

Response from The Theatres Trust

Our Ref.: RF/3549

Planning for Growth

Thank you for your email of 6 April consulting The Theatres Trust on the recent ministerial statement 'Planning for Growth' and how it might affect the soundness of the Core Strategy.

The Theatres Trust is The National Advisory Public Body for Theatres. The Theatres Trust Act 1976 states that '*The Theatres Trust exists to promote the better protection of theatres.* It currently delivers statutory planning advice on theatre buildings and theatre use through the Town & Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (England) Order 2010 (DMPO), Articles 16 & 17, Schedule 5, para.(w) that requires the Trust to be consulted by local authorities on planning applications which include '*development involving any land on which there is a theatre.*'

The Theatres Trust appreciates that the LDF process has been far more inclusive than the old Local Plan structure as there has been more opportunity to be involved at a community or district level and welcomes the opportunity to further the awareness of cultural facilities/theatres in the UK. We did not support the Core Strategy as, in our opinion, the document did not provide adequate direction for the future of cultural facilities in the District.

The ministerial statement is not, as yet, national policy and at the present time 'growth' matters are not specified in any national planning policy other than PPS4 which should be referred to regarding positivity towards all development that creates wealth and employment especially in town centres.

While goals to achieve sustainable economic growth and jobs are already contained in most local plans across the country, the ministerial statement is giving them much more priority. However, some commentators have suggested that the Chancellor's moves in the recent Budget to dismantle parts of the planning system to boost economic growth undermine the localism agenda. This could put local councillors on planning committees in a dilemma particularly if faced with a development that is opposed by local groups but would have resulted in jobs and growth.

However these issues should not affect the soundness of the Core Strategy.

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