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**KPF Secures Approval for London Bridge Life Sciences Hub**  
***Re-designed Vinegar Yard scheme given the go ahead by the GLA***

Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates (KPF) has secured planning consent for a major life-sciences led, mixed-use development at Vinegar Yard – designed in partnership with CIT Developments for St Thomas Bermondsey Limited – one of the first buildings within the SC1 Life Science and Innovation District at London Bridge.

Vinegar Yard is designed to accommodate flexible medical use and to support the emerging Guy's and St Thomas's medical and research hub, alongside retail, commercial and affordable workspace. A new urban garden and additional public realm improvements will contribute to Southwark Council's ongoing work to improve connections across the borough and regenerate the wider area.

KPF brought extensive experience of successful life sciences-led development around the world to the UK, working on this key project at London Bridge and also at Canary Wharf, where KPF was recently appointed as the architect of Europe's largest commercial lab.

Healthcare and life sciences are rapidly evolving disciplines that require highly-resilient buildings that are designed for a loose-fit and a long-life, with the potential to be refitted in response to the changing requirements of tenants and the potential of new technologies. The design team worked closely with the GLA and Guy's and St Thomas's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, using the Guys and St Thomas Adaptable Estates Strategy to allow flexible medical and R&D use. This included increased floor-to-floor heights, a more rigid structure to control vibration, and spatial provision for systems to support healthcare use.

The new building sits at the heart of a district that has seen extraordinary regeneration and physical changes in recent years: the construction of The Shard, the redevelopment of London Bridge station, and the revitalisation of many of the area's historic buildings and post-war housing estates. In response, KPF have created a building with a distinctive stepped profile, rising to 20 storeys, composed as a series of carefully assembled volumes that respond to the sensitivities of the immediate context. Inspired by traditional warehouse architecture, the facades are differentiated through subtle variations within a palette of brick, terracotta, stone and glazing.

At its base, the building is active on all sides, with retail frontages and visual and physical permeability that will animate the new urban garden and surrounding streets. Above, its stepped arrangement creates a series of outdoor landscaped terraces for use by occupants. Small gardens also animate the façade and provide additional outdoor green space.

As part of the scheme, the existing warehouse building at 9 Fenning Street will be retained and converted into a community-focussed space, with ground floor retail and a first floor that can accommodate meetings, events and exhibitions.

The design team are targeting a BREEAM Outstanding rating and WELL Building Institute Gold standard with Platinum Fit-out. A high-performance façade, mixed-mode ventilation, all electric system, air-source heat pumps and integrated photovoltaics contribute to the commitment to achieve net-zero operational carbon.

A 27% reduction in embodied carbon has been set against the GLA Benchmark and the project is targeting embodied carbon below 800 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup>. For a longer lifespan, the facades are composed

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of fixed, solid spandrels with window infills, as opposed to a curtain wall system, allowing for easier targeted repair or replacement.

**John Bushell, Design Principal at Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates, said:**

*“We are delighted that Vinegar Yard has received planning consent. It’s been a long journey, but hugely rewarding, to deliver a design that places this building at the heart of London’s new central life sciences and innovation district. Life sciences are an increasingly important element in the UK property sector, and our experience around the world tells us that life sciences innovation blossoms within a thriving mixed-use neighbourhood. That is central to our approach at Vinegar Yard, and we are looking forward to seeing it take shape.*”

*“Connecting the benefits of the development with Southwark’s diverse community is just as vital to the success of our building and the SC1 District. We have listened and directly responded to local aspirations so that the scheme delivers lasting improvements to the borough.”*

**Ewen Puffett, Director at CIT, commented:**

*“We welcome the decision by the Mayor of London to approve the application for Vinegar Yard, a truly transformative development that will unlock this site’s potential as a place for health and creativity. It will drive improvements to health and wealth across the area, creating jobs and contributing to London’s post-Covid recovery.*”

*“The project is the product of over five years of hard work and close collaboration with both the Greater London Authority, Guy’s & St Thomas’ NHS Trust, Kings College London, Southwark Council, and our local community, reflecting CIT’s commitment to the area with a vision to bring a lasting and positive social and economic impact to London Bridge.”*

**Peter Ward, Director of Estate Development for Guy’s & St Thomas’ NHS Foundation Trust and King’s College London, commented:**

