

Ref.: TC/2009

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**Application:** 20/06715/LBC

**Site:** The Sondheim Theatre Shaftesbury Avenue London W1D 6BA

**Proposal:** Creation of an access door between the two stages; creating access between the backstage/stage door area and the lowest level of the Sondheim Grand Circle escape stair at ground floor level; creating an opening between the Sondheim Grand Circle escape stairs into the backstage areas of the Gielgud Theatre at first floor level; 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:**

Thank you for consulting Theatres Trust regarding the above application for listed building consent at the Grade II listed Sondheim Theatre. The proposal also impacts on the adjoining Grade II\* listed Gielgud Theatre, as it seeks to create openings between the two theatres to enable the Sondheim to be 'Covid-secure' to facilitate a safe working environment for performers in a forthcoming run of shows.

There are three interventions proposed; an access door between the stages of both theatres, an access between the stage door area and lowest level of the Sondheim's escape stair and an opening between the Sondheim Grand Circle escape stair into the backstage of the Gielgud. The link between the two stages will be reversed when no longer required.

**Theatres Trust**

22 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0QL

**T** 020 7836 8591 **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, Annie Hampson, Richard Johnston, Gary Kemp, Simon Ricketts, Jane Spiers, Truda Spruyt, Katie Town

The National Advisory Public Body for Theatres

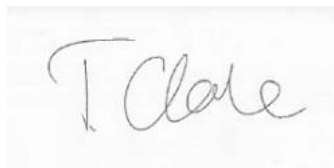
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The rationale for these works is to enable the Sondheim to return to active use as soon as possible. Clearly theatres have been particularly impacted by restrictions as a result of Covid-19 and efforts to open the Sondheim for performance and rehearsals in a safe manner is to be supported. Although these works have some impact on the respective theatre's fabric, it can be considered that this will be offset by the public benefits arising from enabling some level of performance. Their impacted is also mitigated by their location in less sensitive backstage areas.

We would however note that it should be ensured that there is appropriate acoustic protection to avoid future bleed of sound between the two venues, particularly for the works to the stage area and when that part of the works is reversed.

In conclusion due to the circumstances of this proposal in returning some level of live performance and use to the Sondheim we are supportive of the granting of listed building consent.

Please contact the Trust should you wish to discuss these comments in further detail.



Tom Clarke MRTPI  
National Planning Adviser

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