

Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/2325

02 August 2022

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Development Management
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By e-mail: devcontrol@wakefield.gov.uk

Application: 22/01051/FUL & 20/01052/LBC

Site: Theatre Royal Drury Lane Wakefield WF1 2TE

Proposal: Installation of 2 heat pumps and associated pipework; & Installation of 2 external heat pumps and associated pipework on roof and internal fans and associated works

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 come to the attention of the Trust because we have been advised by the applicant of their submission. They are seeking installation of heat pumps with associated piping and alterations. The Trust is a statutory consultee as per our remit outlined above; please ensure we are directly notified of any further applications.

Theatre Royal is a Grade II* listed heritage asset, and is the smallest of the surviving theatres designed by Frank Matcham. After a period in cinema and then bingo use it was restored and reopened as a theatre in the early 1980s. It is an important historic, cultural and social asset for Wakefield, with a mixture of its own and touring productions as well as youth and community outreach programmes and opportunities for volunteering.

Theatres Trust

22 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0QL
T 020 7836 8591 E info@theatrestrust.org.uk W theatrestrust.org.uk

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

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The theatre is seeking to install heating to its stage and scene dock, currently served by a boiler which reached the end of its life six years ago. As a result casts and crew have been working in sub-optimal conditions and audience comfort has been impacted by air from the stage cooling the auditorium particularly to the front. To address this they are proposing heat pumps located to an area of flat roof to the northern elevation as a replacement. This is a means of reducing the carbon impact and improving sustainability. Theatres Trust is highly supportive of venues, including historically important theatres such as this, investing in environmental sustainability initiatives.

The works will necessitate new pipework which will be externally visible and enter into the building through the scene dock. Internally new fans will be located to the rear of the stage area with pipework following the wall as indicated within the Heritage Statement. Although this will have some impact on the building as a heritage asset, this is minimised through location in less sensitive areas. The less than substantial harm this gives rise to is mitigated by the public benefits of the theatre improving its environmental sustainability, providing an appropriate working environment and reducing its operating costs which is important in ensuring its important cultural and community programme is maintained.

It should be ensured that where there are works to make good brickwork and other fabric impacted by new insertions this is completed with appropriate and matching materials.

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

Please do not hesitate to contact the Trust should you wish to discuss this representation in greater detail.

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

Tom Clarke MRTPI
National Planning Adviser

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