

FRAME PROJECTS

Old Kent Road Community Review Panel

Report of review meeting: shortlisted proposals for PC World and B&M Supermarket

7 December 2020

Video conference via Zoom

Group

Gurmeet Sian (chair)

Lucy Atkinson

Hugh Balfour

Shelene Byer

Hazel Flynn

James Glancy

Aaron Mo

Saidat Oketunde

Victoria Oluwables

Peter Warren

Madison Westwood

Attendees

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| Tim Cutts | London Borough of Southwark |
| Wing Lau | London Borough of Southwark |
| Colin Wilson | London Borough of Southwark |
| Tom Bolton | Frame Projects |
| Kate Trant | Frame Projects |
| Penny Nakan | Frame Projects |

Apologies / copied to

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| Alicia Chaumard | London Borough of Southwark |
| Tyreese Asamoah | Old Kent Road Community Review Panel |
| Muyi Kazim | Old Kent Road Community Review Panel |

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.

1. Site address

PC World and B&M Supermarket, 585–613 Old Kent Road, London SE15 1LA

2. Presenting team

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| Cat Janman | London Borough of Southwark |
| Peter Spendiff | London Borough of Southwark |

3. Planning authority's briefing

The site consists of the land at 585-589 Old Kent Road (occupied by the PC World Store) and 593 Old Kent Road (B&M bargain store). The council acquired these sites in 2019 to deliver strategic infrastructure, commercial space and housing, including new council homes.

The council is now procuring architects to prepare a joint planning application to cover both sites. It received 12 submissions from practices on its architects' framework, from which it shortlisted six proposals. The scheme will deliver new council homes, with 50 per cent for social rent. The site has capacity for approximately 500 new homes and 4,000–5,000 square metres of commercial floorspace. The scheme includes a Tier 1 building at 30 storeys, and a Tier 3 building at 15 storeys. Building heights are lower on Old Kent Road. A park is proposed, as well as connections to other green spaces. There is potential for an FE college on the site.

In advance of interviewing the six shortlisted practices, Southwark officers asked the Community Review Panel for its views on the social value element required as part of each proposal. The criteria used to assess the proposals will be balanced as 70 per cent quality, 30 per cent cost. The social value element accounts for 10 of the quality criteria percentage points.

The council asked the Panel for its views on the advantages and disadvantages of the six proposals and, in particular:

- Which proposals are stronger and why?
- What is the panel's view on the council's scoring?
- How might the proposals be delivered to maximise their impact?

4. Community Review Panel's views

Summary


The panel welcomes the opportunity to review and comment on the social value proposals from the six shortlisted architectural practices for these sites, and applauds the Council's intention to social value objectives into the project at this early stage. It makes comments on the relative merits of the proposals themselves, and on the commissioning and evaluation process. Overall, it feels that the social value proposals from [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are the strongest; a combination of the two proposals would lead to a clear preferred bid. Whichever proposal is selected, the panel considers that there is a clear need for social value impact to extend beyond the contract term. The track records of practices in delivering social benefit should form part of assessment process, to provide assurance that proposals can be delivered. Careful thought should be given to creating transparent selection criteria to ensure all educational establishments and pupils have an equal opportunity to benefit from social value proposals. Opportunities offered to young people should be remunerated to allow equal access. These comments are expanded below.


Evaluation of the proposals


- The panel highlights the difficulties inherent in comparing the six proposals. Each proposal contains various similar components, but their relative value is hard to judge against the volume of activity proposed. For example, the number of mentoring hours proposed ranges from six to 302, but there is no clear basis for assessing quality.
- The panel therefore welcomes plans to assess the track records of the shortlisted practices in delivering similar social value on other projects. It feels this will enable a clearer understanding of the value of each offer. It is important to know how closely each practice is engaged at a community level to be confident that they can deliver on their proposals, and that what they deliver will be of a high quality.
- It was suggested that the percentage of the overall assessment score devoted to social value should be lower, to reflect the proportion of the overall budget that will be spent on it, and to avoid detracting from the overall weighting given to design quality.
- The panel asks that consideration is given to the long-term social value provided by the selected design team, to maximises the extent to which value will persists beyond the construction phase.
- The panel also endorses the council's planned review of its framework of architectural practices, intended to improve the way the list reflects the diversity of the area.

