

PD13794/CM/GF/GA/RA/HM-H

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30 January 2025

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

**FAO Elaine Quigley**

**PLANNING PORTAL REF: 13709236**

Dear Elaine,

**THE BRITISH MUSEUM, 39/40 RUSSELL SQUARE, LONDON, WC1B 3DG  
THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED) AND THE TOWN PLANNING (LISTED  
BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990  
APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION AND LISTED BUILDING CONSENT**

#### **PLANNING AND HERITAGE STATEMENT**

On behalf of our client, the Trustees of the British Museum ("the Museum" / "the Applicant"), please find enclosed an application for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent ("the / this Application") at The British Museum, Great Russell Street, London, WC1B 3DG ("the Site").

The description of development for these proposals ("the Proposed Development") is as follows:

*"Installation of CCTV camera to the entrance arch soffit of 39/40 Russell Square."*

The works are proposed following the Museum's Energy Centre Programme (ECP) planning applications, which have either been granted or received resolution to grant at the time of writing. The ECP is the Museum's proposal to switch to an all-electric energy system and is a major part of their strategy to achieve Net Zero Carbon.

The Museum will remain operational during the works permitted under the ECP applications and 39/40 Russell Square, the Site, is proposed to be used as temporary staff accommodation during the ECP works. It is therefore essential that appropriate security measures are taken in relation to this Building for the protection of Museum staff and works.

#### **SITE BACKGROUND**

The Site comprises 39/40 Russell Square, set over four storeys (+ basement) and the 'Science Block' located to the rear. The Building forms part of a row of terraces on the west side of Russell Square and is bound by 38 Russell Square and 41 Russell Square. The Site is located within the administrative local authority of the London Borough of Camden ('LB Camden') and is located within the Central London Area for the purposes of the Local Plan. The existing use of the Site is office under Use Class E.

The Building was Grade II listed in 1969 within the group listing comprising *nos. 38-43 Russell Square and attached railings*. The list description is as follows:

*"Terrace of 6 houses. c1800-03. By James Burton. Multi-coloured stock brick with rusticated stucco ground floors.  
4 storeys and basements. 3 windows each, No.38 with 5-window return, mostly blind, to Montague Place. Round-*

*arched doorways with pilaster-jambs, cornice-heads, fanlights, sidelights and double panelled doors. No.38 has entrance on return with stuccoed Doric projecting porch. No.40 doorway converted to use as a window. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sashes. Cast-iron balconies to 1st floor windows. Stucco cornice at 3rd floor level. Parapets above attic storey. Interiors: not inspected. Subsidiary Features: attached cast-iron railings with urn finials to areas."*

The Site is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

## **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

The Site has recent planning history. On the 17 July 2024, planning permission and listed building consent (2023/2020/L & 2023/1848/P) were granted for the *"Erection of new two storey building, plus basement and associated works to provide plant and welfare accommodation ancillary to the Museum following demolition of existing building and two storey structures on East Road (to the rear of 9-11 Montague Street and 43 Russell Square)."*

On the 16 October 2024, planning permission and listed building consent (2023/4648/P & 2023/4903/L) were granted for: *"Erection of new energy centre incorporating maintenance support accommodation to internal West Road, new substation off Montague Street, all together with associated internal and external works, service runs, erection of plant, landscaping, and temporary works associated with construction following demolition of existing Energy Centre to internal West Road and removal of temporary buildings to the south of the existing energy centre on the internal West Road and to the north and east of the White Wing facing Montague Street."*

On 20 November 2024, associated enabling works were granted for the:

*"Installation of 2 condenser units within the lightwell, new roof vent, external intake and exhaust louvres on the south elevation of the basement and roof level, installation of external lighting on the side and rear elevations of the rear extension (Science Block) and within the lightwell of no. 39 Russell Square, waterproofing tanking of 3 basement vaults for use as storage space, and internal works including installation of replacement air conditioning units in 1st and 2nd floors, structural repairs including removal of partitions, fixture and fittings, new partitions, new servicing and other associated internal alterations in association with use as workshops (Class E)"*

The Proposed Development forming this Application, form part of the enabling works required to deliver the above planning permission for the British Museum Estate.

