DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

September 30, 2019

VIA EMAIL

Alan Harwood, AECOM
3101 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 900
Arlington, VA 22201

Re: British Embassy Washington, 3100 Massachusetts Avenue NW

Dear Mr. Harwood:

The purpose of this correspondence is to confirm our discussions in May 2019 that the internal renovations of the British Embassy in Washington located at 3100 Massachusetts Avenue, NW (the Subject Property) are permitted as a matter of right and will not require any action by the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia, or the Foreign Mission Board of Zoning Adjustment (FMBZA).

We discussed the project as primarily involving (a) interior renovations to the historic Old Chancery Building/Ambassador's Residence, with some drainage improvements on the exterior of the building, and (b) upgrades to the New Chancery Building that are limited primarily to the interior of the structure, with minor improvements to the campus around the New Chancery Building. These improvements are summarized below.

Overall Project

The British Embassy in Washington DC is operated by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). The campus includes three key buildings, the Ambassador's Residence and Old Chancery Building designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens in 1928 and the New Chancery Building designed by Eric Bedford in 1958. The buildings are located within the Embassy campus which also includes the world renowned Ambassador's Residence gardens which together with the Lutyens buildings are important historical landmarks forming part of the Massachusetts Avenue Historic District. The stature of these buildings is paramount in the consideration of the repairs and remodeling works to ensure the buildings are preserved and fit-for-purpose to serve as key assets of the FCO.

The major building repairs project for the British Embassy in Washington DC includes the refurbishment of the existing Ambassador's Residence, Old Chancery Building, New Chancery Building and Embassy campus, with a focus on upgrades to the mechanical, electrical and

plumbing systems. The project also includes essential enhancements for all buildings to improve the functionality, efficiency and appearance of key spaces.

Ambassador's Residence and Old Chancery Building

The renovation of the Ambassador's Residence and the Old Chancery Building includes electrical, plumbing, and HVAC system repairs to address the 2016 physical conditions survey, and asbestos removal that will be required to facilitate the repair works.

In addition to the facility repair works, the following essential enhancements to the Ambassador's Residence include:

- Introduction of an accessible washroom alongside the public washrooms on the main entrance floor (Basement Level).
- Reconfiguration of the main kitchen as directed by the Head Chef.
- Upgrade of sanitary ware as required by the replacement plumbing works.
- Inclusion of repairs to the main stair and spiral stair stoneworks that were damaged in the earthquake of 2011.
- Refurbishment of staff quarters as required to facilitate the repair works and to provide a safe and clean environment with an emphasis on safe fire egress.

In addition to the facility repair works the following essential enhancements to the Old Chancery Building include:

- Conversion of the existing exercise space on the ground floor back to provide visitor and staff accommodation.
- Conversion of the existing British Council offices on the ground and first floors back to provide visitor and staff accommodation.
- General redecoration through-out.
- Review and upgrades to fire alarm and fire detection systems.

Finally, the interior gutter and downspout systems of the Ambassador's Residence and the Old Chancery Building are being repaired to meet the drainage needs of the historic structures. As a result, the proposed project will not alter the original exterior appearance of the buildings.

Overall, the repairs and improvements to the Ambassador's Residence and the Old Chancery Building primarily involve interior spaces and will not affect the exterior appearance of the structures.

New Chancery Building

The New Chancery Building opened in 1960 and consists of brick and limestone affect pre-cast concrete to emulate the materials of the neighboring Lutyens buildings. The New Chancery Building is arranged as a courtyard building with four cores at each corner to provide a highly functional and flexible base design.

The main entrance is at Level 1 with an enclosed security kiosk. Semi-public functions are located on either side of the main entrance and main meeting area. The reception is constrained by the depth of the plan and security line at the main core. A small shop is also located adjacent to the Rotunda. Within the back of house (BOH) space are the Ambassador's garage and facilities management workshops.

