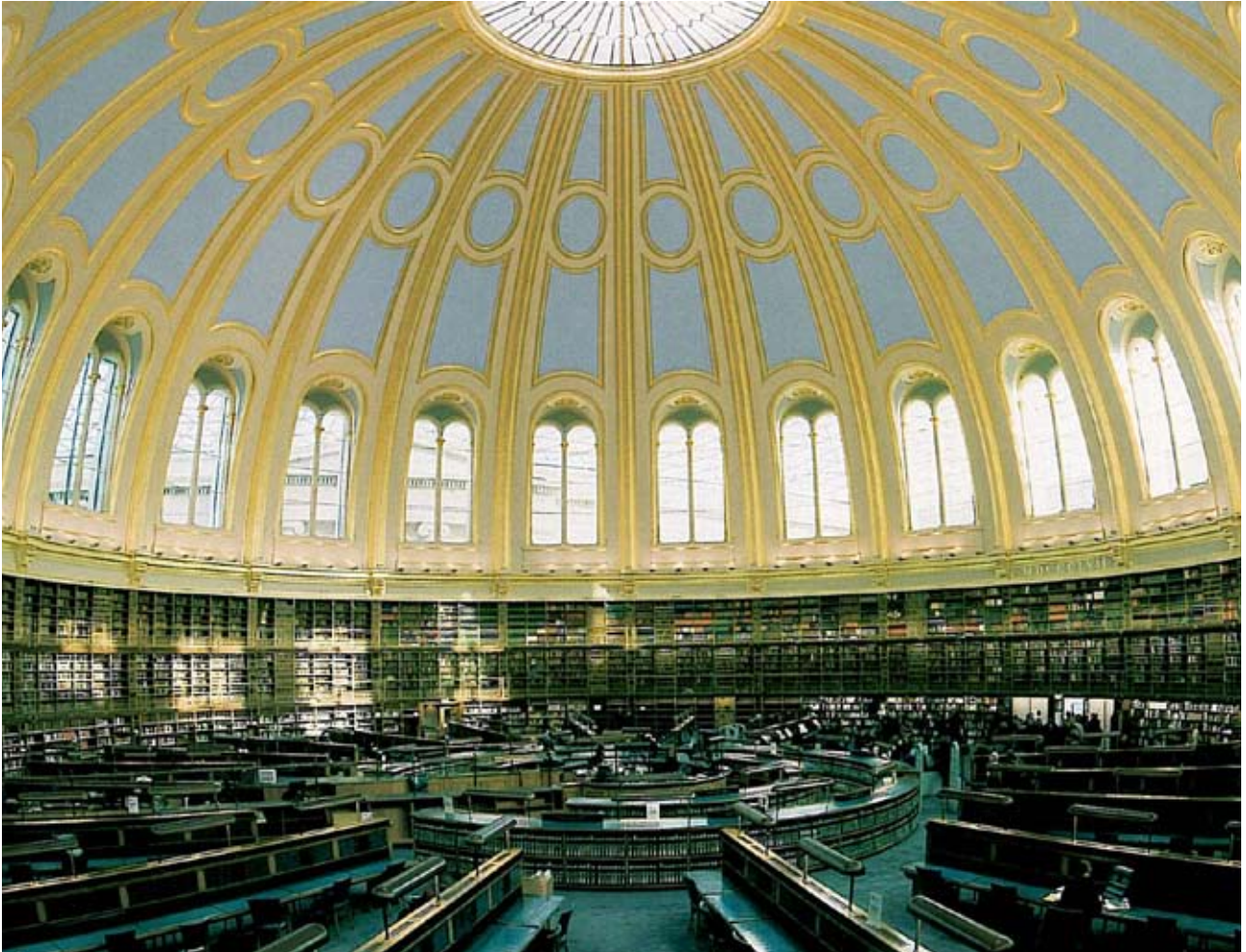


# BRITISH MUSEUM

## **Application to Extend the Temporary Listed Building Consents for the Round Reading Room, the Middle Room and for Desks in the Great Court**



## **Design and Access Statement**

20 March 2008

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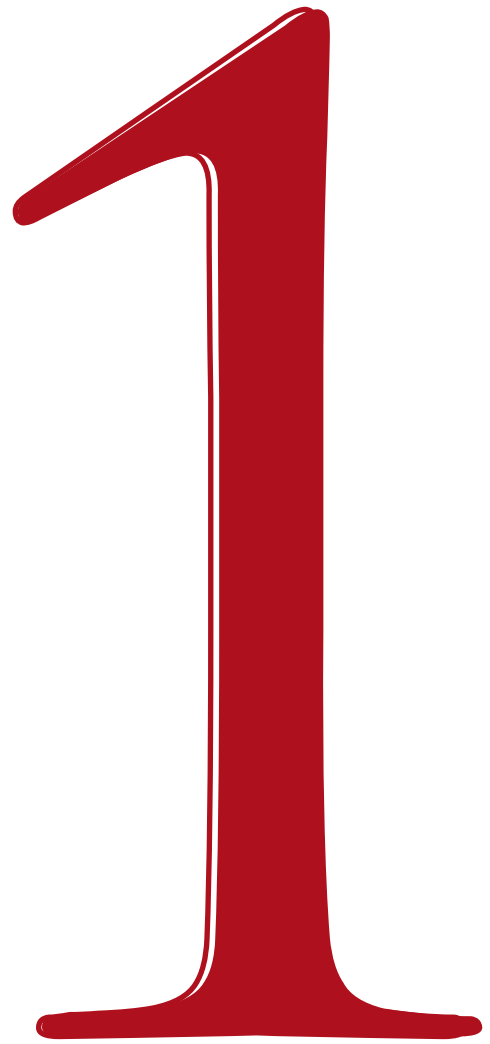
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**LETTER FROM THE  
DIRECTOR OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM**

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Mr Tim Cronin  
Head of Development Control  
Development Control Planning Services  
London Borough of Camden  
Town Hall  
Argyle Street  
London WC1H 8ND

14<sup>th</sup> March 2008

Dear Mr Cronin -

**Application to extend the use of the Round Reading Room as a Special Exhibition Space**

I do hope that you will be able to support our Application to extend the temporary permission granted to the British Museum on 27 October 2006, to use the Round Reading Room as a special exhibition space. As you know, our current exhibition *The First Emperor: China's Terracotta Army* is located in the Round Reading Room and is our most successful exhibition in the Museum's history. By the time it closes in April, more than 800,000 visitors will have seen it. This breadth of engagement would simply not have been possible without the granting of temporary permission to use the Round Reading Room as a special exhibition space. We intend to follow the *First Emperor* exhibition with an exhibition entitled *Hadrian: Empire and Conflict*, due to open to the public in the Round Reading Room in July this year, which I am sure will also be very successful.

As a result of the success of *First Emperor*, the opportunity has arisen for us to host a series of exciting special exhibitions, with considerable loans of collections from other countries that we would not normally be able to consider.

The first of these is a major exhibition on the 16<sup>th</sup> century Iranian leader *Shah Abbas*. This presents a unique opportunity to display, in London, a hugely important exhibition exploring a critical moment in global history, with the arrival of Shia Islam in Iran. *Shah Abbas* could be on display at the Museum from early 2009, continuing the Museum's programme of exhibitions examining great emperors throughout history and exploring the nature of imperial power. However, this exhibition is dependent upon an exhibition space of the size of the Round Reading Room in order to successfully display this extraordinary loan material in an appropriate environment. Reverting to our existing special exhibition gallery would not allow us to present this exhibition.



*Shah Abbas* could then be followed in the summer of 2009 by a major exhibition on the famous Aztec Emperor, Moctezuma, illustrating the challenges and dilemmas brought by the arrival of the Spanish to the Aztec world. The Museum's programme for 2010 and beyond could include a series of significant exhibitions, including an important exhibition about the 'Book of the Dead', explaining ancient Egyptian beliefs about the afterlife and introducing the visitor to the world of the Egyptian gods, as well as a major exhibition on the Italian Renaissance, following on from the tremendous success of the Michelangelo Drawings exhibition in 2005. The success of these exhibitions will in part be dependent on our ability to provide a venue of an appropriate size to accommodate the material and give it the perspective that it deserves.

The London 2012 Olympic Games and the accompanying Cultural Olympiad, taking place between 2008 and 2012, is another significant factor in our desire to extend the temporary use of the Round Reading Room. Using the Round Reading Room as an exhibition space means that the Museum will be able to play a central role as a leading contributor to the nation's cultural offer in the build up to the 2012 Olympic Games.

As you know, we are also well advanced with a scheme to develop a new special exhibition facility to be situated in the North West of the Museum estate and we have been in consultation with your officers regarding this. The new North West Development will give the Museum, for the first time in its history, a special exhibition space with the appropriate support facilities that a world-class institution should have. However, this space will not be available until mid-2011.

The Trustees and I are, of course, acutely aware of the cultural, historic and architectural significance of the Round Reading Room. In seeking a permission to extend the temporary use of the Room as a special exhibition space, I have been assured that there is no possibility of any damage to the furniture, finishes or fittings. This is an overriding consideration and we would not be seeking to extend the temporary permission if we thought that there was any possibility of damage occurring to the original fabric of the Round Reading Room.

Finally I would like to give you my personal assurance that we have no desire to use the Round Reading Room as a temporary exhibition space in its current form in the long term. The firm intention of the Trustees is to remove the temporary installation as soon as the new special exhibition space in the North West Development is available.

I do hope that you will support the Museum in this Application.

Yours sincerely  
Neil MacGregor

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**THE PERMISSIONS  
TO BE EXTENDED**

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## **2 THE PERMISSIONS TO BE EXTENDED**

### **2.1 Listed Building Consents**

Four Listed Building Consents were granted for the work to allow temporary exhibitions to be put on in the Round Reading Room. These four permissions were as follows. For convenience copies of the permissions have been included as Appendix A of this document.

