

Sir John Soane's Museum  
13 Lincoln's Inn Fields

Design and Access and Heritage Statement  
for external signage

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**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND  
CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990**  
**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (CONTROL OF ADVERTISEMENTS) 1992**

We write on behalf of our client in order to submit advertisement and listed building consent applications for the installation of external signage at 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields. In connection with the applications, the following documents have been submitted online via the Planning Portal:

- Location plan (scale 1:1250)
- Advertisement application form
- Listed building application form
- Ownership Certificate B
- Accompanying drawings
- Design and Access Statement and Heritage Statement (this document)
- A payment of £110 made via the Planning Portal website  
(there is no fee required for the Listed Building Application).

## Introduction

This document forms part of the Listed Building Consent and Advertisement Consent applications for the addition of signage to the front railings of No. 12, 13 and 14 Lincoln's Inn Fields and the replacement of the Museum signage for No. 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields.

This document relates to minor works which will have a minimal effect on the appearance and character of the listed building but will have valuable impact for visitors to the building in regards to accessibility and legibility. The works are summarised as follows:

- 1.1 2 x Information signs to be attached to the front railings of No. 12 Lincoln's Inn Fields
- 1.2 1 x Information signs to be attached to the front railings of No. 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields
- 1.3 2 x small detachable signs to gates to No. 13 & 14 Lincoln's Inn Fields
- 1.4 Replacement of 4 x posters cases with 3 x aluminium poster cases to be attached to the front railing of No. 13 and 14 Lincoln's Inn Fields
- 1.5 Replacement of Museum entrance sign to the wall of No. 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields.

These individual elements are shown in the proposed drawings identified in the Drawing Register Sheet at the back of this report.



## The Site

Sir John Soane's museum is a Grade 1 Listed Building located in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The Museum was first listed in 1951. A copy of the listing for the exterior of the buildings is provided below

(SIR JOHN SOANE MUSEUM AND ATTACHED RAILINGS,  
List Entry Number: 1379327).

*'3 terraced houses, formerly the home, studio and private museum of Sir John Soane, now a museum. Progressively rebuilt by Soane to form a symmetrical facade. No.12 built c1792-94 for himself; No.13, c1812-13; No.14, c1824 was built and sold off by Soane but the back half was retained and incorporated into the principal residence at No.13. Soane also built a museum, connected to No.13, on the site of the stables at the rear of the houses. Grey brick, No.13 with stone facing. Nos 12 and 14 with slated mansard roofs and dormers. EXTERIOR: 4 storeys and basements (No.12 & 14 with attics). 3 windows each. Nos 12 and 14: arched ground floor openings. Doorways with patterned radial fanlights and panelled doors. Wrought-iron balconies at 1st floor level. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed windows with original glazing bars (No.14 with C19 blind boxes to 2nd floor).*

*Stone 2nd floor sill strings. Brick modillion and stone cornices at 3rd floor level. Stone cornices and blocking course above 3rd floor. No.13: projecting stone front of 3 bays with the middle bay continuing the projection on the 2nd floor. Roundby Classical Coade stone figures on the outer bays. 1st floor was formerly an open loggia, glazed in 1834. 2nd floor with outer bays recessed and articulated with pilaster strips and friezes. Projecting middle bay with acroteria. Recessed 3rd floor with stone pilasters carrying a stone balustrade with acroteria finials.'*



Figure 1: Ordnance Survey map for listing 1379327

## The Surroundings

The site is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area on the north side of Lincoln's Inn Fields. The north side of the square comprises a row of town houses of different ages and styles, most of which are listed. The majority of the properties date from the early 18th to 20th centuries, the properties range from three to six storeys. There are a number of 20th Century properties including No. 10 Lincoln's Inn Fields, directly to the right of the Museum.

## Context

Sir John Soane's Museum was the house, studio and museum of Sir John Soane (1753 - 1837), one of England's most eminent architects of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The house and its adjoining neighbours were completely rebuilt by Soane to display his ever-growing collection of sculpture, architectural fragments and paintings. Soane had a private Act of Parliament passed in 1833 by which he left No. 12 and 13 to the nation, No. 12 to be rented out to provide income (it is today used by the Museum) and No. 13 as a public museum, to be preserved 'as nearly as possible' exactly as it was left at the time of his death (1837). Despite this covenant, alterations were made to the building, most radically by James Wild at the end of the 19th century. No. 12 Lincoln's Inn Fields was Soane's first house on this site, constructed in 1792. Soane and his family lived here until 1813, when they moved into his new house next door at No. 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields. At the time of Soane's death in 1837 No. 12 was leased out as a domestic dwelling. The lease changed to a commercial lease by the mid 19th century. The Soane interiors were repainted and many were subdivided. No. 12 came back into Museum use in 1969 and was restored in 1969-70 and again in 2011-12. No. 13 has remained open as 'Sir John Soane's Museum' since 1837.



