

Protecting theatres  
for **everyone**



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**Application:** 133731/FO/2022 & 133732/LO/2022

**Site:** Palace Theatre Oxford Street Manchester M1 6FT

**Proposal:** External alterations to rooftop (close to north elevation) consisting of installation of plant with associated equipment and plant enclosure screening; and

LISTED BUILDING CONSENT External alterations to rooftop (close to north elevation) consisting of installation of plant with associated equipment and plant enclosure screening. enlargement of existing vent grilles and installation of new vent grille positions in the ceiling of the Auditorium area within the building.

**Remit:**

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 regarding these applications for planning permission and listed building consent at the Palace Theatre in relation to installation of new mechanical plant with related internal alterations to facilitate improved ventilation.

There is a clear need for improvement of the theatre's ventilation and circulation of air which we are aware of having met recently with the theatre's operator. Currently due to the age and design of the building there is inadequate supply of air and as stated within the Heritage Statement the Council has requested improvements to ventilation.

**Theatres Trust**

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**Chair** Dave Moutrey **Director** Jon Morgan

**Trustees** Paul Cartwright, James Dacre, Suba Das, Stephanie Hall, Annie Hampson, Richard Johnston, Gary Kemp, Lucy Osborne, Jane Spiers, Truda Spruyt, Katie Town

The National Advisory Public Body for Theatres

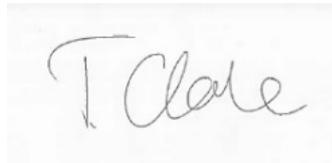
The Theatres Trust Charitable Fund co-operates with the Theatres Trust, has the same Trustees and is registered as a charity under number 274697

This will be met through installing a new plant to a flat area of the theatre's roof to its rear north-west elevation. This will consist of two air handling units and a cooling unit within a louvered enclosure, ducting and barriers to provide safe access for maintenance. Although this will rise above the existing height of the parapet this is a less sensitive elevation from a heritage perspective and there are already servicing installations in place. Therefore we consider it would not compromise the Palace's significance as a heritage asset so constitutes less than substantial harm. Irrespective of this delivering the ventilation and circulation required to support public health and to keep the theatre in safe operation so it is conserved into the future is clearly a public benefit. Neither do we consider it will undermine the character and setting of the conservation area.

There will also be some alterations within the auditorium. Some existing vents will require enlarging to facilitate the upgraded equipment and provide sufficient flow, and additional penetrations will also be required. Although this will cause some harm to historic fabric which is regrettable, more sensitive mouldings are being avoided. As above, the necessity for this project provides mitigation.

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

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



Tom Clarke MRTPI  
National Planning Adviser