

The Director of Regeneration & Planning
London Borough of Camden
5 Pancras Square
London
N1C 4AG



Biotechnology and
Biological Sciences
Research Council

02.06.2021

Dear Sir/Madam,

Application Ref: 2020/5593/P - Proposed redevelopment of former Royal National Throat, Nose and Ear Hospital 330 Gray's Inn Road

We refer to the above planning application, and in particular the letter of objection dated 30 November 2002 submitted by the UCL Ear Institute ("the Institute"), which is located and operated from premises immediately adjacent to the application site.

The Institute opened at its current location in 2005 and brings together some of the most influential academics and clinicians in the world to understand hearing and fight deafness - it is one of the world's leading centres for auditory research.

UKRI is a non-departmental public body launched in 2018 and sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). It brings together the UK's seven disciplinary research councils, as well as Research England, and the UK's innovation agency, Innovate UK, with a view to connecting research communities, institutions, businesses and wider society, in the UK and around the world, working at the heart of the research and innovation system such as higher education institutions and institutes, innovative businesses, investors, not-for-profit organisations and policy makers, and a wider set of partners such as those in the education system and civil society. As the UK's largest public funder of research and innovation it is UKRI's responsibility to ensure the health of the research and innovation system, as a whole.

The Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) plays a critical role in UKRI's strategy and development and in the award of grant funding to institutions linked to the conduct and application of research in the biological sciences. As such, BBSRC is a key funder of the UCL Ear Institute and has an intrinsic interest in ensuring the continuance of the Institute's operations, the research that it undertakes and its ongoing contribution to UK and global science.

The Institute's objections to the above planning application have been set out in their letter dated 30 November 2020 and we understand that they have been in consultation with your officers and the applicant as the application is considered and progressed, specifically with a view to assessing the impact of the proposed development and (in the event that the application is successful and implemented) on the science and research undertaken at the Institute; initial assessments are that noise and disruption throughout the construction phase would be such that the Institute would need to cease all research activity (or relocate it, at considerable cost), and that post-completion ongoing disruption would negatively impact on the viability of continued research.

The desirability of urban regeneration is recognised, and while it is unrealistic to expect immunity from impact, it is a matter of fact that the Institute relies on particularly sensitive equipment in conducting

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its research. Much of the research carried out at the Institute is materially and negatively affected by noise, vibration and percussion and, therefore, has unique characteristics that need to be accounted for beyond typical planning considerations.

We understand the Council's position is that it will oppose the application unless appropriate steps can be secured to satisfactorily mitigate the adverse impact the proposed development would have on the Institute, its operations and research, both throughout any construction phase and in relation to ongoing use of the development.

Given the intrinsic interest BBSRC has in the ongoing operations and research of the Institute, through its funding of key programmes, and in avoiding harmful disruption thereto, we would ask that the unique characteristics of the Institute's research activities are recognised as part of the planning process and that all relevant, appropriate and necessary steps to avoid or satisfactorily mitigate impact and disruption to the Institute are fully factored into decision making and any planning conditions to be attached, in full consultation with the Institute.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Melanie J Welham,
Executive Chair BBSRC,
UK Research and Innovation

