

<b>Address:</b>	The British Museum Great Russell Street London WC1B 3DG		<b>5</b>
<b>Application Number:</b>	2025/5094/P	<b>Officer:</b> Sarah White	
<b>Ward:</b>	Bloomsbury		
<b>Date Received:</b>	11/11/2025		
<b>Proposal:</b>	Erection of 2no. visitor welcome pavilions within the northern and southern forecourts of the British Museum and the erection of associated queuing and wayfinding infrastructure, railings, and seating. Landscaping of the western and eastern lawns in the southern forecourt and alterations to dwarf walls surrounding both lawns. Alterations to curbs and associated landscaping of northern forecourt. All for a temporary period of up to 10 years.		

**Background Papers, Supporting Documents and Drawing Numbers:**

Existing Drawings:

VW102-SWV-1000-X-DDG-X-001000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1000-X-DDG-X-101000 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-X-001000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-X-101000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1010-X-DDG-X-001000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1010-X-DDG-X-101000 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-001000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1010-X-DDG-L-001000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-001000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-X-003000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-X-003000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-013000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-013000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-012000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-012001 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-012000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-012001 Rev 01.

Demolition Drawings:

VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-051000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1010-X-DDG-L-051000 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-051000 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-052000 Rev 00; VW102-SWV-1010-X-DDG-X-052000 Rev 01.

Proposed Drawings:

VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-101000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-X-103000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-112000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-112001 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-113000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-123000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-123001 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-123002 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-142000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-F\_01-DDG-A-111000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-F\_01-DDG-A-111001 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-F\_01-DDG-A-112000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-F\_01-DDG-A-112001 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-F\_01-DDG-A-113000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-F\_01-DDG-A-113001 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-F\_01-DDG-A-113002 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-F\_01-DDG-A-113003 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1010-X-DDG-L-101000 Rev 03; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-101000 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1010-X-DDG-X-103000 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-112000 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-112001 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-113000 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-123000 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-123001 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-123002 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-123003 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-X-

DDG-L-123005 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-C\_02-DDG-A-111000 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-C\_02-DDG-A-111001 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-C\_02-DDG-A-112000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1015-C\_02-DDG-A-112001 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1015-C\_02-DDG-A-113000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1015-C\_02-DDG-A-113001 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1015-C\_02-DDG-A-113002 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-101004 Rev 03; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-101004 Rev 03; VW102-SWV-1014-X-DDG-L-101004 Rev 00.

**Documents:**

Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (Pre-Construct Archaeology, November 2025); Arboricultural Statement including Tree Survey (CBA Trees, November 2025); Biodiversity Statement (Trium, November 2025); Cover Letter (The Planning Lab, 10 November 2025); Design and Access Statement (Studio Weave, November 2025); Draft Construction Management Plan Pro-Forma (November 2025); Drainage and SuDS Strategy Report (Aecom, 16 January 2026); Heritage Statement (Alan Baxter Ltd, November 2025); Planning Statement (The Planning Lab, November 2025); Statement of Community Involvement (Daisy Froud, November 2025); Statutory Biodiversity Metric (October 2025).

**RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY:**

**Grant conditional planning permission subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement**

<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>Agent:</b>
The Trustees of the British Museum Great Russell Street London WC1B 3DG	The Planning Lab Somerset House, South Wing Strand London WC2R 1LA

**ANALYSIS INFORMATION**

<b>Land use floorspaces</b>				
Use Class	Description	Existing GIA (sqm)	Proposed GIA (sqm)	Difference GIA (sqm)
F1	Museum – northern security pavilion	32	32	0
F1	Museum – southern security pavilion	116	181	+65
<b>Total</b>	<b>All uses</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>+65</b>

<b>Parking details</b>			
Cycle Type	Existing spaces	Proposed spaces	Difference
Cycle – short stay (all uses)	56	60	+4

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- i) The application relates to the erection of 2 no. visitor welcome pavilions, and associated landscaping, wayfinding and queuing infrastructure, railings and seating within the northern entrance and southern forecourt of the British Museum to replace the existing white security tents. The pavilions are intended to be an interim solution to security needs whilst a more comprehensive and long-term strategy is developed for the site and as such, planning permission is sought for a temporary period of up to 10 years.
- ii) The proposals would significantly improve the visitor welcome experience, resulting in a more human, welcoming and attractive environment that creates clear public benefits through the opening up of the southern courtyard to the public. It demonstrates a thoughtful and sensitive approach to design, materiality and architectural language, balancing multiple and complex constraints, including heritage considerations, operation and security, maintenance, wayfinding and signage.
- iii) The evolution of the designs following sustained and constructive feedback from officers, the DRP panel and stakeholders has led to a positive scheme that balances operational and security challenges; while also being high-quality in terms of design and materials, restrained in scale, and delivers on its aims of improving the visitor welcome experience for users.
- iv) The proposals have been found to cause varying degrees of harm to designated heritage assets, all of which are less than substantial and range from low to medium. However, this harm has been balanced against a number of public benefits including continued safe access to the Museum and its collection, a more welcoming and inviting visitor experience, and greater public access to the museum forecourt.
- v) The proposals are acceptable in planning terms, comply with the development plan as a whole, and it is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted.

## OFFICER REPORT

**Reason for Referral to Committee:** The Director of Economy, Regeneration and Investment has referred the application for consideration after briefing members (Clause 3(vii)). The panel considered it should be heard by committee due to public interest.

### 1. SITE AND BACKGROUND

#### *Designations*

1.1 The following are the most relevant designations or constraints:

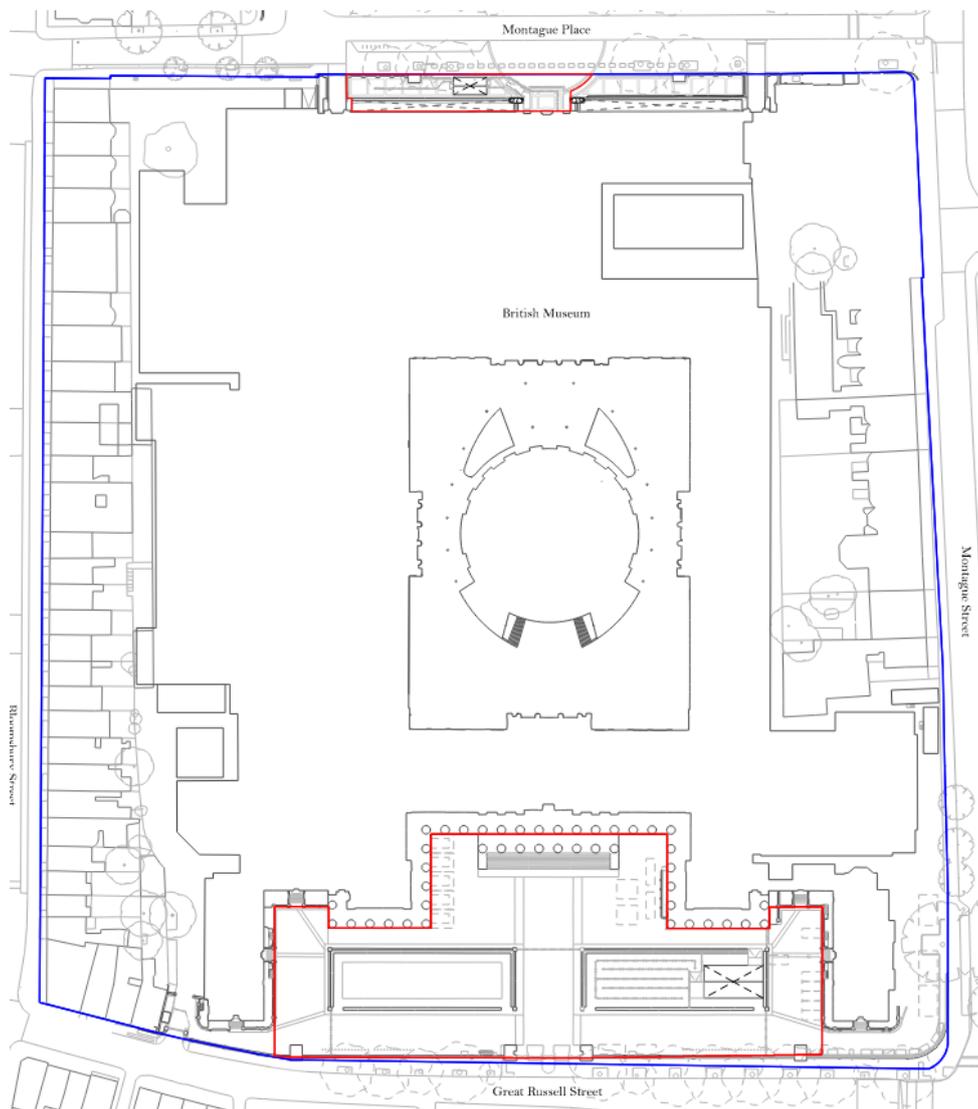
Designation	Details
Central London Area	The British Museum
Conservation Area	Bloomsbury
Listed buildings	Grade I - The British Museum (1130404) - The British Museum King Edward VII Galleries and Attached Wall and Lions (1322129)  Grade II* - Main Entrance Gateway, Railings and Attached Lodges to the British Museum (1130406)  Grade II - Eighteen Lamp Posts on the Forecourt of the British Museum (1130405)
Local Plan Open Space	British Museum Grounds (public)
Archaeological Priority Area	Tier II
PTAL (Public transport accessibility)	6b
Underground development constraints and considerations	- Subterranean (groundwater flow) - Slope stability - TfL zone of interest (tunnel asset)

*Table 1 - Site designations and constraints*

#### *Description*

1.2 The application site lies north of Great Russell Street, west of Montague Street, east of Bloomsbury Street and Bedford Square, and south of Montague Place, and is home to the British Museum. The Museum is a Grade I listed building that houses the national collection of historical artefacts from around the world. It is one of the top visitor attractions in the United Kingdom.

- 1.3 The site is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, and its complex includes the Grade II listed buildings along Montague Street, Bloomsbury Street and Bedford Square. These are described further in the design and heritage section below.
- 1.4 The site is located in Central London, and the southern forecourt is designated as Public Open Space in the Local Plan.
- 1.5 The application relates to two separate areas within the wider British Museum estate: the southern forecourt and the northern entrance, as shown in Figure 1 below.



*Figure 1. Site location plan showing works locations within the northern entrance on Montague Place and southern forecourt on Great Russell Street.*

#### Southern Forecourt

- 1.6 The South Forecourt lies along Great Russell Street and serves as the Museum's principal public access point. Visitors approach via the South

Forecourt, which features a wide stairway leading up to a monumental portico supported by 44 columns, each about 13.7m tall. This frontage belongs to the Museum's Grade I listed main building, designed by Sir Robert Smirke in the Greek Revival style. The Forecourt includes two symmetrical lawns - one to the east and one to the west - reinforcing the classical symmetry of the façade.

- 1.7 Great Russell Street itself is vibrant and heavily trafficked, with souvenir shops, cafés, restaurants, galleries, and other commercial outlets on the ground floor catering to international tourists. Above these, the upper floors are mostly private residences or hotels. While many of the buildings fronting the Museum are unlisted, Nos. 43–48 Great Russell Street are designated Grade II.
- 1.8 To the east along Montague Street, the area is predominantly occupied by offices and hotels, many of which are Grade II listed.
- 1.9 Currently, the temporary tent is located on the east lawn within the forecourt and is surrounded by temporary queuing barriers, as shown in Figure 2 below.



*Figure 2. Existing security tent on the east lawn within the southern forecourt.*

### Northern Entrance

- 1.10 The North Entrance of the British Museum is located on Montague Place and is integrated into the King Edward VII Building - an early 20<sup>th</sup> Century extension designed in a Beaux-Arts style by Sir John James Burnet. This entrance is marked by a central door flanked by two stone lion sculptures designed by Sir George Frampton.
- 1.11 Though less prominent than the South Entrance, it serves a key functional role, particularly for large schools and international groups arriving by coach or bus. Opposite stands Senate House by Charles Holden, a Grade II\* listed structure. Its brick load-bearing structure, Portland stone cladding, and symmetrical design define this institutional backdrop.
- 1.12 Montague Place is framed at both ends by two spaces: Russell Square Garden to the east and Bedford Square Garden to the west. The nearest residences are approximately 120m away along Gower Street and are Grade II-listed Georgian townhouses. To the west, facing Bedford Square Garden, the terraced houses along Bloomsbury Street are primarily Grade I listed, transitioning to Grade II as the street approaches Great Russell Street.
- 1.13 Currently, the temporary tent is located west of the northern entrance and is surrounded by temporary queuing barriers and HVM blocks, as shown in Figure 3.



*Figure 3. Existing security tent beside the northern entrance on Montague Place.*

## 2. THE PROPOSAL

### ***Background***

- 2.1 The British Museum attracts approximately 6.47 million visitors a year from all over the world, and the Museum has a responsibility to maintain the safety of visitors, staff and museum collection by providing security checks before entering the building.
- 2.2 The existing bag search facilities contained within white tents, which sit within the southern forecourt and northern entrance, have been in place for nearly 10 years, enabled by a series of temporary planning permissions as outlined in the Planning History section below. The most recent temporary permissions allow the tents to remain on the eastern lawn within the southern forecourt until July 2027 and at the northern entrance until September 2026.
- 2.3 The need for the security bag-search facilities has been demonstrated and accepted as part of the previous permissions due to the ongoing security risk to the British Museum. Security bag searches are still required to maintain the safe operation of the Museum at the principal visitor entry points.
- 2.4 The existing tents were intended to be a temporary solution to the security needs of the Museum, and with the current temporary permissions set to expire later this year, the Museum are looking to other solutions to fill this security need whilst a broader masterplan for the site is developed.
- 2.5 The Visitor Welcome Programme (VWP) has been developed in response to this need as a temporary measure to maintain the safety of visitors, staff and museum collection. The VWP seeks to improve the visitor welcome experience whilst maintaining a high degree of safety and security. Further details of the proposal are outlined in the section below.
- 2.6 Alongside the proposals incorporated into the VWP, the Museum is currently reviewing its long-term strategy for the wider estate and is working closely with an external design team to develop a more comprehensive and lasting solution that addresses the essential need for search facilities and enhances the overall visitor arrival experience.

### ***Current proposal***

- 2.7 The current application seeks full planning permission for the temporary proposals known as the 'Visitor Welcome Programme' and comprises the following elements:
  - Erection of 2 no. visitor welcome pavilions within the northern entrance and southern forecourt of the British Museum and the erection of associated queuing and wayfinding infrastructure, railings, and seating.

- Landscaping of the western and eastern lawns in the southern forecourt and alterations to the dwarf walls surrounding both lawns.
  - Alterations to curbs and associated landscaping of northern entrance.
- 2.8 As outlined above, the VWP is intended to be an interim solution to security needs whilst a more comprehensive and long-term strategy is developed for the site and as such, planning permission is sought for a temporary period of up to 10 years. The 10-year period will give the Museum time to evaluate the operation of the new pavilions and landscape, monitor their success, review advances in security technology and how these could benefit the Museum, and respond to emerging public realm initiatives being prepared by Council for Great Russell Street and Montague Place.
- 2.9 Both of the existing temporary tents will be removed upon completion of the proposed pavilions.
- 2.10 Officers note that listed building consent has already been granted (2025/1052/L) in relation to the following:
- Alterations to the dwarf walls surrounding both lawns in the southern forecourt.
  - Alterations to curbs, paving and associated landscaping, and installation of railings in the northern forecourt.
  - Affixation of signage panels to existing fabric in both southern and northern forecourts.

#### Proposal for the southern forecourt

- 2.11 The proposed pavilion would be located on the west lawn within the southern forecourt. The pavilion would be single-storey, with a mono-pitch roof that gradually slopes and features a scalloped profile. The long east elevation would be glass, overlooking the west lawn. The south, west, and north elevations primarily feature semi-polished stainless-steel cladding, scalloped with stone fins, set on a stone plinth. The interior would have polished stainless-steel walls, with a silver gilded ceiling and a stone paved floor.
- 2.12 New openings would be made within the west lawn dwarf wall to allow for access to and from the new pavilion and the landscaped lawn. Both the east and west lawns are proposed to be reopened to the public and visitors. The main gates will be kept open during operational hours to allow the public to move freely into and out of the forecourt without restriction. As a result, a new boundary fence ('security line') is proposed at the central axis of the forecourt; between the two lawns, and at the far edge of the eastern lawn.
- 2.13 The proposals include landscaping the lawns, which would feature sweeping paths through the planting made from resin bound gravel and paving. Within the landscape, new seating 'pockets' with stone benches

would be provided under new trees for improved shaded seating, along with curatorial content as objects of interest. Trees within the lawns are proposed to step down from nearest the pavilion to a low height in front of the portico to ensure the key views of the façade are retained and reduce visual impact. New lighting and curatorial signage will be proposed within the landscape. To the south of the east lawn, relocated and additional cycle parking will be provided.

#### Proposal for the northern entrance

- 2.14 At the northern entrance, the pavilion is proposed to be located to the west of the King Edward VII Building (KEB) entrance, in the same location as the existing temporary tent, and comprises a single storey with a gradual sloping mono pitch roof. The roof line would also be scalloped, with the scale allowing for a single scallop. The material concept for the north pavilion is proposed to be a timber structure which is glazed on all elevations and finished with a grey, metal roof. Internally, the timber structure would provide structural support alongside cabinetry for displays referencing the Museum's collection, and the roof would be lined with silver gilding.
- 2.15 Externally, a new laid ramp would provide visitor access from the pavilion to the main entrance into the KEB, and a new guard rail would be installed on the existing wall for improved assistance.
- 2.16 A new landscaped bed is proposed to be planted adjacent to the pavilion and the KEB entrance, following the existing curved entrance line. Planting will be low level and focused around framing the entrance and the iconic Frampton lions, ensuring these are not obscured.

