

Ref.: TC/379

11 April 2024

Tom Bradfield
Reading Borough Council
Civic Offices
Bridge Street
Reading
RG1 2LU

By e-mail: tom.bradfield@reading.gov.uk

Application: 240173

Site: Broad Street Mall Broad Street Reading

Proposal: Part-demolition of existing retail units, car park and service areas, demolition and rebuild of car park ramp, and construction of a residential-led, mixed-use development fronting Queens Walk and Dusseldorf Way, including all necessary enabling and alteration works required.

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 planning permission which seeks redevelopment of the Broad Street Mall. This will result in a major

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

The National Advisory Public Body for Theatres. The Theatres Trust Charitable Fund co-operates with the Theatres Trust, has the same Trustees and is registered as a charity under number 274697

residential-led mixed-use development. We have been notified because the site is within close proximity of the Hexagon Theatre.

The Hexagon is a major theatre and live events venue for the town, also serving a wider regional catchment. We consider it to be an architecturally significant theatre of its time and a non-designated heritage asset. The Hexagon has been granted permission recently for an extension of its own to provide a new studio theatre and other facilities.

Our concern is entirely on the basis of the impact of development on the Hexagon. We make no comment on the principle of the proposed development, or on its height, scale or mix of uses and tenures unless there is a direct effect to the Hexagon.

We consider that for the most part there is sufficient separation between the Hexagon and the the proposed development so as not to give rise to issues of conflict. Whilst the tower to the western side of the development is closer to the Hexagon, we note that reasonable measurements from a typical performance have been undertaken as part of the Noise and Vibration Study and have concluded that noise breakout is at an acceptable level.

We note the Hexagon has a storage area which requires reprovision, and a site area has been identified for this. We suggest that safeguarding of this space is conditioned.

As a general comment we consider that public realm and landscaping works associated with this scheme will positively improve the journey to and from the venue for audiences and visitors, as well as overall legibility and accessibility.

In conclusion, we raise no objection to development.

Please engage with Theatres Trust further should plans be subsequently revised.



Tom Clarke MRTPI

National Planning Adviser

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