

# Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/3848

01 February 2019

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**Application:** 18/506589/FULL

**Site:** Arden Theatre Leslie Smith Drive Faversham Kent ME13 8PW

**Proposal:** Erection of side extension to provide two dressing rooms with storage above.

## 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:

Please note the Trust was not consulted on this proposal despite it falling under our statutory remit as described above. Please ensure the Trust is contacted regarding at further applications at the Arden or any other theatre within Maidstone or Swale.

The Trust **supports** this proposal which would result in the construction of a side extension at the Arden Theatre to facilitate improved dressing room provision and storage.

The Arden is a small community-orientated studio theatre which hosts both professional and amateur productions. It is an important facility for local people, bringing them together and providing opportunities for participation in the arts. Paragraph 92 of the NPPF (2018) seeks planning decisions to plan positively for community buildings and local services (which includes cultural buildings such as theatres), and to support delivery of improved cultural well-being.

The proposed extension is relatively modest in scale but would provide the theatre with much improved dressing room provision which is important from a safeguarding perspective as it will allow for separation. It will also provide backstage toilet facilities to each dressing room. This

## 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

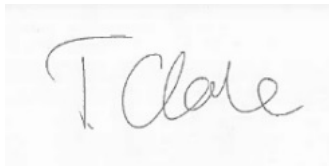
The National Advisory Public Body for Theatres

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will help make the theatre more attractive to hirers which will in enhance its sustainability and viability. This is furthered by the partition being retractable which will allow for the space to utilised as a small studio/rehearsal space, improving capacity and flexibility. The upper-level storage in place of the current external container is operationally beneficial.

The development proposed will help contribute towards the Swale Borough Local Plan (2017) vision and place-based objective of sustaining Faversham's role as a thriving market town, along with Core Objective 10 which seeks to develop culture to support communities. Therefore we **recommend the granting of planning permission**, as it will further support the work of the theatre as a valued facility which helps support the social and cultural well-being of local people.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T Clarke". The signature is written in a cursive style and is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

Tom Clarke MRTPI  
National Planning Adviser