### **3. RELEVANT HISTORY**

#### ***The site***

- 3.1 There have been a significant number of planning permissions and listed building consents for works relating to the main Museum building and the perimeter properties along Montague Street. Below is a summary of the relevant permissions relating to the application sites only.

#### Associated listed building consent

- 3.2 **2025/5102/L** – Alterations to dwarf walls surrounding both lawns in southern forecourt. Alterations to curbs, paving and associated landscaping, and installation railings in northern forecourt. Affixation of signage panels to existing fabric in both southern and northern forecourts. **Granted** on 12/02/2026.

#### Permissions associated with the security bag search facilities

- 3.3 **2025/1777/L** – Formation of a temporary opening in the dwarf wall to the east lawn for access/egress in association with the temporary relocation of

bag search facility at the south entrance of The British Museum from the existing location to the east lawn of the south forecourt. **Granted** on 08/07/2025.

- 3.4 **2025/1746/P** – Temporary relocation of bag search facility at the south entrance of The British Museum from the existing location to the east lawn of the south forecourt with associated creation of a temporary opening in the dwarf wall to the east lawn for access/egress (temporary period expires 01/07/2027). **Granted** on 08/07/2025.
- 3.5 **2025/0038/P** - Continued use of single storey structures in the south and north entrances to provide an external search facility to the museum for a temporary period for 18 months (until 3rd September 2026). **Granted** on 03/03/2025.
- 3.6 **2022/3159/P** - Continued use of single storey structures in the south and north entrances to provide an external search facility to the museum for a temporary period for 2 years. **Granted** on 03/03/2023.
- 3.7 **2021/5342/P** – Installation of security blocks outside the northern entrance on Montague Place in association with the Museum for a temporary period until 05/02/2026. **Granted** subject to a Section 106 Agreement on 20/09/2021.
- 3.8 **2016/4219/P** – 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). **Granted** on 14/09/2020.
- 3.9 **2016/2524/P** – Erection of a single storey structure in the front forecourt to provide an external search facility to the museum for a temporary period of 2 years (RETROSPECTIVE). **Granted** on 17/08/2020.

#### 4. CONSULTATION

##### ***Statutory consultees***

##### Historic England

- 4.1 Historic England did not raise objection to the proposal and provided the following comments and advice:

##### *General comments*

- The proposals have been developed positively in response to necessary and substantial operational requirements, so no objection is raised.
- New pavilions and landscaping would alter the setting character of the Museum's main approaches.
- Removing temporary tents and barriers would improve the public realm.

- All works are temporary and fully reversible after ten years.
- Designs aim to minimise harm to the listed building, though some impact remains.

#### *Southern pavilion and forecourt*

- The permanent reinstatement of public access to both lawns, together with the rationalisation of circulation, would improve spatial clarity and allow the south façade to be better appreciated.
- The design of the pavilion has evolved to reflect the temporary nature of the pavilion and now demonstrates greater subservience to the primacy of the listed building.
- The pavilion would cause low-level harm by disrupting the forecourt's symmetry.
- The proposed landscaping and security infrastructure would introduce a significant change to the existing monoculture of planting and the austere character of the South Forecourt. However, the landscaping would retain the rectilinear geometry and symmetry that underpin the forecourt's significance and preserve the principal vistas of the south façade, resulting in only a low level of harm to the listed building's significance.
- The security fence would have minimal impact on the primary axial view of the south façade, and its necessity is recognised if the clear benefits of greater public access to the forecourt are to be realised.

#### *Northern pavilion and entrance*

- The pavilions scale and form have been reduced to remain visually subordinate and minimise impact on key views of the King Edward VII Building and Frampton's lion statues.
- The pavilion would cause a low level of harm as a result of the modest compromise to the symmetrical proportions of the north façade.
- The landscape strategy supports existing geometry and introduces shade-tolerant planting.
- The treatment of guardrails and boundary lines has been designed to ensure interventions are reversible and do not disrupt the composition of the King Edward VII Building or its associated features.

#### *Conclusion*

- The proposals would result in a limited and temporary degree of change to the setting and significance of the Museum's approaches. While the proposals would cause some harm to the Grade I listed building due to development within its setting, this harm has been sensitively reduced through a positive process of design development and would be of a low level.
- Conditions are requested to require the removal of the structures after 10 years and secure design details.

Officer response:

- *Please refer to the 'Design and Heritage' section of this report which addresses the comments above in relation to the design of the pavilions and landscaping and impacts on heritage assets.*
- *A condition has been imposed to limit the permission to maximum of 10 years.*

Historic England (GLAAS)

4.2 Historic England (GLAAS) did not raise objection to the proposals and provided advice as follows:

- Agree with the Desk Based Assessment produced in support of the application that there is a relatively low potential for the proposed scheme to disturb archaeological remains from all periods except the post-medieval. In particular, evidence may survive relating to Montagu House. Although the pavilion has been designed to avoid structural remains of the house there may be associated features or deposits which will be disturbed.
- Archaeological monitoring of the groundworks associated with the proposed scheme is recommended to be secured via condition.

Officer response:

- *Please refer to the 'Design and Heritage' section of this report which addresses the comments above in relation archaeological impacts.*
- *The recommended archaeological monitoring condition has been included and agreed to by the Applicant.*

**Councillors or MPs**

4.3 No responses received.

**Local groups**

The Georgian Group

4.4 Objection covering the following issues:

*South pavilion and forecourt*

- The height, form, and positioning of the pavilion would block views of the Museum's southern elevation from key public viewpoints, disrupting its symmetry and harming the listed building's setting.
- The pavilion would erode the strong historic group value created by the Museum, its forecourt, railings, and gate lodges, all of which share a formal, symmetrical character.
- The proposed informal landscaping would detract significantly from the architectural language of the main building. Such informality would be

visually incongruous in this setting and in the wider Bloomsbury Conservation Area, which is characterised by formal street patterns and planned squares.

- The Group questions the need to alter both lawns, noting that the forecourt already functions well for access and queue management since the temporary tent was moved.

#### *Northern pavilion and entrance*

- Owing to its height, form, and positioning, the proposed pavilion would appear incongruous within this context, causing harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

#### *Conclusion*

- The Group considers that the proposed pavilions and associated landscaping would result in a high level of less than substantial harm to the significance of Robert Smirke's Grecian elevation, to the group value of the heritage assets, and to the wider Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

#### *Officer response:*

- *Please refer to the 'Design and Heritage' section of this report which addresses the comments above in relation to the design of the pavilions and landscaping and impacts on heritage assets.*
- *In relation to opening up and altering of both lawns, this would allow maximisation of public open space within the forecourt which is a public benefit of the scheme.*

#### Victorian Society

#### 4.5 Objection covering the following issues:

##### *General*

- There is no objection in principle to the improvement of on-site security provision.
- It is agreed that the existing tents are not adequate for their intended function.
- The pavilion should not be used as a cocktail bar.
- The scheme should be designed as if it is permanent and should be designed to fit its context.
- The extension of the security boundary, allowing pedestrians to enjoy the forecourt, will provide a more welcoming entrance to the museum.

##### *Pavilions*

- The pavilion should be moved to a more discreet location closer to the railings to be better integrated, limiting the impact on the Smirke façade.
- The visual language of the pavilions is incongruous with the existing fabric and should respect the strict classical design principles.

- The southern security pavilion would look like a ship.

#### *Southern forecourt*

- The elaborate planting is at odds with the intention of the Smirke design and creates visual clutter.
- The forecourt should be balanced by a building on the eastern side, to retain symmetry.

#### *Officer response:*

- *Please refer to the 'Background' section of this report which addresses why a temporary permission is sought.*
- *Please refer to the 'Design and Heritage' section of this report which addresses the comments above in relation to the design of the pavilions and landscaping and impacts on heritage assets.*
- *Officer note that a cocktail bar does not form part of the current proposal.*

#### Bloomsbury Association

#### 4.6 Objection covering the following issues:

- The proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance and setting of heritage assets.
- The height, form, materiality and asymmetrical positioning of both pavilions would obscure and diminish the significance of the Museum's facades.
- The proposed domestic landscaping is inappropriate for the civic scale and formal character of the entrance court and would cause significant harm.
- The need for an external bag search facility is questioned.
- The concept of public open space and a space to queue is incompatible and could lead to confusion.
- The north pavilion requires listed building consent as it is proposed to be located on the raised Montague Place terrace to the Museum immediately below which is Museum accommodation. This terrace had a relationship to the principal listed building at the time of listing, is in the same ownership as the principal listed asset and was built prior to July 1948. It therefore meets all the accepted tests to be regarded as an integral part of the Grade I listed building.

#### *Officer response:*

- *Please refer to the 'Need for security structures' section of this report which addresses why the security facilities are necessary.*
- *Please refer to the 'Design and Heritage' section of this report which addresses the design and functionality of the proposal and impacts on heritage assets.*

- *With regard to the listed building consent and the northern pavilion, the raised Montague Place terrace is already covered by the associated listed building application 2025/5102/L, noting that the application covers alterations to curbs, paving and associated landscaping at the northern entrance. It is therefore inclusive of this terrace area. The pavilion itself is not proposed to be physically attached to the terrace other than requiring these alterations so does not of itself require a subsequent listed building application.*

#### Historic Buildings and Places

4.7 Objection covering the following issues:

##### *Southern pavilion and forecourt*

- The introduction of naturalistic landscaping would replace the forecourt's formal character, breaking its symmetry and obscuring views of the Museum's main elevation.
- The new fencing, movable queue dividers, benches, and other additions would introduce clutter and undermine the traditional formality of the space.
- The necessity for a security pavilion is acknowledged.

##### *Officer response:*

- *Please refer to the 'Design and Heritage' section of this report which addresses the comments above in relation to the design of the pavilions and landscaping and impacts on heritage assets.*

#### South Bloomsbury Tenants and Residents Association

4.8 Objection covering the following issues:

- Despite the permission being for a 10-year period, the proposal would cause more than substantial harm to the setting of the conservation area and listed building.
- The buildings will be fabricated from insubstantial and short life materials.

##### *Officer response:*

- *Please refer to the 'Design and Heritage' section of this report which addresses the comments above in relation to the design of the pavilions and landscaping and impacts on heritage assets.*
- *Please refer to the 'Sustainable Design' section of this report which addresses reuse of materials.*

#### London and Middlesex Archaeological Society

4.9 Objection covering the following issues:

- The proposal would break the symmetry of the southern forecourt and domesticate its deliberately austere impact.
- The proposal would cause harm to listed buildings and the conservation area.
- The form, material and detail of the pavilions are an inadequate response to their context.
- The visitor entrance route along the central axis intended by Smirke's design would be altered by the proposal.
- No provision has been made for visitors without bags to go straight into the museum without passing through security.

*Officer response:*

- *Please refer to the 'Design and Heritage' section of this report which addresses the comments above in relation to the design of the pavilions and landscaping and impacts on heritage assets.*
- *Please refer to the 'Need for security structures' section of this report which addresses why the security facilities are necessary.*
- *With regard to the entrance routes deviating from the intended Smirke Design, officers note that modern security issues could not have been envisaged at the time the building was designed and thus need to be retrofitted in the interests of public safety and ultimately to keep the building in its optimum viable use.*
- *All visitors will be required to go through the security check, not just visitors with bags. This is the same as the current situation.*

University College London

4.10 Objection covering the following issues:

- The proposal would cheapen and spoil the uninterrupted view of the museum façade from the forecourt.
- It is agreed that something needs to be done to improve accessibility, however the proposal is entirely inappropriate.

*Officer response:*

- *Please refer to the 'Design and Heritage' section of this report which addresses the design and functionality of the proposal and impacts on heritage assets.*

**Adjoining occupiers**

- 4.11 Thirteen sites notice were displayed around the Museum perimeter on Great Russell Street, Montague Street, Montague Place, Bedford Square and Bloomsbury Street. The notices were displayed on 26/11/2025 until 20/12/2025 and the application was advertised in the local paper on 04/12/2025 (expiring 28/12/2025).

- 4.12 Objections were received from at least 20 households, some from within the borough and others from wider London and elsewhere in England. The objections received by the Council are on the Council's website. The key issues raised are.

#### General comments

- The existing security arrangements are functionally inadequate and cause visual harm.
- The pavilions and landscaping would cause substantial harm to the Grade I listed building, the setting of surrounding listed buildings and the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- The sloping rooflines of both pavilions would clash with the lines of the building behind, making them stand out unnecessarily.
- The temporary nature of the proposal is irrelevant.
- Alternative solutions and locations should be explored.

#### Southern pavilion

- The security pavilion would block holistic views of the main Robert Smirke façade.
- The pavilion would disrupt the symmetry of the forecourt and the museum elevation.
- It would cause harm to the historic architecture and appearance of the museum building.
- The flimsiness of the design is not appropriate and would compete with the Robert Smirk building.
- Moving the pavilion closer to the railings would have less visual impact.
- The steel cladding would present a solid appearance.
- The seats and rocks would get in the way of visitors.

#### Southern forecourt planting

- The proposed landscaping will detract from the architectural and historic significance of the building and its setting.
- The planting is oversized, irregular and would undermine the disciplined appearance of the building and formality of the forecourt. The asymmetry goes against the grain of the formal setting.
- The landscaping proposals have no relationship to the museum's functional needs.
- The landscaping proposals would cause significant harm to the setting of the listed building.

#### *Officer's response:*

- *Please refer to the 'Design and Heritage' section of this report which addresses the design and functionality of the proposal and impacts on heritage assets.*

4.13 Six representations in support were also received which raised the following points:

- The current security arrangements are poor and do not create a welcoming visitor experience and their removal is supported.
- The opening up of the forecourt to the public with garden spaces and seating is a positive improvement and a public benefit of the scheme.
- The proposals are thoughtful and well-integrated, sensitive to visitor needs and the surrounding environment.
- The pavilions are an attractive and thoughtfully designed solution to security needs.
- The proposed landscaping would create a clearer sense of arrival and overall visitor flow, enhancing the functionality of the forecourt and public realm presence.
- The project is a key milestone in improving the museum for local communities, visitors and international tourists.

*Officer response:*

- *The above points are noted and have been taken into consideration in the assessment of the application.*

## 5. POLICY

### ***National and regional policy and guidance***

[National Planning Policy Framework 2024 \(NPPF\)](#)

[National Planning Policy Framework: draft for consultation 2025](#)

[National Planning Practice Guidance \(NPPG\)](#)

[London Plan 2021 \(LP\)](#)

[Policy SD4 The Central Activities Zone \(CAZ\)](#)

[Policy D4 Delivering good design](#)

[Policy D5 Inclusive design](#)

[Policy D8 Public realm](#)

[Policy D11 Safety, security and resilience to emergency](#)

[Policy E10 Visitor infrastructure](#)

[Policy HC1 Heritage conservation and growth](#)

[Policy HC5 Supporting London's culture and creative industries](#)

[Policy G1 Green infrastructure](#)

[Policy G4 Open space](#)

[Policy G6 Biodiversity and access to nature](#)

[Policy G7 Trees and woodlands](#)

[Policy SI 4 Managing heat risk](#)

[Policy SI 13 Sustainable drainage](#)

[Policy T1 Strategic approach to transport](#)

[Policy T4 Assessing and mitigating transport impacts](#)

[Policy T5 Cycling](#)

[Policy T7 Deliveries, servicing and construction](#)

[Policy DF1 Delivery of the Plan and Planning Obligations](#)  
[Policy M1 Monitoring](#)

### ***Local policy and guidance***

[Camden Local Plan \(2017\) \(CLP\)](#)

[Policy C3 Cultural and leisure facilities](#)

[Policy C5 Safety and security](#)

[Policy C6 Access for all](#)

[Policy A1 Managing the impact of development](#)

[Policy A2 Open space](#)

[Policy A3 Biodiversity](#)

[Policy D1 Design](#)

[Policy D2 Heritage](#)

[Policy CC1 Climate change mitigation](#)

[Policy CC2 Adapting to climate change](#)

[Policy CC3 Water and flooding](#)

[Policy T1 Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport](#)

[Policy T4 Sustainable movement of goods and materials](#)

[Policy DM1 Delivery and monitoring](#)

[Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance](#)

*Most relevant Camden Planning Guidance (CPGs):*

[Access for All - March 2019](#)

[Amenity - January 2021](#)

[Biodiversity - March 2018](#)

[Design - January 2021](#)

[Developer Contribution - March 2019](#)

[Energy efficiency and adaptation - January 2021](#)

[Public open space - January 2021](#)

[Transport - January 2021](#)

[Trees - March 2019](#)

[Water and flooding - March 2019](#)

*Other guidance:*

[Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy - 2011](#)

[SPD Holborn Vision - January 2025](#)

[Draft SPD Bloomsbury Vision](#)

[Proposed Submission Draft Camden Local Plan \(DCLP\)](#)

- 5.1 The [Proposed Submission Draft Camden Local Plan](#) was submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on the 3 October 2025 for independent examination, in accordance with Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The Plan will now be examined by a Planning Inspector in Spring 2026.

5.2 Previously, the Council published the draft new Camden Local Plan for consultation in January 2024 and published an updated Proposed Submission Draft Camden Local Plan for consultation from 1 May to 27 June 2025.

5.3 The Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan (DCLP) is a significant material consideration in the determination of planning applications but has limited weight at this stage. The weight that can be given to an emerging plan increases as it progresses towards adoption. In line with paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the degree of weight to be given is a matter for the decision-maker, having regard to the stage of preparation, the extent of unresolved objections, and the consistency of the draft policies with the NPPF.

