

The effect of the proposed massing on the ground and landscape.

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The overbearing massing of the blocks, the shadows cast and the environment created at ground level is neither understood or recognised by the landscape design. The lavish and beautifully presented landscape report is unfortunately extremely misleading and therefore in most part irrelevant.

“Woodland Walk”

A third of the landscape of the scheme is sited on the north side of fourteen storey building, which in England by its nature a cold and windy space. This is not a place where people naturally want to gather or spend any time in unless under exceptionally hot summer days; if proof is required a visit to Nine Elms Development makes the point. The concept of siting two children’s play areas on the north side of a tall block demonstrates a lack of understanding of how young children and their parents naturally enjoy being outside in the fresh air and sunshine. The unrealistic nature of these play areas is further demonstrated by the proposed grass (GT1) under the play equipment; this will only grow weekly because of the lack of sunlight, be heavily worn by children playing, and be very difficult to mow.

The two bin rooms opposite the play areas are designed with very little tolerance for overspill – there will be no alternative to leaving material outside these bin areas should they become full.

Additionally the space for the pavement outside the bin stores is very tight and does not recognise the nature of the fairly robust collection process where “time is of the essence”. The landscape is protected by an element (KT3) but this is not described in the key.

This area, north of Block A, is described in the report as an ecological area but this is blind to the fact that it’s prime function as the route for the refuse collection vehicles (and fire engines).

This is also a route for the general public. Local experience at Cleaver Square shows that these areas open to the general public need to be pretty robust to accept the comings and goings especially after dark or when the pubs are closed. Housing landscape in the 1960’s established the concept of “defensible space”, where ambitious schemes only worked if residents owned and cared for them. This concept is not recognised in this planning submission.

Visuals

A conventional architectural model at an appropriate scale would demonstrate, with projected light (sunlight), that these visuals are extremely misleading and dishonest. This lack of understanding and “pulling the wool” is further compounded by the Daylight Report that claims that the scheme is well sunlit throughout the majority of the year, this clearly is impossible if the bulk of the landscape the “Woodland Walk” is on the north side of very tall building.

These visuals have been created to show the scheme in its best light. Sunlight is perhaps the strongest influence on landscape design and use. The visuals do not show any sense of the reality regarding light and sunlight to make the design look acceptable; sunlight never shines from the north west as portrayed in these images, but they depend on this dishonesty to make the scheme look good.

Conclusion

The developer has attempted “to sugar the pill” by presenting a landscape scheme that softens the impact of the overdevelopment. In reality this scheme’s attempts by graphic images hides the reality of the situation (planting trees on the north side of a very tall building to create even more shade may look good but is neither good for people or grass).

This proposal should be refused planning permission.