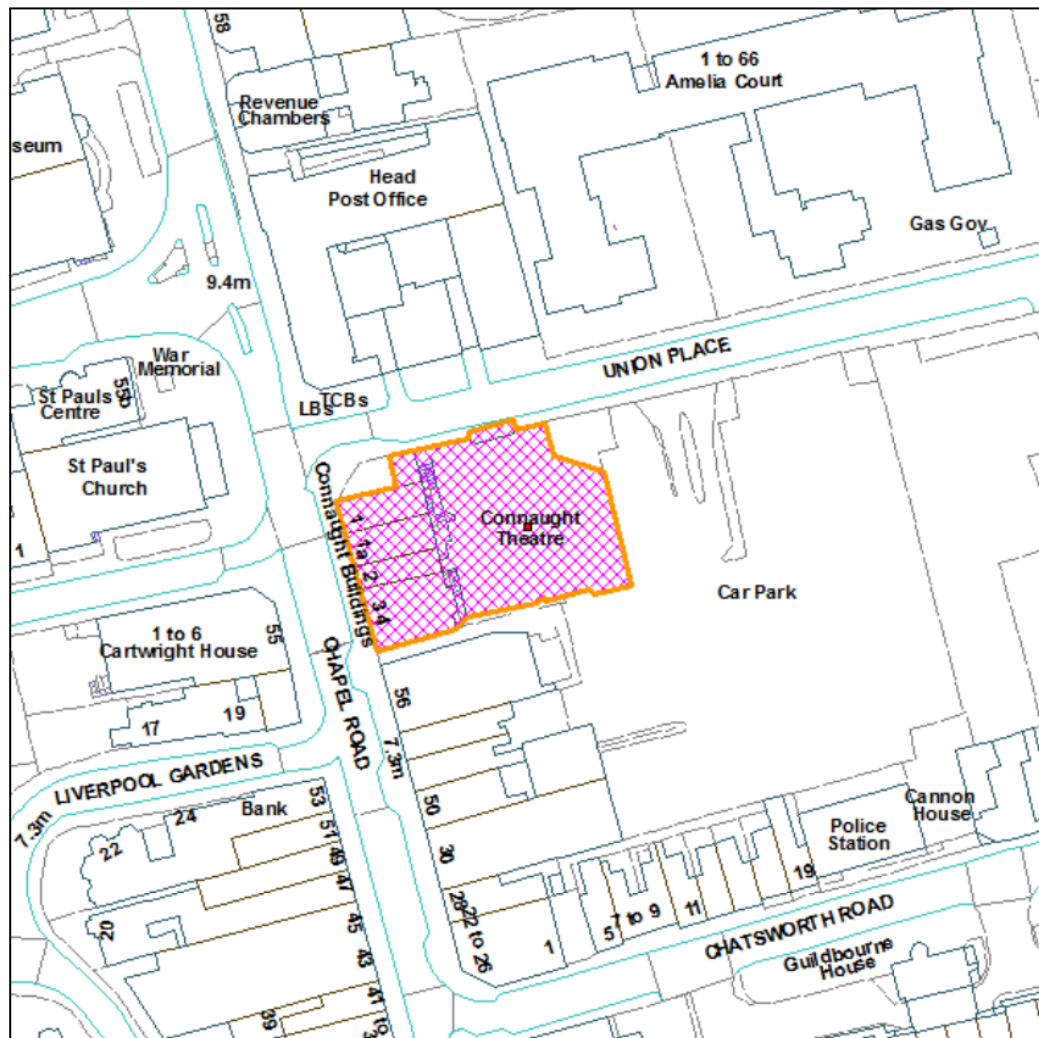


Application Number:	AWDM/1369/24	Recommendation - APPROVE
Site:	Connaught Theatre, Union Place, Worthing	
Proposal:	Replacement of single glazed windows with double glazed windows within Connaught Theatre and Connaught Buildings.	
Applicant:	Kevin Smith, Worthing Borough Council	Ward: Central
Agent:	Christopher Harding, AECOM	
Case Officer:	Rebekah Hincke	



Not to Scale

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This application is brought to the Planning Committee for determination due to the Council's ownership of the buildings.

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application seeks permission for replacement windows to all elevations of Connaught Theatre and to Connaught Buildings to its upper floors.