## **6. ASSESSMENT**

6.1 The principal considerations material to the determination of this application are considered in the following sections of this report:

<b>7</b>	<b>Need for the security structures</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Design and Heritage</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Sustainability and drainage</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Trees and biodiversity</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Neighbouring amenity</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Transport</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>Community Infrastructure Level (CIL)</b>

## **7. NEED FOR THE SECURITY STRUCTURES**

7.1 As noted above, the existing security tents were only ever intended as a short-term temporary solution to address urgent security needs at the Museum. Despite this the original temporary consents have been renewed a number of times and the Council have been clear that a better solution needs to be found.

7.2 The Museum is currently reviewing its long-term strategy for the wider estate and is working closely with an external design team in developing its ongoing masterplan which commenced with the approval of its South West Energy Centre in 2024. The Western Range project will make up the largest component which has a long-term brief to reorganise and refresh some of its most important galleries and is still in its early stages of development. It is hoped that opportunities for a more permanent security strategy will emerge as part of that master planning work. In the interim the Museum

needs to look to other more acceptable solutions to fill this security need whilst the broader master plan is developed.

- 7.3 The need for the security search bag facilities has been demonstrated and accepted as part of the previous permissions due to the ongoing security risk to the British Museum. Security bag searches are still required to maintain the safe operation of the Museum at the principal visitor entry points. One of the key issues with the existing tents is that bags need to be checked manually, which can be time-consuming and ultimately causes unacceptable levels of queuing, both within and outside the museum estate.
- 7.4 The new pavilions would house modern security systems with improved scanner technology, scanning people without the need to empty bags, which is anticipated to improve security wait times and reduce the need for queuing for ticket holders. The British Museum has undertaken a live testing programme to trial the revised queuing layout and refine it prior to full implementation. Overall, the testing has been successful, effectively eliminating queues along Great Russell Street after opening. The British Museum has received positive feedback from the public during this trial period, with a general feeling that the arrival experience is more seamless.

## **8. DESIGN AND HERITAGE**

### ***Legislative and policy background***

#### The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990

- 8.1 Sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 set out that special regard must be given to the preservation of a listed building, its setting or its features of special architectural or historic interest. Section 72 of the same Act sets out that where the development is in a conservation area, special regard must be given to preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of that conservation area.

#### The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 8.2 The NPPF requires its own exercise to be undertaken as set out in chapter 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment). Paragraphs 207 - 216 require consideration as to the impact of a proposed development on the significance of both designated heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets, including an assessment and identification of any harm/the degree of harm. Para. 212 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

8.3 Paragraph 215 states:

*'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'*

Local Plan Design Policies

- 8.4 The Local Plan policies D1 (Design) and D2 (Heritage) are aimed at achieving the highest standard of design in all developments. Policy D1 requires development to be of the highest architectural and urban design quality, which improves the function, appearance and character of the area; and Policy D2 states that the Council will preserve, and where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas and listed buildings.
- 8.5 The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (BCAAMS) provides further details regarding the important contribution that the British Museum and its surrounds make to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

**Contextual background**

Site location and context

- 8.6 The British Museum is located in the Museum Quarter, a character area defined in the Holborn Vision SPD as *'an area of independent shops, cafes, offices, homes, hotels and educational uses, with the British Museum the focal point'* and in close proximity to a network of formal landscaped spaces, such as Russell Square, Bloomsbury Square Gardens and Bedford Square Gardens. Both Holborn Vision SPD and the draft Bloomsbury Vision SPD call for an increase and enhancement of green spaces, improving access to green spaces, increasing biodiversity, shade and natural drainage in the public realm to create more attractive, safe and easy to navigate spaces for walking, wheeling and cycling in this area.
- 8.7 The Museum's main entrance is on Great Russell Street, which was first laid out as a residential street in the second half of the 17th century at the edge of the city, and while the street layout hasn't changed since, the arrival of the Museum and the city growing organically around it have meant it is now one of the busiest streets in Central London. Despite the vibrancy of the Museum Quarter, Great Russell Street is heavily trafficked, both by vehicles and people, serving as both a destination in being the main arrival point for the Museum, and a through-route to other destinations.
- 8.8 There is generally poor pedestrian and cycle connectivity in the area, which leads to congestion to and from the British Museum, with the increasingly stricter security requirements of the Museum meaning queuing primarily

takes place on Great Russell Street outside of the Museum's gates, leading to further congestion and a poor, uninviting arrival space. Montague Place, where the northern entrance is located, is less congested as a public space, primarily due to wider pavements and less traffic, but long queues exist here too.

- 8.9 Holborn Liveable Neighbourhoods (HLN) is a major public realm transformation project to transform the streets of Holborn, including the Museum Quarter. A major project for the scheme is the pedestrianisation of Great Russell Street to general traffic, which will significantly improve the pedestrian experience for residents and visitors alike and contribute to a better arrival space for the British Museum. Montague Place is also a pedestrian priority area.
- 8.10 The Holborn Heat Resilience Study, produced for the HLN, identifies the British Museum forecourt and Great Russell Street as a major heat spot in Holborn, being particularly vulnerable to high heat exposure, mainly due to built form, orientation and dominance of human-made surface materials, alongside the high number of vulnerable groups of people, such as children. As such, the study further identifies the site as a top priority spot for intervention to improve thermal comfort and climate resilience.

#### Description of heritage assets and summary of the significance of buildings and area

- 8.11 The British Museum is a Grade I Listed building located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, to which it makes a very strong positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. There are also numerous Grade I and II listed buildings which sit adjacent to the site, as shown in Figure 4 below.



Figure 4. Listed buildings in and around the site and conservation area boundary

- 8.12 The significance of the Museum lies in its architectural design and materials, plan form, and evidential value as an early 19th Century Museum building, with later phases of development, many of which are significant in themselves. Most notably the King Edward VII Building range to the north, which is Grade I listed in its own right. The site is of the highest heritage significance. It is essentially comprised of Grade I listed buildings.
- 8.13 The two main street-facing blocks directly affected by the proposals are the King Edward VII Building to the North and the Smirke range and its attendant wings, which form the southern part of the site. The railings to the south boundary are listed at Grade II\* and the lamp standards in the south forecourt are listed at Grade II. The site as a whole is also within the setting of several listed buildings on the perimeter streets (those more directly in the setting of the proposed development are the structures and railings on the Museum forecourt and the grade II terrace blocks on Great Russell Street and Museum Street; and also the Grade II\* listed Senate House which is directly opposite the Grade I listed King Edward VII Building). The entire site is within the core of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and is also entirely within an Archaeological Priority Area Tier II.
- 8.14 Broadly speaking the significance of the Museum includes its architectural design and materials, composition and form, evidential value as both an historic museum complex and its current role (cultural significance), townscape value including its positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area, its national significance as a cultural institution, and the national significance of its architecture (which in terms of its grade I status includes it in the top 2% of all listed buildings in England). The land on which it sits has designated archaeological significance and the site would commonly be considered internationally recognisable, although not designated a World Heritage Site.
- 8.15 ***The main range of the Museum***, oriented south, was built in 1823-47 to the design of Sir Robert Smirke. It is faced in Portland stone. It is symmetrically planned on a broadly North-South axis with an open courtyard extending north from Montague House (the original museum, demolished c1840). The main body of the Smirke building has been given screens in the full Greek Ionic order, with an octastyle portico and sculpted pediment by Westmacott.
- 8.16 ***The King Edward VII Galleries*** were designed and built in 1905-14 by Sir John James Burnet, assisted by Thomas Tait. They are faced chiefly in Portland Stone and have a screen of attached Ionic columns raised on a podium and flat, higher square erections at the angles. They have bronze-framed windows on both floors, between the columns, and the main door is framed in granite with an inner frame of enriched marble. There is an attached stone wall to the basement areas terminating at either side of the

main entrance with carved stone lions, having crossed front paws, by Sir George Frampton.

- 8.17 ***The Bloomsbury Conservation Area*** covers an area of approximately 160 hectares extending from Euston Road in the north to High Holborn and Lincoln's Inn Fields in the south and from Tottenham Court Road in the west to King's Cross Road in the east.
- 8.18 Bloomsbury is widely considered to be an internationally significant example of town planning. The original street layouts, which employed formal landscaped squares and an interrelated grid of streets to create an attractive residential environment, remain a dominant feature of the area. Despite Bloomsbury's size and varying ownerships, its expansion northwards from roughly 1660 to 1840 has led to notable consistency in the street pattern, spatial character and predominant building forms. Today, the area's underlying Georgian townscape, latterly shaped by major institutional uses established in the district and expanded over time, is evident across large parts of the Conservation Area.
- 8.19 Some patterns of use have changed over time; for example, offices and hotels came to occupy former family dwellings as families moved out of central London to the suburbs during the late 19th and 20th centuries. However, other original uses have survived and help to maintain the area's distinctive and culturally rich character (the most notable include hospitals, university and academic uses, cultural institutions such as museums, legal uses, and on a smaller scale, specialist retailers including booksellers and furniture shops).
- 8.20 The application site is within Sub Area 3: University of London/British Museum of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. This area is dominated by large-scale institutional buildings. To the north of the area is the University of London precinct and its associated colleges and faculties. To the south is the British Museum which occupies almost an entire street block north of Great Russell Street and south of Montague Place. As well as some exemplary 18th and 19th Century buildings, there are several examples of 20th Century architecture of international repute. The original street pattern is retained in most part, but 20th Century development has involved the loss of some earlier, small-scale domestic terraces. In most cases, later buildings maintain and define street frontages, despite their larger scale and increased bulk and mass. There is a series of pedestrianised spaces and courtyards of varying scales between the buildings, giving a quieter but nonetheless active campus atmosphere, contrasting with the busy streets.
- 8.21 The British Museum is a cultural institution of international importance, occupying a major ensemble of outstanding grade I listed buildings which make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of this the Conservation Area as a whole. The museum site covers the majority of the

street block south of Montague Place. The principal South Front addresses Great Russell Street with a secondary frontage to Montague Place. The east side of the museum has a partial frontage to Montague Street. The museum was built in stages as its collections expanded. However, both historic and modern development is of a large scale, although large portions of the building are not visible from the public realm due to the backland nature of much of the site; the site is effectively shielded from the east and west by the terraced houses lining Montague Street and Bedford Square. For instance, the Round Reading Room at the heart of the site cannot be seen in long views. However, the roof of the 1990s Great Court can be seen from Russell Square or Bedford Square. The Great Court scheme designed by Foster and Partners opened up the centre of the site to the public and created a pedestrian link during opening hours between Great Russell Street and Montague Place.

- 8.22 The principal building is a significant early 19<sup>th</sup> Century neoclassical structure, designed by Sir Robert Smirke in a Greek Revival style and begun in 1823. The centrepiece is a pedimented classical colonnade in the Ionic order, set atop a grand flight of steps. The symmetrical composition is completed by two projecting ranges which enclose the large front forecourt which is also laid out in a symmetrical manner. Set back from the frontage, behind tall railings and a mature line of trees, this frontage forms an impressive landmark along Great Russell Street and offers vistas to the south along narrow streets such as Museum Street, Coptic Street, and Bury Place.
- 8.23 On the north side of the museum, the King Edward VII Galleries were built in 1906-14 to the designs of John James Burnet. The building presents a large-scale frontage to Montague Place, in line with the university buildings on the northern side of the street. The façade is constructed from Portland stone and marble with vertically proportioned metal-framed windows. The symmetrical frontage is set back from the street behind a slightly raised forecourt. It comprises two tall storeys raised on a semi-basement and has a line of Ionic columns supporting an entablature with a projecting cornice and a pair of lion statues flanking the entrance. Demolition has recently taken place of a pair of 1971 neo-Georgian townhouses to make way for a new North West wing designed by Rogers Stirk Harbour and Partners.

#### Design Review Panel

- 8.24 The emerging proposals were presented to the Design Review Panel (DRP) on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2025. The panel welcomed the improved visitor welcome pavilions and found many positive aspects of the scheme but raised a few key points and made some suggestions.
- 8.25 The panel challenged the project brief, considering that the facilities should not be temporary. They raised concerns about the pavilions' materiality and

carbon footprints given the relatively short lifespan, encouraged a bolder approach to the landscape and a forecourt that is publicly accessible to draw people in who might not normally visit the museum.

- 8.26 The design changed significantly following the DRP feedback, including a review of the demountability and re-use strategy, the landscape design to include both lawns, the opening-up of the forecourt to allow public access and material palette. Further testing and information were given to provide an explanation for the temporary nature of the scheme.
- 8.27 It was considered that these changes sufficiently addressed the panel comments.

### ***Assessment***

- 8.28 The assessment of design and heritage considerations has been split into two parts, addressing the proposals for the southern forecourt and the northern entrance separately.

#### Southern forecourt and pavilion

##### *Public realm and landscaping*

- 8.29 The proposal for the southern forecourt, the Museum's principal access point, is to increase the pre-security area from the current security line - the cast-iron railings at the sites boundary along Great Russell Street - to the north edge of the dwarf walls surrounding both lawns to create an area of publicly accessible space that anyone can visit and spend time in during the Museum's opening hours.
- 8.30 This will expand the physical public space accessible to the local community and contribute to a stronger sense of welcome for groups. It is welcomed that this public benefit has been achieved, given the security, operational, and staffing challenges the museum faces. It will also remove the need for queuing on Great Russell Street which is currently a large source of pedestrian congestion in this area.
- 8.31 It is proposed that a condition is attached to the permission (if granted) which secures public access to the forecourt by specifying the location of the security line. It is acknowledged that there may be exceptional circumstances where access to the forecourt has to be reduced or closed for a limited periods of time. Details of these scenarios and partial closure protocols are set out in Operational Management Plans. This will ensure that the benefits of the public open space within the forecourt can be maximised, whilst allowing the Museum the flexibility to respond to emergency situations.
- 8.32 In addition to the security arrangements, the proposal includes introducing soft landscaping to both lawns, which are currently inaccessible to the public

and have low biodiversity value, contributing little to the local community, visitors, or nature.

- 8.33 The original proposal included landscaping works to the western lawn only, and the move to replicate the soft landscaping to the east lawn, also negotiated and achieved throughout discussions with officers at the pre-application stage is welcome. Together with the retention of the landscaping works within the formal rectilinear footprints of the lawns, it helps maintain the sense of symmetry present in the current arrangement of the courtyard and creates a cohesive, coordinated landscape design.
- 8.34 The swift delivery of the landscaping works to the east lawn following the construction of the southern pavilion will be secured by a Delivery Development Plan via an appropriate clause within a section 106 legal Agreement so the public benefits can be enjoyed for as long as possible before the end of the ten-year temporary permission.
- 8.35 The landscape proposal has been developed in collaboration with the Museum's curatorial team and is considered to be a successful design that integrates climate resilience principles, provides year-round interest, significantly increases biodiversity, and enhances access to green space for the local community.
- 8.36 Much thought has gone into creating a space with a clear relationship to the Museum and the history of its curatorial objects, resulting in a highly specific, unique design that is rich in conceptual ideas and appropriate for the context. The design softens what can feel a stark and intimidating forecourt. It would provide much needed climate resilience benefits to respond to the overheating risks identified in the Holborn Heat Resilience Study and moments of rest that are accessible by both the visitors and the wider community. The planting palette has been carefully selected, adding height and density in places to introduce interest without obstructing key views.
- 8.37 A broad range of tree and plant species is proposed to enhance the site's biodiversity, and a mix of materials and textures is proposed for the hard landscaping to further soften the area. Details of all hard and soft landscaping, along with a scheme of maintenance will be secured via condition to ensure all landscaping is of high quality and will be adequately maintained for the life of the temporary permission.

*Scale, massing and layout*

- 8.38 Steps have been taken during the pre-application process to respond to feedback from officers and stakeholders, reducing the height of the south pavilion to better align with the rhythms and datums of the existing colonnaded facade, which is welcome. Together with its location at the far end of the western lawn, these are considered positive moves that integrate the pavilion into the forecourt.

- 8.39 It is noted that several alternative locations for the pavilion within the southern forecourt were explored, as set out within the Design and Access Statement, however these were discounted based on their potential impacts on the historic setting, site logistics or Museum operations.
- 8.40 The pavilion's footprint has been designed to be offset from the Grade II-listed lamp columns, continuing a scalloped plan language found elsewhere in the structure, and adjusting the pavilion's proportions and the roof slope to minimise impact on the lamps.

*Appearance, detailing and materiality*

- 8.41 The symmetry and formality of the Museum's existing southern facade pose a significant challenge for any new structure introduced in the courtyard. Despite this, the design of the south pavilion is a successful balancing act between heritage considerations and a structure that is playful, yet sensitively detailed, with enough articulation to create texture and richness.
- 8.42 The pavilion's elevations follow the same architectural language of elegantly proportioned steel fins, with a stone base on three sides, creating contrast and interest and following a vertical rhythm found in the Museum's facade. The elevation facing the garden is fully glazed to allow natural light in and give a degree of transparency for the security operations; the choice to not include glazing anywhere else in the pavilion except its eastern facade is a deliberate move to avoid overheating without relying on mechanical ventilation. This helps keep the structure lightweight, with greater demountability achieved because complex servicing is not required. This is discussed further in the Sustainability section of this report.
- 8.43 The replication of the scalloped roof profile in the facade's fins creates depth and refinement, while the base datum, continuing the height of the existing garden wall, grounds the building in its landscape. The changes made to the articulation and materiality of the pavilion over the course of the pre-application process, as a result of security considerations and feedback received, has enabled an architectural language that is richer and more cohesive as a result.
- 8.44 The material evolution from a stone top to steel results in a lighter-weight structure with a more temporary feel, allowing full demountability and reuse/recycling of the fins without concern for breakage during disassembly. To avoid glare and competition with the Museum's stonework, the steel has been carefully specified to have an elegant mid-polish matt finish, which will pick up on light and shadow beautifully, creating interest without distraction. These carefully designed elements and material palette create a pavilion that has a sculptural quality, is beautifully proportioned and crafted to ensure that it does not detract from the Museum's materiality.

