

**THE BRITISH MUSEUM  
ROOF OVER GREEK AND ROMAN STUDY ROOM**

**PROPOSED ACCESS HATCH**

**HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT IN SUPPORT OF PLANNING +  
LISTED BUILDING APPLICATION**



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**Yate**

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**BS37 5SY**

**2<sup>nd</sup> January 2020**

## **Heritage Impact Assessment**

This document sets out the significance values and impact based on the BS 7913:2013 Guide to the Conservation of Historic buildings and should be read in conjunction with the Design and Access Statement dated 19<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

The British Standard states that the immediate objective of building conservation is to secure the protection of built heritage, in the long-term interest of society. Significance represents a public interest and the planning system, and the policy and legislation which support it reflect this.

The British Standard sets out the following heritage values and significance to be addressed in preparing a Heritage Impact Assessment:

- Evidential
- Historical
- Aesthetic
- Communal

The significance of the roof over the Greek and Roman Study Room are touched upon in the Museum's Conservation Plan and referred to in the Design and Access Statement forming part of the Planning + Listed Building application package.

### 1. Evidential significance and impact

The existing roof generally remains as it was built in terms of the original structural elements of trusses and joists although the original decking has been overlaid to increase drips and the copper finish replaced.

The proposed alterations are minor with the inclusion of a new access hatch. Although it will be necessary to cut and trim the decking this is relatively insignificant and the original structure is still present and will still be able to yield any historical evidence.

### 2. Historical significance and impact

There is known reference by Smirke regarding the use of copper to the main south range roofs of the Museum and it has always been a fundamental ethos within the Museum to maintain the existing copper roofs in these areas. However, the current copper roofing, and the copper that immediately pre-dated it are not in the original form of detailing which would have been standing seams and with a lesser number of drips. The earlier roofing (replaced by the current copper was assumed to have been re-laid in the 1950's.

The proposal to insert the small access hatch will involve minor alterations to the copper detailing to maintain the water run off around the hatch.

The significance of the copper roofing in the context of this small intrusion is not considered to be a major impact in terms of the historical significance, which is considered to be Smirke's known wish to have a copper finish to the south ranges.

### 3. Aesthetic significance and impact

The roof areas are visually pleasing in terms of their use of artisan trades and materials, but this is not something that is readily available for all to see and appreciate, and so its aesthetic significance is considered to be relatively limited.

The provision of the small roof hatch does not unduly detract from the overall finish and detailing.

### 4. Communal significance and impact

The roof areas are purely functional and have never been intended for any communal use or enjoyment by society generally. There is not considered to be a communal significance

The provision of the small roof hatch has no impact on communal significance

## Conclusion

The introduction of the small access hatch into a roof area where there is very little, if any, alterations to the structure is not a significant change. Overall, the existing structure and fabric are retained.

The benefit of the proposal is that the Fire and Emergency Lighting (FAEL) systems can be more easily installed and maintained (with less disturbance from ceiling level).

The provision of the FAEL services provide advance warning of not only fire damage to the structure, fabric and objects but also to the preservation of life. There is no question that the minimal impact of the provision of this small hatch is negligible in relation to the benefits realised