

Heritage, Design and Access Statement
Proposed External Signage – “THE LITTLE THEATRE”

26 King Street,

Gravesend,

Kent

DA12 2DU

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1. Introduction

This combined Design and Access Statement and Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of applications for **Listed Building Consent and Advertisement Consent** for the installation of external signage at **26 King Street, Gravesend**.

The proposal relates to discreet fascia and projecting signage identifying the premises as “**THE LITTLE THEATRE**”, designed to be proportionate, reversible, and sympathetic to the architectural and historic significance of the host building and its setting.

2. Site Description and Heritage Context

The application site is located at **26 King Street**, within the **King Street Conservation Area**, and lies within the commercial core of **Gravesend** town centre.

The building is a **Grade II listed former County Court**, occupying a prominent frontage along King Street. The Conservation Area is characterised by historic civic and commercial buildings with formal architectural compositions and restrained shopfront treatments.

Existing signage within the area is typically modest in scale, traditionally detailed, and visually subordinate to host buildings, establishing a clear heritage-led context for signage design.

3. Listed Building Significance

The building was listed on **3 July 1975** (List Entry No. 1089061) and dates from circa **1870**. It is constructed in ashlar stone beneath a slate roof and displays strong civic architectural qualities.

Key features of significance include:

- Ashlar stone façade with classical proportions
- Balustraded parapet with quatrefoil motif
- Triglyph frieze and coupled pilasters
- Round-headed doorcases with decorated spandrels
- Original double doors and historic fenestration

The significance of the building derives principally from its **external architectural form, materials, detailing, and historic civic use**, with the principal elevation being of highest sensitivity.

4. Proposed Advertisements – Description and Specification

4.1 Fascia Sign

- **Advertisement Type:** Fascia Sign
- **Height:** 0.7 metres
- **Width:** 7.1 metres
- **Depth:** 0.05 metres
- **Height from ground to base:** 5.2 metres
- **Maximum projection from building:** 0.05 metres
- **Maximum letter height:** 44 centimetres

- **Materials:** Aluminium frame with ACM panel; 19mm foam PVC secondary text (“THE LITTLE THEATRE”) applied as vinyl
- **Colour:** Heritage burgundy text (hex #800020) on a muted, complementary background
- **Illumination:** Yes – externally illuminated
- **Illuminance level:** 195 cd/m²
- **Lighting type:** Static (non-intermittent)

The fascia sign is positioned to align with existing architectural rhythms and will not obscure or interrupt any historic detailing.

4.2 Projecting / Hanging Sign

- **Advertisement Type:** Projecting or Hanging Sign
- **Height:** 1.035 metres
- **Width:** 0.515 metres
- **Depth:** 0.15 metres
- **Height from ground to base:** 3.4 metres
- **Maximum projection from building:** 0.8 metres
- **Maximum letter height:** 13.2 centimetres
- **Materials:** Aluminium frame with ACM panel and vinyl text
- **Colour:** Matching heritage burgundy text and background palette
- **Illumination:** Yes – externally illuminated
- **Illuminance level:** 195 cd/m²
- **Lighting type:** Static (non-intermittent)

The projecting sign is modest in size and positioned to remain visually subservient to the host building while improving legibility at pedestrian level.

5. Design Approach

The signage has been designed to:

- Respect the **formal civic character** of the listed building
- Remain **subordinate to the historic façade**
- Avoid visual clutter or commercial dominance
- Reflect traditional signage proportions and colour palettes

The chosen burgundy colour complements the ashlar stone façade and reflects tones commonly found in heritage signage along King Street. Externally illuminated, low-level, static lighting ensures legibility without glare or visual intrusion.

6. Access Considerations

The projecting sign improves wayfinding for pedestrians approaching from both directions along King Street, enhancing inclusivity and legibility without impeding footway clearance or accessibility.

The height and projection comply with highway and pedestrian safety requirements, and the signage does not obstruct entrances, windows, or historic features.

7. Heritage Impact Assessment

The proposed signage:

- Is **fully reversible**
- Involves **no loss or alteration of historic fabric**
- Does not obscure architectural features
- Preserves the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building

The scale, materials, illumination levels, and positioning ensure that the proposal causes **no harm** to the significance of the Grade II listed building or the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The signage supports the continued cultural use of the building as a theatre, enhancing public understanding while remaining heritage-led and discreet.

8. Policy Compliance

The proposal accords with:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) heritage objectives
- Statutory duties under Sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- Local heritage and advertisement control policies of **Gravesham Borough Council**

9. Conclusion

The proposed fascia and projecting signage for **“THE LITTLE THEATRE”** represents a **minor, sympathetic, and high-quality intervention**.

The design preserves the significance of the Grade II listed building, maintains the character of the King Street Conservation Area, and enhances legibility without causing harm. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in heritage, design, and amenity terms and fully supports the grant of **Listed Building Consent and Advertisement Consent**.