- 8.45 The success of this scheme relies on the quality and subtlety of the materials, finishes and careful and elegant detailing. These will therefore be conditioned to ensure a south pavilion of the highest quality that is appropriate for the highly significant historic setting and does not detract from the materiality of the existing stonework.

*Impacts on the setting of Listed Buildings*

- 8.46 The southern forecourt forms the setting of the Smirke range. All of the listed fabric in the southern courtyard has intrinsic value but also group value with the Museum.
- 8.47 While the forecourt of the building is not a registered park or garden, it has a clear landscape setting relationship with the setting of the listed building. As with Somerset House, the National Gallery and other cultural and quasi-governmental institutions of the 18th and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the treatment of this “landscape” has historically been one of negative space, to give an appropriate setting for the full impact of the symmetrical and formal architecture of the main building.
- 8.48 A similar tendency towards setting is seen in the manner in which Trafalgar Square was laid out in front of the National Gallery and also in can be seen at the contemporary Glyptothek in Munich and the Altes Museum in Berlin, which places the significance of Smirke’s work in a European context of a period of state museum-building. This was to change later in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century when Museums were often located in botanic gardens. A modern interpretation of this tendency has recently been seen at the Grade I listed Natural History Museum where a new botanic garden has been laid out in front of the 1870s building. However, the Natural History Museum was always intended to have a planted garden, unlike the British Museum. The British Museum’s current landscape setting is more representative of urban museum projects of the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century than the later 19<sup>th</sup> Century.
- 8.49 Smirke’s composition is interesting in its creation of the setting because while he used the order of the Greek Ionic for the screens to the museum, the actual composition and form of the building is not Greek, but Roman. The projecting east and west bays create an approach that seems to be more closely based on the concept of Roman Imperial fora, which was one of the few historical precedents for the creation of a public space in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. In addition to this the main elevation of the Museum is not on a Greek stylobate but on a Roman podium, which raises it to a monumental degree and, in combination with the flanking wings, creates a much more monumental, formal, and urban relationship to the landscape setting than would have been achieved by using a Greek stylobate.
- 8.50 The construction of the southern pavilion will alter this setting and there will be resultant harm to setting. The proposed landscaping would retain a sense of symmetry due to being taken across both sides of the main

entrance axis. While there may be ecological benefits to the introduction of the landscaping, it is not part of Smirke's intended design for the site and thereby the historic character of the site will be altered.

- 8.51 The pavilion will cause harm to setting through the loss of the intended symmetrical balance of the site, the introduction of built form in intended negative space, and the attendant architectural formalisation of public entrance into the Museum away from the main entrance. Additionally, harm will be caused through the large extent of glazing facing the main axis of the museum, thereby introducing a considerable extent of glass facing material into a site which was never intended to accommodate such a material in this manner. The height and location of the pavilion makes it visible in a wide range of views from within the courtyard and in some views from the street. In all such views it detracts from the impression of the Museum as intended by Smirke, such that it detracts from one of the chief elements of the significance of the setting of the Museum.
- 8.52 The landscape works to the southern forecourt will considerably alter the setting of the Museum. It would change the setting from a conventional early 19<sup>th</sup> Century monumental setting into something more akin to a public garden. While the landscaping may in itself be an attractive and more ecologically satisfactory feature than the extant lawns, it is not the intended architectural setting of the main Smirke elevation. Therefore, there is harm to setting of the Grade I listed Smirke building due to the landscape treatment. However, this is less than substantial harm to setting at a low level of the scale, as all of the historic paved areas will remain paved and the scale of Museum is such that it will continue to dominate the forecourt and the streetscape despite the landscape proposals.
- 8.53 The pavilion in the southern forecourt will also affect the setting of the Grade II listed lamp standards. In some views within the courtyard the westernmost pair will be screened by the proposed pavilion, and in all views their symmetrical relationship to the matching set on the east lawn will be disrupted by the pavilion. However, the pavilion is curved around the westernmost pair, and they remain visible on entry and exit of the Museum. The harm caused to setting of these is less than substantial at a low end of the scale.

*Impacts on the listed building fabric*

- 8.54 The impact on the listed fabric of the site is focused on alterations to the perimeter and boundary structures around the walls to the south lawns.
- 8.55 The lawn perimeter walls date to the 1990s refurbishment of the forecourt. They are in the approximate location of the Sydney Smirke's forecourt walls, although they incorporate modern elements such as built-in bins. The minor alterations proposed to these walls, namely inserting new openings to their north and south extents, will not involve the loss of historic fabric and does

not in itself have an impact on the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.

*Impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area*

- 8.56 The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy has regard to the Museum site, which makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area. It notes one of the chief positive contributions of both the Smirke elevations and the King Edward VII elevation as being their symmetry. The proposed pavilions would not alter the symmetry of the elevations, but it would affect the balance of their symmetry in terms of presentation to the public realm. There would accordingly be some harm caused to the positive contribution which the site makes to the character and appearance of the conservation area through the erosion of the historic design intent of both Smirke and John James Burnet.
- 8.57 The landscaping to the southern courtyard would also affect the character and appearance of the conservation area. However, given the existence of the treeline and the railings the proposed landscape would not unduly screen the Museum buildings from the streetscape. However, the Conservation Area does not end at the public pavement, and there would unquestionably be loss of the quasi-governmental, monumental “public building” character of the setting of the Smirke building in favour of a more gardenesque planting scheme as experienced from the forecourt. However, in the context of the wider conservation area and public realm the historic character of the Museum would still be the dominant character of the site given the scale of the Museum and the existence of the railings.

Northern entrance and pavilion

*Public realm and landscaping*

- 8.58 The scope for change here is less significant than the southern forecourt, but the proposed alterations will make a distinct difference in the visitor experience, particularly as they will improve accessibility and legibility. These changes include a streamlined circulation strategy for a more legible, coordinated approach and soft landscaping contained within the existing raised platform, which will help create a more animated, attractive arrival point at the north entrance. Details of all hard and soft landscaping, along with a scheme of maintenance will be secured via condition to ensure all landscaping is of high quality and will be adequately maintained for the life of the temporary permission.

*Scale, massing and layout*

- 8.59 The northern pavilion has a smaller footprint than the southern pavilion, dictated by site constraints; the scale and massing have similarly been shaped by datums and rhythm of the facade’s columns and reduced as a

result of feedback at pre-application stage. This has led to a modest pavilion that sits comfortably within its context in terms of scale. Unlike the south pavilion which sits within the Museum's forecourt, the north pavilion sits directly off the Montague Place, making it a structure that is more visible in the public realm.

*Appearance, detailing and materiality*

- 8.60 The northern pavilion takes a different approach to appearance and materiality, although retaining a vertical rhythm that references the Museum's northern colonnade facade which creates articulation.
- 8.61 Unlike the southern pavilion whose structure is largely invisible, clad in stone and metal, the northern pavilion takes a different approach to appearance and detailing, relying on the timber structural elements and cabinetry to achieve a visible external architectural language, that is reminiscent of the display cabinets found throughout the Museum.
- 8.62 The design choice to fully glaze the pavilion is bold and undoubtedly a more contemporary addition than its southern counterpart. Despite this, the pavilion has a clear lightness to its architectural language that both helps view the structure as a temporal addition and give it a role as a small beacon in the public realm, which helps with intuitive wayfinding and orientation. The warmth of the chosen material palette helps soften the approach to the Museum and provide a much more welcoming environment for visitors than the current configuration.
- 8.63 The success of this scheme relies on the quality and subtlety of the materials, finishes, careful and elegant detailing. These will therefore be conditioned to ensure a northern pavilion of the highest quality that is appropriate for the highly significant historic setting and does not detract from the materiality of the existing stonework.

*Impacts on the setting of Listed Buildings*

- 8.64 The public recognition of the King Edward VII wing has in some ways suffered from the nature of its location. Nonetheless this has not prevented it being recognised as a building of the highest national significance in its own right, being listed at Grade I. It is one of the most academically competent Edwardian buildings in London and although it lost its intended axial avenue setting the architecture of the façade and its immediate pavement setting still retains all of the components of that arrangement. The tight and focused grouping of the central door is emphasised in its symmetry by the use of the granite surround to the public door, surmounted by gilded wreathed torches, the treatment of the two secondary entrances at the scale of the fenestration, and the Frampton lions aid in directing and focusing attention to the central entrance point.

- 8.65 The addition of a pavilion to the west side of this composition results in harm to the setting. It unbalances the symmetrical setting of the elevation.

*Impacts on the listed building fabric*

- 8.66 The impact on the listed fabric is focused on alterations to the perimeter and boundary structures of the King Edward VII entrance.
- 8.67 There will be some harm caused by altering the kerb arrangement in front of the north entrance on the King Edward VII Building side of the site. The existing kerb stones on the west side of the entrance will be altered creating a visual imbalance with the east side of the north forecourt. The current kerb arrangement is part of the original design, and the fabric is likely to also date from this period.
- 8.68 The application contains measures to mitigate some of this harm, which is chiefly: building up the ground level around the new security pavilion will reduce the need to remove existing kerb masonry as the new slope will simply sit on top of the historic hardstanding; the gradient of the slope created by the raised ground level will negate a handrail being installed on the lightwell wall, reducing impact on the setting of Frampton's lions; the removal of historic kerb stones will be minimal and reversible, designed for reinstatement in future.
- 8.69 Guarding is proposed along the western lightwell. This is to be fixed to the historic lightwell and would imbalance the symmetry of the building's north elevation. The harm to fabric will be minimised by fixing the railing to the brick part of the rear elevation of the lightwell wall, meaning it will not affect the fair face of the stone to the streetscape. The effect of the proposals on the setting of the listed building will be the same as the impact of the northern pavilion, which is addressed above, but the harm to historic fabric is less than substantial, at a low end of that scale.
- 8.70 The proposed demountable railings to replace the existing temporary fencing is considered to have an acceptable impact given its quantity, scale, design and materials and the fact that it is not affixed to listed fabric.

*Impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area*

- 8.71 As outlined above, the Conservation Area Appraisal notes one of the chief positive contributions of both the Smirke elevations and the King Edward VII elevation to the conservation area is their symmetry. Whilst the proposed pavilions would not alter the symmetry of the elevations, they would affect the balance of their symmetry in terms of presentation to the public realm. There would accordingly be some harm caused to the positive contribution which the site makes to the character and appearance of the conservation area through the erosion of the historic design intent of both Smirke and John James Burnet.

- 8.72 The King Edward VII range is not in its intended axial setting due to the construction of Senate House, and this does to some extent reduce the townscape impact of the symmetry of its elevation. Nonetheless, its historic townscape character was heavily dictated by its intended role as a terminus vista, for which it chiefly relies upon its symmetrical presentation to the public realm. The northern pavilion does disrupt the symmetry of this elevation, but the length and height of the Burnet façade means that the symmetry of the King Edward VII Gallery remains the dominant character of this part of the streetscape.

#### Assessment of harm to heritage assets

- 8.73 Section 16(2) of Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990) directs that *"In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works, the Council is required to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest, which it possesses."*
- 8.74 The works would have some impact on the existing listed fabric. To the south, this would all be within the 1990s fabric and no harm to special architectural or historic interest has been found to occur.
- 8.75 To the north, early 20th Century fabric would be altered. The kerbs and brick inner face of the lightwell will be altered to accommodate the new access arrangements necessitated by the proposed northern pavilion. The harm caused to the fabric is less than substantial at the low end of the scale.
- 8.76 Section 66(1) of the Listed Buildings Act 1990 directs that *"In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the Council is required to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses."*
- 8.77 The pavilions and their associated railings and other works, will cause harm to setting of both of the Grade I listed buildings on the site through the loss of the intended symmetrical balance of the site, the introduction of relatively substantial built form in intended negative space, the attendant architectural formalisation of public entrance into the Museum away from the main entrance, and through the large extent of glazing facing the main axis of the museum, thereby introducing a considerable extent of glass facing material into a site which was never intended to accommodate such a material in this manner. The harm to settings is less than substantial, but the scale of the pavilions means it falls at a medium level on that scale.
- 8.78 The site is in the setting of listed buildings outside the curtilage. In most instances, these buildings form terraces or parts of terraces around the perimeter of the site, such as Great Russell Street, Montague Street, and Bloomsbury Street. Bloomsbury Street and Montague Street have limited to

nil inter-visibility with the proposed works, and the impact on their setting is consequently neutral, i.e. their setting will be preserved.

- 8.79 The northern pavilion will be partly visible from between the Grade I listed buildings that bookend the Bedford Square junction with Montague Place. However, the proposed pavilion is not near these buildings and is also visually separated from them by mature trees. The scale of the proposed northern pavilion, and the fact that it is mainly its rear roof slope, which is visible from this location, means that the impact on the setting of these buildings is neutral, as they will continue to be appreciated in their chief setting, which is as part of Bedford Square.
- 8.80 The southern pavilion will be visible within the context of Grade II-listed buildings on Great Russell Street. However, when these buildings are seen from the street the pavilion is behind the Museum railings, and when they are seen from the southern forecourt of the Museum, they retain their townscape setting of an element in a 19<sup>th</sup> century series of commercial and residential frontages. The impact of the proposed southern pavilion on the significant elements of the setting of the listed buildings of Great Russell Street is therefore very limited and effectively neutral.
- 8.81 The site is directly opposite the Grade II\* Senate House of 1937. Given the sheer scale of Senate House in comparison to both the King Edward VII Galleries and the proposed northern pavilion, the impact of the proposals on the substantive part of its setting is nil. However, the Montague Place range of Senate House is symmetrically aligned with the King Edward VII Galleries and creates the sense of an implied *rond point* in the streetscape. The proposed northern pavilion does not physically encroach on this breathing space, but it does disrupt the otherwise symmetrical dialogue between the two sites, and therefore it does harm the setting of the Montague Place elevation of Senate House. The harm caused to the setting of Senate House as a whole is negligible, but the harm is caused to the setting of the Montague Place elevation, which clearly reflects the symmetry of the King Edward VII Gallery entrance. This harm is less than substantial at a low end of the scale.
- 8.82 Section 72(1) of the Listed Buildings Act 1990 directs that *“In the exercise of various functions under the Planning Acts in relation to land in conservation areas (including determination of planning applications) the Council is required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.”*
- 8.83 As discussed, the proposed works would result in some harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the British Museum through causing less than substantial harm to its intended symmetrical presentation to the street scene and through the removal of the historic lawns to the southern courtyard. As a result, there is also some harm to the Bloomsbury

Conservation Area to which the British Museum makes a strong positive contribution. The facades and forms of the listed buildings themselves would remain almost entirely unaltered by the proposals, and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area would be substantially unchanged. Therefore, the harm caused is less than substantial and at the low end of that scale.

- 8.84 The proposal seeks to demonstrate the pavilions will result in less harm to significance than the existing tents. It is accepted that the existing tents cause harm to the setting of the listed buildings and to the contribution those buildings make to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 8.85 The proposed pavilions do not address all of the harm to significance caused by the existing tents. The existing tents read as temporary informal structures. They retain all historic landscaping on the site and do not physically affect any historic fabric. The proposed pavilions are much more formal interventions within the setting of the listed buildings, are greater in scale than the tents, are in essentially the same, highly sensitive, locations as the tents and will involve the alteration of historic fabric and new landscaping. However, the proposed pavilions are higher quality structures than the existing tents and they consequently have a higher quality appearance and finish than the tents.
- 8.86 The proposals have been found to cause varying degrees of harm to designated heritage assets, all of which are less than substantial and range from low to medium.

Heritage conclusion - public benefits and planning balance

- 8.87 The NPPF at paragraph 215 directs:
- “Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”*
- 8.88 The need for security measures at the Museum is outlined within the application and it is accepted that the need for these measures has been demonstrated. It is accepted that safe public access to the Museum is a public benefit. The building is already in its optimal viable use, although it is acknowledged that security measures were not part of its original design and it is not reasonable to expect the site to operate in its optimal viable use without them.
- 8.89 The proposals also offer public benefits by reducing queuing to enter the Museum and allowing public access into the southern forecourt which is currently only open to museum ticket holders.

- 8.90 The NPPF does not discuss temporality as a means of assessing the acceptability of applications affecting the historic environment. However, Historic England's *The Setting of Heritage Assets* does allow for the "*permanence of the development*" to be considered when assessing the impact of development upon the setting.
- 8.91 Consequently, the proposals are found to be acceptable in heritage terms because they are (1) for a temporary period to enable the Museum to work thorough other projects such as the Western Range proposals, while allowing secure public access to the site and its collections; and (2) would provide a number of public benefits as outline above, which in combination with the temporary nature of the proposal, are considered to outweigh the less than substantial harm identified.
- 8.92 A Development Delivery Plan will be secured by a Section 106 Legal Agreement to ensure that the works are carried out within a timely manner to maximise public benefits.

### ***Archaeology***

- 8.93 Policy D2 outlines that the Council will preserve Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets, including archaeological remains. The application site is located within an Archaeological Priority Area Tier II.
- 8.94 An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (prepared by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd, dated September 2025) was submitted in support of the application. The desk-based assessment concluded that that there is low potential for prehistoric, Roman, Saxon, or medieval evidence, and a high potential for post-medieval materials at the site.
- 8.95 It states that based upon the archaeological potential for post-medieval remains, in particular the possible presence of remains relating to the grounds of Montagu House and the construction of the subsequent British Museum building designed by Sir Robert Smirke, it is expected that further archaeological work will be necessary to confirm the presence or absence of archaeology in this location and allow the design of an appropriate mitigation strategy to offset the anticipated low adverse impact from the proposed development. However, as any archaeology at the site is not expected to be more than of local significance, it is considered that any further archaeological work can be secured by a standard planning condition attached to consent, if granted.
- 8.96 The Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) at Historic England has reviewed the assessment and concurs with the conclusions of the report that there is a relatively low potential for the proposed scheme to disturb archaeological remains from all periods except the post-medieval, in particular, evidence may survive relating to Montagu House. Although the pavilion has been designed to avoid structural remains of the house there

may be associated features or deposits which will be disturbed. As such, a condition requiring archaeological monitoring of the groundworks is recommended.

