

Soho Neighbourhood Plan: Regulation 16 Consultation



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To Neighbourhood, Planning: WCC

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 Follow up. Start by 08 June 2020. Due by 08 June 2020.

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Many thanks for notifying us of the invitation to comment on the Soho Neighbourhood Plan.

I am writing on behalf of the Fitzrovia West Neighbourhood Forum which represents a business forum in the City of Westminster lying immediately to the north of Soho and with Oxford Street as our southern boarder. The Forum has a large number of resident and business members and our Neighbourhood Plan was published for consultation purposes on the 26th May for 10 weeks.

Fitzrovia West is very similar to Soho in that it is a vibrant, dense, mixed use area facing many of the same planning challenges. It is experiencing very high development pressures; it has many heritage assets and contains all or parts of five Conservation Areas; it has very poor air quality; it is lacking in affordable housing and is deficient in green open space and play space and it seeks to encourage the provision of workspace for new and small businesses.

We therefore strongly support the vision, objectives and main policies of the Soho plan and look forward to seeing it being made for statutory purposes.

We particularly welcome the following policies:

2. Tall buildings
8. Active ground floor uses
13. Food and beverage development to protect existing residential amenity
15. Provision of affordable housing
16. Car-free residential development
20. Improving air quality
23. Delivering consolidation points
24. New pocket parks

All these in our view will deliver an improved public realm and enhanced quality of life for residents, workers and visitors.

We also strongly support the recommendations set out in **Section 10: Recommendations and Projects**. Neighbourhoods such as Soho and Fitzrovia West experience a range of issues which go well beyond a strict definition of land use planning. They often relate to urban management in its widest sense and relatively simple changes in the way the local authority and other agencies deliver services can make a big difference to the quality of life

experienced by residents and those working in the area. The Soho plan sets out a very comprehensive list which we fully support and would like to see implemented.

Quite often this requires the local authority and other agencies to consider the needs of particular neighbourhoods rather than imposing standardised approaches to the delivery of services across the borough. These uniform approaches may be more easily managed and cost-effective to the agency concerned but may severely reduce the quality of life and amenity of those living or working in the area. Issues relating to refuse collection and recycling and the alignment of licensing and planning policies are good illustrations of this.

In conclusion, this Forum strongly supports the Soho Neighbourhood Plan including all policies and the recommendations and projects.

Nick Bailey

Secretary

Fitzrovia West Neighbourhood Forum

www.fitzwest.org

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FitzWest was designated a Business Neighbourhood Forum by Westminster City Council in 2015 and over 200 local people and businesses have joined. This designation was extended for another five years in February 2020. The Forum has prepared a plan for the neighbourhood, targeting housing, enterprise, transport, air quality – and much more based ...

www.fitzwest.org

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