



Victoria Palace: view of the main facade

## victoria palace theatre

"These plans would make Victoria Palace the most advanced commercial theatre in London, both in its ability to present large and highly technical productions and in the comfortable facilities we will offer our audiences. We will be the first fully 21st century theatre both for actors and technicians and for audience members."

Sir Stephen Waley-Cohen - Director, Victoria Palace

Client: Sir Stephen Whaley-Cohen  
 Value: £8-12 million  
 Completion: tbc  
 Role: Full architectural and interior design services

## reimagining matcham's theatre

Having prepared proposals and obtained listed building consent for the extension and redevelopment of Sir Stephen Whaley-Cohen's theatre through Arts Team, we recently carried our further studies on the building design and layout. Our brief was to maximise opportunities arising from major commercial and transportation redevelopments taking place all around the theatre. Our proposals also reviewed the implications of recent commercial schemes to ensure the extended stage, improved back stage circulation and facilities, and increased foyer provision was safeguarded.



Massing analysis showing impact of surrounding developments on Victoria Palace Theatre

## design approach

The Grade 2\* listed Matcham theatre has a capacity of 1550 seats and remains one of the best preserved of Matcham's great London theatres. Viability appraisals identified where the theatre stood in relation to other West End theatres, and recommended that sufficient land could be made available to create the best stage and fly tower for musicals in London, making it the musical theatre of choice.

Working with the management team we established target stage house sizes for discussion with development partners regarding the quantum of land.

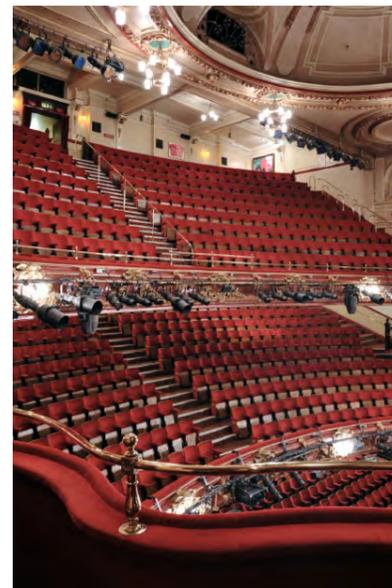
We defined the land area needed to create a 30% larger stage. Our detailed appraisal of auditorium seating showed that 10% more seats, and improved comfort for all seats, could be achieved through intelligent replanning. A new foyer roof-top extension would deliver more space for bar/cafe, merchandise, toilet, rehearsal facilities, and administration offices, all made accessible via two new lifts.

We reviewed further options for extending high over the foyer and stage house to provide lettable offices, residential or other arts uses. These were evaluated against budget, programme and business plan.

The redevelopment of Victoria Palace Theatre will play a major role within the wider context of Victoria Station's redevelopment.

Designs for the new facades create a modern terracotta and brick screen using a contemporary style and rhythm - an architectural reference back to Matcham's original design approach.

When completed, the new fly tower will provide a calm, coherent and understated backdrop to Matcham's fine listed façades. It will also ensure the theatre architecturally "holds its own" in context of the dominant commercial properties that will soon surround it.



Matcham's auditorium - increasing seat numbers without damaging fabric, acoustic or sightlines



Function Suite - improving the potential for revenue generation on all floors