

Committee(s)	Dated:
Planning and Transportation Committee	31/01/2024
Subject: City Plan 2040	Public

Representations

Representations have been received in relation to Item 5 (City Plan 2040) from following organisations: the City Property Association, Bevis Marks Synagogue, 20 Gracechurch Street and SAVE Britain's Heritage. The representations are set out below.

REDACTED
Planning and Development Director
Department of the Built Environment
City of London Corporation
London EC2P 2EJ

By email only: REDACTED

30 January 2024

RE: Updated City Plan 2040 and engagement

Dear REDACTED,

I am writing on behalf of the City Property Association (CPA), the membership body for the owners, investors, professional advisors and developers of real estate in the City of London. A list of the 150+ member companies we represent can be viewed [here](#).

We are aware that in the forthcoming Planning & Transportation Committee meeting on 31 January, Members will decide whether to consult on the updated draft of the City Plan 2040. CPA welcomes the opportunity to review the proposed updated draft Plan and fully engage with the City Corporation accordingly. On behalf of our members, we look forward to reviewing the draft Plan as part of the formal Regulation 19 consultation and providing comments and feedback, as part of a transparent and equitable process for all interested parties in accordance with national policy.

It is clear from the City Corporation's recent report [Future of Office Use](#) that the City Cluster and Key Areas of Change have an important role to play in accommodating further jobs and demographic growth that will in turn generate economic and social prosperity. Policies to support this will be critically important going forward, including enabling the further densification of the area. Not only is this a more sustainable approach to the delivery of new uses but the City's limited and narrow geographical area means that this is likely to be required and should be supported if the City of London is to continue to uphold its unique and unrivalled contribution to the UK's economy.

I would be happy to discuss any of the points raised in our letter and look forward to working with you and your colleagues on the City Plan 2040 going forward during the formal Regulation 19 consultation process.

Yours faithfully,

REDACTED

REDACTED / Chief Executive
City Property Association

REDACTED

From: REDACTED

Sent: Tuesday, January 30, 2024 2:30:00 PM

To: REDACTED

Subject: Please Protect Bevis Marks Synagogue

Dear REDACTED,

I hope this message finds you well.

I'm writing to you ahead of this Wednesday's P&T committee meeting where you will be asked to approve the draft local plan and send it to consultation. Unfortunately, the draft contains several policies that seem intentionally crafted to undermine Bevis Marks Synagogue's planning protections, just weeks after you approved a new Conservation Area to preserve it! In fact, the owners of 31 Bury st to our immediate south have curiously now submitted a new proposal for a very tall building, despite your committee's refusal of a similar one just a few years ago.

It is important that these new policies are not allowed to remain into the consultation phase where they will begin to gain weight. We are therefore asking that you support/ put forward a measure to make three reasonable and necessary amendments to it first.

1. To preserve the synagogue's sky-view backdrop
2. To include the synagogue's entire block in its immediate setting.
3. To retain the previous local plan's policy to prohibit tall buildings in Conservation Areas.

Attached you will find a short policy paper which explains all of this more fully. Please let me know if you have any questions or which to discuss further.

Thank you for your support in protecting Bevis Marks Synagogue.

Best,

REDACTED

BEVIS MARKS SYNAGOGUE

Protecting a major heritage and cultural asset through the City Plan 2040

BRIEFING FOR MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Important amendment to the draft City Plan

The proposed drafting of new Local Plan seeks to limit the duty to preserve or enhance the setting of the Grade 1 Listed Synagogue only to its "immediate" setting. The statutory provisions, however, provide that local planning authorities are under a duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area as a whole. The policy therefore is at odds with the statutory requirements imposed upon the City of London.

The Synagogue calls on Planning & Transportation Committee members to require this very unsatisfactory situation to be corrected before the draft Plan goes out to consultation.

