

Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/2060

28 February 2022

Mr Patrick Hopwood
Lancaster City Council
Development Management
PO Box 4
Town Hall
Lancaster
LA1 1QR

By e-mail: dcconsultation@lancaster.gov.uk

Application: 22/00120/FUL & 22/00121/LB

Site: Morecambe Winter Gardens 209 Marine Road Central Morecambe Lancashire LA4 4BU

Proposal: Erection of a detached toilet block, timber fence, and gate to the side elevation, relocation of existing portacabin with associated stairs, and creation of additional concrete hardstanding; &

Listed building consent for the erection of a timber fence to the side elevation

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:

These applications for planning permission and listed building consent have been brought to the attention of the Trust because they relate to works at the Winter Gardens, a Grade II* heritage and cultural asset. It is a priority building for the Trust as it is on our Theatres at Risk register as well as Historic England's Heritage at Risk register. We are supportive of efforts by the Morecambe Winter Gardens Preservation Trust Limited to restore and fully reopen this important building for Morecambe.

These plans would see alterations and additions within the external yard area to the east of the building just off from Bath Street. Currently this area contains a portacabin and four portaloos and is enclosed by a fence. It is proposed that the portacabin is relocated, the existing portaloos removed and a replacement larger portable 'shipping container' toilet block installed. A gas

Theatres Trust

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Chair Dave Moutrey **Director** Jon Morgan

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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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meter within this area would also be enclosed and the area surrounded by a replacement fence. These would be in place for a temporary period, envisaged to be three years.

The Winter Gardens is undergoing a wider programme of restoration, for which we have commented on other related applications in recent months. It currently has a lack of WCs for the capacity it could support which this proposal would address in the interim whilst refurbishments are carried out.

Whilst these structures are not ideal from a heritage perspective as they cause harm to the building's setting, they are located within a less sensitive area. There are also public benefits in mitigation as they will enable public use of the building pending wider refurbishment, which itself will be a significant benefit not just to the asset itself but to the town. The duration of their placement to ensure this is not permanent development can be managed by condition.

Therefore we are supportive of the granting of planning permission and listed building consent subject to condition.

Please contact us should you wish to discuss these comments in further detail.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T Clarke".

Tom Clarke MRTPI
National Planning Adviser

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