

Theatre Consultants Report Review and Recommendations

The Spa Pavilion Felixstowe



Prepared by:

AMPC

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Introduction

Spa Pavilion is an 892 seat receiving theatre situated on the sea front adjacent to the cliff edge at Felixstowe in a cul-de-sac in a conservation area.

AMPC visited the site in June 2011 and had an extensive tour of the premises including all the technical areas of the auditorium. We have been asked to review the venue and make recommendations with a view to taking the Spa Pavilion forward to the next stage of its life.



The last remaining of 4 theatres in the town, the current premise was built in 1950. Its origins were in music in the form of a bandstand and it was initially a replacement building for the demolished 1910 Floral Hall. The newly named Spa Pavilion, built circa 1938, was subsequently bombed in 1941 and rebuilt as a theatre in 1950. A sea view lounge was added in 1960. Apart from maintenance improvements it has not altered since that time.



Background

The theatre's programme range from mid- scale to small scale: mid-scale musicals, children's theatre, classical performances, dance, pantomime, comedy nights, tribute bands and acts, speakers and for a total of 16 weeks of the year the auditorium is hired out to the local community for amateur dramatic works. Some individual one night only acts and some community shows are sell outs but management has recently had to cancel certain shows due to poor ticket sales.

The theatre offers a range of parallel activities: summer youth theatre; drama festivals and special events. Previous Shakespeare schools project proved popular and could be capitalised upon.

Due to the show cancellations since 2008, currently performances are booked for Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays matinees and evenings. The rest of the time the auditorium is dark and not used. This time could be used for conferencing with break out space provided and educational programmes.

The audience comprises local people, day trippers and people from Ipswich. The management advised that many visit the Spa Pavilion for lunch then visit elsewhere and return for a cream tea.

The venue is unable to attract larger shows and more well known performers because they demand a higher seating capacity of 1200. The BBC was interested in filming their daytime programme Flog It! in the auditorium but the inability to provide a flat floor configuration prevented this.



The restaurant at first floor level with sea view between bar and foyer

The Venue

The Spa Pavilion looks tired. The building is essentially on first floor level and is accessed by steps into the foyer area situated at the rear of the auditorium. The auditorium is gently raked with 3 banks of seating in a one room proscenium arch theatre with orchestra pit. Sightlines are adequate. The ceiling is a gentle arch. There is no fly tower due to height restrictions but this does not pose an operational problem. The control room is at the rear of the stalls with a follow spot room at a higher level.



Auditorium view towards the stage



Auditorium

Dressing rooms, offices and get-in are to the rear of the stage. Egress is from the rear and stage left side wall only – the other side wall is tight against the

cliff edge. Along the length of the auditorium runs the restaurant with views out to the sea and the bar and toilets at the end adjacent to the back of house. The kitchens serving it are below on ground floor. The bar and group toilets should be integrated closer into the foyer area to minimise interval circulation routes. The cellar and workshop are below the bar at ground level



Restaurant with bar and toilets to rear



Front elevation onto seafront

The current restaurant and auditorium work in isolation. As the restaurant is situated on the same level as the foyer and auditorium it is not used when a performance is on as that space is required as a bar area and circulation during the intervals. The kitchens and supporting accommodation situated below on the ground floor level are adjacent to the seafront, esplanade and gardens. These areas offer opportunities of providing additional café/bistro/restaurant type spaces that could serve and link through to the theatre which would allow the restaurant and theatre to operate in tandem. This would also

enhance visual and physical links to the adjacent gardens where performances could also take place.

What and where is the Spa Pavilion? Signposting and identity of the venue is poor and is an obstacle. The recent town centre pedestrianisation has taken car flow away from the venue and made it difficult for those with walking challenges to return to town. Signposting from the station is inadequate and as a newcomer the route down to the venue is not easy to locate. The activity inside the Spa Pavilion does not match its name and so offers confusion to its identity. Some local people do not know the theatre exists and therefore a rebranding of the title or the inclusion of the words 'theatre' and 'restaurant' would attract more visitors. Schemes to provide transport links between the station and the theatre combined with other vehicle links along the seafront would be beneficial.

Venue hire is very competitive: Spa Pavilion with 892 seats is £345 compared to the theatre in nearby Ipswich with 1500 seats is £1800. This may well change with any upgrade but it is worth bearing in mind the attractiveness of low rental the full basis that those performances bring.

There is no designated rehearsal room from which the theatre would benefit.

Additional space provision could be provided by extending the rear two walls behind the dressing rooms. This would provide a designated stage door area plus more dressing room space, office space and storage. It would also provide clarity to two main back of house entrances: one could be the stage door for staff, actors and visitors and the other could be for the get-in.



Rear walls could extend; create stage door



Get – in area

There is opportunity to have increased accommodation to the front of the building. Roof space above the foyer area accessed currently by the follow spot room could be developed to provide a stunning rehearsal room or more admin space.



Roof area behind existing follow spot room

Conclusions

The Spa Pavilion has a great potential to regain its audience members and introduce new ones. Its unique seaside position, outlook and surroundings offer wonderful opportunities for an exciting seaside programme and broader programme of works. It has the potential to branch out to other commercial ventures whilst adhering to its culture of theatre works.

