

# Protecting theatres for **everyone**



Our Ref.: RA/9006029

26 May 2017

Ms Laura Hamlyn  
Brighton & Hove City Council  
Hove Town Hall  
Hove BN3 3BQ

Dear Ms Hamlyn,

**Brighton Little Theatre, 9 Clarence Gardens, Brighton, BN1 2EG**

Application Ref: BH2017/01445

I write regarding the above planning application to make alterations and extend the Brighton Little Theatre. The Trust supports the application. Please see our comments below.

**Statutory Remit:** The Theatres Trust is the national advisory public body for theatres. We champion the past, present and future of live theatre, by protecting the buildings and what goes on inside. We believe that current and future generations should have access to good quality theatre buildings where they can be inspired by, and enjoy, live theatre. We were established through the Theatres Trust Act 1976 'to promote the better protection of theatres' and provide statutory planning advice on theatre buildings and theatre use through The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, requiring the Trust to be consulted by local authorities on planning applications which include 'development involving any land on which there is a theatre'.

**Comments:** The Trust actively encourages theatre owners and operators to invest in their buildings and ensure they are developed in a way that will support their long term viability as a live performance venue and meet the needs and expectations of modern audiences, performers, producers, and staff. We therefore support this application to extend, renew and improve the facilities at the Brighton Little Theatre.

The theatre has operated successfully on this site since 1940, however, we recognise that the existing facilities and layout limits and restricts the way the building is used and operated. We agree with the rationale behind the project, and welcome the replacement of the garage with a new part one and two storey extension to provide much needed additional and more accessible WCs, and the new dressing rooms and storage space with a direct link to the stage, that will greatly improve staging and actor movements around the theatre. The new entry to the WCs will also improve audience flow around the building and remove a 'pinch point' at the main theatre entry. The additional ground floor performance space will also be a great asset to the theatre, providing extra public front of house floor space and a place for rehearsals when the stage is set for other shows.

**Theatres Trust**

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**Chair** Tim Eyles **Director** Jon Morgan

**Trustees** Richard Baldwin, Paddy Dillon, Ruth Eastwood, Dame Penelope Keith DL, Dara Ó Briain, Peter Roberts, Ann Skippers, Anna Stapleton

The National Advisory Public Body for Theatres

The Theatres Trust Charitable Fund co-operates with Theatres Trust, has the same Trustees and is registered as a charity under number 274697

The provision on new dressing rooms allows for the reconfiguration of the auditorium and we support the proposed alterations to the seating and the replacement of the roof trusses with new steel beams to improve sightlines, capacity and the audience experience.

The extensions are relatively low key to minimise their physical and visual impact on the neighbouring properties, but the additional facilities and rearranged spaces will help ensure the theatre can continue to operate effectively into the future. The Trust would therefore recommend granting planning permission.

This advice reflect guidance in Paragraph 70 of the NPPF which states that in 'promoting healthy communities', planning decisions should '*plan positively for cultural buildings*' and ensure that such facilities '*are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable, and retained for the benefit of the community*'.

Please do contact us if we may be of further assistance.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ross Anthony', with a horizontal line drawn underneath it.

Ross Anthony  
Planning Adviser