- 8.97 In line with the recommendations of the desk-study assessment and GLAAS a condition has been included requiring a written scheme of investigation (WSI) to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of works.

## **9. SUSTAINABILITY AND DRAINAGE**

- 9.1 In November 2019, Camden Council formally declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency. The council adopted the Camden Climate Action Plan 2020-2025 which aims to achieve a net zero carbon Camden by 2030.
- 9.2 In line with London Plan (LP) policies, SI1, SI2, SI3, SI4, SI5 and SI7 and Camden Local Plan (CLP) policies CC1, CC2, CC3, and CC4, development should follow the core principles of sustainable development and circular economy, make the fullest contribution to the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change, to minimise carbon dioxide emissions and contribute to water conservation and sustainable urban drainage.

### ***Sustainable design***

- 9.3 Policy CC1 outlines that the Council will require all development to minimise the effects of climate change and encourage all developments to meet the highest feasible environmental standards that are financially viable during construction and occupation. It is also expected that all development will optimise resource efficiency.
- 9.4 Policy CC2 states that the Council will promote sustainable design and construction by ensuring development schemes demonstrate how adaptation measures and sustainable development principles have been incorporated into the design and proposed implementation.
- 9.5 The pavilions have been designed to be demountable, ensuring that they have an afterlife beyond their 10-year temporary consent (this was something raised by the DRP). Key components include demountable stone panels, prefabricated wall and roof elements and beam and block flooring – all assembled using dry construction allowing for ease of disassembly and reuse. The Museum is considering options for the re-use of both pavilions, and this could include relocation to the British Museum Arc site in Reading for a range of new uses including events and classroom use.
- 9.6 The buildings have been designed to be low energy demand, which means there are no explicit heating and cooling set points. However, the design has allowed for high efficiency radiant heaters in the main pavilion spaces and back of house areas to provide reasonable staff and occupant

conditions during the cold weather. Similarly, the overheating has been assessed in both pavilions, with both the north and south Pavilions indicating reasonable conditions aligned with TM59.

### ***Drainage***

- 9.7 Policy CC2 outlines that all development should adopt appropriate climate change adaptation measures, including the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to reduce surface water run-off and measures to reduce the impact of urban overheating.
- 9.8 Whilst the works locations themselves do not have risk of flooding, other areas nearby have a high risk of surface water flooding. A Drainage SuDS Strategy Report was submitted in support of the application, and this details how flood risk and drainage will be managed at the site.
- 9.9 At the northern entrance, the roof runoff from the pavilion would be attenuated within shallow geocellular units integrated into the adjacent landscaping, restricting flows to 0.5l/s before discharging to the existing gully.
- 9.10 Within the southern forecourt, runoff from the roof will be restricted to 2l/s and attenuation would be provided within a geocellular storage tank within the west lawn area. The tank has been sized to accommodate runoff from the pavilion roof only, and the existing perforated lawn drains would remain in place. On the east lawn, the lawn and hard landscaping would be regraded following the removal of the temporary tent. Surface water would be attenuated with permeable paving before discharging into the existing combined sewer network at a restricted rate of 2l/s.
- 9.11 The SuDS Strategy has been reviewed by Council's Flood Risk Officer who has confirmed that the proposed SuDS measure are acceptable to adequately manage surface water runoff at the site. A condition has been included to require the submission and approval of a lifetime maintenance plan for these SuDS to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development.

## **10. TREES AND BIODIVERSITY**

### ***Impact on trees***

- 10.1 Local Plan policy A3 deals with biodiversity and expects development to protect and enhance nature conservation and biodiversity, securing benefits and enhancements where possible. It resists the removal of trees and vegetation of significant value and expects developments to incorporate additional trees and vegetation.
- 10.2 An Arboricultural Statement (prepared by CBA Trees, dated November 2025) was submitted in support of the application. Whilst there are no tree

removals proposed as part of the scheme, tree protection measures are required to protect the existing plane trees along Great Russell Street and Montague Place during the construction phase. A Tree Protection Plan (TPP) has been submitted and reviewed by Council's Tree Officer who has confirmed that the details are acceptable. A condition has been imposed requiring compliance with this TPP during all demolition and construction works.

### ***Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain***

- 10.3 As well as the requirements of the development plan, there are statutory requirements for 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).
- 10.4 BNG is a way of creating and improving natural habitats with a measurably positive impact ('net gain') on biodiversity, compared to what was there before development. Every grant of planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to a condition which requires the submission of a Biodiversity Net Gain Plan (BGP) before development can commence, showing how the 10% gain will be met.
- 10.5 This gain can be achieved through onsite biodiversity gains, registered offsite biodiversity gains (for example, on other land or developments owned by the applicant), or by purchasing statutory biodiversity credits.
- 10.6 The baseline for the site is made up of two areas of modified grassland within the southern forecourt, with the remainder of the site being buildings and hardstanding areas. As part of the wider enabling works associated with the Temporary Visitor Welcome Pavilion works (Application Reference 2025/1746/P), the modified grassland associated with the East Lawn is temporarily removed to facilitate the relocation of the security tent. The loss of grassland habitat associated with this is temporary, with the lawn to be re-laid within 2 years of its removal, and therefore the baseline for the development will be as per the current status (as per BNG condition 2025/3595/06BGP). A single tree, which will be contained within a planter on the forecourt and is to be provided to deliver a net gain associated with the Temporary Visitor Welcome Pavilion but not currently present, has been included in the baseline to reflect the baseline that will be expected following completion of these works. As a result, the Proposed Development is assessed as having a baseline biodiversity value of 0.17 habitat units.
- 10.7 The development proposals will require the removal of the two modified grassland lawns, part of which will accommodate the new pavilion structures with the remainder removed to facilitate access and a new landscaping scheme. The urban tree, which will be provided as part of the Temporary Visitor Welcome Pavilion application, will be retained within the site. As a result, the development will result in the loss of 0.15 habitat units with the retention of 0.02 habitat units associated with the urban tree.

- 10.8 Based on the information provided, this scheme will require the approval of a BGP before development begins. This is because the proposals will have an impact on habitat that exceeds 25 m<sup>2</sup> of habitat. As a result, the de minimis exemption from mandatory BNG does not apply to the application, nor do the other exemptions listed in the secondary legislation. As a result, it is concluded that the application should be subject to mandatory BNG as a condition of planning.
- 10.9 The proposed development includes the addition of a small area of landscape planting within the north forecourt and significant additions of landscape planting across both lawns within the south forecourt. This would provide an enhancement of 0.44 habitat units, or approximately 158% increase over the baseline value, which is well in exceedance of the 10% BNG requirement.
- 10.10 However, given the temporary nature of the permission, being only 10 years, it is not possible for the applicant to commit to the 30-year maintenance requirements associated with the enhancements contributing towards the statutory BNG requirement. It is also at this stage unknown if landscaping will form part of any future, more permanent solutions for security management, which further prevents the Museum from committing to the 30-year maintenance period.
- 10.11 Therefore, to comply with the mandatory 10% BNG requirement and Trading Rules associated with the metric, it is proposed that the development will offset the losses associated with area-based habitats. The shortfall comprises the 0.15 habitat units lost as a result of the removal of modified grassland habitat along with the 10% net gain requirement, comprising 0.02 habitat units, thereby totalling a shortfall of 0.17 area-based habitat units. The BNG metric, prepared by Trium, notes that there is a shortfall to comprise 0.34 units within A1 with the spatial risk multiplier applied to the shortfall.
- 10.12 The Applicant has identified two options to meet the offsetting requirements which will be explored further during the completion of the Biodiversity Gain Plan. Both options are viable and achievable at application stage and have applied and adhered to the mitigation hierarchy as outlined within Biodiversity Statement. The options under consideration are as follows:
- Offsetting through a registered offsetting scheme – as the habitat loss is associated with a low distinctiveness habitat, there is a range of offsetting options available through the Biodiversity Gain Site register; or
  - Offsetting through the purchase of Statutory Biodiversity Credits – a payment for statutory credits could be made to offset the minor loss, equating to a cost of approximately £14,280 excluding VAT.

10.13 The Council's Nature Conservation Officer considers that the biodiversity gain condition is capable of being discharged successfully. The 10% gain can be met through offsetting via a registered offsetting scheme or through purchasing credits. This would be confirmed via discharge of the statutory BNG condition. The statutory condition will not be repeated on the decision notice, in line with guidance, but informatives explaining the statutory obligations will be included on the decision.

## **11. IMPACT ON NEIGHBOURING AMENITY**

11.1 CLP policies A1 and A4 and the Amenity CPG are all relevant with regards to the impact on the amenity of residential properties in the area, requiring careful consideration of the impacts of development on light, outlook, privacy and noise. Impact from construction works are also relevant but dealt with in the 'Transport' section. The thrust of the policies is that the quality of life of current and occupiers should be protected and development which causes an unacceptable level of harm to amenity should be refused.

11.2 Due to the location and nature of the single storey pavilion structures away 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.

11.3 With regard to light spill, whilst the southern pavilion is set within the forecourt of the Museum away from residential properties, the northern pavilion is slightly more exposed, with the closest residential neighbours approximately 110m away. This is considered to be a sufficient distance away from residential neighbours as to not cause adverse impacts as a result of light spill.

11.4 Overall, the proposal would not result in unacceptable impacts on neighbouring amenity.

## **12. TRANSPORT**

### ***Construction management***

12.1 Policy A1 seeks to manage the impacts of the construction phase of development through the use of Construction Management Plans (CMP). CMPs are used to demonstrate how developments will minimise impacts from the movement of goods and materials during the construction process (including any demolition works).

12.2 The British Museum is located in the Central London Area where footfall is high. Traffic congestion is a significant problem in this part of the Borough, particularly during peak periods, but often throughout the day on Monday to Friday. Along with the primary concern of public safety, the Council also

need to ensure that construction traffic does not create (or add to existing) traffic congestion in the local area. The Council needs to ensure that the development can be implemented without being detrimental to amenity or the safe and efficient operation of the highway network in the local area. The Council's Transport Officer has advised that considering the location of the site, it will be necessary to restrict construction traffic arriving and departing the site to between the hours of 0930 and 1630 on weekdays, and it may be necessary to restrict this window even further subject to review.

- 12.3 A draft CMP based on the Council's proforma was submitted. This has been reviewed by the Council's Transport Officer who considers that the draft CMP provides useful information to suggest the works can be delivered in a safe manner without significant impacts on road users, particularly disabled people, pedestrians and cyclists. However, it is noted that the draft CMP lacks detail as a contractor is yet to be appointed. A more detailed CMP document using the Council's proforma will be secured by a section 106 legal agreement in accordance with Local Plan Policy A1 and T4. The development will require input from Transport Officers during construction. This will relate to the development and assessment of the CMP as well as ongoing monitoring and enforcement of the CMP during construction. Implementation support contributions of £3,000 and impact bonds of £3,000 will be secured by S106 legal agreement in accordance with Local Plan Policy A1 and T4.
- 12.4 The appointed contractor will need to register the works with the Considerate Constructors' Scheme. The contractor will also need to adhere to the CLOCS standard for Construction Logistics and Community Safety.

### ***Highway works***

- 12.5 Transport Officer has advised that the public highway adjacent to the site (north and south courtyards) could sustain significant damage as a direct result of the development proposals. As such, Council will secure a highway works contribution of £20,000 by a section 106 legal agreement to ensure funding is in place to cover the cost of any remedial works, which will be undertaken by the Council's highways contractor for this part of the Borough.

### ***Cycle parking***

- 12.6 The Council requires high quality cycle parking to be provided in accordance with Local Plan Policy T1, CPG Transport, the London Cycling Design Standards (LCDS), and London Plan Policy T5.
- 12.7 The proposal includes the relocation/ reprovision of 30 Sheffield Stands in the Southern courtyard which will provide short stay cycle parking for 60 visitors (an increase of 4 spaces). Eight of these spaces will accommodate cargo bikes. The Transport Officer has reviewed this proposal and

confirmed it to be acceptable, provided that the Sheffield stands area installed in accordance with CPG Transport guidance (e.g. 1m between each stand). A condition has been imposed to require detailed plans of the proposed cycle parking to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

### **13. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)**

- 13.1 The CIL applies to all proposals which add 100sqm of new floorspace or an extra dwelling. Regulation 5(2) of the of The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 outlines that planning permission granted for a limited period is not included within the meaning of 'planning permission' for the purposes of these Regulations and as such, the proposed development would not be liable for CIL contributions.

### **14. CONCLUSION**

- 14.1 Overall, the proposals significantly improve the visitor welcome experience, resulting in a more human, welcoming and attractive environment that creates clear public benefits through the opening up of the southern courtyard to the public. It demonstrates a thoughtful and sensitive approach to design, materiality and architectural language, balancing multiple and complex constraints, including heritage considerations, operation and security, maintenance, wayfinding and signage.
- 14.2 The pavilions would provide a high-quality and well-considered interim solution to security needs whilst a more comprehensive and long-term strategy is developed for the site.

#### ***Public benefits***

- 14.3 Harm has been identified to heritage assets, but that harm is less than substantial. Considerable weight and importance must be given to that harm, but officers conclude there are a number of public benefits that outweigh that harm:
- Opening up of the southern forecourt for enjoyment by the general public, rather than just ticket holders as is the current situation.
  - Provision of continued safe access to the Museum and its collections
  - Minimising queues and congestions on Great Russell Street and Montague Place and creating a more welcoming arrival experience for visitors.
  - Increasing biodiversity and improving the heat resilience of the southern forecourt.
  - Low carbon, sustainable buildings with no mechanical plant and ventilation, reducing embodied carbon and operational carbon demands.

## **15. RECOMMENDATION**

15.1 Grant conditional Planning Permission subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement with the following heads of terms:

- Construction management plan (CMP)
- CMP implementation support contribution of £3,000
- CMP Impact Bond of £3,000
- Highways contribution of £20,000
- Development Delivery Plan

## **16. LEGAL COMMENTS**

16.1 Members are referred to the note from the Legal Division at the start of the Agenda.

## **17. CONDITIONS**

### ***Standard conditions***

#### **1 Time limit**

The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In order to comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

#### **2 Temporary permission**

The pavilion buildings and associated landscaping and structures, hereby permitted, is for a temporary period only and shall be removed on or before 10 years after the date of this planning permission.

Reason: These types of structures are not such that the local planning authority is prepared to approve, other than for a limited period, in view of its appearance and impact of heritage assets. The permanent retention of the structure would be contrary to the requirements of policies D1 and D2 of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017.

#### **3 Approved drawings**

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

Existing Plans: VW102-SWV-1000-X-DDG-X-001000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1000-X-DDG-X-101000 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-X-001000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-X-101000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1010-X-DDG-X-001000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1010-X-DDG-X-101000 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-001000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1010-X-DDG-L-001000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-001000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-X-003000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-X-003000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-

1105-X-DDG-L-013000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-013000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-012000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-012001 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-012000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-012001 Rev 01.

Demolition Plans: VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-051000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1010-X-DDG-L-051000 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-051000 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-052000 Rev 00; VW102-SWV-1010-X-DDG-X-052000 Rev 01.

Proposed Plans: VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-101000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-X-103000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-112000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-112001 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-113000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-123000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-123001 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-123002 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-142000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-F\_01-DDG-A-111000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-F\_01-DDG-A-111001 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-F\_01-DDG-A-112000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-F\_01-DDG-A-112001 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-F\_01-DDG-A-113000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-F\_01-DDG-A-113001 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-F\_01-DDG-A-113002 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-F\_01-DDG-A-113003 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1010-X-DDG-L-101000 Rev 03 ; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-101000 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1010-X-DDG-X-103000 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-112000 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-112001 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-113000 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-123000 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-123001 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-123002 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-123003 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-123005 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-C\_02-DDG-A-111000 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-C\_02-DDG-A-111001 Rev 02; VW102-SWV-1015-C\_02-DDG-A-112000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1015-C\_02-DDG-A-112001 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1015-C\_02-DDG-A-113000 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1015-C\_02-DDG-A-113001 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1015-C\_02-DDG-A-113002 Rev 01; VW102-SWV-1105-X-DDG-L-101004 Rev 03; VW102-SWV-1015-X-DDG-L-101004 Rev 03; VW102-SWV-1014-X-DDG-L-101004 Rev 00.

Supporting Documents: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (Pre-Construct Archaeology, November 2025); Arboricultural Statement including Tree Survey (CBA Trees, November 2025); Biodiversity Statement (Trium, November 2025); Cover Letter (The Planning Lab, 10 November 2025); Design and Access Statement (Studio Weave, November 2025); Draft Construction Management Plan Pro-Forma (November 2025); Drainage and SuDS Strategy Report (Aecom, 16 January 2026); Heritage Statement (Alan Baxter Ltd, November 2025); Planning Statement (The Planning Lab, November 2025); Statement of Community Involvement (Daisy Froud, November 2025); Statutory Biodiversity Metric (October 2025).

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

### ***Pre-start conditions (any works)***

#### **4 Contaminated land**

No development shall commence until:

A. A preliminary risk assessment report is submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. This report shall comprise:

- i. a desktop study which identifies all current and previous uses at the site and surrounding area as well as the potential contaminants associated with those uses;
- ii. a conceptual site model, indicating potential pollutant linkages between sources, pathways, and receptors, including those in the surrounding area and those planned at the site; and
- iii. a qualitative risk assessment of any potentially unacceptable risks to identified receptors.