*“SC1 as a whole, and Vinegar Yard as a part of it, will bring very real benefits to the Trust, the University and to our patients, students, staff and communities. Growing the stock of space suitable for healthcare and medical research will give more people access to clinical trials, improve environments in which patients are treated, and create an estimated 60,000 new high quality jobs in our sector by 2050. CIT’s development will play its part in this, delivering direct local employment and training, and creating affordable workspace for our community in a model we hope to replicate across our innovation district.”*

**Professor Richard C Trembath, Senior Vice-President Health and Life Sciences - King's College London, Executive Director - King's Health Partners, adds:**

*“Vinegar Yard differs from a typical commercial development in a number of important ways. As a result, the technical specifications of the building means that it could be used by the Trust for outpatients, by KCL or tech firms for research, as Category 1 and 2 laboratories for industry or start-ups, or for aligned research activities. This is exactly the ecosystem of uses we want to encourage, whose location and proximities create a clear line of sight from the laboratory bench to the bedside, helping to accelerate the pace of innovation.*”

*“SC1 itself has a pipeline of potential life science businesses, researchers and start-ups that would take the space as part of the wider life science innovation community co-located at our BioMedical Hub on the London Bridge Campus. It is also a precedent, advert and benchmark for future development partners and investors that we would wish to champion.”*

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**William Austin, Founder of Southwark Studios, commented:**

*“We strongly believe Vinegar Yard will set an important and pioneering example for how to secure truly affordable workspace within Zone 1 of our Capital. There is interest from the GLA and local authorities to use this as an example and case-study of best practice for the affordable workspace sector. Designed and built-for-purpose by CIT, this new home for Southwark Studios and our community engagement space will provide a replicable solution that will deliver the next generation of spaces in London for creative production and cultural consumption.”*

**Richard Tyrie, Founder of GoodPeople added:**

*“We are very excited to be partnering with CIT to deliver long-term, transformational impact for local communities as part of the Vinegar Yard development.*

*“Vinegar Yard will see local communities access job opportunities and support that will directly connect them into employers in a sector that is set to witness significant growth. In doing so, we will tackle inequality, improve population health and wellbeing through innovative digitally-driven approaches, and focus on helping to prepare local residents for growth jobs of the future.”*

**Gareth Fox, Partner at Montagu Evans, said:**

*“This approval, combining life science land uses and an occupation mechanism, is a first for London and will unlock significant public benefits as well as advantages for the burgeoning SC1 Life Science Innovation District. Not only will this scheme act as a catalyst for life-saving medical research at London Bridge but its approach to planning can be adopted elsewhere to help bring forward other centres for medical excellence across the capital.”*

**-Ends-**

**Editors Notes:**

**Project Time Line**

On 27 May 2022 The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, approved the Vinegar Yard planning application (Ref: GLA/2020/6665) subject to planning conditions and S106 obligations.

December 2018	Initial planning application submitted
June 29, 2020	Planning permission refused at committee (officers recommended approval, subject to conditions and S106 agreement)
August 24, 2020	‘Called In’ by the Mayor of London. The applicant team worked with the GLA to revise the scheme
October, 2021	Revised application submitted
May 27, 2022	Consent granted

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**About Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates**

Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates (KPF) is one of the world’s preeminent architecture firms, providing architecture, interior, programming and master planning services for clients that include some of the most forward-thinking developers, corporations, entrepreneurs, and institutions around the world. The firm’s extensive portfolio spans more than 40 countries and includes a wide range of projects.

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Driven by individual design solutions, rather than a predetermined style, KPF's mission is to create buildings and places of the utmost quality and contextual sensitivity, providing a valuable impact on the cities they inhabit.

As a global practice with a far-reaching impact, KPF endeavours to design lasting architectural solutions that mitigate their lifecycle impact on environmental resources and that protect and enhance the well-being of the communities they serve. For that reason, the firm has joined AIA, RIBA, and many of its peers in a joint effort to develop the capabilities to design and deliver carbon-neutral buildings by 2030.

KPF's expertise in life sciences and innovation districts includes [Channelside](#) in Boston, [CUNY Advanced Science Research Centre](#) in New York, and the [Hong Kong University of Science and Technology](#).

[www.kpf.com](http://www.kpf.com)

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