

Blossom Street Feedback Report

Design Workshop 2nd June 2014

Landscape Workshop 11th & 12th June 2014

Overview

This note provides a record of the principal points and key issues raised during the consultation events held in June 2014 on British Land's proposals for the Blossom Street regeneration.

This early consultation was focused on the design of emerging proposals, and was targeted at the immediate residential neighbours and local community groups with a particular interest in the area and the planning and design process.

Representatives from the following local interest groups were present:

- Spitalfields Society
- Spitalfields Community Group
- Spitalfields Trust
- The East End Preservation Society
- Burhan Uddin Tenants and Residents' Association
- St George's Tenants and Residents' Association
- Tune Hotel

This note is compiled from the notes taken on the evenings by members of the project and design team, with a record of all written feedback received included. Broad themes - areas of support and areas of disagreement – are apparent, although on many points different and opposing views were expressed on the strategy and details of the emerging proposals and ideas.

Although the information in this document is a record of feedback from the evening, we are sure that we will not have captured everything. We would welcome any further comments you wish to make at this stage, or if there is anything you feel we have left out and you can do this by contacting us:

info@blossomstreet-e1.com or 0845 460 6011.

What will we do with your comments?

We will be shortly holding a public exhibition to display our proposals to a wider audience and seek further feedback. Some of your comments will already have influenced the progression of the scheme and you may well see that in the content for the exhibition.

We will not be able to incorporate every idea or comment, particularly as many of those commenting so far have offered differing views of certain aspects of the proposals.

Following the exhibition, we will be compiling a further report on all the feedback we have received at the consultation events and we will provide a response to all comments made. This response will explain how your views have been taken into consideration and also set out our response to those points that we do not feel can be incorporated into the scheme.

We are continuing to analyse and consider the comments we are receiving and will provide detailed feedback as this work progresses.

The document sets out the feedback as follows:

1. Design Workshop

The Design Workshop provided attendees the opportunity to hear about the Blossom Street scheme, and then from each of the five architect practices involved about their particular area of responsibility within the wider site.

The feedback recorded is presented by site and is as grouped by architect practice, with overarching comments applicable across the Blossom Street site then covered off by issue.

2. Public Realm Workshop

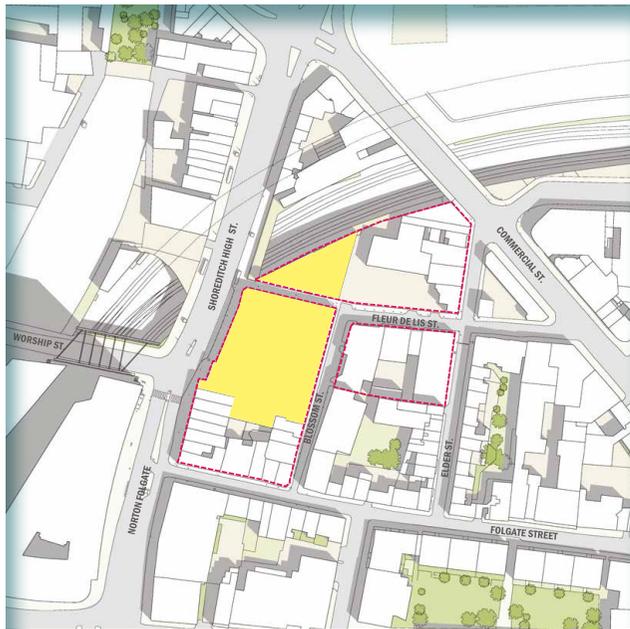
The Public Realm Workshop allowed attendees to discuss the key issues relating to landscaping with British Land and the landscape consultants, East. The feedback recorded is presented by issue and where applicable by location around the area.

3. Written feedback

A full record of all written feedback, anonymised, is recorded verbatim.