#### **2.1.1 Application Reference 2006/3731/L**

Dated 27th October 2006

Proposal: Erection of a temporary stage within the Round Reading Room and the opening of the Reading Room North door in order to provide a temporary exhibition space.

This consent had eleven conditions attached to it one of which we are now seeking to extend for a further four years until November 2012. The relevant condition is point 4:

*The installation of the temporary exhibition gallery in the Round Reading Room shall be limited to a period of 2 years from the date of this consent. On or before the expiry of which period the works undertaken to form the temporary exhibition gallery shall be removed and the building restored to the former 2006 appearance, form and elevation.*

#### **2.1.2 Application Reference 2006/4440/L**

Dated 21st November 2006

Proposal: Refurbishment of the Middle Room including minor alterations to existing windows, door, balustrade and upgrading existing services.

This consent had six conditions attached to it one of which we are now seeking to extend for a further four years until November 2012. The relevant condition is point 4:

*The installation of the temporary balustrade and handrail to the perimeter gallery shall be limited to a period of 2 years from the date of this consent, on or before the expiry of which period the temporary balustrade and handrail shall be removed and the building restored to the former 2006 appearance, form and elevation.*

#### **2.1.3 Application Reference 2007/2746/L**

Dated 20th July 2007

Proposal: Erection of additional temporary structure within the round reading room for exhibition purposes to support lights, cameras and projectors.

This consent had three conditions attached to it none of which specifically time limit the temporary structure. However, this structure is a part of the platform inserted to allow the Round Reading Room to be used as an exhibition space and the application made it clear that

this was a temporary structure. We now wish to have clarity that this structure will remain in position for the length of time the temporary platform is in place and that it will be removed at the same time i.e. no later than November 2012.

#### **2.1.4 Application Reference 2007/2934/L**

Dated 8th August 2007

Proposal: Installation of temporary retail desk in the south eastern corner of the great Court.

This consent had four conditions attached to it one of which we are now seeking to extend for a further four years until November 2012. The relevant condition is point 4:

*The retail ticket desk hereby approved shall be removed in its entirety and any affected areas made good upon closure of the First Emperor temporary exhibition season in October 2008.*

## **2.2 The Reasons for Seeking the Extension**

In the period since the British Museum submitted its application for permission to temporarily convert the Round Reading Room into an exhibition space, a number of significant and unforeseen circumstances have come to light which have altered the Museum's position towards the use of the Round Reading Room in the years leading up to 2012. Essentially these can be broken down into three factors:

- The outstanding success of The First Emperor
- Subsequent offers for major loan exhibitions from Iran and Mexico
- The British Museum's pivotal role in the Cultural Olympiad

### **2.2.1 Success of The First Emperor**

The spectacular popularity of The First Emperor: China's Terracotta Army, which will have attracted well over 800,000 visitors by the time it finishes in April 2008. The tremendous success of The First Emperor far exceeded the Museum's expectations and is an extraordinary testament to the visiting public's current enthusiasm towards the offer provided by UK museums and galleries. The exhibition is also a vivid indication of the widespread interest in Chinese culture and history in particular, and more generally the interaction and development of great civilisations throughout world history and their relevance to the contemporary world. This success has only been made possible by the use of an exhibition space the size of the Reading Room and could not have been done in the Museum's present exhibition space in the south west wing. The larger space of the Round Reading Room has provided an opportunity to display the startling and phenomenally popular objects from the tomb of China's First Emperor.

The challenge of meeting the incredible public demand to see The First Emperor is being achieved only by the use of timed tickets and by significantly extending opening hours throughout the run of the exhibition. If The First Emperor exhibition had been held in our existing Temporary Exhibition Gallery in the Museum's south west wing the total visitor numbers would have been extremely limited in comparison – most probably less than half the current numbers. Holding such an exhibition has also enabled the Museum to provide a rich programme of public events as well as schools, children's and family activities, helping to further develop our understanding of Chinese culture and its place in the world. One such event was the Chinese New Year celebration on 9 February 2008, which attracted over 35,000 visitors, a record for the Museum.

### **2.2.2 Major International Exhibition Offers**

The second factor is a result of a recent visit to Iran, where we were able to negotiate an agreement to loan material for a major exhibition on the 16th century Iranian leader Shah Abbas. This presents a unique opportunity to display in London a hugely important exhibition exploring a critical moment in global history, with the arrival of Shia Islam in Iran. Shah Abbas, is planned to be on display at the Museum from early 2009 and will follow on from The First Emperor and Hadrian: Empire and Conflict, continuing the Museum's programme of exhibitions examining great emperors throughout history and exploring the nature of imperial power. However, this exhibition is dependent upon an exhibition space the size of the Round Reading Room being available, in order to successfully display this extraordinary loan material in an appropriate environment. Reverting to our existing Temporary Exhibition Gallery would not be possible.

Shah Abbas will then be followed in the autumn of 2009 by a major exhibition on the famous Aztec Emperor Montezuma, illustrating the challenges and dilemmas brought by the arrival of the Spanish to the Aztec world.

The Museum's programme for 2010 and beyond will include a series of significant exhibitions, including an important exhibition about the 'Book of the Dead', explaining ancient Egyptian beliefs about the afterlife and introducing the visitor to the world of the Egyptian gods, as well as a major exhibition on the Italian Renaissance, following on from the tremendous success of the Michelangelo Drawings exhibition in 2005.

The Museum's public programme places a high importance on the ability to be able to stage and host significant travelling exhibitions. It is part of the Museum's mission and essential to its ability to tell the story of world civilisation. Whilst a larger world-class Special Exhibition facility is an essential long term requirement as identified in the Museum's Masterplan, this will not be available until 2011, which is too late to stage the highly significant exhibitions now being offered to the Museum. When the new exhibition space is available, the Museum will be able to receive world-class touring exhibitions in a purpose-built space on the Bloomsbury site. This will be far more suitable than interim alternative provided by the Round Reading Room, which could not be considered as a viable solution to the Museum's exhibition requirements.

### **2.2.3 London 2012 and the Cultural Olympiad**

The London 2012 Olympic Games and the accompanying Cultural Olympiad, which takes place between 2008 and 2012, is another significant factor in the Museum's change of position towards the Round Reading Room. It has been acknowledged that the British Museum, using the Round Reading Room as an exhibition space, will play a central role as a leading contributor to the nation's cultural offer in the build up to the 2012 Olympic Games.

After extensive consideration, the Director and Trustees of the Museum concluded that in order to deliver the programme of major exhibitions and to contribute fully to the Cultural Olympiad, the only possible space that could be made currently available to achieve this is the Round Reading Room.

The Trustees are, of course, acutely aware of the cultural, historic and architectural significance of the Round Reading Room and have only settled on its use with the knowledge that it is possible to use the space temporarily in this manner with no damage (or permanent fixings) to any of the furniture, finishes or fittings. It is the clearly stated intention of the Trustees that the space should only be used for an extended season of temporary exhibitions until 2012 and the opening of the new purpose-built exhibition space.

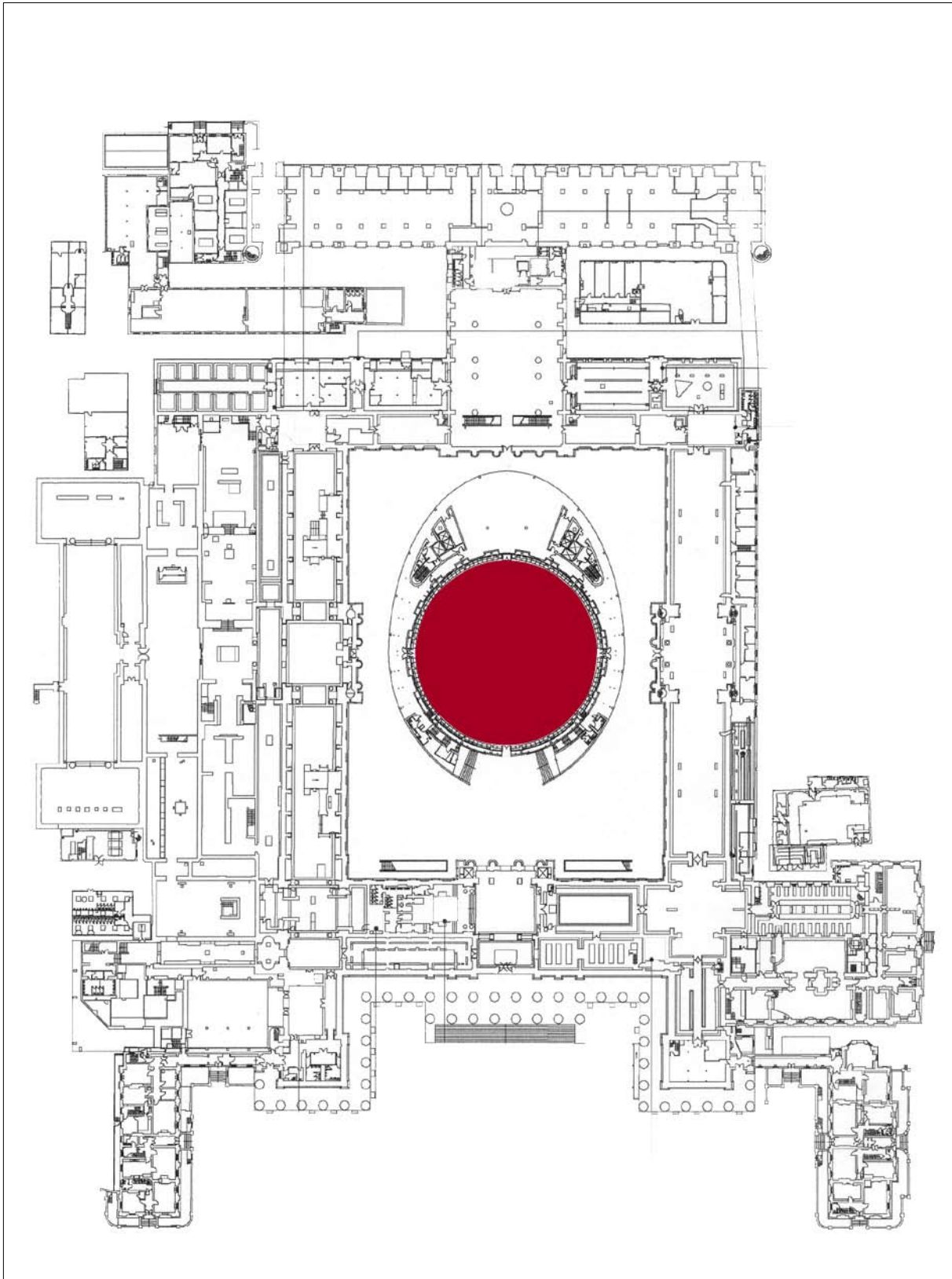
There was a significant amount of pre-application consultation before the original applications for the temporary consent. Bodies consulted included both the statutory consultees and local amenity groups. These included The London Borough of Camden, English Heritage, The Victorian Society, The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee, Bloomsbury Improvement Group, and the Museum's Community Liaison Group. These consultations are continuing at present over the proposals the Museum is developing for a building on the North West of the site. This new building will incorporate a new purpose built temporary exhibition space together with all the necessary public and back of house facilities. There is a broad understanding, amongst the bodies that have been consulted, of the difficulties faced by the Museum in staging such temporary exhibitions within the existing facilities as well as support for the extraordinary opportunity that these exhibitions present to the visiting public. These difficulties relate not only to dealing with very large numbers of visitors in an appropriate way but also to ensuring that the purpose and enjoyment of the rest of the Museum's public collection are not compromised. There is also the great difficulty in building and dismounting these special exhibitions. The difficulties of access and object handling mean that the Round Reading Room space is unsuited for temporary exhibitions other than as a short term expedient.

