

**THEATRE: *Plymouth Palace*****Listed:** Grade II\***Address:** 121-123 Union Street, Plymouth, Devon PL1 3NB**Local Authority:**

Planning Policy, Plymouth City Council

Civic Centre

Plymouth PL1 2AA

Tel: 01752 305 539

Email: [john.salvatore@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:john.salvatore@plymouth.gov.uk)[www.plymouth.gov.uk](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk)**Current Freehold Owner:** Mr Manooch Bahamanzadeh**Current Leasehold Owner:** Vacant**Current Operator/Manager:** None**Local Contacts:** John Salvatore, Conservation OfficerEmail: [john.salvatore@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:john.salvatore@plymouth.gov.uk)**The Theatres Trust Contact:** Suzanne McDougall. Tel 020 7836 8591Email: [Suzanne.mcdougall@theatrust.org.uk](mailto:Suzanne.mcdougall@theatrust.org.uk)

---

**Original theatre architect(s):** 1898: Wimperis & Arber.**Building Description**

The *Palace* opened in 1898 as a music hall, forming part of a development which included the adjoining Grand Western Hotel. Rebuilt internally following a fire, its intimate auditorium seated around 1,600, with two deep balconies decorated with rich plasterwork incorporating military motifs. The large boxes which flank either side of the proscenium at dress circle level have canopies with two projecting ship lanterns. The theatre has a domed ceiling and uniquely the stalls are crossed by a tunnel. These internal features remain, along with a terracotta façade which is highly elaborate in Flemish Renaissance style with the central entrance bay surmounted by a Flemish gable with two statues of Spanish soldiers on protecting brackets. There are three large arched windows between Ionic demi-columns in the piano nobile, flanked in the end bays by semi-circular panels of coloured tiles depicting scenes of the Spanish Armada. There is also much Art Nouveau decorative detail, e.g. on the frieze above the first floor windows, and in the panels below the windows.

**Theatre Use**

The *Palace* was last used as a theatre in 1983, and theatrical activity in Plymouth was concentrated at the *Theatre Royal* (opened 1982). Since 1983 it has been leased to a nightclub operator, but closed since 2006. Externally it is in a poor condition.

**Occupancy:** Vacant.**Building Location**

The *Plymouth Palace* is not in a central location, but is adjacent to an area targeted for regeneration.

**Risks**

The building remains empty, unsecured and unused. It is located in an area known for vandalism and the condition of the building is not being maintained. The Millfields Community Economic Development Trust has an interest in the long-term use and operation of the building and its regeneration. Plymouth could lose its only highly-graded listed Victorian theatre.