

CONSULTATION & DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

4.0

4.1 SCHEME CONSIDERATIONS

Design Brief

SPPARC was approached by YC Saville Theatre Limited and invited to explore how the former Saville Theatre could be adapted to its former theatre use and include a hotel, while being restored after many years of operating as a cinema.

A series of feasibility studies were explored with the client, looking at various use arrangements and a range of scales for each. Due to the nature of the building's format, along with its Grade II listing status, it was deemed most appropriate to explore the hotel use being positioned within and above the existing building, with the theatre positioned below.

These elements of the brief, from the varying uses to the existing and new-build structures, have all been designed to work together and complement each other as a cohesive scheme proposal.

The development aims to:

- Secure a long term future for this historic building
- Strike an appropriate balance between the maximum development potential and respect to the existing buildings and local context
- Protect the history and heritage of the existing building
- Adapt the existing building to new uses that meet local need and demand
- Where possible, update the building to current regulations and standards, maintaining the key aspects of its structure, plan form and character
- Create a world-class entertainment venue
- Create high quality hotel rooms and guest experience
- Add value to the immediate context, giving new life to the site
- Deliver a sustainable development
- Produce a robust servicing strategy

Design Quality

The quality of the Grade II listed buildings and the prominent position of the site should give an opportunity for a proposal with depth and variation in its design language to animate and articulate its local environment.

The creation of a high quality design will serve to establish an exemplar user and visitor environment, while ensuring the site and its heritage asset are brought into a new mode of use for many years to come.

Consultation

Significant pre-application consultation has taken place with senior planning officers at Camden and Historic England, particularly in relation to the design, heritage impact and land use of the scheme.

There have been multiple pre-application meetings over a 24 month period, including a series of presentations to the 20th Century Society and Camden's Design and Review Panel.

The pre-application meetings have established an agreed architectural principle and design language, as well as an understanding of other key planning considerations, including land use, scale, heritage, accessibility and transport.

A detailed summary of the consultation process can be found in section 4.2.

Public Consultation

Consistent with the guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework, published in March 2012, which encourages applicants to engage with the local community before submitting an application, the applicant has undertaken extensive pre-application engagement with the local community.

A number of meetings have been held with local neighbours and stakeholder groups and a formal public drop-in session was held during the consultation period. This wide-ranging consultation sought to fully explain the proposals to the local community, listen to feedback and make changes wherever possible to respond to comments.

A collaborative approach of the consultation process has resulted in the scheme having been refined significantly to achieve the current proposals. A summary of these changes can be found in section 4.2.

Sustainability Aspirations

The Applicant is committed to delivering more sustainable buildings that take a long term view into account. The regulatory framework shown below out a series of minimum policy requirements. The scheme has been designed and assessed to meet all of these requirements as a minimum. For more information please refer to Cudd Bentley's Energy & Sustainability Statement.

The proposed development will aim to meet all the sustainability obligations set by:

GLA

- The London Plan (2021)
- Energy Assessment Guidance (2022)
- London Plan Guidance - Whole Life-Cycle Carbon Assessments (2022)
- London Plan Guidance - Circular Economy Statements (2022)
- London Plan Guidance Documents - 'Be Seen'
- Energy Monitoring Guidance (2021)

Camden:

- The Local Plan (2017)
- Supplementary Camden Planning Guidance (CPG)



10 characteristics of well designed places (from National Design Guide)

4.2 CONSULTATION

Introduction

Since June 2022, the consultant team has been engaging with the local community and key stakeholder groups on plans to repair, reinstate and extend the former Saville Theatre to provide a new world class performance venue and complementary hotel use.

From the outset, the applicant considered the need for a thorough and ongoing approach to engaging with the local community.

Engagement with the near neighbours continued throughout the process, and the applicant ensured neighbours were kept informed and were able to provide feedback throughout the design process.

After giving the nearest neighbours the opportunity to engage on the early proposals for the site, the applicant also sought to engage with the wider local community once proposals for the site had started to develop.

The applicant also undertook regular and ongoing engagement with key stakeholder groups with interests in the site, London Borough of Camden (LBC) officers and local ward councillors.

This consultation process is summarised below and on the following pages.

Further information can be found in the Statement of Community Engagement (SCE), submitted as a part of this application.

