

## REPORT OF THE LEWISHAM DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

Name **Leegate Shopping Centre, Lee Green**

Status **Pre-application : Third Review**

Review Date 24 September 2014

Issue Date 6 October 2014

In attendance:

Developer **St Mowden**  
Killian Morris

Design & Planning Team  
Architects **McCreanor Lavington**  
Richard Lavington  
Ken Thompson

Landscape Architects **East**  
Oren Ezuz

Planning Consultant **Deloitte**  
Jo Dennis-Jones

Panel Members Keith Williams (Chair)  
Ben van Bruggen (Deputy Chair)  
Phil Coffey  
Elaine Toogood

Lewisham Officers Gemma Barnes : principal project officer – growth team  
Monique Wallace : case officer  
Rachel Jones : principal urban designer

This report forms the response of Lewisham Design Review Panel (LDRP) to the presentation of the project, Committee Room 3, Catford Civic Suite, Catford.

### THE SITE AND ITS CONTEXT

Lee Green is the eighth largest of the nine major and district town centres within the borough. The existing Leegate Centre is a 1960's shopping centre and office building, multi-storey car park and former petrol station located within Lee Green. The Leegate Centre is situated at the junction of Burnt Ash Road and Eltham Road, the main A20 connecting Lewisham, central London, and the south-east motorway network.

The site area which is some 1.53 hectares, has a PTAL rating of 4, is not within a Conservation Area, does not encompass any Listed Buildings or areas of archaeological priority. The site is located within a Flood Zone. The Lee Manor Conservation Area is close by to the south of the site. The northern boundary of the site is adjacent to the London Borough of Greenwich. Several listed buildings are located nearby.

### **STATUS OF THE PROJECT**

The project is a returning scheme 3<sup>rd</sup> review, the previous reviews having taken place on March and July 2014. The applicant team stated that they expect to submit a detailed planning application during November 2014.

### **PROJECT SUMMARY**

The project involves the comprehensive redevelopment of the existing site and buildings to create a mixed use scheme, replacing the existing Leegate Shopping Centre, on an urban plot bounded by Burnt Ash Road, Leyland Road, Carston Road and Eltham Road.

The architects explained that the project uses were broadly the same as presented at second review and comprise of the following:

- |         |              |                           |
|---------|--------------|---------------------------|
| • A1    | Supermarket  | 7036m <sup>2</sup> (NIA)  |
| • A1-A3 | Other Retail | 2600m <sup>2</sup> (NIA)  |
| • A4    | Pub          | 618m <sup>2</sup> (NIA)   |
| • D1    | Community    | 156m <sup>2</sup> (NIA)   |
| • D1    | Education    | 187m <sup>2</sup> (NIA)   |
| • D2    | Gym          | 1,539m <sup>2</sup> (NIA) |

### **Residential Development**

Circa 229 residential units in a range of tenures and types, including ground level entry family units.

Residential parking is provided in a basement level accessed from Leyland Road. The number of parking spaces provided was not stated.

The buildings range in height from 2-10 storeys, with the tallest building having reduced in scale by one level from 11 to 10 storeys since second review.

### **PRESENTATION**

The architects' presentation centred on addressing the main issues raised during the second review (July 2014) and the subsequent Panel report. The main issues presented included:

- The affordable and shared ownership blocks are proposed to be located in the most southern blocks along Leyland Road and not the block above the car park and service entrance which could be considered a spot for 'poor doors'.
- The elevational treatment to Burnt Ash Road has a horizontal emphasis with wider windows to emphasise looking out not down.
- The elevational treatment to Leyland Road has a vertical emphasis with longer windows to emphasise looking out over the parkland setting of the Leybridge Estate.
- There is a strong architecturally framed ground floor emphasis to tie the whole scheme together.

- The arcade which connects Burnt Ash Road to Eltham Road is to be viewed as an architectural space, similar in approach and treatment to the exterior – a critical area to the success of the scheme.

### **DESIGN REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS**

The Panel continued to be very positive toward the developing scheme in particular applauding what it considers to be a skilful and extremely well crafted response to a difficult urban typology. The project is in an advanced stage of refinement nevertheless certain aspects are yet to be fully and satisfactorily resolved.

The Panel set out their comments below:

#### **Scale and Massing and Architectural Strategy**

The Panel remained broadly supportive of the finalised massing strategy. Resolution still needs to be arrived at regarding the junction of the 'tower' element and the northern block along Burnt Ash Road, which to the Panel, seemed unconvincing. 3D physical models would have greatly helped the Panel's understanding and the architects' design resolution of the project.

The Panel noted at both previous reviews that further work was still needed to be done to test the environmental aspects of the relationship between the taller elements and the tendency of the southern blocks to cast shadow both onto the communal amenity space and the apartment blocks situated to the north. The analysis does not seem to have progressed beyond diagrammatic stage and this aspect of the project remains to be finally resolved and will be subject to test by the LPA.

