

Ref.: TC/3142

30 August 2024

Harriet Allen
West Berkshire Council
Development and Planning
West Berkshire Council
Market Street
Newbury
RG14 5LD

By e-mail: planapps@westberks.gov.uk

Application: 24/01273/FUL

Site: Watermill Theatre Bagnor Newbury RG20 8AE

Proposal: Installation of 6 freestanding electric charging points for use by staff and visitors to the theatre.

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 install electric charging points at the Watermill Theatre.

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

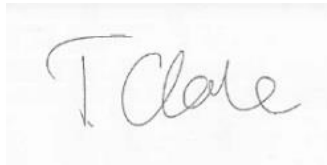
The Theatres Trust is the national advisory public body for theatres. The Theatres Trust Charitable Fund supports the work of The Theatres Trust, has the same Trustees and is registered as a charity under number 274697

The Watermill is a Grade II listed heritage asset which was converted into a repertory theatre in 1967. It has produced a number of shows and supports youth theatre and educational opportunities. It is therefore an important and valued cultural asset for the local area, also drawing in visitors from further afield. Paragraph 97 of the NPPF (2023) seeks planning decisions to plan positively for facilities of this nature.

The rural location of the Watermill means that much of its audience, performer and staff travel will be by private vehicle. We welcome this proposal as it will help promote more sustainable travel options and the reduction of carbon emissions through supporting electric vehicles. The charging points are modest in scale but are in any case to be located within the car park in a location which is less sensitive in heritage terms. Nonetheless with reference to paragraph 208 of the NPPF we consider these installations to constitute a public benefit.

We therefore support the granting of planning permission.

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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