## **THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

The Proposed Development seeks to install a single CCTV camera to the façade of 39/40 Russell Square to provide additional security measures during the ECP works. The camera is to be mounted on the underside of the keystone within the entrance to the Site fronting Russell Square to allow for optimal security coverage. The camera cable is proposed to be fed through a new 10mm hole through the timber frame of the fanlight. A conduit is also proposed to be installed internally which will not affect the window frame and provide coverage for the cable internally.

## **LEGISLATION AND PLANNING POLICY**

### **STATUTORY PROVISIONS**

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and S.38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act requires applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant listed building consent or planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the decision maker shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

## **THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with policies of the statutory Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The statutory development plan for the Site comprises the following documents:

- The London Plan (March 2021); and
- Camden Local Plan (July 2017).

The National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) and National Planning Practice Guidance are also material considerations in the determination of any planning application. There are various supplementary planning guidance documents which have also been considered, including the following:

- The Character and Context SPG (June 2014).

The Site is subject the following designations:

- Central London Area; and
- Bloomsbury Conversation Area.

## **OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The revised National Planning Policy Framework (the “NPPF”) was published in December 2024 and supersedes previous national planning guidance contained in various Planning Policy Guidance and Planning Policy Statements. The Framework sets out the Government’s approach to planning matters and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

The National Planning Practice Guidance, (the “NPPG”), published 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021 (and subsequent amendments) is also a material consideration and should be read in conjunction with the Framework.

The overarching approach of the NPPF is to promote sustainability which has three components, social, environmental and economic. The sections of particular relevance to the determination of this application are:

- Chapter 12 (Achieving well designed and beautiful places); and
- Chapter 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment).

## **HERITAGE STATEMENT**

As noted, 39 Russell Square was listed at Grade II in 1969 as part of a terrace (Nos. 38-43). No. 39 itself is a 1950s reconstruction comprising the amalgamation of two properties (39 and 40) into a single property (39). Its interest derives

from its group value as part of a terrace of townhouses forming part of the speculative development of this area, and for its contribution to the cohesive appearance of the terrace and architectural quality.

The installation of a CCTV camera to the front elevation of No. 39 is necessary and beneficial to the security operations of the British Museum. The proposals have been developed with careful consideration given to the sensitivity of the building's appearance. The selected camera model is visually unobtrusive, and its location, to the soffit beneath the keystone, has been selected to minimise visual disruption to the facade whilst providing the requisite coverage. The cabling will likewise be concealed by fixing it tight to the internal side of the window frame between the springing point of the arch and head of the window. A small (10mm) hole will be formed within the (modern) timber frame to the fanlight.

The Proposed Development proposes the minimum necessary works to improve security standards whilst minimising the impact on fabric. The intervention is designed to be lightweight, visually unobtrusive, and reversible.

For these reasons we conclude that the Proposal will not harm the significance of the listed building or its appreciation. Nor will it harm the contribution the group makes to the Bloomsbury CA.

## **CONCLUSION**

In summary, the proposals are considered to accord with the relevant sections of the Development Plan and meet with national guidance and with the statutory provisions of the town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

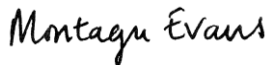
## **ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

The application has been submitted via the Planning Portal under reference **PP-13709236**.

The Application fee has been calculated in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Amendment) (England) 2012 (as amended). The fee, amounting to £363.00 (plus service charge), has been paid via the Planning Portal upon submission.

We would be grateful if LB Camden could confirm that our Application is completed and will be validated shortly. In the meantime, should any further clarification, information or assistance be required, please contact Graham Allison (Tel. 07818 012 421 / graham.allison@montagu-evans.co.uk) or Rosie Adamson (Tel. 07826 552 595 / rosie.adamson@montagu-evans.co.uk) of this office in the first instance.

Yours faithfully,



**Montagu Evans LLP**