



Date of review	31 August 2017-24 September 2017
Developer	Barratt London with Morrisons
Scheme	Camden Goods Yard
Planning Status	Planning submission
Reviewers	David Birkbeck Stefan Kruczkowski
General observations	<p>The redevelopment of Morrisons Chalk Farm supermarket is the cornerstone of LB Camden's plans to promote housing and employment growth through a better connected and more intensive use of the Camden Goods Yard strategic site, priorities for which are found in the adopted SPD. This design responds to core objectives in the SPD, principally:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It addresses existing barriers created by a 6m fall from the north end of the site to the Oval Road southern access, notably by organising the supermarket so that ungainly service areas, restocking delivery noise and 300-bay car park are all buried underground and out of sight. 2. It future proofs the opportunity to extend the growth in housing numbers and movement through its choice of building heights and forms fronting potential redevelopment sites of One Housing's Juniper Crescent (north) and Gilbey's Yard (south). 3. It deals with how the market's current back-of-house uses blight the environment around the landmark Interchange building, adding a new park along the rail arches and a potential link to a Camden "high line". 4. It reinvents a car-dominated environment known for its poor pedestrian and cyclist links as clear and attractive routes for pedestrians by logically linking spaces at the intersection of new and existing buildings and offering cyclists a direct route (away from pedestrians) as well as a secondary route. As such it establishes a spatial framework that creates a more meaningful urban grain. 5. The ambition for a more healthy environment is addressed through a rooftop communal hydroponic winter garden (chilli farm) where local people will be invited and instructed in food production and encouraged to eat their own produce. 6. Its proposals to tuck a new filling station behind a new commercial block fronting Chalk Farm Road helps rationalise vehicle routes into the filling station and car park, while tackling the bleakness pedestrians face on the site's current eastern edge. 7. It proposes a range of new workspaces.

	<p>8. Its architecture reflects the industrial heritage of the site and the most commonplace local materials.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The site has historically been challenged as a residential location by the area's number of pubs and clubs which can lead to poorly overlooked spaces, especially doorways, being misused. The site is also close to one of the capital's largest homeless hostels. A previous report added comments focused on avoiding and minimising areas of blank or dead elevations at street level and enhancing the visibility and natural surveillance opportunity of building entrances, particularly residential entrances. Refinements made to the amount and location of glazing around the accesses to several blocks remove this vulnerability. - The public realm to much of this scheme, with its car free streets and a level of pedestrian movement not often associated with residential schemes, will be fundamental to how the scheme looks (and sells in later phases). This makes us confident that the developer will deliver these spaces to a high standard to ensure success in marketing homes. - The use of 3 different architects to inject variety is still relatively uncommon and to be commended. The commercial building with its expressed timber, the two blocks by designed Piercy & Co with paler facades, and the remainder reflecting the site's industrial heritage will mean heritage domianates, but not relentlessly. 		
	Greens	Ambers	Reds
Integrating into the neighbourhood	4	0	0
Creating a place	4	0	0
Street and Home	4	0	0
Totals	12	0	0

Integrating into the neighbourhood

Connections

Does the scheme integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones; whilst also respecting existing buildings and land uses along the boundaries of the development site?

GREEN

Views: A strategic long distance view corridor from Parliament Hill to the Palace of Westminster has been safeguarded by restricting building heights where necessary.

Neighbours: The relationship between existing buildings and potential redevelopment proposals for higher buildings around site boundaries was discussed in detail between the applicant and the local planning authority. The expectation in the SPD that One Housing's sites north and south of the Morrisons site will be redeveloped to accommodate a greater number of homes within a decade has led to the setting of a typical height for development of "ground plus 7 storeys" across the site that will allow adjacent sites to rise to meet. There are also taller buildings currently acting as markers. In the meantime the southern end of the site has been modelled to take care not to impact on existing properties with Blocks D and E2 stepping down from 5 to 3 storeys and using forms that reflect their Gilbey's Yard neighbours. The taller E1 marker for the southern edge of the site has been pulled back from Gilbey's Yard to preserve 14m of amenity distance and its ground to 4th floor uses have been replanned so that windows do not look into the homes of Gilbey's Yard residents.

The SPD notes that Juniper Crescent is a current bar to movement north towards the Roundhouse, Chalk Farm Tube and potential new Primrose Hills station. The access to Morrisons in a new civic square fronting (the back of) Juniper Crescent acts as foundation to the area-wide plan to make better linkages. It awaits a mixed-use frontage from the Juniper Crescent side of Stephenson Way to this now pedestrianised commercial hub of the site.

