

Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/1136

30 March 2020

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

Application: 20/00752/FULL & 20/00753/LBC

Site: Trinity Theatre And Arts Centre, Church Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 1JP

Proposal: Internal alterations to stairwells and clock tower for public access. New external up-lighting to the tower; and

Listed Building Consent - Internal alterations to stairwells and clock tower for public access. New external up-lighting to the tower.

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 planning permission and listed building consent has come to the attention of the Trust as it results in development at the Grade II* listed Trinity Theatre.

Trinity Theatre is a theatre and arts centre which has been operating within the former Holy Trinity Church since 1982. It is an important cultural and heritage asset for Tunbridge Wells and surrounding areas, supporting smaller to middle scale theatre and performing artists as well as local groups. It helps broaden access to culture and the arts for local people. Paragraph 92 of the NPPF (2019) seeks planning decisions to plan positively for facilities such as this.

This proposal seeks to open up public access to the clock tower and roof, which will create a new attraction for the town and show off some of the building's features of interest and significance. It

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, Ann Skippers, Truda Spruyt, Anna Stapleton

The National Advisory Public Body for Theatres

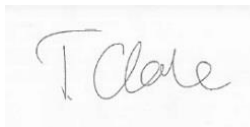
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will also improve access within the first floor in advance of a future project to install lift access.

We are supportive of this project as it will help open up access to the building and bring more people into the theatre. In turn this is likely to result in more people attending performances and engaging with the building as a heritage asset. Although there will be some degree of alteration to facilitate this, this will not harm the building's significance and by opening up access creates a net benefit.

In conclusion **we recommend the granting of planning permission and listed building consent.**

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



Tom Clarke
National Planning Adviser

Theatres Trust

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