

# HERITAGE CASEWORK

By Tim Hatcher

## Grade II\* Listed

Subsequent to consultation with several interested parties, including the CTA, followed by approval of the revised plans, relevant permissions have now been granted for conversion of the State in Grays into a hostelry of JD Wetherspoon plc. It is intended that work should begin within two years, which enterprise will encompass restoration of the Compton organ and installation of a demountable screen in order to facilitate occasional film exhibition.

It is gratifying to report that restoration of the façade of the Picture House in Paignton is currently underway and nearing completion.

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A formal submission to seek planning and listed building consent has been tendered relating to the previously reported proposal to convert the Central Picture Theatre / King Edward in Blackpool into an 'artisan market'. A major defect of the scheme is the intent to pierce the ceiling in order to introduce multiple skylights. See photo p6 last Bulletin.



A productive meeting with representatives of Panter Hudsmith Architects and CNM Estates has been conducted in which it transpired that an objective of the latest scheme is to retain substantially the originality of the lower floor of the interior of the Regal at Kingston-upon-Thames. The Association is adjuring that the integrity of the full volume of the auditorium shall be preserved as a single entity.

*photo taken April 2006*

The freeholder of the Majestic in Mapperley [Nottingham] has sought advice from the Association concerning its restoration.

It is reported that major phases of renovation of the Ritz in Nuneaton have been accomplished; attention is presently diverted to conversion of the foyer into a restaurant.

## Unlisted

The Windsor in Bearwood [Birmingham] was recently marketed at a price of almost half a million pounds. Its most recent utilisation was as a snooker parlour. See photo p22 last Bulletin.

Noise emanating from the Brontë in Haworth suggests that internal building operations have commenced; the external parapet has also been removed. This situation was reported to Bradford Council's conservation team, the response of which, stating that pressure of work precluded immediate action, is palpably unsatisfactory.

Hammerson has placed The Point in Milton Keynes for sale with Savills plc; the plot offered includes the pyramidal structure, auditorium block and car park.

The Association, in parallel with the Theatres Trust and Historic England, has objected vociferously to Rotherham Metropolitan District Council concerning proposed demolition of the Regal. This edifice, situated in a conservation area, possesses associations with both Victor Sylvester and Sandy ("Can you hear me, mother?") Powell.

A timely intervention by an assiduous local conservation officer prevented destruction of the Sandonia in Stafford following the owner's acquisition of permission to demolish. The current aspiration is for retention of the foyer block.



Blackpool Council has been made aware that the locally-listed Royal Pavilion is reputed to be the earliest purpose-built cinema within the United Kingdom. It is envisaged that this particular may influence positively any deliberations upon the building's future.

*photo taken June 2009*

Wakefield Council, currently bidding to become UK City of Culture 2025, has declared its determination to demolish the Regal; it is manifest that the former body had at no stage exhibited any avidity towards its retention. Fifty-two local objections have been received.

The development company which wished to demolish the Royal in Plymouth has apparently withdrawn the scheme. Simultaneously the campaign to transform the building into an arts centre proceeds and indeed some temporary related activity has recently ensued within its portals.



After permanent closure as a Buzz Bingo establishment, ownership of the Regal in Bridlington was transferred to an alternative operator, subsequent to which a new gaming licence was granted and deployment as a bingo undertaking resumed.

*photos taken: exterior June 2006; interior September 2013*

Previous disquiet regarding the Imperial in Walsall was not misplaced, as a developer has now submitted a planning application to create residential apartments within the cinema's shell. The Association is to forward its objections.