

Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/3084

26 September 2018

Mr Richard Collins
Ipswich Borough Council,
Development Management,
3W Grafton House,
15-17 Russell Road,
Ipswich,
IP1 2DE

By e-mail: development.management@ipswich.gov.uk

Application: 18/00773/VC

Site: Former Civic Centre Site And Adjacent Car Parks, Civic Drive, Ipswich, Suffolk

Proposal: Variation of Conditions 1,4,5 and 6 of Planning Permission IP/15/00831/FUL, redevelopment of Spiral Car Park to create Theatre Square, for revised layout landscaping and lighting, revised building for community, theatre participation, office and studio use in place of restaurant and servicing, drop off point in lieu of pedestrian crossing and extension of temporary parking for 10 years..

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:

Thank you for consulting Theatres Trust on the above application, which seeks revisions and a variation of conditions to planning permission reference IP/15/00831/FUL. The original application sought a single-story restaurant (A3) along with temporary change of use of the Civic Centre site as a car park, pedestrian bridges over Civic Drive and towards the town centre along with public realm/landscaping improvements. This application proposes employment and studio space in place of the restaurant, as well as variations to the permitted landscaping and lighting, an extension of the temporary parking permission to ten years and a drop-off point in place of the pedestrian crossing.

The Trust is supportive of the 'participation' studio space and employment space in place of the permitted restaurant. Both are compatible uses in accordance with Policy DM22 of the Ipswich

Theatres Trust

22 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0QL

T 020 7836 8591

F 020 7836 3302

E info@theatrestrust.org.uk

W theatrestrust.org.uk

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

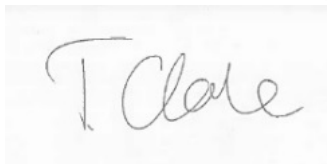
Borough Council Local Plan (2017) for this designated town centre site which sits outside of the Central Shopping Area. Policy CS2 also directs employment provision to such locations, and the proposal contributes towards meeting Objective 3 of the Local Plan's key targets. The existing theatre café/bar is already open throughout the day and spills onto the terrace helping to activate it. This proposal will broaden the mix of uses at the site and help draw people in at different times of day, in turn enhancing the theatre's income potential and sustainability. The participation space will also assist the theatre's ongoing viability by allowing externally-hosted classes to come back in house, and provide an additional resource the theatre can utilise for income-generation.

As with the existing permission, this revision will continue to result in an improved environment and public realm at the site. While this will provide valued open space for local people, workers and visitors during daylight and operating hours, we would recommend an appropriate security and safety strategy to be in place as the greater enclosure created by the new building reduces passing surveillance from Civic Drive.

It is regrettable that the revised scheme removes the proposed road crossing across Civic Drive, as this would have improved permeability and access to the theatre from the west. The proposed bridge towards the town centre also appears to have been removed, although there is an existing route just to the south which can be considered as effective albeit in some need of improvement. We have no objection to the extended temporary period for car parking,

In conclusion we welcome investment in this site and the improvement it will bring to the New Wolsey's facilities and its surrounding environment. We therefore **recommend approval** of this application.

Please contact us if we may be of further assistance.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T Clarke". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Tom Clarke MRTPI
National Planning Adviser