The original site is a haphazard environment and is not of a human scale, dominated by highways infrastructure, moving and parked cars; exposed and semi-exposed service areas. The new proposals make sure the car parking and servicing of the supermarket do not impact on the quality of the public realm or on the lives of those trying to sleep alongside supermarket deliveries. The network of car free streets and public spaces linking across the site propose a mix of uses, occasional spaces and movement routes that should encourage far more pedestrian and cycle movement through the site.

GREEN

Facilities and services

Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes?

The site is remarkable for the quantity of shops and eating places on its doorstep, markets and range of venues for social life which include top rated restaurants. Less expensive options will be provided by the local street market, street food stalls and new supermarket. In addition to the range of amenity, the Royal Free Hospital on Haverstock Hill is a short bus ride or easy walk for many, there are health care facilities on Adelaide Road, a secondary

school on Haverstock Hill and a number of primary schools to its immediate east. Primrose Hill with its views of London is also just a short walk while there are a range of popular sports facilities reasonably close, including the swimming pool at Swiss Cottage and seasonal sports in Regent's Park, a 15 minute walk. The concept of a large year-round communal market garden complete with training for residents in horticulture is a crowning detail and along with other features of this development sets a strong benchmark for subsequent developments across the capital.

GREEN

Public Transport

Does the scheme have good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency?

GREEN

An average PTAL rating of 5 is watered down by homes on the southern and western side of the site which currently face an indirect walk to Chalk Farm which the area wide plan is likely to correct. The PTAL rating for the eastern edge of the site is an excellent 6a. In keeping with LB Camden's parking policy that new homes should be built without car parking provision, the scheme only provides 20 disabled bays across the site, 10 kerbside and 10 under Block F.

The schedule of cycle store provision in the DAS at page 195 is impressive. The plan for 875 for residents and another 73 for those riding into work is good. Proposals for the location of 32 Santander-sponsored TFL cycle hire bays as two docking stations opposite the access to Morrisons on Stephenson Way is another gain for the development, especially when there are currently none north of Camden Tube.

Meeting Local Housing Requirements

Does the development have a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements?

GREEN

The scheme is mixed tenure with 35% affordable and a range of homes for market sale and shared ownership. It is assumed for the purposes of this assessment that the LPA are satisfied with the proposed housing mix (including tenure mix) and noted that the provision of affordable did increase during discussions. There is a healthily broad range of housing offer, including many attractive innovations for easy management. These appear as villas in block E2 served by small cores and through the use of duplexes as a plinth to most apartment buildings, helping to make the flanks of the apartment buildings as active as possible and giving residents in these large units with families immediate access to pedestrian and thereby play-friendly streets. (It should be noted that ground floor single level apartments are generally compromised by poor privacy, foremost by direct views into bedrooms.) It cannot be stressed enough how well these street-access family duplexes function compared with more traditional apartment typologies. These building typologies help to animate and enliven streets and public spaces; whilst also reinforcing a sense of human scale.

Another positive feature of the design to many apartments is the use of several tall slim buildings that mean apartments generally have more exterior wall. Plans shows how this translates into openable windows to kitchens, offering opportunity for direct natural ventilation (as the lack of direct natural ventilation is a common complaint in many new apartments).

Creating a place

Character

Does the scheme create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character?

GREEN

The SPD seeks design inspired by the area's industrial heritage. It should be noted that the site is at the nexus of 5 Conservation Areas, but only the Goods Yard has any industrial heritage, the others being typically 2.5, 3 or 4 storey residential streets in stucco or painted render where individual owners often compete for attention.

A major difference between the original forms, the 1990s reinventions and the current proposals are the quality of brickwork detailing proposed with the "converted industrial" aesthetic proposed by Barratt's is far richer than the solidly utilitarian buildings of the early 19th century and its more recent imitations. This extends to the use of metalwork screens, deeply punched reveals and glazed bricks around the accesses to many homes, which gives relief to the fact that much of the industrial heritage area is relentlessly characterised by London buff brick, albeit dulled by decades of grime.

The most memorable elements of the scheme will be the new public spaces, particularly if the opportunities to use these spaces for community events are capitalised upon. Landmark signage atop Building B and the urban (chilli) farm will be distinctive and memorable while the office building masking the new filling station will significantly lighten the dour aspect of the site from Chalk Farm Road caused by remnants of the Camden Wall.



Above: The design of the supermarket fits into the ethos of the development, contributing towards the creation of a vibrant and memorable place.

The standout building among the various blocks will be the new Morrisons which seamlessly incorporates distinctive the shallow concrete arches (highlighted by the SPD as an example of good mixed use at Amsterdam's West Beach 1) into a building that feels like it belongs in an historic Goods Yard in north London. That this is then topped with the glazed urban (chilli) farm means the development's principal building sets the scene on arrival from the key access with the strongest form and architecture. This is very rare for a supermarket – and

something not seen since Sainsbury's used to commission leading architects to design their stores (such as Sainsbury's Camden Town).