Figures 2, 3 & 4 Flexible free-standing wayfinding signage inside the Museum, commissioned as part of the Opening up the Soane project, Sept 2016.

## Background and Project Justification

This proposal is for a range of easily removable signs and display cases to make the public aware of the location of the museum and improve the quality and clarity of the information given to visitors and passers by interested in the house. The signage also aims to highlight exhibitions and events, along with key visitor information such as opening times.

In recent years Sir John Soane's Museum has changed dramatically. The Museum now welcomes over 115,000 visitors each year. Due to this increase in visitors the Museum has to better manage the queue and expectations of visitors in the queue, informing them of rules within the Museum to assist with conservation of the buildings. It is also seen as a good opportunity to promote upcoming events to help solicit further financial support.

The aim of these proposals is to improve the facilities and visitors' experience of the Museum whilst being respectful to the historic fabric and unique character of the building.

The proposals were commissioned at the end of Phase 3 of Opening up the Soane, which saw new restored spaces open to the public, requiring new signage. They are being funded from a one-off Capital Works grant from the DCMS for the year 2016-17. Wayfinding and signage have been highlighted as key areas that would benefit from strategic investment both to improve visitor offer and improve financial resilience in the future.

The Museum gets much needed revenue from its shop. The shop is open to members of the public as well as visitors to the Museum

which is unknown to many. Having signage outside No. 12 where the shop is located will help with this problem. In addition, although the Museum's building is unique and distinctive, it is still less than obvious to the uninitiated (70% are visitors for the first time) and needs to identify itself more clearly on the street.

The signage has been designed to be flexible and easily removable. It is intended that some of the signage will just be used on certain days during opening hours.

## Access

These works are intended to improve wayfinding around the building by visitors. There would be no obstruction to the entrance or exit, ensuring that safe access and means of escape is maintained at all times.

By ensuring that information is provided at relevant and useful points the aim of the external signage is to speed up the queuing process to avoid obstruction at the front of the building.



Figure 4: Existing signage to railings, May 2016



Figure 5: Existing poster case signage to No. 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields, May 2016



Figure 6: Existing A Frame and queuing system outside the Museum, May 2016



Figure 7: Existing poster cases fixed to the railings of No. 13, August 2016



Figure 8: Existing signage to the ground floor facade of no. 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields, August 2016



Figure 9: Existing ad-hoc signage and poster cases to No. 13, May 2016

## Detailed Design Proposals

The proposal includes the replacement of :

- 4 display cases measuring 420 x 594 mm of varying design (see site photos on previous page) from the external railings at No. 12 and 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields with 3 powder coated aluminium removable display cases measuring 380mm x 500mm. The cases are fitted to the railings using a flat bar, which is fitted to the channel (covered with Plastazote for protection) on the back of the frame with bolts. The poster cases cover 3 vertical bars and are positioned 30mm below the top bar.
- The existing painted wooden Museum entrance sign to the side of No. 13 entrance door with a stove enamelled panel measuring 645mm(w) x 1065mm(h) x 3mm(d). The panel is green/black to match the railings with direct to media printed text. The sign is screwed to the wall using the existing three holes. The sign can be removed easily without harm to the fabric of the building.

The proposal includes the introduction of:

- 3 stove enamelled removable panels measuring 500mm(h) x 350mm(w) x 3mm(d) attached to the vertical bars of the railings associated with No. 12 and 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields. The signs are attached using a bracket around the vertical bars. The bracket is padded with plastazote in order to protect the railings and paintwork from damage.
- 2 stove enamelled panels measuring 300mm x 210mm attached to the top bar of the gates to No. 13 and No. 14 Lincoln's Inn Fields. The signs are not fixed but are hooked over the top bar with an open bracket, padded with plastazote. These signs are temporary and will only be used on days when the main entrance is closed. They will be removed at the end of each day.

All signage panels are located 30mm from the top bar as per existing signage and extend across 3 vertical bars. The panels are coloured using 'Soane red', used throughout the Museum and matched specifically to the original colour of the Library Dining room. The text is printed direct to the stove enamel panel and is clean, simple and consistent across all signs. All signage panels use a sans serif type face which is clear with differentiated 'a' characters for legibility. A good contrast between dark background and light text is more readable by those with poor vision and all signs are hung at the recommended height for wheelchair users and standing visitors.

The signage has been designed with quality in mind. Careful use of graphic design has been applied to ensure the information is clear and the designs are consistent.

**No physical intervention into the fabric of the building is proposed.**

Please see drawings for details of materials, sizes and fixings.



