

Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/31

07 April 2022

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Pending Applications
Development Planning
City of Westminster
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By e-mail: centralplanningteam@westminster.gov.uk

Application: 22/01364/LBC

Site: Apollo Theatre 31 - 33 Shaftesbury Avenue London W1D 7EZ

Proposal: Internal alterations and refurbishment of the Balcony bar and toilets.

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 the Apollo which seek is seeking refurbishment and alterations at its Balcony level for increase and upgrading of WC facilities and provision of a new bar in an area currently used as a store.

There are already WCs at this level and these will be reconfigured. This will enable provision of an additional female cubicle. Many historic theatres suffer from a lack of WC provision which results in queues for audiences, therefore opportunities to improve provision are welcomed because this enhances the audience experience. Alongside this will be refurbishment and renewal of the WCs although it should be noted these are not originals, however there will be a heritage benefit in that the ceiling will be raised which exposes an original timber window. The 1930s doors to each facility will also remain and will be refurbished. We would note the plans suggest there may a limited sightline into the male urinals which could be alleviated by slightly extending the screen next to the wash basins.

Theatres Trust

22 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0QL
T 020 7836 8591 E info@theatrestrust.org.uk W theatrestrust.org.uk

Chair Dave Moutrey **Director** Jon Morgan

Trustees Paul Cartwright, James Dacre, Suba Das, Stephanie Hall, Annie Hampson, Richard Johnston, Gary Kemp, Lucy Osborne, 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

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The adjacent storage room will be converted to a bar, which reinstates its original function. This will necessitate alteration and relocation of a small entry and staircase to the secondary side store but this is of limited significance and offset by the public benefit of increased and improved audience facilities.

These works require very limited external alteration with the installation of extract ductwork but through position and shielding will not harm the significance of the building as a designated heritage asset.

To conclude these proposals will improve the experience of audiences at Balcony level with very limited harm to historic significance and the generation of some heritage benefits with the full revealing of the window and reinstatement of a bar where one previously stood. Therefore we recommend the granting of listed building consent.

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

Tom Clarke MRTPI
National Planning Adviser

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