

Final Biota! Aquarium Design and Stunning Bridge Design revealed for Silvertown Quays

The developers of the £1.5 billion Royal Dock Site, Silvertown Quays Limited, KUD International and landowners London Development Agency have revealed the final designs for Biota! the aquarium designed by renowned architect Terry Farrell & Partners and which will be operated by the Zoological Society of London. The development team also released images of the striking pedestrian bridge designed by Arup in partnership with Patel Taylor, which will create a key gateway to the development.

The final design for Biota! incorporates an ETFE roof, a material being used on some of the most innovative new buildings around the world such as the Eden Project in Devon, the Allianz Stadium in Munich and the Beijing National Aquatics Centre which forms part of the 2008 Olympics.

ETFE is a highly sustainable material with many advantages; it is translucent and allows natural daylight assisting the strongly contrasting 'biomes' to thrive (Biota! is split into biomes that recreate complete ecosystems with plants, fish, free flying birds, mammals and other animals). In terms of the environmental control system for the aquarium the ETFE roof will also facilitate natural ventilation.

The building is arranged around a central atrium and the first floor houses the open ocean and coral reef exhibits with day-lit biomes on the upper floors. The exhibit areas represent diverse world habitats - the Amazon, the British Isles, the Indo-Pacific, and the Atlantic Ocean. The fifth exhibit area, 'Living Conservation', focuses on protecting aquatic species and their habitats, the underlying message of Biota!

A detailed planning application for Biota! and the accompanying public realm (designed by Patel Taylor) has now been submitted to the London Borough of Newham and detailed design work on the building has commenced. A detailed application was also submitted for the infrastructure elements of the development.

The pedestrian bridge forms a crucial part of the Biota! area and sits at an important threshold. It will cross North Woolwich Road, linking the Thames Barrier Park and the new Pontoon Dock DLR station to the south side, with Biota! and further mixed-use development around the Dock.

The contract to design the bridge was awarded following a competition. The jury included Silvertown Quays Limited, the London Development Agency and the London Borough of Newham with key advice from Design for London and masterplanners Urban Strategies Inc.

David Taylor, Chairman of Silvertown Quays Limited said:

"These announcements are another significant step towards the delivery of Silvertown Quays, one of the most important developments in London and the Thames Gateway. The bridge design by Arup and Patel Taylor is a huge contribution to the project, creating a gateway between the local area and the new development. We are also particularly pleased that the progress in the design of Biota! has resulted in a more sustainable project."

The design of the pedestrian bridge will complement the iconic Biota! and the award winning Thames Barrier Park, also designed by Patel Taylor, optimising views from the bridge towards Thames Barrier Park to the south and Biota! to the north.

The area and geometry of Thames Barrier Park was an inspiration to the vision of the new development for Silvertown Quays and the pedestrian bridge will reinforce the development strategy by forming a coherent physical and visual link.

The bridge deck is a continuous, visually uniform element, on a gentle vertical curve, and a hardly perceptible horizontal curve. The experience of moving across the Silvertown Quays pedestrian bridge will be heightened by the gentle asymmetry of its construction. The walkway, cantilevering from the side of a steel box girder, provides a shield against the road, to one side, while engaging with the Thames Barrier Park on the other side.

For further information please contact Naomi Galt, FD Tamesis on 0207 269 9351 or naomi.galt@fdtamesis.com

Note to Editors:

Silvertown Quays:

The transformation of Silvertown Quays is now set: the £1.5 billion development received the green light from the London Borough of Newham in May 2007 following the confirmation of planning approval and the completion of legal and funding agreements by developer Silvertown Quays Ltd (SQL).

Silvertown Quays is one of Europe's largest regeneration projects providing new homes, offices, workspace, retail, leisure, entertainment including Biotat! and Venture Xtreme and community facilities.

The development will include 5,000 new homes (including over 1,300 affordable units), 7,800 sq m of office space, 7,600 sq m of flexible workspace, 8,000 sq m of community facilities, 5,570 sq m of restaurants and bars and 18,925 sq m of leisure facilities that will include the world-class aquarium Biotat!, being developed by KUD International with the Zoological Society of London (ZSL).

The overall project will proceed in phases over the next 12 years.

The agreement between the London Borough of Newham and Silvertown Quays Limited (SQL), KUD International and landowners, the London Development Agency (LDA) will see the delivery of Biotat! and a major contribution to infrastructure and local benefits, bringing major gains to the borough, businesses and the local community. The community facilities include a multi-use community centre, a modern library, a major new health centre and a primary school with nursery facilities.

There will also be new public open spaces and landscaping, better pedestrian, bus and cycle routes and a new pedestrian bridge across the North Woolwich Road to the new Docklands Light Railway station. Silvertown Quays is set to be the new heart of the Royal Docks with high quality restaurants and retail offering variety and activity and creating a lively town centre.

Over £1m has been committed for training local people with an estimated 2,000 jobs being created with 25 per cent guaranteed to Newham residents plus 25 percent of construction jobs, with 10 per cent being apprenticeships.

Silvertown Quays Limited (SQL)

SQL is a special purpose company set up by regeneration specialist David Taylor who is its Chairman. The company was selected as developer following an international competition for the site by the London Development Agency in October 2002.

The London Development Agency (LDA)

The LDA is the London Mayor's agency for driving London's sustainable economic growth. It is the LDA's job to ensure that London remains a global success story. The LDA is dedicated to improving sustainability, health and equality of opportunity for Londoners.

KUD International

KUD International specialises in the management, co-ordination, planning, design and construction of major mixed-use regeneration developments and has specific expertise in the delivery of complex leisure projects (including aquaria, stadiums and arenas).

Bank of Scotland Corporate

Bank of Scotland Corporate, part of HBOS plc, has a reputation for excellence in the provision of corporate finance, delivering innovative funding solutions across a range of markets. Bank of Scotland Corporate is providing the development funding for the initial stages of the project.