As a minimum, Policy HE1 should be amended at point 9 to read "*Development in the defined immediate setting of Bevis Marks Synagogue and The Monument and development that affects their wider setting (including views out and in) should preserve and where possible enhance the elements that contribute to the significance of their setting.*"

This should be accompanied by an amendment to the map at Appendix 4 to show the protected view from the Synagogue in exactly the same way as has already been done for the Monument. The amended map should look approximately like this, where the red dashed line defines the "immediate setting" and the blue lines show the extent of the sky view which is a fundamental part of the wider setting:



It would be desirable to make consequential amendments to other text within the Plan, but the above are the important ones, and are straightforward amendments Committee members could resolve to have made at the 31 January meeting without affecting the consultation timetable.

A further amendment, which would be welcomed throughout the heritage sector, would be to reintroduce the sentiment from the existing Local Plan that "*planning permission for tall buildings within inappropriate areas, comprising: conservation areas; the St. Paul's Heights area; St. Paul's protected vista viewing corridors; and Monument views and setting, as defined on the Policies Map*" will be refused. However, a reference to "**Bevis Marks Synagogue**" should be added next to the wording about The Monument. It may be said by officers that this statement would sit uncomfortably with the Mayor's requirement

for the Plan to plan specifically for where tall buildings will be permitted. However, there is no inconsistency between what the Mayor requires and the statement set out above.

Background

Corporation members will be aware of the considerable feeling about the need to protect this unique Grade 1 Listed building which is to the Jewish community the equivalent of St Paul's Cathedral.

What remains of its sky view was threatened with obliteration by proposals for tall office towers at 31 Bury Street and 33 Creechurch in 2021. There was an unprecedented outpouring of protest from influential figures across the world and from Historic England and national heritage organisations. To its immense credit, the Planning & Transportation Committee decided to refuse 31 Bury Street, and the application for 33 Creechurch was withdrawn.



The draft City Plan 2040

There have been discussions since about how the Synagogue's setting can be effectively protected by the planning system. This has led recently to the designation of the Creechurch Conservation Area, which is very welcome.

However, that positive step now stands to be undermined by the contents of the draft Reg. 19 City Plan 2040 ([draft City Plan 2040](#)).

The draft CP 2040 contains a policy (HE1) to "*conserve and enhance the immediate setting*" of the Synagogue, which is of course welcome. However, the "*immediate setting*" is very tightly drawn, and there is no policy protection for the wider setting, which is just as important to the heritage significance of the building. What remains of the sky view is of great intangible value, being of great religious and cultural importance. This is explained eloquently in the following paper by Professor Green of the University of Oxford: [Professor Green's paper](#).

Not only is there no policy protection for the wider setting, but the policy in the existing City Plan (CS14) is that tall buildings have no place in Conservation Areas. This policy is, without explanation, dropped in the draft new CP.

The treatment of the Synagogue is in marked contrast to the treatment of The Monument. The two are frequently bracketed as buildings of comparable historic and cultural importance. Yet The Monument has protected views in and out, whereas the Synagogue is granted no such protection.

The Synagogue's representatives have had discussions with officers about the situation, but it has not led to the draft Plan being amended.

BEVIS MARKS SYNAGOGUE

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The Synagogue's representatives have had discussions with officers about the situation, but it has not led to the draft Plan being amended.

From: REDACTED

Sent: Friday, January 26, 2024 2:54 PM

To: REDACTED; REDACTED; REDACTED

Cc: REDACTED

Subject: 20 Gracechurch Street

Dear REDACTED, REDACTED, REDACTED,

Thank you for your time on Tuesday. I attach the design presentation which has now been updated to include overlays of the existing building as you requested.

We hope the presentation served to illustrate the site's abundant potential and we look forward to developing our ideas further in due course, reflecting your constructive feedback.

With the right design, we are confident 20 Gracechurch Street can make a far greater contribution to the Square Mile than it does in its present form; enhancing the public realm around a key junction, supporting Destination City, delivering high-quality, flexible floorspace and introducing architecture that justifies its prominence on the western aspect of the City Cluster.

At this stage, and with the City Plan's Reg. 19 consultation approaching, our focus remains to ensure that we can work collaboratively to realise those opportunities within an appropriate and robust policy framework.

