

AVONMOUTH HOUSE

6 Avonmouth Street, London, SE1 6NX

SUMMARY PROOF OF EVIDENCE
of Richard Coleman Dip Arch (Cant) ARB RIBA RIAI
DESIGN AND TOWNSCAPE

on behalf of Tribe Avonmouth House Limited

Planning Inspectorate Reference: APP/A5840/W/22/3303205

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** I am Richard Coleman. My consultancy was appointed to advise on Townscape and Heritage through the design process and to provide assessments for the planning application via a HTVA document. This was a collaboration with Stitch Architects an architectural practice of considerable design talent. My full proof expands on this. My Appendices extends my CV and provides the HTVA rendered views for convenience.

2.0 DEVELOPMENT SITE

- 2.1** The appeal site needs development. It's context is mixed with 2 and 5 storeys to the south and east and a high buildings cluster ranging from 24 to 41 storeys to the north and west. Proposals exist close by for further buildings of up to 46 storeys. The appeal site design and height therefore, can be derived from a broad contextual choice.

3.0 THE APPEAL SCHEME

- 3.1** The design quality of the appeal scheme is high. Architectural skill has transformed a difficult brief for a repetitive programme and produced a sculptural building articulated in a way which responds to the differing scales of the context resulting in a thoughtful, qualitative and distinctive architecture. This is analysed in Chapter 2 of the HTVA. The HTVA provides information about the site, it's history and it's context. It objectively assesses the height and

design in relation to the context and to policy. It's height, which acts as a transition between contrasting contexts, the vertical and horizontal articulation, the use of different colours in the masonry cladding and the richness of its profile all contribute to its design quality.3.2 The Council's first reason for refusal is analysed and is judged to be made without acknowledgement of the care in detailed design and modelling which contributes to a superior compositional quality absent from the outline consented schemes. I compare the dimensions of the individual designs to a series of built examples.

3.2 LBS Statement of Case

Both the impact on the townscape and the design quality are criticised by the Council. The former impact is in my professional opinion a positive benefit as a result of the latter design quality and its consideration for the context. Impact need not be either harmful or unacceptable in these conditions. In fact design quality can reduce harm when it occurs as Historic England notes in para 39 of their advice note No.4 states. A poor design of 16 storeys would cause harm to the townscape but the appeal scheme design is such that no harm occurs. The GLA concur. I believe the appeal scheme accords with local policy in this respect. In my main proof I comment on each of the Council's substantive criticisms within their statement of case in this regard.

3.4 National Policy and Guidance (NPPF&NPPG)

I have checked the aspects of townscape and heritage on which national advice gives direction and find that the appeal scheme satisfies them very well.

3.4.36 Historic England Tall Buildings

Checked against the relevant advice from HE, I believe the appeal scheme succeeds in satisfying it.

3.4.42 GLA London Plan

I believe the appeal scheme satisfies GLA policy D3 and D9. This is confirmed in its supportive Stage 1 report.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The HTVA assessed the qualities of the design as a transitional element of the tall buildings cluster at the north side of Elephant and Castle. It concluded that the appeal scheme is a worthy and appropriate addition to both that cluster, the smaller scale hinterland and Newington Gardens.

4.2 Reason for Refusal - The reason is highly critical of the appeal scheme and proclaims adverse effects on views from the surrounding area and insufficient architectural quality. The reasons are not sustainable and contrary to the conclusion reached by the GLA. They appear to be based on a

misunderstanding of the scheme an overreliance on the still images within the application rather than how it would be perceived in reality.

4.3 In my main proof of evidence I consider a series of checklists to illustrate how well the design stands up to scrutiny, using various national guidance criteria, within my area of skills. These range from assessment based on guidance within the NPPF, NPPG, the National Design Guide and Historic England's Advice Note 4: Tall Buildings, and the London Plan. Testing the scheme through these means confirms its compliance within the aspirations of the planning system.

4.4 In this evidence I show how misconceived is the basis for the reason for refusal. I do this through enlarging upon the valid assessments made in the HTVA. I also do so by challenging each and every criticism in the Council's Statement of Case.

4.5 The appeal scheme is planning policy compliant in these respects, high quality in urban design and architecture, and worthily adds to a townscape and sense of place for this area of Southwark while providing much needed student accommodation. I recommend to the Inspector that the scheme be approved.