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A new future for the iconic Middle Street Synagogue Project

Information to Tender For Architect and Design Team

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Return Date: 20th January 2026



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Brief for Architectural Site Development Options Study

About the project

Middle Street Synagogue, Grade II * listed, is in the heart of Brighton's historic Lanes in the city centre. Funding has been awarded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund to support the detailing of plans for its transformation into a Jewish Cultural Centre offering a dynamic cultural, educational and heritage offer for the local community and visitors.

The project responds to urgent risks identified in a recent condition survey as well as to the pressing need to find a wider sustainable use for the building which has been closed for over two decades (with only occasional religious use or open days). Without action, the physical fabric, historic and public value of this exceptional Grade II* listed site is at risk.

The project will undertake minor stabilisation works, commission a design team and specialist surveys to scope future works and develop interim governance to support longer-term delivery and operations. The legacy will be a costed, inclusive and credible plan for restoration and reuse, backed by consultation, new partnerships and a fundraising development plan, ready to secure investment and bring this unique heritage site back into civic life.

Background and project scope

A 2024 Options and Feasibility study, which included a Statement of Significance and a building Condition Survey, identified the opportunity to conserve and reopen the synagogue as a mixed use Cultural and Educational Centre as well as its continued use for special occasions such as weddings and religious festivals. However emergency stabilisation of key heritage assets, further design work on access and adaptation/spatial layout options, as well as governance, fundraising and project development work are urgently required to secure its future.

The feasibility study identified a way forward and this next stage of work will develop the long-term strategy needed for implementation, identifying design solutions, outline costs, partners and funders for delivery.



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The brief

The design team objectives of this feasibility study are to plan, and cost works (a QS to be appointed separately) to improve access and usability of non-sanctuary spaces, investigate M&E upgrades and undertake further site investigations to develop a fully costed programme of repairs and adaptation to RIBA 1.5 – 2 to inform a future capital project for MSS.

The Design Team are required to:

- Work with the Project Manager and Heritage Development Consultants to assess the options for conservation and adaptation required to enable the building to be used for a mix of educational, cultural, community, and heritage activities. This should take into account the specific security issues associated with the public opening of a synagogue and any design requirement for this. Note: site specific security advice will be provided by the client.
- Work with the Heritage Development Consultants to organize a long weekend of public consultation open days at the synagogue to inform local people of plans and gather feedback.
- Analyse physical capacities and the potential for adaptation for proposed new uses taking account of heritage significance, access needs (potential installation of a lift), security and fire safety etc, working with the heritage development consultants and key stakeholders. Developing the preferred option to equivalent RIBA 1.5/outline Stage 2 to enable the production of an outline specification and cost plan (based on QS estimates), key risks and next steps.
- Assess plans in light of local planning context and constraints, opportunities or risks related to the site and advise client of likelihood of obtaining listed building and other consents required to progress plans. Note: a good working relationship with Historic England is already established and they will continue to support the project through advice and expertise.
- Survey by a building services engineer.
- Identification of potential environmental improvements and energy efficiencies and next steps for scoping and detailing M&E plans.



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- Commission a drone survey of the roof and, in light of the results of the roof drone survey and design work, update the current Condition Survey and the prioritisation of the repairs and conservation work. Update the roof works cost, and identification and prioritisation of further surveys required to establish a plan of work and further cost certainty (if required).
- The historically important stained-glass windows are in urgent need of stabilisation and a stained-glass survey has been commissioned. Quite a few of the windows are bowing and the metal corroding. As part of this phase of work the Architect will need to work with the Project Manager on instructing and managing the temporary propping of the windows to avoid any further damage to them.
- Investigation of existing ceiling finishes and decorations and potential causes of failure.
- There are some cracks in the walls that will need structural investigation.
- There are areas of loose and unstable stonework on the external west elevation cornice that present health and safety concerns and also pose a risk to the structure itself. As part of this brief the Architect will need to instruct and specify the netting of this area
- The downpipe to east end of south elevation needs the displaced downpipe fixing to prevent further leaking as part of this phase of the project.
- Overall, the rainwater goods need assessing for their capacity in the future and their areas such as the east elevation where there is water staining.

Note on existing work and additional surveys included in this project:

The existing Statement of Significance, Condition Survey and Options and Feasibility Study (produced in 2024) will be made available upon request and confirmation that you will submit a tender.



