

# Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC

22 September 2020

Jayne Pallas  
County Hall  
Durham  
County Durham  
DH1 5UL

By e-mail: [planning@durham.gov.uk](mailto:planning@durham.gov.uk)

**Application:** DM/20/01964/LB

**Site:** The Everyman Theatre Ohanlan Street Spennymoor DL16 6RY

**Proposal:** Listed Building Consent for blue plaque

## **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 development at the Spennymore Settlement's Everyman Theatre. Specifically, it seeks to install a commemorative blue plaque to the theatre's front elevation.

The Spennymore Settlement building is a statutory Grade II listed heritage asset which opened in 1939. The Settlement was established in 1930 at a time of great challenge for Spennymore with high unemployment and impoverishment. Its objectives were to give local people an opportunity to develop new skills, find new interests and to provide advice and guidance. The theatre followed nine years later built by unemployed miners, producing and performing plays rooted in socialism supported by utilising the skills and output of the Settlement's various groups such as woodwork, painting and sewing. The Settlement has seen social success, with a number of members having gone onto university including Oxford which was highly unusual from such a community. The building was granted statutory listing in 2004, and is a relatively rare example of such a building in County Durham which also has great social history and significance.

We are supportive of the installation of this plaque, which we understand from the accompanying Heritage Statement to provide some explanation of the Settlement's history and significance. Its

### **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, Richard Johnston, Gary Kemp, Simon Ricketts, Truda Spruyt

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

## Protecting theatres for **everyone**



location alongside the main entrance would give it some degree of prominence without undermining the building's special character.

Therefore we would recommend the granting of listed building consent.

Please contact us should you wish to discuss these comments further.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T Clarke". The signature is written in a cursive style and is centered within a light grey rectangular box.

Tom Clarke MRTPI  
National Planning Adviser

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