

Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/1431

21 January 2022

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By e-mail: development.control@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Application: PA/21/02578/NC

Site: Troxy, 490 Commercial Road, London, E1 0HX

Proposal: Internal works and reinstatement works to the front of house facilities, stage and sub-stage area, mezzanine foyer, in connection with the continued use of the Grade II listed Troxy as a performance venue 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 again consulting Theatres Trust regarding this further application for listed building consent at the Troxy in relation to the programme of development, improvement and restoration at the venue. As stated in our comments on recent applications, we have been engaged by the applicant and their team and are supportive of their plans for the building.

This application seeks the following works:

Basement

The refurbishment and addition of WCs at this level has already been consented. Asbestos was found within non-original fabric, therefore this is being removed. As this constitutes a health and safety hazard and does not result in the removal or harm to original features we raise no objection.

Again, a replacement stage has also been consented and this is fundamental to the development of the venue and its aspirations to attract a wider variety of shows as well as reinstating its

Theatres Trust

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Interim Chair Katie Town **Director** Jon Morgan

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previous scale and position. Within the sub-stage level are revolves which are an important and sensitive historic feature which must be conserved. Strengthening and stabilisation works have been discovered to be required to support the new stage, which will be achieved by strengthening the sub-stage structure and placing a new timber structural deck above. This approach retains the revolves in situ and is reversible, therefore we are supportive of this intervention.

Foyer

The bingo-era cash desk/box office has already been removed under a previous consent, and investigative works at an earlier stage revealed the presence of the original geometric designed flooring. This is being repaired and resealed to reinstate the original appearance of this area. The removal of the desk created a break in the doorsets between the main entrance and inner lobby. This is being addressed through the insertion of new hardwood timber-framed doorways across all bays to replace the modern aluminium doors. These are much closer in style to those originally in place and will match the auditorium doors in materials, palette and detailing. To either side of the foyer will be the box office and security desk with screens that both provide a safe working environment and broadly reflect the typical design of box offices/pay desks within theatres and cinemas of this era. We are supportive of these interventions and consider them to enhance the appearance and function of this area in practical terms and provide a heritage benefit through reinstating original features and appearance.

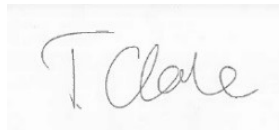
A similar approach is being taken with the upper foyer and whilst this does not appear to be clearly described within the accompanying statements our understanding from the plans and previous discussions/site visit is that this will enhance the area and will reflect the lower level.

Mezzanine

The WCs accessed from the front of the auditorium are to be reconfigured and refurbished, this does not raise any issues in terms of harm to fabric or features.

In conclusion we are again supportive of these works and recommend the granting of listed building consent.

Please continue to consult the Trust as further applications are submitted. If you wish to discuss these comments further please do not hesitate to contact us.



Tom Clarke MRTPI
National Planning Adviser

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