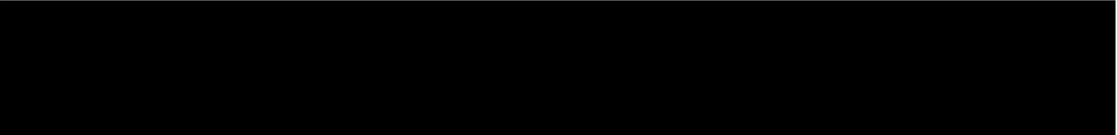




Subject:

Application number: 2022/1041/P



Site Address Land to the North of the British Library 96 Euston Road London NW1

I can only support the principle of extending the British Library to cover part of the site to the north of the existing building which was originally set aside for the Library. The proposed scheme fails in so many ways however.

The benefit which accrues to the Library from the proposal is limited. This limited benefit to the proponent is in stark contrast to the very substantial negative impact of the proposal on the local community, on the built environment, and on the wider environment

The limited benefits to an esteemed institution cannot warrant such wider negative impacts

Among the drawbacks of the scheme are the lost opportunities for the Library to use the site for its own purpose or, failing this, lost opportunities for Camden to ensure the use of the space for other purposes, such as housing or local amenities which are in tune with the needs and policies for the area.

The proposal involves the demolition of the Library's Conservation Centre, completed as recently as 2007, a deplorable waste of resources and a waste of embodied carbon which is not justified by the limited social benefit of the proposal. The Conservation Centre was built to high specifications and with a long life in mind. We are in a climate crisis and in this context the proposed destruction is wanton and wasteful.

In return for this citizens of Camden will get a building which is proactively dreary, looking like so many other commercial developments of recent decades.

The proposed buildings will tower over the existing buildings and will detract from the important existing heritage buildings notably St Pancras Station and the Hotel, the existing British Library, and the fine council housing in Ossulston Street. These are all listed buildings which will be severely diminished by a mediocre mass of blocks.

The proposed new buildings relate clumsily to the fine existing Grade 1 listed British Library building. It entails the demolition of significant frontages of the grade I listed building. Internally I especially object to the demolition of walls on the Upper Ground floor and on the First Floor, which were carefully created to constitute ends of vistas for the public, important aspects of the listed building. This includes a carefully created memorial to the famous nineteenth century chief librarian, Antonio Panizzi, whose bust is inserted into a specially created round niche in the wall, all part of the original grade 1 listed design. These are publicly accessible spaces and the loss of architectural amenity in a grade I listed building is significant.

These walls, vistas and features are proposed to be demolished to create awkward linking passages between the fine existing and the proposed new building.

I fear that the negative impact of the proposal will be even worse. Drawings contain the following disclaimer: "This drawing has been prepared at a preliminary stage of the design. It is indicative and illustrative only and has not been developed in detail. Further development of the design and clarification of design assumptions will

result in changes and RSHP do not undertake any responsibility that this drawing will represent the final construction”.

These statements ought to disqualify the application. Otherwise it makes a mockery of Camden’s planning process, all pretense of democratic control of our environment, and it gives the developer and their client carte blanche to do as they please.

Yours sincerely

Kristian Jensen