

LONDON
REVIEW PANEL

[REDACTED]
The Really Local Group Hayes
London
UB3 1SY

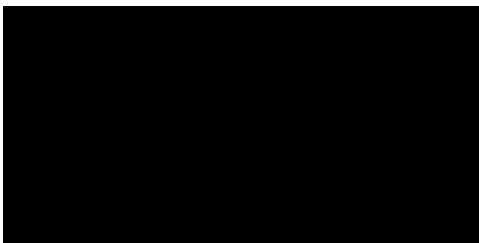
June 2020

Dear [REDACTED],

London Review Panel: The Gramophone, Hillingdon

Please find enclosed the London Review Panel report following the design review of The Gramophone, Hillingdon on 27th May 2020. I would like to thank you for your participation in the review and offer ongoing Mayor's Design Advocate support as the scheme's design develops.

Yours sincerely,



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
Patrick Dubeck, Head of Regeneration, GLA

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REVIEW PANEL

**Report of London Review Panel meeting
The Gramophone, Hillingdon**

Wednesday 27th May 2020
Review held remotely.

London Review Panel

██████████	MDA
██████████	MDA
██████████	MDA (Chair)

Attendees

██████████	Architecture Initiative
██████████	GLA Reneneration
██████████	GLA Reneneration
██████████	GLA Regeneration
██████████	GLA Regeneration (Panel Manager)
██████████	Hawes Price
██████████	Hawes Price
██████████	Really Local Group Hayes
██████████	Really Local Group Hayes

Apologies / report copied to

Report copied to

Jules Pipe	Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Skills
Philip Graham	GLA
Patrick Dubeck	GLA

Confidentiality

Please note that while schemes 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.

Project location

The Pressing Plant, The Old Vinyl Factory, Blyth Road, Hayes, UB3 1SY

Presenting team

██████████	Architecture Initiative
██████████	Really Local Group Hayes
██████████	Really Local Group Hayes

Really Local Group Hayes introduction

The Really Local Group Hayes gave an overview of the organisation's history including the previous delivery of their project at Catford Mews, Lewisham. They expressed their ambition for this site to celebrate the rich music industry heritage. The lack of nearby amenity spaces was highlighted as a key opportunity that could be addressed with the range of activities proposed for the site. These include a 4-screen cinema with a diverse programme of screenings and cultural events which the local community will help curate. The importance of an outreach and engagement programme to the success of the scheme was highlighted in creating a venue that is accessible to all communities in the area.

Architecture Initiative presentation

Architecture Initiative gave a detailed presentation of the project including a short summary of the project history, with this site being the last plot to be developed from a wider masterplan. The site was part of a 2017 planning permission and the varied proposals will be submitted soon as part of a S73 application. Architecture Initiative have worked with The Really Local Group Hayes to make the building as accessible as possible to the various community groups. The main communal space at ground level which included the café would also be activated by an 'internal street' facing the new landscaped public space to the south. The strategy for the main retained north façade was to make good and introduce heritage warehouse style windows. Following a 3D model walkthrough of the project, the presentation was concluded with a statement on how the range of spaces would allow for a rich programme of events. This would enable affordable pricing and a sustainable model of operations with local support.

London Review Panel's views

Summary

The London Review Panel think this has the potential to be an exciting scheme and commend the design team for the significant amount of thinking that has gone into the project. This was evident in the clear presentation of the design proposals. The high-quality design and aspirational ambition in the scheme is evident, and the Panel would like their feedback to further encourage the design team to realise the full social and cultural potential of this important project.

The Panel encourage the team to engage as early as possible with the local communities. By developing relationships as the design develops, the buy in from the diverse community groups will ensure the future success in meeting the project's social value objectives. These early conversations with stakeholders will also be helpful to the design team in finalising some of the spatial and access conflicts raised during the review. The potential for this building is not foreclosed and by opening the conversations with the community groups now there is the opportunity to push these ambitions much further.

Communication & Approach to Engagement

- The Panel queried what the nature of the community engagement process to date had been and how it had informed the designs. The design team confirmed that the proposals were based on historic engagement and explained that their current negotiations with the Local Authority were to maximise the envelope of the project to achieve all the community's priorities.
- The Panel challenged the design team's hesitancy to present proposals to the local community without Local Authority support. While the design team wanted to first agree principles with the Local Authority before seeking community input, the Panel agreed the scheme would be

strengthened by reversing this order of approach, to first agree principles with the community and then present to the Local Authority.

