

Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/1488

11 August 2022

Development & Environment
Post point 15
North Somerset Council
Town Hall
Weston-super-Mare
BS23 1UJ

By e-mail: planningsupport@n-somerset.gov.uk

Application: 22/P/1425/LBC

Site: Curzon Cinema Old Church Road Clevedon North Somerset BS21 6NN

Proposal: Listed Building Consent to add a semicircular wooden sign (marine ply) to the existing poster display boards on the Great Western Road (Eastern side) wall of the Curzon. Provision of background for a new neon illuminated 'Curzon' sign, replicating at 50% of the original 1950s Curzon Neon sign on the front (Old Church Road elevation) of 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 on this application for listed building consent at the Curzon in relation to signage.

The Curzon opened in 1922 as a cine-variety theatre incorporating an earlier cinema which was constructed in 1912. Unusually for British theatres or cinemas it was decorated by pressed metal plates as is common in North America. This is a key factor in the building's significance as noted within Historic England's listing description. The original auditorium is believed to be intact aside from box fronts and the organ; the false ceiling removed under a recent application had concealed original features such as the balcony. Although originally predominantly operated as a cinema it had stage facilities, dressing rooms, a fly gallery and grid, the latter still survives. It currently holds some live events including comedy, live music and limited theatre.

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 Curzon remains a valued community, cultural and historic asset for Clevedon, operated by a charitable trust. Paragraph 93 of the NPPF (2021) seeks planning decisions to plan positively for venues such as this.

The Curzon's east elevation to Great Western Road is relatively inactive. Although typically utilitarian in design and function, it fronts a relatively busy route into the town for vehicles as well as pedestrians. This affords opportunity for greater street presence and visibility through signage and film/show advertisements as is a common feature of these types of use. A set of four posters have been in place for some time but the venue has no branding so to an extent lacks the prominence that might be expected.

This proposal seeks to address that by adding a smaller version of its logo and 'sunburst' above the poster boards, which will be illuminated and manufactured with glass. We are supportive of this; we consider it to be sensitive to the building's significance as a designated heritage asset. Show and venue signage can also be considered an integral part of cinema and theatre character and design.

We do not consider illumination of the new addition would cause harm to the amenity of adjacent properties or impact on highway safety. Brightness can in any case be managed through condition, and the applicant has stated hours of operation will be limited to 10pm.

We therefore support the granting of listed building consent.

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you wish to discuss these comments in further detail.

Tom Clarke MRTPI
National Planning Adviser

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