

Colechurch House in Southwark receives planning approval

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Southwark Council has given planning approval for the redevelopment of Colechurch House site in London Bridge into an exemplar mixed-use scheme, which aims for net zero. The project will provide 48,180 square-metres (518,588 sq ft) of prime space for businesses to thrive, an expansive new public space and home for the popular Southwark Playhouse theatre.

Luke Fox, Head of Studio, Foster + Partners said. "As architects, we have a responsibility to leverage the power of design to positively influence public life and steer urban development towards a more sustainable, diverse and equitable future. Colechurch House is an exemplar project in this regard, and we look forward to working with CIT to make this pioneering project a reality."

The new sustainable development is a striking staggered form, rising to 22 storeys at its highest point. The wellbeing-driven office space is designed to suit the needs of today's workforce. A highly optimised façade will significantly reduce energy consumption, supported by mixed-mode ventilation (opening windows), ground source energy piles and on-site green energy generation comprising extensive photovoltaic panels. Winter gardens on every floor and verdant roof terraces will ensure ample spaces to unwind. There will also be an automated underground cycle storage system with over 200 spaces and end of journey facilities for commuters.

The development is lifted above an extensive new public park that stretches the length of the site. This exceptionally well-connected scheme will provide the area with much needed squares and flexible spaces that can be used for a range of community-led events throughout the year. The layout will open up historic views of Southwark Cathedral and local heritage buildings for the first time

Below the park will be a brand-new multi-storey venue for Southwark Playhouse, bringing the award-winning theatre back to its roots in London Bridge and opening up exciting new possibilities for its youth

and community programme. Together with new local shops and kiosks, the building and the new public realm will be a vibrant destination that can be enjoyed by all.

Ken Hogg, Partner, Foster + Partners, added: “The project delivers an abundance of flexible, new public spaces, which will enhance wellbeing for office workers and local residents, while fostering a sense of community.”