

**LONDON**  
**REVIEW PANEL**

[REDACTED]  
Development Manager  
Berkeley Group

August 2022

Dear [REDACTED]

**London Review Panel: Paddington Green Police Station, City of Westminster**

Please find enclosed the London Review Panel report following the MDA Workshop of Paddington Green Police Station on the 18<sup>th</sup> August 2022. I would like to thank you for your participation in the workshop.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]  
Mayor's Design Advocate

cc.

All meeting attendees

Jules Pipe, Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Skills

Philip Graham, Executive Director of Good Growth, GLA

Louise Duggan, Head of Regeneration, GLA

# LONDON REVIEW PANEL

## Report of London Review Panel MDA workshop for Paddington Green Police Station, City of Westminster

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2022

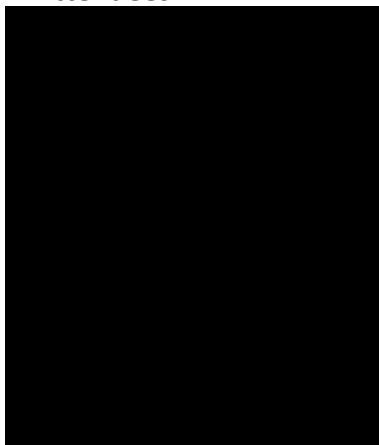
Workshop held in person at Squires & Partners, The Department Store, 248 Ferndale Road, SW9 8FR

### London Review Panel



MDA (Chair)  
MDA

### Attendees



Berkeley Group  
Berkeley Group  
Berkeley Group  
GLA Planning (remote)  
GLA Regeneration (Panel Manager)  
Murdoch Wickham  
Squire & Partners  
Squire & Partners  
Squire & Partners  
Westminster CC (remote)  
Westminster CC (remote)

### Report copied to

Jules Pipe

Philip Graham

Louise Duggan

Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Skills

GLA Executive Director of Good Growth

GLA Head of Regeneration

### Confidentiality and publication

Please note that while schemes are not yet in the public domain, for example at a pre-application stage, will be treated as confidential, as a public organisation the GLA 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. Review reports will target publication to the London Review Panel webpage six months following the review unless otherwise agreed.

## **London Review Panel's Views**

### **Summary**

The panel commends the team on responding so clearly to the panel's comments resulting from the design review in June 2022. The scheme presented in this workshop goes some way to addressing many of the points raised at the last design review and many of these changes have been successful. The panel notes the viability challenges which it is informed are determining the amount of massing being proposed here but would still recommend a reduction in this massing.

The panel agrees with the team that out of the options presented, the taller Block K at 39 storeys is the preferred massing. The panel encourages the team to develop the architectural expression to promote the slenderness of the towers, vary them from the surrounding buildings and allow them to act as a cluster in their own right. The panel advise the elevation treatments are developed to maximise the sense of depth using layering façade elements and avoiding a solid sealed office-like skin. The panel recommends that the team creates a clear ground, middle and crown to each building.

The panel agrees that the team has developed the public realm positively and would continue to encourage the development of a naturalistic landscape approach that creates a safe public realm at all times of day. The panel notes the improvement in dual aspect numbers, and would advise the team to continue to push for maximising dual aspect and quality layouts in the next level of detailed design. The panel advises the team to ensure that quality ground floor storage for all tenures is provided, and to provide shared amenity to relieve the pressure of higher density living such as through roof-top gardens.

### **Quality of Place**

#### *Height & Massing*

- The panel understands the viability challenges of this project and that the affordable housing is required by the client team to be accommodated on this and another linked site.
- With that fundamental constraint in mind, the panel is therefore only able to address the best distribution of this massing to ensure quality places and spaces to live.
- The panel notes that in alternative scenarios they would be asking the applicant team to reduce the amount of mass currently proposed.
- The panel commends the team on the more coherent justification for taller buildings presented but appreciate this is still not fully aligned to Westminster CC policy for this site allocation.
- The panel agrees with the proposal to distribute the height with more given to Block K, and lowering Blocks I and J.
- The panel agrees with the team that the 39 storey Block K option is preferred to the other option presented.
- The panel had previously been in favour of the barrier podiums between J and K in the last review but agrees that the team have demonstrated why its removal is a good move for the quality of public realm.

- The panel agrees from the far side of the Westway (A40) the taller proposal for Block K looks better, with the increased gap between it and the other blocks helping the composition.
- The panel agrees that the views from Regents Park are challenging and that there are likely to be some views where the heights of the proposed and existing tall buildings coalesce negatively.
- The panel advises the team to maximise the differentiation in heights and architectural expression to avoid a clustering of similar height buildings creating an unrelenting mass when viewed from key positions.