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Deliverables

1. Consult with the client lead and heritage consultants to interrogate the brief and agree a programme of work including stakeholder consultation
2. Work collaboratively with the heritage consultants throughout the commission so architectural considerations can be shaped and influenced by a continuous process of dialogue about co-dependencies and end user requirements, including funding deliverability
3. Commissioning of drone roof survey and related update of the Condition Survey and roof costs.
4. Create an outline site options feasibility report that responds to the reuse/end use requirements, respects the heritage significance of the building and improves energy efficiencies and identifies key risks and next steps.
5. Develop the preferred option to RIBA stage 1.5/2 and generate an outline cost plan with a qualified cost consultant/quantity surveyor including a summary of next stage development tasks and associated costs (for example, measured survey, drain surveys, access audit)

The client will own all raw materials, drafts and final reports and outputs relating to the project and be able to use or discard them as they wish. This does not affect the legal intellectual property rights of the consultants appointed. The re-use of materials relating to this project by the consultants must be agreed by Foundation for Jewish Heritage.

Timing

It is anticipated that the project will run from February 2025 with all final reports submitted by early January 2026 (or earlier if achievable).

Fee and Budget

There is a fixed fee for this work of £30,000 excluding VAT and inclusive of all expenses. Payment will be made in instalments at agreed milestones. Value for money is important, and we are looking for realistic estimates of the costs involved. A fixed fee should be provided for this work, together with proposed payment stages.



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In addition to the fee there is a budget of £17,450 for the drone roof survey, stabilisation netting of the external cornice/masonry and some temporary support for the stained-glass windows.

Given the dispersal of trustees and stakeholders, we anticipate the majority of meetings will need to take place online unless they are site specific.

Appointment process and timetable

Interviews are anticipated in January with a start date of early February. The Foundation reserves the right to not interview all tenderers.

Experience, Knowledge and Skills

The practice will be expected to have the following attributes:

- Proven track record of successful delivery of site feasibility option assessments of a similar scale or type and related to listed buildings/buildings in conservation areas. Including an architect accredited in building conservation.
- Experience of working for a variety of clients and to a Board of Trustees/Steering Group.
- Confidence to challenge established thinking and experience of proactive, collaborative and pragmatic working and delivery.
- Excellent analytical skills with an ability to produce balanced and objective reports and plans based on robust investigations, evaluation and analyses that weigh up a range of factors and ability to meet the brief.
- Highly developed written and presentation skills.
- Experience of National Lottery Heritage Fund processes and timetable and how they relate to RIBA planned stages of work would be an advantage.



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Tender Submission

Tender submission proposals should include:

- A detailed plan of work outlining your approach to fulfilling the brief (including objectives, outputs, methodology) and schedule setting out key milestones.
- Details of the people working on the project, outlining their skills, relevant experience and knowledge, specific role and daily rate within the project, together with up-to-date CVs and qualifications. Please ensure that it is clear who would actually be doing the work related to the tasks within your methodology. If you intend to sub-contract to an external AABC architect, we will also require details of this.
- Details of relevant experience and track record including up to 3 examples of projects you have undertaken that are of a similar scale or type and related to cultural heritage collections (archives, museums, historic library collections) and/or sustainable use of
- Listed heritage buildings. Your examples should clearly state the total project cost and those put forward for this project should have worked on the example projects.
- Details of how the project and the client relationship will be managed.
- A detailed budget with a breakdown of costs including the number of days you expect to spend on the project.
- Quality assurances procedures and professional indemnity or other insurances.
- Contact details of two referees.

Proposals must be submitted via email to

rachelheller@foundationforjewishheritage.com and must be received by 5pm on 20th January 2026.

Evaluation Criteria

Bidders will be scored on their answers against the following two criteria:

- A. Quality (Technical, Management and References) – 70%
- B. Price – 30%

Quality Evaluation

The quality evaluation is worth a total of 70% of the final score, and is comprised as follows:

- i) Methodology / Approach: worth 20% of the quality score
- ii) Working with the Team: worth 16% of the quality score
- iii) Experience of those on the team for this project: worth 18% of the quality score
- iv) Examples of 3 similar projects: worth 16% of the quality score.



Your response should describe clearly and concisely how you would fulfil the requirements of the contract,

Please clearly label each response with the appropriate question number.

Please ensure that your responses to the questions relate to the project and the brief.

1.2 For each written question, please ensure that no more material is provided than is required to answer the question. In particular, please avoid the following:

- i) Additional information outside the scope of the question;
- ii) Details about your company that have not been requested and don't add clarity to the response;
- iii) 'Sales pitch' type information.

The Foundation will assess Tenderers' responses to each heading against the criteria set out in the *Quality Evaluation Scoring Table* below, and will award points up to the maximum shown against each heading.

Each quality evaluation question will be assigned a score according to the following criteria. Failure to achieve a rating of satisfactory (i.e. a minimum unweighted score of 3 or above) in any one or more categories may result in the bid being disqualified at the Foundation's discretion.

