

GOLDEN LANE ESTATE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Planning and Development Director
City of London Corporation
Department of Planning and Transportation
PO Box 270
Guildhall
London EC2P 3EJ
Emailed to: plncomments@cityoflondon.gov.uk
12 November 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

Objection to the 1 Silk Street applications; 25/00829/FULEIA and 25/00830/LBC

Please log and acknowledge this as an objection to both applications to demolish and develop 1 Silk Street London EC2Y 8AL.

We object to both applications. They are not in accordance with the Development Plan and their harms (heritage and other) are not outweighed by public benefits, which are minimal. The scheme's height and mass are inappropriate for its setting and cause undue damage to heritage. It harms amenity for neighbouring residents and offers no balancing public benefit for either. Material considerations apply and a full assessment of planning balance is necessary, with further consideration to reduce harm to the existing heritage assets and their setting.

This massive, unbroken block is a poor design for the sensitive context and surrounding heritage. With two towers, up to 20 storeys high and up to 28m taller than the current buildings, it overhangs the pavement on one side and the conservation area on the other, bringing it too close for comfort to the listed Barbican Estate and Landscape, the landmark trinity of Barbican towers, neighbouring homes and schools, the Arts Centre and the Brewery. It is an overdevelopment of a sensitive site.

Residential amenity is severely damaged of this scheme. Sunlight and daylight will be restricted to an unacceptable level for neighbouring homes, schools and open spaces. By overhanging the street, the proposed facades are far too close to neighbouring bedrooms and living rooms.

The site is in an area that City has ruled out for tall buildings (defined as 75 metres AOD and above). Its own City Plan 2040 Character Study says that the site is in an area “**sensitive to tall buildings**” where adding further tall buildings “**which fall outside the post-war idiom are likely to have a disruptive quality.**”

All the City's applicable Plans see this site as not suitable for tall buildings.

The City acknowledges that the site is of great heritage significance. It sits between the Barbican (Grade II-listed), its Grade II* Park and Garden, the Brewery's Grade II* and Grade II buildings, the Barbican and Golden Lane Estate Conservation Area and the Brewery Conservation Area. This immediate heritage and setting has not been given thorough and appropriate consideration in this scheme. The applicant's argument that just by being big and visible this building will automatically "enhance" both the skyline and heritage assets near and far is ridiculous. The Barbican is a rare treasure that attracts visitors from around the world; it should be enriched, not overshadowed.

By ignoring the immediate context, the scheme does not meet national design code standards. It is not in accordance with London Plan Policies SD4 (Part C), D3, D4 and D9 [design and tall buildings]; the current Local Plan Core Strategic Policy CS5, and Policies CS10, CS12, CS14, DM10.7, DM12.1, DM12.5 and DM21.3 [design, heritage, tall buildings, protecting residential amenity]. The so-called 'public benefits' do not stack up to a balance for the many harms of this scheme; it is ridiculous to claim, for example, that a service yard is anything other than a necessary part of the scheme or that the Arts Centre's 'welcome mat' does not have any drawbacks. The huge carbon footprint is a massive dis-benefit. Retrofit should be the approach here, in line with the NPPF, the London Plan, the Local Plan, the emerging City Plan 2040, and the City's own Climate Action Strategy 2020-2027.

There is no "clear and convincing justification" (NPPF 213) for the many identifiable harms to all the views and heritage caused by this overbearing scheme, even though the applicant admits it adversely affects listed buildings, conservation areas and daylight levels for neighbouring residents.

This area deserves better and alternative proposals should be explored. Given that the City's Local Plan does not assign this "Key Area" for intensive office development, a smaller scheme with reduced height and massing could genuinely provide public benefit without harming heritage and local amenity to the same degree.

Yours sincerely

Sue Pearson
Chair 2025 /26
On behalf of Golden Lane Estate Residents' Association
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