

Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC

11 May 2021

Rebecca Harrison
Gravesham Borough Council
Civic Centre
Windmill Street
Gravesend
Kent
DA12 1AU

By e-mail: planning.reps@gravesham.gov.uk

Application: 20210453

Site: Former Cinema Site 11 King Street Gravesend Kent DA12 2EB

Proposal: Repair, restoration, extension and repurposing of 11-12 King Street to provide a residents' workhub at ground floor level and 6 flats above along with the construction of a new building to the rear standing between part 6 and part 9 storeys to contain 47 flats together with car and cycle parking, refuse and recycling storage and private and communal amenity spaces.

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 has come to the attention of the Trust because the development site is the former Majestic/ABC/EMD Cinema.

The Majestic opened in 1931 with a capacity of almost 1,800 and was equipped with a stage and dressing rooms as well as a café. It was said to be ornately decorated and provided high levels of comfort for audiences. It changed hands a number of times and the auditorium was sub-divided in 1972. Cinema use eventually ceased in 2002 after which it was used as a church for four years until it was badly damaged by a fire. Most of the building had to be demolished, but the Palladium-style Portland stone façade remains.

The façade makes a positive contribution to the streetscape and local character and is recognisable as a cinema or theatre, serving as a visual reminder of the site's social history and

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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significance for local people in and around Gravesend. We welcome that it will be retained, restored and brought back to use with a commercial unit on the ground floor and residential above. We have no objection to the addition of an upper floor which will be slightly set back.

We have no comment on the overall scale of development or to the landuses and mix of units proposed. We do however support retention of the historic façade. Should the development be amended or refused we would be keen to see this element retained in any future scheme.

Please contact us 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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