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Dear Mr Stanage,

APPLICATION UNDER SECTION 13 OF THE CORONERS ACT 1988

I am writing to confirm that the Solicitor General has now reconsidered the application for a fresh inquest into the death of Geoffrey Campbell.

The Solicitor has reviewed this application carefully, along with the supporting information you provided, namely:

- Submissions on Behalf of the Applicants
- Applicants' Bundle of Authorities
- Applicants' Bundle of Evidence

As you will be aware, AGO initially sought representations from the Metropolitan Police and HM Coroner for West London as potential interested parties. Neither of these parties wished to make any representations and are neutral about the application. That position remains unchanged.

In order to grant permission for your application to proceed to the High Court, the Solicitor must be satisfied that there is a "reasonable prospect" that the Court will order a new inquest. Having reconsidered the application, the Solicitor is still of the view that this test has not been met.

Reasons for refusal of permission

The application alleged the original inquest was deficient on grounds of insufficiency of inquiry and the discovery of fresh evidence. The Solicitor does not consider these grounds to be made out.

The events leading up to the attack on the World Trade Centre were thoroughly investigated by the FBI and the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States. The conclusions of those investigations are widely known and accepted. They were summarised at the original inquest by Detective Inspector Howard Way, who gave evidence on the events leading up to the attacks and the Metropolitan Police investigation with the code name 'Operation Exchange'. It was reasonable for the Coroner to rely on this evidence, which concluded that the attack on the Twin Towers of the World Trade Centre was part of a coordinated attack using hijacked passenger planes by the Islamic militant group Al-Qaeda in which over 3000 people lost their lives.

Furthermore, the Solicitor does not consider that the expert and eye-witness evidence about pre-planted explosives would make a meaningful difference to the verdict because it is not credible. The structural cause of collapse was subject to a detailed investigation by the National Institute of Standards and Technology ('NIST'). In 2005 and 2008, NIST published reports titled 'Federal Building and Fire Safety Investigation of the World Trade Centre Disaster: Final Report of the National Construction Safety Team on the Collapse of the World Trade Centre Tower'. The reports, which are available online, described how impact from the aircraft and subsequent fires caused the collapse of the towers and made recommendations for increased structural integrity in the future.

The Solicitor does not consider this case justifies the instruction of his own experts to address the expert evidence relied on by the applicant, which concludes that the NIST reports were misconceived. These reports, together with the exhaustive official investigation carried out by the National Commission, suggests there is no realistic possibility that the collapse of the Towers was a result of anything other than impact from the colliding aircraft. That is the clear consensus view. This evidence supports the Coroner's original conclusions, and a new inquest is therefore unlikely to make a meaningful difference to the verdict.

Finally, the Solicitor was unable to conceive what additional benefit Al-Qaeda, or indeed any other malignant actor, would gain by planting explosives in the basement as well as flying planes into the Twin Towers. On a common-sense view, the Solicitor considers the hypothesis advanced by the applicant to be fanciful and therefore unable to discredit the consensus view on what caused the collapse of the Twin Towers.

Interests of Justice

The Solicitor has carefully reconsidered whether a fresh inquest is necessary or desirable in the interests of justice. Whilst the wishes of the family carry considerable weight, the Solicitor is not satisfied that the test is met. The hypothesis that the Towers collapsed due to pre-planted explosives is simply not credible and, accordingly, the Solicitor considers there is no realistic possibility of a different conclusion or narrative verdict at a fresh inquest. He does not therefore believe a fresh inquest to be in the interests of justice.

The Solicitor would also reiterate the long-standing principle outlined in *Gouriet v Union of Post Office Workers* [1978] AC 435, that the exercise of the Law Officers' discretion in public interest functions is absolute, and non-reviewable.

I understand that this will be disappointing to the Campbell family, and the Solicitor once again wishes to pass on his deepest sympathies to them for the tragic loss of their son. However, having reconsidered all of the information provided in respect of this application, and for the reasons set out above, the Solicitor is not of the view that there is a reasonable prospect that the High Court would order a new inquest in this case, nor would it be in the interests of justice to do so.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted signature]

**Domestic Law team
Attorney General's Office**

[Redacted contact information]