

**Richmond
Design Review Panel
C/o Richmond Council**

Environment and Community Services
Department
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44 York Street
Twickenham TW1 3BZ

Please ask for/reply to:



Email:



Web: www.richmond.gov.uk

Our ref: ECS/

Your ref:

Date: 20 October 2021

Neil Henderson
Gerald Eve LLP
72 Welbeck Street
London W1G 0AY

Dear Neil

**Richmond Design Review Panel:
Stag Brewery Redevelopment, Richmond, SW14**

The Panel is grateful to you and your development team for submitting your proposal to the Richmond Design Review Panel (RDRP) on Thursday 30 September 2021. In light of the Government restrictions following the coronavirus outbreak the Panel was not able visit the site and meet your team in person, however provided feedback in a virtual open session with the applicant present to hear the Panel's views. We therefore thank the applicant team for their presentation of the proposals for the redevelopment of the Stag Brewery site. This letter will remain confidential until a formal planning application has been submitted, whereupon it will appear alongside the information submitted with the application.

The former Stag Brewery is bounded by Lower Richmond Road and Mortlake High Street to the south, the River Thames and Thames Bank to the north, Williams Lane to the west and Bulls Alley to the east. The Site is split into two, by Ship Lane, however, linked by a footbridge. The eastern site is 3.1 hectares (ha) the western site 5.5 ha.

The site is occupied by a number of large modern structures associated with the previous brewing process, which ceased at the end of 2015. These are mostly functional in appearance and highly visible from the surrounding area. The exceptions to the modern structures are three Buildings of Townscape Merit (BTMs) - the Maltings (adjacent to the river at the end of Ship Lane and also designated a landmark); the former bottling building (adjacent to Mortlake High Street) and the former hotel (on the junction of Mortlake High Street and Sheen Lane). The site also includes a sports pavilion.

Existing points of gated access exist off Lower Richmond Road, at the junction with Sheen Lane and opposite Welbeck Road, Williams Lane and Ship Lane.

The site enjoys a riverside frontage with two existing slipways at Bulls Alley and adjacent to Ship Lane. A flood defence wall runs along the northern perimeter of the Site and is formed by a combination of building walls as well as site boundary walls. The site is located at the finish of the annual London (Putney – Mortlake) Boat Race and has a high profile with the public who line the embankment of the River Thames,

Background

The Panel acknowledges that the Council prepared a planning brief for the site that provides a vision for its redevelopment and regeneration, and guidelines on future uses, layout and design.

The Panel also acknowledges the complexity associated with the planning application process since the initial applications were made in 2018. Two of the applications received a positive recommendation from the Council, whilst a third to deal with highway works was refused. The original application proposed 893 residential units. The applications were then called in by the Mayor for determination and the two applications that the Council were minded to approve were amended and the highways application withdrawn. In July 2021 these applications were then refused. The amended applications comprised 1,250 residential units, a substantial increase on the earlier scheme.

We note the applicants have now agreed for the Richmond Design Review Panel to review their original scheme, and for a workshop to take place on a hybrid scheme, which would deliver 1142 residential units.

The detailed comments of the Panel have been collated as follows:

Masterplan

The Panel is generally supportive of the original masterplan but feel that there is scope to refresh this in parts, which may help with the distribution of massing.

We feel that both the GLA and hybrid schemes in views from Chiswick Bridge illustrate the visual dominance of the built form over the Maltings, a cherished heritage asset. We were supportive of measures to reduce the massing to the backdrop of the listed buildings fronting the River Thames. The three storey townhouses proposed on the original and hybrid schemes (Blocks 20, 21 and 22) appear more comfortable in terms of height than the blocks of flats.

We are supportive of additional height to the blocks in the proposed Thames Street.

We are also supportive of additional height to the cinema block (Block 01) although this should be re-examined in conjunction with the distribution of height in Thames Street.

We note that the proposed secondary school has moved around the masterplan in form and shape. We feel this is an area which could be re-examined as part of the masterplan to make more of the site and additional height and massing should be explored.

We feel the main desire line for pedestrians from the south and station along Sheen Lane towards the River Thames is obscured by the extension of Block 6, westwards

from the historic bottling building. Instead, the view corridor to the river and the Maltings is more significant and a minor adjustment to the masterplan would reap real benefits. We think it is important to draw people in and through to the river.

We feel this minor adjustment to the masterplan would also assist the consideration of the cinema block which sits rather isolated at present as a pavilion building. Consider perhaps splitting Block 2 which has quite a prominent corner. Breaking it in two would help create a better visual connection between the park and the Maltings building, and make the cinema, Block 1, more integrated. The southern part of Block 2, opposite the cinema, could then accommodate more height.

As part of this strong desire line, we feel that pedestrian improvements to crossing Mortlake High Street by removing the roundabout, would be very beneficial. The crossing by the park could still be retained and a conversation with the Highways Authority is required to secure improvements for pedestrians.

Whilst the typology of blocks is fashioned on mansions and warehouses, we do feel that more variety could be introduced into the masterplan. In our view a typical mansion block would be around 6-7 storeys while 9-10 storeys may be stretching the typology somewhat. We also feel there is opportunity to bring in more variety on those blocks that have a different use such as the already mentioned cinema block.

Public Realm and Landscaping

The Panel supports the design principles for the public realm and open spaces across the masterplan. However, whilst we understand the design principles for establishing a green link through to the River Thames and we are very supportive of this view corridor we feel the suggested adjustments highlighted above would help to make more of this by improving visual permeability and make a stronger connection with peoples' desire lines.

