

Rival Mount Pleasant plans submitted

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COMMENTS (8)



SAVE

Francis Terry and Mount Pleasant Association submit plans to Camden for Royal Mail site

Rival plans by traditionalist architect Francis Terry and a group of local residents have been submitted for the redevelopment of the Royal Mail's Mount Pleasant sorting office in Clerkenwell, central London.

The application by the Mount Pleasant Association (MPA) has been submitted to Camden Council under "community right to build" powers. It is thought to be the largest application of its kind to date.

The initial application is for 125 homes, up to half of which would be affordable.

Under the plans homes would be built in five linked buildings ranging from four storeys to eight storeys in height, alongside 1,200 m² of commercial space. A 900m² community open space would also be created, as well as communal roof terraces for residents.

If successful the MPA plans to submit further plans for the 3.5 ha wider site.

The MPA, working together with lobby group Create Streets, is countering already consented plans by AHMM, Allies & Morrison, Feilden Clegg Bradley and Wilkinson Eyre for nearly 700 homes at the site, in buildings rising up to 15 storeys in height, which the MPA argues are too dense for the area.

The MPA's plans are backed by heavyweight investor Legal & General and developer U+I.

Prior to his election as London mayor, Sadiq Khan praised the locals' initiative as "a great example of how big developments should work". The MPA won £150,000 from the GLA's community right to build fund to work up its own planning application earlier this year.

Speaking to the Guardian, The MPA's Edward Denison, a Bartlett tutor, writer and photographer, said: "This process has brought the community together and everyone has been involved in understanding the neighbourhood and what is needed.

"It is very different to the design we were presented with. This shows there is an alternative way to go about big development instead of the top-down process."

In a statement, Royal Mail Group said: "Royal Mail obtained planning permission in March 2015 for the redevelopment of parts of our Mount Pleasant site that are surplus to our operations, as previously announced. We are currently working to prepare the site for marketing."

Nicholas Boys Smith of Create Streets, which have worked with the MPA on the project, said: "The strong support of the local community for Mount Pleasant Circus shows, yet again, that communities will not just support but passionately argue for development when they can help shape it, when it is beautiful, when it has a sense of place and when it responds to the needs and hopes of local people.

"Ultimately our process for large developments, indeed for our whole planning and development control process needs to move from an often faked post hoc consultation to co-design with local residents.

"We have had constructive conversations with Royal Mail and with a range of developers and investors including U&I and Legal and General who have supported our approach. We hope to take this forward before Christmas and in the New Year."



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