

Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/1043

08 December 2021

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By e-mail: planning@torbay.gov.uk

Application: P/2021/1167

Site: The Pavilion Vaughan Road Torquay TQ2 5EQ

Proposal: Repair works & alterations to include exposure of structural steel frame, concrete terraces with embedded steel structure, faience facade & further investigations into damage caused by water penetration.

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:

This application for listed building consent has come to the attention of the Trust because it is seeking repairs and restorations at the Pavilion.

The Pavilion is a Grade II listed heritage asset which opened in 1912 as a concert hall. A stage house extension was added to the east side of the building in the 1930s when it was adapted for broader theatre use. Internally it featured lounges and café with oak panelling and elegant plasterwork. There was a curved balcony, stained glass and potted palms with open-air promenade and tea garden. Theatre use continued until 1976 at which time most of the interior was removed for conversion to an ice rink with further alterations in 1986 for a shopping arcade. However, we believe some plasterwork to have been retained.

Externally much survives; the Pavilion was constructed in Doulton's white Carrara enamelled stoneware tiles and featured an impressive central copper-covered dome topped with a life size

Theatres Trust

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The National Advisory Public Body for Theatres

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figure of Britannia. This was complemented by smaller domes on each side of the entrance surmounted by copper figures of Mercury. Fine cast ironwork in Art Nouveau style edged the steps to the promenade deck and the octagonal 'Raj style' summerhouses.

The Pavilion has now been vacant and in a deteriorating condition for some time. This is demonstrated by the Building Condition Report which shows several instances of water ingress and saturation, cracks and open joints, and evidence of significant corrosion. Internally there is damage to fibrous plasterwork, removal of fabric and significant corrosion. If left unresolved and untreated this risks total loss of the asset.

As a heritage asset and important landmark for Torquay the Trust is keen to see works progress which would enable full restoration and facilitate opportunities for the Pavilion to be brought back to sustainable active use. There is compelling justification for these works and we welcome the Council's investment.

It is noted that a photographic recording of the building was made during the 1986 conversion, it is recommended that, if permitted, a condition be included to update the recording prior to, and as works are carried out, to ensure that evolution of the Pavilion is formally recorded and to note any other original features that may be revealed as works proceed.

The nature of this project necessitates extensive exposure. It will be important that the building and any openings are fully protected as committed to in the Heritage Statement. We suggest that due to the nature of this project the appointment of suitably experienced contractors is secured by condition. We also suggest inclusion of a recording condition to update the previous 1986 photographic record with details of these works and to include any additional discoveries that may be revealed by surveys and investigations.

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

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

Tom Clarke MRTPI
National Planning Adviser

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