

# Protecting theatres for **everyone**



Ref.: TC/725

02 April 2019

Jennie Humphrie  
Pending Applications  
Development Planning  
City of Westminster  
PO Box 732  
Redhill, RH1 9FL

By e-mail: [southplanningteam@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:southplanningteam@westminster.gov.uk)

**Application:** 19/01975/LBC

**Site:** Noel Coward Theatre 85-89 St Martin's Lane London WC2N 4AU

**Proposal:** Internal alterations including the addition of partitions to create a balcony level audience bar/foyer space; refurbishment of the Grand Circle level Ladies WCs and modifications to the Box Office enclosure at ground floor level.

## **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 in England 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'.

## **Comment:**

Thank you for consulting the Theatres Trust on the above application.

The Trust is supportive of efforts by theatre owners and operators to improve their facilities and better meet the expectations of audiences. In particular, we welcome that this proposal will upgrade and expand the number of female WCs within the theatre which can be challenging within historic theatres.

With regard to Grand Circle level female WCs we would note that plans show these to be inward-opening. The applicant should ensure these utilise reversible hinges to prevent persons becoming trapped inside in the event they require assistance. It should also be ensured that sufficient ventilation is in place to minimise odours escaping to the corridor.

The more significant intervention is the creation of new bar space to serve the balcony (second floor). This will involve the conversion of ancillary office space necessitating the removal of a

## **Theatres Trust**

22 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0QL

**T** 020 7836 8591

**F** 020 7836 3302

**E** [info@theatrestrust.org.uk](mailto:info@theatrestrust.org.uk)

**W** [theatrestrust.org.uk](http://theatrestrust.org.uk)

**Chair** Tim Eyles **Director** Jon Morgan

**Trustees** Richard Baldwin, David Blyth, Pam Bone, Paul Cartwright, Paddy Dillon, Ruth Eastwood, David Ian, Richard Johnston, Gary Kemp, Dara Ó Briain, Simon Ricketts, Peter Roberts, Ann Skippers, Anna Stapleton

The National Advisory Public Body for Theatres

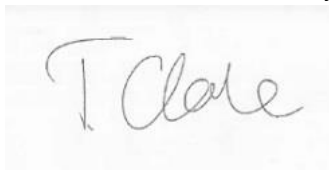
The Theatres Trust Charitable Fund co-operates with Theatres Trust, has the same Trustees and is registered as a charity under number 274697

partition wall. This proposal will better reveal this part of the building to the public and reflect Sprague's original intentions, and will help relieve pressure on existing bars at lower levels. Again, we support these works although we would question whether the bar could have been located or extended into the open plan office space beyond which would create greater space and enhance audience comfort.

We similarly have no concerns regarding works to the box office counter or Albery Bar.

We therefore **recommend the granting of listed building consent.**

Please contact us if we may be of further assistance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "T Clarke", on a light-colored rectangular background.

Tom Clarke MRTPI  
National Planning Adviser