

Protecting theatres
for **everyone**



Ref.: TC/3149

18 April 2023

Ms Rebecca Marshall
Lambeth Planning
PO Box 734
Winchester
SO23 5DG

By e-mail: planning@lambeth.gov.uk

Application: 23/00656/FUL & 23/00657/LB

Site: Royal National Theatre South Bank London Lambeth SE1 9PX

Proposal: Refurbishment of the existing Terrace Restaurant and Bar; including, the reconfiguration of the kitchen and restaurant area and associated plant; removal of air conditioning units and external plant; and refurbishment of terrace awnings and installation of improved lighting on the external terrace area.

Remit:

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 these applications for planning permission and listed building consent at the National Theatre. They seek

Theatres Trust

22 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0QL

Telephone 020 7836 8591 **Email** info@theatrestrust.org.uk **Website** theatrestrust.org.uk **Twitter** @TheatresTrust

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Chair Dave Moutrey OBE

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

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refurbishments and alterations to its Terrace Restaurant and Bar, located to the north-west corner of the building.

The National Theatre is a Grade II* listed heritage asset and an important venue within London's renowned theatre and cultural offer, producing significant works which tour both nationally and internationally. It is significant as a major post-war public building which represented new ideas in theatre design by one of the period's most esteemed architects, Denys Lasdun. It features a range of performance spaces along with exhibition space, rehearsal studios, workshops and extensive public areas.

The rationale for these works is that currently the Terrace underperforms due to its relative lack of visibility and is constrained by its kitchen which is inefficient. It has previously been altered to offer improved accessibility, install awnings to the external area and change internal flooring from carpet to solid wood but its general décor has become dated. It is proposed that the Terrace will be re-branded with an operator having been secured and its interior and terrace updated. As part of these works the kitchen will also be reconfigured, new external lighting and replaced awnings will be installed and redundant plant and air handling will be removed. The principle of these works is supported; it would be beneficial for more effective use to be made of this space so that it better contributes to the theatre's overall offer and meets the expectations of audiences and visitors.

There is clear justification for upgrading and altering the kitchen so that it provides more modern and efficient equipment and improves capacity and flexibility as to what can viably be served. It will improve safety by ensuring compliance with current standards. There is also a wider heritage benefit because relocation of plant will allow for the current insensitive external enclosure to be removed, as would vinyl coverings which will provide greater space and open up views of the river.

Internal redecoration will alter seating arrangements and externally there will be the addition of planting, but these represent reversible alterations. Similarly there will be new external lighting and signage to reflect the new branding.

Overall these plans will help enhance the theatre's offer which should in turn bring more people into the building and support its wider cultural function. In heritage terms we consider these changes to be sensitive to the National's significance, providing heritage benefits as well as making changes which are otherwise reversible.

Therefore we are supportive of the granting of planning permission and listed building consent.

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Please contact us if we may be of further assistance or should you wish to discuss this representation in greater detail.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T Clarke". The signature is written in a cursive style and is centered within a light grey rectangular box.

Tom Clarke MRTPI
National Planning Adviser

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