

Donald Insall Associates

Chartered Architects and Historic Building Consultants

Dominion Centre, Gaumont Cinema

High Level Investigations

Design, Heritage and Access Statement

September 2023



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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of Report

Donald Insall Associates were appointed by the Dominion Centre to assist in proposals for the urgent repairs at the former Gaumont Cinema, Wood Green, now the Dominion Centre Church.

This statement has been prepared in support of an application for Listed Building Consent for investigative works to the high level cornice and parapet to the front elevation. The works included in this application are for a series of intrusive investigations to the top cornice to allow for the assessment of the steel structure within. These investigations will help inform the urgent repairs required to the front elevation of the building, which faces directly onto The Broadway.

Section 2 provides a summary of the building and its significance. The history of the building is summarised in Section 3. Section 4 describes the proposals covered by this application, and their justification with the access statement is included in Section 5.

2. Summary of Design, Heritage and Access Statement

2.1 The Building, its Legal Status and Policy Context

The Dominion Centre is housed in the former Gaumont Cinema, which is a Grade II* listed building located on the west side of The Broadway, a main urban street (A105) close to the centre of Wood Green. The Gaumont Palace forms part of a brick built three storey terrace with retail units on the ground floor and residential accommodation above. The foyer and main façade of the former cinema faces directly onto the street frontage. Steps lead up to a recessed entrance doors opening into the foyer below a projecting canopy. The foyer is a rectangular building and leads to the main auditorium at the rear. The rear auditorium externally forms a plain brick building orientated north/south with a fly tower at the northern end.

The Gaumont Palace Cinema, Wood Green, built in 1934, is one of the super cinemas built in the 1930s to celebrate the growth of film. It represents a time of growth in the cinema industry and expansion of the outer London suburbs. Its importance is evident in the rich interior decoration of the auditorium and foyers in Art Moderne style. Of particular note are the plaster decoration in the foyers, mosaic floors, existing original doors, the curved geometry of the main auditorium with arched proscenium and curved niches.

2.2 Summary of Significance

The cinema was built in 1933-34 to the design of William Edward Trent (1874-1948) and Ernest F Tulley. Trent was the principal in-house architect for the Gaumont-British Picture Corporation. He designed many listed cinemas for the Gaumont and their predecessor, Provincial Cinematograph Theatres before its takeover by Gaumont in 1929.

William Edward Trent was an assistant in the office of Henry Poston of Lombard Street, London from 1892-1905. During this time he studied architecture part time at the Architectural Association until establishing his own practice in 1905. His early cinema work included the conversion of a shop in Dalston, London to a cinema and the large super cinema at Ilford, London although he was not responsible for the interior decoration. Trent joined PCT in 1925 and his existing practice was taken over by his son, W S Trent.

Trent's earlier projects included Bournemouth Regent (1929), Hanley Regent (1929) and Ipswich Regent (1931). These are notable for a large dome dominating the auditorium. The Ipswich cinema had grillework and decorative features in Neo-classical and Art Deco styling.

During the four year period 1931-35, Trent was in charge of all new build cinemas and improvements. During this time, the new cinemas were called 'Gaumont Palaces' and were of lavish proportions and often well equipped for live performances. Many were built in the expanding London suburbs. Of these, the Gaumont Palace, Wood Green is one of Trent's most modern designs incorporating a dramatic curved proscenium arch and niches that leaned inwards to meet the arch.

Trent worked with other designers on a regular basis. Ernest F Tulley first assisted Trent on the refurbishment of the Palladium at Southport, Merseyside and went on to work on many other projects. Trent also worked with Frank Barnes, Gaumont's full time chief artist. The safety curtain at Wood Green was one of his designs, depicting the signs of the zodiac and it is possible that the curtain may survive suspended in the fly tower.

The Gaumont Palace cinema is of national significance as an example of one of the super cinemas of the 1930s with fine interior decoration in the auditorium and foyers incorporating Moderne, Egyptian and Expressionist elements. It is considered to be one of the most successful surviving Gaumont projects by Trent and Tulley.

The Gaumont is also of local historical importance for it marks a period of growth in Wood Green, the north London suburbs and the extension of the Piccadilly line through to Wood Green in 1933, just a year before the construction of the cinema.

