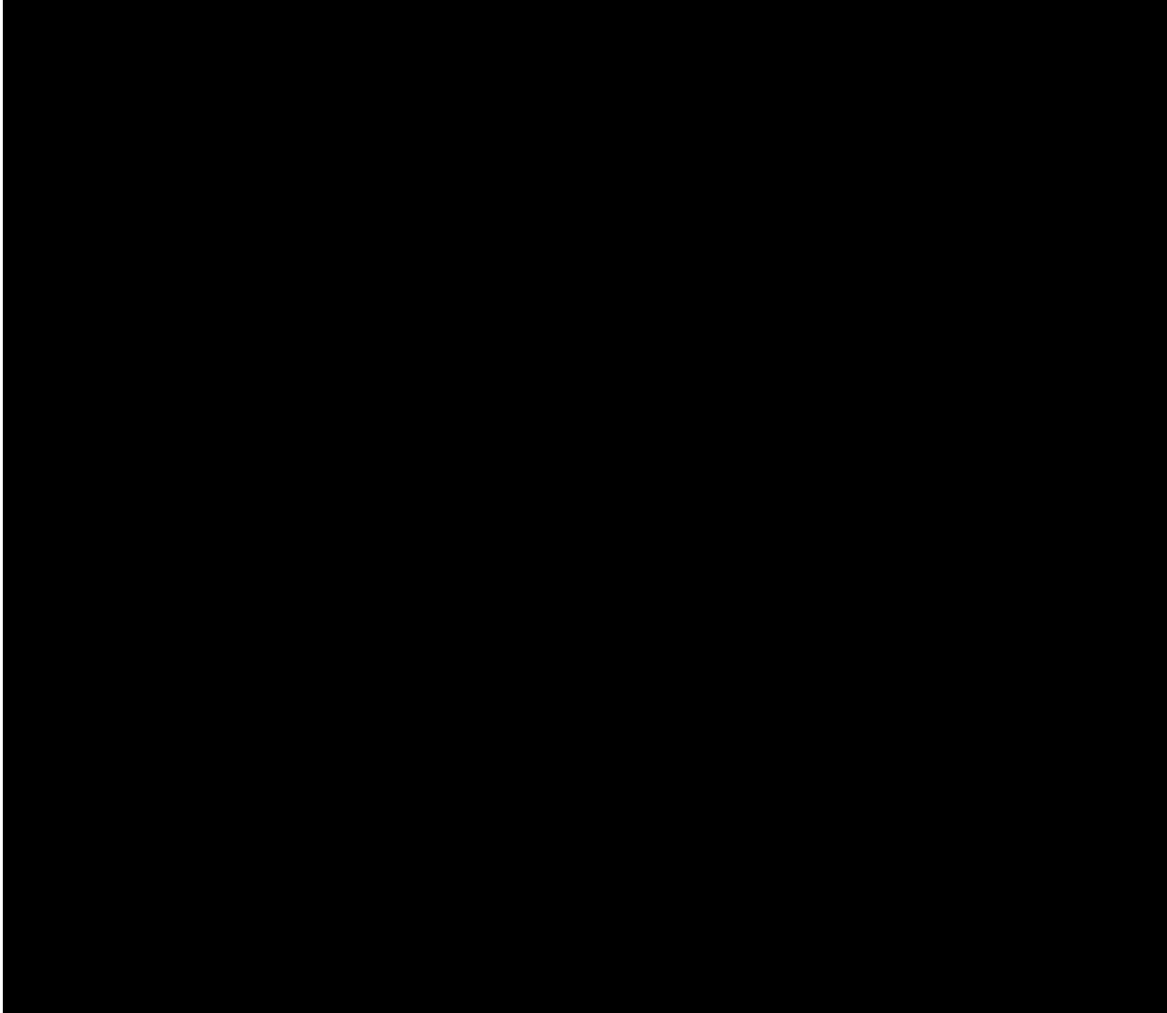


Rafi Miah



Dear Jennifer Walsh

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

I'm writing to present my objection to the above planning application by Rogers Stirk Harbour and Partners, details of which I have seen in the architectural press.

The issues that make me wish to object are primarily the massive imbalance between office/laboratory enabled space and that for the Library. This 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, in a most insensitive manner. I expect greater sensitivity than this from a practice with the high reputation of RSHP.

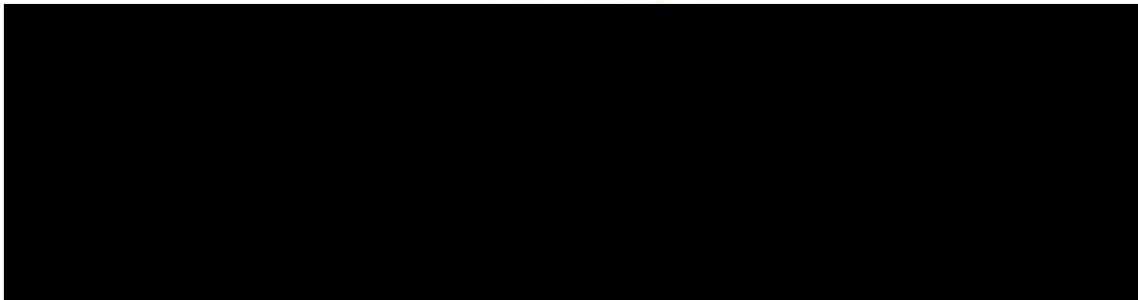
It is not only of concern that this gigantic building results in the concealment of CSJW's carefully considered north elevation, destruction of the iconic circular stair drum and link bridge and of Long and Kentish's Conservation Centre, it also has a most profound effect on the outlook and daylight 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 façade 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-C01 shows that, as well as 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 other features of special architectural 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

Adrian Morrow BA (Hons), BArch (Manc) RIBA
Director

ADRIAN MORROW ARCHITECTS



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