

CASEWORK REPORT: January 2015

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ENGLAND

All photographs by Harry Rigby (Editor - CTA Bulletin)

Grade II*

An enquiry was forthcoming from a theatre director investigating the possibility of establishing a Building Preservation Trust for the **State** at Grays. Relevant information was forwarded; however this project appears to have advanced no further.



State, Grays

Photo: April 2004

In an unanticipated twist to the long running saga of the **Granada** at Walthamstow, it is reported that Antic Ltd, an operator of licensed premises, has acquired the venue. Reportedly, representatives of the new owner have been in constructive discussions with those of Soho Theatre, which latter company wishes to utilise the former cinema as a live performance space.

Grade II

The local council has overcome a legal challenge concerning planning permission granted to the Everyman Group for alteration to the **Whiteladies** Cinema in the Clifton area of Bristol; thus the scheme has been resanctioned.

Chester's local Council has granted itself planning consent for the drastic conversion it proposes for the **Odeon**; English Heritage has largely acquiesced to the proposals, which will irrevocably harm the integrity of the building.

Storage space in a rear extension to the **Curzon** at Clevedon is to be converted into a café and bar; the Association made no objection as no alteration to the main fabric of the cinema is planned.

The **Savoy** in London's Burnt Oak has closed; there appear to be no related planning or listed building consent applications on record. *Photo above taken on CTA visit September 2006.*



At a recent council planning meeting the CTA presented its views concerning the detrimental designs under consideration for the **Regal** in Kingston-upon-Thames; of great assistance were points raised

by theatre consultant Roger Fox, who concisely demonstrated serious flaws in the practical viability of the intended performance area. Minutes reveal that the developers are now required to produce amended drawings addressing these issues.

Photo: September 2006

No objections have been raised to a minor submission relating to the **Odeon** at Weston-Super-Mare, which entails installation of a ticket collection machine within the entrance area.

Unlisted

Planning permission has been granted to convert the **Parade** in Margate to retail use. Internally the auditorium ceiling, of some merit, survives.

The **Picture Playhouse** in Bexhill, probably the first cinema to be designated as an Asset of Community Value under the Localism Act, has now been purchased by the JD Wetherspoon chain of hostelrys. A watching brief will be kept in an attempt to ensure that the auditorium, featuring an unusual octagonal ceiling, is treated sympathetically in any conversion work.

Constructive discussions have taken place with representatives of Richmond Reproductions Ltd, a specialist firm involved in adaptation of buildings to religious purposes, including the **Dominion** at Harrow, which is currently undergoing refurbishment. Attention has been drawn to its excellent original façade, extant but currently concealed behind metal cladding. However, removal of the latter and renovation of the former may prove too costly to be contemplated currently.

The Twentieth Century Society advanced a bid to list the **Curzon** in Chelsea, situated within the envelope of the former Gaumont Palace; this was subsequently rejected. However, at a decidedly animated planning committee meeting, the Cadogan Estate's planning application for the site was also refused.

Opposition to the plans for the **Odeon** at Kensington and its neighbouring site continues to grow, spurred on by dedicated local campaigners for the cinema and augmented by local residents who are fearful of not only the adverse architectural impact of the proposed replacement facility but also the possible usage nuisance which it may engender.

Somewhat worryingly, it has been reported that the **Odeon** in London's Leicester Square is to close for a renovation project shortly after an organ concert at the beginning of March. It is not known if structural changes are intended.

Although the frontage and part of the side return elevation of the **Gaumont Palace** in Streatham are to be retained, the remainder of the structure is to be demolished and replaced by a mixed use development, which will include numerous dwelling units.

In similar vein, an application has been made to replace the **Central Hall** [Regal/Essoldo] in Watford with a shop and flats. Despite a substantially pedestrian interior, the exterior is of a good calibre and the CTA will press for its retention.

Regrettably, the intention to integrate **Pyke's Cinematograph Theatre** in London's Shepherd's Bush into a restaurant serving the neighbouring hotel has proven short-lived: the developer now wishes to raze the building in order to make space for a twenty storey block. This is doubly unfortunate, as demolition would represent not only the loss of an individual structure but also the destruction of an integral component of a triumvirate of adjacent entertainment edifices: the Empire on one flank representing music hall, the Pavilion on the other representing the emergence of the super cinema, with Pyke's in the centre as a symbol of the transitional period between the two. Hammersmith and Fulham Historic Buildings Group is objecting, in addition to the Association.

Durham Council and its consultants, Nataniel Lichfield & Partners, have been contacted to express the view that the façade of the **Palladium**, situated in an area slated for reconstruction, is of sufficient distinction to be retained and restored as part of a renewed street-scape.



Palladium, Durham

Photo: November 2006