

## Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

### Architects Appraisal Panel Report

Imperial West, Wood Lane, W12  
Mixed use university-led scheme

14<sup>th</sup> March 2012

Aukett Fitzroy Robinson  
and PLP

This project for a university campus is in LB Hammersmith and Fulham, with the Royal Borough consulted as the neighbouring authority. The hybrid application includes a new School of Public Health, an 'incubator' building for research/business use, an hotel with conference facility and a residential tower, set around a contemporary landscaped central space.

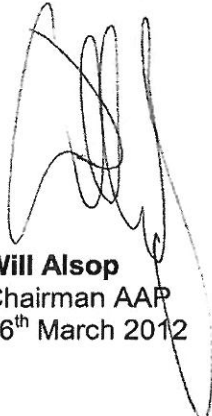
The AAP welcomed the use of the former industrial site for university-led activities, but believed the proposal was more the consequence of a commercial masterplan. There was no attempt at placemaking and promoting a built form that felt like it was a part of a university campus. Furthermore, it did not take advantage of the university's educational and research programme for public health.

The panel believed the public space could be much improved both by reviewing the footprint of the surrounding buildings, especially the hotel, to provide a cohesive space more formal central square; and by drawing on the theme of healthy living for its landscape treatment in support of the focal college building.

The surrounding building heights and forms appeared disparate and failed to gel. The architecture needed either to emphasise and embrace their diversity; or draw more similarities and sense of coordination in their detailed finish. However, the use of terracotta in general was thought to be overworked and clichéd.

It considered the proposed tower needed further work to become the convincing urban marker. Its architecture and activities at the base and top should be reviewed, incorporating a university function or stronger connection to Imperial College; as should the opportunity for turning the building round to face westwards in support of its premise as a 'gateway' building for those arriving into central London. The glazed eastern facade and winter gardens were unconvincing in terms of achieving the envisaged design quality.

Overall, the panel felt there was more to be done overcome the sense that much of the development was not university-related, and that greater effort was need to evoke and celebrate the university campus and new School of Public Health.



**Will Alsop**  
Chairman AAP  
26<sup>th</sup> March 2012