During the period of the extension the interior of the Room will only be visible to those visiting the exhibition. The Hamlyn library, a general collection of reference books which are available for consultation by all Museum users, will continue to be re-housed in the original British Museum Reading Room (The Middle Room) in the south east wing. Both staff and visitors have found the use of this space to be very successful and an extremely appropriate and welcoming environment for the library to be situated. The anthropological library will be left in position in its current shelving in the Round Reading Room where it will remain accessible to the librarians and curators throughout the whole period to service the public.



After what we anticipate will be a very successful exhibition series, following on from The First Emperor, the Museum will reinstate the Reading Room to its original state. The plans and procedures that are described later in this document provide a clear methodology and plan for ensuring that there will be no irreversible intervention into the Room and the current structure will be fully preserved.

## 2.3 The Round Reading Room



Round Reading Room Temporary Exhibition Space



The First Emperor Exhibition shown in place in the Reading Room.  
The dome of the Reading Room is visible above the Exhibition.

#### The British Museum

Application to extend the temporary Listed Building Consents for the Round Reading Room, the Middle Room and for desks in the Great Court

### **2.3.1 The Present Position**

The Round Reading Room is at the very heart of The British Museum. At the time of the completion of the King's Library in 1827, Robert Smirke presented the Trustees with a master plan for the redevelopment of The Museum. This envisaged the construction of the new wings which enclosed a spacious inner courtyard. The buildings were eventually completed by the mid 1840's but the quadrangle was never a great success, as it was overshadowed to a great extent by the surrounding buildings. In 1852, the Trustees decided that it was a wasted space and the concept of the Round Reading Room, in the centre of the courtyard, was put forward. The Round Reading Room, as designed by Sydney Smirke, was conceived as a stand alone reading room. Over the years, the whole of the courtyard became infilled with a series of bookstacks. A detailed history of the construction and alteration of the Round Reading Room was given with the initial application documents for this temporary consent.

With the relocation of the British Library to its new St Pancras site, the original use of the Round Reading Room ceased. The departure of the Library allowed the Millennium Scheme, designed by Foster & Partners, which created the Great Court with the refacing of the exterior of the Reading Room, the new staircases and, of course, the great glazed roof. In the process of completing the Great Court, the whole of the surrounding bookstacks were cleared away.

In attempting to find a new use for the Round Reading Room, the "Hamlyn Library" was moved into this space. This is a public library which is open to all visitors to the Museum. All visitors are allowed in through the south door of the Round Reading Room and there is an area, rather less than a quadrant of the space, which is available for visitors to look at the Round Reading Room and to access information about the Museums collection through the computer database. The remaining space is controlled by the Librarians and is available for readers. The room contains three tiers of bookshelves; the lower shelves are used for the Hamlyn Library's own collection. The upper two levels of shelves, accessible from the balconies, house books from the Anthropological Collection. These are only accessible by the Librarians.

The rationale for seeking to convert the Round Reading Room into temporary exhibition space was set out in the design statement that accompanied the original application. In essence, the Museum lacks, at present, a temporary exhibition gallery of sufficient size to put on major exhibitions. It was felt that "The First Emperor" exhibition would be so popular that it would be inappropriate to stage in the existing temporary exhibition gallery space in the south west wing.

The temporary exhibition space has been created by inserting a new platform above the level of Sidney Smirke's purpose designed library furniture. The furniture was carefully protected and boxed in and the new platform inserted in a way that requires no connection to the existing structure of any kind. The platform is a free standing steel construction with a plywood deck. New steel and timber stairs have been inserted at the four cardinal points to allow entrance, access and fire escape through the existing doors from the Round Reading Room. A free standing wall supported on the temporary platform has been put in around the perimeter to contain the exhibition space and to protect the bookshelves behind this area.

To maintain appropriate environmental conditions for use as a temporary exhibition space, eight free standing air handling units have been inserted between the desks in the void under the floor. These enable the conditions in the space to be maintained at a temperature of 22°C (plus or minus 2°C) and at a relative humidity of 55% (plus or minus 5%). This is a far greater degree of environmental control than has ever been achieved in this space previously. To allow controlled light levels for the exhibits, film has been put on the glass of the high level windows to provide blackout in the space. Temporary blackout has also been provided by draping loose black felt over the skylight in the crown of the dome.

All the work was designed to have a minimal impact on the fabric of the building. The platform has no attachments to the existing structure. The surrounding walls are cantilevered from the platform and do not connect into the existing structure of the Round Reading Room. The air handling units are free standing. The pipework and electrical connections to the air handling units and to the power and lighting in the space, have all been carefully brought in through existing holes in the floor of the Round Reading Room and threaded through existing openings in the desks. This has avoided creating any new holes in the floor structure. The film that has been installed on the windows is all of the "low tack" variety, which can be simply removed when it is no longer required.

### **2.3.2 The Reasons Why an Extension is Required**

The reasons for an extension had been set out in the general section above.

The Director and Trustees have been surprised by how very successful the First Emperor Exhibition has been. 800,000 visitors are expected to have visited this Exhibition by the time it closes. The Museum has been offered the possibility of a series of other high profile exhibitions that logically follow on from the First Emperor.

The planning is now well advanced with the proposed new special exhibition facility that is to be developed in the Northwest Wing. Consultations with the statutory authorities and other interested stakeholders are under way on this proposal at present. It is anticipated that the new temporary exhibition facility will be available by the end of 2011 or early 2012. This will then provide a world class facility for holding temporary exhibitions. This means not only the flexible and fully environmental controlled exhibition space itself but also the necessary facilities for the public visiting the exhibitions. These are, of course, primarily ticketing areas, areas for hiring audio guides, shops for exhibition related merchandise, cloakrooms, lavatories, etc. It is extremely important that these facilities can be provided to handle large numbers of people coming to special exhibitions without major disruption to the enjoyment of the rest of the collection by the Museum's regular visitors. The exhibition space in the southwest corner of the Museum is limited in size and has poor access both for visitors and for the objects associated with visiting exhibitions. The Round Reading Room provides the space that is needed and, with the temporary air handling and blackout that has been provided, allows for appropriate environmental controls that are necessary when taking exhibits from other world museums.

The Round Reading Room is far from ideal as an exhibition space. Access into it is limited as there are no direct connections between secure unloading bays, heavy lifts or other back of house facilities that would be normal for mounting an exhibition. In the longer term there is no desire to have this space used for temporary exhibitions. For the time being, however, this does offer both an appropriate scale of space, appropriate environmental controls, adequate disabled access and, by using the Great Court, a sufficient space for the public facilities.

The public facilities do rely on additional ticketing desks for which temporary permission has been given and is now sought to be extended. It also relies on the closure of the Children's Shop on the east side of the Round Reading Room to allow for access to the special exhibition. Whilst neither of these are desirable in the long term, in the short term the size of the Great Court does allow for the sort of numbers involved with the visits to these exceptional exhibitions to be handled without impacting on any of the principal galleries or collection spaces in the Museum.

