

THE BRITISH MUSEUM

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT FOR THE TEMPORARY TICKETING
AND AUDIO-GUIDE DESKS

24 February 2015



PURCELL

15 Bermondsey Square, Tower Bridge Road, London SE1 3UN
michael.morrison@purcelluk.com | T. 020 7397 7171
www.purcelluk.com

15 Bermondsey Square, Tower Bridge Road, London SE1 3UN
michael.morrison@purcelluk.com
www.purcelluk.com

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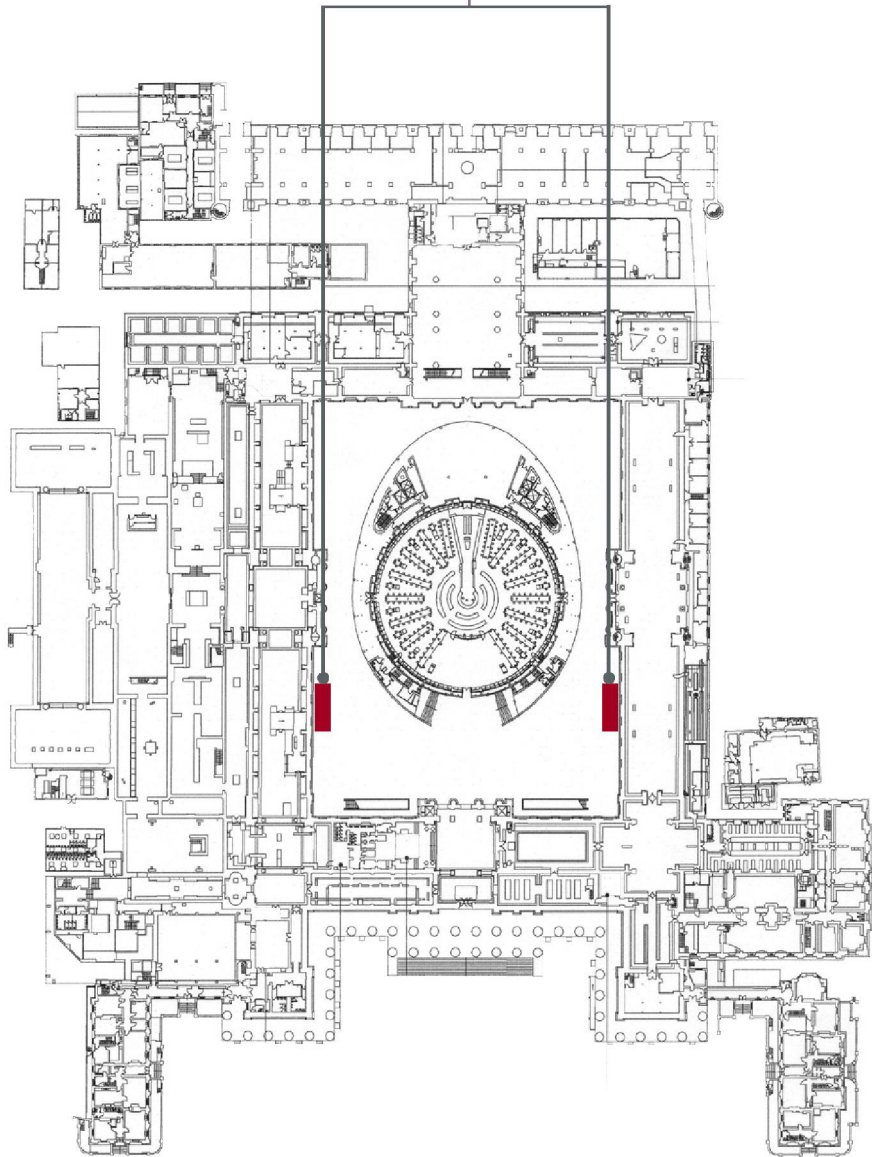
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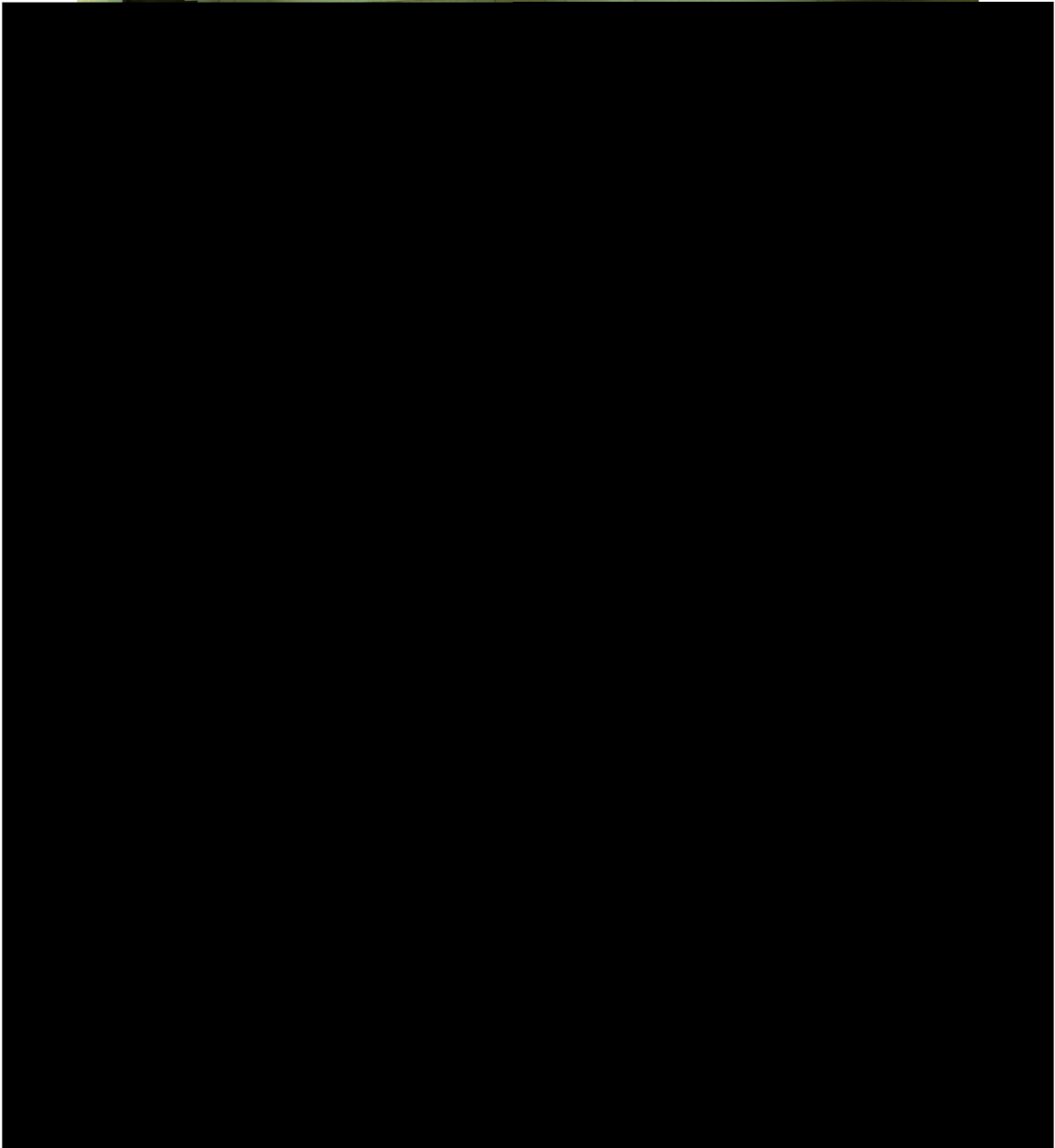
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LOCATION OF
THE TICKET DESKS



Former Reading Room Temporary Exhibition Space



Sponsored by **KOREAN AIR**

Multimedia Guide: over 200 objects,
plus highlights and gallery tours in 10 languages

