

10/4

Confidential Filing

PRESERVATION OF THE ROSE THEATRE

ARTS and
AMENITIES

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3002

May 1989

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
17.5.89							
19.5.89							
2.6.89	RA						
12.6.89							
PREM				19/2587			

Me

PRIME MINISTER

You will have seen from the Questions note that there is a PNQ on the Rose Theatre followed by Douglas Hurd's Broadcasting statement. Do you wish to stay in the House for either?

You have Tom Arnold at 1545 and then a free hour from 1600, but if you did not stay in the House I know Andrew would like to use some of that time for a discussion with you and Robin Butler.

DOMINIC MORRIS

12 June 1989

PRIME MINISTER

ROSE THEATRE

DOE/English Heritage/Imry have today issued Press Notices on their proposals. These seek to deal with two criticisms of the earlier ones:

(i) that piles would go down through the site. The piles will now be at the edges and larger beams will cross the site;

(ii) that there was insufficient headroom in which to create a display. This has now been increased to 22 feet.

Whether the theatre crowd will regard this as satisfactory remains to be seen. They have got some fancy ideas about buying the whole site for development as a museum.

The Government's attitude should be that a perfectly adequate solution has been offered. If others want to go further and can raise the money, then good luck to them but there should be no expectation of further Government help.

indeed
generous
→

AS

Agreed
mt

ANDREW TURNBULL

2 June 1989

SLH/99

ROSE THEATRE SAFE FOR THE FUTURE

Virginia Bottomley, Heritage Minister, today welcomed the announcement by Imry Merchant Developers plc that they have re-designed their office building to safeguard and allow the display of the remains of the Rose Theatre.

Mrs Bottomley said:

^{congratulate}
 "I ~~am pleased that~~ Imry Merchant Developers, ~~has been able~~ to adapt its plans to save this important site. I am grateful for the efforts made by both English Heritage and Southwark Borough Council ^{on working together to preserve the remains} to achieve this successful outcome of the Rose Theatre.

"The building has been redesigned to safeguard ^{the} remains, and I understand that it will also allow ^{to} ~~adequate~~ ^{them} space for the remains to be put on public display after the building has been constructed.

"The fact that these remains are safe for the future is a good example of ~~how well~~ the voluntary code between developers and archaeologists ^{is working in practice}.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Both English Heritage and Imry Merchant Developers ~~will be~~ are issuing detailed Press Notices today.



DRAFT PRESS RELEASE - THE ROSE THEATRE

Imry Merchant Developers PLC ('Imry') is pleased to announce that following extensive consultations with English Heritage, the Department of Environment and Southwark Borough Council, plans have been agreed for a redesign of Southbridge House to enable the remains of the Rose Theatre to be preserved and viewed by the public.

The positioning of the new piles has been carefully designed to respect the integrity of the perceived theatre boundaries and will enable the theatre remains to be clearly visible. The area of the remains uncovered by the archaeologists showed that the theatre site had already been severely damaged by 75 piles sunk at the time of the earlier construction 30 years ago.

The method of construction incorporates extensive new beams which will provide a maximum height of 22 feet above the remains. It is envisaged that access to the site should be possible via Southwark Bridge Road and Rose Alley.

English Heritage, who fully support the scheme, are currently studying with Imry the best method of preserving the remains allowing work to continue.

Imry is most grateful for the considerable co-operation it has received from Southwark Borough Council.

The Heritage Minister, Mrs Virginia Bottomley, congratulated Imry on its work with English Heritage and Southwark Borough Council to ensure a successful outcome.

ENGLISH HERITAGE PRESS RELEASE

fax-sj

THE ROSE THEATRE AND ENGLISH HERITAGE

BACKGROUND

At the meeting at the Department of the Environment on May 15, English Heritage undertook to negotiate with Imry Merchant Developers a plan to preserve and display the remains of the Rose Theatre in Southwark. Previous plans agreed by Imry for a ten weeks delay to excavate and then re-bury the remains under a new building were now accepted as inadequate in view of the nature of the findings and the degree of public interest in their display. One month's delay was agreed for the new negotiations. Since Imry possessed a full planning consent for their building, this new delay was agreed by Imry under the British Property Federation voluntary code of practice for rescue archaeology. This code is widely accepted by archaeologists as securing more generous and flexible terms than any mandatory system - especially where surprise finds are involved.

OBJECTIVES

Throughout the talks, English Heritage has sought three objectives. First, to secure the preservation of the remains through the redesign of building foundations. Second, to ensure their protection during the construction of the new building. Third, to complete the excavations to an agreed plan and to see the site displayed and interpreted to the public. All objectives are linked and all are, we believe, on the way to being achieved.

1. Preservation through redesign

English Heritage has agreed that the redesign of the office building now proposed by Imry provides an environment in which the site can be protected for the future. In the redesign, three giant beams will straddle the theatre in a north south direction. The columns on which these beams rest are to be moved outside the conjectured line of the Rose's outer wall, thus avoiding visual intrusion on any putative reconstruction of at least the footings of this wall. Piling on the south of the site may have to intrude on the roadway to make this possible. Southwark Council is cooperating over this.

2. Short term protection

The theatre site will need to be protected while construction work is in progress. Discussions are taking place on the best way of addressing this. Covering the fragile structures will be a delicate operation. All work in the area of the remains will be under archaeological supervision.

3. Excavation and presentation

Sufficient of the theatre has been excavated to demonstrate its probable extent and character. Under the agreement, a full excavation of the remainder owned by Imry will be possible and the many 1960s piles now defacing the site will be removed under archaeological supervision. This excavation will require a carefully designed strategy. English Heritage and their advisers are also urgently planning the investigation of areas that may be affected by such piling around the outside of the theatre as is to occur.

Future appreciation of the Rose will depend on adequate space being left round its remains. A hall 22 feet high (roughly two storeys) will rise above them. Imry has expanded its original proposals on both the basement and ground floors to give the site a wider context. We hope it may be possible for visitors actually to stand on the site of the original Shakespearian stage. Full interpretation will depend on space now being negotiated on the adjacent depot site, occupying about roughly a third of the theatre's area. If these talks are successful, the Rose Theatre site will be virtually complete. This should enable the eventual display of the theatre remains in full and without intrusion.

