

Ref.: TC/224

01 June 2020

Emma Woodland
Ryedale District Council
Ryedale House
Malton
North Yorkshire
YO17 7HH

By e-mail

Application: 20/00441/FUL

Site: Helmsley Arts Centre Bridge Street Helmsley North Yorkshire YO62 5DW

Proposal: Alterations and extension to provide disabled access from ground floor to first floor

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 has come to the Trust's attention because it involves development at Helmsley Arts Centre, specifically an extension to help facilitate improved accessibility. We have not been formally consulted despite this application falling within the Trust's remit as a statutory consultee.

Helmsley Arts Centre is a valued community and cultural asset providing Helmsley and surrounding communities with access to the arts and opportunities to volunteer and participate. It has a varied programme including theatre, cinema, live music and other events along with provision for classes, rehearsals and meetings. As such it helps contribute to the social and cultural well-being of local people. Paragraph 92 of the NPPF seeks planning decisions to plan positively for facilities of this nature.

Plans show the extension would be to the arts centre's northern elevation and would be relatively modest in scale. At present the space is used as a scenery store on the ground floor with void above. These works would enable the installation of a lift and a new set of stairs from ground to first floor with what appears to be an accessible WC at first floor level (although this isn't

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, David Ian, Richard Johnston, Gary Kemp, Simon Ricketts, Truda Spruyt

The National Advisory Public Body for Theatres

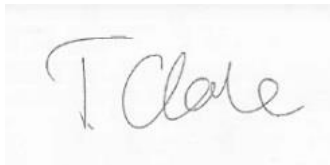
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confirmed or marked on the plans). This would provide access for wheelchair users and others with reduced mobility to the Morley room as well as other facilities to the first floor, and provide performers with backstage dressing room provision.

We are supportive of these proposals and welcome the investment of Helmsley Arts Centre into its facilities to ensure it is accessible to all users. This will also help improve the operational flexibility of the arts centre and enhance its role as a community asset. Policy H5 of the Helmsley Plan Local Plan 2014 to 2027 (2015) supports the intensification of existing town centre uses where they improve the viability and vitality of the town centre; the broadening of the Arts Centre's function would achieve such an outcome. We consider the design of the extension is sympathetic to the existing appearance of Helmsley Arts Centre and of the prevailing character of its wider setting in accordance with Policy H9.

Therefore in conclusion we welcome 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.



Tom Clarke MRTPI
National Planning Adviser

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