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relevant application fee has been forwarded to LB Camden in the post.

Background Context

The BL is a national institution, set up by an Act of Parliament, which serves business and industry, researchers, academics and students in the UK and worldwide. The BL at St Pancras is the largest public building constructed in the UK in the 20th Century, with a total floor area of over 112,000 sqm spread over 14 floors.

The BL's importance as a nationally and internationally recognised facility has continued to grow in recent years. It currently attracts 1.4million visitors per year and makes important contributions to the development of the UK academic infrastructure. The BL enriches Britain's cultural life and contributes to knowledge and learning throughout the world. It also has an important community function within its locality, which is recognised by the provision of public realm spaces, cafés, bookshops and outdoor seating areas.

The BL is continuously seeking to increase visitor numbers, promote the library, enhance awareness locally and improve the visitor experience. This will help generate essential additional revenue, which is particularly important in the current economic climate. Major exhibitions such as the 2012/2013 'Mughal India: Art, Culture and Empire' exhibition provides a vital opportunity to realise this ambition and BL wish to promote this and future events at the St Pancras site. A key issue for BL is public awareness of the building and its profile amongst other significant national institutions. Central to the library's growth strategy is to raise its profile and attract more visitors from across the UK and Europe, as well as surrounding local communities.

The British Library has a comprehensive approach to signage at the St Pancras site. This application is a response to a recent review of this strategy which has highlighted the requirement to improve awareness of people arriving at St Pancras and using routes to the north which link to Euston and in the future will link to the Francis Crick Institute,

Planning History

The wider site has a number of previous consents for advertisement for which a renewal is currently being sought from LBC. This proposal has the following specific planning history:

03/08/2012: The display of a non-illuminated wall banner to the north elevation (Midland Road) and 3x fence scrim (1x on Ossulston Road and 2x on Midland Road) between July – September 2012. (Ref: 2012/3072/A)

This application was considered to be acceptable on amenity and public safety grounds. While this advertisement was granted a temporary consent in conjunction with the 2012 Olympic Games, it is considered that the location is suitable for a more permanent sign to promote the BL. The Olympic sign was well received by locals and visitors to the area and it is considered that this is the best location on the rear façade to improve awareness of the BL in long views of the site.

Proposals

The application seeks consent for a new poster panel on the north façade of the St Pancras site facing north west onto Midland Road (AL019). The sign is non illuminated and is required to increase public awareness of the building to individuals using the adjacent exit of St Pancras Station and arriving at the site from the north. The number of people using this route is expected to increase significantly in the future, once the Francis Crick Institute opens.

The sign helps to create a consistent brand for the British Library in conjunction with the wider set of existing signs, raise awareness of the building and assist with the way finding. The BL considers that this new poster panel is essential for the long term operation of the BL especially as activity along the rear façade increases and with the impending opening of the Francis Crick Institute.

Planning Policy Context

Advertisements

Core Strategy Policy CS14 and Development Management Policy DP24 seek to ensure the high quality design of all buildings in Camden. They expect development to consider the character, setting, context and scale of the existing building and also neighbouring buildings.

Detailed guidance for advertisements, signs and hoardings is contained within 'Camden Planning Guidance 1'. This states that 'satisfactory advertisements' should consider the character and design of the property; the appearance of the surroundings; and the external fabric of the building.

The new sign has been carefully designed to ensure it effectively increases public awareness of the site without having a detrimental impact on the surrounding area. The positioning, design, size and material of this site is appropriate to its location and purpose and this additional sign will contribute to the consistent brand message and consumer experience at the BL. The addition of this new sign on the northern façade will not result in a proliferation of advertisement. This façade is currently under used by the BL, but will increasingly become a focal point for visitors arriving from St Pancras and crossing Somers Town to the north of the site following the opening of the Francis Crick Institute.

It is considered that the sign is of a high quality design and will enhance the building's image. The sign relates to the function of the building and responds to BL's objective to increase its profile and number of visitors. The sign is required primarily to increase public awareness of the building and current exhibitions.

The sign has been designed for its specific purpose and has sensitively considered the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The sign respects the form, fabric and scale of the building and does not obscure any architectural features.



The sign is located at high level to ensure that it is neither harmful to pedestrian or vehicle traffic. In addition the advert is static and non illuminated away from traffic lights and junctions and is unlikely to raise any public safety concerns.

Heritage

The site is not listed or located within a Conservation Area. It is however located adjacent to the Kings Cross St Pancras Conservation Area and the Grade I Listed St Pancras Station. Consequently the heritage setting has been considered. Development Management Policy DP25 seeks to preserve Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings and resists development that would cause harm to their setting.

The BL has carefully considered the heritage setting before considering this proposal. The sign faces away from the Listed St Pancras Chambers and it is not considered to cause any harm to the significance of this heritage asset. The sign will face into the neighbouring Kings Cross Conservation Area, however, as it will be primarily visible from the Midland Road exit of St Pancras, it is not considered to harm the setting of or any views into or out of the neighbouring Conservation Area. The sign is considered to relate to the surrounding area and enhance the image of the building. The sign will complement the two poster panels that have been previously permitted at the site, at the junction of Midland Road and Euston Road, and on the west side of the Euston Road portico. The sign is essential to ensure the large number of visitors using St Pancras Station and accessing the area to the north are aware of the British Library.

Summary

BL is continuously seeking to increase visitor numbers, promote awareness locally and improve visitor circulation. A key issue for the BL is raising public awareness of the building and its profile amongst other significant national institutions. The use of advertisements is therefore essential to promote the building and direct visitors effectively to the entrance. This approach has been pursued successfully at other major London cultural institutions including Tate Modern, Tate Britain, the National Gallery and Natural History Museum.

The BL seeks advertisement consent for a new poster sign on the north façade of the St Pancras building which forms part a comprehensive signage approach at the site.

We trust that you will agree that the proposal is appropriate given the character of the building and the surrounding context. I look forward to receiving confirmation that the application has been validated by LBC. If you have any queries please contact Vicky Woollett (020 7303 4172) or Donald Messenger (020 7303 3053).

Yours sincerely


PP. Rory Joyce
Deloitte LLP