Connaught Theatre is located on the south side of Union Place and Connaught Buildings is adjacent to its west side. Connaught Buildings is on the corner of Union Place at the junction with Chapel Road to the west. The site is within the Chapel Road Conservation Area and both buildings are local interest buildings and identified as positive contributors to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Connaught Theatre is included in the Worthing Local Interest Study (2003) which describes the theatre building as follows:

This frontage to the theatre was added in 1935 by local architect, A T W Goldsmith. The front of the building originally sported wall tiles, which was a common feature of cinemas of this period. In the 1980s the tiles were replaced with the present render as part of a refurbishment of the whole theatre. It is an important building within the town and one of the better examples of its period, with continuous horizontal bands of glazing on the upper level and corner windows.

Double glazed units are proposed as described in the agent's supporting statement as follows:

- I. Connaught Theatre - Replace all North (front) façade elevation windows to Connaught Theatre with Crittall Corporate W20 openable windows. All timber sub-frames to be retained and repaired where necessary.
- II. Connaught Theatre – Replace East (side) and South (rear) all existing steel openable casement windows with Comar Legacy Slimline Heritage double-glazed aluminium openable casement windows.
- III. Connaught Theatre – Replace timber sash and steel Crittall South elevation windows in vicinity of fire escapes with Aluminium Fire Systems MB78-EI double-glazed aluminium fixed casement windows.
- IV. Connaught Studio - Replace first and second floor timber casement windows to North (front) elevations with Parsons Joinery double glazed timber casement windows.
- V. Connaught Studio - Replace first floor timber casement windows to West (side) elevations with Parsons Joinery double glazed timber casement windows.
- VI. Connaught Studio – Replace East elevation (side) first floor timber windows with Comar Legacy Slimline Heritage double-glazed aluminium openable casement windows.

- VII. Replace two first floor timber casement windows to Connaught Theatre Southwest and Studio Southeast elevations in alley between the buildings with Comar Legacy Slimline Heritage double-glazed aluminium openable casement windows.

Relevant Planning History

None relevant

Other applications for window alterations for Worthing Museum (AWDM/1348/24) and Assembly Hall and Richmond Room (AWDM/1340/24 & AWDM/1339/24) were considered and approved at the previous Planning Committee meeting.

Consultations

Adur & Worthing Councils:

Design and Conservation Architect: No objection to the proposals, and comments that he is satisfied with the latest details and has been in discussions with the applicants since pre-application stage.

Worthing Society: Thank you for requesting our comments regarding the aforementioned Planning Application. The works involve the replacement of single-glazed windows with a proposed double-glazed system. I have now had the opportunity to discuss the application with our Heritage Team and we have the following comments:-

The Connaught Theatre and Connaught Buildings (Studio) occupy a landmark site within the Chapel Road Conservation Area (CA) and are included on the Councils Local Interest List as buildings of historic interest.

Although not included on the Statutory List, the style of the windows, particularly in respect of the Art Deco Connaught Theatre, makes a positive contribution to the character of both buildings. Therefore Policy DM23 of the Local Plan is a relevant consideration.

Connaught Theatre – We welcome the fact that all the Crittall Art Deco style windows on the main north façade will be matched as closely as possible in colour and design, are being replaced with Crittall Corporate W20 openable windows. All timber sub-frames to be retained and repaired where necessary. This is an important aspect of the works as this elevation gives the building its distinctive character and is clearly visible within the CA.

Connaught Buildings (Studio) – West and North Elevations: The present window frames are discoloured and in poor condition, detracting from the character of the building which occupies a significant corner site. We consider the replacement double-glazed timber casement windows will be an improvement. The applicant proposes to use a joinery firm to match the existing window profiles as far as possible

Connaught Theatre and Studio (South Elevation): We consider the south facing elevations of the buildings are important historically as the profile charts the change from the original Picturedrome to the Art Deco theatre. It is proposed to replace the existing windows with aluminium frames. The Society suggests these works offer the opportunity to replace the existing sash windows with timber-framed double-glazing.

We have noted the points in the Design and Access Statement regarding Policy DM16 of the Worthing Local Plan and the desirability of improving Energy Performance and meeting the ongoing challenges of climate change.

SUMMARY

In principle, we are supportive of this programme of works to refurbish and extend the long term use of the windows and sustainability of the buildings. We have noted that the applicant's architect has made considerable efforts to source materials of good design to match the character of the original windows. However, where we do digress is the inclusion of aluminium windows as stated above. Perhaps consideration can be given to reviewing this aspect of the proposal.

