

Ref.: TC/686

17 July 2025

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Civic Centre
Southampton
SO14 7LY

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

Application: 25/00756/LBC

Site: Mayflower Theatre Commercial Road Southampton SO15 1AP

Proposal: Listed building consent sought for internal alterations to replace the flying grid system

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 for listed building consent was brought to the attention of Theatres Trust. It seeks to replace the fly grid at the Mayflower 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

The Mayflower Theatre is a Grade II listed heritage asset, designed by W. and T.R. Milburn. It is the largest theatre in the south of England outside of London. After being adapted to a cinema in the 1940s, Southampton City Council purchased the building after its closure in the 1980s and leased it at a peppercorn rate to a charitable trust who reverted it back to a theatre. It became a success, attracting big names and notable touring West End shows. The theatre is an important cultural venue for the city, attracting visitors from a wider catchment into the city as well as helping to meet the cultural needs of local people. Paragraph 98 of the NPPF seeks planning decisions to plan positively for facilities of this nature. The Mayflower has undergone previous improvement and development, and there is a current scheme for an additional extension to provide new rehearsal/studio spaces and improve back of house functions.

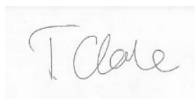
The needs and technical requirements of producers and touring shows have evolved over time and that is reflected by previous adaptations and alterations to the grid. The flying grid no longer provides the optimum loading and standards required for the theatre to remain competitive.

Paragraph 4.2 of the Heritage Statement indicates the grid is not unique in its design and form, and the Mayflower is not present on a survey of sensitive backstage equipment undertaken in 2009 by Association of British Theatre Technicians for Theatres Trust.

On that basis we raise no objection to the undertaking of this project. It is important for the theatre's ongoing operation and conservation that it is able to attract the shows and events which enable it to remain competitive and to meet the needs of its audiences.

We support the granting of listed building consent.

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



Tom Clarke MRTPI

National Planning Adviser

Theatres Trust

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