

# Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/206

14 November 2019

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**Applications:** 19/07939/LBC

**Site:** Queens Theatre Ltd Shaftesbury Avenue London W1D 6BA

**Proposal:** Refurbishment of public foyer/bar and circulation areas, decorative works to first floor / Queen's Bar, and associated works.

## **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:**

These comments have been submitted in addition to our response to application reference 19/07938/LBC. This application for listed building consent primarily centres on works to the Queen's Bar and refurbishment works to the public foyer and circulation areas which largely fall within the building's 1950s replacement for its war-damaged original foyer. As with the corresponding application we were not directly notified but did provide advice to the applicant and visited the site in September 2019.

The applicant's intention for the Queen's Bar is to introduce an interpretation of the original Edwardian character of the building. The Trust has no objection to lightweight and reversible additions to this area, which are freestanding, leaving the original 1950s fabric persevered behind. However, we are aware that the Twentieth Century Society has identified the 1950s

## **Theatres Trust**

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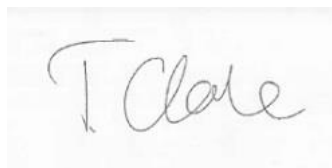
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remodelling as highly significant and will be objecting to the proposals. We would therefore be interested to comment on any revised or alternative proposals should they come forward.

In terms of what has been put forward within this application we welcome that the solid wood counter is to be retained and likewise welcome retention and refurbishment of the perimeter bench seating. The application suggests that the original wall panelling is to be retained, although this is to be concealed behind a new independent wall lining of plaster inset with patternations taken from Edwardian details elsewhere in the building. From the information provided this new plaster lining would appear to be set in front of the wooden panelling, however, the fixing of these panels is unclear. We recommend that this new element be freestanding and independent of the existing wall lining - more akin to a stage scenery - so that it is easily reversible and does not harm the existing panelling and that further details be submitted for this.

In conclusion we would encourage consideration of a revised proposal for the Queen's Bar, or for a more thorough assessment to be provided which better justifies the approach being taken forward. Should listed building consent be granted we recommend this is on the basis of the original 1950s wooden fabric being protected so that future reversion to the 1950s appearance remains an option.

Please contact us if we may be of further assistance or should you wish to discuss these comments further.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading 'T Clarke', on a light-colored rectangular background.

Tom Clarke MRTPI  
National Planning Adviser