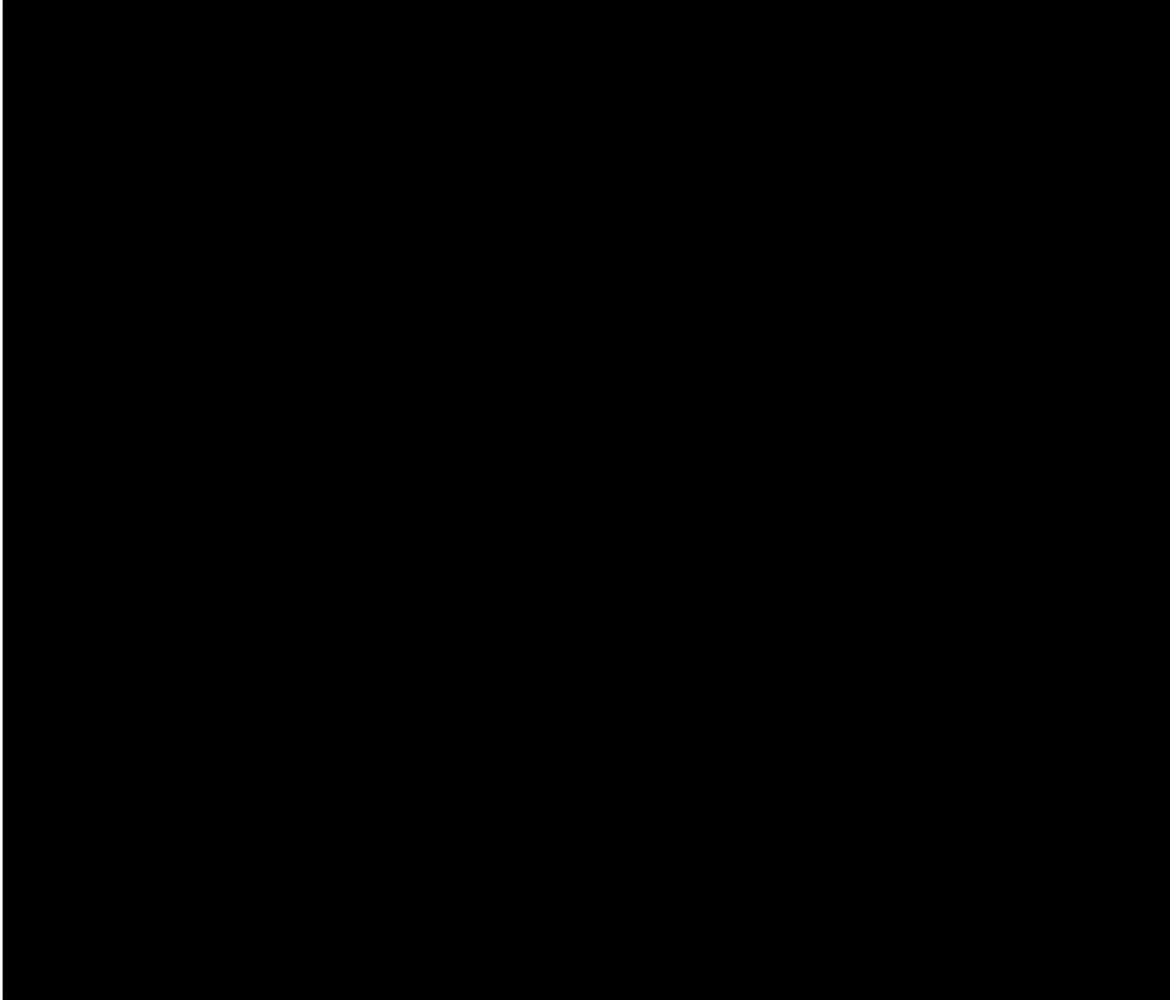


Rafi Miah



Dear Jennifer Walsh

Planning reference 2022/1320/L and 2022/1041/P

I have now had the chance to look at the documentation submitted for this application by RSHP, details of which you kindly forwarded to me with your email of 11 April 2022. I note that the scheme is substantially similar to that presented in early 2021, and reviewed at the Development Management Forum of 25 May 2021 in which I participated however I note, with concern, that the earlier large imbalance between commercial space and provision for the Library, commented on at the time, has now increased by a further 3,000 sq.m., making 76.000 sq.m. commercial space with a mere 10,000 sq.m. for the Library itself.

This colossal imbalance between office/laboratory enabled space and that for the Library is at the root of the problem with the present proposal which, not only subsumes the Grade I Listed Building's entire north elevation behind a ten-storey wall of offices but also, results in the demolition of the Library's

Conservation Centre as well as CSJW's iconic circular stair drum with its link to the adjoining west Reading Room.

The composition of this north elevation of the Library was considered by Colin St John Wilson and MJ Long to be a most important element in the overall design of Completion Phase of the building, while also noting that it is highly visible from St Pancras station's side exit onto Midland Road. Consequently when MJ Long and Rolfe Kentish with Colin St John Wilson as consultant, came to design the Conservation Centre beside it in 2003 they, naturally, took great care to respect the scale and integrity of the adjoining elevation. Unfortunately the present proposals have no such compunction, they spread across the whole north face of the building, like a massive express train smashing through everything in its path.

It is not only of concern that this gigantic building results in the concealment of CSJW's carefully considered north elevation, destruction of the iconic circular stair drum and link bridge and of Long and Kentish's Conservation Centre, it also has a most profound effect on the outlook and daylight levels in every one of the important north-facing rooms and external spaces of this Grade I Listed Building. Among them the Restaurant and terrace, Readers and Friends Lounges and terrace, Board, Committee, Conference Rooms and Offices. All of them to be confronted by a massive, vertical wall of offices/laboratories, completely alien to the Library, over 30 metres high and surmounted by a sloping, south-facing, glazed facade of a further 12 metres. At its closest point the proposed scheme is within 20 metres of the existing elevation. And it is not only the north elevation that is impacted by this colossus. RSHP's section drawing P-1301-S-CO1 shows that, as well as the proposed new work towering over 20 metres above the very highest point of the north elevation of the present building, it also illustrates that most of the sloping, glazed area of the proposed new extension will be visible above the carefully contoured pitched roofs of the entrance hall on the south side of the Library when viewed from Euston Road. This is surely the most irresponsible way to treat one of the very few Grade I Listed Buildings of the late twentieth century, and which was considered as "a landmark public building" when selected by Historic England in 2015.

In essence this is a gross over development of the Library's own site with commercial premises, and only a tiny portion serving the Library itself. In the process a significant Grade I Listed Building by an eminent architectural practice will be severely compromised and the Library's Conservation Centre, by the same architects, destroyed. This is in direct contravention of Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which requires that the local planning authority "shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses." Furthermore paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 states "When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation." I therefore urge you to exercise your powers under the planning legislation applicable to a Grade I listed Building and to refuse Listed Building Consent and Planning Permission for the proposals.

Yours sincerely

Peter Denney Dip Arch. RIBA.

Your acknowledgement of this objection to the application would be appreciated.