Working with the site and its context

Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), trees and plants, wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimate?

GREEN

The SPD and DAS explain the complex opportunities and constraints, options, evolution of the preferred option, precedents and stakeholder engagement. It is very well evidenced within the submission material that the scheme responds appropriately and in a considered way to the site and its wider context.

The proposed development will successfully navigate around underground constraints such as the Victorian sewer to place elements of the scheme that offer no value to the street environment (such as the supermarket car park and loading bay) below ground, with levels well resolved across the site.

The orientation of streets will allow glimpse views of the distinctive shape of the area's landmark Roundhouse and will make a feature square in front of the distinctive Interchange warehouse, one of few buildings in the Goods Yard area not faced in buff brick (and thereby a key opportunity to vary character). The proposals will help initiate the SPD's ambition of bringing back parts of the disused railway line as Camden 'high line' – a particularly exciting prospect. The proposals for a railway park alongside the railway arches are the first step in developing this potential.

The completed proposals will intensify the development of this land and the impact of the positioning, orientation and height of buildings on existing and new resident amenity including the penetration of sunlight into public and other amenity spaces has been carefully considered.

Creating well defined streets and spaces

Are buildings designed and positioned with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and are buildings designed to turn street corners well?

GREEN

A series of well defined perimeter blocks are framed by a simple, logical and connected street network upon which a series of open spaces are proposed. The interface between buildings and the street is generally well resolved, however we initially identified some areas where it was questioned whether minor amendments could be made to: a) improve the relationship between the building and the street; b) enhance natural surveillance opportunities to the public realm and of building entrances. It was suggested that an audit of ground floor levels was undertaken to identify inactive parts of elevations and consider whether there was opportunity to make minor amendments to the scheme to reduce the amount of inactivity.

We noted that the consultation with a local SBD officer highlighted the risk to the scheme from rough sleeping. We commented that the strategy for avoiding the misuse of ground

floors to residential blocks was generally very good but less clear for some mixed-use and commercial buildings.

We are still unclear whether the large arch headed windows to the supermarket be glazed, providing a visual connection and relationship between the outside and the internal activity within the store? It has not been possible from the material provided to determine what this relationship might be and whether there is any risk of these will be wholly obscured by vinyl graphics. It will be important to secure this transparency in a future Advertisement application.

We made suggestions for closing out the small number but possibly troublesome blind spots across the scheme below. We made this point because the nearby Arlington House, as the capital's largest homeless hostel, is likely to provide unwelcome challenges to the scheme which the area's wealth of pubs and clubs is only likely to exacerbate. We note that the suggestions we made have been implemented where possible.

Easy to find your way in and around

Is the scheme designed to make it easy to understand the links between where people live and how you access the building, as well as how you move through it?

GREEN

The linearity of streets helps to visually connect places to one another, reinforcing a sense of orientation. Building B will function as a strong landmark for the scheme by virtue of its scale, feature lettering and roof top glass houses. E1 will function as the southern gate post and views north to the Roundhouse will help remind pedestrians of the approximate location of Chalk Farm Tube. The direct route to the car park for the supermarket and the pedestrian plaza in front will all make use of the site plan logical and obvious.

Therefore the scheme will be very legible.

Street and Home

Active streets

Does the development engage with the street so passers-by will understand the movement between the building and the street, and is there an obvious visual link between the inside and the outside?

GREEN

The common risk of apartment buildings is when shared communal accesses sever the relationship between most of the building and most of the street. However, this risk has been comprehensively avoided by the use of duplexes with their own individual front doors and the use of non-residential uses at ground floor, such as retail units, community buildings and a gym. This strategy protects at least 95% of the development proposals from any risks associated (by comparison, the average apartment building with its single point of access and blank ground floors dominated by servicing needs, offers 95% risk).

Across the site as a whole, there is a good mix of uses that will contribute to creating a well overlooked network of streets and spaces, with high levels of activity as people move

between places and walk into and out of buildings. A series of observations previously made relating to improving the natural surveillance of some areas have been responded to and these have enhanced the scheme further, for instance we observed that windows could be added to the end duplex in Block F. Additional windows have been introduced.

