



Report to Planning Committee 6 August 2026

Business Manager Lead: Oliver Scott – Planning Development

Lead Officer: Julia Lockwood, Senior Planner (Conservation)

Report Summary			
Application No.	26/00785/LBC		
Proposal	Proposed internal safety works consisting of: - New Catwalks on Box Tops - New Catwalk Platform & Ladder to the stage left fly floor - Replacement Stage Safety Fire Curtain		
Location	Palace Theatre 16 - 18 Appleton Gate Newark On Trent NG24 1JY		
Applicant	Mr Stuart Sheardown - Newark and Sherwood District Council	Agent	Miss Yasmin Kelly – Studio-G Associates Ltd
Web Link	26/00785/LBC Proposed internal safety works consisting of: - New Catwalks on Box Tops - New Catwalk Platform & Ladder to the stage left fly floor - Replacement Stage Safety Fire Curtain Palace Theatre 16 - 18 Appleton Gate Newark On Trent NG24 1JY		
Registered	28 May 2026	Target Date Extension of time	23 July 2026 7 August 2026
Recommendation	Approve, subject to conditions.		

This application is being presented to the Planning Committee in line with the Council's Scheme of Delegation as the applicant is Newark and Sherwood District Council.

1.0 The Site

- 1.1 The application site is occupied by the Palace Theatre, a prominent Grade II listed building situated on Appleton Gate. It is physically connected by a modern extension to the National Civil War Centre (a Grade II* building comprising the former Tudor Hall and Headmaster's House of the Old Magnus School). The two buildings provide interconnecting services.

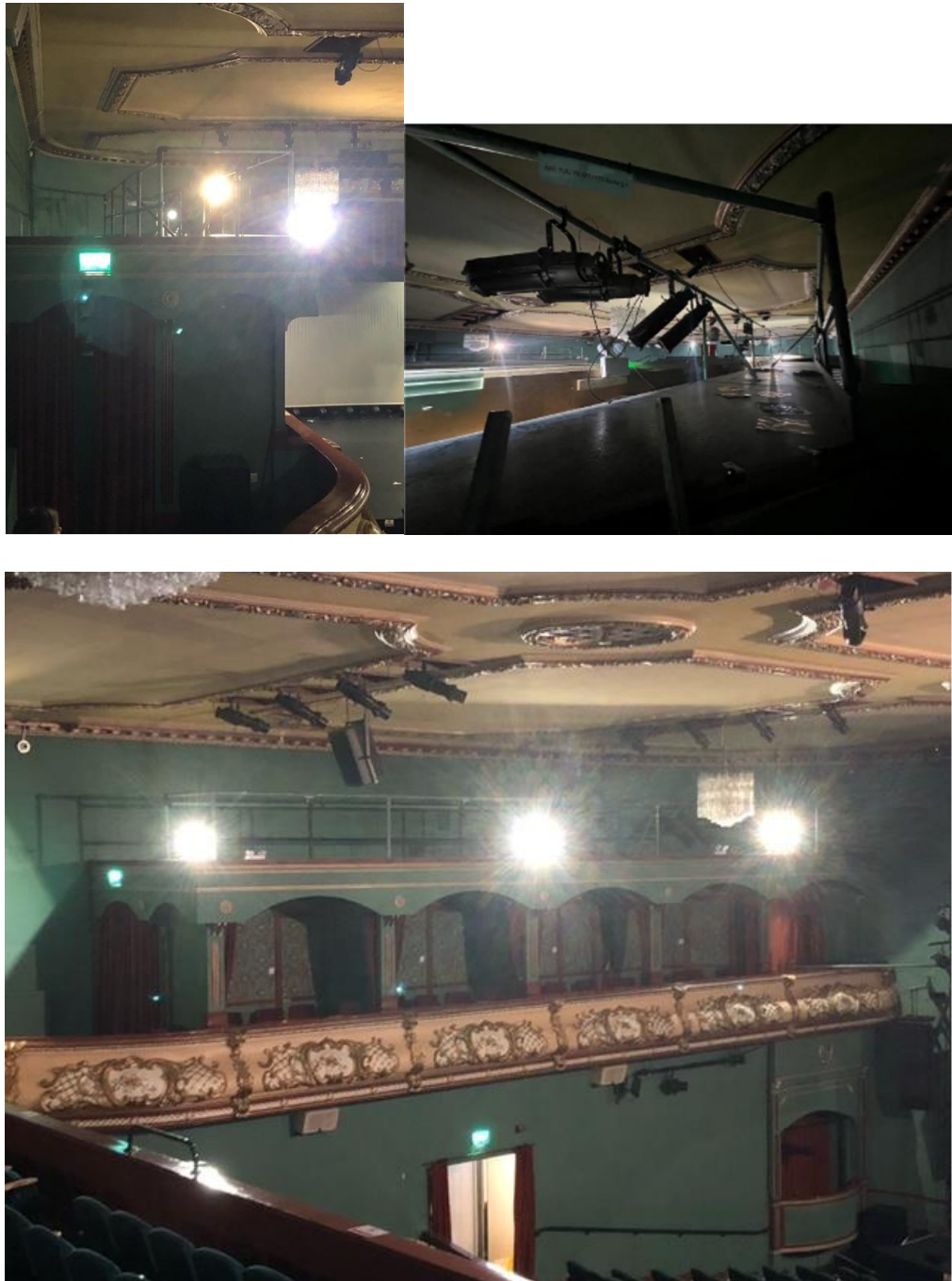
- 1.2 There are numerous 18th century Grade II listed buildings along Appleton Gate, both opposite the Theatre and on the same side of the road leading towards the town centre. The site is also within the designated Newark Conservation Area.

