

Squire and Farrell square up in Vauxhall

'Prize fight between architects' as designer and masterplanner speak at public inquiry

Elizabeth Hopkirk

Squire & Partners' proposal for two towers beside Vauxhall bus station will leave the public feeling stranded on a traffic island, Terry Farrell told a government planning inspector this week.

Farrell and Michael Squire were both called to give evidence at a public inquiry, in what the latter described as a "prize fight between two architects".

Speaking for Lambeth council, Farrell, who drew up a master-

plan for the wider Vauxhall and Nine Elms area, argued that a better design could transform the site into a vibrant high street despite its location on one of London's most notorious gyratory systems.

Squire is proposing two elliptical towers of up to 41 storeys on the Vauxhall Island site with flats over retail and a hotel. The space between the two would be covered, creating a "winter garden" and a through route for pedestrians coming from Nine Elms towards the stations. Retail pavil-



Squire & Partners' scheme includes two towers up to 41 storeys.

ions would be added as demand grew from future developments.

But Farrell dismissed the canopy as decorative and said:

"These towers don't easily adapt to encourage enclosure. Small kiosks don't provide the necessary enclosure. Four or five storeys of

foothills can contribute to the enclosure needed to protect the town centre."

He advised intensifying the development to create a traditional streetscape, and moving the public open space to the roofs of lower buildings.

"The Squire scheme shows little attempt to improve the diversity at street level and there is little contribution to the uses needed for a town centre," he said.

"Car is still king and the gyratory is still dominant. Little is done for pedestrians to make them feel like they're not stranded on the island."

Lambeth's planning consultant, Iwan Richards, described

Squire's scheme as "seriously lacking" and missing a "golden opportunity" to create a new heart for Vauxhall.

But Squire insisted his motivation had always been to give Vauxhall a heart.

The garden between his towers would be both a thoroughfare and an attractive place to linger over a coffee while waiting for a bus, he said.

"It's absurd to say a four-storey-high garden would be public space," he said of Farrell's idea.

Developer Kylun is appealing against the council's non-determination of the plans. Communities secretary Eric Pickles will make a final decision later this year.

FIRST LOOK DELVENDAHL MARTIN ARCHITECTS

PRIVATE HOUSE, FOREST HILL, LONDON



A new double-height roof will sit on top of the existing bungalow.



Dramatic views of London are framed by the gabled roof.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

- 1 Balcony
- 2 Planting
- 3 Living room
- 4 Kitchen
- 5 Dining
- 6 Terrace



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

- 1 Entrance
- 2 Bedroom
- 3 Family room
- 4 Bathroom
- 5 Utility room
- 6 Deck

Delvendahl Martin Architects has won planning for a radical remodelling of a private house in Forest Hill, south-east London.

The site is located on one of the highest points in the area and enjoys unique views over the city to the north. The project proposes placing a new habitable roof form, containing the main living spaces, on top of an existing

bungalow to take full advantage of the location.

"A roof with a view" was the key idea behind the brief for this four-bedroom house, which includes a new garage structure.

The shape of the roof was generated by placing a double-pitched volume over the entire footprint of the existing building and then sculpting open views to the north and south.

The main structure of the roof will be constructed using a series of laminated timber portal frames spanning from wall to wall of the existing bungalow, which will be resurfaced with a textured render.

The timber frames of the new structure are intended to establish a robust yet sympathetic response to the half-timber and roughcast

gables of the adjacent "cottage-revival" houses.

The new-built elements will be constructed using three main exterior materials: laminated timber frames, transparent and translucent glazing, and fibre cement — used in tiled form for the main roof elements and in larger panel formats for wall cladding.

The project is due to start on site at the end of the year.