

**LONDON**  
**REVIEW PANEL**

██████████  
National Youth Theatre  
443-445 Holloway Road,  
London,  
N7 6LW

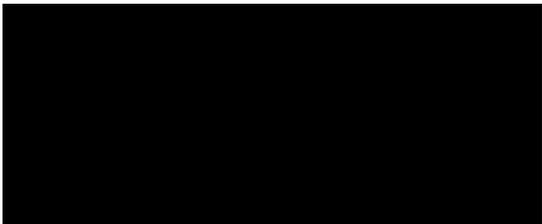
December 2019

Dear ██████████

**London Review Panel: National Youth Theatre**

Please find enclosed the London Review Panel report following the second review of the proposals for the National Youth Theatre on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019. I would like to thank you for your participation in the review and offer the Panel's ongoing support as the scheme's design develops.

Yours sincerely,



*Mayor's Design Advocate*

cc.

All meeting attendees

Jules Pipe, Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Skills

Debbie Jackson, Executive Director of Development, Enterprise and Environment, GLA

Patrick Dubeck, Head of Regeneration, GLA



**Report of London Review Panel meeting  
National Youth Theatre**

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019

Review held at: City Hall, The Queen's Walk, SE1 2AA

**London Review Panel**

██████████ Chair

**Attendees**

██████████ GLA Regeneration  
██████████ GLA Regeneration  
██████████ GLA Regeneration  
██████████ National Youth Theatre  
██████████ DSDHA  
██████████ DSDHA  
██████████ Gardiner Theobald

**Apologies / report copied to**

██████████ GLA Regeneration

**Report copied to**

Jules Pipe Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Skills  
Debbie Jackson GLA  
Patrick Dubeck GLA

**Confidentiality**

Please note that while schemes not yet in the public domain, for example at a pre-application stage, will be treated as confidential, as a public organisation the GLA is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) and in the case of an FOI request may be obliged to release project information submitted for review.

## Project name and site address

National Youth Theatre, 443-445 Holloway Road, London, N7 6LW

## Presenting team

██████████ National Youth Theatre (NYT)  
██████████ DSDHA

## National Youth Theatre introduction

The presenting team gave a summary of how the project had developed since the RIBA Stage 2 design review in April 2019, including the evolution of the design to RIBA Stage 4, the success of positive engagement and consultation events, planning challenges and how the comments from the Panel had been addressed and incorporated. A recent funding application for improvements to the public realm adjacent to the NYT was presented in detail. The team explained that whilst this application was not successful, it gained support from LB Islington, TfL and permission from the landowner(s). LB Islington have pledged to ringfence their contribution of £50,000 until match funding can be secured.

The objectives of the NYT project to dramatically increase use of the building by creating more useable space, to allow more young Londoners to engage with the NYT, were reaffirmed and demonstrated to underpin the design process and development project. The NYT confirmed that the core elements of the brief remain protected, despite significant design alterations required as a result of a challenging planning process.

## Design Review Panel's views

### *Summary*

The London Review Panel remain impressed with the ambition and overall vision of the project and applaud the team for their efforts and perseverance to date. The Panel commend the way in which the essence of the design has been retained in the careful response to planning concerns and how, in some instances the design quality has improved.

The Panel are supportive of some of the concerns raised by LB Islington planning team, particularly in regard to the glazing to the north elevation. The Panel are satisfied that this is a positive amendment to the scheme and was an intervention discussed in the previous Panel review session. Overall, the Panel view the architectural moves as sensible and successful. A pared-back elevational treatment, which does not mimic the arch motif of the historic façade is welcomed. The Panel view the loss of a canopy as regretful, yet understand the compromises required in order to maximise the functionality of the reception space whilst meeting planning concerns.

The Panel are concerned about the public realm uncertainty and resolution of the surface treatment of the privately-owned access road directly in front of the proposed NYT entrance. The Panel recognise and commend the proactive response to this challenge that saw NYT build a coalition of support for ambitious improvements to the wider public realm that would offer a greened space and pause point for the local community. Given the resulting funding application was unsuccessful this remains the only outstanding concern on this project. If a 'plan B' can be agreed that resolves this issue the Panel would be in a position to give their wholehearted support to the scheme.

### ***Entrance, Access and Public Realm***

- The Panel welcomes a more permeable façade and entrance experience.
- The Panel is now convinced that the lateral entrance position is in the right location. The arrival space and glazing arrangements mean it now positively addresses both the pedestrian approach to the building and the experience of passing-by on Holloway Road.
- The Panel commend the idea of a more extensive public realm improvement scheme which would significantly improve the entrance and arrival experience and offer more to the local community.
- The Panel strongly advise that the surface treatment immediately adjacent to the NYT entrance space be improved to facilitate accessibility and provide a welcoming threshold. If this work is not done, it would be of a significant detriment to the overall quality of the project.
- The Panel reiterate that the improved access and welcome to the NYT is a necessary and long-overdue intervention.

### ***Architectural Language and Identity***

- The Panel welcome the use of additional glazing in the facades and the retention of the long view through the extension. The Panel are satisfied the additional glazing helps to mitigate the development and give something back to the streetscape and public realm, revealing activity beyond.
- The removal of the arch motif is considered as a positive move by the Panel, which has led to a more refined and successful elevational treatment.
- The Panel commend the pared-back material palette and architectural expression, and support the reference of Holloway Road tube station, where the architectural language and materiality expresses a robustness and acts as a beacon.