

**The Theatres Trust**  
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Our Ref: BP/128

Please contact: Ms Bridget Pereira

5 March 2010

Development Control  
Planning Services  
London Borough of Camden  
Town Hall  
Argyle Street  
London WC1H 8ND



Dear Ms Christoforou,

**The Shaftesbury Theatre**  
**Application: 2010/0007/P**

Thank you for consulting The Theatres Trust on the above Planning Application for alterations including the replacement of windows and doors and re-routing of services including facades of *Shaftesbury Theatre (sui-generis)*. The Trust **supports** the application. Please see our detailed advice and suggested conditions below.

**Remit:** The Theatres Trust is The National Advisory Public Body for Theatres. The Town & Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995, Article 10, Para (v) requires the Trust to be consulted on planning applications which include '*development involving any land on which there is a theatre.*' It was established by The Theatres Trust Act 1976 '*to promote the better protection of theatres.*' This applies to all theatre buildings. Our main objective is to safeguard theatre use, or the potential for such use but we also provide expert advice on design, conservation, property and planning matters to theatre operators, local authorities and official bodies.

**Advice/comment:** The Trust supports the application because the proposals include the repair and improvement to the appearance of the listed theatre building. Commercial theatres in London's West End need substantial enhancement and upgrading if they are to keep pace with public expectation and the needs of performers and producers.

*The Shaftesbury* occupies a prominent corner site and is viewed across a wide road junction. It has terracotta faced elevations in the Baroque manner with a corner tower. The building is three storeys high with 4 bays to each return, with a curved entrance bay. The entrance has rectangular windows with enriched architraves all of which have large consoles under a cornice and elaborate parapet. Diocletian windows and oculi in alternate bays are found on the second floor. It is one of a handful of theatres in the West End not to have had the façade cleaned and rationalised.

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## Protecting theatres for everyone

**Director** Mhora Samuel **Chairman** Rob Dickins CBE  
**Trustees** Jason Barnes, Phil Clark, Marilyn Cutts, Venu Dhupa, Tim Foster, Penelope Keith CBE DL,  
Dr Pauleen Lane CBE, Baroness McIntosh of Hudnall, Anne McReynolds, Matthew Rooke,  
Chris Shepley CBE, Sam Shrouder, Ben Twist

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 Theatres Trust supports proposals to re-route the services because this will de-clutter the existing façade and enhance the original architectural features that are currently being obscured. However, at present the plans do not adequately outline the exact mild non-aggressive cleaning method to be used to clean the terracotta /faience ashlar on the facade. Therefore, for clarity, we suggest that you **condition** sample panels and a method statement.

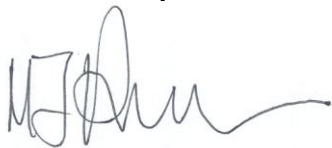
In terms of the existing entrance doors and windows, we understand that following advice from your Conservation Officer, this element will be withdrawn and that a repair schedule will be submitted as a reserved matter. The Trust recognises that many of the theatre's windows and doors are in a state of disrepair and will need to be replaced. However, prior to any remedial action being taken, the need for wholesale replacement should be carefully assessed. Sympathetic repairs to the existing historic fabric are always preferable to the loss and like-for-like replacement of any original architectural features. The theatre's fenestration features prominently in English Heritage's Listing Description (1974) and makes a significant contribution to the overall design envisioned by Crewe.

The *Shaftesbury Theatre* (ex Princes Theatre) was built in 1911 as a melodrama house by the renowned theatre architect, Bertie Crewe. It was the last of the great pre-war theatres to be built in Shaftesbury Avenue. After being sold to EMI in 1962, it became the *Shaftesbury Theatre* the following year. The theatre is currently owned by The Theatre of Comedy Company and has been in their possession since 1984.

We would **urge you to approve the application** and attach conditions accordingly.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M J Price', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark J Price MRTPI, IHBC  
Planning and Heritage Adviser

cc James Williams, Chief Executive, The Shaftesbury Theatre  
Charlie Rose, Conservation Officer, Camden Borough Council