



70 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6EJ **PRESS RELEASE 25th April 2013**

SAVE Britain's Heritage today submitted its letter of objection to the City Corporation against a scheme to mutilate Smithfield General Market and replace it with offices up to 20 metres high. The scheme also includes a proposal to build an enormous office block behind the Red House Cold Store that will tower over the Fish Market, also to be partially destroyed.

Smithfield General Market and Fish Market complete one of the grandest surviving groups of market buildings in Western Europe. If granted, these proposals will lead to its destruction.

As well as being great Victorian landmarks, Smithfield General Market and Annex constitute London's last threatened market halls. The buildings in question form part of an enclave of historic buildings unlike any other in the City, retaining a powerful historic and architectural sense of place.

Smithfield General Market is a public asset, owned by the City of London Corporation. It has been largely kept out of use since the 1980s when the market closed. These buildings are capable of reuse with minimal intervention, and are potentially a huge asset to this part of the City, yet they lie purposely disused and unmaintained.

In the 2008 Public Inquiry the Inspector concluded that the site offers an opportunity for regeneration of the kind undertaken at Covent Garden, Spitalfields, Greenwich or Camden Lock. The Inspector concluded that the City should place the site on the open market to allow the viability of conservation-led schemes to be tested, thus avoiding demolition.

SAVE strongly objects to the scheme. It causes substantial harm to the conservation area and setting of listed buildings, it breaks up the Smithfield Market group of buildings, there is no justification for the proposed levels of demolition, and the buildings have been deliberately neglected for over 30 years.

Please see the attached letter for our objections in full.

Marcus Binney, SAVE's President says: "This proposal constitutes the worst mutilation of a Victorian landmark in the last 30 years. If the City approves this destructive scheme we will press for a new Public Inquiry where the strong objections by the Victorian Society and others can be fully debated and assessed."

Clem Cecil, SAVE's Director says: "We urge the City of London Corporation to refuse this Application. Moreover, we urge the City of London to follow the conclusions of the 2008 Public Inquiry that overturned a previous application to demolish these buildings. The Inspector stated that the site should be placed on the open market to test the commercial viability of a conservation-led scheme. Unless this is done, any scheme that comes forward will be justifiably open to challenge."

Alec Forshaw, author of an Independent Appraisal of the Application says: "Having considered the proposals and the wide range of impacts, including those identified by English Heritage in their letter of 5th April 2013 but also many more that have been overlooked, I conclude that, considered cumulatively and assessed against the City of London's own policies and the Planning Inspector's Report, the proposals cause very substantial harm to designated heritage assets, including the Smithfield, Charterhouse Square and Hatton Garden Conservation Areas, the Poultry Market (Grade II) and its setting, the setting of 51-53 Charterhouse Street (Grade II) and the main Meat Market (Grade II*), and to the undesignated heritage assets of the General Market, the Red House and the Annex, which themselves form a major part of a designated asset."

Please make your own representation to the City.

Send your letter of objection to the Corporation of London, addressed to planning officer Gemma Delves: gemma.delves@cityoflondon.gov.uk
Address: City of London, Guildhall, PO Box 270, London, EC2P 2EJ

Quote Planning application numbers: 13/00150/FULEIA,13/00155/LBC, 13/00156/CAC



Arial View of Application Site with proposed demolition shaded red

For more images see:

https://www.facebook.com/SaveSmithfieldMarket/photos_albums

Or contact SAVE Director Clem Cecil on clem.cecil@savebritainsheritage.org 020 7253 3500

NOTES TO EDITORS: 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.

Press release issued by SAVE Britain's Heritage, 70 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6EJ.

Registered Charity 269129