#### *Cluster & Architecture*

- The panel advises the team that the current architectural expression is not particularly flattering when seeking to create a slender cluster of buildings and suggest the team look to articulate the elevations more to emphasise this slenderness.
- The panel suggests that the slenderness should be achieved by moving beyond the preferred footprint and height and focusing on breaking up the mass.
- The panel suggests that the team splits the architectural treatment into clear lower, middle and crown portions to help carve up the height. This will help with the simplicity of the diagram when presenting the elevation response.
- The panel encourages the team to explore how the crown on all three buildings can be more articulated to avoid a flat line capping the tops of the buildings. This can be done in an economical way to screen the roof plant or potential roof gardens and does not need to be solid all the way around.
- The panel suggests the team develops a more heavily modelled base at ground level where it faces the street with a more civic design that clearly reads as the ground portion of the buildings. The ground floor design should also encourage blending between the buildings and the street to avoid a harsh threshold between inside and outside.
- The panel suggests that the team now develops the depth of the elevation build up to avoid a flat, office block like skin (as observed at Paddington Basin) that would make these buildings negatively coalesce with the Westmark tower.
- The panel suggests that this could be achieved through layering of the façade to increase the depth of the elevation using deeper reveals and a lighter and finer armature. This could include shading elements which can also address overheating and celebrate the recessed balconies.
- The panel encourages the team to avoid making a generic design response to the architecture, and to introduce an architectural language which is specific to this location.
- The panel encourages the team to ensure the three new buildings have more in common with each other and read as a family, rather than a zoo of large buildings with differing styles and materials. This will avoid the new buildings competing directly with the Westmark and differentiate this as a clear new phase and a cluster in its own right.

### *Landscape & Play Space*

- The panel agrees that the ground floor plan is working much better than the previous iteration and appreciates the amount of quality public realm being given back to the city.
- The panel commends the team on the much more successful central green space of Newcastle Place, unlocked by moving the access route to the north of Block A (Westmark).
- The panel agrees that the emergency access through Newcastle Place is neatly done to allow access without impacting on the quality of the public realm.
- The panel agrees that the connections and spaces adjacent to Edgware Road and Harrow Road are more suitable ways to address these urban edge conditions.
- The panel agrees that all pockets of landscape now have more identity and that the distribution of space and slight flaring of the in-between green spaces is more successful.
- The panel suggests that there may be an advantage to having some community space located close to the central play space in Newcastle Place, and closer to the social rent block that would most benefit from this provision.
- The panel also notes that the current proposed location of community space is more outward facing which has benefits. The final location of community spaces will depend on the programme given to these spaces, such as a community café or youth club.
- The panel suggests that there could be links to working with local colleges and groups who could inform the programme that activates the community spaces and public realm.
- The panel encourages the team to ensure that there is a programme of activity beyond 'office hours' to avoid dead public realm and resultant feelings of vulnerability at night. The team should ensure night safety is embedded in the landscape designs including prospect and refuge with clear sightlines.
- The panel encourages the team to consider the importance of long-term stewardship and governance arrangements of these spaces to ensure their continued vibrancy and relevance to the local community.
- The panel recommends that the team avoids a landscape that is very formal, clipped and rigid. The team should embrace the gritty, naturalistic approach to planting that avoids too much hard landscape. The urban forest approach with low level planting and higher-level tree canopy with clear sightlines is one appropriate response.
- The panel suggests that the team avoids installing too much street furniture or other hard landscape features in some of the spaces such as the avenues. Providing some tree lined avenues with simple seating is enough, allowing for spaces to be programmed or used informally in a flexible way.

### **Quality of Life**

#### *Residential Quality*

- The panel is pleased to see the progress in reducing the number of single aspect homes. The panel suggests a minimum of 60% of homes should be dual aspect and would encourage the team to reach much higher levels.
- The panel encourages the team to continue to develop quality into the next level of home layout planning.

- The panel notes the addition of residential storage at ground floor of some of the blocks. The panel advise the team to ensure all tenures in all blocks are provided with this flexible ground floor storage, with emphasis on providing space for the blocks and tenures with larger family homes. For instance the team should demonstrate where the ground floor storage would be located for the social rent family homes on the 15<sup>th</sup> floor.
- The panel recommends that the size of these storage areas is enough to accommodate the likely number of buggies for the families living in these blocks.
- The panel suggests that the team provides internal access to the residential ground storage space rather than have the access from outside.
- The panel encourage the team to consider a roof top garden to the social rent block to provide a dedicated, secure and accessible amenity space for the residents. This would address the needs for young people and children who may otherwise occupy communal stairs and corridors. A good example of this is [Via Verde Rooftop Garden](#) in New York. This could add to the quality of life for families in that building.
- The panel suggests that to avoid conflict between the plant and amenity uses for the rooftop a technical floor to host the plant could be introduced. This could inform how the building crown caps the top of the building.
- The panel encourages the client team to undertake post occupancy research with the families currently living in their taller, denser buildings to understand how those families are experiencing living at height.

### **Next Steps**

The panel thanks the applicant for its clear presentation of the scheme and is available to review the scheme again if requested to do so by the GLA.