1. DESIGN WORKSHOP – 2ND JUNE

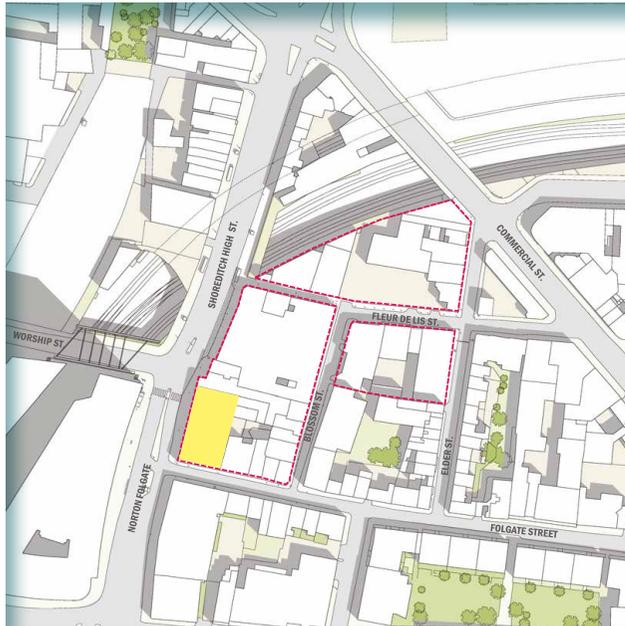
SITE 1 – AHMM



Comments

- *Generally positive feedback regarding the massing, with some dissent over the 15 storey element:*
 - *An even split between those who agreed with the approach taken to 4th façade to Principal Place and those that were against height on the triangle*
 - *Some people wanted more height on triangle*
- *General welcome for the approach to materiality. Further information on details of the façades requested, and will be shown at the public exhibition.*
- *Fleur de Lis Alley: mixed responses*
 - *Known as 'P**s Alley' and generally not liked; new uses and overlooking/natural surveillance welcomed*
 - *Should be retained exactly as is, as an example of "old" East End London*
- *Norton Folgate facades (triangle building and neighbour) lacked differentiation in design*
- *Some concern over views of the tallest element from within the Conservation Area*
- *Proposals should consider reinstating the historic entrance at the junction with 19 Norton Folgate*
- *One mention of the possibility of retaining the existing brick wall at rear of 17/18 Norton Folgate within new courtyard*
- *Some comments that the only important issue is around the retention of buildings; discussion of new elements not important in comparison to justifying retention/loss of existing elements*

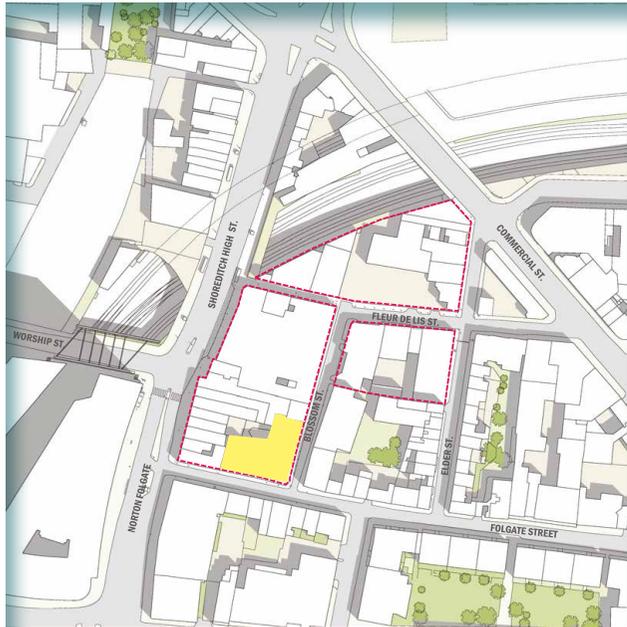
SITE 1A – Duggan Morris



Comments

- *Some attendees were keen to see the retention of the 14-15 Norton Folgate buildings*
- *Very mixed reception to these proposals, with responses ranging from outrage to delight depending on opinions as to what the corner can and should support*
- *The proposals as presented could work, but would need to be very carefully detailed and constructed to avoid looking crude*
- *The Folgate St elevation could sit better next to the Arts & Craft building by having smaller proportions of glazing*
- *Suggestion was made that brick could be a good material choice for this corner site*
- *Widespread support of the proposals for the front and back of 16-19. A minority concerned at the loss of the original window configuration at the back, others like the balance of new and old here*
- *A few people were genuinely encouraged by the idea of trying to do something 'special' on the corner and felt that the design contrasted well with the more gridded elevations of the wider scheme*
- *One concern raised that the façade would read as an architectural drawing, rather than a piece of architecture*
- *Mixed response to the Avanti treatment of 15 Norton Folgate; some supported façade retention and refinishing, others thought that a crude solution*