Community Engagement Overview

As with any scheme of this scale and sensitivity, there is a need to balance policy objectives with feedback from members of the community in order to design a deliverable scheme with maximum public benefit.

It was considered that the best way to achieve this would be through a multi-staged engagement and consultation process that aligned with the design programme. This would allow for early near neighbour and local community input on the evolving design, ongoing feedback, and an opportunity to comment on the final concept.

4.2.1 Pre-Application Advice

Local Planning Authority (LBC)

YC Saville Theatre Ltd and the project team has engaged extensively from the early stages of the project with LBC officers, politicians, the local community and relevant statutory consultees and other parties, including Historic England and the Theatres Trust.

The following meetings have taken place with Camden:

- Pre App 01:
 1. November 05, 2021
- Pre App 02:
 2. 02 March 2022
- Pre App 03:
 3. 17 March 2022
- Pre App 04:
 4. 14 April 2022
- Pre App 05:
 5. 14 June 2022
- Pre App 06 (Camden Design Workshop)
 6. 30 June 2022
- Camden Workshop
 7. 08 August 2022
- Heritage England Workshop
 8. 18 August 2022
- Heritage England Workshop
 9. 11 November 2022
- PreApp 07
 10. 30 January 2023
- Additional material circulated
 11. 03 February 2023
- LAC Presentation
 12. 14 February 2023
- Scheme Introduction – Phoenix Gardens
 13. 14 March 2023
- Theatre Trust Presentation
 14. 28 March 2023
- Theatre Trust Updates
 15. 08 June 2023
- Theatre Trust Additional Information
 16. 11 July 2023
- Consultation Pack
 17. 17 July 2023
- Consultation Updates
 18. 16 September
- Theatres Trust

19. 20 September

- Pre App 07
 20. November 01
- Historic England Update
 21. 13 November
- DRP Presentation
 22. 10 November 2023
- GLA Presentation
 23. 21 November 2023
- Camden Workshop
 24. 20 December 2023
- Historic England
 25. 24 January 2023
- GLA Pre-Application Meeting
 26. 21 February 2024

The proposed development responds directly to the feedback received from Camden Officers, particularly with regards to:

- Proposed massing and height of extensions to the Listed Building and the new built additions above the parapet
- Layout of the theatre and hotel arrangement that has resulted in a simplified layout for both.
- The approach taken to internal layouts within the Listed Building;
- Proposed architectural treatment to the extensions to the Listed Building.

Throughout consultation with officers, significant design changes have been adopted in response including:

- An increased coherence to the theatre entrance and the original plan form;
- The reintroduction of the separation between the original structure and the upper-level massing to separate the modern interventions from the Grade II Listed building through the use of an inset “belt” level;
- The introduction of a massing setback to Phoenix Gardens at the upper levels to reduce impact on Phoenix Gardens;
- The introduction of planting to the Phoenix Garden elevation;
- A greater integration of the plant screen into the architecture;
- A revisit of the sustainability strategy to inform the façade approach;
- Greater articulation to the façade to remove the conflict of potential overlooking;
- A return to a brick appearance that binds the character of the proposed interventions into the Grade II Listed Building.

4.2 CONSULTATION

The Theatres Trust

The Theatres Trust is the national advice and advocacy body for the UK's theatres supporting all forms of theatres.

Set up by the Government through an Act of Parliament in 1976, The Theatres Trust is the national advisory public body for theatres, they are a statutory consultee on theatres in the planning system, and also operate as a charity to promote the better protection of theatres for the benefit of the nation.

The Theatres Trust protect theatres and champion the future of live performance by advising and supporting the nation's theatres to develop best practice in design and management following the four principles of resilience, environmental sustainability, inclusivity and placemaking.

During the pre-planning process, the consultant team has met with The Theatres Trust across three formal pre-application meeting both independently and also with Camden planning officers.

The advice and feedback provided by Claire Appleby and Tom Clarke was hugely helpful to shape and adapt the scheme to ensure the future of the new theatre at the Saville for future generations to enjoy.

Following the first introduction meeting of the project in spring of 2022 to the Theatres Trust where a number of opportunities and challenges were discussed, the client appointed James Williams, the Chief Executive of the Shaftesbury Theatre to the project team.

Throughout the design process, James has contributed to the future vision of the Saville to ensure its place in the West End as a thriving operating live performance venue bringing decades of expertise to the design process.

