

5 December 2016

David Glasgow  
Principal Planning Officer  
Regeneration and Planning  
London Borough of Camden  
5 Pancras Square  
London, N1C 4AG

Dear Mr Glasgow

**Support for the redevelopment of the Ambassadors Theatre**

I am writing in support of Delfont Mackintosh Theatres' planning application for the redevelopment of the Ambassadors Theatre (Ref: 2016/4869/P and 2016/5032/L).

My fervent support for the initiative is based on a number of principles. The way theatre is made is changing. While there is still a place for more traditional theatre which sits within the proscenium arch, more and more companies are experimenting with form and configuration, including work on a thrust stage and/or in-the-round. A West End venue that could accommodate these new ways of presenting plays and musicals would be a huge advantage.

**Diversity of West End Theatre**

Firstly, having a specialised, adaptable theatre space would increase the diversity of theatre on offer in the West End - and better reflect the diversity of theatre making that exists in the whole of the UK. Given that London's West End is the international shop window for UK theatre, presenting our theatre in all its innovative glory would be another feather in the West End's cap.

**Spatial Congruence**

Secondly, there are countless examples of productions made not just in Chichester, but all over the country, which could and should have transferred to London - if only the appropriate space existed. Productions that begin in either our main auditorium (which seats 1300 people) or our smaller space (seating around 325), where they are presented in an intimate, shallow thrust configuration, are hugely challenging to transfer to traditional London playhouses - aesthetically and financially. Having a theatre in London flexible enough to accommodate productions created for the less traditional theatrical configurations means the West End theatre could offer a different type of experience for audiences, domestic and international.

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### **Regional Collaboration & Benefits**

Thirdly, recently, the relationship between the capital and the regions has been under much scrutiny. There has been considerable pressure on the government funding bodies to redress the current imbalance in the financial discrepancy between the two. I would say that a West End building that fostered and facilitated collaboration between regional theatres and London would have intrinsic value. However, such an initiative would also bring with it considerable instrumental value: it would increase the diversity of theatre on offer in the capital, it would showcase the significant talent that is nurtured and developed outside of London in the regional houses, and it would increase the visibility of such innovative work, as well as offering the regional institutions a small financial support in royalties.

This theatre would not only be beneficial to London, but as my letter sets out, would help with the development of theatre across the regions. I hope that these exciting proposals can come forward.

Yours sincerely

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Daniel Evans.

**Daniel Evans**  
Artistic Director



David Glasgow  
Principal Planning Officer  
Regeneration and Planning  
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06 December 2016

Redevelopment of the Ambassadors Theatre (Ref: 2016/4869/P and 2016/5032/L)

Dear David Glasgow,

I am writing in my capacity as Director of Hampstead Theatre to wholeheartedly support the proposals for the redevelopment of the Ambassadors Theatre to the Sondheim Theatre. Having looked at the proposals I can see that they are planning to create a practical but hugely dynamic and adaptable performance space which can embrace both the intimate and the epic.

As a new writing focused theatre, we produce up to a dozen premieres every year. Many of these productions do have onward trajectories and as a publicly subsidised theatre, I make a point of trying to disseminate our work to as broad an audience as possible. Our auditorium here at Hampstead is modern and is able to adapt into any configuration so we often find ourselves with great pieces of work that need more than just a traditional proscenium house for a transfer. The proposed Sondheim Theatre fills a gap in the West End Theatre landscape, and will offer theatres such as us an opportunity to transfer work to a wider audience that will prove invaluable. It is also a perfect intermediate house, bridging the gap between the out-and-out commercial demand of the West End and creative demand of the subsidised sector.

We have transferred many pieces of work to the West End and beyond over the last few years, but we have also produced plenty of work that could have had a life beyond our North London home had The Sondheim been in existence. These productions were realised using unusual auditorium configurations and could have benefited from a transfer to The Sondheim at the kind of semi-commercial terms being proposed.

The proposed new building will contribute enormously to the West End Theatre scene - and to the London Theatre ecology as a whole - by offering a home for this kind of work that currently slips through the net. I wish this redevelopment every success.

Yours sincerely,

Edward Hall  
Artistic Director  
Hampstead Theatre