### **2.3.3 Potential Impacts of the Extended Use of the Round Reading Room as a Temporary Exhibition Gallery**

There are a number of obvious impacts if the Room continues with its temporary exhibition use until 2012. The primary ones are seen as follows:

- i. The most serious impact is, of course, the fact that the Round Reading Room in its original form is no longer available to be seen by visitors. There is little that can be done about this and it is the primary loss in keeping the space set out in its present form. After careful consideration the Director and Trustees feel that the loss of this space in its original form for a further four years is more than offset by the possibilities offered in terms of special exhibitions within this space.
- ii. In its previous use as the Hamlyn Library the Round Reading Room in its original form was available for inspection by any visitor to the Museum. This will not be the case if the Round Reading Room remains as a temporary exhibition gallery until 2012. It should be noted, however, that the actual number of people going in to the Round Reading Room and thus experiencing the nature of the space and the spectacular dome has greatly increased from the numbers who have entered the space on an annual basis between 2000 and 2006. It should also be noted that the Room was not open to the general public any time up to its reopening after the Millennium scheme in 2000. This space was originally a private reading room for ticket holders only with no admission to the general public.
- iii. There may be concern over the risk of long term damage to the fittings and fitments in the space which are currently covered up by the platform and walls. We would suggest that there is no risk to any of these items. The platform itself is completely freestanding and unattached. Before the construction work commenced the whole of the furnishings in the space were carefully protected with foam and polythene wrapping with solid plywood casing built around them. The bookshelves and the galleries around the Room are protected by the freestanding wall which runs around the whole perimeter of the exhibition space and conceals these items. We think that there is a very low risk indeed



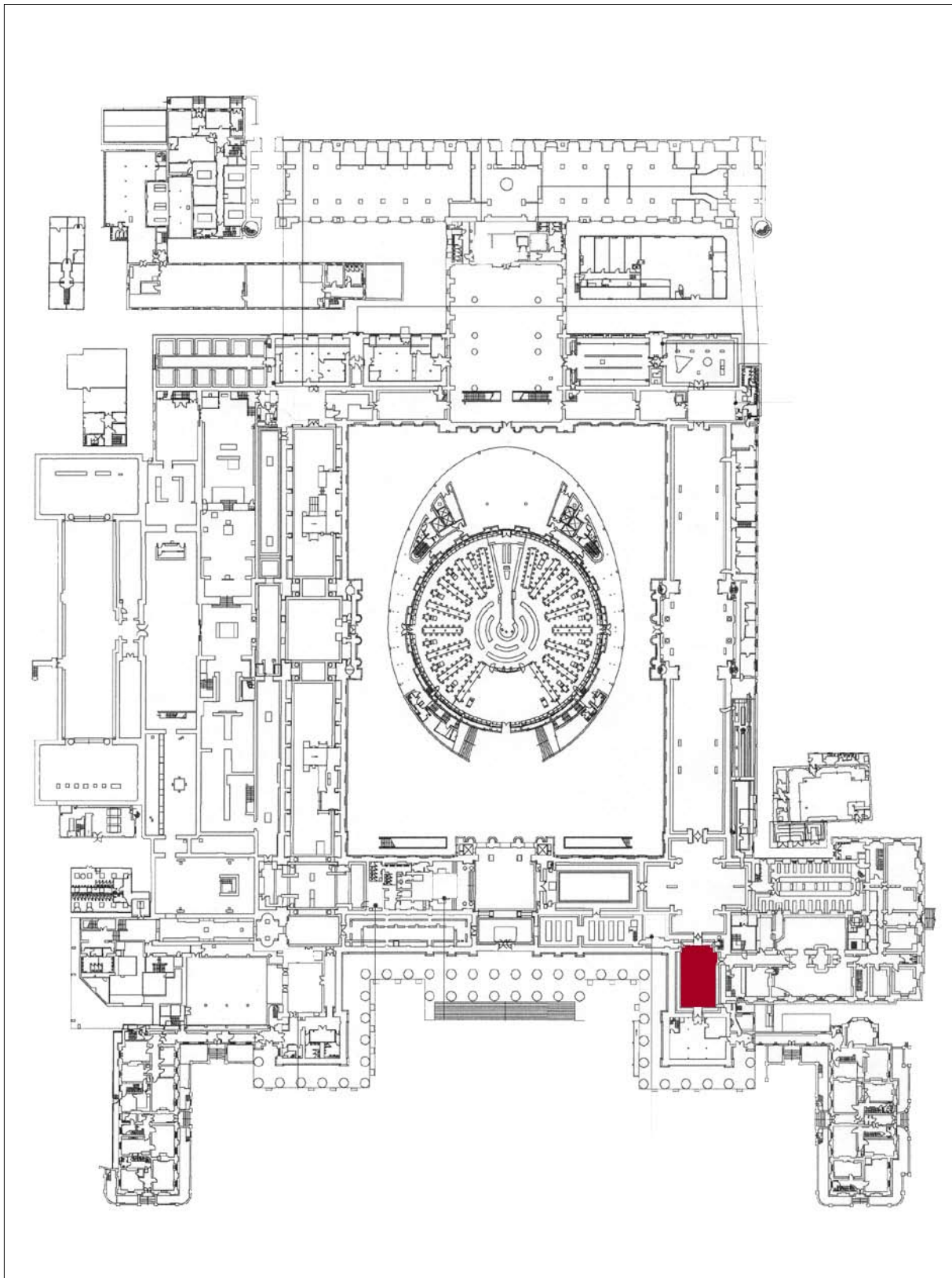
of any physical damage to any of the fixtures or fittings in the space. The standards demanded by the exhibits have required a significant upgrading of the air handling plant within the space. This has been achieved by eight freestanding air handling units. These are providing a far closer degree of control of both temperature and relative humidity than has ever been achieved in the space previously. The temperature and relative humidity has been closely monitored as part of the mounting of the Exhibition. The space under the platform is conditioned to the same level exactly as the exhibition space above it. The under platform space effectively acting as a plenum with open grilles between it and the main space. The conditions that are being experienced both by the furnishings and by the fittings and in particular by the papier mâché panels of the dome are far more benign and stable than would normally be the case. The Museum will ensure that stable environmental conditions are maintained in the Round Reading Room during the period between exhibitions. There is already a regime of checking (by the Conservation Department) on the condition of the furniture by removing selected panels of the boxed protection. This regime will continue until the temporary works are all removed. Inspections completed to date show that the protected furniture is all in good condition.

Some care will be needed when the additional plant is removed in 2012. It will not, obviously, be possible to keep this new plant in place as it is freestanding at the original floor level. A strategy will be required to ensure that there is no sudden change from the present closely controlled conditions to the more ambient conditions that have generally been experienced in this room. It is suggested that once the last exhibition finishes there should be a controlled shut down of the plant gradually to allow the conditions to fluctuate more in line with their original variations.

iv. Access to the Book Collections

On the lower level shelves was part of the Hamlyn Library and this has been removed to the Middle Room and to other spaces in the Museum where it is accessible to the Library staff. The books at the two upper levels are part of the Anthropological Collection and have been left in place. Access to the gallery is still freely available to staff at all times and these books continue to be accessed by librarians for public use and for use by Museum staff. There would be no change in this situation if the temporary exhibition permission is extended.

## 2.4 The Middle Room



The Middle Room containing the Hamlyn Library location plan



The Middle Room showing the new Hamlyn Library in position

#### The British Museum

Application to extend the temporary Listed Building Consents for the Round Reading Room, the Middle Room and for desks in the Great Court

#### **2.4.1 The Present Position**

The Middle Room is one of the earlier parts of the Museum. It was designed by Sir Robert Smirke as part of a cruciform of rooms to the south of the King's Library. The Middle Room was built as a reading room surrounded by purpose built shelving and with a cast iron and timber gallery giving access to the upper shelves. A detailed history of the design and construction and subsequent alteration of this room was given in the design statement that accompanied the original application.

The Middle Room is very much a part of the original library of the Museum (what subsequently became the British Library) and the room remained in this use until the Library left for its new premises at St Pancras. Apart from some early alterations by Sydney Smirke the space remains very much as designed and part of the sequence of spaces in the East Wing that include the King's Library and the Manuscript Saloon. The bookcases, galleries and other fittings are in the same family, though of simpler design.

The Middle Room was vacant from the departure of the British Library until the Hamlyn Library was moved there in February 2007. The reason for the move was, of course, to clear the Round Reading Room to allow the construction of the temporary exhibition space. However, the move has been beneficial in a number of ways as set out below – in particular it is very satisfactory to see this part of the Museum with its original fittings being put to a use which is entirely appropriate. The space was built as a library and reading room and was used as such for 170 years until the departure of the British Library.

#### **2.4.2 The Current Usage of the Hamlyn Library**

The Middle Room has been refurbished to create a library room with space for 36 readers. This has been achieved with free standing desks which have no significant impact on the space itself. The library is open to the public 7 days a week with two late night openings until 8.30 p.m. Service offered in the library in the Middle Room is very much the same as the service offered in the Round Reading Room. The library team consists of 9 staff and 2 supervisors. They run the service in the room and provide a first point of contact for visitors making educational enquiries to the museum. They currently answer an average of 500 e-mail enquiries per month and many 100's of face to face enquiries.

The bookstock stands at 18,500 volumes with approx. 1,000 books waiting to be catalogued and processed at present. Approximately 1/3 of the current stock is accessible in the Middle Room shelving, the rest is stored in other rooms nearby and is available on request.

The library continues to be very popular. Since the relocation, the door count shows an average of 3,500 visitors a week to the library in its present position. A more accurate count based on the books retrieved and re-shelved together with head counts in the room itself give an average number of 2,100 library readers per week or 300 per day.



In addition to the users, there have been a monthly average of 700 families with young children requesting Hamlyn backpacks and gallery trails and using the books provided specifically for children within the library. This certainly represents a very heavy use for a library with only 36 reader seats. It does, however, make a point that the Round Reading Room with 250 user seats is an overlarge space for the current use of the Hamlyn Library.

### **2.4.3 Concerns of the Continued Use of the Room**

It seems unlikely that there will be any concerns over the continued use of this room as a library reading room. This is what it was built for and is an entirely appropriate use. The room finishes are robust and the present set up for 36 readers and 2 or 3 librarians fits well within the space and requires no physical connections to the historic fabric.

The particular element of work that was a conditioned for removal at the end of the 2 year period was the work to the balustrade that gives access to the upper bookshelves. The other work that has had some impact on the historic fabric was the removal of the glass doors to the book presses and the reversing of the bookshelves themselves.