In that regard, and notwithstanding the significant weight that would be attached to the existence of a tall building on the site as a material consideration, we would encourage you to recognise the site's potential through inclusion in the City Cluster Tall Buildings Area. Without an amendment, when the site comes forward, it will constitute development of a tall building to be assessed against Policy D9 of the London Plan, which states that: 'tall buildings should only be developed in locations that are identified as suitable in Development Plans'.

Redevelopment of the site will further engage consideration of Historic England Advice Note 4: Tall Buildings (2022) - referenced extensively in the City's Tall Buildings Topic Paper – which states that: 'the presence of an existing tall building that has been proven to have harmful impacts will not necessarily justify its replacement with a new tall building of the same or greater scale.'
(HEAN 4, para. 4.1)

As you will be aware, recent statutory amendments to Section 38 of the PCPA 2004 promise an even greater emphasis on the primacy of the development plan moving forward, reinforcing the importance of a plan-led approach to tall buildings advocated by the London Plan and HEAN 4. As

this site is contiguous with the draft tall buildings area and respects each of the 'Select Criteria' which informed initial modelling, we do believe an amendment would be the most logical step to bring clarity to future development of this key site and the City Cluster as a whole.

We would of course welcome your considered view on this suggestion, once you have had an opportunity to reflect further on Tuesday's presentation and the matters we discussed. In the meantime, if you require any further background information or material in relation to the site, please do not hesitate to contact me. We would be happy to talk through the policy position with REDACTED if helpful.

Kind regards,

REDACTED

Partner

Tel. REDACTED
Mobile. REDACTED
REDACTED

Gerald Eve LLP
Bow Bells House, 1 Bread Street
London, EC4M 9BE
www.geraldeve.com



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From: REDACTED

Sent: Tuesday, January 30, 2024 5:06 PM

To: REDACTED emails

Subject: City Plan 2040 amendments

THIS IS AN EXTERNAL EMAIL

Dear Members of the Planning & Transportation Committee,

Please find attached a letter on behalf of SAVE Britain's Heritage setting out our comments and concerns regarding the draft City Plan 2040 amendments set to be debated by the committee when it meets tomorrow morning, 31st January 2024.

I would be happy to answer any queries you may have in the meantime, and we welcome the City of London's ongoing work to preserve and enhance its unique heritage in the emerging City Plan.

Yours sincerely,

REDACTED

Senior Conservation Officer



REDACTED

Tel: REDACTED

Be our Friend and enjoy the benefits for just £36 a year by clicking [here](#).

www.savebritainsheritage.org

@SAVEBrit

Members of the Planning & Transportation Committee
City of London Corporation
PO Box 270,
Guildhall,
London EC2P 2EJ

By email

Our reference: 24016

30th January 2024

Dear Members of the Planning & Transportation Committee,

Amendments proposed to the City Plan 2040 – 31 January 2024

Following consideration of the, SAVE Britain's Heritage writes to offer comments on the latest draft City Plan 2040, and to request members consider two amendments to the draft heritage policy before it is approved for Regulation 19 examination. These amendments relate to the coherence of policies with regard to Bevis Marks Synagogue and tall buildings in conservation areas and their consistency with national heritage policy. Our comments are accompanied by straightforward amendments to address each concern, intended to avoid any unnecessary delay to the ongoing local plan examination process scheduled for February and March 2024.

The setting of Bevis Marks Synagogue

Bevis Marks is amongst the most important synagogues in the country (if not Europe) and is accordingly listed at grade I on account of its exceptional historic and architectural significance. All parties are agreed that the synagogue draws a critical part of its significance from natural daylight, and that this daylight is drawn from a wider setting which is open to the sky and (currently) largely free from tall buildings. The adoption of the Creechurch Conservation Area earlier this month recognises this point and is intended to provide a new layer of planning legislation to protect the building and its setting.

The current wording and scope of draft City Plan 2040 Policy HE1 (managing change to the historic environment) risks undermining the clarity and coherence of this setting protection. The policy states the draft City Plan 2040 would only require that the 'Immediate setting' of the synagogue be protected, without defining clearly what the extent of immediate means. This wording risks leaving the extent of the synagogue's setting open to interpretation and its wider setting unprotected.

