

Theatres fit for the **future**



Ref.: TC/426

11 March 2025

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

Application: 25/08957/LBC

Site: Fortune Theatre Russell Street London WC2B 5HH

Proposal: Replacement of existing WiFi access points throughout the theatre and the installations of new access points within the main auditorium.

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'.

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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Director Joshua McTaggart

Trustees Vicky Browning OBE, Anna Collins, James Dacre, Suba Das, Liam Evans-Ford, Stephanie Hall, Annie Hampson OBE, Tracy Ann Oberman, Lucy Osborne, Saratha Rajeswaran, Truda Spruyt, Michèle Taylor MBE, Katie Town

The Theatres Trust is the national advisory public body for theatres. The Theatres Trust Charitable Fund supports the work of The Theatres Trust, has the same Trustees and is registered as a charity under number 274697

Comment:

Thank you for consulting Theatres Trust on this application for listed building consent at the Fortune Theatre. It seeks to undertake removal and replacement of wifi provision including some additional installations.

The theatre's operator has carried out similar works across their other venues around the country and we have been consulted and provided comment on a number of those including within the West End.

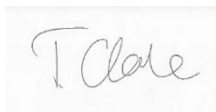
The rationale and benefits of upgrading the theatre's wireless infrastructure has been clearly outlined. There is a general operational and customer service need for functional wifi services, for example to operate sales terminals effectively, for audiences to be able to access and purchase services, and for staff to be able to communicate. Significantly it will also facilitate improved hearing assistance technology and audio captioning.

With reference to paragraph 215 of the NPPF (2024), whilst there will be some harm arising from additional installations we consider the public benefits of enhancing provision for audiences with hearing and sight impairments as well as general operational improvements for the theatre and its productions mitigates this.

Furthermore a number of locations are within less sensitive areas of the building, or are in discreet positions which will not interrupt features of significance and will be coloured to match surrounding fabric.

We therefore support the granting of listed building consent.

Please contact us if we may be of further assistance or should you wish to discuss these comments in further detail.



Tom Clarke MRTPI

National Planning Adviser

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