

Bakers Lane QRP Summary Reports:

20.03.20 – Formal review of Epping Town Centre Sites

- While supporting the emerging work, the panel thinks there is scope to be bolder.
- The panel recommends further work to define, proactively manage, protect and measure 'quality', through each RIBA stage of work.
- The panel recommends embedding clear sustainability commitments at RIBA Stage 1 or 2, which could include precedent research for criteria such as Passivhaus.
- It highlights the benefits of early community engagement.
- The panel encourages options testing for the mix and location of key Town Centre functions and non-residential land uses. It also suggests broadening the spatial scope of the Brief, to look beyond red line boundaries and consider the relationship between the five sites and the high street, including potential public realm improvements.
- The panel urges a holistic view of the whole town centre to inform key design moves on each site.
- The panel thinks the current approach to car parking is unresolved. It highlights the huge potential to encourage sustainable travel and adopt a flexible future-proofed strategy to car parking and travel.

10.07.20 – Formal review of Epping Town Centre Sites

- The panel thinks a more convincingly comprehensive approach is developing.
- It strongly welcomes reconsideration of the leisure centre location and multi-storey car park proposals.
- The panel is yet to be convinced on the analysis undertaken to support the current approach to town centre functions, or rationale for the housing typologies, tenure and mix. While it broadly supports the uses suggested, it is unclear why specific uses are being directed to specific sites.
- It strongly recommends further work to ensure exemplary housing design, including revisiting typologies, internal arrangements and layouts. The panel would like to see more detail at a framework level before planning application details are developed, including on: routes, broader connectivity, servicing, edges, integration and retail arrangements.
- It continues to strongly urge early engagement to develop the project vision – so people can feel genuine agency in informing proposals.

17.09.20 – Workshop review of Epping Town Centre Sites

- The Panel applauds the substantial work undertaken since the last review.
- The approach taken to engagement is commendable and should be valuable in informing ongoing design work.
- The panel continues to stress the importance of looking beyond physical building elements – to engage with the social, not just physical development of the centre. It would have expected to see mapping – analysing the social and cultural offer that already exists in the centre. This would then be used to inform an approach to 'fill in these gaps'.
- The panel encourages developing a meanwhile strategy, and exploring the potential for small scale public realm interventions.

- Greater clarity is needed on how individual sites and public realm will be phased, funded and delivered including the delivery of public realm improvements.
- The panel continues to strongly urge that the council re-consider the 'no net loss' approach to car parking – and follow an evidence-based approach to parking and sustainable travel.

30.10.20 – Site Specific Workshop review

- The panel finds much to admire but recommends significant reconsideration of a number of aspects in advance of a planning submission.
- The panel encourages the team to learn from the pandemic by celebrating the outdoors with an active rooftop or shared public amenity spaces for exercise and play.
- The team is urged to develop its sustainability strategy further, so that it becomes an exemplar scheme suited to a civic setting. This includes using materials and systems to promote sustainability more widely and establishing a heat exchange system.
- The team should strive to create a flexible community hub that can facilitate non-sporting uses and events at different times of the day.
- The step in topography to the western side should be reconsidered, and priority parking moved to Cottis Lane to enlarge the area of external public space accessible from Bakers Lane.
- The panel welcomes the way the building strongly addresses the eastern corner of the site, but recommends that the pedestrian link to Cottis Lane Car Park is reconsidered to provide safe accessibility.
- The panel supports the simplicity of the building form, and encourages the use of a robust material palette, with careful attention to detailing.