Levels 2-6 are office spaces housing conventional office desking in various configurations, with meeting rooms, storage, server rooms and cellular offices depending on the needs of the departments. Restroom facilities and kitchen spaces are generally located in the corners. Level 7 currently houses the small cafeteria space, elevator over-runs and some rooftop plant. An additional elevator has been installed to provide an accessible route to this floor from Level 6 below.

While the New Chancery Building is of sturdy construction and has a been well-maintained, there are some critical issues with the building that together with the improvements to mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems should be rectified or improved; these include:

- The 9' 6" floor to floor height creates an oppressive environment for the office floors with ceiling heights of 7' 6" - 7' 10".
- Insufficient restroom provision to meet required standards, particularly for women.
- Lack of accessible restrooms on every floor.
- Less than desired public facing spaces constrained by the existing spatial arrangement.
- Deteriorating finishes in the main core and stair area.
- Lack of on-floor amenities for the typical office spaces.
- Lack of landscaped open spaces with ease of access.

In response to these issues, and to enhance the functionality and use of the facility, the renovation of the New Chancery also includes several design initiatives. These items include:

- Additional event and exhibition space connected to the landscaped courtyard.
- Cafe and kitchen space at Level 1 including a small brickwork extension.
- Exercise space relocated from the Old Chancery Building.

- Consular office relocated from the existing Passport Office in the existing back of house area with new brickwork facade.
- Flexible office spaces with all office functions located on Levels 2-6.
- Enhanced office space to provide high acoustic quality meeting rooms, improved air quality and lighting.
- Increased restroom provision, accessible restrooms and showers.
- Landscaped courtyard to provide protected open space for staff and for events.

A central asset of the New Chancery Building is the courtyard space, which is currently used for car parking but offers greater value as a multi-function courtyard garden to support exhibitions, functions and staff well-being. As part of the New Chancery Building improvements, the interior staff parking lots in the center of the building would be altered. A new two-story exhibition hall and landscaped courtyard would replace the existing asphalt parking spaces, removing the current courtyard parking lots on Level 1 and level 2 entirely. This addition would not be visible from the exterior of the New Chancery Building.

Summary

Given the limited scope and visibility of the project, I conclude that the proposed renovations of the British Embassy Washington are permitted as a matter of right without further review by the Zoning Commission or the Foreign Mission Board of Zoning Adjustment. The FCO may cite this administrative determination during the course of submitting materials to DCRA, or other review or permitting agencies.

Sincerely,

Matthew Le Grant
Zoning Administrator

Disclaimer: This letter is issued in reliance upon, and therefore limited to, the questions asked, and documents submitted in support of the request for a determination. The determinations reached in this letter are made based on the information supplied, and the laws, regulations, and policy in effect as of the date of this letter. Changes in the applicable laws, regulations, or policy, or new information or evidence, may result in a different determination. This letter is **NOT** a final decision of the Zoning Administrator that may be appealed under Section Y-302.1 of the Zoning Regulations (Title 11 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations), but instead is an advisory statement of how the Zoning Administrator would rule on an application if reviewed as of the date of this letter. Therefore, this letter does **NOT** vest an application for zoning or other DCRA approval process, which may only occur as part of the review of an application submitted to DCRA. This determination is limited to an interpretation of the Zoning Regulations, and I am not making any representations as to Building Code requirements or other D.C. laws.

Attachment: PDRM Project Set dated 12-21-18

File: Det Let re 3100 Massachusetts Ave NW – British Embassy to Harwood 9-30-19

Foreign & Commonwealth Office

AECOM

Washington Major Building Repairs Project

British Embassy Washington DC

DCRA Preliminary Design Review Meeting Document

The plans included within this PDRM submission are not to be copied, distributed or shared beyond parties issued for their information by the UK Foreign Commonwealth Office, unless with express written permission by the Project Director, British Embassy Washington DC

