

Dear James Keogh,

Re: PA/14/03548 and PA/14/03618. Land bounded by Elder Street, Folgate Street, Blossom Street, Norton Folgate, Shoreditch High Street and Commercial Street, E1.

This letter is sent on behalf of the Spitalfields Community Group to restate its OBJECTION to the recently amended scheme.

Spitalfields Community Group (SCG) was formed in 2011 with the aim of promoting and protecting the quality of life of people living and working in the ward of Spitalfields and Banglatown. We have over 200 members and are growing.

The decision by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets on 25th August refused planning permission on this site on three main grounds:

1. That the development would result in the total and partial loss of, and unsympathetic alteration to, a significant number of heritage assets which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Their replacements, by reason of their scale, mass and design would be harmful to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. And that this harm was not outweighed by public benefits.
2. That the proportion of Housing relative to commercial space was too low.
3. That the proportion of Affordable Housing was too low.

The recent amendments proposed by British Land make a minimal, and ultimately inconsequential, contribution on the first ground, and do not at all address the other two.

Whilst the decision to keep the warehouses at 12-13 Blossom is encouraging, it leaves plans for around a dozen other historic buildings (significant heritage assets) on the site exactly as they were. These include 3-9 Shoreditch High St (Nicholls & Clarke), 14 Norton Folgate, 15 Norton Folgate, 16-19 Norton Folgate, 5-11a Folgate St (Arts & Crafts Buildings), 27 Blossom St, 2 Elder St & 161 Commercial St, 4-8 Elder St. The other preserved building, the 1887 Warehouse, remains grafted to the side of a 14 storey tower.

Indeed, the approach to the conservation of the historic buildings and environment continues to fall short of that within the extant planning permission for the site. 12-13 Blossom St itself, is still not defined as a separate building – with a Western elevation and clear open space between it and the 11 storey office development it adjoins – as is the case in the present Consented Scheme.

The scale, mass and design of the proposed new buildings remain exactly as before. They would still tower to 10-14 storeys in an area with a predominant height of 4. The Conservation Area would be overwhelmed, its fine historic grain destroyed. In addition, the proportion of Housing, and within that, the proportion of Affordable Housing, remain too low.

On all of these points, our previous objections remain valid, and we ask the GLA to follow the example of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and refuse this Application.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Gledhill

for and on behalf of the Spitalfields Community Group