

Application ref: 2021/2162/L  
Contact: Nick Baxter  
Tel: 020 7974 3442  
Email: Nick.Baxter@camden.gov.uk  
Date: 24 April 2023

**Development Management**  
Regeneration and Planning  
London Borough of Camden  
Town Hall  
Judd Street  
London  
WC1H 9JE

Phone: 020 7974 4444

[planning@camden.gov.uk](mailto:planning@camden.gov.uk)

[www.camden.gov.uk/planning](http://www.camden.gov.uk/planning)

The Planning Lab  
Room S6  
South Wing  
Somerset house  
London  
WC2R 1LA

Dear Sir/Madam

## **DECISION**

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

### **Listed Building Consent Granted**

Address:

**British Museum  
Great Russell Street  
London  
WC1B 3DG**

Proposal:

Temporary retention of audio guide and ticketing desks on East and West of the Great Court for 5 years.

Drawing Nos: Location and block plan, DAS & HIA temp desks

The Council has considered your application and decided to grant Listed Building Consent subject to the following condition(s):

Conditions And Reasons:

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Location and block plan, DAS & HIA temp desks

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

- 2 Notwithstanding the content of the design & access and heritage statements

and consented drawings, which propose the retention of the structures in their current locations for a five-year period, this consent is for a two-year period only.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

- 3 The structures hereby permitted are for a temporary two-year period only from the date of this consent; and on or before their expiry shall be removed in their entirety, all necessary fabric repairs completed, and the affected areas of the Great Court restored to their former 2007 appearance,

Reason: The type of structure is not such as the Council is prepared to approve, other than for a limited period, in view of its harmful impact on the special architectural and historic interest of the building. The permanent retention of the structure would be contrary to the requirements of policies D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

#### Informative(s):

- 1 The site is the courtyard of a grade-I-listed museum of 1849 by Smirke, roofed over in 2000.

The application seeks the retention of two large temporary ticketing/audio desks in the Great Court.

The applicant wishes to apply for a further extension of consent, having first made such an application in 2007, 16 years ago.

This application initially proposed the retention of the desks for a period of five years, but the Council considered this to be too long as the desks were originally granted temporary consent for just one year in 2007, in conjunction with the temporary use of the Round Reading Room as an exhibition space. Further temporary consents were granted in 2008, 2011, 2015 and 2018, on the basis that a strategy for the future use of the now disused Round Reading Room be in place. However, at the time of granting this consent, the British Museum has yet to produce such a strategy. The council therefore grants a temporary consent for two years to allow the information guide and ticketing function to continue in the Great Court. In this time the council expects a building development framework to be produced which will include alternative less intrusive locations for the desks as well as establishing a new use for the Round Reading Room, with all necessary consents in place on expiry of this consent.

It should be noted that if the desks were in position for the long term, they would constitute clutter within the Great Court when read alongside a number of permanent installations including information and guide desks, café serveries, art installations and signage. Nonetheless, the retention of the two audio guide and ticketing desks in their current positions for a specified limited period, together with proposed minor alterations to their fabric, are not

considered to have a negative impact on the museum building due to their reversible and temporary nature. As such, the application proposals as temporary installations are not considered to harm the special interest of the grade-I-listed building.

The application has been advertised in the press and by means of a site notice, whereby there were no consultation responses. Given Historic England's presence in meetings, no formal consultation with it has been deemed necessary. The site's planning history has been taken into account in making this decision.

Particular attention has been paid to the desirability of preserving the special interest of the listed building, under s.16 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 as amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act (ERR) 2013

As such, the proposal is in general accordance with policy D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017. The proposed development also accords with the London Plan 2021.

- 2 You are advised that any works of alterations or upgrading not included on the approved drawings which are required to satisfy Building Regulations or Fire Certification may require a further application for listed building consent.

In dealing with the application, the Council has sought to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive way in accordance with paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

You can find advice about your rights of appeal at:

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/appeals/guidance/guidancecontent>

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DPope', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Daniel Pope  
Chief Planning Officer