

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		26/08/2011	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		02/09/2011	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Catherine Bond				2011/3386/L			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
British Museum Great Russell Street London WC1B 3DG				Refer to decision notice			
PO 3/4		Area Team Signature		C&UD		Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal(s)							
Replacement of 6 internal door panels with glass vision panels in connection with existing museum (Class D1).							
Recommendation(s):		Grant listed building consent					
Application Type:		Listed Building Consent					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:		No. notified	00	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
				No. electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:		Site notice – no response Press notice – no response English Heritage letter authorising the Council to determine the application as it thinks fit dated 19 September 2011					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify		N/A					

Site Description

Grade I listed museum building situated on the north side of Great Russell Street within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The original portions of the building date from 1823-47 and were built to the designs of Robert Smirke. Constructed of Portland stone it was originally planned as a big quadrangle with an open central courtyard. The building consists of two principal storeys and adheres to the Greek Revival style in the most part. Various additions, most recent of which is the Norman Foster designed Great Court scheme which created a central glass covered space around the Sidney Smirke designed Reading Room dating 1852-57.

Relevant History

Listed building consent 2003/1439/L granted on 04/11/2003 for the installation of 1 hour fire resistant doors in Level 1, Sector A, North Corridor, and 4-hour fire shutters on sector boundaries, Level 1, Sector B corridor, East Residence.

Listed building consent 2003/1604/L granted on 19/11/2003 for upgrading of fire integrity in Level 1, Corridor B in connection with ongoing fire protection strategy, including the upgrading and/or replacement of existing doors in escape corridor.

Relevant policies

LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies

Policy CS14 – Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

Policy DP25 – Conserving Camden's heritage

Assessment

Current fire regulations require that doors in certain back-of-house areas of the British Museum, namely means-of-escape corridors in the East Residence at Levels 5 and 6, should be upgraded for fire safety purposes. This involves the insertion of glazed vision panels using Georgian wired glass.

The proposals are acceptable in principle. The doors which are subject of the proposal all adhere to a standard 19th century four panel door or two panel double leaf door pattern. Although the proposal involves the loss of some historic fabric, in the form of the upper door panels, the overall appearance and integrity of each door will not be lost.

The original proposal involved the replacement of only one upper door solid panel in each single leaf door with glazing, which was considered to give a curious, asymmetrical appearance to an otherwise symmetrically designed door. Revisions have been made by the applicant to the original submission to meet the Council's reservations to the asymmetrical design. The revised drawing shows both upper panels to each single leaf door with new glazed panels. Although this involves the loss of further historic fabric, the resultant balanced appearance of the doors is more in keeping with the character of the listed building.

It should be noted that Georgian wired glass has been specified as it more fire-resistant than other types of pyro-glass. It has been used elsewhere in the museum for similar vision panels.

The proposal complies with policies CS14 and DP25 and is therefore considered acceptable.

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