

BSO

PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990

39TH AMENDMENT OF THE 8TH LIST OF BUILDINGS OF SPECIAL

ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST

DISTRICT OF THANET (KENT)

WHEREAS:

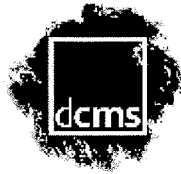
1. Section 1 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ("the Act") requires the Secretary of State, for the purposes of the Act and with a view to the guidance of local planning authorities in the performance of their functions under the Act and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 in relation to buildings of special architectural or historic interest, to compile lists of such buildings, and he may amend any list so compiled.

2. On 22 February 1973, the Secretary of State compiled a list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest situate in the District of Thanet (that part including the parish of Margate).

3. The Secretary of State, having consulted with the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England and such other persons or bodies of persons who appear to him appropriate as having special knowledge of, and interest in, such buildings, considers that the said list should be amended in the manner set out in the Schedule hereto.

NOW THEREFORE the Secretary of State, in exercise of the powers conferred on him by Section 1 of the Act, hereby amends the said list in the manner set out in the Schedule hereto.

HSD DOC 2



SCHEDULE

The entry for:-

TR 37 SW & TR 37 SE	MARGATE	MARINE TERRACE
10 & 11 /10003		Dreamland Cinema
		II

Has been replaced by:-

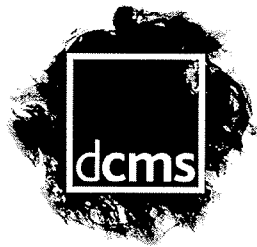
TR 37 SW & TR 37 SE	MARGATE	MARINE TERRACE
10 & 11 /10003		Dreamland Cinema
11.8.1992		II*

Cinema and entertainment centre. 1933-35, designed by JB Iles, Julian Leathart and WF Granger, architects, for John Henry Iles' Dreamland entertainment complex. Walpole Champneys, interior consultant.

MATERIALS: steel-framed structure, with brown and pink brick cladding and some concrete ornament. Travertine marble steps and panelling to outer wall at entrance.

PLAN: L-shaped, with the main entrances to the north, facing Margate beach. The seaward-facing frontage comprises former bars to ground floor (now an amusement arcade) and restaurant to first floor. The main cinema entrance, also north-facing, leads to a circular foyer, beyond which is the auditorium, aligned east-west. The auditorium interior was sub-divided at time of inspection (2007), with the ground floor given over to a bingo hall, and two smaller auditoria above, in the former circle. Below the cinema auditorium, at lower ground floor level, is the former entrance to the amusement park, with the former restaurant (now devoted to indoor amusements) situated beneath the western end of the auditorium.

EXTERIOR: the principal sea-facing front comprises a tall, Expressionist-influenced brick tower with a projecting fin, 80 ft (24.4m) tall. The current lettering spelling DREAMLAND is a modern replacement; originally the lettering (in applied sans-serif letters bearing neon strips) ran vertically, along the fin. To the east (or left) is a tall brick cube with horizontal decorative bands over a screen of glass blocks; to the west (or right) is a lower, rectangular section with a long picture window overlooking the sea, and serving the restaurant. At first floor level is a long fascia strip. The ground floor front is now occupied by an amusement arcade and has been stripped out. To the east is the principal entrance, via Travertine steps with coloured borders. The eastern return elevation is faced in Travertine at the lower level, and consists largely of a plain brick wall. The descending approach to the amusement park is located under the flank of the cinema auditorium, and this entrance is marked by tall vertical panels above. The side and rear elevations of the cinema become progressively plainer. Attached to the south-western end are the remnants of the Dreamland



ballroom: a mixture of (misfired) brick and corrugated iron elevations, with a steel trussed structure within; these remnants are not regarded as possessing the special interest of the cinema building.