Recommendations:

To provide a more flexible facility that could attract a wider scope of bookings and the larger acts which in turn will attract a wider larger audience :

Option 1 – increase seating capacity

- Add 215 seat to existing auditorium
- Extend the stage
- Maintain orchestra pit
- Additional light bar to the front of the auditorium
- Move the control room up one level to position of the followspot room
- Add side galleries and rear balcony to give additional seats and improves intimacy and envelopment of the wide auditorium
- Follow spot and additional lighting positions to the balconies
- Add a rehearsal room
- Extend back of house rear walls to create separate entrances for actors and get-in whilst increasing accommodation
- Improve communications of the Spa Pavilion to Felixstowe and Suffolk
 - increase signage and transportation links
 - rebrand name to include the words theatre and restaurant
 - involve more education programmes; writing programmes; workshops; open days; tours
 - harness the demographics: lunchtime recitals; matinees; more clubs;
 - involve/attract the younger members of Felixstowe
- Provide outdoor performances, street performers, puppetry and workshop skills in the adjacent spa gardens development to interact with the surroundings and provide additional attractions to the theatre and gardens
- Provide ground floor level/sea front level access and restaurant to link in to foyer and theatre above

Option 2 – increase seating capacity to 1200

- Add 300 seat to existing auditorium
- Extend the stage
- Maintain orchestra pit
- Install stage extension lift
- Additional light bar to the front of the auditorium
- Move the control room up one level to position of the followspot room
- Add side galleries and rear balcony to give additional seats and improves intimacy and envelopment of the wide auditorium
- Follow spot and additional lighting positions to the balconies
- Seating types that offer a flat floor configuration eg tracked tip-up and seats on moveable pallets
- Technical infrastructure to reduce size of auditorium to 300 or 500 when required and address acoustics issues that presents
- Offer banqueting, conferencing, lecture and catering provision
- Add a rehearsal room
- Extend back of house rear walls to create separate entrances for actors and get-in whilst increasing accommodation

- Improve communications of the Spa Pavilion to Felixstowe and Suffolk
 - increase signage and transportation links
 - rebrand name to include the words theatre and restaurant
 - involve more education programmes; writing programmes; workshops; open days; tours
 - harness the demographics: lunchtime recitals; matinees; more clubs;
 - involve/attract the younger people of Felixstowe
- Provide outdoor performances, street performers, puppetry and workshop skills in the adjacent spa gardens development to interact with the surroundings and provide additional attractions to the theatre and gardens
- Provide ground floor level/sea front level access and restaurant to link in to foyer and theatre above

Option 3 – decrease seating capacity to 500

To provide a flexible venue that had a reduced capacity of 300-500 seats for musicals, drama, dance and for community use that maximised space outside the auditorium for conferencing

- Reduce seating capacity by 392
- Extend the stage
- Maintain orchestra pit
- Install stage extension lift
- Additional light bar to the front of the auditorium
- Pull in the rear wall of the auditorium to relocate existing technical provision and create more production lighting positions
- Increase the provision for break out space needed for conferencing
- Increase catering facilities
- Address any acoustic issues
- Add a rehearsal room
- Extend back of house rear walls to create separate entrances for actors and get-in whilst increasing accommodation
- Improve communications of the Spa Pavilion to Felixstowe and Suffolk
 - increase signage and transportation links
 - rebrand name to include the words 'theatre' and 'restaurant'
 - involve more education programmes; writing programmes; workshops; open days; tours
 - harness the demographics: lunchtime recitals; matinees; more clubs;
 - engage the younger people of Felixstowe
- Provide outdoor performances, street performers, puppetry and workshop skills in the adjacent spa gardens development to interact with the surroundings and provide additional attractions to the theatre and gardens
- Provide ground floor level/sea front level access and restaurant to link in to foyer and theatre above

Phasing

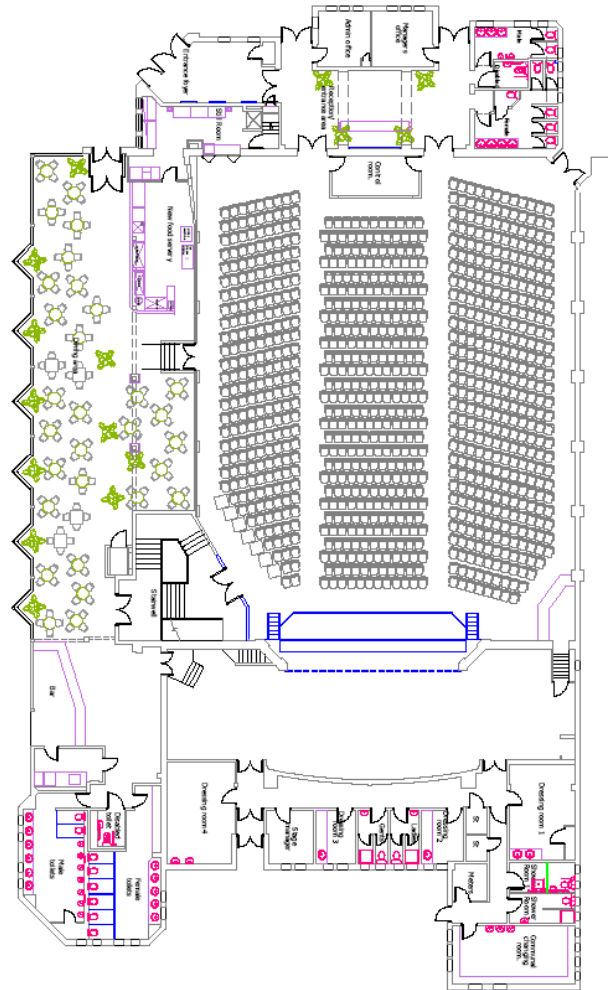
A phased approach to refurbishment could be implemented. The theatre is currently very quiet during January and February when they carry out routine maintenance work.

