

Ref.: TC/2872

5 February 2026

Laura Neale
Development Control
Communities and Place
The Council House
Corporation Street
Derby
DE1 2FS

By e-mail: developmentcontrol@derby.gov.uk

Application: 26/00042/OUT

Site: Former Assembly Rooms Market Place/34 Full Street/Tenant Street Derby DE1 3AH

Proposal: Outline planning application (with all matters reserved save for access) for a phased, mixed-use development, comprising a hotel (Use Class C1) with ancillary uses, an office building (Use Class E) with flexibility for ground floor and upper floor commercial uses (Use Class E and Sui Generis), and a flexible commercial, leisure and cultural building incorporating flexibility for the following uses: commercial, business and service uses (Use Class E), community, education and non-residential institution uses (Use Class F1), drinking establishments, film and performance space, conference / function space, and / or a live music venue (Sui Generis), as well as public realm and landscaping, highways works, parking, servicing, and all other associated works including the demolition of 34 Full Street and associated structures.

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

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

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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:

Thank you for consulting Theatres Trust on this application for outline planning permission. The proposed scheme seeks a mixed use development located on the site of the existing Assembly Rooms and neighbouring car park.

The Assembly Rooms have been closed since 2014 following a fire which damaged the plant room and also impacted the adjoining car park. Since that time Derby has been without provision for large-scale theatre and performance, other than a very limited programme at the Derby Arena. This is compounded by the closure of the Guildhall which is still ongoing. As a result local audiences are having to travel to other centres meaning footfall and spend is leaking from the city.

There is an existing consent for demolition of the Assembly Rooms, subject to conditions. We would prefer to see the Assembly Rooms retained and refurbished as there are both heritage and environmental arguments in favour of this, not least the carbon impacts of demolition and construction. However, if this is demonstrably unfeasible we do not object to the principle of replacement development.

This proposal is currently an illustrative masterplan. It is predominantly a flexible creative and leisure scheme with employment space and a hotel. The community building includes a library and the 'performance' provision appears to be a flexible community hall. There is limited scope for this to provide a meaningful theatre offer, therefore the replacement development falls outside of our remit. As such we cannot comment on the overall design, height/massing or the unit mix.

We continue to urge the council to engage with us and to prioritise bringing forward a permanent replacement large-scale theatre in the city. As set out within previous comments, there are also various options for interim provision.

Although we have expressed neither support nor objection to these plans, we consider it essential that demolition of the Assembly Rooms does not take place until such time as a full detailed planning consent is in place and there is developer and operator commitment to the replacement scheme coming forward.

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Theatres fit for the **future**



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

Tom Clarke MRTPI

National Planning Manager

Theatres Trust

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