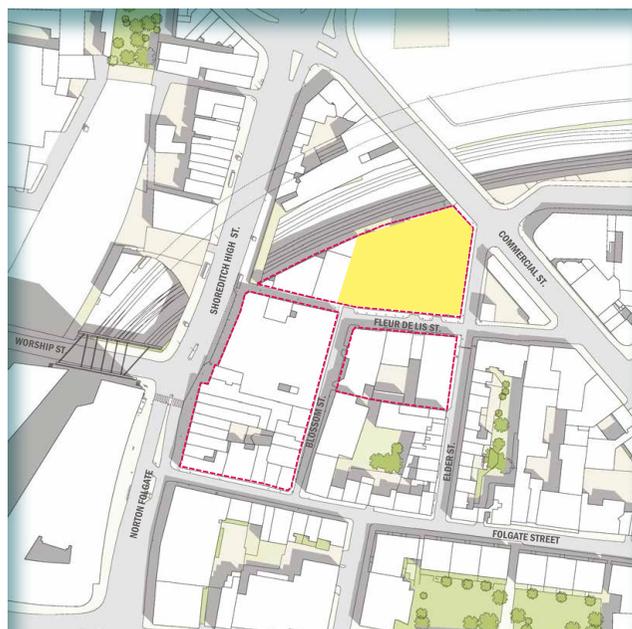
SITE 1B – DSDHA



Comments

- *Welcomed as a considerable improvement on the existing site, particularly on the Blossom Street infill façade*
- *Proportions to the rear of Folgate St need careful consideration – currently too much glazing proposed*
- *Need to interrogate options for mitigating what will be a relatively dark façade (north facing, surrounded by large buildings)*
- *Current idea of reflective nature of windows positively received*
- *Unanimous support for the treatment of the facades of both 5-11 Folgate St. and Blossom St.*
- *Concern that the quality of the architectural detailing will not be followed through in reality*
- *Support for retaining the Water Poet, as an important contributor to the diversity of the development*
- *The design should actively encourage the pub to remain*
- *Concern that the pub will lose its character in an office environment, and the possibility of its replacement with other food and beverage businesses*
- *Smoking area important for the Water Poet to reduce noise to the street*
- *Noise from the pub is an issue for Folgate Street residents; measures to reduce noise or encourage noise in the courtyard rather than the street supported*

