

HERITAGE STATEMENT

THE KNOWLEDGE CENTRE, BRITISH LIBRARY

Introduction:

This Heritage Statement has been prepared and submitted on behalf of The British Library, to provide justification for the following development:

“Internal works consisting of stage alterations and the installation of one wheelchair lift, to enable disabled access to the stage in the Knowledge Centre.”

The proposal and location:

The proposed permanent wheelchair lift and stage extension will be provided within the Knowledge Centre, which is a separately identifiable space within the British Library building. This is not considered to be an architecturally significant room or location in the Library, whilst covered by the wider listing of the building, it is not specifically acknowledged as a significant location in Historic England’s full listing for the building.

The external materials on the wheelchair lift, stage extension panelling and button station will be consistent with the existing materials within the Knowledge Centre, so will not be intrusive on the character of the centre.

With regard to the proposed works and methods of fixing, whilst there will be a requirement to drill into both the wall, floor and existing stage, these will be carried out cautiously and similarly to the process used elsewhere in the Library and will not be intrusive. Therefore, the proposed works, in this internal part of the Library are considered to be appropriate and will have a no substantial impact on the listed building.

Policy considerations:

The proposed development is compliant with both National and Local Planning Policy, as set out below.

Section 12 of the NPPF (2012) sets out the approach to be taken for the consideration of Listed Buildings, of particular relevance are Paragraphs 132 and 133 which seek to protect heritage assets (inclusive of Grade I listed buildings) by resisting the approval of planning applications which will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of an asset. In line with these requirements, substantial weight has been given to the conservation of The British Library and it is considered that this minor internal alteration to the listed building will have no substantial impact on or loss of the significance of the heritage asset.

Policy D2 (Heritage and Conservation) of Camden’s Local Plan (adopted 03 July 2017) seeks to preserve and enhance Camden’s heritage assets and their settings. In accordance with the policy requirements, this proposal does not result in the loss of, or substantial harm to the designated heritage asset, affect the preservation and will not cause harm to the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.

Conclusion

Overall, the proposed wheelchair lift and permanent stage extension will cause no substantial harm or impact to the listed building and will not affect the setting or character of the specific internal area of building. There will be no impact on the fabric of the building and the non-intrusive proposed works are consistent with those which have been undertaken elsewhere in the Library.