

The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn



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17 September 2015

Dear Sirs

Planning application 2015/4404/P : Lincoln's Inn Education Centre

We write to support the applications as respectively Chairman of the Lincoln's Inn Education and Continuing Education Committees. Bernard Livesey has chaired the Education Committee since 2011. Alan Saggerson has chaired the Continuing Education Committee since 2010 and is an advocacy and ethics trainer, and a course director for the Inn. We are not members of the Working Group charged by Council (the Inn's governing body) with responsibility for the delivery of the development for which planning consent is sought.

We note that some of the objections to the planning application have stated that there is no need for the new East Terrace education and training suite. We also note that not one of these objectors has (to the best of our knowledge and information) ever participated in any of the Inn's many educational activities. The objections based on lack of need are ill-informed. The need is compelling and pressing.

The proposed development was extensively debated and unanimously supported at both our committees. It was fully debated at Council and approved by an appreciable majority. During the deliberations of our respective committees and Council the question of need was one which received the most careful examination. The arguments in favour are contained in the *Statement of Need* but we add the following summary:

1. Although we do provide a number of residential training weekends off-site each year, a substantial number of lectures, advocacy and ethics training, and practice management modules for our student, pupil and barrister members take place in London. The number of educational events and courses delivered from London is bound to increase in the foreseeable future to meet the demands of the professional regulators for greater access to continuing professional education and development.

2. At present for courses and training in London we are obliged to use an off-site basement space. It is uncomfortable, cramped, has no natural light and can only accommodate a limited range of events for comparatively few attendees at any one time. This increases the number of smaller events and thus the burdens on our entirely voluntary teaching faculty. Accordingly, there has to be frequent resort to the Great Hall, Old Hall and Old Court Room which were not designed and are not adequate for a modern, accessible and inclusive education programme. For example, the provision of audio visual facilities (particularly for distance, including overseas, access) is severely limited by concerns for the historic fabric. Participants (of which there are many) from outside London must travel - this is expensive, time-consuming and risks limiting inclusion to those with sufficient financial resources. Appropriate, modern educational facilities address each of these vitally important issues.
3. There is the fundamental concern that if the opportunity is not taken now to provide for future flexibility, growth, much needed improvement and modernisation, the Inn (through no fault of its own) will be identified as little more than a charming enclave of historic buildings in the middle of legal London, rather than as an educational institution of the first importance driving up standards of professional conduct and performance to the levels expected in a 21st century commercial economy.

Yours faithfully



Bernard Livesey QC & His Honour Judge A. Saggerson