At first review, the Panel recorded that the housing 'wrapping the supermarket' along Carston Close and Leyland Road, would necessarily be single aspect. The Panel noted that this element should be acceptable in principle for the contribution that the buildings would make to the architecture of block, and to the provision of an integrated approach to the street scene. The Panel felt that these units had been developed very effectively with careful and appropriate consideration given to private amenity space, 2 balconies and a roof terrace and that the separation from the street edge by section was an accomplished design solution.

The junction of the south west corner of the housing along Carston Road and the Burnt Ash Road block did not seem to integrate effectively with the main larger block, and in the Panel's view needs further consideration.

#### **Layout**

The Panel generally supported the layouts as presented but questioned the two isolated flats recently inserted at the car park level and which are to be serviced by the southern core on Burnt Ash Road. The Panel felt that this seemed incongruous given the clarity of the design approach to the project and more importantly appeared isolated and generally providing questionable quality housing accommodation. Concern was also expressed with regard to the two duplex units along Leyland Road which did not seem to have level access to enter.

#### **Elevational Treatment**

At second review, the Panel were very supportive of the elevations along Leyland and Eltham Roads but were less convinced by the elevation along Burnt Ash Road elevation particularly the area at the Tower. At second review, the Panel had remarked that the west elevation on Burnt Ash Road, including the faceted tower building, remains problematic. There was considerable discussion concerning the proportion of these

elevations which in the Panel's view lacked clarity in design as to whether they were intended to carry a vertical or horizontal emphasis, resulting in a somewhat squat composition. This situation was clarified by analysis and explanation at presentation, however given that the tower element has been reduced in height that reading of the composition in the Panel's view remains, at least in so far as it appears from the presentation drawings.

The references to Geurst & Schulze's mixed use development in Zuiderspoor Parkstad Rotterdam was cited as a precedent for the façade treatment and was regarded as appropriate and helpful in explain the ambition and qualitative elements of the elevational detail.

The retail car parking occupies virtually a complete floor above the supermarket, forming a slot in the facades. In the latest design, the cill levels have been raised to better obscure the cars and in particular the headlight spread when used at night. The Panel felt that its previous concerns had largely been resolved.

The above comments notwithstanding, the Panel were broadly supportive of the approach to the elevational composition.

### **Street Level Environment**

The Panel again noted that supermarkets do not generally have active frontages and supported the strategy of wrapping the supermarket with smaller scale retail and town housing to form a varied street scene.

Concern had been expressed with the potential for vent grilles, screens, barriers etc associated with major car parks could intrude unduly into the street scene, which had been developed and refined as the designs had developed further. The latest designs with brickwork panels forming the screens as integral elements in the facades was welcomed by the Panel.

The Panel had previously expressed concern at the concentration of all major service bays, car park egress/ingress and the like in the SW corner which penalises a considerable proportion of the façade, public realm and pedestrian experience at this point. The Panel suggested that the design team consider breaking up this concentration and a re-distribution of these service elements within the development to lessen the impact on the important Burnt Ash Road street scene.

The architects explained that they had relocated the residential car park entrance. The Panel supported the architects' ambition to combine the service and main store car park entrances, noting that confirmation is awaited from the project's transport consultants that this will be viable.

### **Tenure/Long Term Functional Viability**

The developers explained that they had considered the long term function of this site and are confident that a site designated as a district centre with an associated car park will provide accommodation for future/alternative uses if required. The layout and configuration of the ground floor commercial units result in a wrapped box that can be accessed from the main streets.

The developers remarked that although the leases of the apartments will be much longer and therefore to be on a different cycle to that of commercial supermarket leases, typically 25-30 years, they were confident that the large floor plate of the proposed supermarket could accommodate a variety of alternative future uses (retail and/or leisure) to ensure the long term viability of the development.

### **Residents Amenity Space at Podium Level**

The arrangement of the communal garden at podium level has developed and now includes six separate zones and four playspaces. The Panel noted the development of the communal garden areas to include linkages to both sides, which the Panel supported.

The Panel accepted the principle of the strategy proposed for the podium deck, landscape and general maintenance including access for staff, deliveries and equipment as indicated on the landscape architects diagrams. This will need further articulation and development at planning application stage. At podium level each block also has its own shared garden. There are a number of gates which can connect between if required however Housing associations usually want separate gardens for management & maintenance issues.

The planting structure consists of lawns and planted areas and generous terraces are set in the planted areas to create defensible space between them and the communal garden areas. The Panel were concerned that the play spaces shown on the podium would probably require an artificial surface and therefore there will be less grassed area than shown on the plans, but were reassured by the applicants response to integrate the play spaces with green landscaping. The landscape architects had also set out a planting strategy including an outline of the plant species proposed.

At second review it was noted that certain elements of the supermarket plant (e.g. chillers) had to be located at or near the podium garden level. The Panel remarked that this would need careful design, visual and aural screening so as not cause nuisance to the nearby apartments and will need to be developed to the satisfaction of the LPA at planning submission stage.

