

Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/2010

21 February 2022

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

Application: 21/07110/FULL & 21/07111/LBC

Site: London Coliseum 32 - 35 St Martin's Lane London WC2N 4ES

Proposal: Installation of automatic glazed internal entrance enclosure and doors to the main foyer entrance of the London Coliseum.

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 re-consulting Theatres Trust regarding these applications for planning permission and listed building consent at the Coliseum which seek a glazed draught lobby within the foyer. In our previous representation we had submitted an objection and urged the applicant to withdraw the application. This was due to a lack of information and justification for the level of harm given how sensitive this building is as a heritage asset, particularly as we considered there to be other options that may have been more appropriate. We welcome that plans have now been revised, and that the applicant has engaged positively with the Trust in the meantime.

A Heritage Statement has this time been submitted which clearly describes the significance of the asset in accordance with paragraphs 194 and 195 of the NPPF (2021) and planning practice guidance on the historic environment (2019). It also assesses the impact of the proposal and provides justification for the harm that will be caused in line with NPPF paragraphs 199 and 200. Notwithstanding our views on the proposed works, this addresses one of our primary concerns with the original submission.

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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This revised proposal utilises the same foyer entrance as the previous iteration but its design has been amended.

Although there are locations that are less architecturally and historically significant these are sub-optimal for meeting the project objective, for example there would be greater difficulty in visitor management and it would compromise the wider security of the building. On the other hand there are also locations that would cause greater harm to significance. We consider the proposed lobby to offer a pragmatic solution to the challenges the theatre faces as it requires little disruption to original architectural features with minimal fixings and will be reversible. The matwell in this location is not original and its replacement will not impact on surviving mosaic flooring underneath.

In light of this improved design and solution, and that the impact of the proposal of historic significance is mitigated by the public benefits of broadening access to the building, we are now in a position to support the granting of planning permission and 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". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Tom Clarke MRTPI
National Planning Adviser

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