

ALEXANDRA THEATRE MEDIA RELEASE

11th September 2023

Theatre rejuvenation takes major step forward with committee approval for plans

Arun District Council are delighted that their proposals for the rejuvenation of Alexandra Theatre were unanimously approved by the Planning Committee on 6th September 2023.

The planning application was recommended for approval by the Council's planning officers, and the committee members resolved to approve the application, granting officers delegated authority to conclude matters.

The planning application received a large level of support from the local community including groups such as the Bognor Regis Regeneration Board, Bognor Regis Town Council, The Theatres Trust, The University of Chichester and the Bognor Regis Business Improvement District. The scheme involves the partial demolition and extension of the theatre and various other improvements. The front-of-house area is set to be replaced with an extension for an improved foyer area, 3 refurbished studios and 2 new performance studio spaces and a café / bar area with associated seating.

The approved planning application will provide a significantly improved visitor offer for Bognor Regis as one of England's premier coastal tourist destinations. The increased seating capacity, new floorspace and catering / bar facilities will contribute to the local economy and tourist offer on the seafront.

Arun District Council has been working in partnership with Arun Arts to deliver a state-of-the-art theatre. Further details and updates on the proposals can be found at the dedicated project website: www.regisrejuvenation.co.uk.

Neil Taylor from Arun District Council says: *"We are thrilled with the decision of the Planning Committee to grant permission for the rejuvenation of Alexandra Theatre. Our proposal is the first step in making Bognor Regis a prime location for the local community and visitors. We are pleased to have worked with the local community and local groups and we are thankful to those who have showed their support."*

Notes to editors:

The submitted planning application for the theatre rejuvenation includes the following elements:

- Refurbishment of the main auditorium, to include improved sightlines, more legroom, displacement air systems and new technical infrastructure;
- 2700sqm of arts / cultural floorspace, including 1455sqm of new and reprovisioned floorspace;
- Additional seat capacity in the main auditorium, rising to 386 seats;
- A fully accessible double height foyer / exhibition space with improved bar and café facilities, connected by two passenger lifts;
- Inclusion of a new dedicated space in the foyer area for use as an on-site pop up art gallery and display space; with the added facility for this in any of the studios when required ensuring an ever evolving and changing art display subject to interested external providers;
- Five new airy studios with sprung floors and technical facilities. Some of these will be performance studios with staging and seating. All the studios will have audio / visual connection to the main auditorium, allowing access for larger audiences (up to c. 730 seats) to keynote performances;
- A striking contemporary and transparent façade, spilling out on the new Place Saint Maur des Fosses.

ENDS.