It was not apparent at third review that this had been resolved.

### **Public Realm and Landscape Strategy**

As noted at earlier reviews, the concept of acknowledging the existing crossroads at the junction of the major roads with the taller building of the new development acting as the visual anchor seems more realistic in terms of place marking, and setting back the building to create street level public realm is welcomed.

### **Public Arcade**

As noted in previous reviews and acknowledged by the design team, the arcade/mall cannot be included as public realm since it will be in private ownership and will most likely be gated/closed at night, but the square (forecourt) gives it a greater sense of presence, and helping to address earlier concerns with regard to connectivity.

The concept for the arcade of a roofed external space however appears to have been diminished in the latest designs, and somewhat resembles a standard shopping mall as opposed to the designer's ambition of a classic mall model (e.g. Burlington Arcade). The Panel remarked that the travelators positioned approximately in the middle of the mall, divide the space uncomfortably both laterally and axially, preventing the concept of a classic mall model (Burlington Arcade) being achievable. The Panel suggested that the travelators be repositioned and completely embedded within the supermarket curtilage/mall façade to open up the full width of the mall space and ensure both ends are visually interconnected.

### **Diurnal/Nocturnal Aspects of the Public Realm**

The approach to the lighting strategy for the public realm was again regarded as a positive development. However the Panel noted that this was only partially formed and the designs need to take account of both diurnal and nocturnal environment and need to consider how the project will provide a safe and welcoming environment through day and night-time cycle and across the seasons. This should take into account the lighting of the buildings, public realm and communal spaces. These need to be generated to demonstrate at planning submission stage that the quality of light and issues of security have been addressed.

The panel recommended the preparation of night time CGI images to demonstrate the lighting principles.

### **Community Facilities**

As discussed at both the first and second review, the Panel and the LPA regard the appropriate high quality of community facilities as an important element of any comprehensive redevelopment of this site, and the promoters have yet to propose an appropriately scaled facility. The Panel noted the comment from the design team that dialogue with community is ongoing to determine the appropriate form of the facilities. The Panel felt it most important that the siting which should be prominent and easily accessible, and the minimum scale (currently stated as 156m<sup>2</sup>) of the community facility are all irrevocably secured at planning stage.

### **Materials + Detail**

The Panel remain supportive and enthusiastic as to the approach to the detailed treatment of the elevations, the proposed deployment of materials, and the materials palate.

The emerging quality and general direction of the landscape detailing was also welcomed but will need further elaboration and clarification in the run in to the planning submission and agreed with LPA officers.

### **Securing Quality of the Project**

The Panel stressed the importance of establishing the appropriate level of design, material and constructional quality for the project. At planning application stage the quality of the detailing needs to be demonstrated through large scale drawings 1:20 and 1:5 of key elements of the building and landscape, and should be accompanied by material panels and the full range of brick samples, which should be secured as part of any planning approval. The Panel remarked that the design architects should be retained throughout the project in order to deliver a quality scheme.

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

The designers stated their intentions toward sustainability and energy use targets for the development as follows:

- Housing Elements code for sustainable Homes Level 4
- The balance of the development BREEAM 'Excellent'

The standards comply in principle with LPA policy. These aspects need to be demonstrated in detail in support of the planning application.

## **LOCAL AUTHORITY PLANNING OFFICERS' VIEW**

The Local Authority have raised the following detailed issues that need to be addressed before the planning application is made:

- The provision of public toilets needs to be clarified
- The installation of glazed shop fronts is necessary and will be secured by conditions/s106.
- The provision for a taxi/cash point area is still not shown on the drawings.
- A scaled model of the proposal is necessary to demonstrate what the scheme will look like in terms of scale, height, mass and the podium treatment.
- Technical drawings showing the feasibility of widening the footpath on Leyland Road is still required.
- Public realm/landscaping needs more development in terms of detailed design before an application is submitted

## **CONCLUSION**

In summary the Panel fully understand the complexity and challenges of this project and very much admire the design strategies being pursued.

The height, scale and massing proposed is generally endorsed as is the integrated mixed-use model for the entire urban block. The emerging detail of the project is encouraging and is much more explicit in its development as presented at this review, and the approach to the design and materiality of the public realm has improved significantly. The Panel would restate their comments at all reviews regarding the provision of high quality community facilities, which are regarded as an important element of any comprehensive redevelopment and are not yet defined, along with the final detailing of the landscape and public realm scheme which at present are aspirational rather than explicitly specified.

The Panel felt that the design of the project has been developed very positively and are pleased to offer strong support for the project subject to commentary herein and detailed resolution of the final issues with the LPA officers.

This report constitutes the formal response of Lewisham Design Review Panel to the project as presented at review 24 September 2014 and supersedes any previous comments made in any earlier consideration of the project.

Yours sincerely



**Keith R Williams RIBA MRIAI FRSA: Chair LDRP**