

Application ref: 2016/4219/P
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Mrs Sylvia Hughes
The British Museum
Great Russell Street
London
WC1B 3DG

Dear Sir/Madam

DECISION

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

Full Planning Permission Granted

Address:

The British Museum
Great Russell Street
London
WC1B 3DG

Proposal: Erection of a single storey structure including ramp and handrail outside the KEB building north entrance to provide an external search facility to the museum for a temporary period of 2 years (RETROSPECTIVE).

Drawing Nos: EW-BG-PP-10; EW-BG-PP-11; EW-BG-PP-12; EW-BG-PP-13;
Proposed North elevation; Proposed North section; Design and Access Statement prepared by the British Museum dated 21/12/2016.

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

Condition(s) and Reason(s):

- 1 The proposed single storey security structure in the northern forecourt hereby permitted is for a temporary period only and shall be removed from the site and the site made good by no more than 2 years from the date of this permission (14/09/2022).

Reason: The type of structure is not such as the local planning authority is prepared to approve, other than for a limited period, in view of its appearance. The permanent retention of the structure would be contrary to the requirements

of policy D1 and D2 of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

EW-BG-PP-10; EW-BG-PP-11; EW-BG-PP-12; EW-BG-PP-13; Proposed North elevation; Proposed North section; Design and Access Statement prepared by the British Museum dated 21/12/2016.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning.

Informative(s):

- 1 Reasons for granting permission.

Permission is sought for the erection of a temporary structure in the northern forecourt to provide an external search facility to the museum for 2 years (retrospective). The structure's purpose is to provide security screening to visitors entering the museum as an additional security measure to the existing security screening within the northern entrance of the Museum itself. The structures have been in place since August 2016 and planning permission is being sought retrospectively. Listed building consent is not required for these works as the security structures are not attached to the listed building but are independent structures that require planning permission only.

Although temporary in nature the Museum is repairing and cleaning the security structures to address wear and tear and maintain their appearance. It has been confirmed that the works will be planned and carried out on a like-for-like basis with an external deep clean and repairs including re-levelling the main structure, replacement of the external apron at low level, remedial work to cladding to ensure water tightness, replacement of entry / exit ramps and internal fit out . The structure has been in place for nearly 4 years. During this time discussions have been ongoing with the Museum during regular quarterly meetings which include Historic England around the timescales that the structures would need to be in place and how they could be treated to minimise any visual harm. Discussions around a permanent solution to address the security issues will be undertaken as part of a future masterplan which will include discussions with the Council, Historic England as well as other stakeholders and local groups.

The Council acknowledges that the proposed security structure would be considered to be a prominent feature within the direct setting of the Museum and as such, is considered to cause a degree of harm to the setting of that building and the wider Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The harm to the setting of the building is due to the position of the structure outside the Grade I listed building. The northern entrance is integral to the character and appearance of the building and the wider Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The harm would be considered less than substantial to the designated heritage asset (i.e. the Grade I listed building) as it is not affecting the designated heritage asset itself rather the issue is the harm to its setting. The proposed structure would be out

of character in the conservation area due to its size, scale, bulk, footprint, form and appearance. However the harm is identified as less than substantial harm as the impact has to be considered in relation to the setting of the conservation area as a whole and the proposal affects only to a small area of the Bloomsbury conservation area. The issues of harm have to be weighed against the public benefits that the proposal provides. Considerable importance and weight has been attached to the harm caused in this instance, nevertheless the security structure would be in place for a temporary period of time until a permanent solution is identified through the future masterplan for the estate. It is accepted that the approach taken is an appropriate temporary solution to address the existing security issues and that the works have been carefully conceived to cause the least harm to the listed building in line with paragraph 196 of the NPPF. Historic England were notified about the application and recommended that it should be determined in accordance with Camden's local plan guidance.

- 2 The Council and Historic England attend regular meetings with the applicant to discuss estate matters which includes the status of current and outstanding planning matters. Following a further consultation exercise Historic England has advised in their recommendation that any permission should be temporary and should be for a maximum period of 2 years.

As already stated above, this type of development is something that the Council would not normally support due to the impact of the proposal on the conservation area. Given the longer time period required to design and plan for a permanent solution as part of a future masterplan document the permission would be for a temporary period of 2 years and would then be required to be removed and the area made good. This would be secured by condition.

Due to the location and nature of the single storey security structure from neighbouring residential properties the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the amenity of the neighbouring occupiers in terms of loss of privacy, outlook or daylight and sunlight and would be considered acceptable.

No objections were received prior to determination. The planning history of the site has been taken into account when coming to this decision.

Special regard has been attached to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses under s.66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act (ERR) 2013. Special attention has been paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area, under s.72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990) as amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act (ERR) 2013.

As such, the proposed development is in general accordance with policies A1, D1 and D2 of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017. The proposed development also accords with the London Plan 2016, Intend to Publish London Plan 2019 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.

In dealing with the application, the Council has sought to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive way in accordance with paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.

You can find advice about your rights of appeal at:

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/appeals/guidance/guidancecontent>

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DP', is centered on a light grey rectangular background.

Daniel Pope
Director of Economy, Regeneration and Investment