

Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/2060

16 December 2020

Regeneration and Planning
Development Management Team
PO Box 4
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Lancaster
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By e-mail: dcconsultation@lancaster.gov.uk

Application: 20/01405/FUL & 20/01325/LB

Site: The Winter Gardens Marine Road Central Morecambe Lancashire LA4 4BU

Proposal: Installation of a roof mounted flue; & Listed building application for the removal of the existing heating system and installation of a new heating system with associated radiators, pipework, installation of new walls and ceilings to plant room and installation of a roof mounted flue

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:

These applications for planning permission and listed building consent have been brought to the attention of the Trust because it relates to development at the Winter Gardens. Specifically they seek installation of a flue to the rear of the building to facilitate the installation of the new heating system and removal of existing covered within the corresponding listed building consent.

The Winter Gardens is a statutorily listed Grade II* heritage and cultural asset. It is also a priority building for the Trust, sitting on our Theatres at Risk register as well as Historic England's Heritage at Risk register. It is considered unique as being a large concert or minstrel's hall, built in 1897 with renowned theatre architect Frank Matcham as a consultant. After some years of increasing deterioration and a promised restoration and reopening not coming forward, the Friends of The Winter Gardens formed in 1986 to support the complex. Twenty years later this group created the Morecambe Winter Gardens Preservation Trust Limited to purchase the

Theatres Trust

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Chair Tim Eyles **Director** Jon Morgan

Trustees Richard Baldwin, David Blyth, Pam Bone, Paul Cartwright, Paddy Dillon, Annie Hampson, Richard Johnston, Gary Kemp, Simon Ricketts, Jane Spiers, Truda Spruyt, Katie Town

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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building and continue to seek funds to restore and reopen it. The theatre is open to the public and has a mixed programme of entertainment from limited parts of the building. Some elements including the upper balcony remain in poor condition and are not open to the public. Significant funds are required to enable full restoration and allow the building to meet its full potential.

The need for replacement of the heating system has been clearly articulated as it is ineffective and inefficient. The replacement system will enable use of the Winter Gardens through the winter which will support efforts to maximise use of the building and reduce running costs. In turn this will contribute towards the Winter Garden's wider preservation and restoration as a cultural asset and attraction for Morecambe.

The plant and equipment will be housed in an area of the building of low significance with the flue going through the roof to the rear. Heat will be emitted through radiators and fan convectors housed in casings which reflect the style, detail and finish of original timber panelling.

Therefore we raise no objection to these proposals and are supportive of the granting of planning permission and listed building consent.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T Clarke". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Tom Clarke MRTPI
National Planning Adviser

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