



Inside the new Screen 1 and Screen 2 at the Phoenix

By John Lawrence

The installation of a second screen at the Phoenix Cinema, as reported on our front page, along with new seating in the main screen, will be the largest construction project undertaken at the venue since 1938 when the frontage and walls were given an Art Deco makeover and the direction of the seating in its main auditorium was reversed. Although from the outside there will be no noticeable changes in 2024, the Phoenix trustees and staff hope the opening of the second screen will be transformational for the cinema's fortunes. They say it will enable them to show more films and be more responsive to audience demand.

Small but stylish

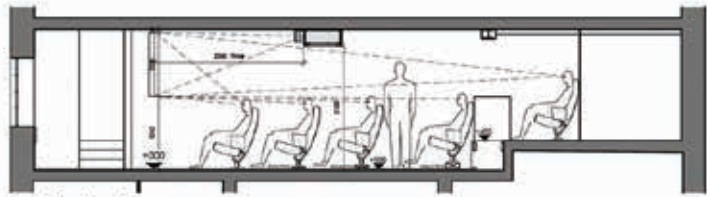
Screen 2 will fit into the space at the front of the Phoenix's first-floor level where the café operated until four years ago. There will be a corridor stretching almost the width of the building over the top of the interior foyer and a single door entrance into the screen.

same cinema magic," he said. Seats and speakers

As soon as the second screen is open, currently planned for October, work will start on upgrading the cinema's main auditorium, renamed Screen 1. All the existing 250 seats will be ripped out and replaced with 188 new higher-backed chairs



New space: How Screen 2 could look, above, and a plan of how it fits into the café and foyer space, below, plus a side view of the layout, left.



Auditorium 2
Section Scale 1:50

Inside there will be 23 seats, spaced over five rows. The first four rows will be on a level surface and the rear fifth row will be raised slightly, where the café serving area now stands. Two seats will be removable to make one accessible space. There will be one double set of doors onto the exterior balcony. The 2m-wide screen will be positioned above seated head height and the projection box will sit in the ceiling midway back. Phoenix executive director Rob Kenny acknowledged it won't give the same 'big screen' experience as the main auditorium but predicted filmgoers would still love it. "Once you're in your very comfortable seat, the lights go down and the excellent sound system comes on, it will have all the

with more leg room and cup holders incorporated into their arms. There will be two rows of



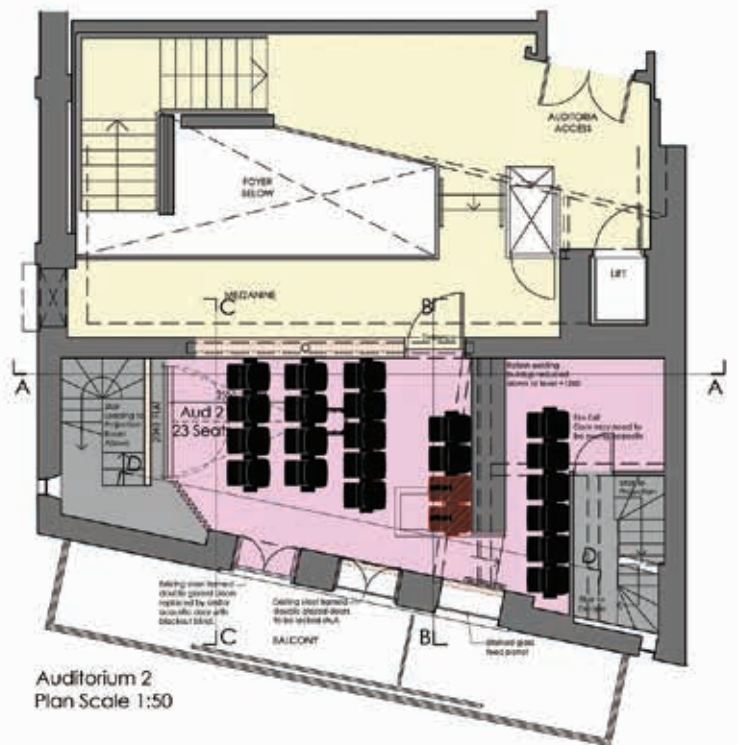
Plush: High-back seating will be fitted in the Phoenix's main auditorium

double seats that can be used as sofa seating.

The slope of the auditorium will be altered to ensure everyone can still see the big

screen. At the same time, new surround sound speakers will be positioned towards the front of the auditorium. "The most common complaints we have got from our audiences have been about the sound and the seating. This project will greatly improve both," said

Mr Kenny. "The new seats are superb. They are the same model that have just been put into Screen 3 at the British Film Institute on the South Bank."



Auditorium 2
Plan Scale 1:50

There will be a new carpet throughout the main auditorium and a refreshments area will be introduced at the back. This will be open before each showing and during the intervals of longer productions like the popular Metropolitan Opera and National Theatre Live shows. "We will have fewer seats

but that's a sacrifice worth making because it's rare that we ever sell out our existing 250," added Mr Kenny. "All these improvements are about bringing a whole new level of comfort to our audience and giving them a different experience when they come to watch films at the Phoenix."



Where to donate your unwanted household items for recycling

- Batteries to EF Electricals and Sainsbury's, High Road
- Bicycle inner tubes to Bike & Run, High Road
- Cables and small electrical items to EF Electricals, High Road
- Crisp packets to Cherry Tree Café, Cherry Tree Wood
- Dental products (toothbrushes and heads) to Cavendish Dental Practice, East End Road
- Electrical cables to Everything Electrical, High Road
- Ink jet cartridges to UOE, High Road
- Lightbulbs to Amy's or EF Electricals, High Road
- Make-up to Oakdale Pharmacy, High Road
- Paper, cork, ribbon, foil, wood off-cuts, buttons, stationery, sequins, carpet samples to Amy's, High Road
- Spectacles to Stewart Duncan Opticians and David Hillel Opticians, High Road

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