

Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/2858

22 January 2020

Development Management
4 Civic Way
Ellesmere Port
CH65 0BE

By e-mail: planning@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Application: 20/00108/FUL

Site: The Little Theatre Gloucester Street Chester Cheshire CH1 3HR

Proposal: Single storey extension

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 because it relates to development at Chester Little Theatre. The Trust was consulted on a previous application seeking a two story extension; this proposal seeks a single story extension.

The primary alteration would be the infilling of the yard which will provide a rehearsal room and some kitchen facilities. This will increase the theatre's flexibility as it will be able to use the existing studio and new rehearsal room concurrently. It will also potentially enable greater scope for external hires which would help assist the theatre's financial sustainability and enhance the theatre's role as a community and cultural asset.

In doing so the stairs adjacent to the disabled WC will be removed which will open up the foyer space as well as the first floor above, making the theatre more welcoming and enhancing circulation.

Policy SOC5 of the Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies (2015) supports proposals which strengthen the borough's cultural offer. Policy DM39 of the Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies (2019) also supports improved community facilities, which is

Theatres Trust

22 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0QL

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, Truda Spruyt, Anna Stapleton

The National Advisory Public Body for Theatres

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consistent with paragraph 92 of the NPPF (2019) which seeks planning decisions to plan positively for community and cultural facilities. This proposal meets those objectives, so we **recommend the granting of planning permission.**

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".

Tom Clarke MRTPI
National Planning Adviser

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