Engagement with schools and young people

- The panel proposes further consideration of the way local schools and organisations are selected for involvement in the scheme. This process should be fair, and should avoid disadvantaging those not involved in the winning bid.
- The panel suggests that the council should provide guidance on the schools that would benefit most from working with the winning team, and potentially produces a set of outline requirements for schools to put themselves forward for involvement. Criteria used for selection should be equitable and transparent.
- Greater detail about the nature and extent of the apprenticeships, internships and mentoring proposed is needed for full evaluation of the bids. Southwark has specifically asked for engagement with young people rather than a sole focus on employment. The panel asks for further consideration of its objectives for the outcomes of these programmes.
- The panel suggests local schools not included in any of the proposals should be considered for involvement, especially The City of London Academy (Southwark), with a high proportion of BAME pupils, and Phoenix Primary School, both of which are close to the site.
- It is essential that young people employed through the winning bid are paid. Unpaid opportunities will exclude those on lower incomes.
- The panel raises its concern that delivery of social value elements could be sub-contracted, and suggests this is explored at interview.


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- The panel places this proposal in the top two, alongside [redacted] proposal. It particularly supports the scale of the proposed skills workshops, which are likely to have a long-term impact; the inclusion of a work placement; and the overall range of local people and organisations included.
 - The panel suggests that more detail is needed to understand the plan's likely impact, including the management of the proposed £91,000 allocated to spending through local MSMEs.
 - The panel recognises the benefit of building on the practice's existing relationship with the Stephen Lawrence Trust (SLT). It asks for clarification of the reasons for the focus on SLT—whose centre is based in Lewisham—rather than, for example, the more-locally based Damilola Taylor Trust.
 - The panel asks for more information on the detail of engagement with schools and colleges, including the number of over 24 and under 24-year-olds who will benefit from the 540 hours of skills workshops.


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- The proposal includes a number of positive aspects, including the recruitment of a local BAME architectural assistant, and the channelling of spending through local MSMEs.
 - However, the panel feels that it lacks detail, and that solutions have been proposed without clearly identifying the problems they are intended to solve. For example, there is no information on why the mentoring scheme is directed at over-24 year olds, whether they will be people with particular interests or qualifications, and how they will benefit.
 - It is also difficult to evaluate the benefits provided by the proposed staff volunteering contribution, without more information on what it is intended to achieve.

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- The panel admires the [redacted] bid, and considers it to be a robust, substantial offer including a range of disciplines. It appears that local organisations have been approached in order to understand their needs and that this has resulted in a solid basis for development of the proposal.
 - The substantial hours proposed for workshops and mentoring in valuable, relevant activities—coding, engineering, architecture—are particularly valuable.
 - The panel understands that the offer of a bicycle maintenance apprenticeship is made in partnership with a local organisation. However, it suggests that this training could be more valuable in areas relevant to architecture and engineering.
 - The panel also queries whether the £62,000 subcontracting offer is ambitious enough in relation to the total value of the contract, and the fees practices will receive.

Morris+Company

- The panel considers the proposed volunteering initiative in Burgess Park to be positive, with 224 hours a significant contribution, and also welcomes the proposal to provide five young people with paid work.
- The question was raised of whether a wider range of organisations could be included, to avoid reliance on a religious charity and provide a more holistic way to involve the community.
- The panel suggests the proposal does not provide a sufficient long-term social value contribution.

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- The panel likes the range of ideas included in this proposal, and is impressed by the offer of premises at a subsidised rent, which is clearly a specific and considered proposals. The potential long-term impact of the proposals is also valuable.
 - The panel observes that this is the only bid that mentions youth centres, but that it does not name the schools the practice would work with.
 - The panel considers more information is needed about the role to be played on the design team by the Southwark resident who is mentioned.
 - Overall, the panel feels that the scale of the social value offer is lower than that offered by other bids.

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- The panel admires the proposal that 50 per cent of the design team will be from a BAME background, as well as the inclusion of a girls' school. It also supports the proposed mentoring for Ark leavers, but would welcome more detail about who this would focus on.
 - While it is good to see valuable engagement with school leavers—providing guidance and advice—the overall offer appears limited in comparison to the other bids.
 - The panel would welcome more detail on what the £19,000 allocation to funding local community champions would be used to achieve.
 - The panel is also concerned that a contribution of £5,000 to the Southwark Young Advisors' Streetbase project is not large enough to fund significant activity.
 - More information is needed on how the proposed workshops, assemblies, and work experience would be structured, and who they would be aimed at, to assess the potential benefits.
 - Overall, the panel suggests that each element of the proposal needs to be thought through in greater detail.

Next steps

The six practices will attend interviews with the council during the week beginning 14 December 2020. The Community Review Panel is available, if required, to provide further input once a bid has been selected, and design development has begun.