

Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/2004

10 June 2022

Allison Borden
Pending Applications
Development Planning
City of Westminster
PO Box 732
Redhill,
RH1 9FL

By e-mail: southplanningteam@westminster.gov.uk

Application: 22/03055/LBC

Site: Playhouse Theatre Northumberland Avenue London WC2N 5DE

Proposal: Internal alterations creating two, small, reversible interventions within the existing building to provide additional functionality to the theatre, improving the welfare of the current cast and providing additional dressing room space.

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 on this application for listed building consent at the Playhouse Theatre which seeks alterations within the sub stage area to provide additional dressing rooms.

A number of works took place at the Playhouse in 2021 to reconfigure its auditorium to enable it to host a major production which has been well received with its run having been extended. Alongside this were a number of changes, some permanent, to improve the theatre's facilities and accessibility. The nature of the current production with its large cast and support is such that there is a shortage of dressing rooms and back of house provision. Therefore it is proposed that space within the sub stage area is utilised to create two additional dressing rooms, one within the basement and one at the mezzanine level.

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 mezzanine dressing room will be created through lightweight partitions with a new opening from the orchestra pit. The building fabric in this location is not of particular significance although some stage machinery will have to be removed and stored. We suggest that to ensure safe preservation and retention of historic features these are clearly labelled and packaged and retained on site within this area of the building as there is risk of them becoming mislaid if moved elsewhere. It may be appropriate for this to be managed through a condition, although we would also note that some elements as specified within the applicant's Heritage Statement are not of architectural or historic significance.

There is limited alteration required to create the basement level dressing room, again it will be formed through lightweight partitions along with relocation of tow timber and metal pulleys and removal of wooden uprights and a timber staircase but these are not of architectural or historic interest.

These works will be reversible, subject to appropriate storage of historic machinery, and will provide the theatre with the additional back of house provision it requires. Therefore we are supportive of 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T Clarke".

Tom Clarke MRTPI
National Planning Adviser

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