



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

**Chinese Embassy in the UK  
c/o Ms Nona Jones  
DP9 Ltd**

**Sent via e-mail only to:  
[nona.jones@dp9.co.uk](mailto:nona.jones@dp9.co.uk)**

**Please ask for:** Andrew Lynch

**Tel:** 0303 44 43594

**Email:** [Andrew.lynch@communities.gov.uk](mailto:Andrew.lynch@communities.gov.uk)

**Your ref:** PA/24/01229/A1 and PA/24/01248/NC

**Our ref:** PCU/RTI/E5900/3353255

**Date:** 14 October 2024

Dear Ms Jones

**Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – Section 77  
Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England)  
Order 2015 and Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 -  
Section 12  
Town and Country Planning (Inquiries Procedure) (England) Rules 2000**

**Application by Chinese Embassy in the UK for the redevelopment of the site to provide an embassy (Sui Generis use class), involving the refurbishment and restoration of the Johnson Smirke Building (Grade II listed), partial demolition, remodelling and refurbishment of Seaman's Registry (Grade II listed), with alterations to the west elevation of the building, the retention, part demolition, alterations and extensions to Murray House and Dexter House, the erection of a standalone entrance pavilion building, alterations to the existing boundary wall and demolition of substation, associated public realm and landscaping, highway works, car and cycle parking and all ancillary and associated works at Royal Mint Court, London, EC3N 4QN.**

**Planning Application no: PA/24/01229/A1 and PA/24/01248/NC**

1. I am directed by the Secretary of State to refer to the above named planning applications.
2. In deciding whether to call in these applications, the Secretary of State has considered her policy on calling in planning applications. This gives examples of the types of issues which may lead her to conclude, in her opinion, that the applications should be called-in. In the light of her policy,

the Secretary of State has decided to call-in these applications. She accordingly directs, under her powers in sections 12 and 77 of the 1990 Acts, that the applications shall be referred to her instead of being dealt with by the Local Planning Authority.

3. To consider all the relevant aspects of the proposed development, the Secretary of State has decided to hold a local inquiry. For the purposes of the 2000 Rules this letter is the “relevant notice” that an inquiry is to be held and the date of this letter is the “starting date”. All the arrangements for holding the inquiry will be made by the Planning Inspectorate in Bristol.
4. The Planning Inspectorate will write to you shortly about the procedure for determining the called-in applications.
5. The original applications, together with any plans and other documents accompanying them will need to be supplied to the Planning Inspectorate (including any related certificates and correspondence). The Inspectorate will contact you shortly to discuss this further.
6. Should you have any questions please contact the Planning Inspectorate (email [Mark.Boulton@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:Mark.Boulton@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)).
7. On the information so far available to the Secretary of State, the matters which she particularly wishes to be informed about for the purposes of her consideration of the application are:
  - a) The extent to which the proposed development is consistent with Government policies for ‘Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment’ in the NPPF (Chapter 16);
  - b) The extent to which the proposed development is consistent with the development plan for the area; and
  - c) any other matters the Inspector considers relevant.
8. This is to be taken as the Secretary of State’s statement under rule 6(12) of the 2000 Rules.
9. In accordance with rule 6(1) and (2), the local planning authority shall ensure that two copies of a statement of case are received by the Secretary of State, and one copy has been received by any statutory party as defined in rule 2 within six weeks of the starting date (unless the Planning Inspectorate notifies you otherwise - you may wish to contact them). Your attention is drawn to rule 6(11). The Secretary of State will comply with rule 6(4).
10. Your attention is also drawn to the provisions in rule 14 of the 2000 Rules that the local planning authority and the applicant shall together prepare an agreed statement of common ground and ensure that a copy is received by the Secretary of State (at the Planning Inspectorate) and

any statutory party receives a copy within 6 weeks of the starting date (unless the Planning Inspectorate notifies you otherwise as the bespoke arrangements will apply – you may wish to contact them).

11. If you are proposing to give, or call a person to give, evidence at the inquiry by reading a written statement (i.e. proof of evidence) your attention is drawn to rule 13.

Yours sincerely

*Andrew Lynch*

**Andrew Lynch**  
**Head of Casework, Propriety and Practice**  
**Planning Casework Unit**

*This decision was made by the Secretary of State and signed on her behalf.*