



Old Kent Road Community Review Panel

Report of review meeting: Rich Industrial Estate

Monday 26 October 2020
Video conference via Zoom

Attendees

Gurmeet Sian (chair)
Lucy Atkinson
Tyreece Asamoah
Hugh Balfour
Hazel Flynn
James Glancy
Muyi Kazim
Aaron Mo
Saidat Oketunde
Victoria Oluwables
Peter Warren
Madison Westwood

Kiran Chauhan	Team Leader, Old Kent Road, LB Southwark
Tim Cutts	Senior Regeneration Manager, Old Kent Road, LB Southwark
Colin Wilson	Head of Regeneration, Old Kent Road, LB Southwark
Tom Bolton	Panel Manager, Frame Projects
Penny Nakan	Panel Coordinator, Frame Projects

Observer

Wing Lau	Team Leader, Old Kent Road, LB Southwark
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Apologies / copied to

Liz Awoyemi	London Borough of Southwark
Alicia Chaumard	Planning Officer, Old Kent Road, LB Southwark
Shelene Byer	Old Kent Road Community Review Group

Confidentiality

As a public organisation the London Borough of Southwark 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.

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1. Project name

Phase 3 of Rich Industrial Estate, Crimscott Street and Willow Walk, London SE1 5TE

2. Presenting team

Mark Smith	London Square
Sam Harvey	AHMM
James Santer	AHMM
Katherine Storr	AHMM
Paul Henry	DP9
Edward Law	DP9

3. Planning authority's views

The scheme presented to the Community Review Panel was Phase 3 of the Rich Industrial Estate. Planning permission was granted in December 2016 for comprehensive redevelopment of the site, to provide a total of 406 homes and 19,468 sqm of commercial floor space. Phase 3 of the approved scheme consists of 130 units, 2,524 sqm of commercial floorspace and 2,943 sqm of self-storage floorspace (for Access Self Storage, currently on site). Since the Old Kent Road Opportunity Area was allocated, the applicant has revisited Phase 3 of the scheme, and now proposes 198 homes (including 78 affordable homes), increased levels of commercial floorspace and increased self-storage floorspace. The scheme includes buildings with individual architectural approaches, named 'The Twins', 'The Fold' and 'The Wave', unified by a common base. Public realm improvements are proposed at ground floor level, including the enlivening of Crimscott Street and Willow Walk.

Southwark Council asked for the panel's views, in particular, on whether:

- the self-storage facility workspace offer, doubling the size of that approved, will provide viable and attractive facility for the Old Kent Road;
- the increased height of the proposal is acceptable, from a maximum of 9 storeys as approved, to 14 storeys, particularly its relationship with surrounding buildings and in views from Page's Walk Conservation Area;
- the three different styles complement one another and create a comfortable relationship to the surrounding townscape;
- the site can accommodate the proposed additional 68 homes successfully, in terms of design standards and the provision of balconies, play space and communal amenity space.



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4. Community Review Panel's views

Summary

The panel is generally supportive of the Phase 3 development proposals for the Rich Industrial Estate. Mixed views were expressed on the increase in the maximum height from 9 to 14 storeys – but all agreed on the need to consult residents of Page's Walk on this. Overall, the panel supports the architectural approaches proposed for the three elements of the development. Most, but not all, panel members support the design of The Wave. The panel also suggests refinements to the façade and balcony designs for The Twins. Concerns were raised about the lack of family accommodation, which is much needed in the Old Kent Road Area. The panel would also like to see flats with generous space standards. For example, it is important that flats are designed to enable residents to work from home. In terms of sustainability, more should also be done to improve the development's energy efficiency rating, and increase cycle parking. The panel notes that commercial units in new developments are often unlet, long after completion. It is pleased to hear that the applicant intends to prioritise their fit-out and marketing, to ensure these units do not remain empty. The panel emphasises the importance of providing enough green outdoor space to serve the density of the proposed development – including play space for children of all ages. It would also be valuable for the scheme to contribute to improving play space in Spa Park. These comments are expanded below.

Height and massing

- The panel expresses differing views on the impact of the increased height of The Twins in views from the Page's Walk Conservation Area. Some members feel that it will create an undesirable addition. Others consider that it can be acceptable, but emphasise the need for a design that complements the terraced houses on Page's Walk.
- The panel also emphasise the importance of consulting Page's Walk residents, and ensure their views influence the final decision on the massing and architecture of The Twins.

