

The Planning Inspectorate

COMMENTS ON CASE (Online Version)


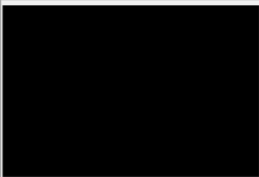
Please note that comments about this case need to be made within the timetable. This can be found in the notification letter sent by the local planning authority or the start date letter. Comments submitted after the deadline may be considered invalid and returned to sender.

Appeal Reference: APP/A1720/C/23/3336046

DETAILS OF THE CASE

Appeal Reference	APP/A1720/C/23/3336046
Appeal By	TITCHFIELD FESTIVAL THEATRE LIMITED
Site Address	Titchfield Festival Theatre 71-73 St. Margarets Lane FAREHAM PO14 4BG

SENDER DETAILS

Name	
Address	

ABOUT YOUR COMMENTS

In what capacity do you wish to make representations on this case?

- Appellant
- Agent
- Interested Party / Person
- Land Owner
- Rule 6 (6)

What kind of representation are you making?

- Final Comments
- Proof of Evidence
- Statement
- Statement of Common Ground
- Interested Party/Person Correspondence
- Other

YOUR COMMENTS ON THE CASE

As an attendee of Titchfield Festival Theatre I have read with interest the reasons for the Enforcement Notice and can't help but think a big point is being missed and obvious solutions being overlooked.

Taking each point of the Enforcement Notice of 29th December 2023 my comments are:

Point A - public transport around the local area is insufficient to serve ANY of the local theatres properly. If I was going to Fareham Live I would STILL drive. Trains don't run late back to Swanwick. Bus timetables to Whiteley are laughable. So whether I'm visiting TFT or Fareham Live or Mayflower or Kings, I would drive.

Point B - the worry that other borough centres may be adversely affected. Titchfield Festival Theatre is NOT in competition with Fareham Live or other venues locally. Whilst they all offer access to the arts to the community, TFT is very much a different offering. Run by volunteers and with shows performed by local unpaid amateurs. I've been to shows where lines have been forgotten, lighting cues missed. We expect that based on it being a stage where local talent can perform but importantly learn and improve. I would put it under an "education" category, a "training theatre". My own daughter performs here and she is very much learning the art of acting with a long way to go. But I shall be forever grateful that the theatre is accessible from a location, cost and "everyone welcome" point of view. We looked at the Mayflower youth theatre and it was too expensive and too far away to be viable. She's gone from being in the background cast with no lines, to having a lead role in just the short space of a few years. She has ADHD and an aspect of that is suffering huge social anxiety. She tells me that TFT is her safe place. Like a family. A place she can be herself without fear of judgement. I have read the comments on the local petition and notice mental health has been mentioned by many. Nobody needs reminding that in recent years of lockdown it was the arts that we all missed so much and we were reminded how important they are in our lives.

In contrast when I go to Ferneham Hall (now to be Fareham Live), the Kings Theatre Portsmouth or the Mayflower Theatre I am NOT expecting lines to be missed, or an amateur feel. I am expecting a professional performance and understand the ticket prices reflect that.

My daughter has auditioned unsuccessfully at Kings Theatre before so again so many children and adults would miss out on being involved if TFT did not exist.

The number of signatures on the petition prove that this theatre is very much wanted and supported, despite your Point B claiming "demonstrable need in this location". I am not sure what research was done to come to that conclusion but would urge you to reassess that statement in light of the numbers signing the petition.

So in summary TFT does NOT present a threat to Ferneham Hall as they offer different things.

Point C - acoustic insulation can be made a requirement for the Arden Theatre to be used. You can also stipulate latest finish times to avoid local residents hearing theatre goes after a certain time.

Point D - parking. I find it incredulous that a different set of "rules" appear to exist where Fareham Live, Kings Portsmouth and Mayflower all too are unable to provide sufficient parking on site yet only TFT is being told the same situation is a reason for saying the Arden Theatre cannot be permitted. What explanation can you give the community as to why different criteria is being applied to TFT than those other theatres? Knowing that TFT have additional parking at Holiday Inn / Nursery opposite secured that goes a long way to make up the shortfall on site.

It seems easy and obvious to me that you just stipulate to TFT that they cannot take more than XX number of bookings for any one night and you enforce a "cap" on numbers. They in turn might then choose not to have all 3 theatres open on the same night (unlikely they would in any case) or they know they can only sell XX % of Arden Theatre tickets to adhere to max parking capacity.

TFT can continue to stipulate and police that people are not parking in the road or blocking driveways. I went to see a show just last night and there was plenty of parking still at the nursery opposite which leads me to think that most people parked at the Holiday Inn. And paint white lines where you need to along the road if that reassures residents about them finding their driveways blocked.

TFT is a valuable asset and joy to the local community.

It brings a sense of community and belonging to many.

It makes the arts accessible to a wide local audience.

It is the only local theatre offering training as an "educational theatre" which is affordable and in a viable location (10,000+ population in Whiteley alone).

It champions amateur dramatics for those not at a professional level.

And lastly, and importantly given current economic situation for councils = It does not rely on tax payer money. You should be doing all you can to support it to flourish and thus being able to tick many educational, art and cultural boxes for the borough, knowing that it is not coming out of your coffers at all!!!!!!