Limiting protection to just the immediate setting of a grade I listed building also conflicts with the provisions of the Planning (LBs & CAs) Act 1990 which states that Local Planning Authorities have a duty to protect the entire setting of listed buildings and the character and appearance of conservation areas as a whole.

We would therefore suggest the following:

1. The policy wording is amended to state that: "Development in the defined immediate setting of Bevis Marks Synagogue and The Monument and development that affects their wider setting (including views out and in) should preserve and where possible enhance the elements that contribute to the significance of their setting."

2. The policy map provided be amended to also show the wider setting zone and view corridors to and from the synagogue which are to be protected. This would afford planners and developers alike the clarity about where any potential new development is likely to be appropriate or inappropriate. This could also form the basis of a new Bevis Marks Views Study, much like the one prepared for The Monument in December 2020. Clarity at this point is critical if the application of this emerging policy is to be robust.

Tall buildings in conservation areas

We call for the re-instatement of policy CS14 of the existing City Plan 2015 which states that tall buildings within inappropriate areas, including conservation areas, will be refused. This policy has been dropped without explanation in the draft City Plan 2040 and has left Bevis Marks Synagogue once again open to the threat of large-scale development within its setting. In the absence of this policy, doubts now arise over the inclusion of 31 Bury Street within the recently designated Creechurch Conservation Area. Under the current policy CS14, the inappropriateness of a tall building on this site (now within the conservation area) and the setting of the synagogue was clear. Without Policy CS14, this protection is now no longer as clear.

Parallels are frequently drawn between the complex settings of both Bevis Marks Synagogue and The Monument. However, The Monument is afforded extensive and detailed policy protection on its setting in its widest sense. Failing to achieve parity in the emerging policy detail for Bevis Marks Synagogue risks leaving the grade I listed building and new Creechurch Conservation Area as poorer relatives to The Monument, and at far greater risk of harmful and inappropriate development in the future.

This is especially the case in the context of approved plans for a 56 storey tower at 100 Leadenhall (one block to the south), and the plans awaiting determination for a 76 storey tower at 1 Undershaft (two blocks to the west west).

The loss of this policy also has wider implications for conservation areas and listed buildings across the Square Mile. The City of London has an unusually large number (28) of often small conservation areas and over 6000 listed buildings. In the context of well documented development pressure on almost every site (occupied or unoccupied), clarity over the appropriateness of tall buildings in these specific areas and their settings is critical if the special significance of the City's historic environment is to be preserved and its heritage policies robust enough to be enforceable. This should include a balanced approach to policy presumptions regarding areas which are appropriate for tall new development with obvious setting impacts and areas which are not. A truly constructive approach to policy should not preclude the use of clear and straightforward policy limitations such as the current Policy CS14.

We would therefore suggest the following:

1. That Policy CS14 is reinstated with regard to conservation areas alongside policies setting out positive plans for where tall buildings would be acceptable.
2. This would allow the City's traditional policy focus on protecting conservation areas from harmful development whilst also satisfying the London Plan's requirement around positive plan making for new development in local planning policy.

'Retrofit first' approach to design and reuse

We welcome the City's commitment to policies requiring all future major development to consider retrofitting rather than demolishing existing buildings. Draft Policy OF1 (Office Development) seeks to prioritise retrofitting of existing buildings, in line with the 'retrofit first' approach set out in Chapter 9 of the City Plan. Policy DE1 (Sustainable Design) sets out a 'retrofit first' approach, requiring all major development to undertake an options appraisal to identify the most sustainable and suitable approach for the site.

Given the high-profile nature of this issue in planning practice and the construction industry at large, it is encouraging to see the City of London taking a lead in this area. This couldn't more timely given changing office needs, working habits and the sheer amount and variety of vacant office stock in the Square Mile, with many such buildings being of heritage significance.

Conclusion

I trust these comments will be of assistance to members and we welcome the City of London's ongoing work to preserve and enhance its unique heritage in the emerging City Plan.

Yours sincerely,

REDACTED

REDACTED

Senior Conservation Officer, SAVE Britain's Heritage

Cc: REDACTED City of London Corporation
REDACTED