The feedback from the Theatres Trust throughout each of the pre-application meetings focused on layout, operational efficiency and future flexibility of the new theatre space as well as balancing matters of scale of the upper level additions.

The pre-application discussions reviewed and responded to the most appropriate location of the new theatre shell and how this could contribute to the buildings prominent Shaftesbury Avenue location.

The design was encouraged to utilise as much of the original buildings remaining fabric whilst optimising the potential for ground floor activity and porosity to establish the theatre into the wider community outside of performance times.

The Theatres Trust also encouraged the creation of space that was able to adapt across future decades to suit the changing styles and taste of performance without the need for structural changes within the building. The design of the theatre has responded to the challenge as set out in Section 6.4.

The upper level additions have significantly evolved throughout the pre-application process with height and massing reductions responding to stakeholder feedback including from The Theatres Trust to balance the benefits of creating a new world class live performance space back into the building after a 54 year absence.

4.2 CONSULTATION

4.2.2 Design Review Panels

SPPARC presented to the London Borough of Camden Design Review Panel on Friday the 10th of November 2023 - 18 people were in attendance including members of Yoo Capital, SPPARC, Montagu Evans, Hoare Lea as well as representatives from Camden.

Camden officers noted that the scheme had been in pre-application for approximately 24 months and that the officers were broadly supportive of the scheme principles. The major points of interest were the panel's views on height, mass and bulk, adaptability and the extent of change.

Following the presentation, a formal written response setting out the principal points was received several as set out below:

- The panel strongly supported the principle of bringing the site back into use as a theatre.
- The panel did not consider the proposed height of the building to be a problem in principle.
- The panel requested further justification to show that the proposals represent the best solution, including massing studies to show how the approach was developed, and how the extension responds to its setting.
- The panel questioned the extent of the proposed basement excavation and requested to see more information showing why a theatre cannot be incorporated within the existing fabric.
- The panel expressed concern that the rear façade of the building will create an oppressive presence next to The Phoenix Garden. The bulk and scale of the sheer elevation on this side of the building seemed out of scale with the garden, and did not reflect the stepped massing of neighbouring buildings.
- It was suggested by the panel that stepping the massing back would also create the opportunity for roof terraces to provide amenity space for the hotel, potentially incorporating gardens.
- The panel emphasises that the architectural quality of the extension must be exceptional to match the quality of composition and form in the listed building.
- The panel felt that more could be done to reinterpret or reference the original theatre foyer and create a dramatic entrance experience. The stairs are currently close to the entrance, but the space would be improved if the volume of the space could be opened up in plan as well as in height.
- The panel wanted to see carbon reduction objectives driving the overall design approach more clearly.
- Options should be developed to replace existing windows at the rear of the building to ensure their u-values align with those in the triple-glazed extension.
- The panel asked about the future flexibility of the building. As well as ensuring the theatre can adapt to a different tenant if needed, consideration should be given to how the hotel can adapt.

The feedback received from the Design Review Panel was balanced and was considered alongside the feedback received from LBC, the GLA, Historic England, The Theatres Trust and neighbouring residents.

Following the DRP, significant changes have been adopted into the application scheme as a direct response to the helpful comments from the panel.

Headline changes to the scheme include:

- A methodical and granular assessment of the existing building and how it is able to respond to the very specific demands of a modern theatre operator to create a world class visitor experience.
- Further justification of the wholly appropriate location of the new world class performance space within the building.
- A reworking of the ground level layout to closer reference the historic arrangement whilst providing the required front of house spaces needed for a modern theatre.
- A reworking of the external façade of the upper level additions to including an amplification of the proposed detailing and finer grain to better integrate into the Grade II listed building.
- Further solidification of the façade with high quality hit/miss masonry detailing to improve the energy efficiency of the proposal.
- The design approach to Phoenix Gardens has been completely reworked to reduce its impact to the gardens.
- A reduction in height, mass and bulk to the rear elevation including the introduction of a stepped arrangement to accommodate green landscaping.
- The use of a different façade approach including a reduced scale and materiality adopted to the Phoenix Gardens façade.
- Enhanced integration of green landscaping into the Phoenix Gardens elevation to soften its appearance and bind its character into the established green space.
- Greater articulation to the façade to remove any overlooking issues.