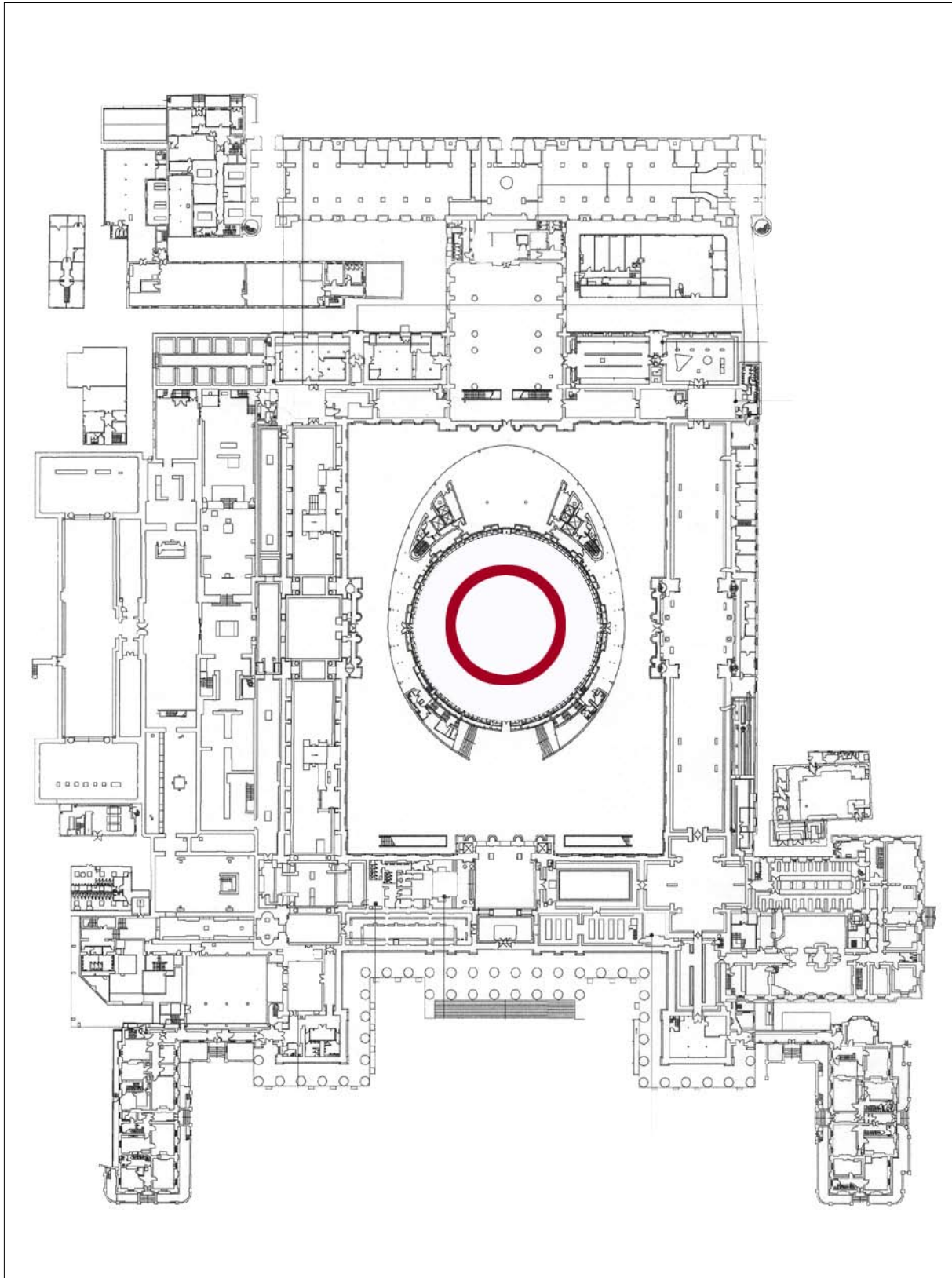
The work to the balustrade was to provide safe access to this area both for access to the bookshelves and to provide access to adjacent galleries. The work is similar to that carried out with full listed building consent in the Manuscript Saloon. The balustrade remains necessary for safe access as long as the room continues in its present use. This is a problem for all the rooms which have the balcony and upper shelving arrangement at present. The balustrade and trunking does, of course, have no direct connection to the existing structure and can be removed without damage at any time.

The glass doors from the lower book presses were removed as it was felt they would be at risk of damage by members of the public under its present use. There is also some concern that the doors themselves are difficult to use and would put the public at some risk if the shelves were to have any degree of public access. The doors have been taken off and have been carefully stored and can be reinstated at any time. It will, however, be desirable to keep the doors off as long as free access is required to the shelves in this area.

The book shelves originally had leather flaps on their leading edges to help keep the books clean. These have deteriorated to a very substantial degree and are now fragile. To prevent ongoing damage to these, the shelves were reversed when the new library use was put in place. Reversing the shelves keeps the original fittings in position but ensures that the leather is not further damaged. This is, of course, fully reversible and can be changed at any time.

In the long term, it is probably desirable to keep the Hamlyn Library in this space rather than return it to the Round Reading Room. This would require the extension of the Hamlyn Library into some of the adjacent spaces to achieve more space. It would also be desirable to resolve, in a permanent way, the issues around the balustrade, glass doors and shelving.

## 2.5 Additional Temporary Structure



The Temporary Structure location in the Round Reading Room





Location of the Structure known as 'The Jade Ring' seen here with lights attached

#### The British Museum

Application to extend the temporary Listed Building Consents for the Round Reading Room, the Middle Room and for desks in the Great Court

### **2.5.1 The Present Position**

The Additional temporary Structure is known as “The Jade Ring” as far as it relates to the present exhibition and is the green disc set approximately 3 metres above the temporary platform level which can be seen in the attached photograph. The disc is supported on six steel columns which are themselves connected to the temporary inserted floor. There is no physical connection between the Jade Ring and the original fabric of the Round Reading Room.

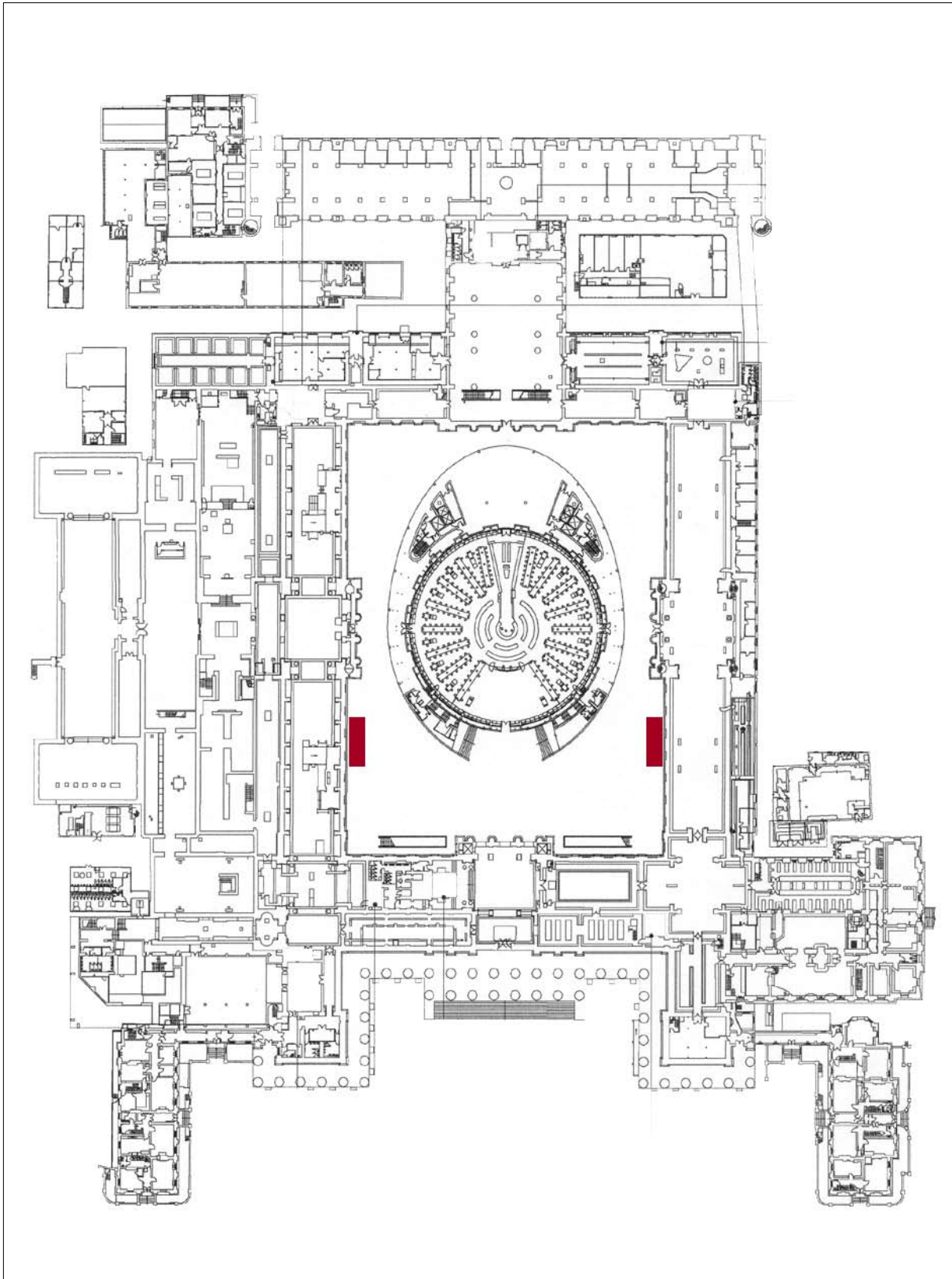
The exhibition designers added the ring to the exhibition design as a way of getting some flexibility in the provision of display lighting and general lighting of the space. It has also been used for emergency lighting and for loudspeakers for the voice alarm system. The top of the ring has cable trays mounted on it to allow flexibility without any disturbance to existing fabric.

There is no specific condition on the Listed Building Consent relating to the removal of this “temporary structure” – however, it is attached to the inserted platform and will inevitably be removed when the platform that supports it is removed. In considering the possibility of extending the temporary permissions for the floor and other items we wish to be clear that this structure would be retained for the same period.

