

# Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC

22 February 2019

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**Applications:** P2018/1427/S73

**Site:** Archway Methodist Central Hall, Navigator Square (formerly Archway Close), Islington, London, N19 3TD.

**Proposals:** Change of use of the existing Archway Methodist Central Hall building (Use Class D1) to Arts Centre classes (Use Class D1/D2) and ancillary theatre use (Use Class Sui Generis), including the creation 240 square metres (GIA) within the existing building at first floor level along with associated external alterations.

## **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.

We welcome efforts to bring the Central Hall back to use as an Arts Centre, which would add diversity to the mix of uses within the designated Archway town centre and activate a prominent heritage asset on Islington's local heritage list. An arts centre in this location would further enhance Islington's cultural offer, and accord with Policy DM4.4.C of the Local Plan: Development Management Policies (2013) by contributing to the vitality of the centre while enhancing heritage and local distinctiveness. Policy DM4.12 also directs new cultural facilities to such locations.

We do however have concerns as to whether the internal design and layout of the proposed arts centre as proposed is the optimum/most viable solution. Plans suggest there will be significant

## **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

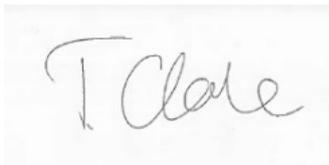
The Theatres Trust Charitable Fund co-operates with Theatres Trust, has the same Trustees and is registered as a charity under number 274697

interventions and alterations within the building, in particular the main hall where a new floor will be inserted separating the upper and lower floors. Photos of the interior suggest the main hall to be an attractive space, and we would suggest some thought might be given to an alternative layout which would maintain the appearance and integrity of the existing space and its decorative features.

Additional thought may also need to be given as to how to manage get-ins/get-outs and general servicing/deliveries from the get-in proposed given the building's position on a 'red route' and the safety hazard that could arise from vehicles stopping.

In conclusion, we support this endeavour and recommend the granting of planning permission because the principle of an arts centre/theatre in this location is acceptable. We would encourage the applicant to work with the Trust and specialist theatre architects/consultants to refine proposals and ensure the space is sustainable and viable.

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

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

Tom Clarke MRTPI  
National Planning Adviser