

25 April 2017

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## Dalston Quarter Consultation Response from Arcola Theatre

**DRAFT - NOT FOR SUBMISSION**

### Draft Principle 1: Recognition of past and present to shape the future:

(a) The contribution and role of existing organisations to the Quarter will be recognised alongside opportunities for their future growth and their involvement in taking the project forward;

The role of the existing community, cultural, creative and third sector organisations should be more than 'recognised' in any redevelopment. This Principle should commit to full engagement with existing organisations within these sectors, and a commitment made that any proposals that are put forward on these sites will reinforce existing organisations in these sectors and facilitate and support their future growth where possible.

(b) Existing buildings with heritage significance will sought to be retained or refurbished where possible alongside new buildings of exemplar and high quality design to enhance the area's vibrant character and celebrate Dalston's diversity (including the Terrace on the south side of Dalston Lane at Nos. 16-22 Dalston Lane).

The retention of existing buildings of heritage significance should be the default position. Any demolition of buildings of significance should not be permitted on the grounds of financial viability alone. However retention of existing buildings should not obstruct the most effective use of the sites for cultural and creative uses.

All new building should be of exemplary and high quality design and provisions put in place for quality to be safeguarded in any future development process.

### Draft Principle 2: Provide a diverse range of uses which work together to foster networking, collaboration and the creation of cutting edge products and services:

(a) Provision of a range of improved, flexible floorspace to support creative/cultural and community businesses that will complement the existing Quarter's assets and promote employment opportunities. Employment floorspace may range from 'desk-space' to 'move-on space' for a variety of different sectors, including the provision of some affordable floorspace for charities and social organisations, local professional services, creative tech businesses, for makers and the creative arts;

(b) Improved retail floorspace with a range of unit sizes that could support an independent retail offer helping to maintain Dalston Town Centre's distinct character and appeal, complementing and reinforcing the town centre's reputation as home to an innovative and enterprising community;

(c) The design for non-residential space could take pointers from Dalston's creative and light industrial heritage. From the materials used in construction through the design process to the provision of space which helps break down the barriers of planning use classes to provide truly shared space which meets the needs of different uses and of a range of business activities. This could include components such as higher ceiling heights, mezzanines floors where possible; shared service areas, entrances and receptions;

(d) The introduction of a range of residential development types could also be included. This would offer the potential for affordable and low cost ownership housing through the Council's involvement, as well as homes for market sale to help pay for the delivery of community and cultural floorspace.



The range of uses listed are not prioritised. This priority should be more clearly defined - with the creative, cultural, community and workspace uses being defined as the primary uses on the site; with the retail and residential uses being subsidiary to these functions.

The diverse range of uses should be anchored, where possible, by existing cultural and creative tenants in order to achieve the arts-led cultural destination in line with the Dalston AAP, which has the stated aim to "establish Dalston as one of London's foremost centres for culture, creative industries and the third sector through improving and expanding facilities and attractions, such as provision of affordable workspace, a major programme of public art and a relocated Arcola Theatre in the area." The AAP specifically zones sites 2 & 3 for primarily cultural uses. This should be reflected in this Principle.

As noted above, the proposed redevelopment of these sites should support existing uses and their plans for future growth.

This Principle should not preclude bespoke facilities for cultural or commercial uses. As such the wording should be amended to read "flexible floorspace and bespoke facilities to support creative/ cultural and community businesses".

Any retail space should be small-scale independent retail units fronting Dalston Lane. Retail on Ashwin Street should be subsidiary to primary creative, cultural, community and workspace functions.

The inclusion of residential should be more clearly stated as being included to create a rich mix of uses on the site rather than to be seen as a commercial driver on the site.

This Principle should commit to a minimum of 35% affordable housing by habitable room being provided. This should not be subject to viability.

Care will be required to avoid conflict between new residential uses in Ashwin Street and cultural uses (e.g. evening noise).

### **Draft Principle 3: Re-enforce a public realm befitting the 'Dalston Quarter':**

(a) Facilitate high quality buildings with active frontages and a set of enhancements to Ashwin Street to encourage 'shared space', 'spill out spaces' and pedestrian spaces along the street further defining this unique and vibrant space and strengthening Ashwin Street's reputation as an arts led cultural destination;

Quality buildings and public realm area are supported. However, the public realm should not be sanitized. It should be recognized that this is a vibrant, busy working area, with the need for continuing vehicular access to Ashwin Street for access, parking and loading and unloading.

(b) Sites with an eastern frontage onto the Eastern Curve Public Realm could potentially include active frontages onto the space which may include areas of publicly accessible green space, including potential for some continued use as a community garden and the creation of complementary urban spaces that enhance the green spaces and create a green lung in the heart of Dalston.

The opportunity for cultural and community activities to spill-out in to Public Realm is welcomed.

It is noted that most of the proposed Eastern Curve Public Realm (presently the Dalston Eastern Curve Garden) is not on council owned land and thus is not directly addressed by this consultation on use of LB Hackney owned sites. Nonetheless, since high quality green spaces are crucial to the well-being of residents and the attractiveness of Dalston to visitors, we express here the importance of ensuring that such green spaces are catered for in wider developments.

