

planning approval: **Uplands, Walthamstow**

The London Borough of Waltham Forest has granted approval to the hybrid planning application for plans drawn up by Allies and Morrison for Uplands, on behalf of NEAT developments. The 5.45ha site is located at the heart of the Blackhorse Lane SIL in the Lea Valley. Through an industrial intensification strategy, masterplan proposals re-provide and increase industrial capacity while adding a range of other uses such as food and beverage, retail, educational spaces, a doctor's surgery and up to 1,800 new homes.

Uplands Business Park is already home to a diverse mix of workspaces, including creative businesses as well as traditional industry. Over the years these businesses have become leaner, cleaner and greener; many have begun to trade directly with customers on site, which has attracted people into the area. The re-provision and long-term retention of industrial uses at Uplands lies at the very heart of this masterplan and underpins all design decisions and strategies, from the block structure and the street hierarchy to the design of public spaces and mix of uses.

The outline application comprises eight development plots and innovative typologies such as stacked industrial and podium industrial buildings combined with workshops; in total up to 167,398 sqm (GEA) of residential floorspace, up to 14,824 sqm (GEA) of industrial floorspace, and up to 5,000 sqm (GEA) of commercial and community floorspace. Detailed proposals for Phase One's 1.52ha will deliver a stacked industrial block with 17,636 sqm of industrial floorspace, and a residential block (35% affordable) with workshops at ground and



first floor levels. The approval also establishes important proposals for public realm, a range of spaces across the site that respond to the new neighbourhood's key functions: a place to work (industrial yard), a place to live (community yard) and a place to enjoy (commercial yard). A waterside park will complement the yards and introduces a north-south cycle route as well as green space and play areas. The project provides a model for accommodating industrial uses within a changing urban context.

Brian Reynolds, NEAT Developments said *"Industrial intensification and co-location are simple ideas but not easy to deliver. At Uplands, there were several constraints that our designers had to work through: a high-pressure water tunnel requiring a 22m non-piling zone diagonally across the site, and the need to be a good neighbour to a girls' secondary school were two of the most pressing. But we also wanted to keep as many of the existing businesses as possible and give them quality production areas as well as front facing sales spaces. At the same time, we needed to consider the new uses, particularly the residential element. Crucial was the separation of the industrial route and the non-industrial "neighbourhood" route to give a road infrastructure serving the industrial floorspace in parallel to a safe and attractive network of streets and open spaces for pedestrians and cyclists.*

All of this has to be affordable, and flexible enough to adapt to changing requirements – for example, we've included a 'swing block' that can be delivered as podium industrial or as stacked industrial. We hope Uplands will become a high quality 15 Minute Neighbourhood."

Antje Saunders, Director at Allies and Morrison said *"In developing a mixed-use masterplan for Uplands, it was important to see co-location as an opportunity not a compromise. Ensuring that each of the different uses proposed had the highest quality design provision was fundamental, and one of the ways we did this was to consider how the neighbourhood will be experienced differently by residents, employees, visitors and neighbours.*

The masterplan separates circulation routes, and delivers a variety of open spaces, covering 35% of the site. Best practice sustainability standards underpin the design of the new neighbourhood through a thorough set of design guidelines that will apply to future RMA applications. These cover a wide range of criteria such as designing for robustness, prioritising walkability and cycling, and increasing biodiversity.

In line with Agent of Change requirements we developed a family of buildings of a variety of typologies that will either co-locate functions or accommodate adjacencies. For example a stacked industrial building combines an expansive high-ceilinged ground floor unit with a large yard, with spaces for small businesses on the floors above. Another combines an industrial podium with a residential courtyard block, while small, stacked workspaces can take their place alongside predominantly residential blocks. Particular attention was paid to the role of the Phase 1 proposals as an exemplar case study, co-locating a stacked industrial building, workshops and residential homes within blocks A and B, alongside providing 100% dual aspect homes.

Our masterplan is also careful to build in future flexibility to allow it to adapt to changing requirements and provide a framework for a sustainable and long-term industrially functional neighbourhood."



Location	London E17
Uses	Industrial, Workplace, Housing
Client	NEAT Developments on behalf of BlackRock
Status	Current
Size	5.45 ha site area
Expertise	Masterplanning, Architecture
Team	Architecture: Allies and Morrison, Landscape: Bradley-Hole Schoenaich, Planning: Turley, Transport: Ardent, Engineering: Meinhardt, EIA: Quod, Cost: Gardiner & Theobald

About Allies and Morrison

Allies and Morrison is a practice of architects and urbanists based in London, Manchester and Cambridge. We design beautiful buildings that have long life and can adapt over the generations. We also shape enduring places whether new pieces of city or settlements at any scale. All our projects are concerned with the crafting of every detail and the appreciation for the uniqueness of each context.

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