ECE Architecture

7524 Worthing Pavilion Theatre, Worthing

Heritage Statement

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Revision History

Issue	Date	Author	Checked	Notes
P1	12.09.24	N Wright	D MacDonald	Information



Figure 1 - WTM Pavilion Theatre Front Entrance

Introduction

This heritage statement supports the application for the installation of a wheelchair-accessible ramp at the Worthing Pavilion Theatre, a Grade II listed building. Located on the seafront, the Pavilion is an integral part of Worthing's cultural and architectural heritage. The proposed development aims to improve accessibility for disabled patrons while preserving the building's historical and architectural significance.

Historic and Architectural Significance

Worthing Pavilion Theatre, constructed in 1926, is an exemplary structure of early 20th-century seaside architecture, designed in a Neo-Georgian style with elements of Art Deco. The building, listed for its architectural value, features a grand façade with tall sash windows, classical columns, and decorative detailing. The theatre's prominent location on the Worthing Pier further adds to its cultural and historical importance.

As a public venue, the Pavilion Theatre has been at the heart of Worthing’s cultural life, hosting theatre productions, concerts, and community events. The building's layout, materials, and architectural detailing contribute significantly to its character, making it a cherished landmark in the town.



Figure 2 - WTM Pavilion Theatre Auditorium

Justification for the Proposal

The primary goal of the proposed ramp installation is to ensure that the Pavilion Theatre meets modern accessibility standards, in line with the Equality Act 2010, which mandates public buildings to be accessible to all. Currently, the lack of wheelchair access to the stalls limits the theatre's inclusivity, excluding disabled visitors from fully enjoying the venue's offerings.

The proposal has been carefully designed to balance the need for improved accessibility with the preservation of the building's historic features. By enhancing access, the theatre will continue to serve as a welcoming venue for a diverse audience, including those with mobility impairments. This aligns with the Pavilion's long-standing role as a community hub, fostering engagement and inclusivity.

Impact on the Historic Fabric

The proposed ramp will be located on the South West corner of the auditorium, where the most convenient access can be provided without disrupting the internal layout. The design of the ramp is sympathetic to the building's use and historical character. The ramp will incorporate materials that match the existing contemporary wood panel balustrade. The slope of the ramp has been designed to minimize impact on the seating capacity, and it will be positioned in a way that avoids detracting from the original architectural layout of the stalls.



Figure 3 - Proposed location of ramp

The installation will involve minimal intervention with the original fabric of the building. The construction will be reversible, meaning that should future changes be required, the ramp can be removed without permanent damage to the Pavilion's structure.

Conclusion

The proposed installation of a wheelchair-accessible ramp at Worthing Pavilion Theatre is a necessary and sensitive enhancement that addresses modern accessibility requirements while respecting the building’s architectural and historical significance. The design has been carefully considered to ensure minimal visual and physical impact on the heritage asset. By improving access, this proposal not only adheres to statutory obligations but also enhances the theatre's role as an inclusive community space, ensuring that it remains a vital part of Worthing’s cultural heritage for future generations.



Figure 4 - Proposed location of ramp