

Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC

11 November 2019

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By e-mail: pkneen@fareham.gov.uk

Applications: P/19/1053/CU

Site: Titchfield Festival Theatre 71-73 St Margarets Lane Fareham PO14 4BG

Proposal: Change of use of Unit B to a mixed use of B8/D2 and theatre purposes and variation of condition 8 of P/12/0050/CU relating to use and hours of operation

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 regarding this proposal which seeks change of use at Titchfield Festival Theatre along with a variation of condition in order to allow the unit to be used for the same hours as the theatre.

Presently the site is in theatre (Sui Generis) use alongside a warehouse restricted to B1/B8 use and only between the hours of 08:00-18:00 Monday-Friday, 09:00-13:00 Saturday and no use on Sundays and Bank Holidays. This application seeks to formally integrate the warehouse into the theatre. The theatre is a cultural facility valued by local people.

We are supportive of this proposal. Neither parts of Fareham's Local Plan (Core Strategy 2011 and Development Sites and Policies 2015) provide specific restriction on the loss of employment (B) floorspace outside of designated sites and areas. Policy CS1 of the Core Strategy does

Theatres Trust

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T 020 7836 8591 **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, Ann Skippers, Anna Stapleton

The National Advisory Public Body for Theatres

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

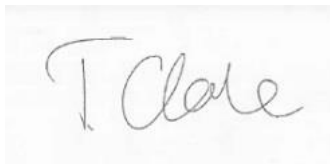
however take “a flexible approach to the redevelopment of existing employment sites for different uses which contribute to economic development”. The use of this space for the storage and preparation of scenery and theatre equipment is consistent with the principles of B1/B8 use, and such spaces typically have more of a ‘workshop’ feel and function. While not formally within a ‘B’ landuse it would nevertheless contribute towards economic development. The draft London Plan (July 2019) for example promotes workspace for creative purposes partly driven by a shortage.

Furthermore the space is also used by Men’s Shed. Although this is a community function, the nature of its activities is centred on ‘DIY’ and making which again is consistent with this space. Men’s Shed is a positive social and community initiative which helps combat loneliness and isolation particularly amongst older men. Theatres themselves provide opportunities for people to come together, participate and improve social and cultural wellbeing, therefore co-location within a theatre environment is beneficial. We have supported a Men’s Shed proposal at a theatre elsewhere. As such, we consider change of use to regularise activities within the theatre to be policy compliant and will in effect maintain the characteristics of a ‘B’ use. Paragraph 92 of the NPPF (2019) seeks decisions to plan positively for community facilities.

On the same basis we also support the proposed extension of hours of operation as this would provide the theatre with improved operational flexibility. It would also broaden the times at which Men’s Shed could operate. We do not consider that the nature of activities undertaken within the space would cause harm to the amenity of nearby properties.

In conclusion we are supportive of 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 further.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "T Clarke", on a light blue rectangular background.

Tom Clarke MRTPI
National Planning Adviser