

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 16 June 2024 21:16
To: Planning Policy Consultations
Subject: Local plan consultation response
Categories: CONFIRMED

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THIS IS AN EXTERNAL EMAIL

Dear sir/madam,

Please find below my response to the City Plan 2040 public consultation. Could you please confirm receipt?

Best,
Dr A R [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

I am writing today as a City resident, local business owner, and congregant of Bevis Marks Synagogue to state my disappointment in this proposed local plan, which in its current state is unsound. It does not provide the robust and specific protections for the synagogue which are so desperately needed, and in fact actually undermines any protection we do have in the following ways:

1. By designating our 'immediate setting' - an invented term - as the setting for protections, the City opens the way for developments that harm us just beyond this boundary. For example, the contested scheme at 31 Bury St, which the City's own planning committee rejected in 2021 as creating unacceptable massing and overshadowing of the synagogue, and which we are now forced to fight a second time, would be permitted under this plan. It seems the City is creating policy that allows developers to justify harming us, while using language that implies that they are creating protections instead. This is both misleading and a gross betrayal of the Jewish community's trust.
2. By removing the provision against tall buildings in conservation areas, the City is essentially making our newly designated Creechurch Conservation Area null and void. This removal of protection again gives the developers the green light and leaves us facing endless planning battles. It also undermines any protections for heritage across the whole of the City.

Bevis Marks Synagogue is the cathedral synagogue of British Jewry, and a site of immense significance both nationally and internationally. It is a 'heritage asset' which the City should be proud of and protect, but it is not only this. It is a living community, unique in the world for its uninterrupted customs, melodies, and traditions, which are specific to this site. I urge you in the strongest possible terms to work with us to create protections with specific parameters that will protect our historic setting in totality, including the sky view so core to our religious practice, so that developers know from the start what is permissible. Constantly forcing our community to be on the defensive, investing our time, energy and financial resources into fighting ongoing planning battles has begun to

feel abusive. The developers continue to resubmit, trying to exhaust us, and the City, which has a legal responsibility to prevent harm to its minority communities under the Equalities Act, seems to use its policies to help the developers get away with harming us. It is a sad and shocking state of affairs, and cannot be in keeping with the duties set out in the national planning policy guidelines. It certainly does not reflect the warm partnership our community has had with the City for the last three centuries.

Best,

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