

King's Cross Development Forum

Meeting 6:30 p.m. 11 May 2017

Committee Room 2, Camden Town Hall, Judd Street, London WC1H 9JE

1 Attendance

1.1 Present

John Chamberlain, James Dunnett, Michael Edwards, Helia Evans, Ben Fernandez, Jean James, Philip James, Ivor Kamlish, Deklan Kilfeather, Ernie Lew, Fiona Maclean, Peter McGinty, Robert Milne, Jamie Scudamore, Norman Sheppard, Christian Spencer-Davies, Lisa Tang, Herman Tribelnig, Malcolm Tucker and Paul Weiser

1.2 Apologies

Andrew Bosi, Jim Humphris, Jasmine King, Hugh Lake, Diana Shelley, Lucy Tammam and Ben Williams

2 Previous meeting

2.1 Notes

The notes for the meeting of 22 November 2016 had been circulated and posted on the website and were formally approved.

2.2 Matters arising

Nothing was discussed.

3 Developments

3.1 Open space policy

Julia Finlayson gave an account of the intentions for open space in King's Cross Central as they have changed over the years. The most recent change is that there is now a hope that Granary Square will be restricted to pedestrians and cyclists; vehicles will turn at the bottom of Stable Street and busses will terminate in Canal Reach. In addition Pavilion H, the building at the bottom of Stable Street, will become single storey (except for the lift booth), so it will not block the view from of the Fish and Coal Buildings from Stable Street.

However, whether the Boulevard will remain closed to motor traffic is still unclear. TfL might still want to use it in the plans for the gyratory.

The square in Zone S, now with the working title of Keskiddee Square, is likely to have paving by Lucy Skaer that commemorates the former brick making on the site and the Afro-Caribbean heritage of the Keskiddee Centre (which was the first black arts centre in the UK). However, the clay of the site is unlikely to be suitable for paviors for the square: it would need to be baked very intensely for that purpose.

Under current plans, bus route 394 (from Homerton to Angel) will be extended to King's Cross Central by Copenhagen Street, York Way and Canal Reach. A member of the Forum proposed that

there be navettes to help people move around the site, because the current plans were inadequate even though they met the modest TfL requirement that nobody be more than 300 metres from a bus stop.

Members of the Forum noted that the site had relatively few trees and rather many hard grey surfaces. They asked for how much of the open space was actually green space, and how much grey; unfortunately what is meant by green space is difficult to define.

3.2 A

Graham McCormeny, of BDP, Ziad Shehab, of BIG, and Craig Millar, of Hetherwick, described Zone A of King's Cross Central. Zone A comprises one building on a site of about 10,000 square metres, which stretches its frontage 290 metres from Goods Way to King's Cross Station between the railway lines and the Boulevard. The offices (with shops at street level) are intended for up to 4,000 employees; the tenant will ultimately have up to 10,000 employees in King's Cross Central. The completion of this building is now envisaged for 2021; for the earlier scheme, with Allford Hall Monaghan Morris as its architects, the date mentioned was 2016.

The office floors effectively hang from the core; every second or third floor reaches out as far as the external walls, where it is articulated horizontally. There are deep laminated timber mullions that provide shade and reduce the loading of the walls; on the southern elevation they adjust with the position of the sun.

The retail spaces are different from the office floors and indeed from each other. That at the northern end appears to be intended for a large store; that at the southern end for something that can open up fully to the square, so that customers can drift in and spill out. The retail street between the ends, aside from the two entrances for the office floors, has inset doors and windows (though such details appear to be intended to be replaceable easily) that might take their scale, or at least their overall shapes, from much earlier shops. The shops and offices will all be serviced from the existing service ramp alongside the railway lines; it will stay much as it is except for an additional thin surface.

The general intention seems to be to add variety to a very long façade, including the side facing the railway lines: horizontal and rising lintels, punctuated by planted balconies, climb up the site from south to north. However, they are not punctuated by a bridge across the railway lines, which would have been outside the domain of the tenant.

There are ambitions to make achieve BREEAM outstanding and LEED gold ratings. The roof has a large garden, arranged in different zones; there are also a pool and other sports facilities. There is no proposal to make any of this open to the public, except on occasional special days (such as in Open Garden Squares Weekend). There might also be public events in the auditorium from time to time.

In response to a query about community involvement, it was stressed that the occupants of the building would be using external local facilities such as shops and restaurants as well as those in the building itself. Opening the garden more generally might pose problems of confidentiality and security (though one might think that the ingenuity of the architects was sufficient to overcome such problems).

This scheme is worth comparing with the earlier one, described in the [minutes of the meeting](#) for 13 June 2013, to see whether the changes justify the delay of four years from the point of view of the general public.

4 Design and Access Forum

Nothing was reported.

5 Construction Impact Group

Nothing was reported.

6 Operations

Nothing was discussed.

7 Future meetings

Nothing was discussed.

8 Actions

All to provide comments on the initial proposals about the proposed building for Zone A, for inclusion in a response to the application for planning permission.