Architecture

- Overall, the panel supports the architectural approaches proposed for the three elements of the development. However, there is some doubt about the aesthetic impact of The Wave, including whether its design sits comfortably alongside the remaining elements of the development and whether it appears of lower quality than the other two buildings.
- The panel suggests that more variation in the façade design of The Twins, for example changes in brickwork style, would help to celebrate it to a greater extent as a landmark building.
- The panel also questions whether the design of projecting balconies on The Twins, both whether they appear too long and narrow in views from ground



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level, and whether their design provides the optimum area of useable private amenity space.

Apartment types

- The panel questions the decision to include only a single four-bed unit in the development, noting that a lack of family accommodation is a problem in the area.
- It asks whether there are any options available to increase the provision of larger units, including considering the addition of extra floors to the development.
- It also raises questions about the significant number of one-bed apartments included – a total of 35 – and asks that further thought is given to who will occupy these.
- One-bed flats are more likely, for example, to be occupied by people with mobility issues, and it will be therefore important that the development is designed to accommodate them successfully.

Residential space

- The panel asks the applicant to give further consideration to the space allocated to residential units. Although they meet minimum space standards, it suggests that the density of the scheme requires a level of ambition that goes beyond minimum requirements. The development should aim to provide the optimum amount of space for those living in a dense urban environment.
- The panel asks whether apartment designs are based on consultation with Southwark residents and other potential occupiers, to understand whether their needs are met, especially in the wake of the major changes to lifestyles caused by the Covid pandemic.
- It is important that flats are specifically designed to enable residents to work from home. The panel urges the design team to do everything possible to enable home working for residents, likely to be increasingly required post-pandemic. The needs of children should also be considered, to ensure they have space designed for them to do homework.
- The panel suggests that balconies in The Wave building appear close to those above and below. It asks for assurances that they will receive sufficient sunlight and daylight to create pleasant outdoor spaces, and that interiors will not be overshadowed by the balconies of flats above.



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Sustainability

- The panel notes that the development has an projected 'E' energy rating. It considers this to be a low level of performance for a new development, and asks that more is done to improve energy efficiency and that a rating in the higher energy efficiency bands is achieved.
- The panel asks whether more can be done to provide cycle storage facilities, setting a more ambitious target than the London Plan minimum requirement.
- A significant number of children are likely to live in the development, so storage space should be considered for cycles and scooters. Space should also be considered for cargo bikes, for families that do not drive.

Commercial units

- The panel notes that commercial units in new developments are often unlet, long after completion. It is important for the success of this scheme that the ground floor commercial units are occupied. The panel therefore strongly supports the applicant's intention to prioritise fit-out and marketing, and to ensure units do not remain empty.
- The panel feels it is important that community space is considered alongside commercial units, and that discussions are held on providing a facility that will benefit residents on lower incomes, who may not be able to afford to access commercial uses.

Amenity space

- The panel emphasises the importance of providing enough green outdoor space to serve the density of the proposed development.
- It suggests that more green space at ground level would add benefit alongside the areas available at courtyard and roof levels.
- Roof gardens provide a positive amenity for residents, but the panel asks that careful thought is given to how they will be used. It urges the design team to maximise the useability of these areas as far as possible, considering the addition of a range of different surfaces and seating, and ensuring spaces are not dominated by raised beds.
- The panel also emphasises the need for discussions with the housing association that will manage the blocks, Peabody, to ensure design intentions are aligned with the management regime they will put in place.
- The panel emphasises the need to include a range of different types of play space, catering to children of all ages, across the site, on the podium and in publicly accessible space.



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- Section 106 contributions should be secured to improve play space in Spa Park, which would benefit from investment.

Public spaces

- The panel suggests that the route between the entrances to the development on Grange Road and Willow Walk is likely to form a desire line. It will therefore be important to ensure the surfacing on this route is suited to heavier foot traffic, and that grass areas are not adversely affected.
- The panel also encourages the addition of historical interpretation, for example information boards, to communicate the distinctive history of the site to residents and to contribute to its character.

Streetscape

- The panel suggests that measures should be discussed with Southwark Council to improve pedestrian safety on Willow Walk. The street is a busy cycle Quietway, so care will be needed to avoid conflict with the increased number of pedestrians generated by the development. A controlled crossing may be required to ensure pedestrians, particularly children, can cross safely.

Next steps

The Community Review Panel asks that the issues it has raised are addressed in discussions with Southwark Council officers.

