

Ref.: TC/70

03 April 2020

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Pending Applications
Development Planning
City of Westminster
PO Box 732
Redhill,
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By e-mail: southplanningteam@westminster.gov.uk

Applications: 20/01579/LBC

Site: Royal Albert Hall Kensington Gore London SW7 2AP

Proposal: Installation of replacement and new lighting within the building.

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 Theatres Trust regarding this application for listed building consent at Royal Albert Hall. The proposal seeks to install new and replacement lighting within the building. We understand this forms part of a suite of works for which there have been a number of applications over the last year, although we were not consulted previously.

Royal Albert Hall is a statutory Grade 1 listed heritage asset, denoting that it is of exceptional interest. It is also a significant concert hall and multi-purpose venue which hosts a range of events; it is not just a key feature of London's cultural offer but is also recognised worldwide and is arguably the country's most famous venue.

The applicant has stated the need for these works is because a number of the lights are coming to the end of their useful lives, and a number have fittings which do not contribute to or reflect the building's significance. This proposal seeks to replace with new light fittings predominantly within service and back of house locations, but also within public areas such as auditorium boxes and the Gallery where design and appearance will be more sensitive.

Theatres Trust

22 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0QL

T 020 7836 8591 E info@theatrestrust.org.uk W 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, Ann Skippers, Truda Spruyt, Anna Stapleton

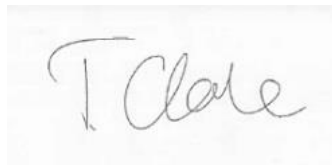
The National Advisory Public Body for Theatres

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

We are supportive of these alterations, for which there appears to be strong rationale and justification. Some will result in positive improvements in terms of appearance and heritage impact and benefit; for example the reintroduction of shell lights above the stalls, the utilisation of existing fittings and locations and retaining the existing dimmer switch to the Royal Box. The introduction of Edison screws in place of Bayonet fittings will enable a greater range of potential fittings which will offer operational improvements. More generally lights and fittings will broadly match the colour and appearance of those they will replace, or improve fittings which are less sympathetic to the venue's significance.

Overall we consider this programme of replacement lighting would not cause harm to the significance of the Royal Albert Hall as a cultural and heritage asset and will contribute towards its ongoing operation and role. Therefore **we recommend the granting of listed building consent.**

Please contact us should you wish to discuss these comments in greater detail.



Tom Clarke MRTPI
National Planning Adviser

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