- The Panel encouraged the design team to be proactive in developing the brief with the community for the spatial layout and event programming and start these conversations as early as possible. Communities want to be engaged now more than ever and there are many creative ways to reach out, potentially accessing parts of the community that don't usually participate.
- The Panel recommended that the design team clarify what the community had expressed as their priorities, given the diverse nature of the community. The design team confirmed that some commitments had already been made to the local community and that common themes for the various groups were quality, affordability and space.
- The Panel were pleased to hear that there was a community steering group being set up to act as community liaison throughout the design development and to guide with the programming during operations. This Steering Group should be empowered and supported at the earliest opportunity to ensure they can contribute to the design development of the project.
- The Panel commend the design team's appointment of Social Life to run a public consultation event programme and data gathering exercise to establish a baseline for future evaluation. They encourage their involvement at the earliest opportunity to ensure that this work inputs into the design development.
- The Panel questioned whether the music industry heritage of the site was important to the local community groups and recommended that other priorities from the community could be addressed first. The singular focus on a one type of musical heritage feels like a missed opportunity to express an art form that can galvanise multiple communities.

Social Value & Ongoing Monitoring

- The Panel commends the social commitments already made by the Really Local Group Hayes, including the commitment to reinvest and ringfence 10% of profits to support ongoing community programming and encourages them to clarify further what the tangible social outputs of the project are expected to be.
- The Panel queried how this socioeconomic value be assessed in ongoing monitoring so the project could adapt to future need. The design team confirmed their intention for ongoing social commitments based on continued monitoring and with an awareness of the Good Growth Fund social output requirements.
- The Panel expressed the opportunity for an inclusive programme of events based around music to bring together the historic importance of the site and the diverse cultures of the existing and emerging community groups. The design team confirmed that a Cultural Steering Group including 13 groups from the local community was being set up to work alongside a dedicated Really Local Group Hayes Community Programme Manager.
- The Panel commented that engaging the community as early as possible into the design and decision-making process. The Panel suggest will reduce the risk of retrofit to accommodate changes. noting that communities that are part of the shaping places will be less critical of any issues that arise during occupation.
- The Panel recommends evaluating the current designs against community priorities as a baseline, to be able to demonstrate how the designs evolve during the next phase of development, with ongoing commitments to review during the building being in use.

Layouts and Relationship with Public Realm

- The Panel recommends that the design team need to review in more detail the wider context to illustrate how different user groups and the routes they use influence the location of the multiple entrances and the wayfinding strategy proposed. For instance, there may be different circulation

patterns from residents to the north to those approaching from the station and that this can inform access points and signage.