In addition, there will be access to the Bear Gardens Museum across Rose Alley, where the Globe Theatre Trust is hoping to establish a Shakespeare centre and museum.

Scheduling

The Rose remains as now revealed are unquestionably of great national and international importance. Their scheduling as an ancient monument where an outstanding planning permission exists would make English Heritage vulnerable to claims for substantial compensation which it could not possibly afford. We believe the same outcome - preservation - has been achieved by negotiation. However, the question of the best future status for the Rose site remains to be considered.

The Long Term

A full debate will be held on the best long-term method of presenting the remains to the public, including the extent of any reconstruction. Talks have already been held with the Rose Theatre Trust under the chairmanship of the local MP, Simon Hughes, on whose steering committee both the Globe Theatre Trust and the Theatres Trust are represented.

English Heritage would like to express its appreciation of the generosity and cooperation shown by Imry Merchant Developers in securing the remains of the Rose.

Enquiries 01-734 6942

Richard Seifert 2
of Seifert Ltd and Southwark

2 June 1989

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Richard Seifert 2
of Seifert Ltd and Southwark
Borough Council

How the Rose could bloom again

The architects are taking centre stage in the unfolding drama of the battle to save the remains of Shakespeare's theatre in London. Simon Tait reports

Two or three weeks ago, the name was known only to those with a keen interest in the history of the English theatre; now all you have to tell your taxi driver is "The Rose". The 400-year-old theatre, whose remains huddle in the midst of what was Tudor London's theatreland, has become the most celebrated archaeological site since Howard Carter walked into Tutankhamun's tomb.

The battle to save the remains of the Rose is attracting an audience of office workers and tourists many hundreds of times the size of those which watched the first nights of Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* or Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* on it in the 1590s. The efforts of the likes of Dame Peggy Ashcroft, Dame Judi Dench, Ian McKellen and James Fox, who joined hands with 500 other vigilantes on the night of May 13-14 to keep the contractors with their pile-drivers off the remains, got their cause on to the front pages of most national newspapers, and got the developer, Imry Merchant, branded as a villain, quite unfairly. It had, after all, already come up with a revised scheme less damaging than the one now under way at the Huggin Hill Roman baths.

The day after "Rose Night", the furore was so great that Nicholas Ridley himself had to get up in the House of Commons and pledge £1 million of Department of the Environment money to the 28-day reprieve.

Today, less than two weeks before the end of the moratorium, the Rose Preservation Committee, created by the vigilantes, formally launches its campaign on three options of salvation. "They are," says Simon Hughes, the MP for Southwark and Bermondsey and chairman of the committee, "first, acquisition of the whole site, including the northern part where there is no significant archaeology and development would be totally dedicated to the Rose; second, acquisition of half the site to build our own visitors' centre over the Rose within the context of the development on the northern site by Imry; and third, preservation of the remains for public viewing beneath a modified Imry building."

The first option would involve an appeal for money, possibly for about £20 million, to end Imry's involvement by buying the site

from the freeholders, Postel, which manages the Post Office Pension Fund, and making their own building instead of Imry's 10-storey office block. They would also try to acquire an awkward City of London storage depot, wedged into the site between the exposed remains and Southwark Bridge Road.

The massive public-relations potential at the committee's disposal is being fully mobilized. Last night, after the first night of his first Shakespearean performance, in Peter Hall's production of *The Merchant of Venice*, Dustin Hoffman made a curtain appeal to the audience to sign the petitions in the foyer of the Phoenix Theatre.

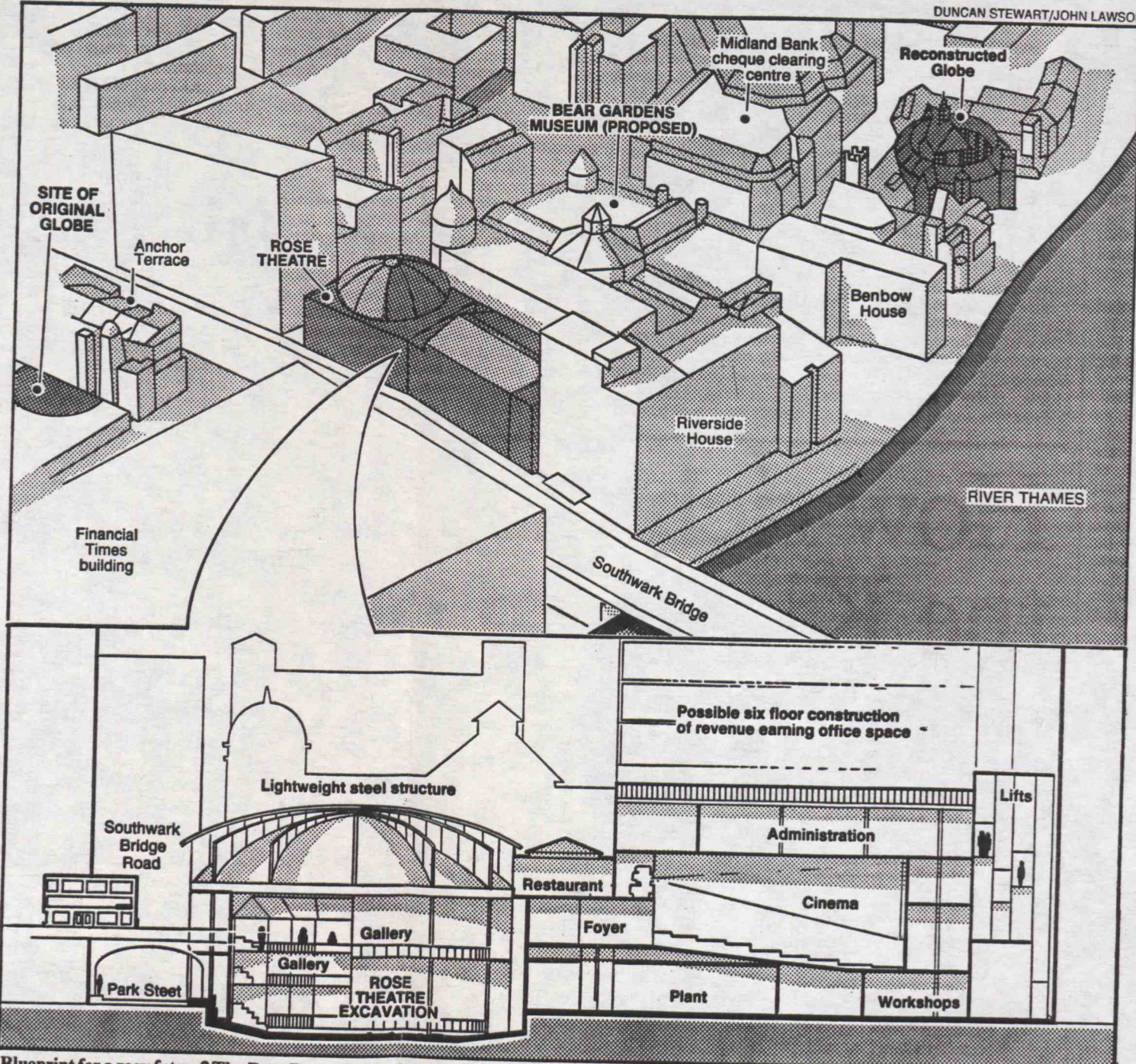
That is the cue for petitions to appear in each of the West End's 50 theatre foyers, and this weekend some 50,000 leaflets are to be distributed in the theatres appealing for funds and calling for petition signatures, of which there are already 30,000.

