

Ref.: TC/2519

13 February 2024

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Development Management
Economy Directorate
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By e-mail: planning@adur-worthing.gov.uk

Application: AWDM/0459/23

Site: Dome Cinema 22 Marine Parade Worthing West Sussex

Proposal: Internal toilet facility alterations at ground and first floor. Existing vacant space on first floor converted into additional cinema auditorium. Refurbishment of existing auditorium 2 at first floor.

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

Theatres Trust

22 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0QL

Telephone 020 7836 8591 **Email** info@theatrestrust.org.uk **Website** theatrestrust.org.uk **Twitter** @TheatresTrust

Facebook @theatres.trust **Instagram** @TheatresTrust

Chair Dave Moutrey OBE

Director Jon Morgan

Trustees James Dacre, Suba Das, Stephanie Hall, Annie Hampson, Lucy Osborne, 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

at the Dome Cinema, Worthing. It seeks to carry out internal alterations to provide an additional screen to the first floor, to refurbish the existing second screen and to alter its ground and first floor WC provision.

The Dome is a Grade II* listed heritage asset described in the Theatres Trust's database as, "the most complete example of a building of its type, and said to be amongst one of the ten finest buildings on the South Coast". It opened in 1911 with a main multi-purpose entertainment hall called the Kursaal at the lower level and a cinema called the Electric Theatre at its upper level. During the building's early years there was extensive theatre use. In the early 1920s The Kursaal was converted into the Dome Cinema and the Electric Theatre became a restaurant. The auditorium has the character of a music hall, with narrow balconies on each side and opulent plasterwork and ceiling domes. The Dome also has a stage house. By 1999 the building was in need of extensive repair and after being taken on by a local Trust and supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund it re-opened as a cinema in 2007. It hosted some live events along with providing tea rooms and function space. The Dome is a valued social, community and cultural asset.

With regards to the alterations to WCs, at ground floor level it appears that space is being optimised in order to reduce the footprint of the men's WCs and to instead provide two additional cubicles within the female block. At first floor two unisex cubicles will be converted to a male WC block, which we assume to replace provision lost on the ground floor. The additional statement submitted by the applicant suggests this area is not of historic value, therefore on that basis these works are supported in principle.

At this stage we are unable to support the other elements of this scheme because, as noted by other consultees, there is lack of sufficient detail and justification.

Paragraph 7 of guidance on the Historic Environment (2019) states that, "Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals". Paragraph 9 of the guidance and paragraph 200 of the NPPF (2023) add, "The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on its significance". As a Grade II* listed heritage asset a proper and sufficiently detailed Heritage Statement should be provided which more clearly describes the proposed works and the impact this will have on existing historic fabric and features.

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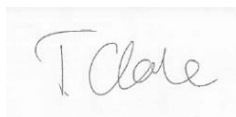
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Until such time, we cannot support the granting of listed building consent.

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



Tom Clarke MRTPI

National Planning Adviser

Theatres Trust

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