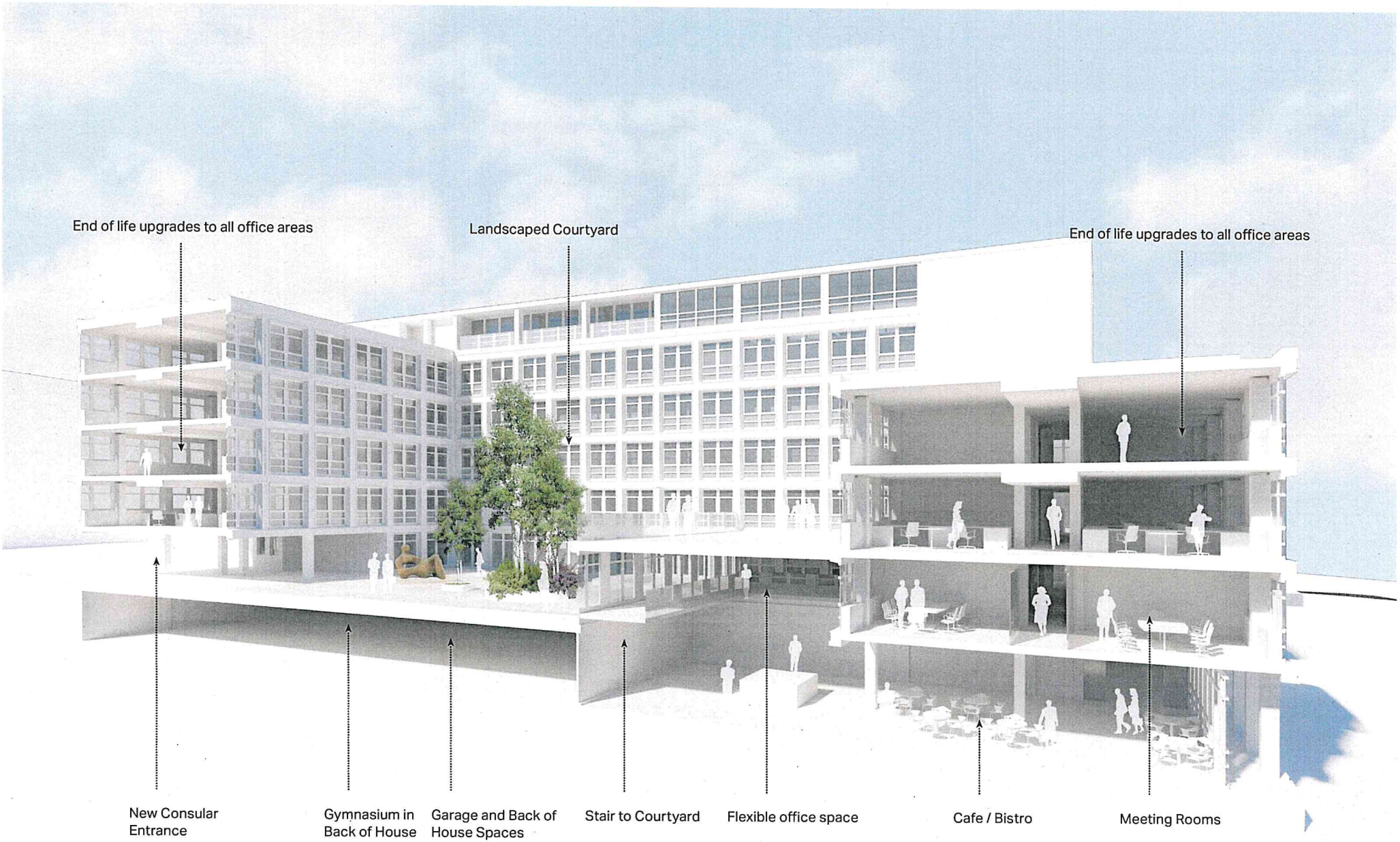
21 December 2018

60538917

Washington Major Building Repairs Project
British Embassy Washington DC

DCRA Preliminary Design Review Meeting Document

Preliminary design information documenting the project scope relating to the major repairs and essential enhancements related to life expired elements for the British Embassy in Washington DC.



