

Ref.: TC/3597

13 December 2024

Planning & Strategy
Waverley Court
4 East Market Street
Edinburgh
EH8 8BG

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

Application: 24/05642/LBC

Site: George Square Theatre 32 George Square Edinburgh EH8 9LH

Proposal: The proposal is to create an external stair on the east side of the building from the first floor to ground floor level, stair finishes to match stair on the west side of the building. This is to allow safe egress from the building in the event of a fire as current egress for the east side of the building is via an unprotected route, the main foyer area. The proposal also includes the creation of temporary waiting spaces outside the lecture theatre on the second floor.

Remit:

Theatres Trust is the national advisory public body for theatres. We were established through the Theatres Trust Act 1978 'to promote the better protection of theatres' and provide statutory planning advice on theatre buildings and theatre use in Scotland through The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulation 2013, 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 **Twitter** @TheatresTrust

Facebook @theatres.trust **Instagram** @TheatresTrust

Chair Dave Moutrey OBE

Director Jon Morgan

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

Comment:

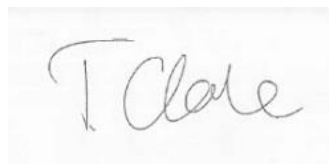
This application for listed building consent has come to the attention of Theatres Trust because it is seeking to add an external staircase to the east elevation of the Gordon Aiken Lecture Theatre to match an existing stair on the opposite side of the building.

The Gordon Aiken Lecture Theatre is Category B listed for its group significance and as an important example of Scottish Modernism representing the aspirations of key architects of the time which remains in good condition and quite unaltered. It opened in 1970 as the George Square Theatre, having been built for both live theatre and university lectures. It is an important venue for the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, and is frequently used for filming. It was renamed in 2018 to commemorate Gordon Aikman who had been a graduate who raised money to fund research into motor neurone disease.

There have been previous consents for similar schemes. The new staircase replicates the design approach on the western elevation. We consider these works to generate limited harm to the building's architectural and historic significance, and its wider setting. There is public benefit in enhancing the safety of users through better means of egress.

We therefore support the granting of listed building consent.

Please contact us if you wish to discuss these comments in further detail.



Tom Clarke MRTPI

National Planning Adviser

Theatres Trust

22 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0QL

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

Facebook @theatres.trust **Instagram** @TheatresTrust

Chair Dave Moutrey OBE

Director Jon Morgan

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