BLOOMSBURY RESIDENTS' ACTION GROUP

PROOF OF EVIDENCE 8

Problems caused to hospital patients and staff

STATEMENT

by JOHN CAMACHO

Solicitor appointed by Court of Protection

a) I have lived in Bloomsbury for 40 years and at Judd Street for 20 years. I am writing to explain my opposition to the Torrington/Tavistock ETO.

b) I work as a Solicitor and have worked as a volunteer driver for patients for some years. Seven years ago I was appointed by the Court of Protection to look after welfare matters relating to a friend disabled by a severe stroke and heart attack.

c) This involves taking him to frequent hospital appointments at the Institute of Neurology in Queen's Square and UCLH.

d) Before the ETO came into force the trip between the Neurological Hospital and UCH would take a maximum of 10 minutes. Now, deprived of any westbound route except for Euston Road, the trip can take as long as 45 minutes. This increase in journey time not only makes it difficult for me to continue as a volunteer but also causes a lot of stress to patients that are already in a very vulnerable state.

e) Likewise any trips between anywhere east of Judd Street and west of Gower Street (whether it be to UCH, the Cancer Centre or Mortimer Market Centre) involves patients in prolonged traffic congestion and, if they are not in a private car, greatly increases the cost of any taxi journey, adds to pollution and unnecessary congestion.

f) I am describing my personal experience but I believe this is representative of the delays caused to many patients, carers and staff who have to move between the three major hospitals in our area (Great Ormond Street, The Neurological Hospital and UCH)

g) I am angered by the proponents of the ETO that argue that our local streets are simply rat runs for drivers trying to avoid Euston Road. In fact these roads are mainly used by local people to access vital services such as healthcare; the removal of this westbound route is causing severe disruption to the lives of the most vulnerable local residents.