2.0 Relevant Planning History

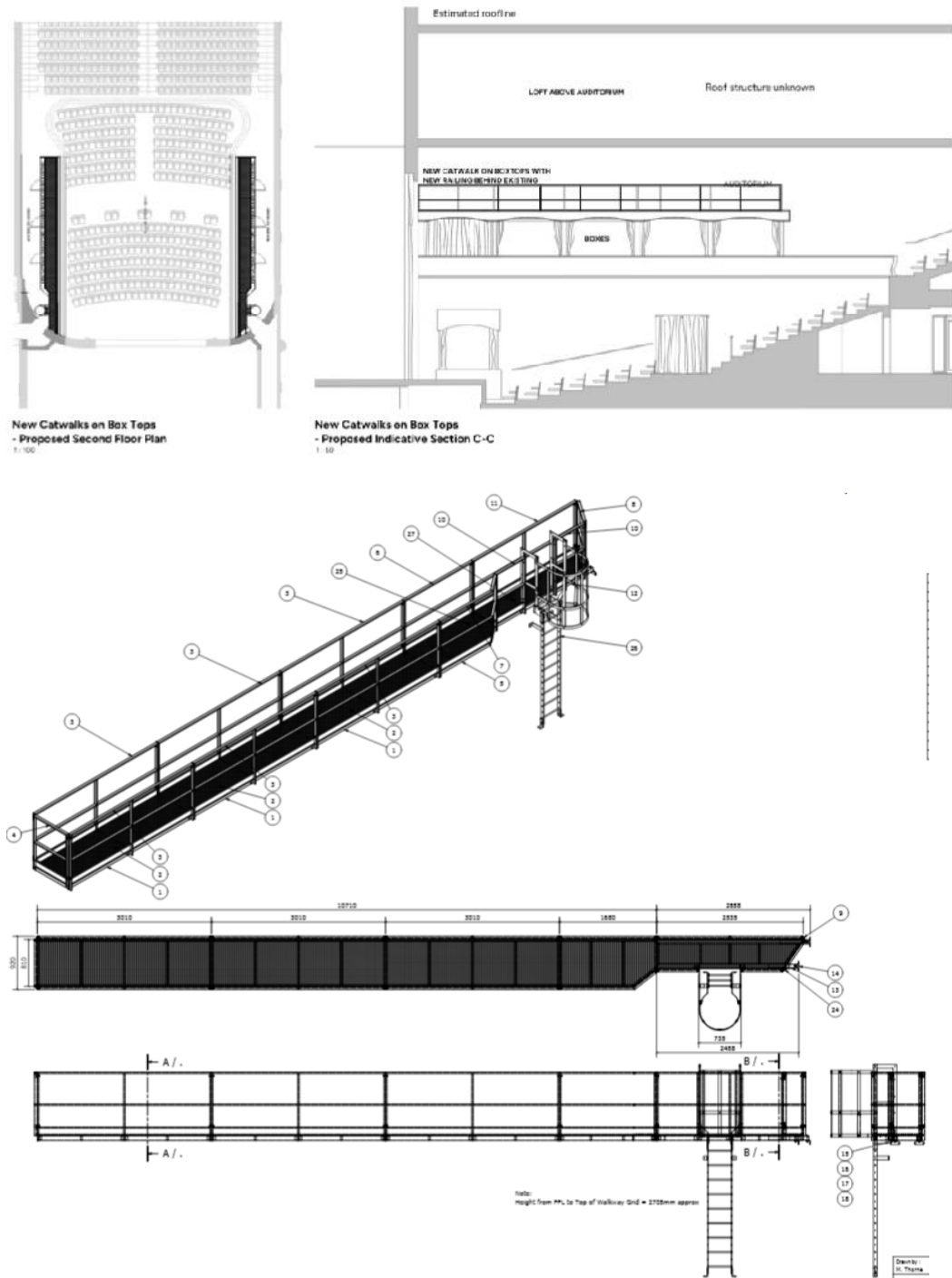
- 2.1. Numerous applications have been submitted for new/upgrading/repair works and below are the list of applications submitted this year alone:
- 2.2. 26/00961/LBC - Proposed internal lighting works and associated electrical upgrades, pending consideration.
- 2.3. 26/00503/LBC - A painted mural situated on one of the external walls to the courtyard, pending consideration, included within this Committee agenda.
- 2.4. 26/00704/LBCLDC - Application for Certificate of Lawfulness for Proposed Works to a Listed Building to fit hooks to walls in order to drape ropes across, Certificate issued 22.06.2026
- 2.5. 25/02069/LBCLDC - Application for Certificate of Lawfulness for Proposed Works to a Listed Building for replacement of some of the existing ironmongery including push bars, escutcheon plates, locksmith, and door handles with new brass plated ironmongery, approved 30.01.2026.
- 2.6. 25/02009/LBCLDC - Certificate of Lawfulness for Proposed Works to a Listed Building for removal of existing thermostat and relocation of new thermostat to side of stage, approved 19.01.2026

