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BY E-MAIL

Dear Alan

Midland Goods Shed and Handyside Canopies, Approval of Details, Planning Application No. 2014/5675/L

Thank you for putting a missing second volume of the Heritage Consent Report onto the public website. We have the following comments.

Condition 2a) Paint colour, existing metalwork, East Handyside Canopy

In our letter of objection of 2 April 2014, we pointed out that if the cast ironwork of the EH Canopy was painted a dark colour it would make it still more difficult than otherwise to see the all-important details through the inevitably reflective glass cladding, and for that reason we suggested a bright colour should be chosen. When originally erected, the paintwork would have been coloured, since the fashion for painting ironwork black is of 20th century origin. We are sorry the architect has not taken to that idea, but the current visualisations do suggest a grey rather than black, which might give some chance of the metalwork details being seen from within the shadows. However, it is stated that an initial coat of the proposed colour has been applied to all of the existing metalwork, as part of the preliminary work. On visiting the site I see that its actual colour appears significantly darker than the visualisations (and darker than it is made to look in the photo on page 13): IT WILL BE TOO DARK. Please can it be made lighter.

Condition 2o) Details relating to hydraulic accumulator tower equipment

i) The outline method for lifting the accumulator to the raised position seems to show some misconceptions about the accumulator's components and their method of working. There is no 'tank' – the sheet-metal vessel never held water and it is called a weight case. The cap plate referred to, from which the weight case was suspended when in use, is not strictly a part of the weight case but belongs to the ram (in other designs there is a crosshead beam here rather than

a cap plate). Although fitted over the end of ram, the cap plate may not be positively connected to it, since the ram was intended to be supported by hydraulic pressure rather than suspended and if there are connecting bolts they are unlikely to have been designed for the weight of the solid cast-iron ram. So when the cap plate is lifted the ram is likely to stay in the lower position, a possibility the method statement anticipates, but it may drop suddenly and unexpectedly, when friction and rust cease to hold or fixings break.

There is a more serious misunderstanding revealed in item 2.6, which refers to unbolting the piston/ram at ground level. The ram is contained within a separate cast-iron cylinder (shown in the drawing), within which it was originally free-running. The bottom of the ram will be inaccessible within the cylinder. The cylinder is fixed to the ground and certainly should not lift with the rest. However, the stuffing box around the ram at the top of the cylinder may be seized up, so this should be freed as a first operation to avoid excessive restraint and load on the cap plate during lifting. GLIAS believes it is important for the cylinder to be left in place on the ground, for reasons of interpretation previously explained, but if the applicant is determined to lift it, that may be attempted as a subsequent operation. Separate support will be needed. The base flange may be wider than drawn.

ii) The visualisation on page 8 is based on the misconception that the weight case is a tank – instead, there will be the hydraulic cylinder coaxially inside it and the ram inside that again.

The guide rails are shown removed, which is quite wrong – they are an essential part of the protected accumulator. Representative control valves, pipework and linkages need also to be kept and you should request details of proposals.

iii) Page 9 notes that the roof will be replaced, and retain its external appearance. As part of preserved monument and Grade II listed, ought it not to be reinstated like for like?

iv) Members of this society have much knowledge of hydraulic power equipment, and would be willing to explain how things should be.

v) The archaeological survey team was unable to gain access to the upper part of the accumulator tower. Will they be invited to complete their job there, and also to record the internally hidden parts of the accumulator?

Condition 2p) Drawings of façade treatment of East Handyside Canopy at a scale of 1:10

It appears that the relationship of the new façade to the cast-ironwork is dealt with only on page 31 of the second document, and the details are at 1:20 or smaller. The elevation of the column is not precisely or completely drawn. As shown in the photograph, there are cast-iron brackets on the column head that rise higher than the top of the column and are attached to gutter-shaped flanges, but they are not drawn. Where these original column-top features would be, the one Detail Section shows a layer of insulation, while an unspecified

shaded feature to its right also clashes. The attachment brackets for the intermediate rafters are also not drawn.

The profile of the solid cladding in front of the beam and column head is not clear. We think it important and readily accommodated that this be raised slightly so that the tops of the brackets will remain visible, not half hidden – this is where the original 1850 Temporary Passenger Station's roof was affixed.

The "new vertical steel profile" to support external equipment will intrude into the view of the column head and it appears to be proposed to leave the cladding contractor to sort the detail despite its visibility. The historic structure requires more delicately designed details.

So Condition 2p is clearly not ready to be discharged and we should like to see further drawings.

Lastly, may we please be kept informed of further submissions, as we requested in our April 2014 letter. We learnt of the present application only incidentally and nearly missed it – our apologies for slightly late response in consequence.

Yours sincerely

Malcolm Tucker

Caseworker for the Greater London Industrial Archaeology Society

cc Claire Brady, English Heritage