

Ref.: TC/1954

9 April 2026

Emma Fibbens
Planning Applications Team
Thanet District Council
PO Box 9
Cecil Street
Margate
CT9 1XZ

Application: L/TH/26/0181

Site: Winter Gardens Fort Crescent Margate Kent CT9 1HX

Proposal: Application for Listed Building Consent for proposed internal investigative works including creation of trail pits, opening of ceilings, floors and wall and inspection of building servicing routes

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:

Thank you for consulting Theatres Trust on this application for listed building consent at Margate Winter Gardens. It seeks to undertake investigative works in advance of an anticipated programme of refurbishment and alteration to facilitate its return to use. We have been engaged on this scheme by the applicant; a site visit with full tour of the building was undertaken in July 2025.

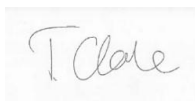
The Winter Gardens have been closed since August 2022 when its previous operator withdrew, although its programme post-opening after the lockdowns of 2020 and 2021 was infrequent. The complex is a Grade II listed designated heritage asset within the Margate Conservation Area. It is a significant venue for Margate and one we are keen to see restored and reopened.

The purpose of this proposal is to enable the opening up of various areas of structure and fabric. This will provide an understanding of construction, materials and condition, and in some cases to assess loading. The objective of this is to inform the nature and extent of interventions required to bring the building back to use and of a standard that can viably and sustainably meet the needs of its users.

Whilst these interventions result in varying degrees of less than substantial harm within the locations identified for assessment, with reference to paragraph 215 of the NPPF (2024) this is considered necessary to support necessary progression towards reopening. This constitutes a significant public benefit.

We therefore 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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