3.0 The Proposal

- 3.1 The application seeks listed building consent for a number of internal safety works at the theatre comprising the following:
- New catwalks on box tops. On each side balcony at upper floor level of the theatre are five private boxes. On top of these boxes and running along their length are already modern industrial looking railings and the proposal is to retain the existing and insert within it, a new catwalk, with metal walkway, railings front and back with mid rails and toe boards and fixed metal ladder to be finished in matt black. The catwalk is also extended slightly to serve existing lighting rigging areas. Presently there are movable ladder arrangements. These areas are only accessed by technical staff in order to control the spot lighting onto the stage. The railings would be partially visible within the main auditorium above the boxes and the ladder would be hidden behind an existing screen.

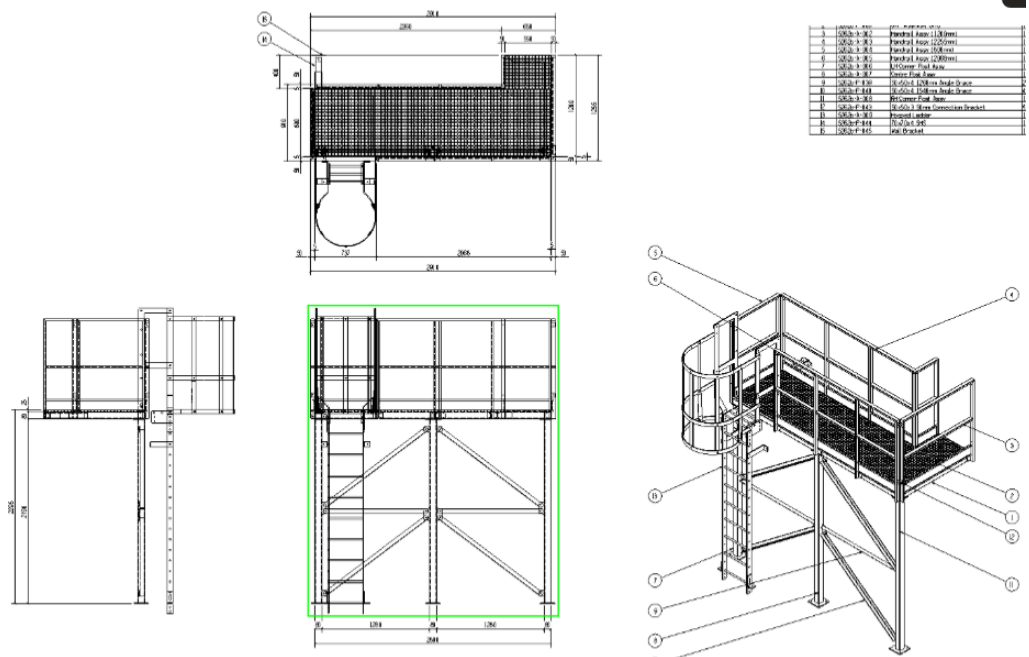
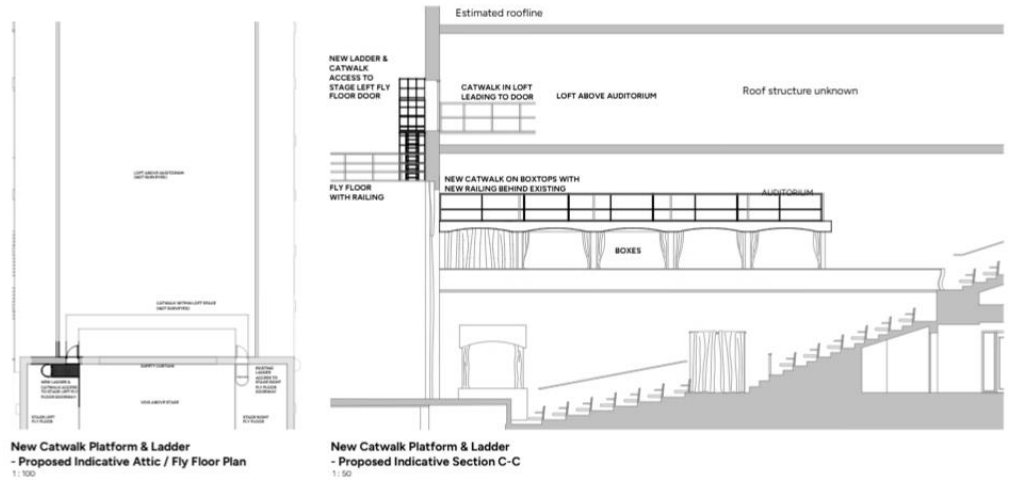


Photographs of existing catwalks above boxes.



Drawings of new catwalks to be positioned above boxes.

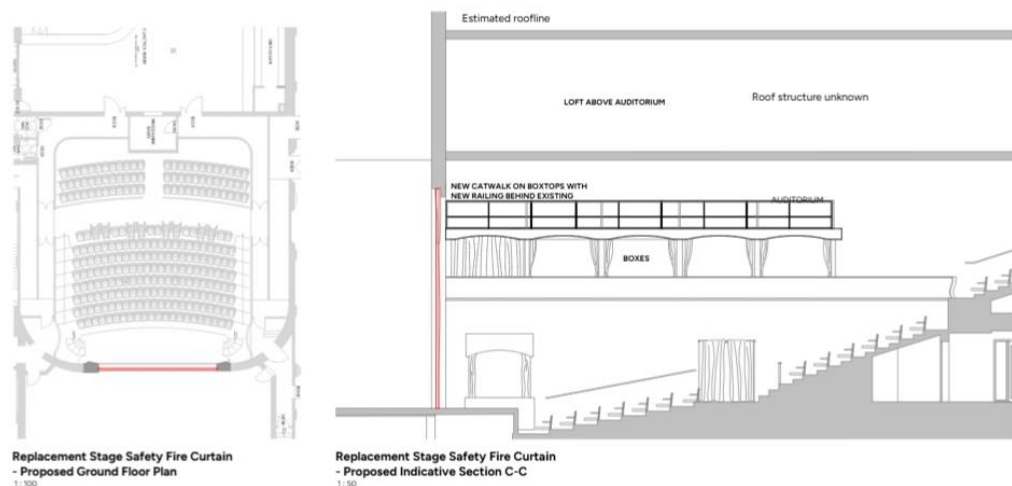
- Provide a new metal catwalk platform and ladder to the stage left fly floor behind the proscenium, to provide access to the existing roof level access door. There is already a ladder to the stage right fly floor. This is backstage and would not be visible to the public.