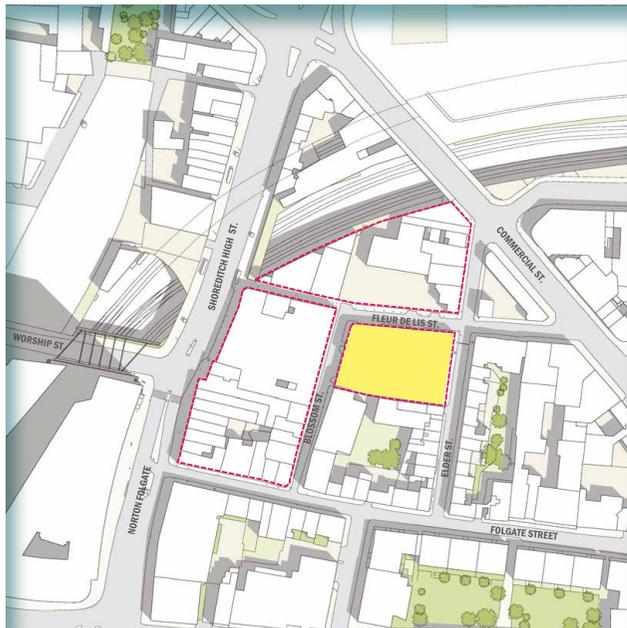
SITE 2 – Stanton Williams



Comments

- *Some concern about the height of the building*
- *Majority considered the massing to be in the right place*
- *Generally pleased to see the heritage buildings retained, with most considering that the right ones have been targeted (161 Commercial St, 1927 Warehouse, Elder St Warehouses)*
- *No strong objections to replacing the roof on Elder St, although questions over the mansard roof were raised*
- *No strong objections to the 1927 Warehouse façade strategy*
- *Concern as to the impact on the views of existing properties, with questions asked as to what the new views would be; further information will be available at the public exhibition*
- *Mixed views on whether to animate Fleur de Lis Street: some welcomed the prospect of a restaurant, whilst others want to keep this activity enclosed within the courtyard and on Blossom St*
- *Positive comments on the public courtyard:*
 - *Welcomed that it might re-route people away from Elder St*
 - *Notion of a new public space with retail was well received*
- *Retail on ground floor a potential problem for some – fear that this will increase noise / people, draw more people into the area.*

SITE 3- AHMM



Comments

- *Modern interpretation of a Georgian Street challenged*
- *Predominant view that Georgian pastiche or an exact replica of Georgian Town Houses is more appropriate in this location*
- *Four storey massing to Elder Street supported*
- *The top level mass could be broken up with changes to the parapet line*
- *Some suggestions that the site can support more height*
- *Top storey could be an interpretation of the weaver's spaces, with pitched roofs*
- *This site produced a wide range of comments and suggestions, including:*
 - *Break down scale of block more. Too much like a block*
 - *Too uniform – houses on Elder Street are in pairs – the design does not reflect this*
 - *Grain of blocks needs to be expressed more.*
 - *Does the grain sit well with existing plot widths*
 - *Proportions: expression of ground and then residential floors above to be investigated*
 - *Spacing of front doors*
 - *Propositions of windows; not full height*
 - *Detail of windows and shutters*
 - *Variation in window sizes*
 - *Depth of brickwork*
 - *Explore possibility of views through cores at ground into court*

- *Could cores be external spaces?*
- *Exposed brickwork welcomed*
- *Detail of brick and coursing*
- *How will flats at ground floor work?*
- *Flats at ground could be accessed off core*
- *Could duplex units be explored*
- *Colour of brick – look at variation down Elder Street*
- *Want to see some joy and fun in lavational approach*
- *Could rethink the typology: introduce 3-4 new Georgian Town Houses on Elder Street, with flats to Fleur de Lis and Blossom Street*
- *Concern at the impact on residential Elder Street of an increase in pedestrian footfall due to the new residential core*
- *Entrances could be located on other streets, with just front doors to flats along Elder Street*
- *Suggestion that Loom Court should be reused for housing:*
 - *An acceptable Georgian replica*
 - *Relatively recent building – demolition will negatively impact on embodied energy*

PUBLIC REALM - EAST

Comments

- *Public realm should focus on retention, and enhancing the unique character of the area*
- *Street lighting could be on buildings not lamp posts to maximise space on the streets*
- *Retain existing road and street signage*
- *Mixed views on Fleur De Lis Alley: either retain existing materials or replace with more substantial flagstones*
- *Piazas inappropriate for the area; smaller scale public realm 'courtyards' supported*
- *Simple, traditional materials; don't overcomplicate; use existing parameters – cobbled streets*
- *No public art*
- *Strong welcome for introducing greenery*
- *Retain interesting bollards*
- *Opening up new pathways through the site welcomed*
- *Encourage pedestrian pathways through the site, to pull footfall away from residential Elder Street and through the Blossom Street site instead*
- *Boundary stones feature on the warehouses – these should be preserved/incorporated into the new building*

