

Ref.: TC/1242

9 February 2024

Viv Pearson
Planning
Warrington Borough Council

By e-mail: devcontrol@warrington.gov.uk

Application: 2023/01495/FUL

Site: Pyramid Arts Centre, Warrington, WA1 1BL

Proposal: Internal remodelling and external renovations to the Pyramid Arts Centre building. External works include replacement of existing cladding, replacement of existing flat roof finishes, and a new double door and loading platform to the rear of the Exhibition Hall (Museum Street facade).

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:

This application has come to the attention of Theatres Trust because it is seeking to undertake alterations to the Pyramid Arts Centre, specifically replacement cladding, roof finishes and a new door and loading platform to the venue's Exhibition Hall. There is a corresponding listed building consent covering internal alterations to which we have responded under separate cover.

Theatres Trust

22 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0QL

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

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Chair Dave Moutrey OBE

Director Jon Morgan

Trustees James Dacre, Suba Das, Stephanie Hall, Annie Hampson, Lucy Osborne, Truda Spruyt, Katie Town

The Pyramid Arts Centre opened in 2002, utilising the Grade II listed County Court building and neighbouring former Inland Revenue office with a modern extension. It is an important arts and cultural venue for Warrington and its wider catchment, providing a 200-seat studio theatre, a large exhibition hall, dance studios and meeting rooms. It sits within the Palmyra Square Conservation Area.

The external works covered by this application will see like-for-like replacement of cladding in order to provide better thermal performance, and arrest damage from water ingress. This centres on modern elements of the building, and therefore does not impact on historic fabric. On a similar basis will be replacement of flat roof finishes. There will also be a new door to the rear of the exhibition hall in order to make loading and removal more efficient. Again this is a less sensitive part of the building. There will be infilling of a high-level window to the east wall of the exhibition hall to allow for acoustic lining to be installed which is improving acoustic separation between the Arts Centre's venues. Similarly we support this intervention, which is reversible and will improve the venue's function.

These works will not harm the special character of the more sensitive former County Court, or detract from the character and significance of the conservation area. They will result in improved energy efficiency and operational benefits for the Arts Centre.

We therefore support the granting of planning permission.

Please contact us should you wish to discuss these comments in further detail.



Tom Clarke MRTPI
National Planning Adviser

Theatres Trust

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