

Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/608

17 April 2018

For the attention of Ann Edmonds

The Planning Inspectorate
Room 3M Kite Wing
Temple Quay House
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By e-mail: west2@pins.gsi.gov.uk

Appeal: APP/G1250/W/17/3183304

Application: 7-2016-891-Z

Local Planning Authority: Bournemouth Borough Council

Site: 37-41 Westover Road, Bournemouth

Proposal: Outline submission for demolition of the part of the existing building and erection of a 10 storey building comprising of two levels of retail floor space, 84 flats, 97 car parking spaces, associated servicing facilities, refuse and cycle storage.

Remit:

The Theatres Trust is the national advisory public body for theatres. 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 in England 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'.

Response:

Please note that this representation is also reflective of the Trust's comments on the corresponding appeal reference S78/2018/7048 (APP/G1250/W/17/3189580).

The Trust maintains its objection to this scheme as set out in our representation to Bournemouth Borough Council on 23rd December 2016 which should have been forwarded to you by the Council. We support the Council's refusal of the proposal.

In addition to the reasons for refusal as set out in the Council's Decision Notice (dated 3rd March 2017), which we support, we would also like to draw your attention to the absence of justification

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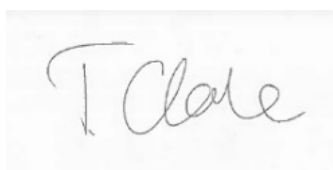
The National Advisory Public Body for Theatres

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

provided by the applicant to support the loss of the site as a cultural facility and demonstrate the building is surplus to the requirements of the local community. This is contrary to paragraph 70 of the NPPF, which states that planning decisions should 'plan positively for cultural buildings' and 'guard against the loss of cultural facilities and services'. We understand a covenant was put in place by the previous owner precluding its future use as a cinema. Such a covenant, even if legally enforceable, should not be considered as appropriate justification for change of use. Regardless of this, the building is suitable for other types of community and cultural uses and we recommend that these should be explored first before allowing this appeal.

We would also recommend that even if conversion to non-cultural or community use is considered acceptable in principle, the first priority must be to consider options that are reversible; that is to retain the integrity of the existing building and its interior with minimal alteration so that cinema or performance use could viably return at a later time. The existing proposal would fail to provide that option. Although the building is not currently statutorily listed, even on the assumption any application for listing is unsuccessful it does have value as an undesignated heritage asset and positively contributes to the local townscape. We recommend that all possible efforts must be made to retain it.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'T Clarke', on a light-colored rectangular background.

Tom Clarke
National Planning Adviser