- The Panel advise the design team to review what the quality of the environment would be for the surrounding streets, especially on the less overlooked parts such as around the service doors. The Panel was concerned of the risk of areas around service doors becoming unsightly over time, or less overlooked external facades becoming areas of anti-social behavior.
- The Panel queried where those groups needing to avoid alcohol could find neutral communal space to dwell as the only flexible dwell space at ground level was the bar area. The design team are encouraged to review the layouts so that these groups be accommodated in shared public spaces for all to sit and enjoy the building.
- The Panel suggested scenario testing to assess circulation routes for different user groups, to resolve overlaps in the servicing of the project. Scenarios to be tested could include how alcohol is delivered through shared spaces to the bar and how the ground floor is used when the high occupancy areas such as the cinemas are in use. The Panel encourage further dialogue with the community to resolve any conflicts of circulation and servicing that emerge.
- The Panel reiterated the benefit of engaging the community groups now to develop the plan layouts as the best way of creating community ownership. The Panel recommends early engagement with community groups reviewing the proposed layouts will help avoid developing coded spaces and the reading of these spaces by the various community groups.
- The Panel questioned whether the side entrances that serve the community room, adjacent to the service doors may become unpleasant over time. The Panel queried whether the community entrances were in the right place and whether they were visible enough. The Panel has some concern over the orientation of some of the spaces, with the community entrance seeming at the rear of the building and this should be reviewed.
- The Panel recommend that the community groups are involved in layout and signage design to avoid confusion over the multiple entrances and to ensure that first time visitors understand where to access. The Panel recommend co-design with the community groups on the entrance signage could be a creative strategy to make the communities contribution to the design development more visible. The Panel reiterated the importance of clear threshold and welcome signs/mats that are read externally. These can be a focus of community involvement through prototyping and testing on site.
- The Panel raised a concern that the explicit community spaces were buried within the layouts. They suggested looking at the Africa Centre, a similar scheme that puts recording studios by the entrances to encourage chance encounters and social integration. This would be a way of inviting people who did not know the of the projects various function into their spaces. The Panel queried how animating the live window display of pressing records would be and that this prime location could swap with the recording studios to encourage active engagement between users and visitors of the building and streets.
- The Panel thought the building edge to the street was inflexible with a hard edge and this needs to be more welcoming. The Panel commented that though the ground floor is very transparent there is little relationship to the street and that opportunities to spill out into the public realm should be included. The Panel recommended that this hard edge to the public realm be eroded to create spaces that are more open. This is particularly important with the projects ambition to engage communities who are nervous about crossing these boundaries and encourage them to come back again.
- The Panel understood there was a significant amount of technical and functional equipment to accommodate, but challenged the design team on whether the layouts can allow for spaces to expand, contract or adapt as the operational monitoring and community needs evolve. The Panel reiterated the importance of the spaces to be practical and flexible as when the community moves in they will need the building to adapt accordingly and the design team should accommodate this.

Concept, Form and Materiality

- The Panel commended the design team on their considered design, with the building showcasing the rich music industry of the site. The Panel queried whether the music industry heritage of the site was overplayed, considering the local community's priorities.
- The Panel queried whether the proposals were too refined and developed to allow for changes to be made following future comments from the community and the design team should not conclude the designs without this input.
- The Panel queried the façade retention strategy and suggested there was a missed opportunity for the first-floor windows. The cinema layouts currently require these windows within the retained facade to be blocked up whilst the new 'listening café' is provided with new windows. There is an opportunity to swap these spaces so that the windows to Blyth Road can activate the street rather than be blanked off with a screen. If this is not possible, can more be made of the window infills than currently proposed. The Panel suggested that the retained façade could also be used more creatively such as a canvas for a curated local street art programme.

Next Steps

- The Panel encourages the design team to push ahead with community engagement at the earliest opportunity. There is no point too early to start working with the community.
- The Panel reiterated that the scheme should be ambitious in its engagement with the diverse communities and that clear and agreed priorities are set out early on with the Community Steering Group to monitor during design development and the building in use.
- The Panel recommend the design team declare clear social commitments and a statement of how this socioeconomic value will be assessed in ongoing monitoring so the project could adapt to future need.
- The Panel recommend the design team review the wider context, the routes into and out of the site and how these circulation patterns can inform the location of the multiple entrances and signage. This should also address the function of the building in terms of urban design such as whether it is a front door to a community, or a centerpiece bringing them together in a forum space.
- The Panel suggest the design team conduct scenario testing of how different groups will use the spaces to highlight where issues over circulation and activities may overlap. This will inform the separation of spaces for specific group's needs.
- The Panel recommend the design team review the ground floor layout to ensure it can best provide for the needs of the diverse community groups. Areas to review include the amount of shared communal space to dwell for all users, entrances and whether the vinyl production exhibit could be swapped with recording studios to encourage more interaction between the various users and the public.
- The Panel suggest that entrances and signage should be workshopped with the community groups as a priority. This is to ensure that the building is as welcoming and clearly signposted as possible.
- The Panel would encourage the design team to review the ground floor perimeter to be more permeable with the public realm.
- The Panel recommends the design team review the flexibility of the current layout and scenario test future arrangements with the community to demonstrate the spaces can adapt to the users as their needs change.

- The Panel suggests the design team review the façade retention strategy with regards to how the building activates Blythe Road at ground and first floor. The scheme would be improved by activating the infilled windows onto Blyth Road such as by swapping the first floor uses.
- The Panel recommend a further review to see design development based on comments in this report and the outcome of planned community engagement.