



Our Ref: 2380/ds

Date: 3 March 2015

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

recorded at

**Phoenix Theatre
110 Charing Cross Road
London
WC2H 0JP**

on behalf of

**Newman Displays Limited
23 Pakenham Street
London
WC1X 0LB**

**Proposed Signage for the musical 'Bend It Like
Beckham'**

History

The Phoenix Theatre opened on the 24th of September 1930 with the very successful play 'Private Lives' by Noel Coward, starring Coward himself, Gertrude Lawrence, Adrienne Allen, and Laurence Olivier, and ran for 101 performances before transferring to America.

The theatre was designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, Bertie Crew, and Cecil Masey, with an auditorium designed by Theodore Komisarjevsky. The theatre was built by Bovis Ltd., on land which had previously been a factory and then became a music hall for a while, called the Alcazar.

The Alcazar was an unusual kind of music hall which was basically a very long hall with three different stages which the audience would then wander from, one to the other, as each 'turn' finished their act and the next began. It was also used as a kind of audition space where, although the public paid for admission, theatre managers did not as they were always on the lookout for new 'turns' to populate their own theatres and music halls. Unfortunately for the owner, Lucien Samett, the idea didn't take off and the Alcazar soon became something quite different. The 'Stage' publication referred to it as being a 'Fun City,' with slot machines and gambling on the ground floor, and above; rather dubious sounding 'exhibitions' such as 'Beautiful Artists' and 'Posing Models'.

The Phoenix was one of many theatres which opened in London's West End in 1930, and one of several opening in the same month. First there was the Prince Edward on April the 3rd, then the Cambridge on the 4th of September, then the Phoenix on the 24th of September, and the Whitehall on the 29th of September. Then came the rebuilt Adelphi Theatre on 3rd of December, and finally the Leicester Square Theatre which opened on December the 19th.

The Phoenix Theatre's has two entrances on two different streets, one in Charing Cross Road and the second on Phoenix Street from which the Theatre takes its name.

The day after the Phoenix opened, The 'Stage' reviewed this new theatre in their 25th of September edition, which read:

'The distinguished columns here are blues and pinks on a cream ground, and the whole is lavishly picked out with modelling in gold. Large windows in the adjacent promenade allow late-comers and others who might for some reason or other be prevented from getting to their seats to view the stalls level and the stage. The circle appears to come far forward and has a commodious upper circle above it. Care has been taken in the comfort of the seating. Each seat has sufficient body and leg room and is provided with its own hat rack. There are six roomy private boxes. The upholstery has a touch of the medieval, and is in a rare shade of dark pink with a touch of heliotrope or light purple in its pattern. In the front of the house rich reds, blues, and gold appear to be the prime colours. Bars and cloakrooms are well appointed, but no attempt has been made here in the shape of elaborate decoration. A striking feature in the interior decoration will be found in the fine reproductions of works by old masters'.

After the success of the Phoenix Theatre's opening play, which had a three month contract but could have carried on if it hadn't had, the next production was the equally successful 'Late Night Final' by Louis Weitzenkorn which opened in June 1931 and ran for 132 performances. However, after this the theatre did not do so well and became a variety theatre but this also met with little success.

Noel Coward was back in 1936 though and the theatre picked up considerably with his productions of one act plays called 'Tonight at 8.30'. This did very well and ran for 157 performances. One of the plays

in this series was 'Still Lives' which was later made into the now classic film 'Brief Encounter.'

Noel Coward returned again in 1952 with the play 'Quadrille'. On the 16th December 1969, the long association with Coward was celebrated with a midnight matinee in honour of his 70th birthday, and the foyer bar was renamed the Noel Coward Bar.

The Phoenix has had a number of successful plays including John Gielgud's 'Love for Love' during the Second World War. 'Harlequinade' and 'The Browning Version', two plays by Terence Rattigan, opened on the 8th September 1948 at the theatre. In the mid 1950s, Paul Scofield and Peter Brook appeared at the theatre. In 1968, a musical version of Chaucer's 'The Canterbury Tales' opened and ran for around two thousand performances. 'Night and Day', a 1978 play by Tom Stoppard, ran for two years.

The theatre hosted many musicals in the 1980s and 1990s, including 'The Biograph Girl' with Sheila White, 'The Baker's Wife' by Stephen Schwartz, directed by Trevor Nunn, and 'Into the Woods' by Stephen Sondheim, starring Julia McKenzie. There were also a number of plays by William Shakespeare.

The current production of 'Blood Brothers', the Willy Russell musical that transferred from The Albery Theatre in November 1991, will end a 21-year run on 10th November 2012 after becoming longest-running production at the theatre. Following limited engagements of 'Goodnight Mr. Tom' and 'Midnight Tango', the theatre will host the original West End production of Broadway musical 'Once', which is due to open in April 2013. The theatre is owned by the Ambassador Theatre Group.

Proposal

The proposed works is to replace the existing theatre signage with the new musical 'Bend It Like Beckham' production signage. The existing canopy signage facade is to be replaced with new illuminated 'Bend It Like Beckham' show signage inserts. The rotunda main entrance to the theatre off Charing Cross Road is to have a new show related neon lighting fixed to the existing columns using the existing fixings point. Fairy lights are to be hung behind the main sign to both entrances and below the canopy to the main entrance. The two trees at Charing Cross Rd/Phoenix Street juncture are to be draped in fairy lights. Between the two buildings on Phoenix Street multi-coloured lights and Indian rope gala are to be festooned across the street. A new graphic panel over the Phoenix Street entrance is to be installed.

Design Access Statement

The purpose of the report is solely to assess the effect that the signage for the musical 'Bend It Like Beckham' will have on the building and the surrounding area.

The new signage is facing towards the maximum amount of focal interest to gain maximum publicity for the new show production.

The advertisement respects the character and appearance of the local area, whilst it should also be noted that the minimum amount of signage to promote the new show has been used. It is our opinion that the majority of the signage does not harm the character of the building.

Materials, Illumination & Detailed Design

Generally the proposed show advertisements are to be inset into the existing signage poster boxes / framing. The proposed fairy lights to the two main entrances and below the canopy's allow the building façade behind to still be viewed while also enhancing the show signage. The corner elevation is to have a larger banner erected and will conceal the brickwork to the flats above the canopy. Phoenix Street is to be

festooned with multi-coloured fairy lights and flowered rope galas in keeping with show.

New Materials – Fairy lights, Perspex show inserts, large banner sign, graphic panel over Phoenix Street entrance.

New Illumination – LED fairy lights to the two entrances and underside of canopy. Neon lighting to main entrance signs. Fairy lights to the two trees

Detailed Design – The majority of the signage is to be located with the extent of the existing poster boxes/frames and pre-determined locations for the signage. The new neon lettering to the rotunda elevation has been designed to make use of the existing fixings from the previous show to minimise the effect on the building. The large banner on the corner has been increased in size to maximise the space available on the wall without any detriment to the building.

Appendix

Drawings included:

- 2380-001 Site Location Plan
- 2380-002 Existing Rotunda Elevation
- 2380-003 Existing Charing Cross Road Elevation
- 2380-004 Existing Charing/Phoenix Corner Elevation
- 2380-005 Existing Phoenix Street Elevation

- 2380-006 Proposed Rotunda Elevation
- 2380-007 Proposed Charing Cross Road Elevation
- 2380-008 Proposed Charing/Phoenix Corner Elevation
- 2380-009 Proposed Phoenix Street Elevation
- 2380-010/011 Proposed Visuals

