

Ref.: TC/2233

29 May 2024

Jennie Townsend
Bury Council
Town Hall
Knowsley Street
Bury
BL9 0SW

By e-mail: development.control@bury.gov.uk

Application: 70639

Site: The Art Picture House, Haymarket Street, Bury, BL9 0AY

Proposal: Listed building consent to create four staff WC/changing cubicles in an undeveloped space on the first floor from new stud walls and the refurbishment of the existing staff room; Addition of a condenser to the rear elevation

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:

Thank you for consulting Theatres Trust on this application for listed building consent at the Art Picture House, which seeks to undertake some internal alterations to the

Theatres Trust

22 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0QL

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Chair Dave Moutrey OBE

Director Jon Morgan

Trustees James Dacre, Suba Das, Stephanie Hall, Annie Hampson, Lucy Osborne, Truda Spruyt, Katie Town

building's first floor, refurbishment of the staff room and the installation of a condenser to the rear elevation.

The Art Picture House is currently in use as a pub. It was built in 1923 to replace the Art Picture Hall, which was a theatre within a converted Baptist chapel. The Theatres Trust database describes the current building as, "An elaborate and complete example of an early 1920s cinema, exceptionally theatrical in its plan and decoration". It was built with stalls, a pit and a circle with two boxes either side of the proscenium. At first floor level was a cafe known as the Oriental or Indian Lounge. It had a large stage and full-height fly tower. Architecturally the front elevation is symmetrical in five bays with the centre crowned by stepped pedimental parapets in white faience. The outer bays were crowned by elaborate arches but these have been replaced with stepped parapets. The ground floor has also been altered with modern tiling. There is a round-arched central window with 'Art Pictures' written to the left and 'Art Cafe' to the right. Internally the foyer was small with marble stairs and gilded metal balustrade with 1920s Roman style decoration. The Art Picture House is unusual in that the projection box is to the rear of the stalls. The auditorium is richly decorated in an Edwardian-Baroque style with a barrel vault ceiling and a raised and domed ceiling over the rear of the balcony. The Art Picture House is a Grade II listed heritage asset.

After closing in 1965 the building was largely used as a bingo club until it was converted for bar use in the 1990s. It is currently a pub.

The rear of the building is typically utilitarian with existing servicing installations, and is therefore less sensitive. We therefore raise no objection to the installation of the condenser from a heritage perspective.

With regards to alterations within the staff room, it is stated there will be just refurbishment with replacement of the existing sink and no new walls inserted or original walls impacted. The proposed first floor plan reflects this. However, the staff room detail plan is different. This shows a stud wall will be inserted and attached to non-original walls and Elevation B notes the stud wall will be in front of historic plasterwork. The floorplan on this document shows a void separating them. This discrepancy should be clarified, as should the significance or otherwise of the historic plasterwork. If there is an unheated void there is a risk of build-up of moisture which could cause deterioration.

Within the vacant space the lobby area will be demolished, this is non-original and shown in an image within the Heritage Statement. The Heritage Statement also

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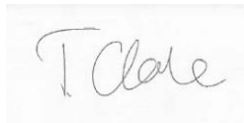
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shows decorative pasterwork to the wall within the undeveloped space but this is not indicated on the proposed locker room detail plan. Direction A-A shows and states no historic plasterwork and the remaining walls show stud walls with voids in front. Again this should be clarified.

We have no objection to the external installation of a condenser and no objection in principle to developing staff facilities internally, although the discrepancies identified should be clarified and if necessary for the Heritage Statement to be amended to explain and justify any harm to historic fabric.

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



Tom Clarke MRTPI

National Planning Adviser

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