HIGHWAYS/ TRANSPORT

Comments

- *Many attendees were pleased with the approach to the proposed traffic management strategy*
- *Consideration should be given to a taxi drop off / pick up on Norton Folgate*
- *Car Parking – car parking expected at basement level and needs to be provided.*
- *Despite the high PTAL rating, car parking provision must be included in the scheme as new residents will want a car*
- *Disabled on-street car parking – where is this going to go? Parking spaces on street are all currently occupied*
- *Support for controlling traffic movement from most but not all*
- *Would welcome one way: most content with East -> West, except one group that observed that that's the current rat-running problem, so should be West-East unless there's controlled access on Fleur-de-Lis*
- *Controlled access on Fleur-de-Lis positively received*

MANAGEMENT

Comments

- *Courtyard: wider passageways would improve safety at night*
- *Will security be present? Mix of reactions to idea of security, with the blocking off of gates at night the favoured option*
- *Management of retail and food and beverage uses*
- *Delivery hours should be restricted*
- *Concern over additional drinking establishments and anti-social behaviour/noise/nuisance (such as the Light Bar and the Water Poet) spilling in to the Conservation Area*
- *General concern about nature of retail/ food and beverage (F&B) and possibility of drinking spilling onto streets*

OTHER

Comments

- *Eccentricity and quirkiness define the area, which should be evident in the architecture of all blocks, and across the landscaping*
- *This development shouldn't play it safe and should be something special*
- *Proposed affordable housing provision raised*
- *Daylight/sunlight testing for neighbouring properties*

CHARACTER

- *The area is quiet, peaceful and tranquil and this needs to be preserved*
- *Universal supportive for a new pedestrian route from the top of Elder Street to the top of Blossom Street - through the proposed public square – to pull pedestrians away from residential Elder Street*
- *Outer core / inner sanctum narrative for the area*
- *Preserve the quiet, peace and tranquility of Elder Street and the Conservation Area*
- *Maintain the existing character and feel of the streets*
- *The streets within the Conservation Area are more similar than different, and a holistic strategy for public realm that unites extant characteristics is needed*
- *Food and Drink uses should be directed away from the residential areas*

MATERIALS

- *Strong support for maintaining cobbles and extending cobbling through the Conservation Area*
- *Use reclaimed cobbles*
- *No herringbone paving*
- *No concrete*
- *Introduce York Stone through Elder Street*

GENERAL

- *Increasing pedestrian levels in existing traffic conditions is a worry*
- *Boundary stones in the warehouses should be retained*
- *Better road signage throughout the area is needed – and will help to reduce road rage*
- *Eg mark at the southern entrance to Elder Street that it is not a through road*
- *No Public Art*
- *Curb heights should be maintained (Brick Lane used as an example of unwelcome low curb heights)*
- *Ensure sufficient bike racks through the area*
- *Names are very important and should refer to and enforce the history of the area*
- *eg New public square could be called 'Liberty Sqaure'*
- *There is an inconsistency retaining cobbles with new building (at Norton Folgate/Folgate St)*
- *Consideration required for storage and waste management strategy*

FLEUR DE LIS ALLEY

- *Currently dirty and smelly, but a useful passage*
- *Transition between character of Shoreditch High Street and Fleur de Lis appreciated*
- *Conflicting view of future use:*
 - *Should not have an active frontage, and remain a passage way*
 - *Activating in some way would be good*
- *Suggestion for installation of temporary urinals*

GREENERY

- *Marks serenity/tranquility/peace*
- *Introduce as much greenery as possible*
- *Signifies a quieter, residential area*
- *Elder St: one observation that planting is very new to Elder Street, and not in keeping with its historic character*

BLOSSOM STREET

- *Concern that active frontages and an increased number of pedestrians will be dangerous considering the traffic and speeds of vehicles – tables and chairs on the street a particular concern*

ELDER STREET

- *Character should be preserved exactly as is*
- *Introduce York Stone throughout Elder Street*

DESIGN WORKSHOP S1 - AHMM

Save Fleur de Lis Passage. Keep its ambience and character. Also, the height of the pencil tower as mooted at 15 storeys is too high. Glad you retaining old cobbles. I must plead that you leave Fleur de Lis passage untouched. The flag stones are ancient and the dark seedy ambience is a touch of "old London", authentic and rare.