2.3 Summary Proposals and Justification

The proposed scope of works included in this application comprise of opening up works to the cornice at high level to establish the construction of the cornice and its condition. It has been established that there are steel columns within the brickwork which have been exposed in some locations. Brickwork will be removed in specified locations where it is assume further steel columns are located.

A further area of cracking to the north parapet is also to be investigated in a similar manner.

The findings from these investigation will inform a programme of repairs to be undertaken to fully support the cornice and prevent further failure.

3. Historical Summary and Assessment of Significance

3.1 Development of the Gaumont Cinema

The Gaumont Palace Cinema, Wood Green, built in 1934, is one of the super cinemas built in the 1930s to celebrate the growth of film. It represents a time of growth in the cinema industry and expansion of the outer London suburbs. Its importance is evident in the rich interior decoration of the auditorium and foyers in Art Moderne style. Of particular note are the plaster decoration in the foyers, mosaic floors, existing original doors, the curved geometry of the main auditorium with arched proscenium and curved niches.

The building is no longer a cinema. Until 2005, the building was used as a Bingo Club, with the main auditorium sub-divided. The building, then in poor condition, was acquired by the Dominion Church. The growing church has made significant enhancements to the building, with the removal of inappropriate modern sub-divisions, conservation of historic internal lighting and plasterwork, and the reinstatement of the curved proscenium arch. Today, the first floor café above the foyer is separately leased to a night club.

4. Commentary on Proposals and Justification

4.1 Existing Situation

The former Gaumont Palace is a brick clad steel framed building. The front elevation is a symmetrical arrangement of a central rendered area flanked by brickwork. There are two horizontal mouldings at the top of the front elevation which carry the name of the cinema.

The 2003 Conservation Statement by Donald Insall Associates affords national significance to the building as an example of a 1930s Art Moderne super cinemas. It is also afforded local historical significance for its association with the expansion of Wood Green.

The building is now in need of urgent repairs to address the corrosion of the metal fixings which is causing failure of the render on the front elevation. This elevation faces directly onto The Broadway, a main thoroughfare in Wood Green. The building is currently listed on Historic England's Heritage At Risk Register, following pieces of the high level cornice falling onto the street below. The church has arranged for scaffold to be erected in order to safeguard those walking below and also to permit a more detailed inspection to assess the extent of necessary repairs.

Previous Listed Building Consents have been obtained for some of the repairs required, however, in order to inform the repairs of the steelwork supporting the moulded cornice, intrusive investigations are required to assess the condition of the steels currently encased within the brickwork.

4.2 Proposals

It is proposed that sections of the cornice are subject to opening up works at strategic locations, where steel columns are known to exist and assumed to exist based on site evidence. The condition of the steel columns will determine the type and extent of the structural repairs required to the cornice.

In addition, it is proposed that a crack to the brickwork in the north parapet wall will also be investigated to determine the cause of the defect and a suitable repair will be developed as required.

The repairs to the cornice and parapet will be the subject of a further Listed Building Consent following development of the proposals.

4.3 Pre-Application Advice

A Pre-App meeting was arranged on site on 4th July 2023 and was attended by the client, architect, structural engineer, Haringey planning officers, Kevin Tohill and Zara Seelig, and conservation officer, Elisabetta Tonazzi.

The discussions regarding the proposed investigations were well received and due to the urgent need for repairs, the planning and conservation officers were pleased to see the works being progressed. They were content for works to start as soon as possible, with an LBC application submitted to concurrently to the investigations being undertaken. It was requested that they be kept informed of the progress of the works and it is the intention to meet again on site following the completion of the investigations to discuss the proposed repairs.

An advice note summarising the meeting was issued 14th September and is included in Appendix III.

4.4 Impact on the Significance of the Heritage Asset, Justification and Conclusion

The proposals would not result in any harm to the heritage asset and form part of a wider programme of works which will see the stabilisation of the cornice and repair of the elevation to the former cinema. This will allow for the removal of the scaffold and ensure the safety of the building, thus have a beneficial impact on the heritage asset.

