

# Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/9006224

25 September 2018

Shannon Franklin

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**Applications:** 18/03777/FUL

**Site:** Porters Lodge Shrewsbury School Ashton Road Shrewsbury Shropshire SY3 7AR

**Proposal:** Erection of extension and refurbishment of existing theatre; external landscaping and demolition of existing porters lodge.

## **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:**

This application has come to the attention of the Trust as it was included in our round-up of press stories relating to theatres. We were not directly notified as per the statutory requirement as set out above. Please ensure the Council's systems are updated so that the Trust is notified should any further proposals come forward for this or other theatre buildings within the Council's boundary.

While this theatre predominantly operates as a facility for the education and development of pupils, it does host some public performances each year and thus can be considered a community building which contributes to the cultural wellbeing of local people. Paragraph 92 of the NPPF (2018) requires authorities to plan positively for such facilities, with a social objective of supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities by providing accessible services that support social and cultural wellbeing being included as a pillar of sustainable development.

We welcome proposals which invest in theatre buildings and enhance the facilities available to their users, therefore we support the principle of this development. The extension will give the theatre greater prominence, while not detrimentally impacting the setting of nearby statutorily listed buildings and monuments. It will provide two small studios and a flexible space, which improves the range of facilities available. In turn, this will be beneficial for the development of pupils and help nurture future talent. Potentially this also provides space that can be utilised by the wider community.

## **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

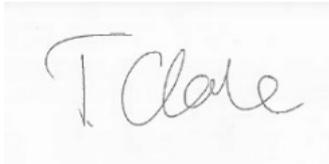
The National Advisory Public Body for Theatres

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

Another benefit of this proposal is that toilet provision will be increased and enhanced both backstage and for audience members. The dressing rooms are to be moved and assumedly improved, although it does not appear from the plans that these will be accessible to wheelchairs and there is no alternative changing facility set out. This is because the changing rooms are at first floor level, and there appear to be some steps between the dressing rooms and the space identified for future lift installation. We would strongly encourage the applicant to review this provision; there would appear to be adequate space available to install an additional changing room at ground floor level if required.

On the basis of satisfactory disabled provision being addressed, we support this proposal and **recommend the granting of planning permission.**

Please contact us if we may be of further assistance or should you wish to discuss these comments.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T Clarke". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'T'.

Tom Clarke MRTPI  
National Planning Adviser