



Our Ref: 2243/DS Rev B

Date: 6th June 2014

Re: Dominion Theatre, London – Refurbishment 2014

Heritage Statement

This statement has been prepared at the request of Camden Council to accompany a Listed Building Consent Application for works at the Dominion Theatre.

Assessment Heritage Asset

The Dominion Theatre was constructed in 1928-29 with a steel-framed construction and a concave Portland stone facade and was the work of a young William Milburn. Compared with other London venues, the Dominion is vast with excellent circulation space to the foyers and circles. A neo-Renaissance style was adopted for the internal deco, and later redecorated in darker colours. The front elevation has not been altered structurally since the venue was first constructed and still retains many of the ornate features.

English Heritage provide the following listing description for the property:

“CAMDEN TQ2981SE TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD 798-1/104/1643 (East side) 10/10/88 Dominion Theatre GV II Theatre. 1928-29. Designed by W and TR Milburn. Steel-framed construction with Portland stone facade. EXTERIOR: narrow facade of 3 main bays; recessed entrance doors to full width of facade. Wooden doors, glazed in panels to full height, enriched with carved moulding, beneath projecting canopy facade above with pilaster strips to corners and projecting centre of 3 bays. Bases of pilaster strips with sculptured plaques with masks. Facade above concave in shape, with 3 square headed apertures filled with decorative wrought-iron work. Simple cornice band above, slightly raised to centre. INTERIOR: grand 2-storey entrance foyer with flights of stairs to left and right linking to central balcony; stripped Classical detailing and original pendant lights. Circle lounge and lower circle lounge with similar detailing. Auditorium with two galleries (one disused) also with Roman Classical detailing to walls and ceiling having 2 tiers of galleries and round cornered boxes (upper pair never seated) to left and right of proscenium. Original light fittings. HISTORICAL NOTE: The Dominion Theatre is a grand composition which embodies a transitional phase in the history of theatre design, incorporating the broad plan and decorative detailing more usually associated with cinemas of the period though always

intended primarily for theatrical use. (Architects' Journal: 2 October 1929; Architect & Building News: 4 October 1929)."

In the 1930s, after an unsuccessful period, the theatre was converted to a permanent cinema, where alterations were made internally to the bar and cloakroom areas to facilitate a cinema. The building was sold and again further internal alterations were made, after the Second World War, to increase the office space within the building. In 1958 a new large cinema screen and projection box were installed which resulted in the upper circle being closed.

Following an uncertain period plans were drawn up to demolish the venue completely to make way for a new hotel on the site. The venue was sold to Apollo Leisure in 1990 and subsequently avoided demolition. The Dominion has since become a top destination for theatre goers thanks to hit shows such as We Will Rock You.

External Works

The following work are to be carried out to the front elevation:

Ref: PP-03586270

"Replacement of Freddie Mercury statue and existing show related signage with new double sided static LED screen" (PP and LBC)

Ref: PP-03586164

"Replacement of existing high level signage with 'Dominion Theatre' lettering" (PP and LBC)

REF: PP-03585849

"Replacement of existing upper façade and canopy lighting with new LED lighting" (LBC)

At present a large portion of the building façade is hidden behind a statue of Freddie and signage board, which obscures the view of the existing windows and stone columns. The proposed works will look to address the current signage to the front elevation and reduce the overall impact by providing a set area for show related advertisements to the canopy and LED screen. The new signage would result in a

significantly greater view of the building façade and will also allow natural light back into the building.

Following the removal of the signage the elevation is to be cleaned with soap and water to remove the years of pollution. A non-aggressive cleaning solution has been adopted to avert any adverse effects of a more aggressive cleaning solution. The existing windows are to be redecorated to match the existing colours as closed as possible (gold/bronze). A temporary scaffold structure will be erected to the front elevation with a mono-flex wrap to facilitate the works.

A new lighting scheme is to be introduced which will highlight certain features of the building façade including the columns and ornate detailing at high level. The new lights will be modern LEDs which are more energy efficient and reduce light pollution. The new LED spot lights to the underside of the canopy will help light the existing signs above the main doors and provide a uniformed arrangement of light down onto the pavement below.

The new double sided static LED screen will alleviate the need for a large advertisement board on the front elevation and will allow a greater portion of the elevation to be visible. A modern LED screen will allow the venue to change the show related advertisements instantly and safely without the need to close the pavement below the canopy to gain access up onto the area. A lighting report has been completed by Consolux to provide information on the proposed design and assess the impact of new artificial lighting to the external front elevation will have on the surrounding area.

The new show related signage to the canopy will involve overhauling the existing light box and re-fitting with relevant show related inserts. The high level venue signage/lettering is to be replaced with new 80mm rim and return lettering, finished in gold to match the existing windows, with opal acrylic faces internally lit via LEDs.

The building façade has largely been untouched for many years now (apart from new/additional signage being added) and has become tired and dull. The proposed works will only server to enhance the building façade and the surrounding area. The new signage/screen will reduce the overall impact on the façade and prevent the need for a large show related board obscuring the windows and much of the

elevation. The new lighting will enhance the buildings ornate detailing and the cleaning/redecorating will revive the elevation.

The surrounding area to the Dominion is mainly commercial (café, fast food, retail, offices, hotel and electronics) and with the new crossrail station opening at Tottenham Court Road, due for completion in 2016, the area will benefit visually with improvements to the Dominion façade.

There are a number of Grade II listed buildings around the Dominion, including the former Oxford corner house, 1 Tottenham Court, Burton headquarters and shop, Great Russell Street and Centre Point. The Tottenham Public House is a Grade II* listed building. Due to the relatively commercial surroundings the effects of the proposed works will not be significant enough to impact on the Listed Buildings in the area to the Dominion Theatre.