

Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/1988

31 March 2020

Kirsty Minney
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Mount Pleasant Road
Royal Tunbridge Wells
Kent
TN1 1RS

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

Application: 20/00442/LBC

Site: The Opera House 88 Mount Pleasant Road Royal Tunbridge Wells Kent TN1 1RT

Proposal: Listed Building Consent - Remove a section of the existing plasterboard ceiling; install a new Mitsubishi PUHZ-P250WKA (22kW) void type unit into the ceiling void; new Mitsubishi PUHZ-P250YKA3 condensing unit on the external wall; install interconnecting services such as refrigeration pipework and mains power . ACS to run discharge air ductwork above the plasterboard ceiling . ACS to test & commission . Mansfield Builders to re-instate ceiling with access doors for future maintenance purposes.

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 for listed building consent has come to the attention of the Trust because it involves works at the Grade II* listed Opera House. The Opera House was a theatre with grandiose exterior and interior; it was deceptively intimate as it had the look of a large theatre but capacity for around 750. It was used as a bingo hall from the 1960s until the mid-1990s when there was prospect of it returning to theatre use and vocal local support for such. However it was lost to pub use, but it retains many original features including its stage, grid and fly floors. It remains a building that is of great interest to the Trust.

This proposal seeks internal and external alteration in association with the installation of new air-conditioning units and related pipework. We note this will assist with maintaining the building and

Theatres Trust

22 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0QL

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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, Ann Skippers, Truda Spruyt, 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

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will not harm the building's character and significance as a heritage asset. It is also reversible. Therefore, we raise no objection to this proposal.

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

Tom Clarke
National Planning Adviser

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