

Ref.: TC

1 July 2024

Christian De Grussa
Canterbury City Council
Military Road
Canterbury
CT1 1YW

By e-mail: planning@canterbury.gov.uk

Application: CA/24/00813

Site: 28 Arkley Road Herne Bay Kent CT6 5SL

Proposal: Display of an internally illuminated fascia sign with individual neon lettering measuring 10.6m x 0.4m for a temporary period from 29 June 2024 to 21 September 2024.

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 has come to the attention of Theatres Trust because it is seeking change of use to a theatre.

The application site is an existing hall which has been owned and operated for some

Theatres Trust

22 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0QL

Telephone 020 7836 8591 **Email** info@theatrestrust.org.uk **Website** theatrestrust.org.uk **Twitter** @TheatresTrust

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Chair Dave Moutrey OBE

Director Jon Morgan

Trustees Vicky Browning OBE, Anna Collins, James Dacre, Suba Das, Liam Evans-Ford, Stephanie Hall, Annie Hampson, 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

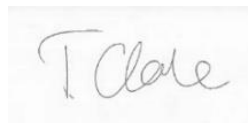
time by the Herne Bay Musical Theatre Society (HBMTS), a local amateur theatre group. This has been used for the group's rehearsals as well as youth theatre activities and is also available for wider community use. Due to a lack of availability of suitable sites to host their productions, they have commenced utilising the hall as a theatre. This application would formalise theatre use.

We are supportive of this application. Whilst theatres can be considered main town centre uses, this venue is of very small scale reflecting its amateur/community operation. As such, with reference to Policy TCL11 of the Canterbury District Local Plan, this does not constitute a major facility. Around the country many such small and amateur theatres are similarly located away from town centres, for example the nearby Herne Bay Little Theatre. The site is already owned by the HBMTS and is utilised for theatre-related activities. The long-established landuse is already within community use (likely F2(b)/former D1), and theatres of this type can similarly be considered as community facilities. We do not consider the scale of this theatre would give rise to significant adverse impacts; we note there is a commitment to cease activities by 10pm and if necessary this can be managed by condition. As such we do not consider there to be conflict with the principles of Policy TCL6 and therefore the proposed theatre use can be appropriate at this location.

Additionally, paragraph 97 of the NPPF (2023) seeks planning decisions to plan positively for community and cultural facilities and to ensure that existing facilities are able to develop. Facilitating formal theatre use at this site will support the ongoing role and operation of HBMTS as an important local organisation which enables the participation of local people in theatre and the arts.

In conclusion, we are supportive of the granting of planning permission.

Please contact us if we may be of further assistance or should you wish to discuss these comments in further detail.



Tom Clarke MRTPI

National Planning Adviser

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