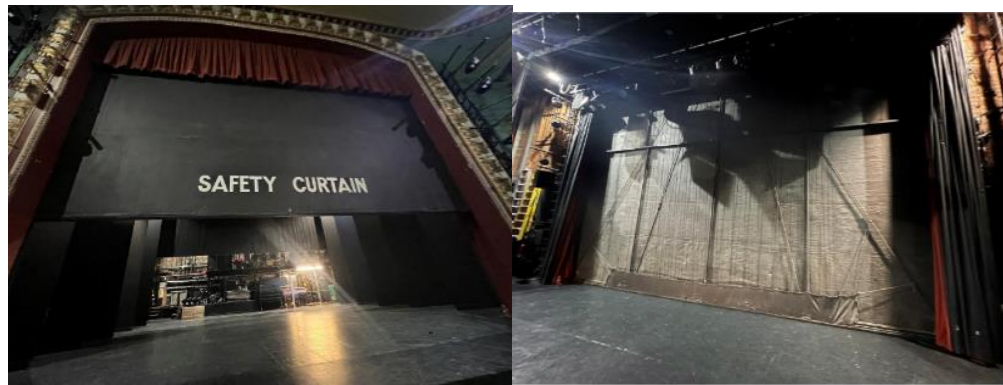


The above left photograph shows the existing door that the new catwalk/ladder would serve and the top right is a photograph of the existing ladder on the right hand side fly floor.

- Replace the stage safety fire curtain and associated lifting equipment and replace with new. The replacement curtain would replicate the existing appearance and finish as viewed from the auditorium.



The above drawing shows position of stage safety curtain in red.



Photograph of existing stage safety curtain, front and rear.

3.2 Documents assessed in this appraisal:

- Application Form
- Site Location Plan
- OS and Block Plan (Drawing No: 26013/SGA/00/SL/DR/A/EX101 Rev P1)
- Existing Basement Floor Plan (Drawing No: 26013/SGA/20/BG/DR/A/EX200 Rev P1)
- Existing Ground Floor Plan (Drawing No: 26013/SGA/00/SL/DR/A/EX201 Rev P1)
- Existing First Floor Plan (Drawing No: 26013/SGA/20/01/DR/A/EX202 Rev P1)
- Existing Second Floor Plan (Drawing No: 26013/SGA/20/02/DR/A/EX203 Rev P1)
- Existing Roof Floor Plan (Drawing No: 26013/SGA/20/03/DR/A/EX204 Rev P1)
- Existing Elevations and Sections 1 of 3 (Drawing No: 26013/SGA/21/XX/DR/A/EX300 Rev P1)
- Existing Elevations and Sections 2 of 3 (Drawing No: 26013/SGA/21/XX/DR/A/EX301 Rev P1)
- Existing Elevations and Sections 3 of 3 (Drawing No: 26013/SGA/21/XX/DR/A/EX302 Rev P1)
- Box Walkway Assembly (Stage Left) (Drawing No: 5262a-A013)
- Box Walkway (Stage Right) (Drawing No: 5262a-A001)
- Access Walkway Assembly (Drawing No: 5262b)
- New Catwalk Platform & Ladder to the stage left fly floor (Drawing No: 26013/SGA/20/ZZ/DR/A/30201 Rev P1)
- New Catwalks on Box Tops (Drawing No: 26013/SGA/20/ZZ/DR/A/30200 Rev P2)
- Replacement Stage Safety Fire Curtain (Drawing No: 2601/SGA/20/ZZ/DR/A/30202 Rev P1)
- Heritage Impact Assessment (inc. Design and Access Statement)

4.0 **Departure/Public Advertisement Procedure**

- 4.1 Occupiers of 21 properties have been individually notified by letter. A site notice has also been displayed near to the site and an advert has been placed in the local press.
- 4.2 Site visit undertaken on 8 June 2026.

5.0 Planning Policy Framework

- 5.1. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act') provides a presumption in favour of the preservation of Listed Buildings and preservation or enhancement of the character and appearance of Conservation Areas.
- 5.2. The Courts have accepted that Section 54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 does not apply to decisions on applications for Listed Building Consents, since in those cases there is no statutory requirement to have regard to the provisions of the development plan. However, Local Planning Authorities are required to be mindful of their duty under the legal framework in determining such matters, i.e. Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and take account of the following other material considerations:
 - National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (as amended Feb 2025)
 - Planning Practice Guidance (online resource)
 - Historic England (2016) Making Changes to Heritage Assets: Advice Note 2
 - Newark and Sherwood Amended Core Strategy (adopted 2019) – Core Policy 14: Historic Environment
 - Allocations and Development Management DPD (adopted 2013) – Policy DM9: Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment
 - Draft Amended Allocations and Development Management Plan DPD – Policy DM9: Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment

6.0 Consultations and Representations

Please Note: Comments below are provided in summary - for comments in full please see the online planning file.