Children's Guide: 7 highlights tours
with Vid the alien and his friends (English only)

British Sign Language Guide.
access to over 200 video signed commentaries

Audio Description Guide:
access to over 200 audio descriptions
for visually impaired people (English only)

13:02 14/JAN/2015

Sign on the west desk detailing the guides available:



The west desk like the east desk is unattached to the building fabric

Permission being sought

The Director and Trustees of the British Museum (Museum) are seeking a further temporary Listed Building Consent to retain the two desks which stand in the South East and South West sides of the Great Court of the Museum. Permission was originally granted for these desks on a temporary basis in 2007. Permission is now sought to retain these desks in position for a further five year period until 31st December 2019. It should be noted that these desks are not attached to the fabric of the historic building and retention of the desks for a further period has no physical effect on the building.

The present position

An application was made in October 2006 for a temporary listed building consent to use the former Reading Room at the British Museum as a temporary exhibition space. The background for this was an urgent need to find a space for an exhibition of the terracotta warriors from Xian. The Museum was, at that time, in the process of drawing up plans for the new building – including a main exhibition space – which opened in 2014. This new exhibition space designed by architects Rogers Stirk Harbour, is part of the new World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre and, at long last, fulfils the Museum's requirements for a large, flexible and permanent space for temporary exhibitions.

The temporary space created in the former Reading Room provided a very welcome interim solution. The "First Emperor" exhibition of the terracotta warriors was staged in 2007/08 and proved an enormous success with visitors to the Museum with some 800,000 people having the chance to see these extraordinary figures. So great was the success that the Director and Trustees of the Museum decided to apply for an extension of the temporary Listed Building Consent. This was granted for a further temporary period. A further application was made in February 2011 (permission granted on 01 April 2011 Reference 2011/0605/P) for a further extension to allow the former Reading Room to be used as a temporary exhibition space until the new World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre was ready for use. This extension was also granted by the London Borough of Camden and the space has been used successfully throughout that period. The temporary work in the former Reading Room forming the raised floor and surrounding fabric walls is now about to be stripped out and the space put back to its former 2006 appearance.

As part of the original work to turn the former Reading Room into a temporary exhibition space a decision was made to install two large pieces of furniture into the west and east sides of the Great Court to serve as a ticket desk for the temporary exhibition space and as a base for the audio-guides for the exhibitions. This permission was granted by the London Borough of Camden on 8th August 2007 (Application reference 2007/2934/L – a copy is attached as Appendix A). One of the conditions attached to the original consent was (Condition 4)

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

An application was made in 2008 for the extension of the various temporary listed building consents to allow the former Reading Room to continue to be used as an exhibition space and as part of that application permission was sought for the retention of the desks. Permission was granted in July 2008 (Application reference 2008/1376/L – a copy of this is attached as Appendix B). This had the condition attached (Condition 7)

"The retail and ticket desks hereby approved shall be removed in their entirety within four years from the date of this consent.... (i.e. by July 2012)".

The further application in February 2011 granted a further extension for the use of the desks until the new exhibition space in the World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre was open (i.e. the autumn of 2014) - Application reference 2011/0605/P.

The reasons for seeking the new permission

The new exhibition space in the World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre has been open since May 2014 and the whole building has been in use since August 2014. The temporary work in the former Reading Room is about to be stripped out and the interior will be reinstated. This will be done over the next few months with the target for the space to be fully reinstated being Easter 2016 at the latest and potentially before this. However, over the past seven years the importance of the desks in the Great Court has grown. They were initially conceived as simply being there to serve the temporary exhibitions however their use has broadened so that they are now an essential part of the smooth functioning of the overall visitor experience. It is recognised that virtually all (approximately 85%) visitors to the Museum and all first time visitors entering by the main South Door will start their visit by entering the Great Court. The number of visitors who have a clear idea of where they are going and who turn right or left after entering the South Door is minimal. The obvious light and space of the Great Court directly ahead of the visitor on entering the Museum is an almost irresistible draw. This is less the case for visitors entering by the North Door – but they represent a relatively small proportion (currently 15%) of all visitors.

