# EIA Quality Mark Case Study

## New Covent Garden Market – London Borough of Wandsworth

## Key Issues

There were a number of key issues that needed to be addressed through the EIA and design process, including:

- A requirement to maintain the market operations throughout construction, and therefore a strategy was developed in order to systematically ‘decant’ operations to temporary facilities.
- Due to the 12.5 year anticipated construction programme, a number of ‘timeslices’ were identified and tested for different periods of the construction programme in order to assess a reasonable worst case scenario.
- The sensitivity of the site’s location with regard to strategic views across the River Thames from The Palace of Westminster World Heritage Site. To avoid impacts on this protected view, the design ensured no building would be visible behind or above the roofline of the palace.
- In order to minimise daylight and sunlight effects on surrounding properties, the height of the proposed buildings was.
- Concern from local residents about the potential for an increase in noise levels with a new market scheme in place meant a noise barrier had to be carefully designed along with the layout of the ‘Market Site’ so that noisy operations were reduced or screened as far as possible.

## Purpose of the Project

The purpose of the project was to provide a high quality mixed use destination whilst retaining use of the current market. The client needed to deliver a facility that its market traders can use, both now and in the future by providing improved units and by making operations more efficient overall. By providing residential homes (both private and affordable), this project will contribute to the growth of the Nine Elms area, in line with the objectives of the Vauxhall, Nine Elms and Battersea Opportunity Area (VNEB OA) planning framework.

## Description of the Project

The site is located in central London and in the area of Nine Elms, within the London Borough of Wandsworth (LBW). It currently comprises five distinct parcels of land, totaling approximately 25 hectares. Demolition of the existing buildings on the site will be followed by the construction of a consolidated fruit and vegetable wholesale market, including a new flower market on what is referred to as the ‘Market Site’, as well as 3,019 residential units (plus retail, office, leisure and community uses). Outline planning permission was sought for the development overall, with the ‘Market Site’ and the tallest building in the proposals submitted in detail. Planning permission was granted by in November 2014.
Lessons Learnt

An early and extensive consultation programme led by the client team was carried out to understand the most beneficial design for both the market traders and the surrounding community. This allowed the design to develop progressively, achieving buy-in from local residents and allowing environmental mitigation measures to be designed into the scheme.

With such a complex EIA, understanding the design evolution process and overall planning strategy was of key importance. Collaboration and communication with the project team, which included a large client base, two architectural firms, planning consultant and a large number of technical consultants was vital in order to understand and manage the vast amount of information pertinent to producing a robust EIA.

The cumulative assessment needed careful consideration in such a dynamic area as the VNEB OA, with a number of developments coming forward for planning at the same time. A total of 19 cumulative schemes were assessed in the ES including the adjacent Market Towers (One Nine Elms) and planning applications were carefully monitored during this project to ensure the appropriate schemes were captured.

Lessons Learnt cont.

For the outline elements of the planning application, the AECOM EIA team provided detailed advice and input into the development of a set of parameters against which the proposed development was assessed. This involved meeting up with the relevant technical specialists, architects and the client to identify these parameters (such as the massing of the proposed buildings) and to discuss the amount of flexibility that could be achieved within them, whilst ensuring a robust assessment of the environmental effects. The parameter plans were ultimately based on building footprints which allowed a more accurate and meaningful assessment to be undertaken, compared to parameters being based on development plots.

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