If deemed necessary following the findings of the preliminary risk assessment, the following steps shall also be taken:

B. A site investigation is undertaken, and the findings are submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The site investigation should assess all potential risks identified by the desktop study and should include a generic quantitative risk assessment and a revised conceptual site model. The assessment must encompass an assessment of risks posed by radon and by ground gas. All works must be carried out in compliance with LCRM (2020) and by a competent person.

C. A remediation method statement (RMS) is submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. This statement shall detail any required remediation works and shall be designed to mitigate any remaining risks identified in the approved quantitative risk assessment. This document should include a strategy for dealing with previously undiscovered contamination. All works must be carried out in compliance with LCRM (2020) and by a competent person.

D. Following the completion of any remediation, a verification report demonstrating that the remediation as outlined in the RMS have been completed should be submitted to, and approved in writing, by the local planning authority. This report shall include (but may not be limited to):

- i. details of the remediation works carried out;
- ii. results of any verification sampling, testing, or monitoring including the analysis of any imported soil and waste management documentation.

All works must be carried out in compliance with LCRM (2020) and by a competent person.

Reason: To ensure the risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors, in accordance with policies G1, D1, A1, and DM1 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

### **5 Archaeological written scheme of investigation – northern entrance**

No demolition or development shall take place within the northern part of the site until a written scheme of investigation (WSI) has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no demolition or development shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed WSI, which shall include the statement of significance and research objectives, and:

A. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works.

B. Where appropriate, details of a programme for delivering related positive public benefits.

C. The programme for post-investigation assessment and subsequent analysis, publication & dissemination and deposition of resulting material. This part of the condition shall not be discharged until these elements have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI.

Reason: Important archaeological remains may exist on this site. Accordingly, the local planning authority wishes to secure the provision of archaeological investigation and the subsequent recording of the remains prior to development in accordance with the requirements of policy D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

### **6 Archaeological written scheme of investigation – southern forecourt**

No demolition or development shall take place within the southern part of the site until a written scheme of investigation (WSI) has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no demolition or development shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed WSI, which shall include the statement of significance and research objectives, and:

A. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works.

B. Where appropriate, details of a programme for delivering related positive public benefits.

C. The programme for post-investigation assessment and subsequent analysis, publication & dissemination and deposition of resulting material. This part of the condition shall not be discharged until these elements have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI.

Reason: Important archaeological remains may exist on this site. Accordingly, the local planning authority wishes to secure the provision of archaeological investigation and the subsequent recording of the remains prior to development in accordance with the requirements of policy D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

### **7 Tree protection measures – northern entrance**

Prior to the commencement of works on the northern part of the site, tree protection measures shall be installed and working practices adopted in accordance with the document entitled Arboricultural Statement (including Tree Survey) dated November 2025 by CBA Trees ref. CBA11948 v1C. All trees on the site, or parts of trees grow from adjoining sites, unless shown on the permitted drawings as being removed, shall be retained and protected from damage in accordance with BS5837:2012 and with the approved protection details. The development shall be monitored by the project arboriculturalist in accordance with the approved report.

Reason: To ensure that the development will not have an adverse effect on existing trees and in order to maintain the character and amenity of the area in accordance with the requirements of policies A2 and A3 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

### **8 Building foundation details – northern entrance**

Prior to commencement of any works on the northern part of the site, details of the relevant north pavilion of the design of building foundations and the layout, with dimensions and levels, of service trenches and other excavations on site in so far as these items may affect trees on or adjoining the site, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The relevant part of the works shall not be carried out otherwise than in accordance with the details thus approved.

Reason: To ensure that the development will not have an adverse effect on existing trees and in order to maintain the character and amenities of the area in accordance with the requirements of policies A2 and A3 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

### **9 Tree protection measures – southern forecourt**

Prior to the commencement of works on the southern part of the site, tree protection measures shall be installed and working practices adopted in accordance with the document entitled Arboricultural Statement (including Tree Survey) dated November 2025 by CBA Trees ref. CBA11948 v1C. All trees on the site, or parts of trees grow from adjoining sites, unless shown on the permitted drawings as being removed, shall be retained and protected from damage in accordance with BS5837:2012 and with the approved protection details. The development shall be monitored by the project arboriculturalist in accordance with the approved report.

Reason: To ensure that the development will not have an adverse effect on existing trees and in order to maintain the character and amenity of the area in accordance with the requirements of policies A2 and A3 of the of Camden Local Plan 2017.

## **10 Building foundation details – southern forecourt**

Prior to commencement of any works on the southern part of the site, details of the relevant southern pavilion of the design of building foundations and the layout, with dimensions and levels, of service trenches and other excavations on site in so far as these items may affect trees on or adjoining the site, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The relevant part of the works shall not be carried out otherwise than in accordance with the details thus approved.

Reason: To ensure that the development will not have an adverse effect on existing trees and in order to maintain the character and amenities of the area in accordance with the requirements of policies A2 and A3 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

### ***Pre-start conditions (other than demolition or site clearance)***

## **11 Detailed design drawings and samples – northern entrance**

Notwithstanding the details shown on the approved plans, prior to commencement of the relevant works to the northern part of the site (other than demolition and site clearance, ground preparation, below ground works and other site investigations), detailed drawings, or samples of materials for the relevant northern pavilion and associated landscaping as appropriate, in respect of the following, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority before the relevant part of the work is begun:

a) Detailed drawings including plans, coloured elevations and sections at 1:10 of all typical new facade parts for the north pavilion. To include all typical openings, external door head and cill, any exterior lighting fixtures, roof junctions.

b) Manufacturer's specification details, including high resolution photographs, of all facing materials (to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority) and physical samples of those materials at a minimum of 0.5 x 0.5m (to be provided on site).

c) Once a) and b) are agreed, sample panel(s) of typical interface details of key envelope junctions and roof details of the relevant north pavilion at 1:1 scale (for example a typical facade panel). For the north pavilion, these sample panels should include the junctions for the structural glazing and timber elements and roof detailing. These should be installed on site for review, and the extents of the panel are to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority ahead of construction.

d) A lighting strategy for the northern pavilion, details of internal light fittings within 3m of the external glazing and light fixtures to the exterior of the building, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

e) Detail drawings of any new metalwork, at the northern part of the site, to include the guard rail, at a scale of 1:10, including method of fixing.

f) Detailed drawings, including plans, elevations and sections at 1:50 of the northern landscape, to show the planting and soft landscaping, additional structures, wayfinding elements and new surface materials.

g) Manufacturer's specification details, including high resolution photographs, of all new hardscape materials proposed in the landscaping works (to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority) and physical samples of those materials (to be provided on site).

h) A lighting strategy for the northern entrance and details of lighting fittings and fixtures in the landscape shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The relevant part of the works shall be carried out in accordance with the details thus approved and all approved samples shall be retained on site during the course of the works.

Reason: To safeguard the appearance of the buildings and the character and appearance of the area and ensure that the development achieves a high quality of landscaping which contributes to the visual amenity and character of the area in accordance with the requirements of policies A2, A3, D1, and D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

## **12 Detailed design drawings and samples – southern forecourt**

Notwithstanding the details shown on the approved plans, prior to commencement of the relevant works to the southern part of the site (other than demolition and site clearance, ground preparation, below ground works and other site investigations), detailed drawings, or samples of materials for the relevant southern pavilion and associated landscaping as appropriate, in respect of the following, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority before the relevant part of the work is begun:

a) Detailed drawings including plans, coloured elevations and sections at 1:10 of all typical new facade parts for the south pavilion. To include all typical openings, external door head and cill, any exterior lighting fixtures, roof junctions.

b) Manufacturer's specification details, including high resolution photographs, of all facing materials (to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority) and physical samples of those materials at a minimum of 0.5 x 0.5m (to be provided on site).

c) Once a) and b) are agreed, sample panel(s) of typical interface details of key envelope junctions and roof details of the relevant south pavilion at 1:1 scale (for example a typical facade panel). For the south pavilion, these sample panels should include the junctions between the metal and stone cladding, metal fins and roof detailing. These should be installed on site for review, and the extents of the panel are to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority ahead of construction.

d) A lighting strategy for the southern pavilion, details of internal light fittings within 3m of the external glazing and light fixtures to the exterior of the building, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

e) Detail drawings of any new metalwork, at the southern part of the site, to include fixed railings, at a scale of 1:10, including method of fixing.

f) Detailed drawings, including plans, elevations and sections at 1:50 of both landscaped lawns, to show the planting and soft landscaping, additional structures, wayfinding elements and new surface materials.

g) Manufacturer's specification details, including high resolution photographs, of all new hardscape materials proposed in the landscaping works (to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority) and physical samples of those materials (to be provided on site).

h) A lighting strategy for the southern forecourt and details of lighting fittings and fixtures in the landscape shall be submitted to and approved in writing to the Local Planning Authority.

The relevant part of the works shall be carried out in accordance with the details thus approved and all approved samples shall be retained on site during the course of the works.

Reason: To safeguard the appearance of the buildings and the character and appearance of the area and ensure that the development achieves a high quality of landscaping which contributes to the visual amenity and character of the area in accordance with the requirements of policies A2, A3, D1, and D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

### **13 Cycle parking details**

Prior to the commencement of works to the cycle storage area in the southern part of the site, details of the cycle storage area for 60 no. cycles, including 8no. larger spaces to accommodate cargo bikes, shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The approved facility shall thereafter be provided in its entirety prior to the first use of the relevant southern pavilion and permanently retained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure the development provides adequate cycle parking facilities in accordance with the requirements of policy T1 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

### **14 SuDS details**

Prior to commencement of development, a lifetime maintenance plan demonstrating how the sustainable drainage system as approved (The British Museum Visitor Welcome Programme Drainage and Run-Off Report including SuDS Strategy prepared by AECOM January 2026) will be maintained submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The sustainable drainage system as approved shall be installed as part of the development to accommodate all storms up to and including a 1:100 year storm with a 40% provision for climate change, such that flooding does not occur in any part of a building or in any utility plant susceptible to water and to achieve run off rates of 4.0l/s for the southern pavilion/forecourt and 0.5l/s for the northern pavilion/entrance. The system shall include an attenuation tank (5m<sup>3</sup> capacity) for the north pavilion) and an attention tank (21m<sup>3</sup>) and pervious pavements (9m<sup>3</sup>) (total 30m<sup>3</sup> capacity) for the south pavilion as stated in the approved drawings

and shall thereafter retained and maintained in accordance with the approved maintenance plan.

Reason: To reduce the rate of surface water run-off from the buildings and limit the impact on the storm-water drainage system in accordance with policies CC2 and CC3 of the Camden Local Plan 2017 and Policy SI 13 of the London Plan 2021.

***Prior to occupation or use***

**15 Hard and soft landscaping details – northern entrance**

All hard and soft landscaping works associated with the northern part of the site shall be carried out in full accordance with the approved landscape details for the relevant part of the site prior to the first use of the relevant north pavilion.

Any trees or areas of planting (including trees existing at the outset of the development other than those indicated to be removed) which, within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced as soon as is reasonably possible and, in any case, by not later than the end of the following planting season, with others of similar size and species, unless the local planning authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure that the landscaping is carried out within a reasonable period and to maintain a high quality of visual amenity in the scheme in accordance with the requirements of policies A2, A3, D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

**16 Landscaping scheme of maintenance – northern entrance**

Prior to the first use of the relevant north pavilion, a detailed scheme of maintenance for all hard and soft landscaping within the northern part of the site shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing.

Reason: To maintain a high quality of visual amenity in the scheme in accordance with the requirements of policies A2, A3, D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

**17 Hard and soft landscaping details – western lawn, southern forecourt**

All hard and soft landscaping works associated with the western lawn within the southern forecourt shall be carried out in full accordance with the approved landscape details for the relevant part of the site prior to the first use of the relevant south pavilion.

Any trees or areas of planting (including trees existing at the outset of the development other than those indicated to be removed) which, within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced as soon as is reasonably possible and, in any case, by not later than the end of the following planting season, with others of similar size and species, unless the local planning authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure that the landscaping is carried out within a reasonable period and to maintain a high quality of visual amenity in the scheme in accordance with the requirements of policies A2, A3, D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

### **18 Landscaping scheme of maintenance – western lawn, southern forecourt**

Prior to the first use of the relevant south pavilion, a detailed scheme of maintenance for all hard and soft landscaping within the west lawn of the southern forecourt of the site shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing.

Reason: To maintain a high quality of visual amenity in the scheme in accordance with the requirements of policies A2, A3, D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

### **19 Hard and soft landscaping details – eastern lawn, southern forecourt**

Hard and soft landscaping works associated with the eastern lawn within the southern forecourt shall commence on the first use of the southern pavilion, as so far as operationally reasonable. This will include:

- a) The removal of the temporary tent on the east lawn on or before 1st July 2027;
- b) The making good of the lawn to provide public access within 3 months of the removal of the tent;
- c) The delivery of the landscape scheme for the east lawn in full accordance with the approved landscape details no later than 12 months from the making good of the lawn.

Any trees or areas of planting (including trees existing at the outset of the development other than those indicated to be removed) which, within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced as soon as is reasonably possible and, in any case, by not later than the end of the following planting season, with others of similar size and species, unless the local planning authority gives written consent to any variation

Reason: To ensure that the landscaping is carried out within a reasonable period and to maintain a high quality of visual amenity in the scheme in accordance with the requirements of policies A2, A3, D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

### **20 Landscaping scheme of maintenance – eastern lawn, southern forecourt**

Prior to the first use of the landscaped eastern lawn of the southern forecourt, a detailed scheme of maintenance for all relevant hard and soft landscaping within the eastern lawn shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing.

Reason: To maintain a high quality of visual amenity in the scheme in accordance with the requirements of policies A2, A3, D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

## **Compliance conditions**

### **21 Southern Forecourt Security Line**

The security line for visitors to the British Museum accessing the building via the southern forecourt shall be installed in accordance with the locations shown on approved plan VW102-SWV-1010-X-DDG-X-101000 Rev 02 and retained thereafter for the lifetime of the development, except in exceptional circumstances as agreed within the Operational Management Plans, after which the security line shall return to the approved locations within 24 hours or such longer period as agreed in writing with the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that the public space is maintained and retained at all times possible for public amenity purposes as intended by the application, throughout the lifetime of the development in accordance with policies A1, A2 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

### **22 Non-road mobile machinery (NRMM)**

All non-Road mobile Machinery (any mobile machine, item of transportable industrial equipment, or vehicle - with or without bodywork) of net power between 37kW and 560kW used on the site for the entirety of the [demolition and/construction] phase of the development hereby approved shall be required to meet Stage IIIB of EU Directive 97/68/EC. The site shall be registered on the NRMM register for the construction phase of the development.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the adjoining occupiers, the area generally and contribution of developments to the air quality of the borough in accordance with the requirements of policies G1, A1, CC1 and CC4 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

## **18. INFORMATIVES**

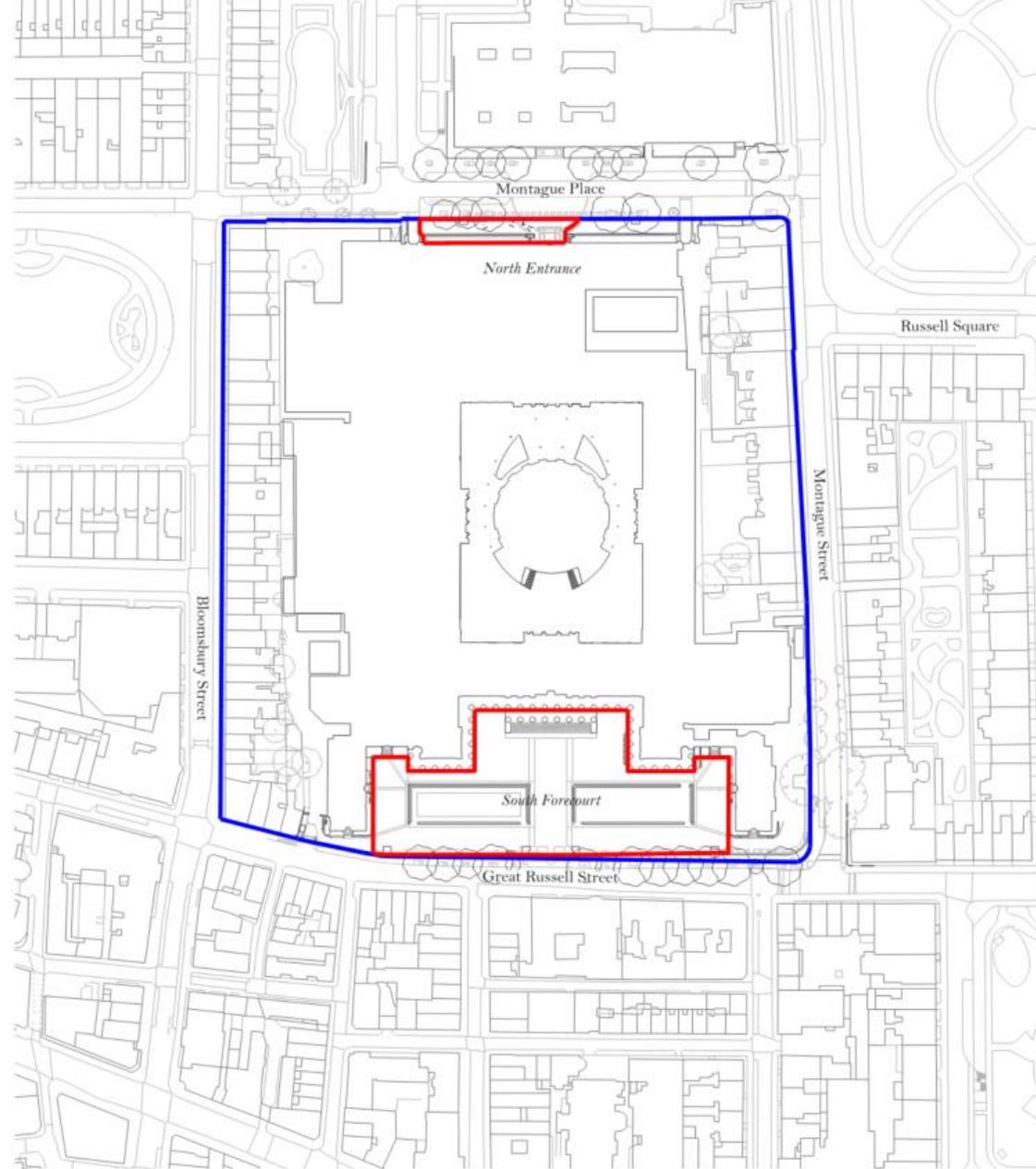
1	The written scheme of investigation will need to be prepared and implemented by a suitably professionally accredited archaeological practice in accordance with Historic England's Guidelines for Archaeological projects in Greater London. This condition is exempt from deemed discharge under schedule 6 of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.
2	Your proposals may be subject to control under the Building Regulations and/or the London Buildings Acts that cover aspects including fire and emergency escape, access and facilities for people with disabilities and sound insulation between dwellings. You are advised to consult the Council's Building Control Service, Camden Town Hall, Judd St, Kings Cross, London NW1 2QS (tel: 020-7974 6941).
3	This approval does not authorise the use of the public highway. Any requirement to use the public highway, such as for hoardings, temporary road closures and suspension of parking bays, will be subject to approval