The proposed investigations, and the subsequent repairs that they will enable, accord with the relevant policies in the NPPF and Policy HC1 of the London Plan (2021)



Exposed steel column at cornice level.



Crack to north parapet to be investigated as part of works.

5. Access Statement

5.1 Access

The proposed works are to undertake intrusive investigations at high level to inform further repair works. Therefore, access to the building will not be affected as a result of these works.

Appendix I - Listing Description

Heritage Category: Listed Building
Grade: II*
List Entry Number: 1263635
Date first listed: 26-Mar-1990
List Entry Name: TOP RANK CLUB
Statutory Address 1: TOP RANK CLUB, BROADWAY

County: Greater London Authority
District: Haringey (London Borough)
Parish: Non Civil Parish
National Grid Reference: TQ 31000 90285

TQ3090 and TQ3190 BROADWAY

GV II*

Alternatively known as: GAUMONT CINEMA, BROADWAY. Former cinema, built in 1933-34 by the Gaumont-British Picture Corporation in collaboration with a satellite company, Associated Provincial Picture Houses. Architect: William Edward Trent (1874-1948) and Ernest F. Tulley. Constructed with a steel frame, brick clad with some internal blockwork. Symmetrical Moderne entrance facade combining artificial stone with brick. Auditorium in stock brick, with roof visible and tall stage fly tower. Roof of foyer block not seen. Large auditorium with balcony and stage, set behind complex foyers in double-height entrance hall. EXTERIOR: The four sets of original entrance doors are approached by five steps. Flanking are two more doors, the one to the right being an exit while the left-hand one formerly accessed the cafe above the foyer. Over the cantilevered canopy are long windows on two levels divided into three sections by broad convex mullions with original glazing bars. The cafe, most recently let as a banqueting hall, was situated on the second level. Above the windows is an area of artificial stone (it formerly held moveable lettering advertising the film programmes). The composition is surrounded by an artificial stone frame terminating in squared volutes. At the top are two horizontal mouldings carrying the name of the cinema. There are two window apertures in the brick area at second floor level. Beyond the foyer block the auditorium runs at right angles parallel to the street. INTERIOR: Ground and first floor foyers in streamlined Moderne style, having convex and concave mouldings running along the walls and ceilings, incorporating light fittings in the ceiling ribs. This is particularly pronounced in the inner foyer. Pier glasses substitute as pilasters, below which are Moderne radiator grills. The rising ground necessitates a series of short flights of stairs to reach the main floor of the auditorium. Streamlined balustrades with brass handrails. At the far end of the inner foyer, broad stairs rise to the balcony level, halting at a landing where flights reverse in Imperial form, which previously provided access to the cafe (connection now blocked). The main balcony stairs are flanked by subsidiary flight to the stalls. Above all, is a coved cornice with original sans serif lettering: STALLS CIRCLE STALLS, surmounted by Moderne ventilation grilles. Large double-height rusticated streamlined Moderne auditorium. Semi-circular arched proscenium. Large arched niches on the curving ante-proscenium containing recessed mouldings surrounding slender

features enclosing roundels with Egyptian-style motifs. One the side walls are cigar-shaped niches bound by paired mouldings and containing original globe light fittings surmounted by chromium Egyptian motifs comprising superimposed sun disks with lyriiform horns. Stepped and curved cornicing, with grills over the proscenium. Large balcony. Ceiling with a cigar-shaped moulding containing recessed roundels. Deep stage with fly-tower and dressing rooms. It is possible that Frank Barnes's painted scene representing the signs of the zodiac may still survive on the safety iron in the fly-tower. Cafe to front (operated separately in 2000) retains original ceiling and cornice detailing. ANALYSIS: A lavish super cinema of the 1930s combining Moderne, Egyptianising and Expressionist elements in its decoration -the latter probably derived from the interior of the Titania Palast cinema in Berlin of 1928 by Schoffler, Schlonbach and Jacobi. Possibly the most successful of the surviving Gaumont schemes by Trent and Tulley. From 1984 to 1996 the cinema was in use as a bingo club. SOURCE Richard Gray, *Cinemas in Britain*, Lund Humphries Publishers, London, 1996, pages 81,88-89, 135. Allen Eyles, *Gaumont British Cinemas*, Cinema Theatre Association, Burgess Hill, 1996, pages 62-64 and 222. Bridget Cherry and Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England -London 4: North*, Penguin Books, London, 1998, page 594.