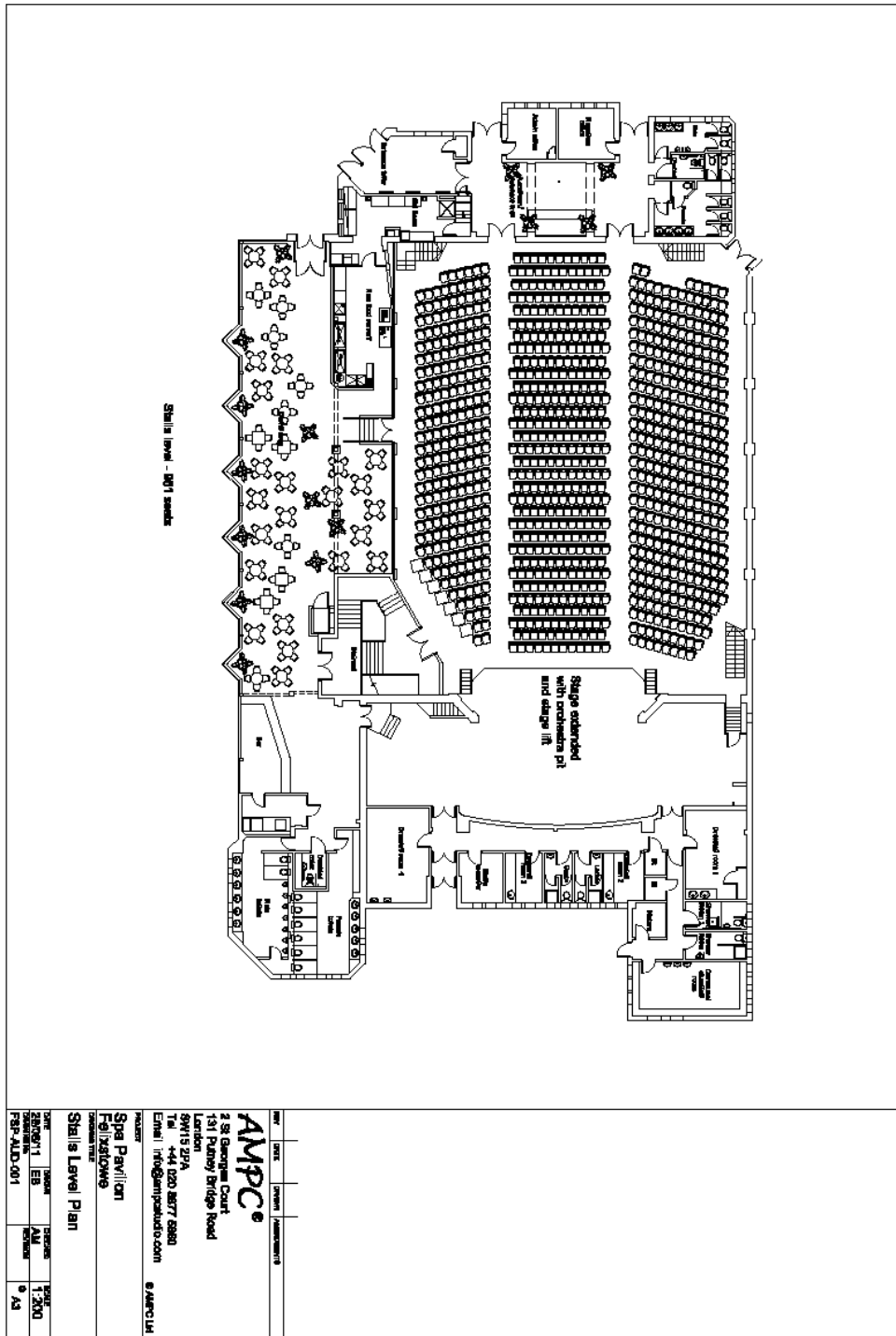
Appendices

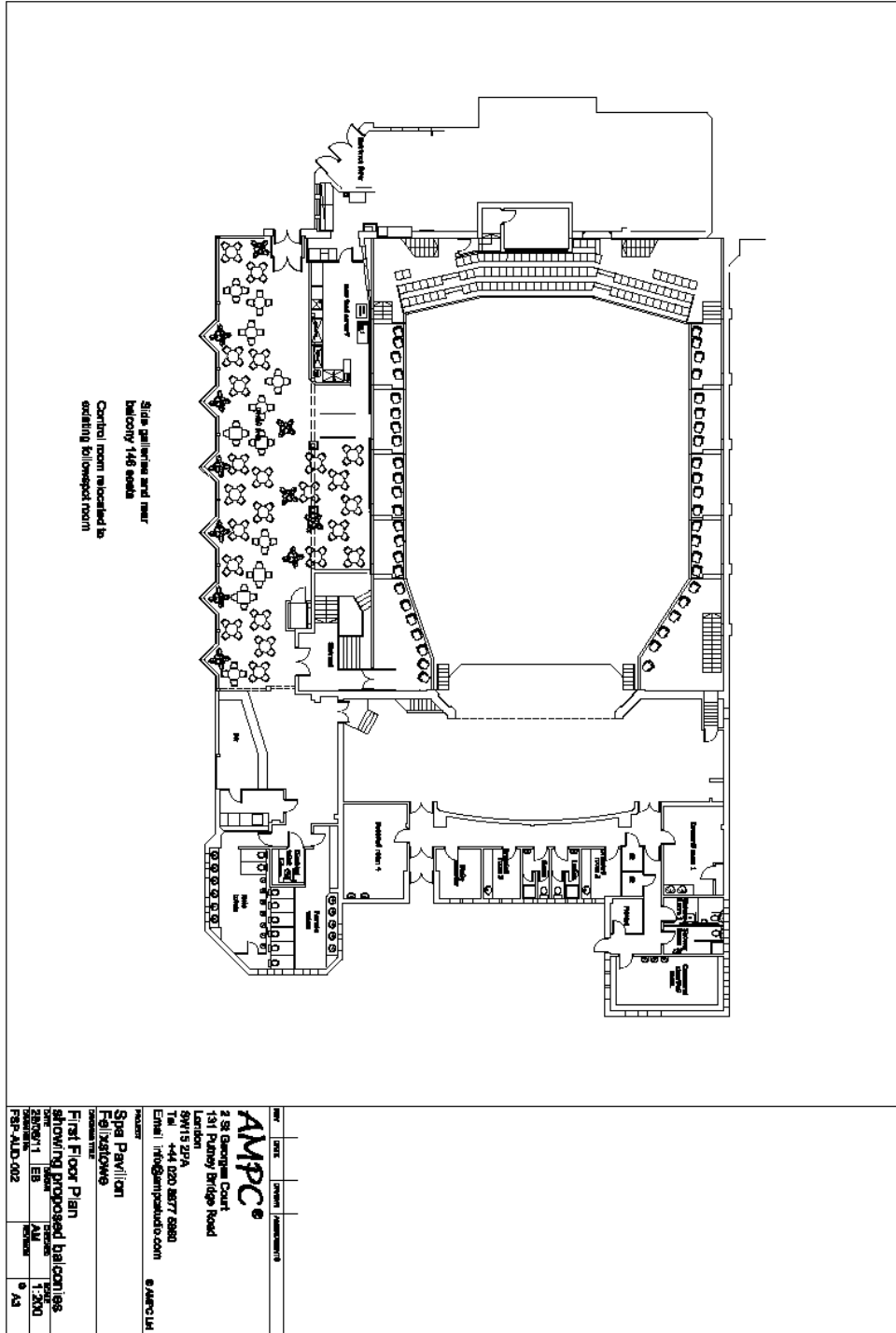
- Existing ground floor plan

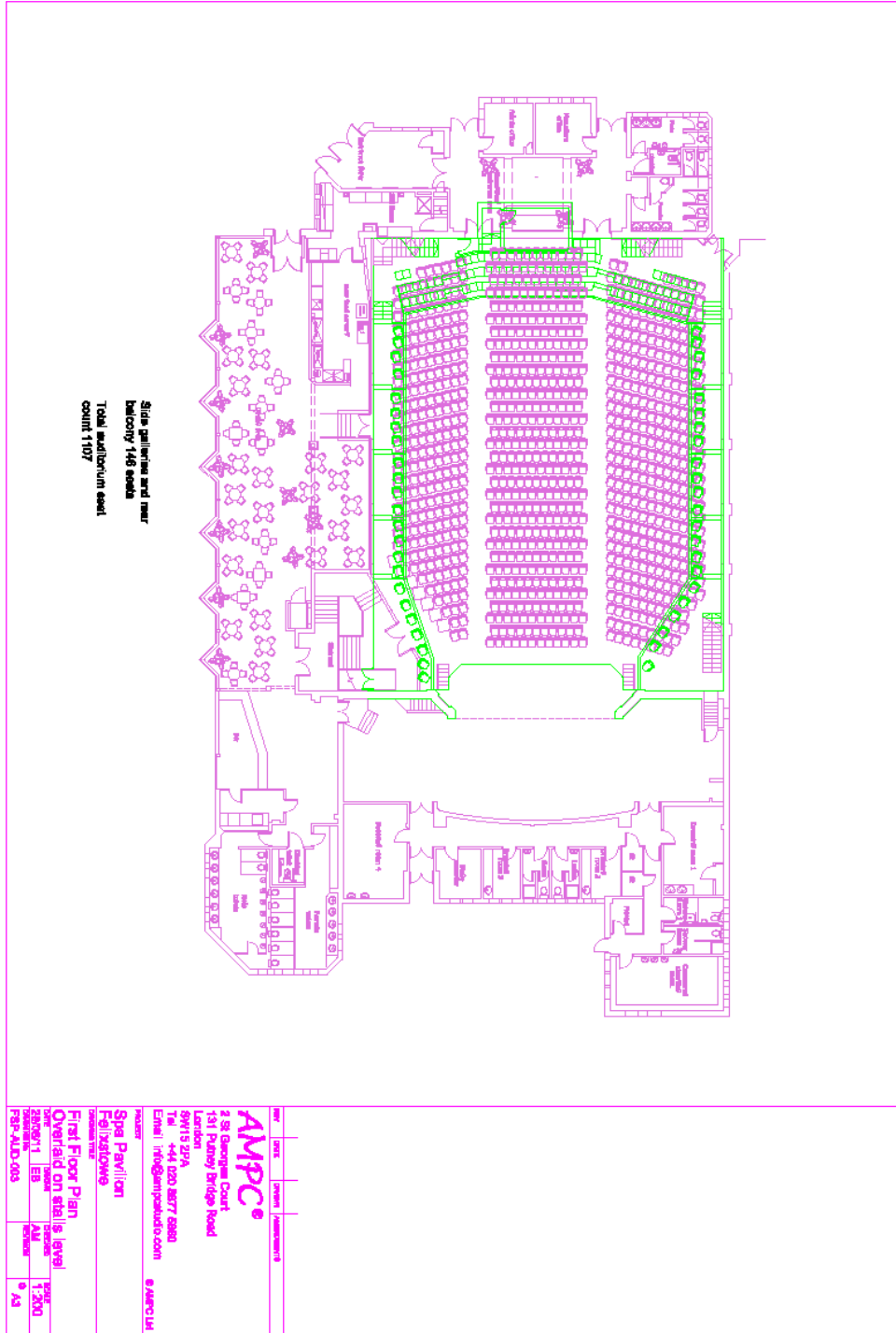
- AMPC drawing proposals
 - FSP-AUD-001 Stalls Level Plan – 961 seats and stage extended with orchestra and pit and stage lift
 - FSP-AUD-002 First Floor Plan showing proposed balconies – 146 seats side galleries and rear balcony. Control room relocated to existing follow spot room
 - FSP-AUD-003 First floor Plan overlaid on stalls level – Total auditorium 1107 seats contained within existing room
 - FSP-AUD-004 Stalls Level Plan 300 seat option – Floor seats retracted to rear for storage
 - FSP-AUD-005 Stalls Level Plan 500 seat option - Floor seats retracted to rear for storage
 - FSP-AUD-006 Stalls Level Plan Flat Floor configuration – seats retracted to rear and seats stored back of house via stage lift