	<p>of relevant licence from the Council's Streetworks Authorisations &amp; Compliance Team, 5 Pancras Square c/o Town Hall, Judd Street London WC1H 9JE (Tel. No 020 7974 4444). Licences and authorisations need to be sought in advance of proposed works. Where development is subject to a Construction Management Plan (through a requirement in a S106 agreement), no licence or authorisation will be granted until the Construction Management Plan is approved by the Council.</p>
4	<p>All works should be conducted in accordance with the Camden Minimum Requirements - a copy is available on the Council's website (search for 'Camden Minimum Requirements' at <a href="http://www.camden.gov.uk">www.camden.gov.uk</a>) or contact the Council's Noise and Licensing Enforcement Team, 5 Pancras Square c/o Town Hall, Judd Street London WC1H 9JE (Tel. No. 020 7974 4444)</p> <p>Noise from demolition and construction works is subject to control under the Control of Pollution Act 1974. You must carry out any building works that can be heard at the boundary of the site only between 08.00 and 18.00 hours Monday to Friday and 08.00 to 13.00 on Saturday and not at all on Sundays and Public Holidays. You must secure the approval of the Council's Noise and Licensing Enforcement Team prior to undertaking such activities outside these hours.</p>
5	<p>Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Informative (1/3):  The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 ("1990 Act") is that planning permission granted in England is subject to the condition ("the biodiversity gain condition") that development may not begin unless:  (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and  (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.</p> <p>The local planning authority (LPA) that would approve any Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP) (if required) is London Borough of Camden.</p> <p>There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These are summarised below, but you should check the legislation yourself and ensure you meet the statutory requirements.</p> <p>Based on the information provided, this permission WILL require approval of a BGP before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements summarised below are considered to apply.</p>
6	<p>Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Informative (2/3):  + Summary of transitional arrangements and exemptions for biodiversity gain condition</p>

	<p>The following are provided for information and may not apply to this permission:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The planning application was made before 12 February 2024.</li> <li>2. The planning permission is retrospective.</li> <li>3. The planning permission was granted under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, and the original (parent) planning permission was made or granted before 12 February 2024.</li> <li>4. The permission is exempt because of one or more of the reasons below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is not "major development" and the application was made or granted before 2 April 2024, or planning permission is granted under section 73 and the original (parent) permission was made or granted before 2 April 2024.</li> <li>- It is below the de minimis threshold (because it does not impact an onsite priority habitat AND impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat with biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat).</li> <li>- The application is a Householder Application.</li> <li>- It is for development of a "Biodiversity Gain Site".</li> <li>- It is Self and Custom Build Development (for no more than 9 dwellings on a site no larger than 0.5 hectares and consists exclusively of dwellings which are Self-Build or Custom Housebuilding).</li> <li>- It forms part of, or is ancillary to, the high-speed railway transport network (High Speed 2).</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
7	<p>Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Informative (3/3):</p> <p>+ Irreplaceable habitat:</p> <p>If the onsite habitat includes Irreplaceable Habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements. In addition to information about minimising adverse impacts on the habitat, the BGP must include information on compensation for any impact on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat. The LPA can only approve a BGP if satisfied that the impact on the irreplaceable habitat is minimised and appropriate arrangements have been made for compensating for any impact which do not include the use of biodiversity credits.</p> <p>+ The effect of section 73(2D) of the Town &amp; Country Planning Act 1990  If planning permission is granted under section 73, and a BGP was approved in relation to the previous planning permission ("the earlier BGP"), the earlier BGP may be regarded as approved for the purpose of discharging the biodiversity gain condition on this permission. It will be regarded as approved if the conditions attached (and so the permission granted) do not affect both the post-development value of the onsite habitat and any arrangements made to compensate irreplaceable habitat as specified in the earlier BGP.</p> <p>+ Phased development</p>

	<p>In the case of phased development, the BGP will be required to be submitted to and approved by the LPA before development can begin (the overall plan), and before each phase of development can begin (phase plans). The modifications in respect of the biodiversity gain condition in phased development are set out in Part 2 of the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024.</p>
8	<p>You are advised the developer and appointed / potential contractors should take the Council's guidance on Construction Management Plans (CMP) into consideration prior to finalising work programmes and must submit the plan using the Council's CMP pro-forma; this is available on the Council's website at <a href="https://beta.camden.gov.uk/web/guest/construction-management-plans">https://beta.camden.gov.uk/web/guest/construction-management-plans</a> or contact the Council's Planning Obligations Team, 5 Pancras Square c/o Town Hall, Judd Street London WC1H 9JE (Tel. No. 020 7974 4444). No development works can start on site until the CMP obligation has been discharged by the Council and failure to supply the relevant information may mean the council cannot accept the submission as valid, causing delays to scheme implementation. Sufficient time should be afforded in work plans to allow for public liaison, revisions of CMPs and approval by the Council.</p>
9	<p>With regard to the condition above, the preliminary risk assessment is required in accordance with CLR11 model procedures for management of contaminated land and must include an appropriate scheme of investigation with a schedule of work detailing the proposed sampling and analysis strategy. You are advised that the London Borough of Camden offer an Enhanced Environmental Information Review available from the Contaminated Land Officer (who has access to the Council's historical land use data) on 020 7974 4444, or by email, <a href="http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/contacts/council-contacts/environment/contact-the-contaminated-land-officer.en">http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/contacts/council-contacts/environment/contact-the-contaminated-land-officer.en</a>, and that this information can form the basis of a preliminary risk assessment. Further information is also available on the Council's Contaminated Land web pages at <a href="http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/environment/pollution/contaminated-land/">http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/environment/pollution/contaminated-land/</a>, or from the Environment Agency at <a href="http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk">www.environment-agency.gov.uk</a>.</p>
10	<p>Your attention is drawn to the fact that there is a separate legal agreement with the Council which relates to the development for which this permission is granted. Information/drawings relating to the discharge of matters covered by the Heads of Terms of the legal agreement should be marked for the attention of the Planning Obligations Officer, Sites Team, Camden Town Hall, Argyle Street, WC1H 8EQ.</p>

11	<p>This permission is granted without prejudice to the necessity of obtaining consent under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007. Application forms may be obtained from the Council's website, <a href="http://www.camden.gov.uk/planning">www.camden.gov.uk/planning</a> or the Camden Contact Centre on Tel: 020 7974 4444 or email <a href="mailto:env.devcon@camden.gov.uk">env.devcon@camden.gov.uk</a>).</p>
12	<p>This site is within an area of archaeological significance/archaeological potential where development is likely to result in the destruction of ancient remains. Your attention is drawn to the British Archaeologists and Developers Liaison Group Code of Practice agreed by the British Property Federation and the Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers. The Council recognises and endorses this Code and will expect the developer and approved archaeological organisations to abide by its provisions.</p>



Site Locations at British Museum



*Russell Square*

*British Museum*

*Bedford Square Garden*

*Bloomsbury Square Garden*

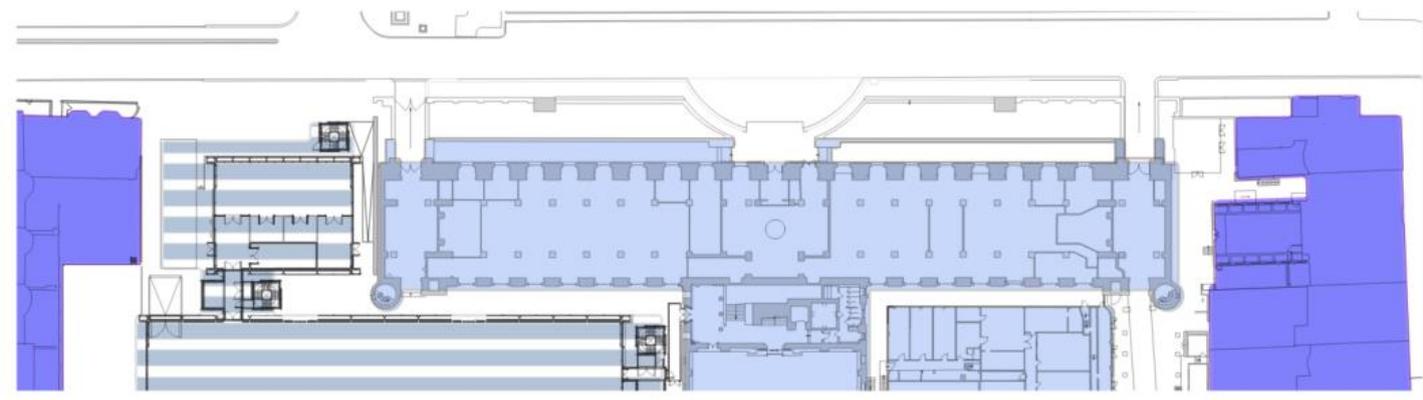
Key



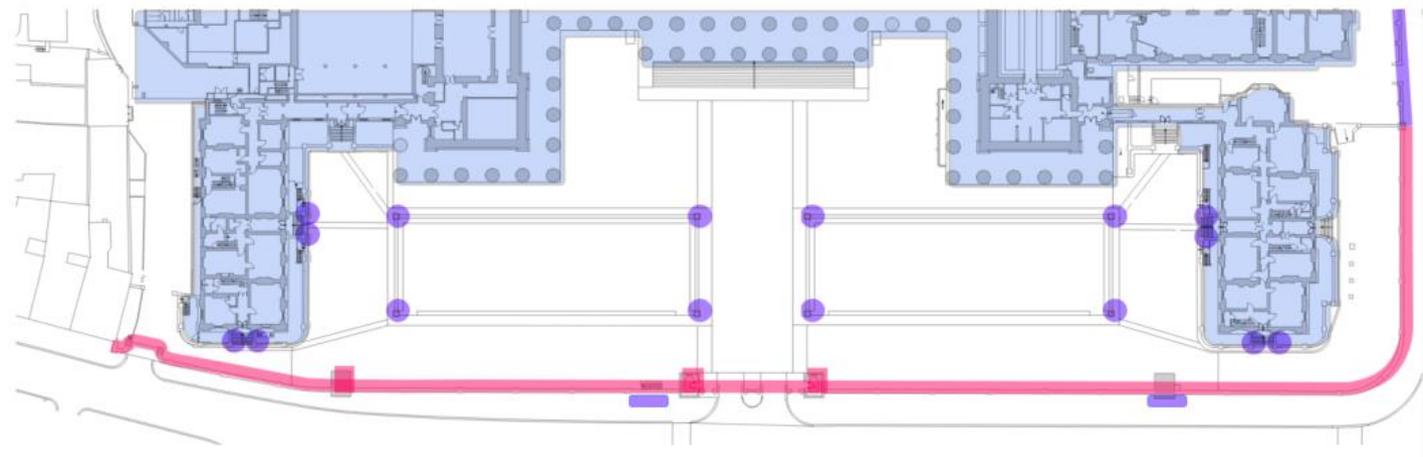
**GRADE I - The British Museum & King Edward VII Galleries**  
By virtue of its physical attachment to the main Museum building, the World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre (WCEC) is technically Grade I listed

**GRADE II\* - Main entrance gateway, railings and lodges attached to the British Museum**

**GRADE II - 18 lampposts on the Forecourt of the British Museum**  
Pair of K6 telephone kiosks next to the western stone pier on the front boundary railings  
Pair of K6 telephone kiosks flanking the eastern stone pier on the front boundary railings



Listing Summary - King Edward Building & Montagu House



Listing Summary - South Forecourt & Great Russell Street



*Historic image of the Northern Entrance*



*Historic image of the South Forecourt*



Figure 2. Existing queuing conditions and temporary tent on Montague Place



Figure 10. Existing queuing conditions on Great Russell Street

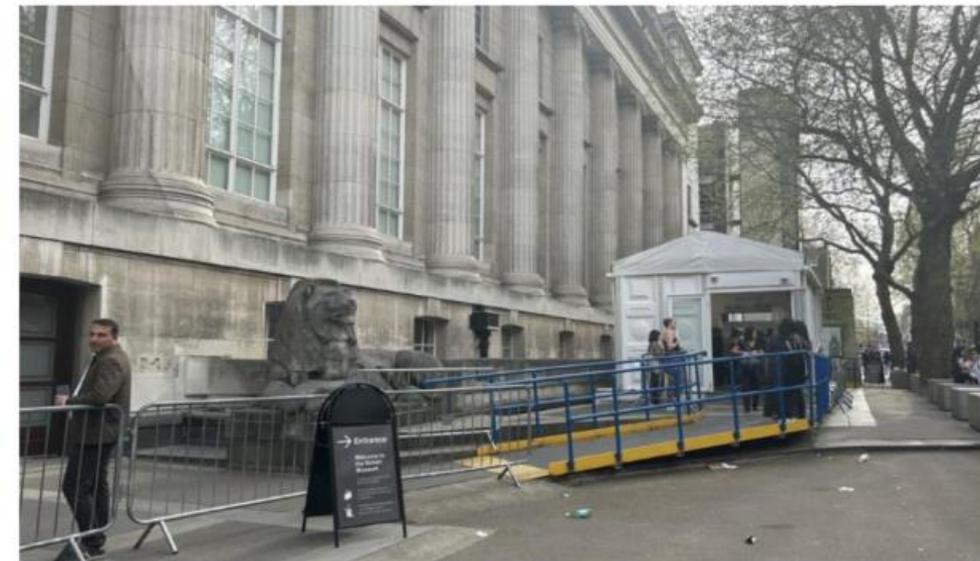
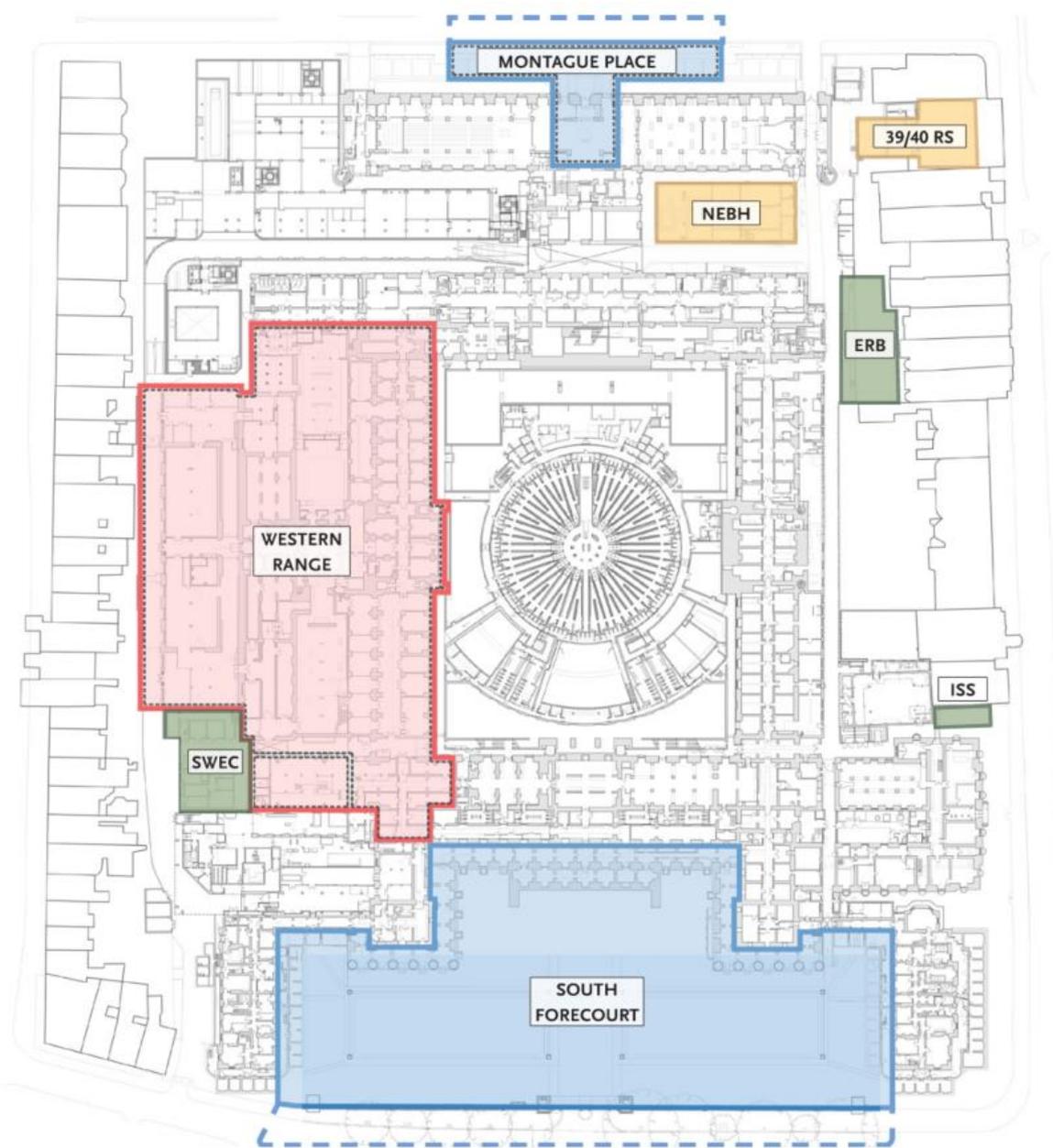


