

Our Ref.: RA/3149

4 May 2017

Mr Mark Heaney  
Lambeth Planning  
London Borough of Lambeth  
10 Wandsworth Road  
London SW8 2LL

Dear Mr Heaney,

**National Theatre, South Bank, London**

Application ref: 17/01760/LB and 17/01759/FUL

I write regarding the above planning application and listed building applications to replace the existing temporary structure on the external terrace of the National Theatre, known as the Deck, with a permanent structure. The Theatres Trust supports the applications. Please see our remit and comments below.

**Remit:** The Theatres Trust is the national advisory public body for theatres. We were established through the Theatres Trust Act 1976 'to promote the better protection of theatres' and provide statutory planning advice on theatre buildings and theatre use through The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, requiring the Trust to be consulted by local authorities on planning applications which include 'development involving any land on which there is a theatre'.

**Advice:** The Trust supports this opportunity to permanently enhance the entertainment and function facilities at the National Theatre by installing permanent structure to replace the temporary venue known as the Deck. We recognise that ancillary uses of this kind provide essential additional income to support the ongoing operation of the theatre and, given the Deck has been operating on a temporary basis since 2008, it has become an important part of the theatre's business model.

The existing pavilion structure consists of a lightweight aluminium frame clad in polycarbonate sheets with glazed sliding doors and a PVC tensile sheet roof. The structure was designed to be in keeping with the overall proportions of the theatre building and has not adversely harmed the character or significance of the listed building. This structure was designed to be temporary and, having now been in place for over 8 years, is approaching the end of its useful life. Apart from wear and tear, we are aware the structure also has energy usage and acoustic shortcomings associated with its year round use.

We therefore welcome the installation of a new light weight but robust permanent structure that

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The National Advisory Public Body for Theatres

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will provide better function and support facilities, address thermal comfort and acoustics, and improve the use, capacity and appearance of this structure. We note the design includes chamfered corners and the use of a timber 'diagrid' to echo features in the main theatre building. It also reuses the original steel sub structure, therefore by minimising the alterations needed to the existing building. Like the existing structure, the replacement one has also been designed to respect, complement, and be subservient to Lasdun's design, and remains entirely reversible. In our opinion, the new structure does not affect the historic or architectural significance of the theatre, and the benefits of a new purpose built permanent function room to the operation of the theatre would outweigh any harm caused.

The Trust would therefore recommend granting planning and listed building consent. Please contact us if we may be of further assistance.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Ross Anthony', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ross Anthony  
Planning Adviser