15 storeys is far too tall for the corner tower – triangle building.

*Is the square open 24 hours?
Address the square – pull materials across
Type of retail units: must be independent
Retention of Blossom Street
Ground floor windows
Boring design
Daylighting of commercial street*

DESIGN WORKSHOP S1A – DUGGAN MORRIS

I think the facades of 14-15 Norton Folgate should be preserved. I'm afraid I don't like the proposed building at the end of Folgate Street. I would like to see the old court house reconstructed but maybe that's just dreaming...

DESIGN WORKSHOP S1B - DSDHA

I am very pleased that the Blossom Street warehouses are being retained. I am also much relieved that Folgate Street around the pub will also be retained. I like the idea of the court yard. It would suit bars and cafes. As for traffic, keep it one way.

DESIGN WORKSHOP S3 - AHMM

I would like to see the Loom Court building which fronts Elder Street done so it is a replica of the old side of Elder Street or – better – the buildings that used to be there before demolition in the 1970s. Have flats but have the entrance to them appearing to be town houses.

The Elder Street façade / elevation is really important – you need to tie in this new build with the homes on this street – this is a really important historic streetscape.

DESIGN WORKSHOP PUBLIC REALM - EAST

A popular historic assessment is needed of the street furniture and finishes in order to inform the development of the proposals. All historic finishes should be retained and repaired.

Glad you're retaining old cobbles. I must plead that you leave Fleur De Lys passage untouched. The flagstones are ancient and the dark, seedy ambience is a touch of "old London", authentic and rare.

DESIGN WORKSHOP GENERAL

This area is unique and special. The buildings here are full of individual character. I would hope to see this reflected in the new development. I think that DSDHA and Duggan Morris Architects are achieving this from the rough ideas shown.

I am concerned the other large scale building plans are generic city designs and I would like to see some leaps of imagination. I want magic and something that would make my heart sing. I want people 200-300 years from now to be fighting to save your designs – so make them special.

PUBLIC REALM WORKSHOP

All the relevant streets should be cobbled- and the alleyways into Lamb Street that aren't already paved with York Stone.

I like the high curbs in Fleur de Lys Street – and elsewhere.

Spital Square could be cobbled.

Repair of cobbles v important and restore camber of the streets (more cobbles the better! But must be historic)

Overall, agree smarten up but let's not get "prissy" – keep understated feel to Blossom St.

No through road signs need to be at entrance to Elder St.

Public Realm walkabout All the relevant streets should be cobbled- and the alleyways into Lamb Street that aren't already paved with York Stone.

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Spital Square could be cobbled.

Repair of cobbles v important and restore camber of the streets (more cobbles the better! But must be historic)

Overall, agree smarten up but let's not get "prissy" – keep understated feel to Blossom St.

No through road signs need to be at entrance to Elder St.

Maintain cobbles and general character and feel of the streets

Reinstate the passage at position of the Savoy Café

Keep 18th C shop fronts and houses above

Fleur de Lis maintained and avoid too much glass

Light well on Blossom Street?

Use Folgate St as through street

York Stones to Elder St

Crossing at Commercial Street

Remove steps to Elder St warehouses

Rooftops/urban realm

Naming space – relative and historical places

Greenery please eg. Mulberry trees

Cobbles should be put back on the end of the roads as tarmac is really not a good combination with the cobbles, especially as it is a conservation area.

A public garden area with something like a fountain or water feature would be pleasant addition.

More lighting for the alleyways and some floor lighting will be ideal for this up and coming area. And make it a lot safer to walk through in the evenings.

York stone effect slabs on pavements instead of concrete, as concrete really looks out of place with the york stone slabs that have been recently layed around the area.

We are going to need more resident parking areas with all the new additional residential and business residents.

Tearooms, Flower shop or Delicatessen would be very welcome in Fleur de lis street.

Replace modern gates with antique style gates, so that they are in keeping with the surrounding conservation area.