Today a video with Hoffman, Hall, Vanessa Redgrave, Timothy Dalton and James Fox is being released to spread the appeal world-wide, and next week Dame Irene Worth will go to 10 Downing Street to hand in a petition of 150 names, gathered in Hollywood; the list includes Robert De Niro. And on Sunday afternoon, at a "Rally for the Rose", the Royal Shakespeare Company will perform *Faustus* at the site.

Also today, Imry expects to be able to reveal the latest amended plans for an office block by its architect, Richard Seifert - if it has approval from English Heritage and the Department of the Environment - on the basis of which it will then apply to Southwark Council for detailed planning permission.

A solicitor's letter is with the DoE from the Rose Committee - which is in the process of becoming both a charitable trust and a company limited by guarantee - demanding a decision on whether the site will be scheduled as an ancient monument. A positive decision would make any meddling with the Rose impossible without the Secretary of State's approval. Should it come to that, the Government would be liable for Imry's compensation, which might be anything from £5 million to £25 million.

Meanwhile, the Theatres Trust, dedicated to saving living theatres such as the Whitehall and the



Blueprint for a rosy future? The Rose Preservation Committee's first option is to purchase the whole site and dedicate development to the theatre

Dominion rather than long-buried ones, has its own suggestions on how the Imry building could be best adapted.

And not to be forgotten is Sam Wanamaker, who, after a 20-year fight, is recreating the Globe, Shakespeare's later theatre, a few yards away, and whose temporary museum is the Rose campaign's headquarters. Wanamaker came up with the idea to bury and pile to a less damaging extent than originally planned, then uncover it in a few years' time and join it to his own scheme. That idea drifted out of consideration in the tide-turning events of Rose Night.

And amid the welter of proposal and counter-proposal, discussions, press releases, permissions and cross-permissions, the archae-

ologists can only stand and wonder at what still lies undiscovered, and what is slowly being destroyed by the elements.

Whatever happens in the next few days, after the Rose no archaeological site is going to be regarded as the exclusive domain of either developers or archaeologists. From now on the people have a crucial say. "It really has reached ordinary people," says John Earl, director of the Theatres Trust. "We are talking about something which nobody has ever seen but which everybody feels they know something about, something which is in the very heartland of the English language."

"But the most impressive thing is the way the profession has gone with this - they are very skilled

communicators, and it isn't just actors poncing about enjoying the limelight for a few minutes. It is a genuine, deep feeling."

Through the Museum of London, which runs the biggest archaeological operation in the country, the archaeologists have let English Heritage know what they want: "A suitable building," they say, which would use "light and space to advantage so that remains are not cramped; a design allowing full public access with associated pedestrian routes, fire safety etc; no further damage to the theatre remains; adequate protective measures for archaeological remains during construction of the new building."

What has developed from that simple, previously unpublished

demand has been the matrix for both the Rose Committee and the Theatres Trust in their deliberations. "We have taken the lead from the museum report," Hughes says. Their architects have come up with three optional designs in a feasibility study, complementing Wanamaker's £18-million International Shakespeare Globe Centre. Each has to protect the remains from further deterioration, keep destruction of the remains to a minimum, give all-round public viewing, explain the theatre's context in displays, and give a focus for possible future archaeological finds.

The Theatres Trust exercise was to tackle what was seen as Imry's major problem: the structural engineering dilemma of support-

ing the building on piles which might be a metre wide and go 55 feet down, but which would be located carefully to avoid any remains. Behind this advisory report is Iain Mackintosh, a trustee of the Theatres Trust and a theatre designer who pioneered the return of the open court theatre, of which the Rose is a progenitor and his Cottesloe at the National Theatre a modern manifestation. His report was only adopted by the trust, a government-funded quango, on Wednesday and is still being distributed.

As a favour, the trust asked an engineer, Martin Manning of Ove Arup and Partners, to suggest a solution. Using the pre-protel Seifert design for Imry and advice from Professor John Orrell, the acknowledged expert on Shakespearean theatre, he has moved the nine piles which would have destroyed part of the remains, in favour of columns outside the Rose area with 150-ton transfer girders running north and south above the Rose. These would be augmented by concrete girders, to make up for the lack of piling along the Southwark Bridge Street side of the building.

From the trusses may hang visitor walkways, Orrell's preferred option, or else the public viewing platform would run along the top of the City depot, with reception/exhibition areas and offices. "It's not technically complex," Manning says. "There are no esoteric problems."

That report is now on its way to Southwark Council, English Heritage, the DoE, the Rose Committee, the Theatres Trust and Imry. What is comforting about all the thinking going on this week at intense late-night meetings is that most of the parties seem to be aware of what the others are doing.

