

Ref.: TC/1140

2 July 2026

Gemma Paterson
Epsom and Ewell Council
Town Hall
The Parade
Epsom
Surrey
KT18 5BY

By e-mail: planningsupport@epsom-ewell.gov.uk

Application: 26/00572/FUL

Site: Epsom Playhouse Ashley Avenue Epsom Surrey KT18 5AL

Proposal: Replacement of air handling condensers with six heat pumps and four condenser units housed within acoustic panelling

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 planning permission has come to the attention of Theatres Trust because it is seeking to undertake development at Epsom Playhouse, specifically the installation of air source heat pumps and condensers and the removal of existing air

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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handling equipment.

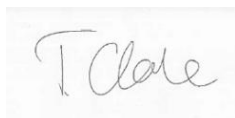
Epsom Playhouse is a 400-seat theatre which opened in 1984, built as part of a shopping centre development. Alongside the main auditorium is a smaller studio. It has a mixed programme of local and professional touring theatre, comedy, live music and other events. It is an important cultural facility for Epsom and its wider local catchment. Paragraph 98 of the NPPF (2024) seeks planning decisions to plan positively for facilities such as this.

We support efforts by theatre owners and operators to invest in their buildings, particularly where this contributes to improving environmental sustainability. These proposals will see the removal of older and inefficient gas-fired boilers, air handling units and related infrastructure (including condensers and supply ducts) located to the theatre's roof. In the broadly the same locations, along with an additional position to the north-west corner, air source heat pumps will be installed. There will also be the addition of louvred enclosures.

This building is not a designated, and not considered a non-designated, heritage asset. Nonetheless, we do not consider this project to cause negative impact on the host building or its wider setting. There are substantial public benefits in this proposal because it will support the theatre's operations, reduce its operating costs and enhance audience comfort and the working environment for performers and staff. Paragraph 167 of the NPPF gives significant weight to supporting energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings.

We therefore support the granting of planning permission.

Please contact us if you wish to discuss this further or if our understanding of the site is incorrect.



Tom Clarke MRTPI

National Planning Manager

Theatres Trust

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