
From: jim.monahan [REDACTED]
Sent: 02 December 2022 10:58
[REDACTED]
Subject: Objection to GOSH planning application ref 2022/2255/P

Dear Sir/Madam

OBJECTION

The planning application made by Great Ormand Street Hospital to demolish a very large part of their hospital fronting Great Ormand Street is very problematic. Everyone would wish GOSH well in providing new and larger cancer facilities for children, but the current scheme has two fundamental flaws.

The first concerns how the current buildings are to be demolished and subsequently how the new building is to be constructed. It is inappropriate and unnecessary to carry out this work relying on all construction traffic movement to be from Lambs Conduit Street and Gt Ormand Street through to Queen Square and then down Boswell Street. These streets are narrow and cannot accommodate the level of construction vehicles that will be required for the demolition and construction of the new building; this whole process will take at least 2/3 years. Boswell Street is primarily a residential street as is Gt Ormand Street on the south side, and to navigate around Queen Sq is fraught with pedestrian movement conflicts. Frankly it is the worse possible construction vehicle route being proposed and shows no consideration of the long term affect it will have on the environment and health of residents living in the streets concerned. The additional fumes that will result and will permeate into residential accommodation along the route, much of which exists at a level below the street level; the additional heavy construction traffic will clearly worsen the air quality and increase the level of poisonous substances that will adversely affect residents health. At a time that the GLA make great claims that they wish to improve air quality for London for GOSH to insist that this is their construction vehicle route is quite preposterous. Those with respiratory problems like asthma are bound to be adversely affected.

For a hospital for sick children to insist on this route is more than a sick joke.

A perfectly feasible alternative option does exist, namely that a new connection to Guildford Street is provided at the outset of the development and that construction vehicles are only permitted along Guildford Street. This street is wider and has far fewer residential properties and Guildford Street has access directly to two arterial roads namely Grays Inn Road and Southampton Row/Russell Square.

I would urge that the planning report makes it clear that if the Council is minded to grant consent to the overall scheme that the current construction plan is rejected and the Council will only be minded to grant consent if the construction traffic during the demolition and construction phases is entirely contained to Guildford Street. This is entirely feasible and practical, but to date GOSH have been remarkably arrogant and dismissed this approach so it will unfortunately only be taken seriously if GOSH are informed that no planning permission will be granted unless they make the undertaking that all construction traffic will be entirely contained along Guildford Street. It is not sufficient to make this traffic route a condition of the planning application that the Council might be minded to grant as conditions can be appealed and varied. The Council hand is much strengthened if GOSH make a legal agreement before planning permission is granted that the Guildford Street construction route will be the only road to be used by construction traffic.

The second objection is the height and bulk of the development. It is inevitable that the proposed size of the new Children's Cancer Centre will result in a taller building along Gt Ormand Street; however the current height seriously damages the setting of the many listed buildings along the south side of Gt Ormand Street and also adversely affects the quality of the Conservation Area. The development as currently proposed envisages two levels under street level, so major excavation is already envisaged. It would be possible to excavate still further to reduce the overall visual bulk of the development. Currently the scheme shows at 9/10 floors has a massive floor to ceiling height of over 9 m, and this is because it contains plant. Most if not all of this plant could be located at an additional basement level and thereby significantly reduce the height of the building. This in itself will not completely deal with the overbearing bulk of the development but it certainly would result in a very significant improvement to the external appearance and I would hope the Council insist on this approach to ensure the height of the overall development is substantially reduced along Great Ormand Street. It is often stated that plant has to be at roof level. This is not the case as air handling's plant can be located at basement level though it would require relocating air ducts and air intake points which is eminently feasible. It just needs a clear directive from the planners that the bulk of the building needs to be reduced.

The proposed rooftop garden is to be applauded, but currently it is above the plant room mentioned above and a long way away from the wards. By relocating the plant to basement level the rooftop garden would be directly related to the wards and considerably more accessible.

Could you please inform me when the matter will be considered at committee.

Yours sincerely

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