

Designation of Spitalfields Neighbourhood Planning Forum Consultation Statement January 2021

Introduction

1. On 25 November 2020, the Spitalfields Neighbourhood Forum applied to the Council to be designated as the Neighbourhood Planning Forum for the Spitalfields Neighbourhood Planning Area. The application was assessed to be in keeping with the relevant regulations, and in accordance with Regulation 9 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 a public consultation period was held between 3 December 2020 and 22 January 2021. This was more than the required 6 weeks, in order to account for the holiday period which fell in the middle of the consultation, and to ensure that all interested parties had suitable opportunity to submit responses.
2. This document provides a summary of matters raised during the consultation period. The report takes account of relevant planning matters in representations submitted to the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. This paper has been prepared for public information and to inform the Council's decision making process – it is not intended to address any of the issues raised during the consultation period.

Consultation activities undertaken by the Council

3. Consultation activities undertaken by the Council were carried out in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations and the principles expressed in the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. The activities undertaken were as follows:
 - The application form, supporting materials, and consultation information were placed on the Council's website
 - The same information was sent directly to the elected councillors for the Weavers and Spitalfields and Banglatown wards
 - An email announcing the consultation and explaining where the relevant information could be found was sent to everyone on the Plan Making Team's consultation database
 - A public notice was published in the Docklands & East London Advertiser
 - Due to government guidance around the coronavirus pandemic, hard copies of the consultation material were not made available at the Town Hall or in Idea Stores close to the neighbourhood planning area on this occasion – respondents were encouraged to contact the Plan Making team if this caused any difficulties

Approach to categorising representations made

4. During the public consultation period, the public are able to make representations on the contents of forum application submitted to the

Council. Typically, representations are made by local residents, local Councillors, landowners, businesses, interests groups, statutory consultees and neighbouring Local Authorities. Representations were not made by all parties directly consulted.

5. The following categories have been used to categorise representations:

Support	Have stated explicit support, or support has been inferred from the contents of the representation
Object	Have stated explicit objection, or objection has been inferred from the contents of the representation
Neutral	Have offered comments but not determined if they object or support the application
Petition	A written objection signed by multiple signatories
No comment	Where no comment has been made and no position on the matter can be inferred
Concerned	Do not state they object but highlight areas of concern

6. The following summaries have been derived from an analysis of the consultation responses. Please note, representations did not always specify support or objection to the area and Forum. The summary of responses paraphrases comments made by representors and, to avoid repetition, makes reference to the same matter once only.

7. When analysing the representations, regard is given to legislative requirements related to the Forum and Area proposals.

Summary of representations

Number of representations received

Support	Objection	Neutral	No comment	Petition	Concerned	Total
10	0	2	5	0	0	17

8. A total of 17 responses were received to the consultation.

9. No comment: One of the responses, from Sport England, provided generic comments on the role of sports in neighbourhood planning, but did not address any of the specifics of this particular neighbourhood forum application. Transport for London, Natural England, the Canal and River Trust, and the Environment Agency stated they have no comments to make on the application.

10. Neutral: Historic England stated they have no objection to the application, and did not wish to provide detailed comments. The Port of London Authority also stated they have no objection.

11. Positive: Ten positive responses to the application were received, four from organisations based in the local area, and six from residents. The Attlee Centre said that the Forum are 'organised, well run and have worked tirelessly to make improvement for our area'. The Spitalfields Community Group said 'we remain convinced that the work they [the Forum] do is hugely beneficial for those who live and work in Spitalfields'. The Spitalfields Trust said that 'the Forum has been influential in increasing the diversity and inclusion of voices in the effort, and has worked hard and very effectively to improve the liveability of Spitalfields'. The Spitalfields Society said that the Forum's membership is 'very well informed, highly diverse, and genuinely representative of the range of residents and businesses in the area'. All four organisation explicitly stated that they support the renewal of the forum designation.

12. The positive responses received from residents included the following comments:

- The Forum has engaged many people and a wide range of the community
- The Forum is well organised (two separate responses raised this point)
- The Forum has developed a high-quality neighbourhood plan
- The Forum has demonstrated clear thinking and a sense of purpose in addressing the neglect and decline of Spitalfields
- The Forum has worked hard to reach the current stage of developing a neighbourhood plan, and this work should continue
- The forum has people from a broad range of backgrounds involved