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CHARTERED SURVEYORS

Clarges House  
6-12 Clarges Street  
London W1J 8HB

Tel: 020 7493 4002  
Fax: 020 7312 7548

www.montagu-evans.co.uk

W

~~2235~~

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PRC/PD7000  
email: paul.crisp@montagu-evans.co.uk

26 March 2009

Bethany Arbery  
Development Control Planning Services  
London Borough of Camden  
5th Floor  
Camden Town Hall Extension  
Argyle Street  
London  
WC1H 8EQ

Dear Bethany

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)  
LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREA ACT 1990  
BRITISH MUSEUM: RELOCATION OF SWITCHGEAR AND SUB-STATION**

We are instructed by the British Museum to submit the enclosed full application for planning permission and listed building consent for:

*"The demolition of the existing carpenters workshops in the north east corner of the British Museum site. Construction of single storey building to house EDF sub-station and associated switchgear. Ancillary works to enable connection into main High Voltage feed."*

Four copies of the following documents are included within this submission.

- Application form, signed and dated;
- Completed Certificate of Ownership, signed and dated;
- Agricultural Holdings Certificate, signed and dated;
- Design and Access Statement, prepared by Purcell Miller Tritton;
- Statement, prepared by Pre-construct archaeology regarding Written Scheme of Investigation for Boundary Wall;
- Site Location Plan at 1:1250 (Drawing Reference: 231755/000);
- Existing Plan (Drawing Reference: 231755/001); and
- Proposed Substation (Drawing References: 231755/002 and 231755/002a).

**Site Location & Surrounding Area**

The existing Carpenters workshop is located in the north east corner of the British Museum site and is not visible from the street. A detailed assessment of the existing carpenters workshop, and its historical significance, is set out in the Design and Access Statement prepared by Purcell Miller Tritton.

The workshop forms part of the accommodation of the British Museum which is a significant presence in the surrounding area. The Museum has several list entries, with the King Edward VII Building (to the west of the proposed sub-station) being Grade I. In the wider area, Senate House is also Grade I listed. The properties to the east (fronting Montague Street and Russell Square) are Grade II listed.

The site is within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The adopted Conservation Area Appraisal does not identify buildings which contribute to the character or appearance of the area, the emerging appraisal,

prepared by Nathaniel Litchfield and Partners, the main Museum building is identified as making a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.

### **Relevant Planning Policy**

The development plan for the site is the Adopted Camden Unitary Development Plan which was adopted in June 2006.

General Design principles are set out in Policy B1 of the UDP which identify a series of criteria which apply to all development.

The relevant policies within the UDP are B6 which considers the effect of development proposals on listed buildings and re-iterates the guidance as found in PPG15 in that proposals should preserve the setting of listed buildings. Conservation Area policy is set out in policy B7 and requires that proposals should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. This which reflects government guidance set out in PPG15.

In line with PPG15 and the Camden UDP, in considering the demolition of unlisted buildings with a Conservation Area, it is essential to understand the contribution that the building makes to the Area. Where this is considered to be negative or limited, consideration passes onto the replacement building and whether that building would preserve or enhance the Conservation Area. Where it is concluded that a building makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, the demolition of that structure will be subject to the same broad tests for the demolition of a listed building contained within paragraphs 3.16 to 3.19 of PPG15.

### **Planning Considerations**

As set out above, in considering the demolition of the existing workshops, it is necessary to consider their contribution to the surrounding Conservation Area. The existing workshop is not visible from the street and is wholly contained within the Museum grounds. It is of a utilitarian structure with, as the Design and Access Statement sets out, of no architectural or historic merit. The existing carpenters workshop therefore make a 'nil' contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

As the existing structures on the site make a 'nil' contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, guidance states that the effect of the replacement building should be considered. Whilst the replacement switchroom will be wholly contained within the Museum grounds and will not be visible from the street level, the proposals includes the extension of the wall by the King Edward VII building. Whilst minor, this will improve, albeit in a minor way, the appearance of the wall in relation to the Conservation Area. Notwithstanding this, the character or appearance of the Conservation Area will be preserved, with a minor enhancement as a result of the extended wall. The statutory tests are therefore satisfied.

The general design principles set out a series of criteria which should be used in determining applications. The accompanying Design and Access Statement addresses how the proposal addresses these. The proposals satisfies the general design principles.

### **Summary**

For these reasons, it is considered that the application wholly accords with the Development Plan and any other material planning considerations and it is respectfully requested that planning permission and listed building consent should be granted.

We look forward to receiving confirmation that this application has been duly registered.

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This application is being dealt with by Paul Crisp. Please ensure that all application correspondence is directed accordingly.

If we can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely



**Montagu Evans LLP**

cc. Tony Wilson – British Museum (& encls)  
Nigel Sunter – PMT (& encls)

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