

# Protecting theatres for **everyone**



Ref.: TC

25 March 2019

Planning Department  
County Hall  
Morpeth  
Northumberland  
NE61 2EF

**By e-mail:** [planning@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:planning@northumberland.gov.uk)

**Applications:** 19/00384/FUL & 19/00385/ADE

**Site:** Dovecote Centre Dovecote Street Amble Morpeth Northumberland NE65 0DX

**Proposal:** Retrospective change of use to community venue for cinema, live music and classes also a base for our touring theatre company; &

Retrospective advertising consent for community venue for cinema, live music and classes also a base for our touring theatre company.

## **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:**

We are supportive of this retrospective proposal which would formalise the change of use of the Dovecote Centre from an adult education centre (D1) to a multi-use community arts centre (D2) and home for the Northumberland Theatre Company. The building has been vacant since the previous use ceased in 2016.

Within the emerging Northumberland Local Plan (Publication Draft Plan 2019) the emerging vision by 2036 is to safeguard the health and wellbeing of the county's people and communities and to secure access to services and facilities. Policy INF 2.2 seeks improvement in the quantity, quality, accessibility and range of community services and facilities and supports new ones. This is reflective of paragraph 83 of the NPPF (2019) which supports the development of accessible local services such as community and cultural buildings. This proposal would help meet those aims, and expand Amble's cultural offer for the benefit of local people. Cultural facilities, particularly of this nature, help bring people together and provide opportunities for

## **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

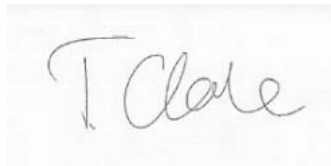
participation in the arts. This in turn helps reduce isolation and improves cultural well-being.

It appears that no internal alterations are proposed at this stage. Given the live arts and theatre focus of this facility, we would encourage the applicant to engage with us regarding any future works.

In relation to the noticeboard subject to retrospective advertisement consent, these form an integral aspect of buildings of this nature and help raise awareness of forthcoming events and opportunities. This is important for ongoing sustainability and viability. We do not consider that it would detract from the character of the Amble conservation area.

Paragraph 92 seeks planning decisions to plan positively for the provision of community buildings. We consider these retrospective proposals to be policy compliant, and **recommend the granting of planning permission and advertisement consent.**

Please contact us should you wish to discuss these comments in further detail.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T Clarke', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Tom Clarke MRTPI  
National Planning Adviser