

Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/1037

18 October 2021

Mr Gareth Ball
Lambeth Planning
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Winchester
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By e-mail: planning@lambeth.gov.uk

Application: 21/01864/FUL

Site: 124 - 126 The Cut London SE1 8LN

Proposal: Erection of a nine storey building comprising a commercial unit (Class E) at ground floor and basement level and 9 no. self-contained residential flats (Class C3) on the upper levels.

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:

This application has been brought to the attention of the Trust by the Old Vic, as it is seeking development on an adjacent site which will impact the setting of the theatre as a Grade II* listed heritage asset. Although the application was submitted in May 2021 there appears to have been no prior engagement with the Old Vic or ourselves. Therefore it is only now at very late notice prior to Planning Committee of 19th October 2021 that we have been able to draft and submit our objection to this scheme.

The application site has been subject to a number of development proposals over the last eight years. The site is currently vacant, until recently a one-storey commercial unit occupied the site. In 2013 an application for a five-storey redevelopment was permitted and an application for an eight story redevelopment was refused. The refused application cited the size, scale and design failing to respond to the local context of the site resulting in an incongruous building which would potentially harm the setting of neighbouring heritage assets including the Old Vic. The Council's Conservation Officer objected on those grounds. Paragraph 6.9 of the officer's report specifically referenced the potential to harm the special interest of the Old Vic. Two further applications followed in 2015 and 2016, again the former was refused due to size, scale and design whereas

Theatres Trust

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Interim Chair Paddy Dillon Director Jon Morgan

Trustees Richard Baldwin, Paul Cartwright, Annie Hampson, Richard Johnston, Gary Kemp, Jane Spiers, Truda Spruyt, Katie Town

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

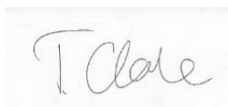
the latter was permitted (reference 16/05063/FUL). As with the previous permission this was for a five-storey development and forms an extant scheme.

This current development is seeking a nine storey building. Given some of the reasons for previous refusal for an eight storey building remaining pertinent in this case – specifically impact on the setting of the Old Vic – it is unclear why there is now a recommendation for approval with no objection from the current Conservation Officer as we are of the view that nothing in regard to the Old Vic has changed. We disagree with the assertion there would be no harm to surrounding heritage assets as it is clear that from the south-west proposed view there would be considerable visual impact on the setting of the theatre. This view does not appear to be shown within the report to Committee whereas other less sensitive views (from the perspective of the Old Vic) are shown.

We have no objection to the principle of redevelopment of this site, and it is clear that the existing height and scale of development within the extant permission is not detrimental to the Old Vic and its setting and important views to the same extent. However in common with the previous refusal in 2013 (13/05883/FUL) we urge that this application is similarly refused on the grounds of harm to the setting and significance of the Old Vic as a particularly important designated heritage asset of more than special interest. We consider there to be insufficient appraisal or justification for the harm that would be caused by this development and that the report to Committee incorrectly concludes there would not be harm to nearby listed buildings. Therefore this element of the proposal is in conflict with Local Plan and NPPF policy related to heritage.

In conclusion we object to this application and urge the refusal of planning permission. We suggest at least deferral of this item from the agenda for Planning Committee of 19th October 2021 to allow more time for this representation, as well as the objection of the Old Vic, to be considered.

Please contact us should you wish to discuss these comments further.



Tom Clarke MRTPI
National Planning Adviser

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