

CAMPAIGNING TO SAVE YOUR HISTORIC CINEMAS

By Tim Hatcher

Grade II*



The State Grays in April 2004

JD Wetherspoon plc has been granted listed building consent and planning permission for its adaptation of the **State** at Grays into a unit of its chain of hostelries. Conditions include photographic recording of the building, full restoration of the organ prior to opening and commencement of work within three years. An aspiration has also been expressed by Thurrock Council Regeneration Team that a number of film screenings and organ concerts be held annually.

It is reported that work to the **Electric Palace** in Harwich has been delayed because of the discovery of asbestos in its construction, which perhaps might not have been entirely unexpected in such an aged building. Additional costs involved may impact upon the budget for cosmetic improvements.

Grade II

Now unfortunately a regular occurrence, a further case of a cinema's closure following the cessation of bingo is that of the **Ritz** in Ilkeston. This is a boldly dynamic edifice both within and without, therefore concern for its future is to be expressed forcefully to its local authority. See coverpic & p22 last Bulletin.

The **Odeon** in Holloway is to undergo major refurbishment, including conversion of one of the small auditoria to a bar and the shops along Holloway Road to a restaurant. It is to be hoped that C Howard Crane's distinguished foyer will be refurbished to replicate at least a degree of its former opulence, which the current blanket coating of white paint visited upon every surface, including the elegant wooden balustrade, has endeavoured to enervate. See p10/11 Bulletin 52/4.

Unlisted



The rear of the Westover/ABC Bournemouth in June 2006

Following prolonged prompting by the Association, Bournemouth Council intends to extend a Conservation Area to include the Regent and the **Westover** [ABC]. This could augur well for the futures of these two venues, particularly in light of the recent rejection of Libra Homes' appeal against the refusal of planning permission for its proposals for the properties.



The Byron Hucknall on the CTA visit [exterior only] in May 2008

A community group which had been operating within the **Byron** at Hucknall, albeit without a formal lease, has been evicted from the building concurrently with the latter's placement for sale. The CTA was consulted and advised preparation of an application for Asset of Community Value designation. This has now been submitted to the local Council, which regards the cinema as a non-designated heritage asset. A cinema operator reportedly has expressed interest in the possibility of the restitution of film exhibition.

The **Royal** in Deal, a conversion of a former Odd Fellows' Hall of 1892, is threatened with demolition. Communication appertaining to possible concerted action is to be established with the caseworker of The Victorian Society See p20 last Bulletin.

The scheme for redevelopment of **Pyke's** Cinematograph Theatre at London's Shepherd's Bush had included a basement cinema; however, an entertainment space on the more accessible ground floor has now been substituted. It is considered that no action is required.

The **Shaftesbury** at Portsmouth is threatened with demolition. Although of little merit internally, it boasts an impressive Edwardian frontage, which contributes positively to the streetscape. Thus representations will be made to this effect. See p17 Bulletin 52/4.

A fragment of the original façade of the **Futurist** in Scarborough, featuring a cherubic motif, has been salvaged from the demolition site and presented to a local museum. That institution is to be requested to accession the piece officially to prevent casual disposal by the Borough Council at a later date.



The Sandonia Stafford in May 2008

A local enthusiast is proposing reclamation of the façade of the **Sandonia** in Stafford, which is slated for imminent demolition, preceding reassembly at the Crich Tramway Village. Whilst the Association supports such an endeavour in principle, the practicalities, including expense for specialised removal and reconstruction allied with the timescale imposed by the demolition deadline, may weigh against the enterprise.