The most likely solution will be a mix-and-match one: that Imry adopt something similar to the Manning plan, with the Rose Committee taking a lease on the ground and first floor of the building to create, according to Hughes, "a visitor centre or appropriate building allowing proper viewing of the theatre", possibly to be run by the Museum of London as an out-station.

Such a solution would lessen Imry's financial headache, give the committee a campaign to involve all the interested parties, and keep the museum involved. Yet it had never occurred to anyone before May 15, when the preservation of the Rose Theatre seemed impossible. As one of the campaigners has already pointed out, the end of the moratorium comes on June 13, the day dedicated to St Anthony of Padua - the patron saint of lost causes.

PRIME MINISTER

ROSE THEATRE

DOE/English Heritage/Imry have today issued Press Notices on their proposals. These seek to deal with two criticisms of the earlier ones:

(i) that piles would go down through the site. The piles will now be at the edges and larger beams will cross the site;

(ii) that there was insufficient headroom in which to create a display. This has now been increased to 22 feet.

Whether the theatre crowd will regard this as satisfactory remains to be seen. They have got some fancy ideas about buying the whole site for development as a museum.

The Government's attitude should be that a perfectly adequate solution has been offered. If others want to go further and can raise the money, then good luck to them but there should be no expectation of further Government help.

ANDREW TURNBULL

2 June 1989

SLH/99



10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

Rose Theatre

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AT 2/6



10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

Can I provide an insight into how you and Nicholas Ridley came to be a loggheads over the Rose Theatre. During the weekend Robin Butler visited the site and was impressed by the feel one got of an Elizabethan theatre. He also had explained to him some of the shortcomings of the plan agreed with English Heritage. For example, the height of the ceiling above the site was very low, given the overall planning constraint on the height of the building. This would have limited scope for subsequent development.

Robin in a personal capacity, spoke to Virginia Bottomley about his impressions. On Monday morning she recounted this conversation to Nicholas Ridley who misread it as a message from you that you wanted the matter looked at again. You, meanwhile, were loyally sticking to the brief given to you at Questions and to the Department's Press Notice.

Nicholas Ridley was therefore taken aback at your reaction to the phone conversation. The matter is now back a course with a cap set to Govt involvement.

19/5

Thankyou. That really
does explain it.
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Site
SD
59

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Principal Private Secretary

17 May, 1989.

ROSE THEATRE

The Prime Minister has seen your Secretary of State's minute of 16 May. She has noted, sceptically, the account of why the Department modified its position between the press notice issued on Friday afternoon and the announcement on Monday.

She has emphasised that the £1 million earmarked for compensating the developers for further delay should be regarded as an upper limit, not as an amount to be spent regardless; and that money to pay for a redesign of the building or for subsequent development of the site must be raised privately.

Andrew Turnbull

Roger Bright, Esq.,
Department of the Environment.

men



Prime Minister

We spoke earlier today about the decision to meet the costs of a short delay to construction on the site of the former Rose Theatre in Southwark. This is to be limited to (up to) £1 m. I promised you a note.

Events have moved very fast on this case in the last few days.

Until Thursday it looked as if the remains of the Rose Theatre could be preserved - with some minimal damage - and with a possibility of eventual public access. The site at that stage was still being excavated and our information was that the remains, although more extensive than originally proposed, could be protected during construction of the building by infilling with sand, which could subsequently be removed.

In the course of Thursday the position began to change. English Heritage's Deputy Chairman made a public appeal to the developers to redesign the building. The theatrical lobby also began to attract significant public and media support. Statements were read out in theatres. It was clear that, if Imry were to attempt to move on to the site on Monday without any public commitment to preserving the remains, there would be a considerable outcry. Virginia Bottomley therefore invited the developers to see her on Friday morning and obtained from them a very important public commitment substantially to preserve the remains, and an undertaking to continue to work on possible ways of allowing the remains to go on public display one day.

Over the weekend new factors emerged. The remains which had been revealed during the last few days of excavation consisted of part



of the actual timber framework of the theatre which was considerably more fragile than the chalk foundations previously uncovered and which was self-evidently more vulnerable to damage from the pile driving operations, the piles themselves and subsequent construction. A new controversy arose about the methods which were to be used to protect the remains during piling and subsequent construction. English Heritage felt that they must strengthen their advice that a better solution could be achieved. At the same time it was clear to us for the first time that there was a real possibility that the developer's architect, Richard Siefert, had a redesign of the scheme which could both avoid carrying out piling in the most sensitive areas of the site (the stage) and offered a good prospect of public access once the building was complete.

That was the background against which, after discussing the issues with English Heritage, Virginia Bottomley and I saw developers yesterday. They were anxious to cooperate further but naturally pointed out that they could not ask their shareholders to bear the full cost of a further delay to allow Siefert's ideas to be tested and discussed with English Heritage and the planning authority. There seemed a real chance that a further period of time would allow a satisfactory solution to emerge.

The breathing space we have bought does not of course guarantee a solution, and I have made that clear publicly. I have also made it clear that I can promise no further financial support. However we now have a real opportunity to ensure that a site which is generally regarded as of international significance has a better chance of proper long-term preservation and public presentation.

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16 May 1989

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COMMUNICATION

PRIME MINISTER

ROSE THEATRE

Mr. Ridley's minute sets out developments on the Rose Theatre and attempts an explanation of why the Department took one line on Friday afternoon and another on Monday morning.

As you pointed out on the phone, the story that new evidence emerged over the weekend was not particularly plausible. More plausible is that pressure from the Rose Theatre lobby caused English Heritage to modify its advice.

Looking ahead there are three dangers over money. Firstly, the developers may argue £1 million is not enough to compensate them for a full month's delay. Secondly, when Siefert's have looked at a re-design, they may conclude that one is possible but that further compensation is needed, either because the solution is more expensive in engineering terms or because the creation of a basement gallery for the Theatre takes up space for services which must now be accommodated in revenue earning parts of the space. Thirdly, money will be needed to complete excavation of the site and to create a museum.

Agree I write back:

(i) emphasising that £1 million is an upper limit not a sum to be spent regardless? *Yes not*

(ii) emphasising that money to pay for a re-design or for subsequent developments of the site must be raised privately?