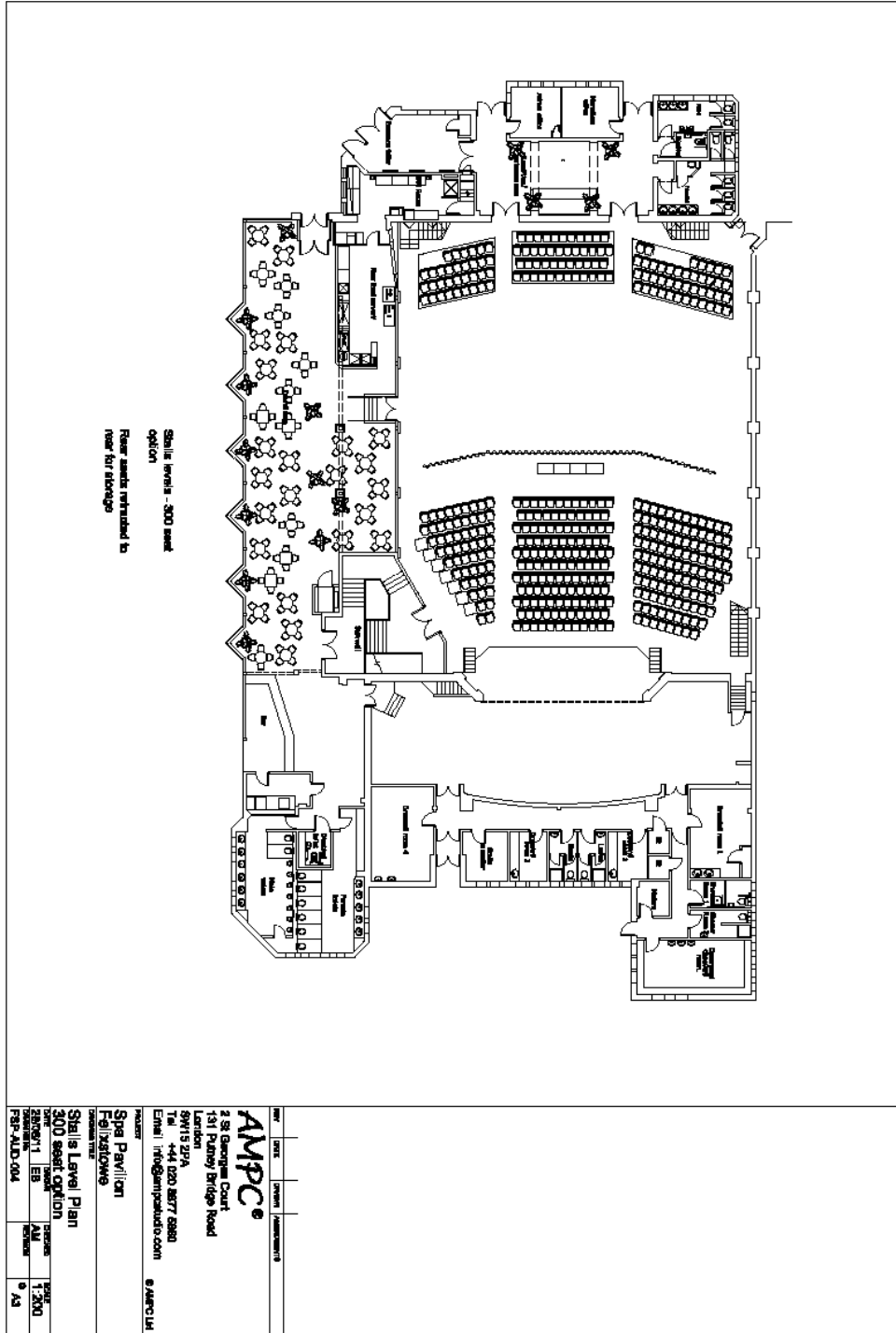
- Spa Pavilion Technical Specification

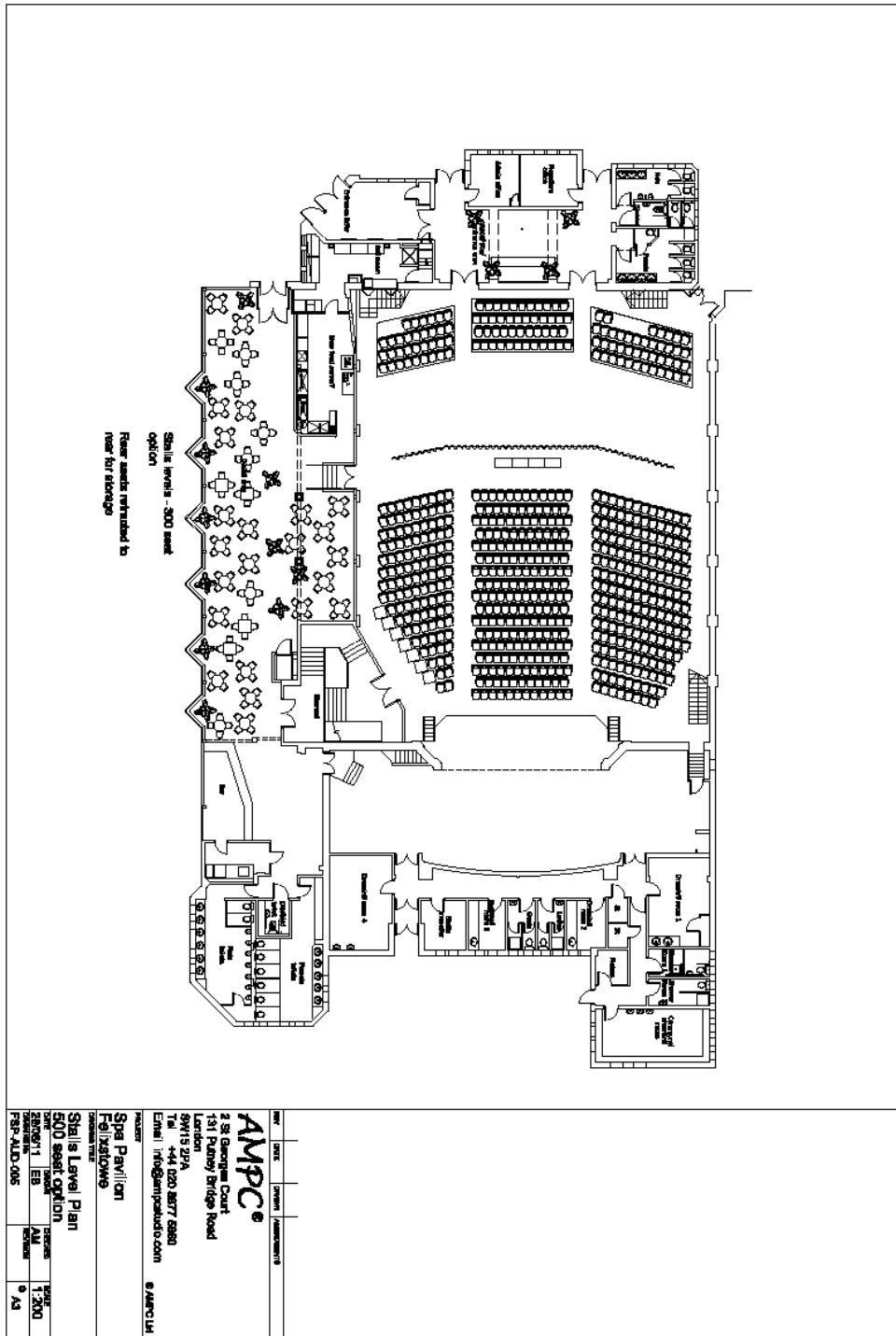


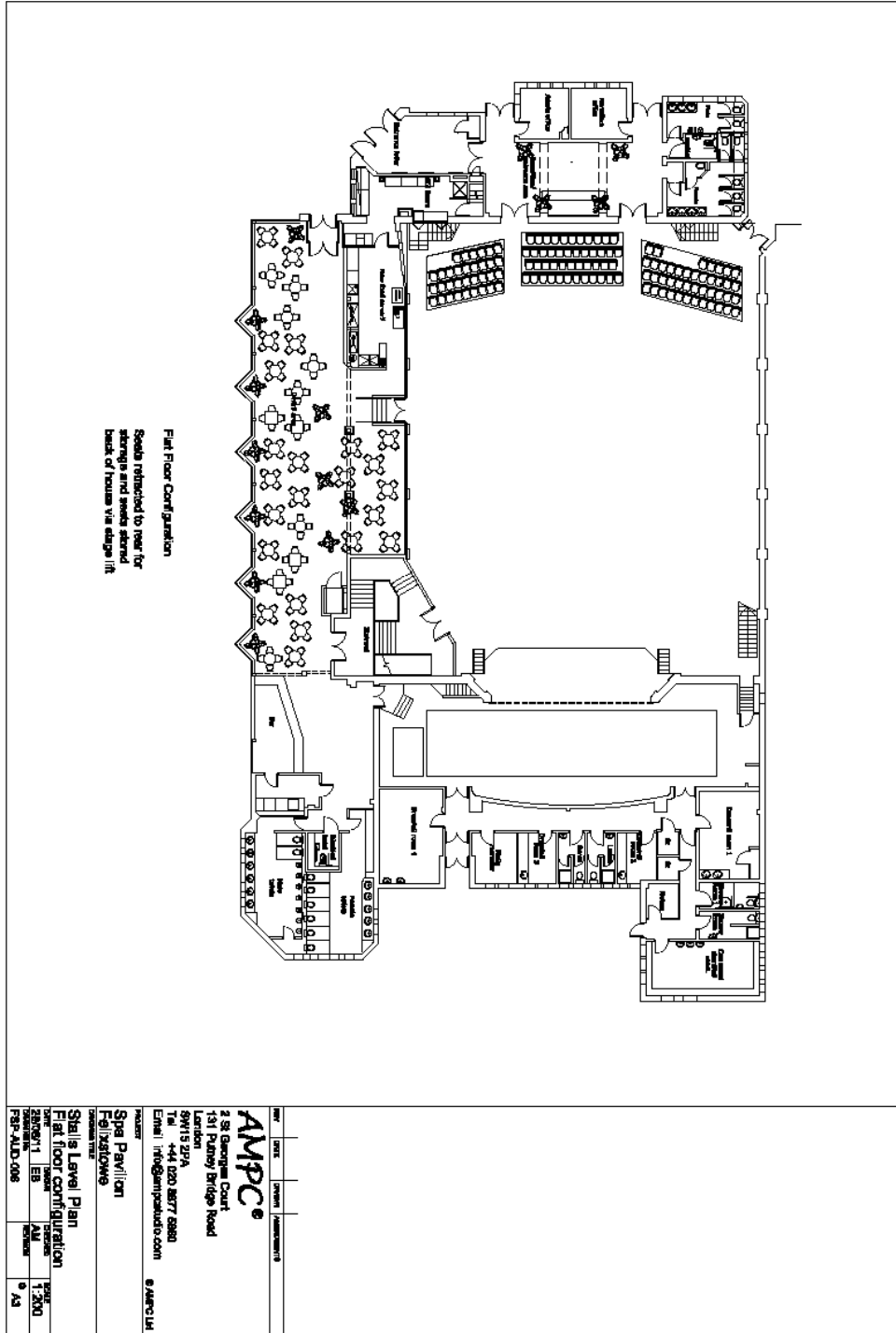












SPA PAVILION THEATRE FELIXSTOWE

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

STAGE DIMENSIONS

32' ACROSS PROS ARCH X 24' FROM CYC WALL TO FRONT EDGE OF STAGE. HOUSE CURTAIN WILL CROSS AT 20' GIVING A 4' APRON APPROX. PLEASE BE AWARE THAT THE FIRE CURTAIN WILL DROP APPROX 12" D/S OF HOUSE CURTAIN. WITH THIS IN MIND CARE SHOULD BE TAKEN IN THE PLACEMENT OF SPEAKERS AND SCENERY. IT IS POSSIBLE TO PUT A STEEL DECK EXTENSION ON THE FRONT OF THE STAGE, THIS WILL MIRROR THE AREA OF THE ORCHESTRA PIT, (PLEASE BE AWARE THAT THE SUPPORTS FOR THE EXTENSION, WILL RESTRICT THE NUMBER OF MUSICIANS YOU ARE ABLE TO PUT INTO THE PIT)

SUGGESTED MAXIMUM SCENERY HEIGHT IS 12'. THE STAGE HAS A RAKE OF 23/4" IN 20'. HIGHER FLATS CAN BE FITTED BUT YOU SHOULD CONSULT THE STAGE OFFICE BEFORE COMMITTING TO THIS.

