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Vaastu Review: The new U.S. embassy in London

Building Background: U.S. officials announced on Feb 23, 2010 that the Philadelphia-based architecture firm Kieran Timberlake has won the competition to design the U.S.'s high-security new embassy in London. The architects, in a written description of the concept, refer to a wide range of positive ways in which the building will perform, both as an example of sustainable architecture and as a piece of urban design. Construction for this \$1B building is expected to start in 2013, with a target completion in 2017. Embassy renderings as released by the U.S. state department and published in multiple forums are shown below.



Vaastu Background: Vaastu is an ancient building science that originated in India, thousands of years back. The building and land guidelines presented in the Vaastu realm, aim at providing a healthy and rewarding environment for all the building occupants. Residing in a Vaastu favorable building integrated with appropriate functionality of the rooms will bring in rich rewards to the occupants. The concepts in Vaastu design harmonize the five elements (solid, water, fire, air and ether) that are present in the body to a minute scale with their universal presence. With Americans spending about 87% of the time indoors, designing buildings to Vaastu guidelines will translate to good health and good quality of life.

The modern day sustainability design ideas are a component of Vaastu design principles. The above renderings were analyzed to determine the Vaastu strength/weakness of the new building. Supplementary input that was used in this analysis was obtained from various web publications that described this building and the adjacent landscape.

Vaastu Findings: The new embassy building, from multiple fronts, has **significant Vaastu strengths**. This will ensure that the functionality of the building will flourish once the building is occupied by its staff. In addition, the required approval process will not run into any hurdles in the U.S. Congress and the construction work will not experience any delays. The positive Vaastu elements in this building are:

- The north facing orientation of this cubical structure will bring in lot of positive energy.
- The presence of River Thames towards the North side of the building will ensure that the economic relationship between the two countries will flourish.
- The architects have used the landscape around the building to provide the required security. To this end, the ground level on the south side is significantly higher than that in north. This is one of the core recommendations in Vaastu.
- The presence of moat (semi circular pond) on the North side will increase the goodwill between the embassy and the local population.
- The formal primary entrance for the visitors and dignitaries is located on the East side of the North east corner of the building. This is a very favorable location.
- The presence of more open space on the Eastern side will increase the work efficiency and improve the health of the occupants.

Based on the above renderings, the Vaastu grade for this building is **'B+'**.

Prasada Rao, Ph.D. is Chair and Associate professor of the Civil and Environmental Engineering department at California State University, Fullerton. He has assisted many individuals and institutions in designing Vaastu compatible structures. His other articles are present at www.sriyaastu.com