

Protecting theatres for everyone



Ref.: TC/9006237

09 February 2022

Mr James Mountain
Planning & Building Control
LH Box 5
Loxley House
Station Street
Nottingham
NG2 3NG

By e-mail: development.management@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Applications: 22/00081/PFUL3

Site: 92 Lower Parliament Street Nottingham NG1 1EH

Proposal: Development including the following: Replacement external stair on front elevation
Installation of external lift shaft on front elevation Replacement windows Creation of roof terrace
area General refurbishment works associated with use of the site as studio/theatre space

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 has come to the attention of the Trust because it is seeking alterations at Nonsuch Studios.

Nonsuch Studios is a valued arts and cultural venue which includes a theatre and performance space along with studios for rehearsals and classes, meeting space and recording and broadcasting facilities. Its programme includes smaller-scale theatre, comedy and film showings. It opened in 2018 and has become an important part of Nottingham's varied cultural offer. Paragraph 93 of the NPPF (2022) seeks planning decisions to plan positively for this type of use, as it contributes to the social and cultural well-being of local people as well as helping to attract people into the city. We submitted comments in support of the building's change of use for these purposes in 2018.

This proposal seeks a number of refurbishments and minor extensions to enhance the studio's offer and to make the venue accessible. This is welcomed, as lack of access to the first floor for

Theatres Trust

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Interim Chair Katie Town **Director** Jon Morgan

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wheelchair users and those with reduced mobility is something we highlighted in our previous comments and we encouraged future options to be considered. This will be addressed by insertion of a lift adjacent to the main entrance, with the shaft also providing an opportunity to vastly increase the studio's visibility and branding. This should improve the prominence and awareness of Nonsuch Studios thus helping draw visitors to the building. Although slightly out-of-scale with the building there is existing additional height set back containing the tank room and we consider the public benefits of providing accessibility offset any negative impacts.

Internal works will see Studio 2 on the ground floor reduced in size with a new café going into the released space. This will further broaden the facilities available and provide an additional source of income to support the wider cultural programme. At first floor Studios 3 and 4 will be merged into a larger space. This will increase capacity and flexibility of the theatre space as well as enable provision of an accessible WC with platform lift. Again this is welcomed.

Alongside this will be thermal and waterproofing works which will help improve the building's efficiency and sustainability and reduce running costs. Part of the roof will be made accessible for building users.

To conclude we are supportive of this project and would recommend the granting of planning permission.

Please contact us if we may be of further assistance.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T Clarke".

Tom Clarke MRTPI
National Planning Adviser

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