

Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/3118

19 August 2021

Lucy Haile
Planning and Building Control
Civic 1
Station Road
Harrow
HA1 2XY

By e-mail: duty.planner@harrow.gov.uk

Application: P/2975/21

Site: Harrow Arts Centre, 171 Uxbridge Road, Hatch End, Pinner, HA5 4EA

Proposal: Listed Building Consent: Installation Of Measures To Reduce Carbon Consumption Including Air Source Heat Pumps Solar Panels Building Management System And Pipe Lagging To Elliot Hall And Ancillary Curtilage Listed Outbuildings

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 is seeking to undertake various works at Harrow Arts Centre.

Harrow Arts Centre is a valued community and cultural asset, and is the only professional theatre in the borough. It opened in 1988 within a former school, the 500-seat main auditorium being within the old assembly hall (Elliott Hall) which is Grade II listed and built in neo-Tudor style. It also contains a smaller 120 seat 'black box' studio theatre along with studios and meeting rooms which can be used by the community and its front of house facilities within an interconnected block. Paragraph 93 of the NPPF (2021) seeks planning decisions to plan positively for facilities of this nature.

These proposals seek to implement measures to improve the theatre's sustainability, which we welcome. Specifically they would result in the installation of air source heat pumps, solar PV panels, a new efficient heating system and pipe lagging to reduce heat loss. This will also help

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**



to reduce the Arts Centre's operating costs which will help support its important role for the community.

The panels to Elliott Hall are to be located on the building's area of flat roof. This is the optimum location as it will meet the project's objective whilst minimising visual impact on the building's special character. Similarly the air source heat pumps to this building are to be located within an enclosure to the link building which reduces sensitivity and allows them to be concealed. The same approach is being applied to other parts of the complex. We note that impact on historic fabric from pipework and servicing will be minimised.

We are highly supportive of theatres, including historic theatres and those located within heritage assets, investing in environmental sustainability initiatives. For venues such as this the cost savings are particularly beneficial to their long-term viability. However such interventions within the historic environment can lead to conflict between sustainability and harm to architectural and historic significance. In this instance the applicant's approach minimises harm to the Arts Centre and its wider setting. Furthermore, with specific reference to the PV panels, they are removable thus this is a reversible change. In our view the harm from these interventions is less than substantial and is mitigated by the public benefit of improved sustainability and efficiency.

Therefore, we are supportive of the granting of listed building consent.

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

Tom Clarke MRTPI
National Planning Adviser

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