### **2.5.2 The Need for the 'Jade Ring' Temporary Structure**

The ring will allow for the changing displays in this area. The space will be used for the exhibition to be mounted over the summer of 2008 (under the present permission) Hadrian: Empire and Conflict. This exhibition will be a complete redesign from the present First Emperor exhibition with a different circulation pattern, different layout of objects and different lighting levels. This will inevitably mean the need to change the position of a large number of display lights and most probably the adjustment of the general lighting and the emergency lights. This can be simply achieved with no disturbance to the original fabric of the Round Reading Room as all the alteration will take place to fitments on the "Jade Ring". This will obviously apply to any other exhibitions that are mounted in this area and so if the permission is extended for the inserted floor then it will be very desirable to have this permission extended for the same timescale.

## 2.6 Temporary Retail Desks



Retail Desks Location Plan



The southeast desk



The southwest desk

#### The British Museum

Application to extend the temporary Listed Building Consents for the Round Reading Room, the Middle Room and for desks in the Great Court



### **2.6.1 The Present Position**

The retail desks are necessary for the proper operation of the Round Reading Room as a temporary exhibition gallery. One of the desks is given over to the ticketing operation, the other to the provision of retail. The desks are in use everyday that the exhibition is open. The desks are free standing pieces of furniture with no attachment to the original fabric of the building. These desks will have no purpose once the temporary exhibition use ceases in the Round Reading Room. They can be removed with no disruption and no need for making good other than cleaning of adjacent surfaces.

### **2.6.2 The Need for these Temporary Desks**

As noted above there are a very large number of visitors coming to the First Emperor Exhibition (around 4,500 visitors a day) and the space needed for the sale and collection of tickets is considerable. There is a permanent ticket desk in the "Cloakroom Gallery" (the space immediately to the west of the main south door) which has in the past been used to sell tickets for the exhibitions in the south west exhibition space. This desk would be too small for the numbers accessing the current exhibition and is inconveniently placed. The Cloakroom Gallery is a major circulation space for people going to the West Wing Rooms which contain a major part of the Museum's collection and is also the route to the Café, lavatories and cloakroom. This circulation would be very much impeded if large queues for tickets were forming at this point.

It is accepted that the use of the Great Court is not ideal as a place for these desks however, since the opening up of this space it has become the primary circulation and gathering space in the Museum and is the only space where a crowd can gather without impeding circulation. The desks are logically placed both in terms of potential visitors to the exhibitions finding them and also in relation to the special exhibition entrance. Having the desks in the Great Court does also ensure that there is minimal disturbance to the museum visitor who has not come to the special exhibition and wishes to access the permanent collection.

The condition on the consent states that the desks should be removed in their entirety at the end of October 2008 (i.e. when the current temporary permission for the work in the Round Reading room expires). We are now seeking to extend their period of use until the time when the extended use of the Round Reading Room ceases – i.e. the end of November 2012.

## **2.7 The Future of the Round Reading Room**

The temporary use of the Round Reading Room for exhibition purposes has reopened the debate within the Museum as to its long term future. This has been a concern since the removal of the British Library to the St Pancras site. The Round Reading Room is so very much a purpose-built space intended for a very specific purpose. The key hole for the librarians which is only accessible from the north door, the concentric ring of the main card index and the radial built-in desks are splendid for their original purpose but entirely inflexible for any other use. The problem was solved in the short term by the installation of the Hamlyn Library which was a very appropriate use for the space but which had some practical problems. The space, with 250 reader positions, was very generous for the number of users of the



Hamlyn Library and so the space always felt under-used. It is a space that every visitor to the Museum should see as it is not only a fine architectural space redolent of history but it is also an essential part of understanding the original purpose of the Museum and how it has developed over two centuries. Visitors were allowed, indeed encouraged, to enter the south door - but many were put off by seeing something that was clearly a library space and with the indefinable feeling that they "should not be in there". The visitors who did come in to photograph the room or to consult the computer database were a considerable distraction to those serious users of the Hamlyn Library.

When the Temporary Permissions were sought the Museum expected the Hamlyn Library to be reinstated in the Round Reading Room as soon as the exhibition had been dismantled. However, as explained above, the Middle Room, one of Sir Robert Smirke's original reading rooms, has provided a very good and appropriate home for the Hamlyn Library on a scale that suits the usage and allows the librarians to offer a good service to readers.

The Museum is, of course, only too aware of the iconic status of this Grade I listed space which sits at the very heart of the Museum. Finding a use which respects the significance of the Room, its furniture and fittings but which allows the space to function in a way that makes it significant and comprehensible to all visitors is a real challenge. There are no current answers to this problem - but, if permission is given to extend the temporary usage, the Museum will use the time available to enter into a full debate and process of wide consultation to arrive at a series of possibilities for how this space may be used in the future. It is suggested that, if the permission is renewed for a further four years, the Museum will use the first half of the period for the development of a range of possible options for the reuse which will be followed by consultations with the statutory authorities and the wider stakeholder, as well as the general visitors to the Museum.

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# 3

**MUSEUMS  
EXHIBITION PROGRAMME**

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### **3 MUSEUMS EXHIBITION PROGRAMME**

The Museum has an active programme of special exhibitions. These have in the past relied on either the space in the South West Wing or the modest space developed as part of the Millennium work in the Great Court, both of which are set up for mounting temporary exhibitions but are very constrained in size. The alternative has involved the closure of permanent galleries to allow a major exhibition to be staged - something that is thoroughly undesirable for the general visitor to the Museum. A major exhibition space has been a priority for the British Museum for some time and work is underway at present to design a new building on the Northwest corner of the site to house a new temporary exhibition facility in the longer term. This project is still at the development stage and even if all goes well with the funding of the project and the necessary consents this new space cannot be available until the end of 2011.

For the possible programme of exhibitions that is now being offered to the British Museum a space a good deal larger than the South West Wing is an absolute necessity. The scale of the loans being negotiated, in particular Shah Abbas and Moctezuma, demands a space of some 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> which is the standard scale of significant international loans for exhibitions of this calibre. Both the Shah Abbas and the Moctezuma exhibitions have significant numbers of objects (many more than we could accommodate in Room 5) and most importantly some very large pieces - Shah Abbas has a 5 metre long carpet similar to the magnificent Ardabil carpet at the V&A and Moctezuma will contain monumental Aztec sculpture of the like displayed in the very successful RA Aztecs Show. Without the possibility of using the Round Reading Room it will not be possible for the Museum to be able to consider negotiating or accommodating these world class exhibitions.

The following was prepared recently by the Head of Exhibitions at the British Museum as a briefing paper to the Directors and Trustees on the future exhibition programme. This helps to explain what is proposed, its context and its significance.

#### **Exhibitions Programme: Three Year Forward Look**

##### **2008**

##### **The American Scene**

10 April – 7 September 2008 (Gallery 90)

BM Collection Only

Room 90

This exhibition does not involve the use of the Round Reading Room

This exhibition will feature around 150 outstanding prints by 74 leading modern American artists, including George Bellows, Edward Hopper, Grant Wood, Josef Albers, Alexander Calder, Louise Bourgeois and Jackson Pollock.

The first half of the 20th century was a period of great change in America, and the exhibition examines American society and culture through the prints produced by some of the most important artists of the time. All the works come from the British Museum's own American print collection, which is the most comprehensive outside the United States covering this period.

### **Hadrian: Empire and Conflict**

24 July - 26 October 2008

Major International Loan

This exhibition will be staged as the second exhibition in the Round Reading Room

This special exhibition will explore the life, love and legacy of Rome's most enigmatic emperor, Hadrian (reigned AD 117–138). Ruling an empire that comprised much of Europe, northern Africa and the Middle East, Hadrian was a capable and, at times, ruthless military leader. He realigned borders and quashed revolt, stabilising a territory critically overstretched by his predecessor, Trajan. Hadrian had a great passion for architecture and Greek culture. His extensive building programme included the Pantheon in Rome, his villa in Tivoli and the city of Antinopolis, which he founded and named after his male lover Antinous.

The exhibition will provide fresh insight into the sharp contradictions of Hadrian's character and challenges faced during his reign. Objects from 31 museums worldwide and finds from recent excavations will be shown together for the first time to reassess his legacy, which remains strikingly relevant today.

### **Babylon**

13 November 2008 – 15 March 2009

Medium Sized Loan

Room 5

This exhibition does not involve the use of the Round Reading Room

Babylon was a real city in ancient Iraq and was the capital of a vast empire ruled by King Nebuchadnezzar II (604 – 562 BC). This exhibition will juxtapose archaeology with later art, exploring stories about Babylon as well as the history of the city.

The displays will give a vivid impression of the scale and magnificence of the city and will include some of its most impressive archaeological remains such as the large glazed brick reliefs of animals. Models will show major buildings such as the ziggurat and the Ishtar Gate. The exhibition will examine different stories and myths surrounding Babylon, explore their sources, and show how the popular view of Babylon has developed. It will be clear that the stories arose through the transmission of ideas over time, chiefly through Greek historians and the Bible. Subjects will include the wonders of the world; the tower of Babel; the captivity of the Jews; Daniel; Belshazzar; and the conquest of the city by the Persians.

The exhibition will show how many elements of Babylonian knowledge, especially in the fields of mathematics and astronomy, have survived to the present and that Babylon continues as a potent reference in many aspects of contemporary culture. The finale of the exhibition will provide a stark reminder of the present state of the site of Babylon in Iraq, highlighting recent damage and the need to protect the site for the future.

The exhibition has been developed by and will be presented at the Musée du Louvre and Pergamon Museum, Berlin (exhibition dates 10 March – 2 June 2008 and 26 June – 5 October 2008, respectively). Due to limited space the BM will display a condensed version of the show.

**2009**

**Shah `Abbas (working title)**

12 February – 7 June 2009

Major International Loan

Round Reading Room (tbc)

The exhibition will tell the story of one of Iran's great kings, Shah `Abbas. Through an exploration of his life and his world, visitors will understand the background to and the development of Shi'a Islam, the state religion of Iran. It continues the Museum's programme of exhibitions examining great emperors throughout history and exploring the nature of imperial power.