INTERIOR: this has undergone sub-division and alteration, but retains considerable amounts of significant fabric. The internal decoration is stylistically consistent, being executed in an Art Deco influenced version of archaic Greek ornament, and is of very high quality for a cinema. The entrance corridor is paved with Travertine, and retains a moulded cornice and matching notice boards; along the west wall is the entrance to the former cafe. It leads to a spectacular double-height, top-lit circular foyer with an octagonal wooden desk of oak, with sloping stepped sides, to the centre; the balcony and ceiling soffits are decorated with a stylised Greek meander pattern executed in gold and deep blue; around the balcony wall are reliefs of a piping rider on horseback, designed by the sculptor Lawrence Bradshaw. An Art Deco bronze lantern is suspended from the ceiling. The staircase to the south-west retains bronze hand rails, and there is a coved cornice at its upper level to the central column. The first floor former balcony foyer is decorated in a matching style, with projecting half-columns carrying a coffered roof, around which runs a frieze with incised grooves. The upper auditoria, occupying the former stalls, are plain and presently sub-divided. Below, the lower part of the original auditorium survives largely intact, having been used in recent years for bingo. The proscenium arch has a coffered ceiling above, and is flanked by doorcases to each side; these have stylized Ionic columns, in the Minoan manner, and carry entablatures, on which stand mythological bronzed plaster figures (including Pan): these, and other relief figures in the auditorium were designed by the celebrated Art Deco sculptor Eric Aumonier (d.1974). In front of the stage is a rising Compton Waterman organ, with a blue and gold outer case. The former cafe to the first floor front, now a Chinese restaurant, has been extensively remodelled, and there is no trace of the 40 ft (12.2m) mural of a sea serpent by Walpole Champneys, recorded as being on the east wall of this room, over the bar (illustrated in *Building*, June 1934). Nor is there anything left of the saloon bar and public bar which formerly occupied the ground floor of the northern front. The former restaurant, situated on the lower ground floor to the west of the entrance to the amusement park, retains its decorated roof in the Minoan manner, with distinctive octagonal panels, a frieze, and ribbed mouldings; to the upper ceiling are reliefs of flying ducks. The derelict former ballroom attached to the rear of the cinema is not regarded as of special interest; its steel roof trusses bear the stencil of the firm of H. Young & Co, engineers of Nine Elms, London.

HISTORY: this site was first used for commercial entertainment in 1867, when the Hall by the Sea was opened for commercial catering. The first film was shown here in 1912, and in 1919 the site (by now highly successful, forming an integral part of one of Southern England's major seaside resorts) was acquired by John Henry Iles. Strongly influenced by American approaches to popular entertainment, he renamed the site Dreamland (the very name was taken from a Coney Island attraction) on its reopening in 1920, and drew some 1.5 million visitors during the first year of operation. The listed Scenic Railway [q.v.] dates from this time. A new cinema was opened in a converted ballroom in 1923, but plans for a new cinema and restaurant were drawn up in the early 1930s. Iles's son, John Bird Iles, in partnership with the established architectural practice of Leathart & Granger, was responsible for the design; Leathart & Granger are thought to have been mainly in charge, with Walpole Champneys overseeing co-ordination of the interior decoration. The restaurant could seat 500; the cinema's capacity was 2,050. Strongly influenced by German cinema design e.g. the Titania-Palast, Berlin by Schoffler, Schlönbach and Jacobi of 1928), this was the earliest Art Deco cinema in an Expressionist influenced brick idiom and was to prove influential on the subsequent design of the Odeon chain of cinemas. The decorative artists were respected figures in their day: Aumonier is best known for the reliefs in the foyer of the former Daily Express building on Fleet Street and for archer statues at East Finchley underground station, and also worked with Leathart &



Granger at East Sheen cinema; Laurence Bradshaw also worked for London Transport, and later modelled the bust of Karl Marx at Highgate Cemetery. In decorative terms, the interior displays the influence of Minoan sources, then very much in vogue following Sir Arthur Evans's publications of the palace of Minos at Knossos, Crete. Iles was bankrupted in 1938, and in 1940 Dreamland was used to receive evacuated troops from Dunkirk. Dreamland continued to be a successful enterprise into the 1970s, and was also used as a concert venue. In 1973 the cinema was sub-divided, and re-opened as two small screens each seating 350, with a large bingo hall beneath. The cinema closed in 2007.

SOURCES:

Architects' plans, dated October 1933;
Architects' Journal, June 14 1934, 865-69;
Building, June 1934, 204-211;
Architect & Building News, April 5 1935, 12-15;
Richard Gray, 'Cinemas in Britain' (1999), 93;
Nick Evans, 'Dreamland Remembered' (2nd ed 2005);
Allan Brodie & Gary Winter 'Englands Seaside Resorts' (2007);
English Heritage 'Margate's Seaside Heritage' (2007).

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

Dreamland Cinema is listed at Grade II* for the following principal reasons:

- Architectural: the cinema is an early example of the influence of German cinema design and sports both Expressionist and Art Deco influences. The tower is a particularly effective design, and was to prove influential on the design of Odeon cinemas.
- Decorative: the internal embellishment by Eric Aumonier and Laurence Bradshaw is of consistently high quality, and the overall decorative treatment, overseen by Walpole Champneys, is a very unusual essay in an Art Deco version of archaic Greek or Minoan style. This cinema retains notable bespoke sculpture, which is relatively unusual.
- Seaside context: Dreamland forms a very important part of Margate, one of Britain's oldest and most important seaside resorts. It is the most important addition to the town of the C20, and it brought a very successful Art Deco note to the Georgian and Victorian seafront.
- Group Value: Dreamland Cinema is closely linked with the listed and notable Scenic Railway. As such it forms part of a very significant entertainment complex, rivalled only by Blackpool Pleasure Beach.

Bibliography

Architects Journal, June 14, 1934
Building, June, 1934

Dated:- 25th April 2008

Signed by authority of the
Secretary of State

Elaine Pearce

ELAINE PEARCE
Department for Culture, Media
and Sport