

Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/351

30 April 2021

Emma Dennis
Boston Borough Council
Municipal Buildings,
West Street,
Boston,
Lincolnshire
PE21 8QR

By e-mail: planning@boston.gov.uk

Application: B/18/0292

Site: Blackfriars Art Centre, 11 Spain Lane, Boston, PE21 6HP

Proposal: Listed building consent to upgrade existing heating and ventilation system

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 on this application for listed building consent, which seeks to upgrade the Blackfriars Arts Centre's heating and ventilation system.

The Trust welcomes proposals by owners and operators to invest in their buildings, and with performance venues having been hardest hit by restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic it is essential they are supported to re-open. For venues such as Blackfriars their recovery is also critical to ensure the buildings they occupy are kept in use and maintained as valued heritage assets. These works are being supported by a grant from Theatres Trust's Theatre Reopening Fund.

The need for effective ventilation has become apparent during the pandemic and will help to ensure a Covid-safe environment. This in itself provides compelling justification for treating applications favourably which seek upgrades to ventilation systems. Nonetheless, as this proposal would primarily utilise existing openings and fittings with just new openings to the less sensitive 1960s part of the building, the building's character and significance would be preserved.

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

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We would just bring to the attention of the applicant that regulations have changed for performance venues, now seeking 10l/sec per person rather than the 8l/sec per person within the 'Yellow Book' and that is stated in their Heritage Statement. If there is an opportunity for them to increase fresh air intake further through their new system we would encourage them to do so as increased fresh air intake helps reduce the spread of aerosol transmission. However we acknowledge there can be challenges when installing ventilation into historic buildings so a higher rate may not be possible.

In conclusion we support this proposal and recommend the granting of listed building consent.

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".

Tom Clarke MRTPI
National Planning Adviser

Theatres Trust

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