

# Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/2309

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Alex Ferguson  
Strategic Place Planning  
Aberdeen City Council  
Business Hub 4  
Marischal College  
Broad Street  
Aberdeen  
AB10 1AB

By e-mail: [pi@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:pi@aberdeencity.gov.uk)

**Application:** 211823/LBC

**Site:** His Majesty's Theatre Rosemount Viaduct Aberdeen AB25 1NT

**Proposal:** Internal alterations at levels 4 and 5, including removal of staircase, extension to mezzanine floor level, removal of bar counter in foyer bar, formation of openings in internal walls and reconfiguration of restaurant/cafe/bar areas

## **Remit:**

The Theatres Trust is the national advisory public body for theatres. We were established through the Theatres Trust Act 1978 'to promote the better protection of theatres' and provide statutory planning advice on theatre buildings and theatre use in Scotland through The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulation 2013, 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 internal alterations within His Majesty's Theatre.

His Majesty's is Category A listed, reflecting its outstanding historic and architectural interest. It has a capacity of around 1,400 and is an important touring venue serving the city and its wider catchment. It was designed by renowned theatre architect Frank Matcham, opening in 1906. Like many older theatres it lacked front of house facilities so was addressed by the addition of a glazed extension which opened in 2005.

It is this the modern extension to the theatre on which this proposal focuses, seeking internal alterations and extension of floorspace. These are to the fourth and fifth floors but actually constitute the main public entrance level from Rosemount Viaduct. Currently the fourth floor of the extension contains the box office, café area and a large staircase leading to the bar above.

## **Theatres Trust**

22 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0QL  
T 020 7836 8591 E [info@theatrestrust.org.uk](mailto:info@theatrestrust.org.uk) W [theatrestrust.org.uk](http://theatrestrust.org.uk)

**Interim Chair** Katie Town      **Director** Jon Morgan

**Trustees** Paul Cartwright, Annie Hampson, Richard Johnston, Gary Kemp, Jane Spiers, Truda Spruyt

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



The fifth floor is set back with a void above the main entrance. This proposal will take out the staircase with the fifth floor accessed from the principal staircase within the older part of the theatre. The café will also be removed. In the immediate term this additional space will better enable social distancing to be maintained for audiences undergoing ticket/entry checks and free up space for general exhibitions and other such events. The café will be integrated into a larger café/bar on the fifth floor with additional seating facilitated through infill of the void. Alongside this will be general refurbishments and a re-location of the accessible WC.

Although not explicitly stated, we assume these works are intended to provide a longer-term enhancement to the theatre's facilities and audience comfort beyond the stated objective of better enabling social distancing and queueing space in the current circumstances. This part of the building is less architecturally sensitive having been constructed in 2005, therefore we have no objection to re-arrangement and the project should provide a better food and beverage offer which can help support the wider conservation and function of the theatre.

We would note however that it should be ensured the accessible WC meets current standards, and further thought needs to be given to the adjacent WC block as users awaiting or leaving the accessible WC would have a view straight to the urinals when the door is open.

In conclusion this proposal meets its immediate objective and can provide a lasting enhancement to the theatre's facilities. 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 this representation in greater 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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