The Panel feels that much higher diversity and a more relaxed public realm could be considered. We acknowledge the more formal landscape design of the squares and the avenues of trees but suggest less formality to the communal open spaces to the rear of blocks and along Thames Bank.

Consider the healthy living agenda working with the community and the proposed school to create a step change in lifestyles.

We support the 'play on the way' principles for the River Thames frontage and feel this is an opportunity to celebrate the relationship with the river particularly with regards to the ecological diversity.

We support the proposed water play and water jets proposal for the Maltings Plaza and feel this public space has the potential to animate the riverfront and celebrate the connection to the annual Boat Race.

We suggest a green roof strategy be considered as part of any submission particularly for the western side of the masterplan where flat roofs are indicated.

We suggest a management and maintenance strategy be submitted for the public realm to accompany any application.

Height and Massing

The Panel were shown the CGIs of the LBRuT, GLA and Hybrid schemes as part of the views' assessment. We were of the opinion that both the GLA and Hybrid schemes were overly dominant in riverside views generally, in juxtaposition to the Maltings.

We accept the need to mitigate the harm caused to heritage assets along the river frontage and that additional height away from the river frontage could be considered.

We suggest that additional height across the masterplan as highlighted above could help in a redistribution of the massing across the centre of the site.

We feel that Blocks 8 and 10 could accommodate more height, along with Blocks 1, 2 and 6 if block 6 were realigned as highlighted above. We also feel that the block comprising the proposed secondary school could justify additional height.

However, we do feel that the Blocks 20 and 21 would benefit from a reduction in height to three storeys in line with the Hybrid scheme in view of the backdrop to the listed buildings to the River Thames frontage.

Architecture

The Panel were very supportive of the mansion block typologies proposed for the riverside blocks. These take their cues from mansion block precedents in Richmond and elsewhere in London on the River Thames. We are also supportive of the warehouse typology which is again represented on the river frontage in Richmond.

We agree that the mansion block typology generally is between 6 and 7 storeys, normally with a single core and a compact form having a consistent skyline. We agree that they should not be stepped as this would undermine their architectural integrity.

However, the Panel suggests breaking up the mansion blocks more to increase permeability and dual aspect. Some of the longer blocks look to be in excess of 80m long which feel quite out of character with the typology.

We do however, encourage more playfulness and richness in the elevations to capture the essence of their celebrated historic precedents.

Sustainability

The Panel were presented with very little information about the sustainability of the proposed development. We understand a report was submitted with the 2018 application, but requirements are changing and there is a need to push hard in relation to the Council's climate change agenda to achieve a greener borough and meet the net-zero carbon target by 2030. More details of the sustainability aspects of the buildings are needed as the scheme progresses. Also, we note the two basement car parks on the site, these will involve considerable embodied carbon and measures to reduce this should be factored in.

In terms of the landscape there is a requirement to achieve an Urban Greening Factor of 0.4 and details of how this is to be achieved should form part of any submission.

Moving Forward

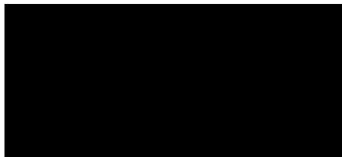
The Panel is pleased to see that the proposal has been submitted for a review at this time as the original application was submitted before the Panel was set up. We acknowledge the enormous amount of work the team have put into this scheme over the past 5 years and understands the Design Review represented an opportunity to re-appraise the masterplan.

Whilst we were generally supportive of the underlying principles of the masterplan we feel there are opportunities to refresh some elements and in particular a redistribution of the

massing. It is a very ambitious programme, and we feel it is important that the masterplan be reviewed in light of the comments above, and further developed in the continuous conversation with the Council as part of the pre-application process. We also suggest a further conversation with the Highways Authority over measures to improve pedestrian connectivity and a more people-friendly public realm.

We note that only the area of the site to the east of Ship Lane has been considered in detail and with hindsight, we feel that the area to the west, which was subject to outline application could be subject to a further design review relating to reserved matters when this comes forward.

Yours sincerely



Noel Farrer

Director, Farrer Huxley
Chair, Richmond Design Review Panel

Panel Members

Leonardo Pelleriti	Director, Wimshurst Pelleriti Architects
Kelly Green	Associate, Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios
Beatrix Young	Partner, Weston Williamson & Partners
Vinita Dhume	Associate Director, Levitt Bernstein
Katy Neaves	Director, Neaves Urbanism

Panel Admin

Barry Sellers	Principal Planner, Panel Secretary
Daniela Lucchese	Senior Urban Designer, Panel Coordinator

Applicant Team

Michael Squire	Squire and Partners
Murray Levinson	Squire and Partners
Rebecca Brook	Squire and Partners
David Ashcroft	Dartmouth Capital
Guy Duckworth	Dartmouth Capital
Neil Henderson	Gerald Eve LLP
Anna Gargan	Gerald Eve LLP

Attendees (invited to observe)

Jeni Jackson	Assistant Director Environment & Community Services
Lucy Thatcher	Strategic Applications Manager
Grace Edwards	Senior Planner
Marc Wolfe-Cowen	Principal Urban Design Officer
Nicolette Duckham	Senior Conservation Officer
Tara Murphy	Conservation Officer
Matt Clarke	Conservation Office

Cllr Gareth Roberts
Cllr Julia Neden-Watts
Cllr Martin Elengorn
Cllr Paul Avon