

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham



Design Review Panel Notes

**Lavender Court,
168-178 Westway W12 0SA**

Tuesday 13th June 2017

Panel	LBHF	Architects and Agents
Robin Partington - Chair Andrew Barnett Nigel Bidwell Dan Burr Gary Colleran Fred Pilbrow Charles Wagner Will Wimshurst	Davina Barton Paul Goodacre Raj Satheesan	Victoria Bullock – Barton Willmore Paul Wellings-Longmore - Hunters

1. MAIN ISSUES:

1.	Potential to enhance the Wormholt and Old Oak common conservation area
2.	Timescale for planning application submission
3.	Explanation of the architecture and façade
4.	Affordable housing
5.	Size of site
6.	Use of external walkways and quality of accommodation
7.	Access to site off Westway
8.	Proximity of balconies/living room windows and privacy/overlooking
9.	Ancillary space
10.	Level change of circa 3m across the site
11.	Access to the amenity space and affect on privacy
12.	Pedestrian access to the site
13.	Parking provision/car-free development
14.	Building heights along the A40
15.	Height of nearby Savoy Circus development
16.	Plant location
17.	Materials planned

18.	Trees protection zones on the site
19.	Tree locations on the site
20.	Gardens on lower ground floor
21.	Number of units in existing building

2. SUMMARY:

The Panel thanked the applicants team for their presentation which had generated some interesting conversation amongst members of the panel. It is acknowledged that this is a difficult site. The various constraints including a significant change in level across the site, responding to the harsh environment of the A40, the single point of access and servicing issues combined with the proposed programme to the submission of a detailed planning application leave little time to craft a scheme. We appreciate that the scheme has come to DRP early in the process. However, there was a lack of information for the Panel to comment on.

The following comments are therefore confined to issues relating to the approach to the design and the fundamentals of the design concept presented at the Review, and does not discuss the design of the proposed elevations as these did not form part of the presentation.

The configuration of the building blocks and the quality of the scheme overall is of concern. The proposed external access routes even with the possibility of them being glazed and enclosed is of concern. Circulation routes would pass close to windows of living spaces and kitchens, they are overly long and inefficient with dead spaces. The Panel believe this would not be an efficient diagram and would create an institutional feel rather than a development where a strong sense of community could thrive. The proposed configuration of accommodation creates an inefficient wall to floor ratio which further raises concern, together with a vertical circulation strategy that results in a lift to flat ratio which is very high and likely to carry with it significant running costs going forward for the ongoing management and maintenance of the development.

The Panel felt that the cores shown were very inefficient and the overall lift provision is excessive. It should be possible to reduce the lift provision to two to provide a very good service to this number of apartments leaving spare capacity in case of failure of one of the units, significantly reducing costs, without affecting quality or reliability of service.

There are separate tenures proposed, but most RSLs accept the shared use of lifts / cores between social rented and shared equity accommodation, presenting an opportunity to reconfigure the cores into a central location, resulting in a far more efficient and effective layout with significantly less circulation.

The close proximity between the windows of some units may/will lead to a lack of privacy and overlooking, which is also of concern, not just between units but also from circulation routes. The Panel ask that such issues are designed out or mitigated where possible.

The scheme as presented would require 43 families to walk past the bin store and plant area upon entering the site, which is not very welcoming or community spirited. The Panel urge that the scheme should be re-examined to provide a better sense of arrival, looking at alternative solutions for the servicing of the buildings and site from the A40, whilst still working within the constraints of the site access point. Solutions may lie in reconsidering some of the constraints including the removal of the large lime tree, for the benefit of the scheme as a whole. The release of a major constraint might lead to better solutions in general, including a better quality of landscape across the site mitigating the loss of the tree.

Open space on the site is partially provided for in the courtyard to the eastern edge. This space has a turning circle and four disabled parking spaces. The Panel question whether all four are needed? There is a nearby bus stop. Could this space be released for better amenity provision and a reduced dependency on private vehicles? The Panel felt that the garden space to the west might also struggle to work due to the configuration of surrounding units and balcony spaces immediately adjacent to and overlooking/overlooked by the garden. The garden space feels residual and is isolated and difficult to get to.

The proposed heights of the building are not overly aggressive, and it might be possible to consider an extra floor on the/a block at north end of the site if it could release pressure on the south of the site and help to unlock some of the problems inherent in the current scheme.

The time constraints imposed by the client for the submission of a detailed planning application are clearly unrealistic. The scheme needs more time to develop to ensure a much better balanced solution is secured, and one that creates a far stronger community spirit. Other diagrams which were discussed amongst the Panel at the Review need to be considered: They include-

- North/south block
- A 'T'-shaped block
- Two adjacent blocks
- An 'l'-shaped block

The Panel urge the applicants to challenge some of the identified constraints, releasing opportunities to create a more effective and efficient diagram and a far better quality and layout of accommodation. The long external corridors create an institutional feel and waste valuable space. A tighter more efficient plan form could potentially release funds to spend on the accommodation and make it a better place to live.