

HERITAGE CASEWORK

By Tim Hatcher

Grade II* Listed

Concern grows over the continued decline into dilapidation of the State at Grays whilst the latest proposals for alteration by JD Wetherspoon remain in abeyance. Regrettably, local councillors appear willing to sacrifice the integrity of the building's original features in order to facilitate a swift conclusion to its extended period of desuetude. The CTA is thus attempting to enlist the advocacy of other organisations in an attempt to resist these unsympathetic interpolations and to ensure that the structure receives the immediate remedial maintenance required.



The Association is liaising with the Conservation Officer of Harrow London Borough Council concerning a proposed corrective undertaking to rectify defects that have arisen upon the frontage of the Grosvenor in the Rayner's Lane area. *Photo taken March 2004.*

The CTA remains in detailed discussions concerning renovation of the Granada in Walthamstow. It is encouraging to report that, as petitioned, the dual organ consoles have been removed for restoration. Consultation anent the results of paint analyses and subsequent choice of colour palette is envisaged.

The trust administering the Picture House in Paignton is no longer soliciting funding from the Association; it is currently applying to varied sources in order to secure finance for restoration of the cinema's façade and front-of-house areas. Various activities in relation to the forthcoming International Agatha Christie Festival are also in the embryonic stages of planning.

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The religious group that owns the Ritz in Nuneaton finds itself in an impecunious state and is therefore seeking funds to underwrite expedition of essential repairs to the roof and to enhance the building's security provision. The seemingly omnipresent spectre of asbestos is set to exhibit a further challenge to the budget.

Trafford Council has acceded to the previously reported request for its intervention to prevent further deterioration and promote repair to the disused frontal block of the Pyramid in Sale. The authority is treating the problem as an enforcement issue and is to ensure that necessary measures are taken by the property's owners to rectify decay of affected elements.

Unlisted

A scheme to adapt the Elite in Ashbourne into a theatre would entail removal of any surviving internal detail dating from its 1929 inception. However, the structure has previously suffered considerable internal revision and subdivision; it is thus considered that insufficient original features remain to merit expending a significant amount of limited resources on the case.

The CTA is continuing to press for retention of the front and rear elevations, together with the foyers, of the Westover in Bournemouth. It is also soliciting the commission of a full photographic record of the interior and requesting that any significant architectural elements be salvaged.



Save Britain's Heritage has suggested that the Association might add its endorsement to the former's attempt to procure listed status for the Abbey, situated in Liverpool's Wavertree area. This support will augment that garnered locally from the civic society and from a group campaigning for the retention of the property. *Photo taken July 2007.*

Various options are under exploration to halt the corrosion to the steelwork within residual sections of the frontage of the Kensington Kinema, which are destined for incorporation into the new edifice envisioned for the plot. The resultant expansion has caused cracking to the facing stonework. Unfortunately, solutions range from short-term and possibly ineffective remedies to a highly intrusive option of complete deconstruction and re-erection with replacement steelwork. This latter alternative is likely to entail replication of many of the facing components, resulting in a consequent loss of originality and patina.

No objection has been submitted to a planning application to enclose a small balcony situated on a flank wall of the Savoy in Leyton in order to establish two small rooms thereon.

An approach is to be made to the Conservation Officer of Westminster City Council to counsel the attachment of a condition to any planning consent to be granted with respect to the Twentieth Century Fox Building in Soho. This would be to the effect that the neon roof-sign shall be punctiliously dismantled and offered to a suitable museum or collection.

A recent local planning proposal would remove the Prince's in North Shields from the official town centre zone. Whilst this would not currently render any additional risk to the venue, it could at a future date transpire that this had been a retrograde measure; thus the ordinance is to be resolutely resisted.

The Futurist in Nottingham has been locally listed; this provides an increased degree of protection to the property.

Efforts continue to dissuade Sunderland City Council from its medium-term intent to demolish the Regal, entreating it instead to regard the property as an asset in its regeneration scheme by including the current building in its new local plan.

BUZZ BINGO

Following the recent permanent closure of several prominent former cinemas as bingo halls of the above company, grave perturbation arises for the future of these sites. The most notable of these is undoubtedly the Regal in Bridlington, which was recently inexplicably refused listed status by Historic England despite a skilfully crafted submission extolling its copious and varied extant detailing of distinguished quality.

In an endeavour to secure a future for these buildings, the CTA is engaging pro-actively by contacting cinema chains with suggestions and details of those that might make useful additions to their portfolios. It is of course recognised that identical economic factors that prompted the closure of these halls are also adversely affecting film exhibitors to a similar degree and it is not the ideal time in which to suggest expansion.

