

Ref.: TC/934

19 March 2025

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Pending Applications
Development Planning
City of Westminster
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Application: 25/00524/LBC

Site: Theatre Royal 8 Haymarket London SW1Y 4HT

Proposal: Redecoration and repairs, including recovering two roofs over entrance portico and dressing rooms in traditional lead sheet (in lieu of slate), replacement of existing timber roof access walkways with metal, replacement of one UPVC window with timber, and associated works.

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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Chair Dave Moutrey OBE

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

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Comment:

Thank you for consulting Theatres Trust on this application for listed building consent at Theatre Royal Haymarket. It seeks to undertake a number of external refurbishments and repairs around the building. We were aware of this project as we had been contacted by the theatre prior to submission.

The Heritage Statement notes that the theatre is under an obligation from their ground landlord to keep the building in a good standard of external decoration. This is being used as an opportunity to review the overall condition of the building and to undertake repairs, maintenance and replacement where required. We welcome and support efforts to maintain the building and to invest into its ongoing conservation. Theatre Royal is a highly significant theatre, reflected by its Grade I listing. It is one of a small number of theatres across the UK to be designated at the highest level of heritage grading.

The proposed works are catalogued within the Heritage Statement, some of which are accompanied by photographic evidence of condition. Some elements are entirely decorative, for example re-painting on a like-for-like basis. For the most part where there is to be replacement, such as to rotting timber around escape doors, this too is like-for-like and demonstrably necessary to ensure ongoing conservation and safe operation.

There will be a higher degree of alteration to the portico roof, due to the removal of its slate covering and relaying with lead sheeting and an additional 50mm in height due to the insertion of insulation below. The lead sheeting will result in a colour change. This constitutes less than substantial harm. With reference to paragraph 215 of the NPPF (2024), justification is set out in that the current materials have reached the end of their life and their shallow pitch and poor condition has resulted in occasions of water ingress which then harms other areas of fabric. The improved thermal efficiency constitutes a public benefit, as does the roof being more sturdy so maintenance access can be better facilitated. On balance we consider this change to be appropriate.

We have no objection to the removal of non-original rooflights, which will be replaced with slates to match the surrounding area, to the removal of a non-original door to the grid, or to the removal of redundant plant boxing. These items are later additions which do not contribute to character and significance.

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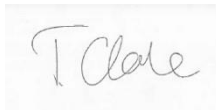
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Theatres fit for the **future**

Overall we consider these interventions to have a positive impact on the building by keeping it in a good state of repair. Where there is alteration, as set out above we consider this to be adequately mitigated through the benefits arising.

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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