*AT**Yes not*

(ANDREW TURNBULL)

16 May 1989

cc ~~Sir Peter Butler~~
Cabinet Office

STATEMENT ON THE ROSE THEATRE

Archaeological work on the site of the Rose Theatre has been in progress for some 5 months. This work has been financed by the developers, Imry Merchant Developers Plc, under guidance from English Heritage and the Museum of London. It has become clear in the light of the most recent discoveries that the remains are of greater importances than was previously thought.

As a result, the developers and their architect have been working urgently on possible ways of ensuring that the excavated remains are properly preserved and displayed to the public. I invited them to a discussion this morning, together with English Heritage, who have advised us on this throughout.

I am very glad to tell the House that Imry have agreed to delay work on the theatre site for up to one month. This is to enable them and their architect to work with English Heritage and with us on the various options. The roof will go back over the site immediately, so that the excavated remains are fully protected while these discussions continue.

English Heritage, assisted by the Government, will be contributing financially to the cost of the delay.

PRIME MINISTER

ROSE THEATRE

Despite yesterday's announcement of a 'deal' between the developers and English Heritage - see Mrs. Bottomley's press notice attached, Flag A - there is still a great deal of lobbying, some of which may reach you over the weekend. Building is due to resume first thing on Monday.

The proposition which lay behind your answer to Simon Hughes - Flag B - was that the site would be covered in a mixture of sand and gravel and that the new building would be constructed over it. This would leave open the option of excavation later on, with a viewing area in the basement of the building - see Tuesday's adjournment debate, Flag C. I imagine a trust, rather like the Mary Rose Trust, would be established to finance this work.

There is still dissatisfaction on two counts:-

- i. The archaeological and theatre worlds do not want a building at all and would prefer the site to be excavated in the open;
- ii. Those who accept that the building must go ahead may be disputing the technical solution on the grounds that filling the site with sand and gravel will damage the remains or that the pile for the building will damage it.

There is no way of meeting the former. With the latter, one is in a technical argument between the supporters of the theatre and English Heritage's archaeological advisers who believe this is a satisfactory solution.

It appears, however, that the deal announced yesterday is consistent with the position you took in the House.

Sara Howe

mt

RP Andrew Turnbull
13 May 1989

ENVIRONMENT

NEWS RELEASE

277

12 May 1989

ROSE THEATRE IS SAFE SAYS VIRGINIA BOTTOMLEY

Virginia Bottomley, Heritage Minister, today welcomed Imry Merchant Developers' commitment substantially to preserve the remains of the Rose Theatre.

Mrs Bottomley said:

"I am delighted to hear that the developers have re-affirmed their strong commitment to preserve the remains of the Rose Theatre under their new building, and that they hope it may be practicable for them to go on public display one day.

"I would like to congratulate the developers and all parties concerned on the way they have worked together.

"As the Prime Minister said yesterday, the discovery of the remains of the Rose Theatre is an historic event. The fact that the archaeologists have been able to carry out such a thorough evaluation, and that the major part of the remains is now safe for future generations, is a tribute to the developers' responsible attitude to our national heritage and demonstrates that the voluntary approach is working well."

Press Enquiries 01 276 0929
(Out of Hours) 01 276 4120)
Public enquiries: 01 276 3000
(Ask for Public Enquiries Unit)

(As agreed)

~~DOE DRAFT OF POSSIBLE PRESS STATEMENT~~
BY IMRY

1. The discovery of the remains of the Rose Theatre was enormously exciting to us - as it was to many other members of the public. We did not know of their existence when we got planning permission for the site and we were very pleased that we were able to play our part in helping the archaeologists find out what the Rose Theatre was really like. As a result a vast wealth of information has been produced which will, we understand, be of great value to historians and scholars.

2. We are absolutely committed to ensuring that the remains are preserved and properly protected under the new building with minimal damage. ~~Indeed we shall also be making good some of the damage done by previous development.~~

3. We shall be taking possession of the site on Monday and starting initial preparations for the new building. But we are continuing to work with our architects and interested parties to see whether there is a practicable way of ensuring that ~~once the building is complete~~ the remains of the Rose Theatre can be put ^{back} on public display at some stage in the future.

make place before the judge in a few days. I note that the Labour party likes to have only one side of the story when it makes its judgments.

Q5. Mr. John Greenway: To ask the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for Thursday 11 May.

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply that I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Greenway: Does my right hon. Friend agree that this week's announcement of a 42 per cent. increase in the suckler cow premium for beef farmers is a major boost for British beef production? Does she also agree that it demonstrates both the achievement of my right hon. Friend the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in the negotiations in the European Agriculture Council and the Government's renewed commitment to supporting British farmers to ensure that they can compete on fair and equal terms in Europe? Is not the announcement good for the farmer, for the housewife and for exports?

The Prime Minister: I agree that the announcement made by my right hon. Friend the Minister in May about the suckler cow premium has been welcomed by industry as a whole. As my hon. Friend has said, it encourages the production of high-quality beef, for which there is a continuing demand at home and an increasing demand in export markets. I also agree that the announcement was accompanied by a very good negotiation with the Common Market on agricultural policy, and that the revaluation of the green pound is also greatly to the benefit of our farmers.

Q6. Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for Thursday 11 May.

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply that I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Hughes: Will the Prime Minister join me in rejoicing at the discovery on Bankside in Southwark, in my constituency, of the ruins of the Rose theatre, the great mediaeval theatre of England? Will she also join me in applauding the collaboration between the developers Imry, English heritage and the Museum of London, which have allowed us to discover this great treasure? Given the

risk that on Monday the site will be filled in and pile-driven and the stage destroyed, will she now add her support to discussions that are taking place between English Heritage and the developers so that we may preserve for ever the greatest of the Roses of England?

The Prime Minister: I agree that the discovery of the remains of the Elizabethan Rose theatre is an historic event, and that everything possible must be done to preserve those remains so that one day they may be on public display. I understand that there have been very constructive discussions—as the hon. Gentleman has said—between the developers, English Heritage and the Museum of London, and that as a result the remains are to be preserved with minimal damage. I welcome that; and it does not rule out the possibility of a scheme for public display one day. In the meantime, constructive discussions continue.

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Tebbit.

Mr. Tebbit rose—[Interruption.]

