Court to the rear of the site.

The proposal is for redevelopment, consisting of the amalgamation, extension and adaptation of the existing almshouses to provide a total of 48 dwellings, comprising: 26 family houses; 16 new-build studios and one bed apartments; four new-build two bed apartments, one new-build three bed almshouse; a two bed refurbished gatehouse; and retention of the existing chapel.

Officers seek the panel's views on the scheme's design quality.



5. Quality Review Panel's views

Summary

The panel welcomes the opportunity to review the proposed scheme for Drapers' Almshouses as it continues to evolve. It will be an important development for the borough; the proposals are moving forward well, and represent a substantial amount of work by the client and project team. The panel is warmly supportive of the scheme, and of the way that the project team have responded to feedback from the two previous reviews – held in person on 4 March 2020 (including a site visit) and online on 16 December 2020. It supports the scale of the proposals, the refurbishment of the chapel, the extension of the almshouses and the adjustments to the infill building on Bruce Grove.

However, there are still some aspects of the proposals that would benefit from some further consideration. These include the arrangements for cycle parking, the entrance sequences, and circulation layout within the new-build elements. The scheme would also benefit from a greater level of articulation and detail within the elevations of the new buildings, and from further clarity and control of the landscaped area in front of the new apartment building.

The design team will need to negotiate a careful balance between heritage requirements and energy efficient design; this should be undertaken in cooperation with Haringey officers. The panel would also welcome greater clarity of intention within the drawings in terms of the technical design of the development, which should include showing elements like air source heat pumps and photovoltaic panels within the drawings. The panel also highlights the importance of producing additional three-dimensional (CGI) images to show the detail of all of the new-build elements, and the relationships between the new buildings and the existing buildings.

Landscape proposals

- The panel feels that the design team has responded well to feedback about the landscape design. The relationship between public and private realms has improved, especially at the interface of the rear of the almshouses and the new-build blocks. The communal space is a good location for play space and the panel thinks that this could potentially be further reinforced.
- It questions whether the issue of cycle parking has been fully resolved and notes that the requirement for residents of the almshouses to carry their cycles through the house to the rear garden might be problematic due to the dimensions and angles of some of the interior spaces. It notes that while it may not be suitable to provide a separate external route to the rear gardens, additional communal cycle parking could be accommodated within the front courtyard.



- The drawings need further clarity in terms of the relationship of the car parking spaces to the front of the almshouses, as they currently show the parking spaces very close to the front of the almshouses, and this may not be correct.

Refurbished almshouses

- The panel warmly supports the careful approach to the refurbishment and selective extension of the existing almshouses. A reduced number of two-storey extensions is a good strategy to optimise the accommodation provided.

Chapel building

- The proposed refurbishment of the chapel building works well; the panel supports the detailed approach to this part of the scheme.

New-build corner buildings

- The panel considers that the broad principles for the new-build corner buildings seem sensible. Some concerns remain about the entrance sequence from the exterior to the individual front doors internally.
- The panel understands that a 'quieter' architectural treatment has been adopted in response to previous panel comments, but it would encourage some further consideration of the details to enliven the elevations, while avoiding pastiche. This could include a strong coping detail to the parapet, and more substantial eaves, incorporating a good drip detail to avoid staining. The panel wonders whether a material contrast with some red brick elements could also provide some greater depth and interest.
- The panel would encourage the design team to produce additional CGI images to show the detail of the new-build elements, and their relationship with the existing buildings on site. Carefully worked three-dimensional images will bring the drawings to life, and can demonstrate the shadow, depth and life of the elevations.

New-build infill building – adjacent to Bruce Grove

- The proposal for the new-build infill building seems to be very sensitive. The scale looks good and the orientation and design of the block are successful, opening up the entrance and providing a clear route to the apartment building at the rear.
- The primary frontage onto Bruce Grove – essentially the side gable of the building, due to its orientation – would benefit from another level of detail and richness in the architectural expression, to enliven this important frontage.



- As noted above, additional CGI images are required to show the detail of the new buildings and their relationship with existing buildings adjacent.

New-build apartment building

- The design of the new-build apartment has generally come together well, although some concerns remain about the interior of the block, in terms of the configuration and quality of corridors. A simplified approach to circulation, perhaps through flipping the location of the core and the corridor, would improve the ground floor plan.
- Concern also remains about the approach to the main entrance from the direction of Bruce Grove. The panel notes that the dog-leg pathway to the entrance relies upon low boundary treatments for visibility, and is vulnerable to residents planting tall hedges which would block off the view to the entrance. Further consideration should be given to the soft and hard landscaping and its management.
- The panel supports the approach to the architectural expression of the building, and it would encourage further consideration of opportunities to achieve a greater depth and articulation of the elevational treatment through careful design and detailing. High quality materials and construction details will be very important.
- As noted above, additional CGI images are required to show the detail of the new buildings and their relationship with existing buildings adjacent.

Environmentally sustainable design

- The technical aspects of achieving the required environmental and energy standards through retrofitting the existing listed almshouses should be developed in consultation with the Council's Climate Change Officer.
- For example, the approach to retrofitting or replacing the windows in the existing almshouses will require careful attention, as there is a difficult trade-off between heritage and sustainability considerations. If more efficient windows can be achieved within the scheme then there will be a significant benefit for the residents in terms of future running costs.
- Increasing the biodiversity of the site is welcomed; the proposed provision of a pond to the rear of the site is a positive move.
- Clarity in the plans, elevations and images of the scheme is needed, to show the location and integration of technical design elements, such as air source



heat pumps and photovoltaic panels. These are currently not shown in the drawings; more detail is needed to ensure that these elements will not be detrimental to the visual quality of the overall scheme.

Next steps

- The Quality Review Panel is delighted with the way that the scheme has progressed, and it looks forward to seeing the proposals come to fruition. Some comments on the details of the scheme remain, but the panel feels that these can be addressed in consultation with officers.

