

PRESS RELEASE: SAVE supports local groups campaigning against over-development on the City fringe, in Tower Hamlets

Proposals for a 14 storey building (equivalent to 18 storeys in height) on the Huntingdon Estate in Shoreditch were refused by Tower Hamlets Council in November 2013, to the delight of local campaigners, but this decision has been appealed by the applicant.

The proposals would cause harm to surrounding heritage assets, including the Grade II listed Owl and Pussycat pub and threaten to destroy the human scale of the Redchurch Street Conservation Area, a much loved part of Shoreditch and East London.



The proposed building for the Huntingdon Industrial Estate

The Redchurch Street Conservation Area appraisal states that: 'The purpose of designation is to safeguard the remaining street pattern and the buildings within it, in an intimate and personable character which is now quite rare in urban England'.

The proposed scheme ignores this sensitivity, treating the Conservation Area's southern boundary as irrelevant, and proposes to build over the west section of Whitby Street. This historic street was acquired by adverse possession shortly before the developers bought the site, thus fusing together two urban blocks and obliterating the fine-grained Georgian street pattern.

Although refused by Tower Hamlets on heritage, design and affordable housing grounds, the applicant appealed, and a public inquiry is currently underway. Jago Action Group (JAG) is a rule 6 party supporting the council's decision to refuse planning.

SAVE was contacted by JAG following our victory at the Smithfield General Market public inquiry in July 2014. JAG requested guidance on fighting a planning appeal and we were glad to assist, introducing the group to solicitor and advocate David Cooper, who has represented SAVE on many occasions in the past.

SAVE considers that the Huntingdon proposals, if approved, have the potential to create a dangerous precedent for the Bishopsgate Goodsyrd site opposite.

SAVE objected to proposals for the Goodsyrd at the end of 2014 for a scheme involving several towers over 40 storeys in height. This scheme has been withdrawn, but revised proposals are expected shortly.



Before and after showing (now withdrawn) proposals for Bishopsgate Goodsyrd

Brad Lochore, local resident and spokesman for campaign group OPEN Shoreditch, said: "Huntingdon's proposal, wholly rejected by local people and Tower Hamlets council, would seriously damage our community and heritage assets.

Worse still, the scheme is being used as a stalking horse by the adjacent Bishopsgate Goodsyrd developers to build even higher towers that will obliterate our community."

David Cooper, solicitor and advocate said: "This over development cannot possibly justify the damage to this [Redchurch Street Conservation Area] and the adjoining Conservations Areas, including the Boundary Estate."

Mike Fox, SAVE Caseworker, said: "Development pressures on East London are becoming increasingly pronounced, as seen in proposals for the Goodsyrd site, Norton Folgate, and the Huntingdon Industrial Estate. These proposals are detrimental to the special character of the surrounding areas and will affect many heritage assets. SAVE is pleased to be working alongside the many local groups opposing these developments."

Additional information about the Goodsyrd development is available via the More Light, More Power campaign [website](#).

More information about threats to East London's architectural heritage can be found via the East End Preservation Society [Facebook page](#)

For more information contact:

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Mike Fox, SAVE Caseworker, on 0207 253 3500 or mike.fox@savebritainsheritage.org

Notes to editors:

OPEN Shoreditch is a coalition of neighbourhood groups including residents and businesses within a half-mile radius of the Goodsyrd. JAG is a member.

SAVE Britain's Heritage has been campaigning for historic buildings since its formation in 1975 by a group of architects, journalists and planners. It is a strong, independent voice in conservation, free to respond rapidly to emergencies and to speak out loud for the historic built environment.

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