

**BELSIZE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**  
**COMMENT ON PLANNING APPLICATION IN BELSIZE PARK**

DATE: 12 December 2014

Re: Royal Free Hospital

FAO: Planning officer for ref 2014/6845/P

Dear Charles Thuaire

Hope that you can include comments on this application from the BRA as you consider this application.

This application is for: Demolition of existing carpark and ancillary structures and erection of new 7 storey building, located on Heath Strange Garden site facing west to Hampstead Green footpath and Rosslyn Hill, containing 9620 sqm laboratory/research space for Institute for Immunity and Transplantation, a patient hotel, Royal Free Charity offices plus a replacement carpark of 58 spaces, replacement garden, plant and landscaping, all ancillary to Royal Free Hospital (Class C2).

This is proving a divisive application. We do welcome the continued success of the Royal Free Hospital as a centre of excellence; but it has to be recognised that the area is particularly congested and any development will have environmental and social costs for the local residents. Further the close proximity of the Royal Free to the grade 1 listed St Stephens will have heritage impacts. In balancing the community benefits of the hospital being improved with the negative impacts, we would ask that the Council considers:

- Overall, the plans do have architectural merit with the development seeking to follow the form of the earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century building. While the current building is not of great architectural value, it is at least set back from the village styled area, limiting its impacts. There should be consideration of how the development improves the overall public realm
- The loss of green space in the vicinity of the hospital, especially the community garden, is regrettable. At best, some equivalent space should be identified but at least the hospital's plans should prioritise betterment of the remaining green areas.
- The traffic assessment shows that the area is very congested, with parking full during business hours. Traffic flows are high in an area that has a lot of pedestrians. The approach taken by the assessment looks a little basic for such conditions. The options to reduce traffic are sketched out at a very basic level; there seems to be a degree of optimism in the travel plan. **We think the traffic management issues should be treated with more rigour than as at present.**

We hope you can include these comments as you consider this proposal.

Yours sincerely

Belsize Residents Association  
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