

Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/41

27 April 2021

Matthew Gest
Planning & Public Protection
Hove Town Hall
Norton Road
Hove
BN3 3BQ

By e-mail: planning.consultation@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Application: BH2021/01079 & BH2021/01080

Site: The Hippodrome 52 - 58 Middle Street Brighton BN1 1AL

Proposal: Erection of new roof structure to the domed roof, and the demolition of several roof structures that penetrate through the existing roof fabric.

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:

Thank you for consulting Theatres Trust regarding these applications for planning permission and listed building consent at the Hippodrome which seeks to erect a new roof structure.

The Hippodrome is a priority building for the Trust, being on both our national 'Theatres at Risk' register and Historic England's 'Heritage at Risk' register. It is Grade II* listed, and is the UK's most architecturally significant circus-theatre and finest surviving example of its type. Since closure of its bingo use in 2006 the building has been vacant and is an increasingly deteriorating condition. We are keen to see its return to theatre use and consider there is potential for it to be viable and sustainable as large-scale theatre.

Following purchase by its current owners some repair works have been carried out to make the building watertight to halt further deterioration and this is welcomed. This proposal goes further by seeking to install a protective roof over the auditorium to make it watertight and provide a safe working environment for contractors to save, repair and restore the significant plasterwork within.

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, Paul Cartwright, Paddy Dillon, Annie Hampson, Richard Johnston, Gary Kemp, 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

Protecting theatres for **everyone**



We are supportive of the principle of this work, as it is a sensitive approach which also provides the most practical means of carrying out the work necessary to undertake the first stage of restoration of this significant cultural and heritage asset. However at this stage there is no information provided to show how the structure will be fixed and whether its loading can be taken. Although we acknowledge that reputable consultants have been engaged there should be a condition attached to any permission which seeks submission of details and methodology. We would highlight that separate permission must also be sought by the applicant for works to the plasterwork and ceiling as this sits outside the scope of these particular applications and would be too invasive not to have listed building consent.

Due to the significance and sensitivity of the Hippodrome as a heritage asset and its condition we also recommend a condition which requires an approved consultant to carry out any work as agreed by the Council in consultation with Theatres Trust and Historic England.

In conclusion we are supportive of the granting of planning permission and listed building consent subject to the conditions outlined. We are keen to engage further with the applicant, the Council and other stakeholders on any further applications and proposals at the Hippodrome.

Please contact us if we may be of further assistance or if you would like to discuss these comments further.

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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