THE ORCHESTRA PIT IS 2Mtr IN DEPTH WITH REMOVEABLE RAIL AT FRONT FOR LOAD IN PUPOSES .ACCESS TO THE PIT IS THROUGH DOOR STAGE LEFT.FRONT ACCESS TO THE AUDITORIUM IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST
WING AREAS. STAGE RIGHT 15' X 8' DEEP (ACCESS TO PERCH LADDER AND DISTRIBUTION BOARD MUST BE MAINTAINED AT ALL TIMES)
STAGE LEFT. 15' X 13' DEEP (ACCESS TO PIT DOOR AND FIRE CURTAIN MOTOR MUST BE MAINTAINED AT ALL TIMES)
AT NO TIME MUST SCENERY OR EQUIPMENT BE STORED BEHIND THE PACK RAILS IN WING AREAS.

DRAPES

HOUSE TABS AND BORDER ARE BLUE VELOUR (HOUSE BORDER IS REMOVEABLE)
A LIMITED NUMBER OF BLACK LEGS FOR MASKING ARE AVAILABLE.
WE NO LONGER HAVE ANY MID STAGE OR CYC CURTAINS AVAILABLE

ACCESS TO STAGE AND BACKSTAGE AREAS

WE HAVE AMPLE PARKING FOR CAST AND CREW IN PRIVATE CAR PARK AT REAR OF THEATRE. LOAD IN AREA WILL ACCOMMODATE VEHICLES UP TO 45'
LOAD IN IS BY SCISSOR LIFT WITH S.W.L. OF 3000KG AND THEN VIA LEVEL AREA INTO STAGE LEFT WING. , REAR DOORS CAN BE EXTENDED TO TAKE HIGHER PIECES UP TO 14' IF REQUIRED.POWER HOOK UP FOR SHOW VEHLICLES IS AVAILABLE IF PRIOR NOTICE IS GIVEN .

DRESSING ROOMS

2 X LARGE AND 1 SMALL ALL ROOMS HAVE HOT & COLD RUNNING WATER, 13 AMP SOCKETS, ADEQUATE LIGHTING AND MIRRORS. A HOSPITALITY ROOM (STAGE LEFT OF MAIN CORRIDOR) MAY ALSO BE USED AS DRESSING ROOM IF REQUIRED.. ALL DRESSING ROOMS ARE SERVED BY A SINGLE CORRIDOR, WHICH ALSO GIVES ACCESS TO WINGS LEFT AND RIGHT.

TOILETS AND SHOWERS ARE SITUATED IN MAIN CORRIDOR AND ARE LADIES X 2
GENTS X 2

SECURITY

NO STAGE DOOR KEEPER IS AVAILABLE AT THIS VENUE. HOWEVER THE MAIN STAGE DOOR AND ACCESS TO THE BAR/LOUNGE ARE BOTH ON A CODED LOCKED DOOR. ALL COMPANIES WILL BE ISSUED THIS CODE ON ARRIVAL. IN ADDITION TO THIS INDIVIDUAL KEYS ARE AVAILABLE FROM STAGE MANAGERS OFFICE FOR ALL DRESSING ROOMS.

ACCESS TO AUDITORIUM FROM STAGE.

ACCESS TO AUDITORIUM IS BY STAIRCASES BY PROS ARCH STAGE L & R , THESE CAN BE REMOVED IF REQUIRED. THERE IS ALSO A PASS DOOR FROM STAGE RIGHT WING.

STAGE EQUIPMENT

BRACES AND WEIGHTS X 10

STAGE EQUIP (CONT)

1 BROADWOOD UPRIGHT PIANO POLISHED BLACK FINISH WITH ADJUSTABLE STOOL,. PLEASE GIVE AT LEAST 5 DAYS NOTICE IF THIS IS REQUIRED, WE ALSO REGRET THAT DUE TO MANUAL HANDLING LOGISTICS. A RECHARGE WILL BE MADE FOR THIS

COMMS

TALKBACK TO LX, SOUND, FOLLOWSPOTS X 2, AND STAGE LEFT AND RIGHT
CUE LIGHT AND COMMS TO ORCHESTRA PIT
BELLS TO BAR AND RESTAURANT AREAS
INTERCOM TO BAR, FOYER, DRESSING ROOMS & SHOW RELAY TO ALL DRESSING ROOMS.
ALL THE ABOVE ARE CONTROLLED FROM SM CORNER SITUATED STAGE RIGHT.

POWER SUPPLY

A LARGE NUMBER OF 13 AMP SOCKETS ARE IN BOTH WING AREAS,
3 PHASE 120 AMP POWER FOR LIGHTING VIA TAILS IS SITUATED STAGE RIGHT
63 AMP SINGLE PHASE ON C-FORM FOR SOUND ALSO STAGE RIGHT
16 & 32 AMP ON C-FORM AVAILABLE FROM DIS BOARD S/R

LIGHTING

Zero 88 Bull Frog Desk 96 channels (71-72 dedicated to house lights) LD 90 Dimmers x 72

STRAND 2.5KW LD90 DIMMERS X 72
HARMONY 1KW 15/28 PROFILES X 22
HARMONY FRESNELS 1KW X 9
HARMONY 1KW PIANO – CONVEX X 2
T84 P.C. 1 KW X 6
T814 PROFILES 1KW X 6
263 PROFILES T/H CONVERTED 1 KW X 4
PATT 223 FRESNELS 1KW X 5
ADB 1KW X 2
THOMAS LOOK ALIKE PAR CANS 1KW X 12
THOMAS PARCANS 1KW X 4
MINUET FLOODS 500 W X 6
CYC BATTEN CODA 500/4 X 4
PRELUDE 16/30 650 WATT X 3
THOMAS FLOOR CANS 1KW X 2
STRAND PARBLAZER PARCANS 1 KW X 4PATT 23 PROFILE X5
STRAND PATT 123 X5
STRAND C.I.D. FOLLOWSPORTS WITH COLOUR MAGS AND DIMMERS X 2