Visitors entering the Great Court expect to be able to access information about their possible visits, to be able to purchase tickets to any special exhibitions that are current, to buy advance tickets where appropriate and to be able to pick up a Museum plan and an audio guide. The number of visitors to the Museum has grown enormously in the fifteen years since the Great Court was opened and the demand for tickets, information and the various multimedia guides cannot be met from the two desks which were designed as part of the original Foster scheme.

The number of ticketed events has increased significantly with several different exhibitions running at any one time. Visitors also collect a multimedia audio guide – there are a variety of guides on offer: A standard guide is available to all visitors but there are also special guides available for children and, importantly, guides for visitors with disabilities. A guide is available for use by visually impaired visitors and a similar guide is available for visitors who need visual signing rather than an audio guide. All the guides are a very important part of the Museum's offer to the visitor.

At present the Museum can see no viable alternative to keeping these desks if the service to visitors is to be maintained. The Great Court is the location where people expect to be able to get this service and the present desks are only just adequate for the service they are providing. The two original desks are fully used for information distribution.

The future

Consultation is underway at present over the long term use of the former Reading Room and the implications this may have for visitor flow through the Museum and the location of ticketing and multimedia guides. In the longer term it may no longer be appropriate to have these desks in the Great Court. In the immediate future, however, there is little prospect of achieving anything other than the reinstatement of the original interior of the former Reading Room. Any new use of the space, which might obviate the need for the desks in the Great Court, will not only depend on the outcome of the current consultation but will also be dependent on the funding of any emerging projects. This is why a further five year temporary listed building consent is being sought.

Appendix A: Listed Building Consent 2007/2934/L dated 8 August 2007



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 8868

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.



Appendix A: Listed Building Consent 2007/2934/L dated 8 August 2007

- 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 B: Listed Building Consent 2008/1376/L dated 22 July 2008



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

Tel 020 7278 4444
Fax 020 7974 1680
Textlink 020 7974 6866

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

PURCELL MILLER TRITTON	
INCOMING	CORRESPONDENCE
Date Received: 21/7/08	Filed Electronically: Y/N
Job No:	Folder No:
Origin:	To:

Mr Michael Morrison
Purcell Miller Tritton LLP
The Clove Building
Maguire Street
LONDON
SE1 2NQ

Application Ref: **2008/1376/L**
Please ask for: **Victoria Fowles**
Telephone: **020 7974 2659**

22 July 2008

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:
BRITISH MUSEUM
Great Russell Street
LONDON
WC1B 3DG

Proposal:
Extend the temporary listed building consent (references 2006/3731/L, 2006/4440/L, 2007/2746/L and 2007/2934/L) to use the Round Reading Room at the Museum as a site for temporary exhibitions and retention of current staging, including extension of permissions for the library in the Middle Room, the temporary structure in the Round Reading Room and the ticket desks in the Great Court.

Drawing Nos: 301/13; S001; 003; 100/006; SK-001; SK002; 001; 002; 003; 006; 006A B; 007 D; 100; 101; 102; 103; Design Statement August 06; Design Statement September 2006; letter from the British Museum Director of Planning and Projects dated 29 May 2008.

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

Conditions and Reasons:



Appendix B: Listed Building Consent 2008/1376/L dated 22 July 2008

- 1 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.

- 2 The installation of the temporary exhibition gallery and all associated items in the Round Reading Room shall be limited to a period of 4 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.

- 3 The over-desk lamps shall continue to be stored under cover in a secure place in accordance with the details approved on 4 April 2007 (ref. 2007/1056/L). These lamps shall be reinstated in a manner, location and to a timetable agreed by the local planning authority.

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.

- 4 Any light-reducing film applied to any part of the glazing of the Round Reading Room shall be removed within 4 years from the date of this consent, on or before the expiry of which period the building shall be restored to the former 2006 appearance.

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 The installation of the temporary balustrade and handrail to the perimeter gallery of the Middle Room shall be limited to a period of 4 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 its 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.

