

Ref.: TC/3809

8 May 2025

Planning Department
The Woolwich Centre
35 Wellington Street
London
SE18 6HQ

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

Application: 25/0580/F

Site: BOROUGH HALL, ROYAL HILL, GREENWICH, LONDON, SE10 8RE

Proposal: Retrospective planning permission for a Change of Use of first floor from Dance Studio and Event Space (Use Class Sui Generis) to a Mixed use Dance Studio and Event Space and Place of Worship (Use Class Sui Generis) and proposed change of use of ground floor and first floor from Dance Studio and Event Space to a Mixed Use Dance Studio and Event Space and Performing Arts College (Sui Generis).

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

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Chair Dave Moutrey OBE

CEO Joshua McTaggart

Trustees Vicky Browning OBE, Anna Collins, James Dacre, Liam Evans-Ford, Stephanie Hall, Annie Hampson OBE, Tracy Ann Oberman, Lucy Osborne, Saratha Rajeswaran, Truda Spruyt, Michèle Taylor MBE, Katie Town

The Theatres Trust is the national advisory public body for theatres. The Theatres Trust Charitable Fund supports the work of The Theatres Trust, has the same Trustees and is registered as a charity under number 274697

Comment:

This application for retrospective planning permission has come to the attention of Theatres Trust because it is seeking to regularise change of use to a mixed use event space, dance studio, performing arts school and place of worship.

Borough Hall is a significant theatre and performance venue for the borough, and a priority case for Theatres Trust. It is currently on our national Theatres at Risk Register on account of its historic and architectural significance, it being closed since 2018 and being in need of some refurbishment and maintenance to bring it up to modern standards. It is a Grade II listed heritage asset, significant for its design inspired by the architecture of Dutch modernist architect W.M. Dudok and his Hilversum Town Hall in particular. We consider there to be realistic need and potential for it to be returned to theatre or other compatible performance use, and are keen to see it brought back to active use.

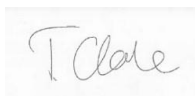
On that basis we welcome this application and that parts of the building have already been re-opened.

The proposed plans show there would be no physical alteration to the building or its internal layout. The proposed uses are compatible with a theatre building and are largely related; the place of worship use is restricted to Sundays and the operator is known to us as they also run services from other active theatres and performance venues including the Dominion in London's West End, Fairfield Halls in Croydon and the Rep Theatre in Reading.

We continue to believe that a return to full dedicated theatre use is possible in future, but in the meantime this constitutes a sensitive and compatible use of this asset.

We support the granting of (part retrospective) planning permission.

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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