Mr. Speaker: Order. This takes up a great deal of time.

Mr. Tebbit: What would be the effect on Western security if Her Majesty's Government policy changed to one in which the taxpayer was called upon to pay the cost of a nuclear deterrent, but the Prime Minister of the day gave an undertaking that he would never use it?

The Prime Minister: My right hon. Friend makes his point very effectively. In that case the deterrent is not a deterrent because it does not deter and the policy is the old one of unilateralism in a different package.

Q7. Mr. Darling: To ask the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for Thursday 11 May.

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply that I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Darling: Can the Prime Minister explain why the dreaded words "poll tax" appear on an official Government publication on the community charge? Surely there must be some mistake?

The Prime Minister: I am glad that the hon. Gentleman thinks that, and calls it a community charge.

Rose Theatre, Southwark

Motion made, and Question proposed, That this House do now adjourn.—[Mr. Heathcoat-Amory.]

11.49 pm

Mr. Simon Hughes (Southwark and Bermondsey): It was a great pleasure to hear on Thursday last that Mr. Speaker had selected for this evening the opportunity for me to raise the matter of the preservation of the Rose theatre in Southwark. I am very grateful to him for that.

When one is but the latest of a series of Members of Parliament for a constituency, the first of whom took his seat in 1295, one can reflect without too much need for research on some words appropriate for tonight:

"All the world's a stage,

And all the men and women merely players:

They have their exits, and their entrances".

We are here but briefly as politicians. The unusual privilege of being a politician normally allows one to make specific pleas for one's constituents; it rarely allows one to make pleas that also go far beyond the interests of one's constituents on a matter of national and international importance, or to make pleas for something of enormous historical importance. But that is what I can do this evening.

I want to do two simple things. First, on behalf of my constituents and many others in this country and beyond, I come to Parliament, to the centre of the modern, national political stage, to make a plea that the recently discovered ruins of the Rose theatre in Southwark be preserved from today henceforth for all the world to enjoy.

I come with a second plea specifically for the Government. I seek nothing more and nothing less than a simple declaration that the Government be willing to say today or, at the latest, later this week, that they are of the view that the Rose theatre should be preserved for all to see and that they will work actively to secure that.

It may be thought sometimes that modern constituents in an inner-city working community do not think that ruins are of great importance. In fact, our local newspaper last year did a vox pop and discovered exactly the opposite. The people of Southwark and Bermondsey said that they overwhelmingly supported the preservation of our history and our heritage.

The Minister will know that it was less than a year ago that I raised with her predecessor in the House the question of the archaeological heritage of Southwark, an enormously rich area of archaeological interest because of its ancient geographical importance, being at the crossing point into London from the continent and elsewhere. More recently, on 21 February this year, my hon. Friend the Member for Caithness and Sutherland (Mr. MacLennan) asked the Secretary of State

"what representations he has received from English Heritage concerning the archaeological discovery of the Elizabethan Rose theatre in Southwark."

The Minister replied:

"None so far."—[*Official Report*, 21 February 1989; Vol. 147, c. 572.]

I know for a fact that since then letters have been pouring into her Department with increasing rapidity and authority.

Things have moved on because the excavation of the Rose theatre has revealed that we have discovered a treasure indeed. Over the last few weeks it has become clear that the ruins of one of the great Elizabethan theatres

of Bankside—one directly linked with Shakespeare and lost to sight over 350 years ago—can now be seen and enjoyed at Bankside, by the Thames by Southwark bridge.

But next week, the foundations of the theatre are likely to be covered up and damaged substantially. They were discovered on land belonging to Imry Merchant Developers. I can say without equivocation that to date Imry, the landowner, has acted with absolute propriety and worked with English Heritage and the Museum of London to secure an opportunity for archaeologists to explore the theatre and to reveal the treasure that exists. I am grateful to the company, as I have said to the director in charge of the site, and I here repeat my thanks. But now we must go further. If the site is covered up at the beginning of next week, we shall lose a site of unique importance and an opportunity for all time.

The site is one of only eight theatres in London in the 16th century, four of which were on the south bank. The sites of the Hope and the Swan are likely to have been destroyed by commercial office developments. The site of the Globe has not been excavated and we do not know what, if anything, we shall find. We have excavated the site of the Rose had we have found it. Therefore we have found the first, and as far as we can be sure, the only in situ evidence of one of the Elizabethan theatres. No one knows whether we shall find any more, but we have found the site of the Rose; it is unique and it may be all we possess of the physical structure of the great public theatres of London 400 years ago. Those theatres were unique to London from the mid-17th century.

The Rose was built in 1587 by Philip Henslow, the impresario, and his partner, Edward Alleyn. It is the earliest of the four Shakespearean theatres. It saw Marlowe's plays performed—it saw "Dr. Faustus" and "The Jew of Malta"—and Jonson, Dekker, Webster and Shakespeare himself performed there too. "Henry VI" and "Titus Andronicus" were probably performed by Shakespeare himself on the stage that we can see now. I found it timely indeed that last Saturday I enjoyed a performance of "Henry VI" by the Royal Shakespeare Company at the Barbican, only a mile away from the original venue of that play. The last known performance at the Rose was in 1603. Soon afterwards, the theatre was demolished and covered up, although happily this theatre is one of the theatres where we know all that was put on and the only one of which we have an illustration contemporary to Shakespeare's plays.

As a result of the dig, we have discovered an enormous amount about the Elizabethan theatre that we did not know but had only speculated about. Previous evidence was contradictory. We had to hypothesise as to what the theatre looked like and how it worked. Now we can see it for ourselves. Today in *The Times* there is an illustration by C. Walter Hodges of what the Rose must have looked like, based on the now available information. It shows the polygonal inner and outer walls of the galleries, the sloping mortar floor, the foundation of the stage and the towered tiring house behind. The heritage of Southwark, England and the world has now accurately been discovered on the Bankside not far from here.

I have received many letters and expressions of interest in recent days. One letter from a student at King's college, London asks:

"Is not the site of the Rose theatre on a par with that of the Tower of Westminster Abbey? Many foreign visitors surely find their strongest association with England through her

great writers and few sights could hold more attractive power than one associated with Shakespeare. Thousands go to Stratford"

On Bankside we have the real thing.

