



Published 04 May 2007 at 11:40
Waugh Thistleton takes an orthodox route with new synagogue – image



Waugh Thistleton has won permission for a synagogue in Hackney, east London – the first new orthodox synagogue in the capital for almost a century.

To be built at the entrance to a disused Jewish burial ground in Victoria Park, the 182m² synagogue will also serve as a community centre and will cost between £500,000 and £700,000 to construct.

It will replace an existing synagogue in Brenthouse Road, which closes in September 2007, and aims to appeal to the rapidly growing younger Jewish community that has recently started moving to the area.

According to Waugh Thistleton, the building's shell will be punctured to allow 'shards of light' into internal areas, while a mirrored skylight will reflect high-level light inside.

The practice adds: 'The elevation begins at the same height as the adjacent listed building, leading up to the highest point at the easternmost corner, the principal direction the congregation should face according to their faith.'

'Due to the constraints placed on the building's height, the plan of the synagogue has the same area for both men and women on the same level. Respecting tradition, however, the two areas are distinctly divided, thus separating but not segregating the congregation.'

Waugh Thistleton, which is also designing a synagogue in Ealing, west London, is confident that the project will be on site within six months, with completion 18 months later.

by Clive Walker