Statutory Consultations

- 6.1. None.

Town/Parish Council

- 6.2. Newark Town Council – No objection.

Representations/Non-Statutory Consultation

- 6.3. Theatres Trust – the theatre is an important cultural facility for the town and its wider catchment. They welcome the number of applications and continued focus and investment in the theatre, its facilities and its up-keep. With regard to the box catwalk structures, ladders and access to the fly floor, although modern interventions these are likely to be acceptable as they relate to improving safety compliance around lighting and backstage technical infrastructure access. This provides for better safety and working conditions for technical staff. For the replacement safety curtain and new lifting equipment will meet current safety standards and replicate the appearance of the existing. The submission states the curtain is approaching the end of its life

although there is no indication about its significance and if it is significant whether other options have been explored to retain the curtain, if original.

- 6.4. No comments have been received from any local resident.

7.0 Comments of the Business Manager – Planning Development

- 7.1. The key issue is the impact on the special historic and architectural interest of the listed building.
- 7.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) promotes the principle of a presumption in favour of sustainable development and recognises the duty under the Planning Acts for planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The NPPF refers to the presumption in favour of sustainable development being at the heart of development and sees sustainable development as a golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking. This is confirmed at the development plan level under Policy DM12 'Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development' of the Allocations and Development Management DPD.
- 7.3. As the application concerns the designated heritage asset of a listed building, section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the 'Act') is particularly relevant. Section 16(2) requires the decision maker in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works, to *"have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses."*
- 7.4. Core Policy 14 of the Amended Core Strategy states that the District Council will seek to secure the continued conservation and enhancement of the character, appearance and setting of the District's heritage assets and historic environment, in line with their identified significance as required in national policy. Paragraph 212 of the NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of the designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be) and this is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. Policy DM9 of the Allocations and Development Management DPD states that all development proposals concerning heritage assets will be expected to secure their continued protection and enhancement, contribute to the wider vitality, viability and regeneration of the areas in which they are located and reinforce a strong sense of place.
- 7.5. The importance of considering the impact of new development on the significance of heritage assets is expressed in Part 16 of the NPPF. Paragraph 8 of the Framework states that protecting and enhancing the historic environment is part of achieving sustainable development.

Summary of Significance of Heritage Asset(s)

- 7.6. The Palace Theatre (Grade II) was built in 1920 for Miss Emily Blagg, a well-known local builder. The building was altered in the mid-20th century and was again altered and restored in 1988. The building is constructed of brick with a stucco front façade and stucco dressings. There are hipped and mansard slate roofs as well as artificial slate roofs. The main entrance has a dentilled cornice and 2 square piers. Round towers with cupolas and onion domes are situated on the 3 corners located at the front of the building, visible from the main street. The building houses a theatre and formerly 2 shops (evident from the timber shopfronts still facing the street frontage). The significance of the building is derived from its architectural features and detailing, historic association with Emily Blagg, and its historic and continued use as a theatre.
- 7.7. The Palace Theatre makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of Newark Conservation Area and is a valued attraction used by the local and wider community.

