

Planning Permission for the new building has been granted

As some of you will know, after a good deal of preliminary discussion and design modification, our planning application for the new Theatre in Shoreditch was finally submitted in July. On Wednesday 7 October the Hackney Planning Committee met and reviewed our planning application, and we're delighted to announce that planning permission has been granted and we can go ahead and build a theatre.



Front elevation, New Inn Broadway

What happens now?

We will launch our fundraising appeal to the wider world (more of that in our Fundraising Update column). We expect to schedule the demolition of the existing building and the remaining archaeological work in Spring 2010. We hope that this will provide another opportunity to view the remains of "The Theatre".

When any new archaeological finds have been established, we may have to modify the position of the foundations to ensure the proper preservation of any important remains. Soil will be removed from the site and hoardings constructed to protect the area and also to display information about the project – creating a sense of anticipation for when we arrive in 2012.

Having raised the required money, we plan to begin building work in 2011 for completion in 2012 – our 80th Anniversary year. (Also the year of the The Olympics in London, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee... anyway, it will be an exciting time).

Thanks are due to all those who have worked so hard to get us to this important milestone on the critical path to our new home.

FROM THE ARCHITECT

Barry Brown, the architect who is working with us on the design of the new building commented:

"I am delighted for the Tower Theatre Company that Planning Permission has been obtained, and believe that they have overcome this important hurdle on the strength of their reputation. I look forward to the next stages of the journey and to the realisation of their dream."



Section showing auditorium seating and stage

FUNDRAISING

Members of the Theatre Company and friends have now pledged or donated a fantastic £150,000. This is an excellent jump-start to our fundraising, not least because it demonstrates the huge commitment to the project from "the home team".

With the planning permission confirmed, fundraising can now really start. Over the coming months we will be applying to many of the bigger trusts and foundations for significant contributions to the appeal; in addition we will make contact with some of the companies and individuals who have expressed an interest in "The Theatre".

We are finalising information about the project for potential funders. This will be available from the beginning of November and will include images of the new theatre and details of how to get involved. There will also be a calendar of fundraising events that we are planning for the next year.

The fundraising team is keen to hear from anyone who has links to organisations or individuals who might have an interest in supporting us. If you would like to organise your own fundraising event, and need any advice then please contact us.

There's more information on our website about how to donate money to this unique and thrilling project.

To contact the fundraising team, please email: annabel.james@thetheatre.org.uk or dinah.irvine@thetheatre.org.uk and for more general information visit the website: www.thetheatre.org.uk/support.htm

PATRONS

We're very excited to have some exceptional people supporting our project. For the full list of patrons, please visit:

www.thetheatre.org.uk/patron.htm



Photo by John Haynes

Declan Donnellan, co-founder of the international theatre company Cheek by Jowl, visited the site when it was open earlier in the year and commented:

"It is moving but also strange to stand on damp gravel exactly where an astonished Londoner first heard Juliet tell Romeo that her bounty was as boundless as the sea. Strange perhaps because we are forced to recognise that Shakespeare was a young author writing new plays for a curious audience in a modern auditorium. That is how it happened. Shakespeare has not evolved into something grander than his roots in damp gravel. We will always miss the point if we divorce him from the ordinary human experience, from the raw and simple encounter between human beings in a human sized space. Preserving the site is not important for sentiment or nostalgia but because we need to be reminded where we come from, and where we end up."