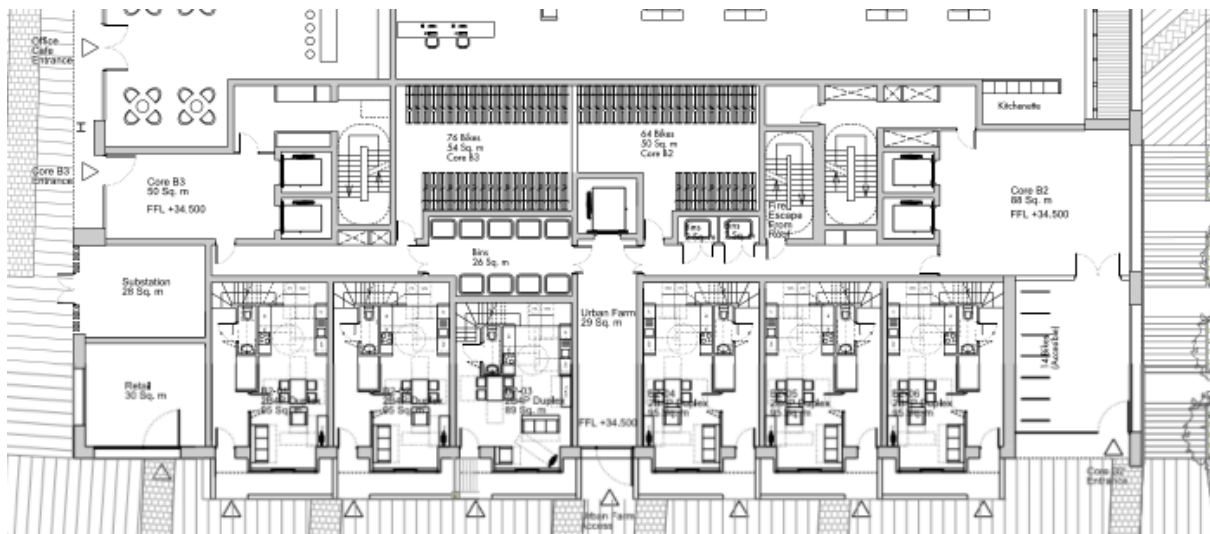
Cycle and car parking

Will the development be likely to support and encourage cycling by providing cycle storage which people can use with confidence? Where parking is provided, is this easy to use? Are accesses to car parking designed not to impact on those not in cars? Are entrances to car parks over-engineered, visually obtrusive or obstructive to pedestrians and cyclists?

GREEN

A high level of cycle parking is provided, with some duplex homes provided with cycle parking adjacent to the front door. It is not clear why this has not been provided to all properties with their own ground floor front door.

Cycle parking appears to be generally well located. There are odd instances when it could be questioned how easy it will be to get bikes through internal corridors, past internal doors and around 90 degree corners to reach cycle stores (example below). Whilst we recognise the deadening effect a large bike store will have along the outer edge of the block (which has seen a logical design decision being made to locate it within the block), it might be worth considering how easy it will be to open two doors abutting a right angled corner whilst wheeling a bike in or out of the store.



Above: How easy will it be to get bikes to the store in the centre of this block?

Shared spaces

Is the purpose and use of shared space clear and is it designed to be safe and easily managed? Where semi-private or private spaces are created, are these clearly demarcated from the public realm?

GREEN

The use of shared spaces is generally clear with a mix of public and semi-private spaces provided, with some spaces more active than others – lending themselves to a variety of uses. Semi-private spaces are shown as being demarcated, the detailed design of these delineations will require careful consideration as detailed design work progresses. Across

London there are recent schemes that have delineated spaces more successfully than others.

Ground floor residential buildings with their own front doors are shown with small semi-private spaces. These spaces are more detailed in places than others, and careful consideration needs to be afforded to ensuring these spaces are designed to accommodate:

- Outdoor seating, thereby helping to enliven the spaces around them.
- Opportunities for personalisation, helping to add colour and interest to public realm.
- Discreet integration of waste and recycling storage – a failing of many recent schemes in London.

Subject to further detailed design work there is no reason why this question would not merit a 'Green' indicator.

Private amenity and storage

Are outdoor spaces, such as terraces and balconies, large enough for two or more people to sit? Is there opportunity for personalisation of these spaces? Is waste storage well integrated into the design of the development so residents and service vehicle access it easily whilst not having an adverse impact on amenity for residents.

GREEN

The proposals include a series of amenity spaces, including private balconies that provide space for seating. Some larger balconies will offer spaces for personalisation, with ground floor semi-private spaces to residential properties afforded their own front door offering the opportunity for interest and interaction within the street environment.

A fully thought through waste storage and disposal strategy has been well integrated throughout the development and means that some parts of the public realm will be much improved by the lack of council refuse trucks. We are advised that homes facing the street will not need individual bin storage on the street frontage.

Individual residential units are designed to meet local housing standards and therefore will offer good internal living spaces, with sufficient space for furniture, circulation space and storage. It has previously been suggested that further consideration is afforded to the detailed design of the semi-private spaces to ground floor residential properties where there is potential scope to create spaces for additional cycle storage, discreet integration of waste and recycling storage whilst also providing attractive amenity space for occupiers.

DB/SK Revised 22/9/2017.