Figure 3. Existing ramp access to temporary tent

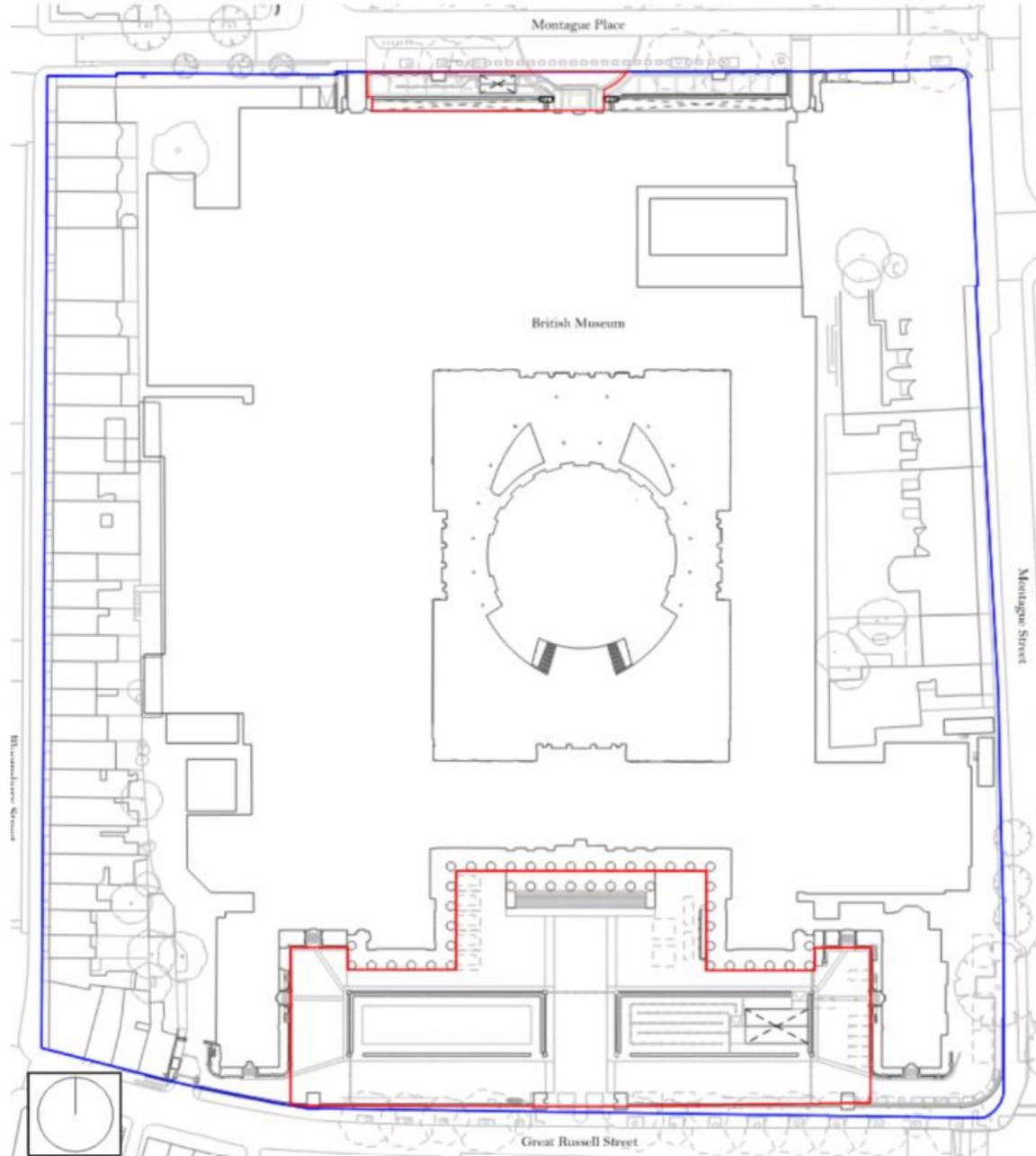


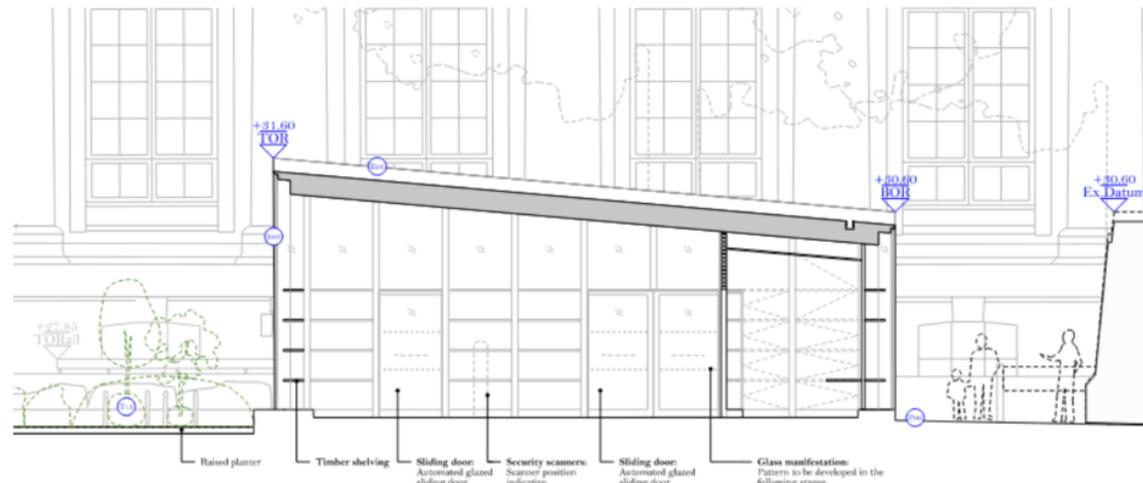
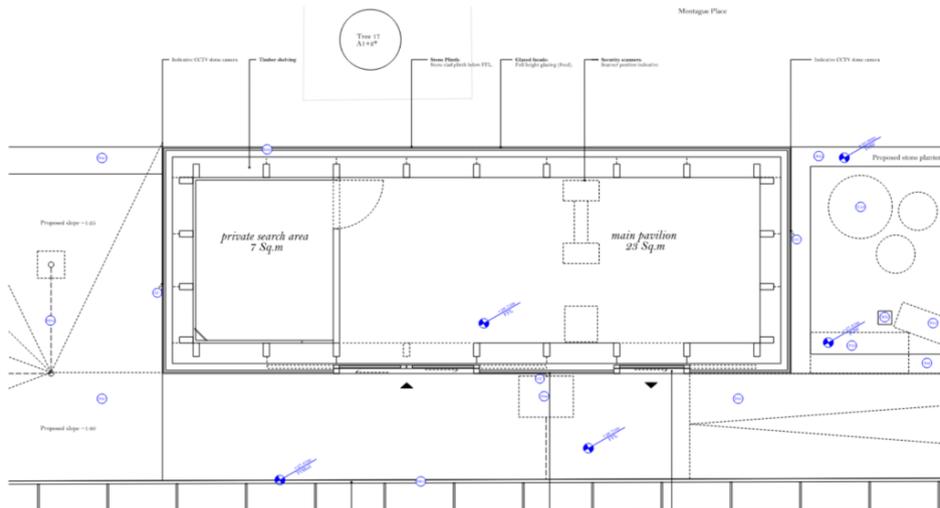
Figure 11. Existing temporary tent and queuing barriers on the east lawn



Key

- South Forecourt and North Entrance
- Western Range
- Energy Centre Programme Proposed Buildings
- Energy Centre Programme Enabling Works









*North pavilion as seen at the North elevation of the King Edward Building along Montague Place*



*View B - Oblique NE view across Montague Place*



*View C - Oblique NW view across Montague Place*

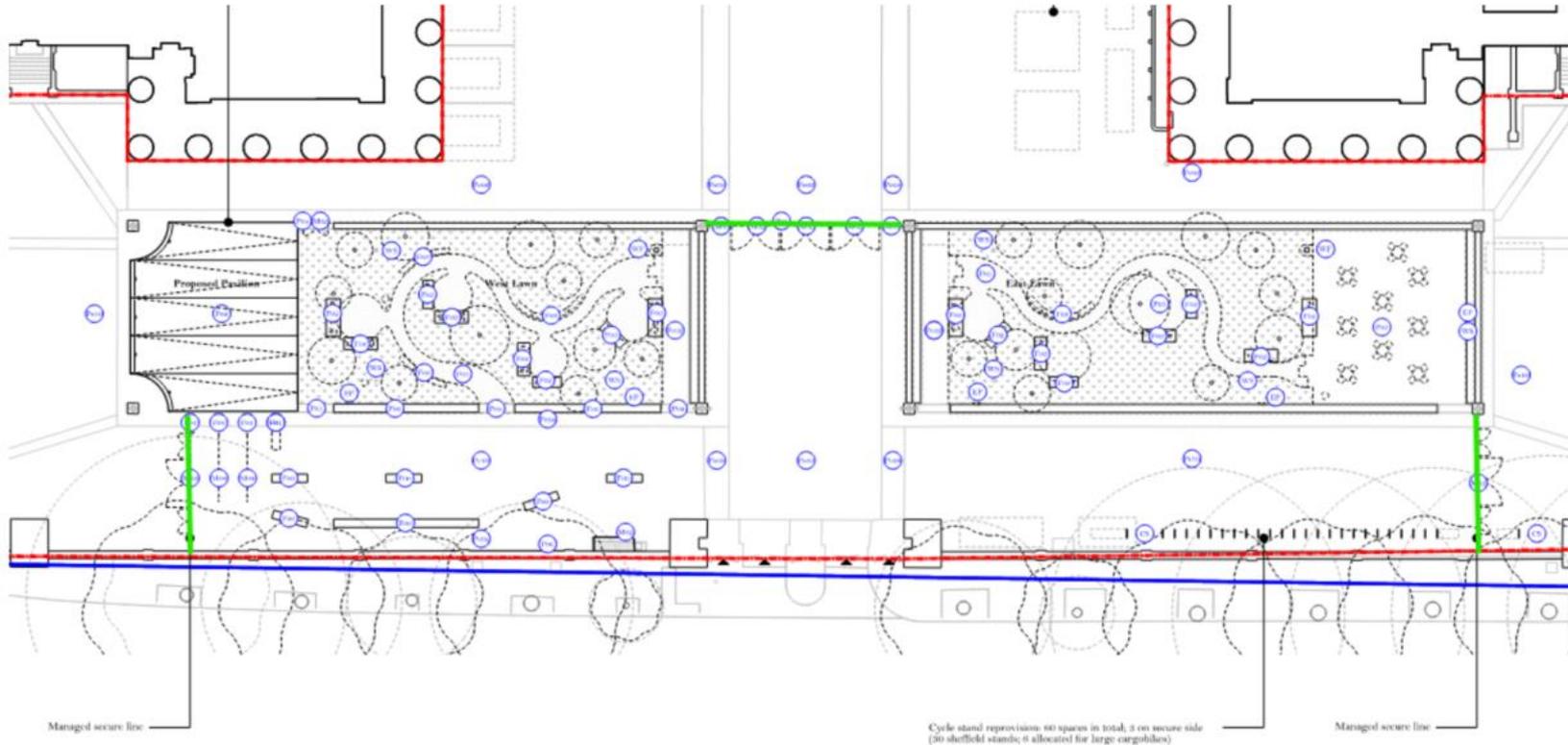


*View F - View from Montague Place*

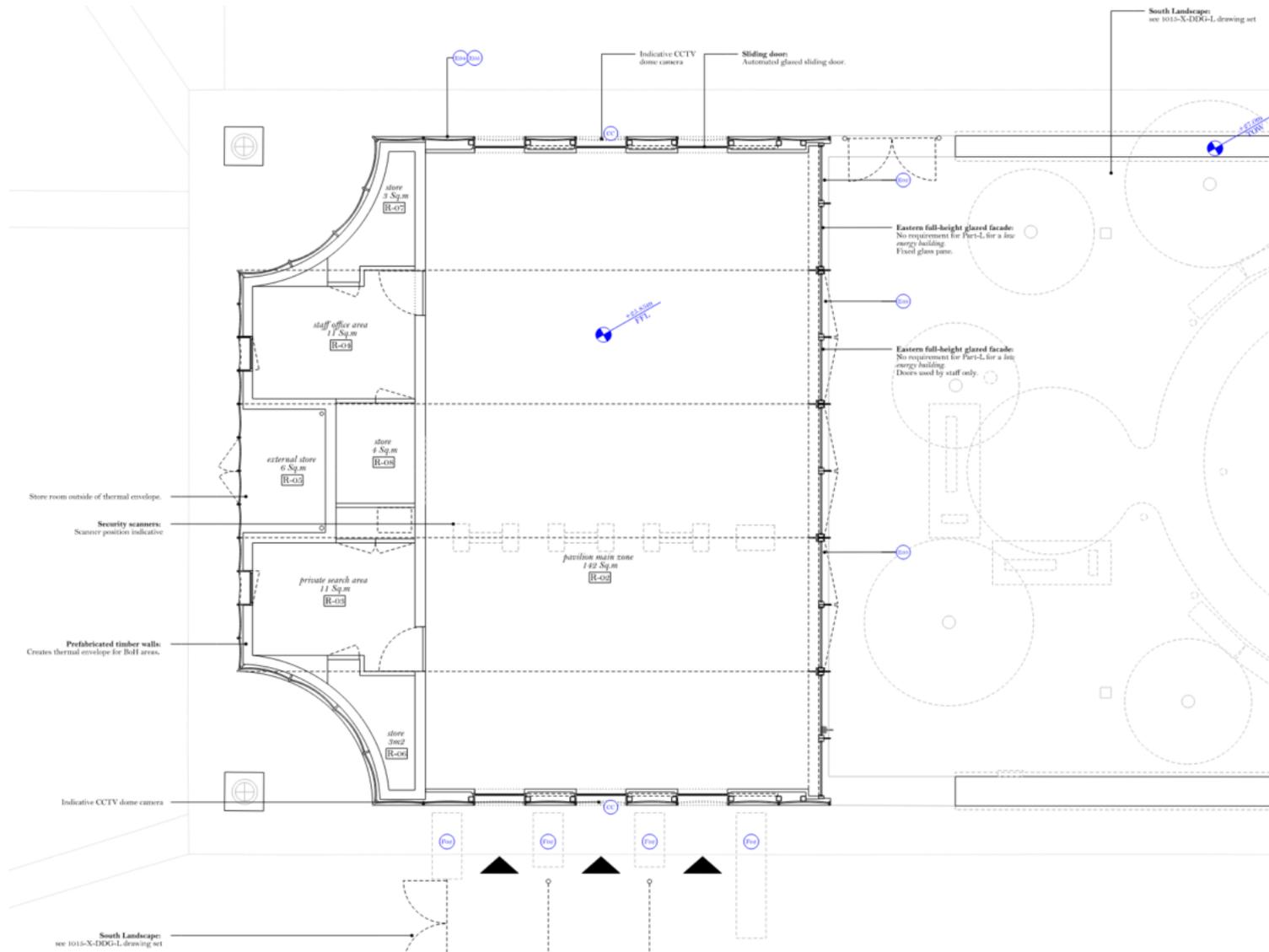
By concentrating these changes outside of the Museum, the listed building's highly significant interiors would be protected from potentially harmful modification.



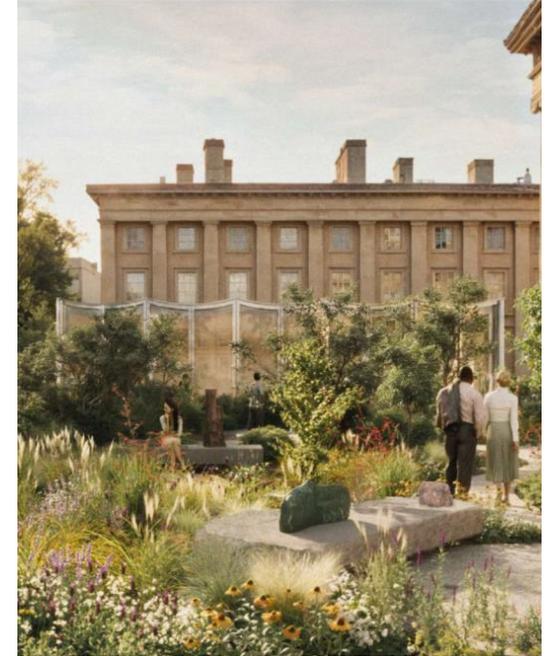
South pavilion as seen at the South Forecourt elevation along Great Russell Street













*South Forecourt Proposals, Great Russell Street - isometric view*