Sectional Perspective of proposed New Chancery Building Remodelling

Project Narrative

This document describes the extent of repair works and essential enhancements for the primary buildings of the British Embassy in Washington DC and related statutory compliance issues for preliminary review with The Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA)

The Project

The major building repairs project for the British Embassy in Washington DC includes general maintenance and repairs as well as the refurbishment of the existing buildings focusing on the replacement of life-expired mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems, and essential enhancements to improve the functionality of key spaces within each of the three main buildings.

The Site

The British Embassy in Washington DC comprises the Sir Edwin Lutyens designed buildings known as the Ambassador's Residence and Old Chancery Building which provide housing accommodation for the British Ambassador to the United States of America and live-in staff and the New Chancery Building accommodating the office functions of the Embassy. The site is designated as forming part of the Massachusetts Avenue Historic District due to the historical significance of the Lutyens buildings and associated gardens.

Aerial Photo

The New Chancery Building

The New Chancery Building was designed by Eric Bedford CVO, CBE in 1958 in the late modernist / brick brutalist style to house the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The rectilinear courtyard building is served by cores on each of the four corners and arranged in wings providing general office functions.

The building has experienced various piece-meal upgrades and refurbishment over time, however a full upgrade of building services is now required to maintain the functionality of the building. This upgrade work is coupled with general repairs to the building fabric as identified in a full building survey conducted in 2016 and the upgrade of ADA compliant facilities, internal finishes, meeting provision and furniture and fittings.

The project also includes the addition of a double height exhibition space within the lower courtyard car parking area and the conversion of the existing upper courtyard from a car park to a plaza with planting designed to function as an outdoor entertainment space. The existing conference space at Level 1 is to be converted to a café connected to a new conference area at Level 2 and the upper courtyard via a lift and grand stair.

The principle upgrades and enhancements are summarised below:

- Replacement of the existing two-pipe heating and cooling system to a four-pipe system to improve the environmental control through-out the year.
- New ventilation strategy with additional fresh air supply and extraction to all floors to reduce the poor air quality experienced within the spaces.
- Re-wiring and replacement of existing plumbing, pipework and ductwork through-out.
- New LED based lighting through-out to provide improved light quality and energy efficiency.
- Refurbishment of IT systems.
- Removal of all superfluous internal suspended ceilings and column cladding where feasible to improve the floor to ceiling heights and views through the office space. These measures are also intended to re-instate the design intent of the original building.
- Improved open-plan layout and meeting room provision for the general office floors.
- Removal of the Level 7 cafeteria for future conversion to office space.
- New Gym facilities with associated changing rooms in the back of house area of Level 1
- Inclusion of the Consular functions at Level 2.
- Inclusion of the British Council within the New Chancery Building and general refinement of departmental arrangements to improve productivity.
- Improved desking including the provision of sit/stand work stations.
- Accessible WC and shower for each floor to improve the overall WC count and ADA compliance.

New Chancery Building

Proposed Exhibition Space and Landscaped Courtyard

The Ambassador's Residence and Old Chancery Building

The Ambassador's Residence and Old Chancery Building were designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens OM, KCIE in 1928. The Residence is the home of the British Ambassador to the United States of America and provides accommodation for travelling dignitaries and some key staff members. The residence building houses a ballroom, dining room and drawing room with associated comfort facilities used for public events. The Residence receives around fifteen thousand guests a year, for a variety of events ranging from one-on-one meals, to major dinners, receptions, barbeques, conferences and garden parties. Rarely does a senior visitor from London visit and not stay in the residence itself.

The project principally focuses on a the full overhaul of building services replacing existing plumbing, wiring and mechanical systems together with urgent repairs to remedy a series of existing leaks and building fabric degradation. Key areas of repairs are summarised below:

- Replacement of all flat roofs and terraces with new high-tech membrane system. Existing brick paving to patios and terraces to be reinstated following repairs.
- Repairs to chimneys, pointing, missing pitched roof tiles and window frames externally.
- Relining and replacement as appropriate of internal guttering and drainage systems to prevent further leaking.
- Repair of all leaks and associated damaged building fabric.
- Removal and encapsulation of asbestos as required to accommodate the project and make the building safe for use.