- 6 The Middle Room glazed doors shall continue to be stored under cover and in a secure location, and later reinstated in their original positions, after the vacation of the Hamlyn Library from this space. The timetable for their reinstatement shall be agreed in writing by the Council as local planning authority.

Appendix B: Listed Building Consent 2008/1376/L dated 22 July 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.

- 7 The retail and ticket desks hereby approved shall be removed in their entirety within 4 years from the date of this consent, on or before the expiry of which period the building shall be restored to its former 2006 appearance.

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.

Informative(s):

- 1 You are advised that above listed building consent has been issued for a temporary period of 4-years on the basis that a clear undertaking has been given by representatives of the British Museum to the Development Control Committee that no further applications for an extension will be submitted.

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



Yours faithfully



Rachel Stopard
Director of Culture & Environment

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Appendix C: Listed Building Consent 2011/0605/P dated 04 April 2011

<p>Mr Michael Morrison Purcell Miller Tritton LLP The Clove Building Maguire Street LONDON SE1 2NQ</p>	<table border="1"><tr><td colspan="2">PURCELL MILLER TRITTON</td></tr><tr><td>INCOMING</td><td>CORRESPONDENCE</td></tr><tr><td>Date</td><td>14.4.11</td></tr><tr><td>Project</td><td>6N</td></tr><tr><td>Job No</td><td>230838</td></tr><tr><td>Ref No</td><td>16</td></tr><tr><td>Original To</td><td>[REDACTED]</td></tr></table>	PURCELL MILLER TRITTON		INCOMING	CORRESPONDENCE	Date	14.4.11	Project	6N	Job No	230838	Ref No	16	Original To	[REDACTED]	 <p>Development Control Planning Services London Borough of Camden Town Hall Argyle Street London WC1H 8ND Tel 020 7974 4444 Fax 020 7974 1660 Textlink 020 7974 6866 env.devcon@camden.gov.uk www.camden.gov.uk/planning</p>
PURCELL MILLER TRITTON																
INCOMING	CORRESPONDENCE															
Date	14.4.11															
Project	6N															
Job No	230838															
Ref No	16															
Original To	[REDACTED]															
<p>Application Ref: 2011/0605/P Please ask for: Victoria Pound Telephone: 020 7974 2659</p>																
<p>4 April 2011</p>																
<p>Dear Sir/Madam</p>																
<p>DECISION</p>																
<p>Town and Country Planning Acts 1990 (as amended) Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 Town and Country Planning (Applications) Regulations 1988</p>																
<p>Variation or Removal of Condition(s) Granted</p>																
<p>Address: BRITISH MUSEUM Great Russell Street LONDON WC1B 3DG</p>																
<p>Proposal: Variation of conditions 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7 (relating to period of display/use restrictions) pursuant to listed building consent dated 22/07/2008 (ref: 2008/1376/L) for the extension of the temporary listed building consent (references 2006/3731/L, 2006/4440/L, 2007/2746/L and 2007/2934/L) to use the Round Reading Room at the Museum as a site for temporary exhibitions and retention of current staging, including extension of permissions for the library in the Middle Room, the temporary structure in the Round Reading Room and the ticket desks in the Great Court, to extend the use of the Round Reading Room as a Temporary Exhibition Space until 31 October 2014.</p>																
<p>Drawing Nos: Site location plan, Design and Access Statement dated 07 February 2011</p>																
<p>The Council has considered your application and decided to grant permission. Informative(s):</p>																
 <p>INVESTOR IN PEOPLE</p>	<p>Page 1 of 2</p>	<p>Director of Culture & Environment Rachel Stopard</p>														

Appendix C: Listed Building Consent 2011/0605/P dated 04 April 2011

- 1 All conditions attached to listed building consent reference 2008/1376/L granted on 22 July 2008 remain applicable.

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

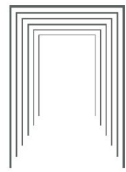
Yours faithfully



Rachel Stopard
Director of Culture & Environment

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