SOUND

SOUNDCRAFT K2 THEATRE DESK
HH VX450 STEREO AMPS X 1
YAMAHA Q2031B 31 BAND GRAPHIC EQUALISER X 1
BOSE 802 SPEAKERS X 2
HH PRO 150 SPEAKERS X 2
YAMAHA SPX 900 EFFECTS PROCESSOR X 1
DENON TWIN CASSETTE DECK X 1
DENON SINGLE CD X 1

AKG C535 CONDENSER MICS X 3
AKG DL200E MICS X 3
SM58 MICS X 2
AKG C 568 EB RIFLE MICS X 5
SHURE RADIO MIC SYSTEM FREQ 173-800Mhz 174-800M hz 174-100Mhz 177-000MHZ
FLOOR STANDS X3
SOUND CONT

BANQUETING STANDS X2
FOLDBACK
HH VX300 DUAL CHANNEL AMPS
GQ2015A YAMAHA 15 BAND EQUALISERX1
TANNOY COUGAR FOLDBACK WEDGES X 2
BOSE 101 SPEAKERS X 2

WHILST EVERY EFFORT IS MADE TO MAINTAIN OUR TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT STOCK, WE ARE UNABLE TO GAURENTEE THAT THE ABOVE EQUIPMENT WILL ALWAYS BE AVAILABLE

GENERAL INFORMATION

**SEATING CAPACITY 905 ON A SINGLE RAKED LEVEL (INCLUDES 11 WHEELCHAIR SPACES)
REAR TWO ROWS CENTRE BLOCK ARE REMOVABLE FOR SOUND AND LX MIX
POSITION IF REQUIRED.
POSITION FOR MULTI RUN NO 1 from stage right around edge of auditorium No2 from stage
right into pit and up the side of the centre block. THE MINIMUM LENGH REQUIRED IS 50
MTRS FOR CENTRE AND 90MTRS FOR OUTSIDE EDGE.**

**HOTELS ETC., A LIST OF HOTELS AND B+B IS AVAILABLE FROM THE STAGE
OFFICE**

CATERING

**THE THEATRE RESTAURANT IS OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK FROM 09-00 - 17-00 WITH A
SEATING CAPACITY OF 200.**

BOX OFFICE

BOX OFFICE OPENING HOURS ARE 10-00AM – 17-00 MON TO SAT

ON SUNDAYS THE BOX OFFICE WILL OPEN ONE HOUR BEFORE PERFORMANCE

CONTACTS.

**SPA PAVILION THEATRE
SEAFRONT
FELIXSTOWE
SUFFOLK
IP11 2DX**

MAIN OFFICE	01394 283303
FAX	01394 278978
BOX OFFICE	01394 282126

GENERAL MANAGER: J Howes	01394 288050
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BOX OFFICE MANAGER: BRIDGET RUTHERFORD	01394 282126
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STAGE MANAGER : ROGER MILLER	01394 288053
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**ALL THE ABOVE CAN BE CONTACTED BY EMAIL USING THE FOLLOWING
First initial surname@thespavilion.com**

SPA PAVILION THEATRE FELIXSTOWE GRID SPEC

THE SET LINE IS TAKEN FROM THE POSITION OF THE HOUSE BORDER

CYC TRACK: THIS IS A FIXED TRACK AND SITS AT A HEIGHT OF 213" AND IS CONTOURED TO THE CYC WALL. AT ITS DEEPEST POINT IT IS 16'8" FROM THE SET LINE TAPERING AWAY TO 14'5" AT THE ENDS., IT WORKS AS A NORMAL TRAVELLER AND IS CONTROLLED FROM A FIXED POINT AT THE STAGE RIGHT SIDE OF THE CYC WALL.

TAB TRACKS ARE ALL OPERATED FROM STAGE RIGHT.

4 WIPE TRACKS ARE AVAILABLE, BUT NO CORDING SETS. CARE SHOULD BE USED IN CALCULATING THE HANGING PLOT FOR THESE TRACKS TO AVOID OVERLOADING BAR.

WINCHES ARE A MIXTURE OF OPEN FACE AND PILING AND ALL HAVE A S.W.L. OF 5CWT HEMP LINES. DUE TO UP GRADING OF HEMP BARS . SOME OF THEM WILL BE UNSUITABLE FOR LX USE DUE TO THE UNDERSIZE FOR CLAMPING , FOR UNDERSIZE BARS WE SUGGEST A REDUCING CLAMP SHOULD BE USED

<u>REF</u>	<u>DISTANCE FROM SET LINE</u>	<u>TYPE</u>
2 LX	18"	WINCH
3	23	HEMP
4 TAB TRACK	20	WINCH
5	35	HEMP
6	41	HEMP
7 LX2	61	WINCH
8 TAB TRACK	76	WINCH
9	80	HEMP
10	86	WINCH
11	92	HEMP
12LX3	100	WINCH
13	108	HEMP
14	114	HEMP
15 TAB TRACK	123	WINCH
16	129	HEMP
17	136	HEMP
18 LX 4	142	WINCH
19	150	HEMP

PLEASE NOTE THE ABOVE IS THE NORMAL CONFIGURATION BUT MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

GENERAL NOTES

All scenery and props should be flame proof to NDFR standard

The painting of scenery / props is not allowed within the stage area . A workshop area is available for this purpose . **use may be restricted due to in house work in progress**

A condition audit will be carried out by the visiting stage manager and the resident stage manager or deputy before any work is carried out , and any faults / damage noted . this process will be repeated after the load out , and any damage found may be the subject of a recharge .

In the event that no visiting company member is available on the load out the resident stage manager or deputy will carry out this inspection , any damage found will be reported to the visiting company , who will have a period of 48 hours to visit the site to inspect the damage

DIRECTIONS TO VENUE

Entering our post code on sat nav may give rise to problems .

Follow A14 for Felixstowe .

First roundabout after orwell bridge

Take second exit signed Felixstowe dock

Follow road down long hill with dock on your right to roundabout

Take second exit (first is Macdonalds)

Continue into 30mph limit , over railway crossing to traffic lights .

Straight over traffic lights

On to T junction with sea in front of you

Turn left

Keeping the sea on your right follow the promenade as far as you can, to the northern end. Access to stage is at the rear of the theatre .