The following enhancements to the accommodation provision are included as part of the project:

- Conversion of the existing apartment and dormitory arrangement of staff quarters in the attic space of the Ambassador's Residence (Level 3) to provide 6 no. independent staff flats with self-contained kitchens and bathrooms.
- Addition of an ADA compliant washroom alongside the public washrooms on the main entrance floor.
- Reconfiguration of the main kitchen equipment to improve functionality.
- New hard wired fire detection system to replace the existing wireless arrangement.
- Repairs to the main stair and spiral stair stoneworks where damaged occurred in the 2011 earthquake.
- Re-conversion of the existing gymnasium space on the ground floor to provide additional guest suites.
- re-conversion of the existing British Council space to provide additional guest suites.
- New paintwork and selected redecoration to all areas to reinstate the building finishes and appearance following the replacement of building services and a general update to other spaces.

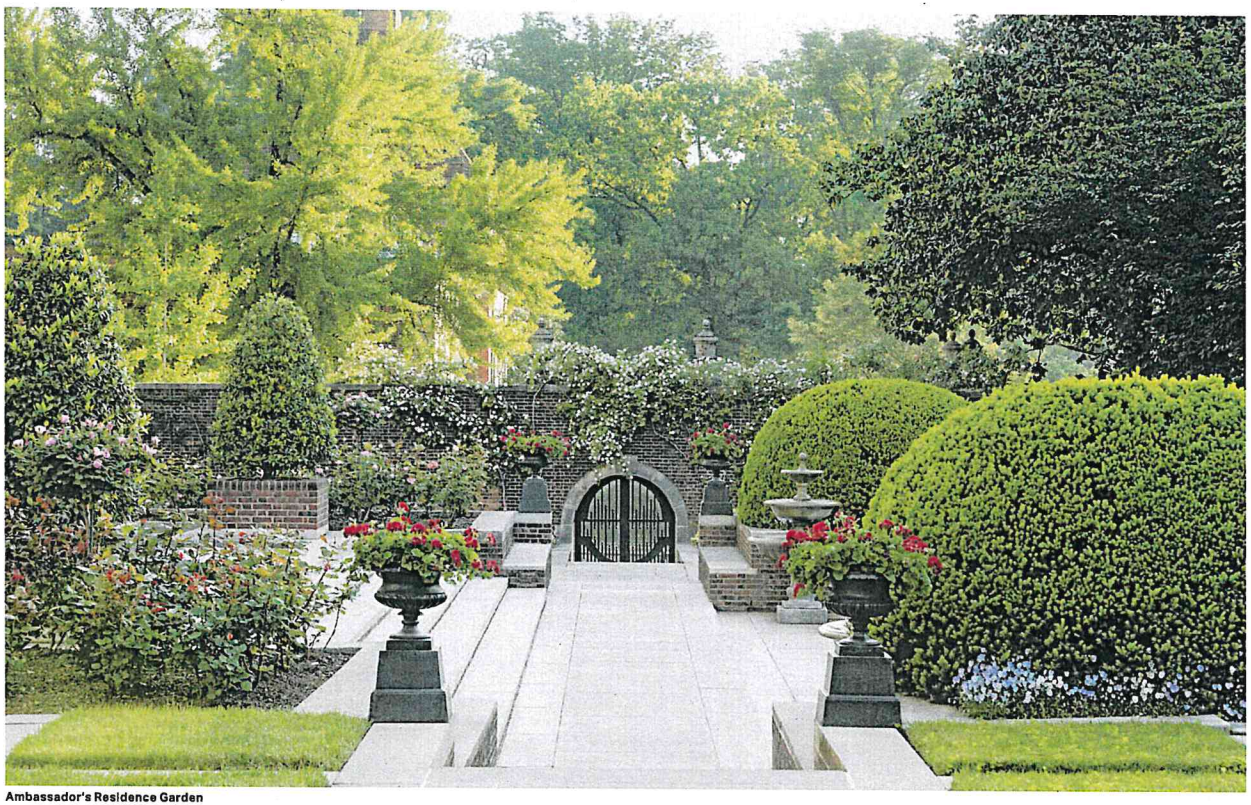
Ambassador's Residence

Old Chancery Building

The Embassy Grounds

Generally the grounds and gardens will be unaffected by the project, however the following enhancements will be undertaken:

- Improvements to the existing drainage systems where pipework has deteriorated.
- Improvements where required and feasible to improve the access to the site and buildings.
- Repairs to the existing retaining walls to maintain the structural integrity.