## Sign types

### Entrance wall sign x 1 (ES )

#### Details:

Stove enamelled panel measuring 645mm(w) x 1065mm(h) x 3mm(d). The panel is green/black (RAL 1065) to match the railings with direct to media printed text. The sign is screwed to the wall using the existing three holes. The sign can be removed easily without harm to the fabric of the building.



### Flexible signs x 2 (FS)

#### Details:

Red stove enamelled panel measuring 300mm(w) x 210mm(h) x 3mm(d). The panels are not attached to the railings but hung using a 3mm bracket. Plastazote is used at touching points.



### Information signs x 3 (EIS)

#### Details:

Stove enamelled panel measuring 380mm(w) x 500mm(h) x 3mm(d) The panel is red (RAL 3011). The signs are attached to the railings using back plates. The sign can be removed easily without harm to the fabric of the building  
Plastazote is used at touching points.



1.

2.

### Display cases x 3 (PC)

#### Details:

Brush brass coloured powder coated aluminium lockable display cases measuring 380mm(w) x 500mm(h) fitted to the railings using the flat bar, which is fitted to the channel (covered with Plastazote for protection) on the back of the frame.



## Heritage Statement

The proposed works have been designed to be in keeping with their surroundings and are sympathetic to the listed buildings and railings. Efforts have been made to ensure the signage is flexible and can be removed easily so as to limit the potential negative impacts imposed on the listed building and railings which may arise from crude or rigid fixings on building fabric.

There are no permanent fixings to the railings and as such there will be no impact to the historic fabric of the building. In addition, the fixings are padded with plastazote hard foam which protects the railings and paintwork.

The design of the signage is simple and uses heritage colours in keeping with the Georgian period of the property. Although a contemporary material is used, it achieves a 'light touch' where signs are placed against historic fabric. The signage is designed not as a pastiche of the historical features but to complement them. As such, the signage material respects the architectural features of the buildings and the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

The entrance sign to the facade of No. 13 is as existing in terms of size, location and fixings.

This restrained approach to design and colour palette is sympathetic to the character of the building and its historic setting, and is consistent with Soane's approach to classical detailing. This is consistent with Policy CPG 1 2.12 which explains that:

*'Materials should form an integral part of the design process and should relate to the character and appearance of the area, particularly*

*in conservation areas or within the setting of listed buildings. The durability of materials and understanding of how they will weather should be taken into consideration. The quality of a well designed building can be easily reduced by the use of poor quality or an unsympathetic palette of materials.'*

The design of the signs is simple. By introducing a uniform signage family the facade of the Museum will have a cleaner look, reducing visual clutter, the existing signage being of different types, materials, sizes and colours.

## Positive Impact

The introduction of the new signage and replacement of current signage to the front railings will represent a significant improvement to the visitor experience.

The proposals will help visitors understand the history of the Museum and the constraints imposed by the layout of the house, for example that bags cannot be carried around the building for security and conservation purposes. The proposals will assist with wayfinding to the Museum from Holborn Station and alert the passer-by to the significance of the building.

## Negative Impact

The Museum will be more visible on Lincoln's Inn Fields, and to an extent the signs could be seen to disrupt the pleasing vertical rhythm established by Soane's railings and facades. However, the precedent set by the existing signs is accepted, and in replacement, there is scope to mitigate their impact through the use of high quality materials using a more sensitive and relevant colour palette.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the introduction of the new signage to the South Elevation will represent a significant improvement to the visitor experience, and enhance the visibility of the Museum for first time visitors.

The proposed external signage has been tastefully and sensitively designed so as not to impact upon the character and appearance of the listed building and the wider conservation area.

The lack of illumination, appropriate scale and location of the advertisements is in keeping with the character and appearance of the existing building and the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

Overall, the proposal is considered to be acceptable and to comply with relevant planning policies relating to Listed Buildings, their setting and to conservation areas.

A meeting and site visit have been undertaken with Camden Council who have no concerns regarding the impact to this significant listed building.

## Drawing Register Sheet

We enclose the following drawings:

Drawing No:	Drawing Name:	Size and Scale:
284-00	Site location plan	1:1250 @ A4
284- E02	South elevation as existing	1:50 @ A2
284- 02 R1	South elevation as proposed	1:50 @ A2
284- E01	Ground Floor Plan as existing	1:50 @ A2
284- 01 R1	Ground Floor Plan as Proposed	1:100 @ A3
284- 03.1	External Signage EIS 01/02/03	1:5 @ A2
284- 03.3	External Signage FS 01/02 OPTION 01	1:5 @ A2
284- 03.4	External Signage ES 02	1:5 @ A2
284-03.5	External Signage PC 01/02/03	1:5 @ A2

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