Quality Evaluation Assessment Methodology Table:

Assessment Criteria	Score
Unacceptable: either no answer is provided, or the answer fails to demonstrate that any of the Foundation's key requirements in the area being measured will be delivered.	0
Poor: fails to demonstrate how Foundation's basic requirements in the area being measured will be addressed, giving rise to serious concerns that acceptable outcomes would not be delivered against the project brief.	1
Weak: barely demonstrates how the Foundation's basic requirements in the area being measured will be addressed, giving rise to concerns whether acceptable outcomes would be delivered against the project brief.	2
Satisfactory: demonstrates how the Foundation's basic requirements in the area being measured will be addressed so as to deliver acceptable outcomes against the project brief.	3
Good: demonstrates how most of the Foundation's requirements in the area being measured will be addressed so as to deliver good outcomes against the project brief.	4



Excellent: demonstrates clearly how all of the Foundation's requirements in the area being measured will be fully addressed so as to deliver excellent outcomes against the project brief.

5

Quality Questions

Please provide your response to the following quality criteria:

	Criteria	Weighting
1.	Please demonstrate your understanding of the brief and how you would approach the project. (Maximum 4 sides of A4 – diagrams / pictures / drawings may be used as part of the response).	20%
2.	Details of how you will work with the Foundation who are a small Team to manage the development and delivery of this project on programme and budget. (Maximum 3 sides of A4 – diagrams / pictures / drawings may be used as part of the response).	16%
3.	Qualifications and experience of the proposed team including the Design Team (please provide CVs) including how they meet the required experience/knowledge; details of the respective roles and responsibilities including lines of communication; commitment to the project in terms of the number of days/hours at each stage of your proposed timetable.	18%
4.	Please provide 3 examples of previous work of within the last 4 years that is relevant to this project. At least one should include a place of worship / listed building and be HLF funded. (Maximum 3 sides of A4 – pictures / drawings may be used as part of the response).	16%

Financial / Price Evaluation

The tenderer who submits the lowest overall bid will receive the full score of 30% available for the financial evaluation. Remaining bids will be awarded a score proportionate to the lowest priced bid according to the following formula:

$$\text{score} = (\text{lowest bid received} / \text{bid price}) \times 30$$

Abnormally low or high bids distort evaluation of tenders, and where the Foundation considers a bid to fall into one of these categories the tenderer will be asked to clarify and explain their bid.

We are unable to provide feedback to candidates who are not shortlisted for interview.



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How to Apply

The closing date for receipt of the completed Invitation to Tender is 5pm on the 20th January 2026.

The completed tender must be sent to Rachel Heller:

rachelheller@foundationforjewishheritage.com

Suppliers shall keep their quotations valid and open for acceptance by the Foundation until the expiry of 90 days from the date for return of quotations.

Interviews will be held at the discretion of the Foundation.

If you have any questions, please contact Rachel Heller

rachelheller@foundationforjewishheritage.com

Interviews

Interviewees will be asked to give a short 10-minute presentation detailing how you will take the project forward. This will be followed by questions from the panel.

We would like to meet the main people who will be working on the commission so interviews may be rescheduled or extended (at the discretion of the client) to enable this to take place.

Supporting Information

Note to Potential Providers – You may adjust the size of the following text boxes to suit your response.

Organisation and Contact Details

A-1 Name of your organisation	
A-2 Registered office (if applicable)	
A-3 Trading address (if different from registered office)	
A-4 Organisation Registration Number	



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(if applicable)	
A-5 Is your organisation a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Sole Trader<input type="checkbox"/> Partnership<input type="checkbox"/> Public Limited Company<input type="checkbox"/> Private Ltd Company<input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary & Community Sector<input type="checkbox"/> Charity<input type="checkbox"/> SME (Small and Medium Enterprise)<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
If you selected other, please specify	
A-6 What, if any, local connections do you have with the County	
A-7 If the Company is a member of a group of companies, please give the name and address of the ultimate holding company	
A-8 Name of person to whom any queries relating to this quote should be addressed	
A-9 Telephone	
A-10 Email	



A-11 Address

(if different to the Address above)

The following information on insurance is also required and failure to do so could result in the tender being disqualified.

Question	Question	Pass/Fail
Potential Provider's Response	<p>The level of insurance required is:</p> <p>EL £3m (if applicable)</p> <p>PL £4m</p> <p>PI £3m</p> <p>Can you confirm that your organisation has the required level of cover or is prepared to obtain the level of cover prior to award?</p>	<p>PASS/FAIL question.</p> <p>Potential Providers who answer 'No' - have not got cover and won't provide the Foundation's level of cover' will fail the RFQ process.</p>
Potential Provider's Response	<p>Yes - have levels of cover already and will continue to for this contract</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No - but will provide the Foundation's level of cover requested if awarded contract</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No - have not got cover and won't provide Foundation's level of cover</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	