Ambassador's Residence Garden

Construction Phasing

New Chancery Building

The works to the New Chancery Building will be partially occupied and designed to be completed in 6 phases. As the existing heating and cooling pipe work is arranged around the exterior wall of the building, the phasing strategy is vertical by wing. The phases are described as follows:

Phase 0	Specialist decanting preparations on Level 4
Phase 1	Decanting preparations on Level 7
	New Exhibition Space construction
	Level 1 back of house renovations
	Level 1, basement and core riser primary services distribution
Phase 2	New Exhibition Space construction
	North Wing renovations Levels 2-4
	Level 1, basement and core riser primary services distribution
Phase 3	East Wing renovations Levels 2-4
	Level 1, basement and core riser primary services distribution
Phase 4	South Wing renovations Levels 2-6
	Level 1, basement and core riser primary services distribution
Phase 5	West Wing renovations Levels 2-7
	Level 1, basement and core riser primary services distribution
Phase 6	Sequenced core renovations

It is intended that all cores remain operational through-out phases 1-5 allowing for access and egress to the occupied floors. The contractor will not use the common cores for materials distribution, this will be provided through a temporary hoist located strategically for each phase.

During Phase 6 the minor works that are required for cores B, C & D will be completed whilst maintaining a suitable egress path. The works for core A will require careful consideration to maintain a suitable egress path or provide an alternative means of escape.

Ambassador's Residence and old Chancery Building

The Ambassador's Residence and Old Chancery Building will both be fully vacated for the duration of the works intended to take 12 months. Alternative accommodation for the staff currently living in these buildings will be provided in the renovated Passport Office adjacent to the New Chancery Building (Permit drawings submitted) and at alternative locations off-site.

Life Safety

New Chancery Building

The existing New Chancery Building is arranged around a central courtyard with 4 cores located on each of the 4 corners of the building. The proposed works on Levels 2-7 largely maintains the existing office arrangements with additional and improved meeting rooms and is intended to retain the existing fire strategy.

The new Exhibition Space located on Level 1 is designed to current NFPA codes and will be sprinklered as required. The back of house garage and selected workshop spaces have existing sprinkler systems and these will be maintained. The egressing strategy for the back of house spaces is unchanged from the existing condition.

Upgrades to detection and alarms systems are included in the design proposals.

Ambassador's Residence and old Chancery Building

The Ambassador's Residence and Old Chancery Building are residential buildings housing the Ambassador, members of the Ambassodor's staff and guest rooms for visitors. The existing egress strategy is intended to be maintained and enhanced with new detection and hard wired fire alarm system. The current system is wireless.

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Permit Operations

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY | 1100 4th STREET, SW | SUITE 310 | WASHINGTON, DC 20024

September 27, 2019

Mr. Roland Dreist
D.C. Surveyor
Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs
Office of the Surveyor
1100 4th St, S.W., 3rd Floor
Washington, DC 20024

Subject: Street/Alley Closing Application **S.O. 18-41561**

Dear Mr. Dreist:

In a letter dated **February 4, 2019**, The District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority (DC Water) objected to the Street/Alley Closing requested in **S.O. 18-41561**. Since that time, the applicant has contacted DC Water and resolved our objections. Therefore, DC Water removes our objection to the proposed street/alley closings requested in **S.O. 18-41561**.

If you have any additional needs from me, I can be reached at the contact information listed below.

Regards,

Kevin Harney
Easement and Covenant Coordinator
District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority
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DC Water - Water is Life!