

Ref.: TC/1845

12 June 2026

Eleanor Ridge
Sheffield City Council
Development, Environment & Leisure
Howden House
1 Union Street
Sheffield
S1 2SH

Application: 26/01334/LBC

Site: The Lyceum Theatre Tudor Square Sheffield S1 2LA

Proposal: Removal and replacement of balcony seating, guard rails and removal of central stair aisle

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, Louisa Harris, Mark Johnston, Adam Knight, Tracy Ann Oberman MBE, Lucy Osborne, Saratha Rajeswaran, Michèle Taylor MBE, Katie Town

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Comment:

This application for listed building consent was brought to the attention of Theatres Trust because it is seeking to undertake internal alteration within the Lyceum Theatre, specifically to replace and alter the seating arrangement at balcony level within the auditorium with associated works.

The Lyceum is Grade II* listed heritage asset. It has particular significance as the only complete surviving theatre outside of London by renowned theatre architect W.G. R Sprague. It was built in 1899 replacing the City Theatre which had been constructed only six years beforehand, itself replacing an earlier theatre of 1879 which was destroyed by fire. The Lyceum was converted for bingo use in the 1960s and faced various threats of demolition until it was purchased in a deteriorated condition 1985 and restored with financial support from Sheffield City Council. Internally it has a fine auditorium with Rococo plasterwork and unusual side-wall treatment articulated by broad pilasters forming bays containing bow-fronted boxes. Since its reopening in 1990 the Lyceum has again become a significant theatre for the city and its wider catchment, with a programme of major touring shows and artists as well as in-house productions by the wider Sheffield Theatres group.

We undertook a site visit to the Lyceum in October 2025.

Historic plans show that the current seating arrangement is not the original one; presently it is provided within two blocks punctuated by a central aisleway. The seating and guardrails were installed as part of the late 1980s/1990 restoration works and are now at the end of their lives which impacts on audience comfort and do not meet current standards. Sightlines are also impacted. The principle of addressing this is supported.

It is proposed that the seating layout will be altered to provide seating in continuous rows with aisleways to each side. This better reflects original design intention. Furthermore, it is the most central seats which are most attractive to audiences and performers dislike playing to central gaps in the audience. This change therefore generates both heritage and operational benefits, and is reversible. There have been other current and recent projects of this nature within historic theatres.

The guardrails being removed are also modern insertions and therefore do not contribute towards significance.

We therefore support the granting of listed building consent.

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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 representation in greater detail.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T Clarke".

Tom Clarke MRTPI

National Planning Manager

Theatres Trust

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