

# Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/2296

4 May 2020

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By e-mail: [DevelopmentControl@bexley.gov.uk](mailto:DevelopmentControl@bexley.gov.uk)

**Applications:** 20/00717/FUL

**Site:** Erith Theatre Guild Erith High Street Erith Kent DA8 1QY

**Proposal:** Continued use of the building in the car park to provide a storage area and sorting playhouse wardrobe previously granted for a limited period under reference 18/00401/FUL.

## **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 involves development at Erith Playhouse, specifically renewal of temporary permission for storage and wardrobe within the theatre's car park.

The Playhouse is a valued community repertory theatre run by its members, providing opportunities to engage and participate in the arts for local people in Erith and surrounding areas. Its important role is demonstrated through its designation as an Asset of Community Value. Paragraph 92 of the NPPF (2019) seeks planning decisions to plan positively for facilities such as this.

The application relates to a portable cabin situated within the theatre's car park. Permission was originally granted in 2014, renewed in 2016 and again in 2018. A further extension is sought. The use of the structure for storage helps support the theatre's operation, providing additional capacity which helps optimise use of the main building for its core theatre function.

We are supportive of continued use of the cabin to help support the theatre. We consider the

## **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, David Ian, Richard Johnston, Gary Kemp, Simon Ricketts, Truda Spruyt, Anna Stapleton

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existing condition limiting the approved functions of this facility is sufficient to ensure the amenity of nearby properties is not compromised.

We therefore recommend the granting of planning permission.

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

Tom Clarke MRTPI  
National Planning Adviser

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