Listing NGR: TQ3100090285

Appendix II - Planning and Policy Guidance

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The Act is legislative basis for decision making on applications that relate to the historic environment.

Sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Act impose a statutory duty upon local planning authorities to consider the impact of proposals upon listed buildings and conservation areas.

Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that:

[...] in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Similarly, section 66 of the above Act states that:

In considering whether to grant permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority, or as the case may be the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Local Policy

Haringey Local Plan 2017 - 2026

The following policies from the Local Plan of 2017 are relevant to this report:

SP12: Conservation

The Council shall ensure the conservation of the historic significance of Haringey's heritage assets, their setting, and the wider historic environment. The borough's heritage assets include Statutory Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens, Archaeological Priority Areas, and other locally important heritage assets such as Locally Listed Buildings, Local Historic Green Spaces and Sites of Industrial Heritage Interest. Where archaeological excavation is required, findings should be published, disseminated, and used as the basis for archaeological interpretation on site.

Regional Policy

The London Plan (March 2021)

In March 2021 the Mayor adopted The London Plan. This is operative as the Mayor's spatial development strategy and forms part of the development plan for Greater London. Relevant policies pertaining to heritage include the following:

Policy HC1 Heritage Conservation and Growth

(E) Where heritage assests have been identified as being At Risk, boroughs should identify opportunities for them to contribute to regeneration and place-making, and tehy should set out strategies for their repair and reuse.

Appendix III - Pre-App Advice Note



Pre-Application Planning Advice Note

Ref: PRE/2023/0096 - LBC proposal

Thank you for attending the recent Pre-Application Planning advice meeting with Haringey Council to discuss your proposal. We hope you found the meeting useful. The points discussed at the meeting are outlined below, along with feedback from the Planning Service about aspects that were good, could be improved, or are unlikely to obtain planning permission as currently proposed. We hope this summary will provide you with useful guidance about the steps you will need to take before submitting an application for planning permission.

If you have any questions about the feedback we have provided, please contact the named officer who will be able to clarify the advice. If you require further advice, our website can provide you with some information about the things we take into consideration when determining a planning application, or you can book a second pre-application advice meeting.

Site Address: 9 The Broadway, Wood Green, London, N22 6DS (Gaumont Cinema, Dominion Centre)

Proposal: In response to your query about the works to be covered in the pre-app and subsequent LBC application for the Dominion Centre, we are proposing investigative works to the cornice which will help inform the remedial works required to the steel structure within. These investigations will require the removal of existing brickwork from the cornice to expose the steel beams and columns below.

Please see attached for a letter and sketches from the structural engineer and a selection of photos of the area in question illustrating the areas to be investigated.

Could we please arrange a date for a meeting on site for further discussion, I am yet to hear from your colleague with regards to dates and costs of the meeting.

Submitted Documents: Plan no's: SK1 Rev P1, SK2 Rev P1. Documents: GCL.04 – Gaumont Cinema External Repairs – Cornice Photos, emails from agent with further information.

Meeting Date: Meeting was on site on 04/07/2023

Attendees:

Zara Seelig - Haringey Council
Kevin Tohill - Haringey Council
Elisabetta Tonazzi - Haringey Council
Emma Naylor - Senior Architect - Donald Insall Associates
Stuart Toppin - Engineer - Stand Consulting Engineers

Summary of Council's response

Overall RAG Rating	Reason for rating
	The proposed repair works are considered necessary and are fully supported by the Councils planning and Conservation teams.

Review of submitted proposal

The assessment of the proposal submitted uses a RAG rating system (see below). Comments are provided on the reasons for the rating given.

Red = This element of the element is not currently considered to be acceptable.

Amber = This element of the proposal has not been adequately addressed within the submission.

Green = This element of the proposal is considered to be acceptable by officers.

NOTE: The rating assigned is a result of the officer's consideration of the proposal against the current planning policy (see below) and all other material planning considerations insofar as they are known at this stage (i.e before consultation with the neighbours has taken place).