Representations

None received.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

Planning Practice Guidance

Worthing Local Plan 2020-2036 (2023): DM5, DM16, DM24

Chapel Road Conservation Area Appraisal

Relevant Legislation

The Committee should consider the planning application in accordance with:

Section 38(6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 that requires the decision to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) provides that the application may be granted either unconditionally or subject to relevant conditions, or refused. Regard shall be given to relevant development plan policies, any relevant local finance considerations, and other material considerations

Section 73A and also Section 72 Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which require the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the appearance of the Conservation Area.

Planning Assessment

It is considered that the main issue for this application is consideration of the impact of the proposals on the significance of the buildings and on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Visual amenity and impact on the conservation area

The Connaught Theatre and Connaught Buildings are buildings of local interest and whilst not listed buildings they are within the conservation area and as such are undesignated heritage assets.

Connaught Theatre and Connaught Buildings are both prominent buildings, readily visible from the surrounding streets and adjacent car park, with particularly prominent frontages onto both Union Place and Chapel Road. Traditional windows and their glazing make an important contribution to their significance.

The Design, Access, and Heritage Statement outlines that the works are required to improve the energy efficiency of the buildings, with benefits from increased thermal and noise insulation as well as reduced running costs and improved comfort of users.

The proposals have been the subject of pre-application discussions with the Council's Design and Conservation Architect. The approach has been to try to replicate the windows on the Union Place and Chapel Road frontages but taking a balanced judgement on the impact on the non-designated heritage asset by allowing some flexibility elsewhere over differences in window styles and types where required.

For the theatre building, a double glazed Crittal Corporate W20 window is proposed to replace the existing Crittal windows on the front (north) elevation and side (west and east) elevations towards the frontage. These would have a similar overall appearance to the existing windows and with comparable detailing and colour to match existing. The timber subframe would be retained and repaired where necessary ensuring a sympathetic appearance on this prominent frontage.

Elsewhere to the sides (towards the rear) and to the rear elevation of the theatre building, the existing windows would be replaced with aluminium casement windows. These would be a combination of Comar Legacy Slimline Heritage double-glazed aluminium openable casement windows and, where in the vicinity of fire escapes, Aluminium Fire Systems MB78-EI double-glazed aluminium fixed casement would be installed.

Although there would be differences in the detailing of these windows and the comments from the Worthing Society in relation to the timber windows are noted, those windows at the rear would be primarily viewed from the adjacent car park site which falls outside of the Conservation Area and also seen in the context of the rear elevations of adjacent buildings in Chapel Road which contain a variety of window types and rear servicing additions. Nevertheless some attention has been given to their overall appearance in terms of proportions for those windows most visible and

where a fire rated window is not required. The colour finish would match the existing windows.

For the upper floors of Connaught Buildings fronting onto Union Place and Chapel Road, the existing timber windows would be replaced by a bespoke product from Parsons Joinery, to replicate the material, operation and finish of the existing windows. During the course of the application revised drawings with sections have been provided which demonstrate a similar appearance and comparable detailing to the existing windows.

The Council's Design and Conservation Architect is satisfied that the proposed windows would provide a similar appearance to the existing windows and has raised no objection. It is considered that their design and materials would provide a suitable alternative to the existing windows which would not cause any significant impact on the significance of the building or the character of the wider conservation area.

Sustainability

The proposed windows would improve the thermal performance of the building, which is broadly supported by the Sustainable Design Policy DM16. The statement outlines that there will be embedded carbon in the production of the replacement glazing but this would be offset by the benefits of improved thermal efficiency to reduce energy consumption.

The proposed double glazing would achieve U-values of between 1.1 W/(m²K) and 1.6W/(m²K), which is a significant improvement on the existing single glazed windows which have a U-value of 4.8 W/(m²K), and would meet the maximum U-value of 1.6W/m²K required by Part L of the Building Regulations.

Conclusion

Although the works would have some impact upon the building and conservation area, this would be limited. The NPPF requires that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Having regard to the sustainability benefits the windows would offer in improving the overall thermal performance of the buildings and in supporting the continued viable use of the buildings, whilst not causing any significant harm to the character of the building and preserving the character and appearance of the wider conservation area, the proposals are considered acceptable.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Approved Plans.
2. Standard time limit
3. Materials and finish as specified

19 February 2025

Local Government Act 1972

Background Papers:

As referred to in individual application reports

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