

Marcus Cooper's £500m Battersea plans set for approval

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Marcus Cooper's plans for a £500m residential-led redevelopment of QVC's former post-modernist headquarters at Marco Polo House in Battersea are set to get the go-ahead next week.

The Scott Brownrigg-designed plans for 346 Queenstown Road, SW8 have been recommended for approval by Wandsworth council. They would create 456 homes ranging from one to

three bedrooms, 68 of which are affordable. There would also be more than 13,000 sq ft of shops, offices and cafes and 213 car parking spaces. It would see the existing 180,000 sq ft, 1986-built office block demolished and replaced with two new buildings of up to 17 storeys and 15 storeys.

There have been concerns that demolition of the existing Ian Pollard-designed post-modernist offices would move away from Boris Johnson's preference for vibrant lower density development.

The Health & Safety Executive has advised against granting planning permission because of its proximity to Battersea's large gasholder. However, in view of the decision to decommission the gasholder the Executive has agreed to a phased development subject to the following condition.

"No residential unit that is wholly or partly within 128m of the wall side of the most northerly Gas Holder shall be occupied until the Hazardous Substances Consent for the Gas Holder Station."

Marcus Cooper has agreed to a commuted sum of £2.5m in lieu of additional on site affordable housing for the scheme.

Wandsworth council planning officers have recommended the scheme for approval at a 19 January planning meeting subject any request from the HSE for the Secretary of State to "call in" the scheme, the completion of a section 106 agreement to include a £9.17m contribution towards the cost of infrastructure, including but not limited to the Northern Line extension.