Policy aspect				Comments
Principle of Development				At the site visit of last 4 th July we discussed the proposed investigations to the parapet of the main elevation of the Grade II listed Dominion Centre with the architect and the structural engineer, we looked at the conditions of the parapet including exposed corroded steel and delamination issues and advised that the proposed investigations aimed at better

				understanding the conditions of the steel beams and columns encased within the brickwork are necessary and fully supported from the heritage conservation perspective. Officers are glad that the investigations and the intention to resume repair works have gained momentum, that a specialist conservation team is designing and leading this very sensitive project and are supportive of the thorough yet sensitive approach to the proposed investigations that will include the localized removal of existing brickwork to access the encased steel behind and the proposed cleaning and discrete removal of delaminated steel to determine the conditions of the surviving steelwork in order to gauge a first understanding of the general conditions of the structure that will be further exposed, assessed and suitably repaired once repair works will commence. Within this frame officers have advised that notwithstanding the need to proceed with the essential structural investigations without any further delay, a detailed LBC application informed by both the architect's and engineer's considerations, as discussed on site, should be submitted concurrently with the investigative works. Officers have requested submission of a programme of the investigation works and to be notified about the key stages and progression of the investigative works so to be able to informedly liaise with and advise as necessary the project team throughout the duration of the proposed works and to finally discuss the ascertained conditions of the listed building based on the outcomes of the investigations. Officers have advised that further pre-application discussion dedicated to the comprehensive repairs that will descend from the findings of the urgent investigations will be beneficial and a new LBC application dedicated to the repair works will need to be submitted in due course. The conservation approach to overcome the challenges posed by the listed building is sound and convincing in the officers' opinion and a steady progression to the design and implementation of the necessary repair works is strongly encouraged.
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Next steps

If you decide to proceed with applying for Listed Building Consent, the following information will be required when you submit your application:

1. The completed full application form (available on our website or from the [Planning Portal](#))
2. Location plan at a scale of 1:1250 with a red line around the site in question.
3. Site plan at a scale of 1:500 or 1:200 showing the direction of North, the proposed development in relation to the site boundaries and written dimensions.
4. Existing and proposed plans where appropriate. All plans/elevations must have a scale bar and dimensions.
5. Programme of the investigation works.
6. Any other documents clearly set out above.

The planning application process

Once you have submitted your planning application, it goes through a number of steps:

1. **Validation/Checking**
Applications are checked to make sure all required documents and fees are there, and checked for any potential issues which need addressed to ensure compliance with policy, if considered 'valid' and likely to be acceptable they are registered, applications are only checked when an officer is available so there can be a number of weeks before an application is validated and checked.
2. **Registration**
The application is entered into the register of applications and customers are informed formally that their application is registered, their application reference number, their case officer and the deadline they can expect to hear back by.
3. **Consultation** (a minimum of 21 days following registration)
Details of the application will be provided to neighbours in line with our consultation policy and they will have the opportunity to comment on the proposed development. Consultees are given a minimum of 21 days to comment on an application.
4. **Decision** (Usually as soon as the consultation has ended).
The planning service can deal with most householder applications under delegated powers and will issue a decision notice to stating whether the application has been approved or refused, and if there are any conditions that must be met.

Carrying out building works

Once you have listed building consent, it is recommended that you obtain technical advice regarding building control matters. Building Control services ensure that the works carried out by your appointed builders are done safely. Building Control services can be found through your local council or an Approved Inspector service.

Haringey Building Control has extensive experience in working with clients on a wide range of projects. Should you wish to discuss your project and how Haringey Building Control may best advise you regarding compliance with relevant building control regulations, please contact Building Control on 020 8489 5504 or by email on building.control@haringey.gov.uk

List of relevant contacts

Planning Officer: Zara Seelig
Email: zara.seelig@haringey.gov.uk

INFORMATIVE

Please be advised that this response is given at officer level and does not form a formal response or decision of the Council with regard to future planning application(s) or other formal approaches. The views expressed above are given in good faith, to the best of ability, and without prejudice to the formal consideration of any future planning application, which will be subject to formal consultation and ultimately decided on by the Council.

