

# Protecting theatres for **everyone**



Ref.: TC/2134

16 May 2018

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Mount Pleasant Road  
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**Application:** 18/00849/LBC

**Site:** Assembly Hall Theatre Crescent Road Royal Tunbridge Wells Kent TN1 2LU

**Proposal:** Listed Building Consent: New fire resisting partitions, doors and shutters.

## **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'.

## **Comment:**

The Trust actively encourages theatre owners and operators to invest in their buildings to ensure they meet current building and safety standards and the expectations of audiences, staff, and performers. We note from the documentation accompanying this application that fire safety inspections have identified improvements to exit routes to facilitate safe egress when the theatre is near full capacity. Therefore the principle of this proposal is supported.

Two options to address fire safety have been put forward – either two fire-resisting partitions with thirty-minute fire resisting doors located at either end of the upper foyer or thirty-minute fire-resistant shutters. Although both require some drilling into the existing walls and ceilings and have some impact on the theatre's character, neither will impact on historic cornice and skirting detailing and the proposed changes are reversible. Should doors be the preferred option, we note that along with the frames and skirting they will be constructed to match existing adjacent doors.

In light of the safety benefits of the proposal, that works are reversible and that impact on the building's historic appearance and fabric has been minimised we **recommend the granting of**

## **Theatres Trust**

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

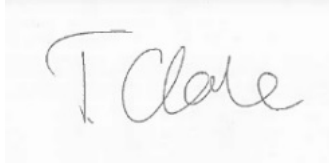
**Trustees** Richard Baldwin, David Blyth, Pam Bone, Paul Cartwright, Paddy Dillon, Ruth Eastwood, David Ian, Richard Johnston, Gary Kemp, Dara Ó Briain, Simon Ricketts, Peter Roberts, Ann Skippers, Anna Stapleton

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

**listed building consent.**

Please contact us if we may be of further assistance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "T Clarke". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'T' and 'C'.

Tom Clarke  
National Planning Adviser