This week we have the opportunity to decide how we make sure that the excitement which I, like others, have enjoyed, is shared by people in years to come.

Another letter to me said:

"The discovery of the Rose theatre in Southwark provides one of the most important pieces of hard evidence on the nature of the Elizabethan theatre ever to have been found. Although it lies in the earth and rises but a few feet, it is a national monument to rank with Stonehenge."

On many occasions—by letter, parliamentary question and Adjournment debate—I have asked the Secretary of State to schedule the Rose and the Globe theatres. I am aware of the procedure for scheduling and for designating areas as areas of archaeological importance. I first ask therefore that a decision be made this week to schedule the site of the Rose theatre and to designate north Southwark, contemplated as a possible area for such designation, as a sixth AAI. I hope that the Government will say that they are willing to consider that and I have today tabled a question to the Secretary of State asking specifically about scheduling.

I want to go further and to explore the ways forward, in the belief that they can be achieved. Given that the developers have so far been sympathetic and given that they now realise how amazing the discovery is, a breathing space is needed for them, the planners in Southwark and English Heritage, with Government support, to work out a way whereby the building that the developers want can be built in a modified form and yet the Rose can be preserved.

On an adjacent site, the actor, director and great friend of Shakespeare, Sam Wanamaker, is constructing a replica of the Globe. It would be a supreme dramatic irony if an American were to be recreating a model of our heritage while we were burying the original Rose theatre itself next door. We cannot allow that to happen.

The remains of the Rose should and must be preserved and presented for the public to view as a monument capable of interpretation. Given the will, the time, the money and the imagination, it must be possible to find a way of keeping the remains visible to future generations. All options should be considered, but the important precondition is that the site is not filled in and that piles are not driven through the foundations, as proposed for next week.

Reconstruction of the site elsewhere is not an option. That would not be authentic. Relocation is not an option, because it would not be the same as the original site. Covering the theatre up and opening it up again later is not an option, because even that would have risks to the site and some of the remains would be destroyed. The vibration of vehicles, the weight of vehicles and power-driving machines would cause additional destruction, apart from the immediate destruction caused by building work. However careful people are, covering in and opening up the remains would not be good enough.

Sam Wanamaker's proposal—although in the right direction—that the site could be viewed only through glass—whether light or darkly—is not sufficient. The Colosseum in Rome is enjoyable because one is in the place. Stonehenge is right and important because it is as it was. Fishbourne is right because one can go in and walk around. We must be able to do the same with the Rose.

[Mr. Simon Hughes]

Many people have written to me expressing their support. John Earl, the director of the Theatres Trust, a body set up by Parliament to promote the better protection of theatres, says:

"It is of vital importance that the preservation and proper display of the Rose should be achieved to the highest international standards".

He goes on to comment that linking it to a possible development next door is not secure enough. The archaeologists on site make it clear that it must be preserved in a way that can be appreciated. It would be ludicrous for us to seek to achieve a lesser objective.

My colleague the hon. Member for Dulwich (Mr. Bowden) wanted to be here tonight and expressly sends support, as does my colleague the hon. Member for Peckham (Ms. Harman). Three parties are represented in the Southwark borough's three Members of Parliament and they are supported by the local authority, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Archbishop of Southwark, the Bishop of Southwark and many from the theatre world—performers, managers, historians and many besides.

Many messages have come in from Britain and overseas. The most pre-eminent people in British theatre today feel that the Rose is so important that not only do they visit it; they want to make it clear that it must be preserved. I hope that I am not exaggerating when I say that the importance of the preservation of the Rose cannot be overestimated. It is a miracle that it has been found, and it must now be kept to be enjoyed.

The Secretary of State and, I understand, the Prime Minister have now been alerted to the importance of the site. I hope that the Minister will tell us tonight that the Government are willing to say that the work done so far is good but that, now we have discovered the treasure under the earth, we must ensure that it is preserved.

It is no good saying, "It is just another site and we cannot preserve them all." I was not here last Friday for the Adjournment debate about the Huggin hill palace in the City of London, although I have read the report of it in *Hansard*. The Minister made it clear that there were other Roman baths and that we might have to lose one. We cannot say that about the Rose. There is no other example of this part of our heritage in the country. It is unique, and must be recognised as such.

I shall end by quoting from others who have written in support of the case before us, but first let me sound a note of warning. It is not enough that we should continue to react at the last moment to each important find or to try at the eleventh hour to intervene in negotiations that have cliffhanger qualities. We should reform our planning structures so that, in future, we can protect sites in advance.

The Minister knows that this is not a one-off expression of interest on my part. I hope that she will see my bid tonight as part of my concern that we should not only increase the number of ancient monuments that we schedule and protect, increase the number of areas of archaeological importance that we designate and the financial wherewithal given for the work to be done, but we should ensure that local authorities protect archaeology and structure plans, that the Department's structure plan is made much more specific in its guidance and that the environmental impact assessment measure agreed last

year are specifically made to apply to the buried historic environment. We must do more, or we shall lose other sites, as valuable as the Rose but in different ways.

The conclusions of those who have visited the Rose are that we are confronted by our first sight of a playhouse that Shakespeare knew. My last quotation is for someone who wrote to me:

"It is all we have ever seen of the most important group of theatres in the history of Western civilisation and our first glimpse of the place where English drama reached its finest flowering. If we do not keep it the world will rightly judge us to be barbaric."

We have a historic responsibility and I hope that, in partnership with all concerned, we shall discharge it this week with honour.

12.8 am

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Environment (Mrs. Virginia Bottomley): The hon. Gentleman said that this was not a one-off interest for him. I endorse that remark. He has raised questions of archaeological concern, particularly relating to his constituency, on several occasions—in questions, in letters and in the debate to which he referred, which took place shortly before I took over my present responsibilities.

I have much sympathy with the hon. Gentleman because I spent many years as a social worker in his part of Southwark. It is well known that helping people to have a sense of pride in the history of their community can play a very important part. I worked on the north Peckham estate, which is an estate where a sense of identity and an understanding of the past cannot be said to be the overriding preoccupation of its residents, so I can well understand the hon. Gentleman's wish for people to know and to understand the past of Southwark and to find ways to ensure that archaeological remains can be preserved and shared with others.