Impact on the Special Interest of the Listed Building

- 7.8. The proposed new catwalks would add modern visual clutter to the rigging already in place above the boxes. The works would unlikely be visible to the majority of the seats within the auditorium but it would be seen as the seats get higher to the rear and from the boxes on the opposite sides. The small extension of the catwalk closest to the stage on each side would increase the visual impact of the modern frame but into an area where there already modern lighting rigging. It is not currently clear how the structures would be fixed in place and additional clarification has been sought on this and will be reported to Members at Committee. Mitigations include positioned within existing rigging, designed to remain visually lightweight and finished in matt black and required to provide improved safe access for technical staff to the theatre rigging and maintenance of it.
- 7.9. The position of the new fixed ladders would be located to the rear of a walled screen at the far end (nearest the stage) of the accessway to the boxes within a largely existing operational area, which would be predominantly hidden from public view. Only the very top of the ladder (including the safety hoop) where it appears above the existing wall screen and joins the catwalk is likely to be visible from some limited areas of the auditorium. A lockable access hatch would prevent unauthorised access. Removal of the existing unsafe temporary ladder arrangement and works to prevent unauthorised public access will help address important health and safety risks.
- 7.10. The new catwalk platform and ladder to the stage left fly floor is confined to the backstage operational area behind the proscenium and would result in limited intervention into historic fabric. The proposal addresses existing unsafe access arrangements to roof level and improves staff safety and operational compliance.
- 7.11. The removal of the existing fire curtain and lifting equipment constitute alteration to long standing theatre operational fabric, however, the existing equipment is reaching the end of its operational life and contain asbestos based materials. Visually there would be little change as the curtain itself would be appear identical to the existing

one and would preserve the established character of the stage opening. The replacement significantly improves fire safety, operational reliability and future maintenance capability as well as modern compliant safety systems.

- 7.12. The proposals comprise internal safety improvements intended to support the continued safe operation and long-term use of the theatre whilst seeking to preserve its historic and architectural significance. Whilst designed for health and safety in mind, rather than being visually attractive, where works are visible within the auditorium, the proposals have remained largely visually recessive and subordinate and mitigated through the use of appropriate finishes, positioning and matching appearance. The locations of fixings need to be carefully considered within the auditorium and are therefore proposed to be conditioned.
- 7.13. As such, it is considered that the proposals, which could be fairly easily reversed, would not result in any harm to the overall historic and architectural special interest of the Palace Theatre and ensures continued safe and viable operation of the listed theatre building for ongoing public use.

8.0 Implications

- 8.1. In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations officers have considered the following implications; Data Protection, Equality and Diversity, Financial, Human Rights, Legal, Safeguarding, Sustainability, and Crime and Disorder and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

8.2. Legal implications - LEG2627/1492

Planning Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report. A Legal Advisor will be present at the meeting to assist on any legal points which may arise during consideration of the application.

9.0 Conclusion

- 9.1. In compliance with Section 16 of the Act, special regard should be given to the desirability of preserving the listed building. Although the proposed works represent modern interventions, it is considered that they would result in no harm and would preserve the special historic and architectural interest of the Palace Theatre Listed Building.
- 9.2. The proposed works would also comply with Core Policy 14 of the Amended Core Strategy and Policy DM9 of the Allocations and Development Management DPD and the guidance within the NPPF, and it is therefore recommended that the works be approved, subject to conditions.

10.0 Conditions

The works to which this consent relates shall be begun no later than three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: In accordance with Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

02

The works hereby approved, for proposed internal safety works, shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and associated documents:

- Application Form
- Site Location Plan
- OS and Block Plan (Drawing No: 26013/SGA/00/SL/DR/A/EX101 Rev P1)
- Box Walkway Assembly (Stage Left) (Drawing No: 5262a-A013)
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- Heritage Impact Assessment (inc. Design and Access Statement)

Reason: To ensure that the works take the agreed form envisaged by the District Planning Authority when determining the application and thus result in a satisfactory form of works.

03

Prior to the installation of the new catwalks above the boxes within the auditorium, hereby approved, full details of the number, positioning and method of fixings shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The catwalks shall be installed using only the agreed details.

Reason: To preserve the architectural special interest of the listed building.

Informatives

01

The Listed Building Consent is granted in strict accordance with the approved plans and specifications contained in this application. It should however be noted that:

- a) You and your agent or any other person responsible for implementing this consent should inform the Local Planning Authority immediately of any proposed variation from the approved plans and ask to be advised as to the best method to resolve the matter, as any unauthorised works undertaken could constitute a criminal offence under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and could be liable for enforcement action.

b) The owner and/or developer is advised that the proposed works may require approval under the Building Regulations. Any amendments to the hereby permitted scheme that may be necessary to comply with the Building Regulations must also be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in order that any planning and listed building implications arising from those amendments may be properly considered.

02

Any damage caused by or during the course of the carrying out of the works hereby permitted should be made good within 3 months after they are complete. All new works unless specified on the approved plans and works of making good, whether internal or external, should be finished to match the adjacent work with regard to the methods used and to material, colour, texture and profile.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Application case file.

Committee Plan - 26/00785/LBC

