

Ref.: TC

06 March 2024

Eleanor Downs
Luton Council
2nd Floor
Town Hall
George Street
Luton
Beds
LU1 2BQ

By e-mail: developmentcontrol@luton.gov.uk

Application: 24/00157/FUL

Site: Bute Street Shoppers Car Park Church Street Luton

Proposal: Proposed mixed use development, comprising of residential units, multi-purpose music and community space, food court, commercial space, retail space, cycle hub, associated soft and hard landscaping, public realm improvements, access, sub stations and other associated infrastructure

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'.

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

Comment:

Thank you for consulting Theatres Trust on this application for planning permission at the Bute Street car park site. We have been notified because the development includes provision of a new multi-purpose live performance venue.

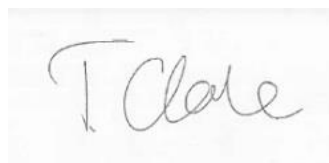
This scheme is called The Stage Project and forms part of the wider Luton Town Centre Masterplan. Alongside the proposed entertainment/performance venue it also includes residential uses, retail and commercial space and new and upgraded public realm. These comments relate entirely to the performance venue and any directly related matters; we make no comment on the wider development including mix of uses, design, heights or scale.

The Design & Access Statement notes that presently the details of this space are indicative, and therefore we cannot make detailed comment at this stage. However we welcome and support the principle of a new performance venue for Luton, assuming that its scale and anticipated programme would complement rather than compete with the town's existing offer.

It will be vital that the scheme is properly designed and acoustically separated to ensure the proposed venue and other uses particularly residential can successfully co-exist, ensuring the venue can operate without restrictions which would undermine its operations and that future residents have appropriate living conditions. It should be ensured there is sufficient volume of space, and that there are adequate front and back of house facilities.

We strongly encourage an operator for the venue to be identified at an early stage of further planning so that it is designed to meet their specific needs at the outset. We also recommend engaging a specialist consultant to guide design and function to ensure the venue is fit for purpose and viable. Please engage with Theatres Trust further as this part of the scheme moves forward.

In conclusion we supportive of the venue element of this scheme in principle but make no comment on the wider development.



Tom Clarke MRTPI

National Planning Adviser

Theatres Trust

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