The hon. Gentleman also referred to the debate last Friday which concerned the impressive archaeological remains at Huggin hill in the city. I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman for giving me another opportunity to discuss archaeology. I have been waiting for some months in my present role for such matters to be discussed on the Floor of the House because they are of growing interest and concern. As development grows and as the whole profession of archaeology strengthens, new techniques and new ways of understanding become available. At the museum of London, which played an important part at the Rose theatre, there are no fewer than 400 archaeologists over the year who participate in digs in London.

The remains at Huggin hill, ascribed by some as those of the palace of Julius Agricola, the governor of Britain—although there is some argument about that—are indeed impressive. I can inform the hon. Gentleman that we are keeping in close contact with all the parties there, and we are continuing to press for a satisfactory outcome for all concerned.

Equally exciting are the discoveries to which the hon. Gentleman has referred. Those excavations have been established to the satisfaction both of the museum of London and of the scholars of the Elizabethan and Jacobean theatre as the site of the Rose theatre, which, as the hon. Gentleman said, in its heyday saw performances of most of Christopher Marlowe's plays, with Edward

Ayleyn—that famous actor of his day and later founder of Dulwich college—playing the title role of Dr. Faustus and the Jew of Malta.

Perhaps of even greater excitement, certainly for Shakespeare scholars and enthusiasts all over the world, will be the fact that two of Shakespeare's early plays received their first performance there—Henry VI in 1592, in which some believe—the hon. Gentleman would count himself among them—Shakespeare appeared as a young actor, and also Titus Andronicus. For the first time we have clear evidence of the shape, size and layout of an Elizabethan theatre, which is crucial to the understanding of the production of the Elizabethan plays that have given so much to our cultural heritage of drama and theatre.

The excitement of this discovery—and for some the surprise—has led to an understandable wish for its preservation, especially because, as we know, such remains are irreplaceable. There are real practical and philosophical debates about the best way forward. How do we safeguard the best of our heritage in a manner consistent with the needs of a dynamic society? How do we also move towards the future? Some of those issues were discussed in our debate last week. I made it clear to the House then that we have seen very dramatic improvements in the relationship between developers and archaeologists.

In a controversial case in York concerning the palace of the Emperor Septimus Severus, there was speculation about how that could be preserved. As a result of good will and co-operation between the archaeologists and the developers, the developers have agreed to redesign the foundations to preserve the archaeology.

Much of that good will and co-operation stems directly from a very valuable code of practice produced by the Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers and the British Property Federation. That partnership has resulted not only in co-operation, but in hard resources. While English Heritage has recently estimated that last year it made a contribution of about £7 million to archaeology, a further £14 million was contributed by developers for excavation. That reinforces the view that voluntary co-operation and partnership are working well in many cases.

As the hon. Gentleman said, the Rose theatre is not a scheduled ancient monument. Many will feel it essential for the protection of those remains, that they be scheduled. Indeed, only last week we received a request to this effect from the Museum of London. Scheduling means that consent must be sought from the Secretary of State before any works that would disturb the monument may be carried out. However, it does not automatically mean that the site must be preserved for all time.

In considering the merits of any scheduling proposal, such as that put forward, it is necessary to bear in mind the fact that planning permission for the redevelopment of the site has previously been granted by the London borough of Southwark and that construction is indeed under way on another part of the site which is separate from the remains of the Rose theatre. It must also be appreciated that adequate time for excavation of the site has already been negotiated between the Museum of London and the developers, Imry Merchant Developers plc.

I was pleased to hear the hon. Gentleman pay tribute to the developers because I understand that the work has been carried out throughout in accordance with an agreement drawn up and fully adhered to by both sides. I know too that English Heritage, our agent in this area, has

been keeping an informal watching brief on the site and that Imry Merchant has consistently respected its requirements. I have no hesitation in commending the developer's allocation of time, funds and equipment, which resulted in this dramatic discovery in the first place and which has allowed for the subsequent excavation of the site.

I am conscious also that Imry Merchant Developers plc is currently studying seriously the imaginative concept which hon. Members may have seen referred to in newspaper articles recently. The hon. Gentleman referred to Sam Wanamaker's idea for a below-ground Shakespeare museum, which would be linked by tunnel to the Rose site, emerging in an area from which the Rose remains could be viewed, at some time in the future.

I understand that Imry has evaluated this general concept so far as has been possible in the short time available, and that it is prepared to do whatever can be done in conformity with its general aims and objectives. It has indicated that the existing scheme could be modified so that it is compatible with such a scheme as has been put forward by Sam Wanamaker. This would involve the encapsulation of the site, and the covering of the remains, so that the filling could be dug out again at a later date and the remains seen from a viewing platform. I understand that this may not be sufficient to satisfy the hon. Gentleman, but it has been endorsed by English Heritage.

I stress that it remains to be seen whether it will prove possible to put the plan into effect. I am, however, encouraged that Imry is living up to its track record for responsible reaction to new situations. Its actions once again prove how seriously so many developers rightly take their responsibilities towards the archaeological heritage. However, I stress that, regardless of whether the Sam Wanamaker scheme comes to fruition, the remains of the Rose theatre site will be preserved for future generations beneath the new development.

In terms of extending our knowledge of Elizabethan theatre, the Rose project has already been a remarkable success. The information gathered from the excavations has amply demonstrated that. The remains will be substantially preserved beneath the new building. Although we can do nothing to mitigate the damage that has already been done by the piling from previous office blocks, any further damage to be caused by the new building is minimal.

That brings me to the question of designation under part II of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. We have discussed that matter previously. As I have said, English Heritage has recently consulted local authorities and a number of other bodies about the working of the system and about whether further designation would be desirable. We have received its advice and are considering it carefully and I shall consider the hon. Gentleman's remarks in that context.

I should like to congratulate the developers and the archaeologists on their splendid job. Like the hon. Gentleman, I hope that a way will be found to ensure that future generations are able to see this magnificent discovery and I commit myself to working with all the parties to find an effective outcome that will achieve the goal that we are all pursuing.

Question put and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at nineteen minutes past Twelve o'clock.



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