

Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/2475

24 November 2022

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Economy and Place Directorate
West Offices
Station Rise
York
YO1 6GA

By e-mail: planning.comments@york.gov.uk

Application: 22/01954/FUL

Site: Joseph Rowntree Theatre Haxby Road York YO31 8TA

Proposal: Erection of temporary single-storey building to provide small indoor cafe/seating area and two additional toilets

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 temporary planning permission at Joseph Rowntree Theatre. It seeks to install a timber modular 'Garden Room' to serve as an indoor café with additional WCs and seating. The theatre sought our advice on this scheme as part of their pre-application process.

The theatre is short of front of house space which is one of the drivers of its aspirations for wider improvement and development project which it hopes to bring forward in the coming years. Like many other older theatres it also has insufficient WCs to meet the needs of audiences. Ancillary revenue from bar spend is very important for the overall viability of theatres and in supporting their arts, cultural and social offers. This is particularly critical for this theatre which is run as a charitable trust operated by the community with outreach programmes and provision for local groups. Paragraph 93 of the NPPF seeks planning decisions to plan positively for facilities such as this.

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 Garden Room will be located to the front of the theatre. In terms of possible locations we consider this the most appropriate to minimise harm to the appearance and setting of the theatre as a Grade II listed heritage asset. Whilst some harm to significance and interruption of existing views towards the theatre is generated, we consider this to amount to less than substantial harm. In mitigation, this is a reversible intervention which can be conditioned if deemed necessary to restrict future renewal. We consider the design and materials of the structure to be relatively sensitive to this location. Moreover, this proposal would help enhance the experience of audiences and allow the theatre to generate much-needed additional income to sustain it as a cultural and community asset and support efforts for a longer-term solution. Provision of additional accessible WCs will enhance the theatre's inclusivity.

Therefore in conclusion we are supportive of the granting of planning permission for this scheme.

Please contact us if we may be of further assistance or if you wish to discuss these comments 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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