

## The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn



**TREASURY OFFICE  
LINCOLN'S INN  
LONDON WC2A 3TL**

TEL: 020 7405 1393  
FAX: 020 7831 1839

Development Management  
Regeneration and Planning  
London Borough of Camden  
Judd Street  
London  
WC1H 8ND

23 September 2015

Dear Sirs

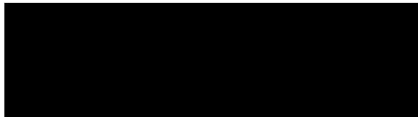
**Planning applications 2015/4408/P & 2015/4541/L: Lincoln's Inn: Library extension on the site of the Under Treasurer's house**

1. I write to support the applications in my capacity as Chairman of Lincoln's Inn Library Committee. I have been a member of the Committee since I was made a bencher of the Inn in 2005, and have chaired it since 2009. I have been a heavy and frequent user of the Library since I was called to the bar in 1975. I am also a tenant of the Inn. I was not a member of the Masterplan Working Group or of the Development Working Group.
2. I disagree with the objectors who question the architectural and aesthetic merits of the design but that may be a matter of opinion. I am, however, closely informed on the Library's needs.
3. As to reading space, the new reading room on the upper floor of the extension is essential, not because we need more reading space but to compensate for a significant loss of prime reading space in the main Library to meet the objectives of providing better working conditions for the Library staff, to enhance the appearance of an exceptionally fine library interior, and to provide improved exhibition space. (This was referred to in para 1.9 of the Statement of Need in the Planning and Heritage Statement.) There may be a net gain of one or two reading spaces, but no more.
4. As to storage, the submissions by objectors mostly seem to acknowledge the need for substantial additional shelf space, which will be created at basement level in the extension, but to do so rather grudgingly. The history of this matter goes back to 2009, long before the Masterplan was conceived, and is set out in the Statement of Need. The problem of shelf space has been considered in detail by the Library Committee, by the Inn's Finance and General Purposes Committee, and by a working party whose membership was drawn from committees other than the Library Committee (except for one member). The issues of off-site storage and digital alternatives were exhaustively analysed.

5. If planning permission is refused, undertaking any alternative scheme is unlikely to be feasible for many years. The consequences would be stark and immediate. There would be no choice but to adopt a programme of large-scale disposal of the stock. The rejection of off-site storage by all those who have considered the matter was not merely because it was considered second-best, but because in the context of how this Library operates and is used – practitioners needing immediate access to material – it would simply be unworkable.

A final comment is prompted by the fact that some of the objectors are members of the Inn, and a few are benchers, i.e. members of its governing body. When the proposals were put to a postal ballot of all benchers in October 2014, following lengthy deliberations in the Inn's Council, the proposals relating to the Under Treasurer's house were approved with barely a vote against. A decision was taken by due process; and a compelling case that there was a need to be met, and by this means, was made.

Yours faithfully



**Nicholas Le Poidevin, Q.C**

**New Square Chambers  
12 New Square  
Lincoln's Inn  
London  
WC2A 3SW**