Shah `Abbas was Shah of Iran from 1587–1629 AD and was a man with a strong sense of personal piety. He gave many gifts of wonderful items, such as carpets, porcelain, manuscripts and silks, to key religious sites across Iran, and embarked on major building projects in the region. After Shiism was declared the state religion in 1501, faith in Iran was transformed. Heterodox Shi'a sects and extremist dervish orders were suppressed in favour of an orthodoxy sanctioned by the Shah and his circle. As a politician and military strategist, the Shah was a stabilizing force in Iran, following a period of civil war and foreign invasion. His legacy of many gifts and buildings continues to this day - he is remembered as one of the most influential of Iranian kings.

**Garden & Cosmos: The Royal Paintings of Jodhpur**

28 May – 23 August 2009

Medium Sized Loan

Room 35

This exhibition does not involve the use of the Round Reading Room

Rajput painting emerged during the 17th century in the royal courts of Rajasthan and flourished for nearly three hundred years. Garden and Cosmos will present two aspects of Rajput - narrative miniatures and very large scale works. All the paintings were produced for the private enjoyment of the Jodhpur maharajas.

The exhibition will open with pieces that demonstrate the emergence of Jodhpur court painting in the 17th century. They reveal the synthesis of a bold local idiom with the refinement of Imperial painting and set the stage for the surprising artistic innovations later. Paintings dating from the first half of the 18th century follow and document the emergence of a unique Jodhpur aesthetic in the desert palace of Nagaur. Painted in a palette of rich pastel colors, they depict Maharaja Bakhat Singh sporting with his harem in fantastic gardens amidst white palaces. During the second half of the century, a more robust style evolved, exemplified by rhythmic and charming narrative works executed in a monumental 4-foot format.

In the first half of the 19th century, one maharaja became the devotee of an esoteric yogic tradition. Jodhpur artists rose to the challenge of creating images for metaphysical concepts and yoga narratives that had never before been the focus of court art. They created hundreds of paintings designed for collective viewing at court. The exhibition presents 23 of these spectacular and very unusual paintings.



**Moctezuma (working title)**

24 September 2009 – 24 January 2010 (provisional)

Major International Loan

Round Reading Room (tbc)

The Aztec Emperor Moctezuma II who reigned from AD 1502-1521 was heir to a highly sophisticated civilisation based on fundamentally different technologies and beliefs from those developed in Europe. This exhibition will tell the story of the first moment of European contact with the Aztec world in the early 16th Century, a time when Moctezuma commanded an immensely successful and aggressively expanding Aztec state.

At the interface of this clash of cultures, Moctezuma played a conflictive role that was to bring about his downfall and death at the hands of his own people. The exhibition will show that accounts given by Mexican and Spanish sources differed dramatically and led to ambivalent interpretations of the Emperor's life and his role in the fall of the Aztec capital Tenochtitlan. Moctezuma witnessed the collapse of the native world order and the imposition of a new civilization that gave birth to modern Mexico. The legacy of these tumultuous events and the semi-mythical status of Moctezuma himself continues to be re-assessed, especially in the light of on-going archaeological discoveries being made in Mexico City.

The exhibition will be the 4th in the Museum's programme of exhibitions examining great emperors.

**2010****Dynasty and Divinity: Ife in Ancient Nigeria**

21 January – 25 April 2010 (provisional dates)

Medium Sized Loan

Room 5

This exhibition does not involve the use of the Round Reading Room

This exhibition will draw from the collections of the Nigerian Museums, with support from the Nigerian government. It will present a range of Ife sculptures dating to 12th -15th centuries, widely recognised as extraordinary for their technical maturity and striking aesthetic appeal. It will provide insights into the complex and sophisticated Ife civilization and its widespread influence and impact on other cultures and societies through trade and exchange. The content will include near life-size figures and heads worked in terracotta and cast in bronze and copper as well as other sculptural pieces in quartz and granite.

The exhibition will provide an opportunity to include important additional pieces from the Museum's collections (Ife head, quartz stool, terracotta fragments) to complement those from Nigeria in an appropriate context. 2010 is the 50th anniversary of Nigeria's independence.

**The Italian Renaissance (working title)**

22 April – 25 July 2010 (provisional dates)

Major International Loan

Round Reading Room (tbc)

This major exhibition will comprise 100 drawings from two of the best collections of 15th century Italian drawings in the world: the British Museum and the Uffizi in Florence. It is a prequel to the recent very successful exhibitions here and at the National Gallery on Michelangelo and Raphael. Both artists propelled Italian art to a new dynamism and classically inspired grandeur in Rome in the second decade of the 16th century. The exhibition will trace how the foundations of the High Renaissance style were laid down in Italy during the course of the previous century. The shift in style, expression and ambition in the course of the century is profoundly dramatic, yet at the same time there is remarkable continuity not least in the central importance of drawing.

The drawings will demonstrate that the core elements of Michelangelo and Raphael's artistic ambitions were ones that had been prepared and refined in drawings by artists of previous generations. The practice of drawing was fundamental to how painters in the period worked and thought. Working on paper allowed them to experiment and try things out with a freedom that is not always reflected in their finished work. For this reason these works open a fresh and sometimes unexpected perspective on some of the century's best-known creative talents.

The portability of drawings offers a unique roll call of names that no exhibition of paintings could ever rival nowadays and key figures, such as Leonardo, Michelangelo and Raphael, will be singled out for special attention with significant group of works. The show should prove to be the greatest display of Italian Renaissance drawings in this country since the Royal Academy show in 1930.

**Book of the Dead (working title)**

21 October 2010 – 25 April 2011

BM Collection/ International Loan

Round Reading Room (tbc)

This widely accessible exhibition will explain ancient Egyptian beliefs about the afterlife, using the rich textual and visual material of the Book of the Dead papyri. It provides an opportunity to build on the success of the Museum's 2005 Egyptian show, Mummy: the inside story. The British Museum holds what is probably the most extensive collection of such documents in the world, representing all the phases of the Book of the Dead's use, and including manuscripts of first-rate importance such as those of Ani and Hunefer. Due to limits on space it has been possible previously to display only a few sections of these papyri, and a key aim of the exhibition will be to exhibit a more fully representative selection and to show at least one papyrus in its entirety.

The principal narrative theme will be the stages in the dead person's journey from death to afterlife, as reflected in the Book of the Dead. There are many stages in this passage and the sequence varies, but a limited number of key episodes could be emphasised. They include the journey to the tomb and protection of the body; equipping the deceased; acquiring divine qualities; secret knowledge & passage through gates and regions of netherworld; judgement; purification and final transfiguration/integration with the cosmos. The most crucial episode (and probably the most familiar to the public) is the Judgement, with its vivid depictions of the weighing of the heart, and this should be a major focal point of the exhibition.

Subsidiary themes will be used to contextualise the episodes treated in the main narrative strand. These themes could include the evolution of the Book of the Dead and its place in Egyptian funerary practices; the making of a Book of the Dead; what modern study is revealing about the Book of the Dead.

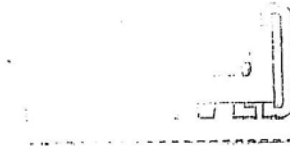
March 2008

# APPENDICES

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## APPENDIX A

### LISTED BUILDING CONSENT - THE ROUND READING ROOM



Development Control  
Planning Services  
London Borough of Camden  
Town Hall  
Argyle Street  
London WC1H 8ND

Tel 020 7278 4444  
Fax 020 7974 1975  
Textlink 020 7974 6866

env.devcon@camden.gov.uk  
www.camden.gov.uk/planning

Purcell Miller Tritton  
FAO. Stefania Scarsini  
The Clove Building  
Maguire Street  
London  
SE1 2NQ

Application Ref: **2006/3731/L**  
Please ask for: **Victoria Fowles**  
Telephone: 020 7974 2659

27 October 2006

Dear Sir/Madam

#### DECISION

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990  
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990

#### Listed Building Consent Granted

Address:  
**Round Reading Room  
British Museum  
Great Russell Street  
London  
WC1B 3DG**

#### Proposal:

Erection of a temporary stage within the Round Reading Room, and the opening of the Reading Room North door in order to provide a temporary exhibition space.  
Drawing Nos: Site Location Plan 001; Drawing No. 230838 003; 006A Rev B; 006 Rev B; 007 Rev D; 002; Design Statement

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

#### Conditions And Reasons:

- 1 The works hereby permitted shall be begun not later than the end of three years from the date of this consent.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Page 1 of 4

Director  
Peter Bishop

#### The British Museum

Application to extend the temporary Listed Building Consents for the Round Reading Room, the Middle Room and for desks in the Great Court

Reason: In order to comply with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

- 2 All new work and work of making good shall be carried out to match the original work as closely as possible in materials and detailed execution.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy B6 of the London Borough of Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006.

- 3 The works hereby approved are only those specifically indicated on the drawing(s) referred to above.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy B6 of the London Borough of Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006.

- 4 The installation of the temporary exhibition gallery in the Round Reading Room shall be limited to a period of 2 years from the date of this consent. On or before the expiry of which period the works undertaken to form the temporary exhibition gallery shall be removed and the building restored to the former 2006 appearance, form and elevation.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy B6 of the London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan 2006.

- 5 Before any work is undertaken in pursuance of this consent to install a temporary exhibition gallery in the Round Reading Room structural engineers' drawings, calculations, details and a method statement, indicating the design and proposed method of installation of the new works, including the safeguarding of the existing building fabric, shall be submitted to and approved by the Council as local planning authority. The relevant work shall be carried out in accordance with such structural engineers' drawings, calculations, details and method statement thus approved.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy B6 of the London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan 2006.

- 6 Precautions shall be taken to secure and protect the interior features against accidental loss or damage, or theft during the building work. Details shall be submitted to and approved by the Council as local planning authority before works begin on site, and the relevant work carried out in accordance with such approval. No such features shall be disturbed or removed temporarily or permanently except as indicated on the approved drawings or with the prior approval in writing of the Council. Particular regard should be given to the following items:

- a. Round Reading Room desks, and other original fittings and furniture;
- b. Access balconies around the perimeter of the Round Reading Room.



Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy B6 of the London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan 2006.

- 7 The following items shall be carefully removed before works commence, under the supervision of a person or body specialising in this procedure appointed by the applicant and approved by the Council as local planning authority, and shall be stored under cover in a secure place and later reinstated in a manner, location and to a timetable agreed with the local authority. Written confirmation shall be given to the Council immediately following this work of the items removed and their location:

- a. Over-desk lamps to the Round Reading Room desks.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy B6 of the London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan 2006.

- 8 The position, type and method of installation of all new and relocated services and related fixtures (for the avoidance of doubt including communications and information technology servicing), shall be specified in advance of any work being carried out, and the prior approval of the Council as local planning authority shall be obtained wherever these installations are to be visible, or where ducts or other methods of concealment are proposed. Any works carried out shall be in accordance with such approval. Particular regard should be given to work affecting the following features or parts of the building:

- a. Additional air handling units to be placed between Round Reading Room desks beneath the new inserted floor.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy B6 of the London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan 2006.

- 9 Details in respect of the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council as local planning authority in consultation with English Heritage before the relevant work is begun. The relevant work shall be carried out in accordance with such approved details:
  - a. Full structural details of the proposed platform lifts;
  - b. Full structural details of the method of support for the additional air handling units beneath the new floor structure.
  - c. Typical details of the protective casings for the existing desks and furniture, including their interface with the diagonal ties supporting the new floor structure;
  - d. Details of the interface between new wall partitions and the existing fabric of the building (around the perimeter of the Round Reading Room and at entrances/exits);
  - e. Any temporary works required at the entrances to the Museum to facilitate construction works;
  - f. Temporary desks, ticketing facilities and security facilities within the Great Court;
  - g. Additional signage and lighting associated with the temporary exhibition

space, including Means of Escape requirements, where these have a direct interface with the historic fabric;

h. Sample of film to be applied to glazing within the Round Reading Room.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy B6 of the London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan 2006.

- 10 All new partitions shall be scribed around the existing internal features of the Round Reading Room.

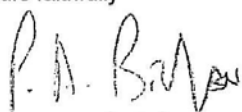
Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy B6 of the London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan 2006.

- 11 Any light-reducing film applied to any part of the glazing of the Round Reading Room shall be removed before the expiry of this consent and the glazing returned to its 2006 appearance, form and elevation.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy B6 of the London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan 2006.

Your attention is drawn to the notes attached to this notice which tell you about your Rights of Appeal and other information.

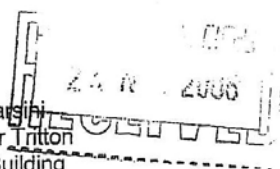
Yours faithfully



Culture and Environment Directorate  
(Duly authorised by the Council to sign this document)

## APPENDIX B LISTED BUILDING CONSENT - THE MIDDLE ROOM

Stefania Scarsini  
Purcell Miller Tritton  
The Clove Building  
Maguire Street  
London  
SE1 2NQ



Development Control  
Planning Services  
London Borough of Camden  
Town Hall  
Argyle Street  
London WC1H 8ND

Tel 020 7278 4444  
Fax 020 7974 1975  
Textlink 020 7974 6866

env.devcon@camden.gov.uk  
www.camden.gov.uk/planning

Application Ref: **2006/4440/L**  
Please ask for: **Victoria Fowles**  
Telephone: 020 7974 **2659**

21 November 2006

Dear Sir/Madam

### DECISION

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990  
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990

#### Listed Building Consent Granted

Address:  
**The British Museum**  
**Great Russell Street**  
**London**  
**WC1B 3DG**

Proposal:  
Refurbishment of the Middle Room including, minor alterations to existing windows, doors and balustrade, and upgrading of existing services.  
Drawing Nos: Site Location Plan 230838 104; Drawing Nos. 230838 100; 101; 102; 103;  
Design Statement dated September 2006.

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

#### Conditions And Reasons:

- 1 The works hereby permitted shall be begun not later than the end of three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: In order to comply with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Page 1 of 3

Director  
Peter Bishop

### The British Museum

Application to extend the temporary Listed Building Consents for the  
Round Reading Room, the Middle Room and for desks in the Great Court

- 2 All new work and work of making good shall be carried out to match the original work as closely as possible in materials and detailed execution.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy B6 of the London Borough of Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006.

- 3 The works hereby approved are only those specifically indicated on the drawing(s) referred to above.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy B6 of the London Borough of Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006.

- 4 The installation of the temporary balustrade and handrail to the perimeter gallery shall be limited to a period of 2 years from the date of this consent, on or before the expiry of which period the temporary balustrade and handrail shall be removed and the building restored to the former 2006 appearance, form and elevation.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy B6 of the London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan 2006.

- 5 With regard to the removal of the glazed doors to the lower (ground) level book presses, the following shall be agreed in writing by the Council as local planning authority:

- a) These shall be carefully removed under the supervision of a person or body specialising in this procedure, as appointed by the applicant and approved in writing by the Council prior to commencement of this part of the works;
- b) The glazed doors shall be stored under cover in a secure location, and later reinstated in their original positions, after the vacation of the Hamlyn Library from this space. The location for the items and timetable for their reinstatement shall be agreed in writing by the Council.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy B6 of the London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan 2006.

- 6 Detailed drawings in respect of the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council before the relevant part of the work is begun:

- a) A typical section through the balcony floor at 1:10 scale, which clearly shows the materials, dimensions and method of fixing of the plinth, service tray and temporary balustrade;
- b) Typical details of the exact position, materials and method of fixing of the safety bar to the balcony-level windows.
- c) Details of the materials, position and method of fixing for the temporary blocking up of window WF01C.

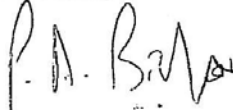
d) Details of the position, type and method of installation of all new and relocated services and related fixtures (for the avoidance of doubt including communications and information technology, and any ductwork or method of concealment of any services).

The relevant parts of the works shall not be carried out otherwise than in accordance with the details thus approved.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy B6 of the London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan 2006.

Your attention is drawn to the notes attached to this notice which tell you about your Rights of Appeal and other information.

Yours faithfully



Culture and Environment Directorate  
(Duly authorised by the Council to sign this document)



## APPENDIX C

### LISTED BUILDING CONSENT - RETAIL DESK



Development Control  
Planning Services  
London Borough of Camden  
Town Hall  
Argyle Street  
London WC1H 8ND

Tel 020 7278 4444  
Fax 020 7974 1975  
Textlink 020 7974 6866

env.devcon@camden.gov.uk  
www.camden.gov.uk/planning

David Meinck  
The British Museum  
Great Russell Street  
LONDON  
WC1B 3DG

Application Ref: 2007/2934/L  
Please ask for: **Victoria Fowles**  
Telephone: 020 7974 2659

08 August 2007

Dear Sir/Madam

#### DECISION

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990  
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990

#### Listed Building Consent Granted

Address:  
**The British Museum**  
**Great Russell Street**  
**LONDON**  
**WC1B 3DG**

Proposal:  
Installation of temporary retail desk in the south eastern corner of the Great Court.  
Drawing Nos: 230838 006 C; 121 009 A; 125 001 A; covering letter dated 07.06.07

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

#### Conditions And Reasons:

- 1 The works hereby permitted shall be begun not later than the end of three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: In order to comply with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.



ESTOR IN PEOPLE

Page 1 of 2

Acting Director  
Robert Scourfield



- 2 All new work and work of making good shall be carried out to match the original work as closely as possible in materials and detailed execution.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy B6 of the London Borough of Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006.

- 3 The works hereby approved are only those specifically indicated on the drawing(s) referred to above.

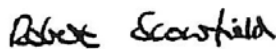
Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy B6 of the London Borough of Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006.

- 4 The retail ticket desk hereby approved shall be removed in its entirety and any affected areas made good upon closure of the First Emperor temporary exhibition season in October 2008.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy B6 of the London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan 2006.

Your attention is drawn to the notes attached to this notice which tell you about your Rights of Appeal and other information.

Yours faithfully



Culture and Environment Directorate  
(Duly authorised by the Council to sign this document)

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## APPENDIX D

### LISTED BUILDING CONSENT - TEMPORARY STRUCTURE 'THE JADE RING'

David Meinck  
The British Museum  
Great Russell Street  
LONDON  
WC1B 3DG



Development Control  
Planning Services  
London Borough of Camden  
Town Hall  
Argyle Street  
London WC1H 8ND

Tel 020 7278 4444  
Fax 020 7974 1975  
Textlink 020 7974 6866

env.devcon@camden.gov.uk  
www.camden.gov.uk/planning

Application Ref: **2007/2746/L**  
Please ask for: **Victoria Fowles**  
Telephone: 020 7974 **2659**

20 July 2007

Dear Sir/Madam

#### DECISION

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990  
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990

#### Listed Building Consent Granted

Address: **The British Museum**  
**Great Russell Street**  
**London**  
**WC1B 3DG**

**Proposal:** Erection of additional temporary structure within the round reading room for exhibition purpose to support lights, cameras and projectors.

**Drawing Nos:** 75744-61 S001 T1; SK\_001; SK002; 75744-61 S003 T2; 230838 006 B; 100/006; 699/301/13; Letters from: Arup & Partners (dated 25 May 2007), Atelier One Ltd (dated 22 May 2007), Lawrence Webster Forrest (undated), British Museum (23.05.07).

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

#### Conditions And Reasons:

- 1 The works hereby permitted shall be begun not later than the end of three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: In order to comply with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.



ESTOR IN PEOPLE

Page 1 of 2

Acting Director  
Robert Scourfield

- 2 All new work and work of making good shall be carried out to match the original work as closely as possible in materials and detailed execution.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy B6 of the London Borough of Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006.

- 3 The works hereby approved are only those specifically indicated on the drawing(s) referred to above.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy B6 of the London Borough of Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006.

Your attention is drawn to the notes attached to this notice which tell you about your Rights of Appeal and other information.

Yours faithfully



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