4.2.4 Neighbours to the Site

- YC held two drop-in introductory events for residents living in the buildings adjacent to the Odeon, and around each side of Phoenix Gardens
- Community BBQ at the Phoenix Gardens held in the summer of 2022 with local residents to introduce the new owners of The Saville Theatre and to hear the communities thoughts on its potential redevelopment
- Meetings with residents living in the immediate vicinity of the site were taken on 18th July and 8th August. 10 residents attended over the two days.



4.2 CONSULTATION

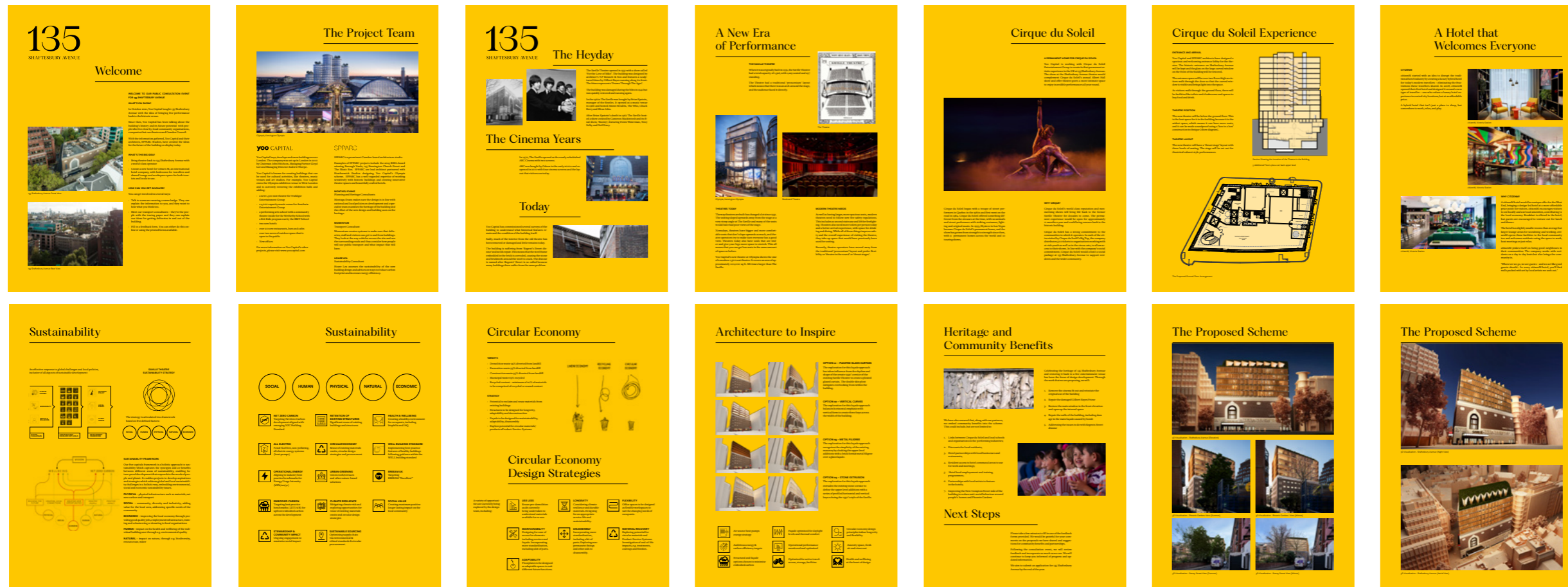
4.2.5 Public Consultations

- YC Saville Theatre Limited delivered 7626 letters to residents and businesses in the local area with an invitation to a drop-in consultation on either Monday 18th September 2023, Tuesday 19th September 2023 from 4 pm – 8 pm or Saturday 23rd September 2023 11 am-2 pm
- Prior to the event, YC Saville Theatre Limited received 12 calls from members of the public with questions about YC Saville Theatre Limited and background on the site and on the area. Approximately 50 people RSVP'd to attend.
- 11 people attended over the three days with a mixed feedback of response. Some were supportive in the whole, some neutral with some others concerned with activities that come with development/construction

4.2.6 Engagement with Council

YC Saville Theatre Limited and SPPARC presented the design proposal to the following council members for further discussion:

- David Burns, Director of Economy, Regeneration and Investment
- Cllr Sue Vincent and Cllr Awale Olad, ward councillors for Holburn and Covent Garden
- Cllr Danny Beales, Cabinet Member for Investing Communities, Culture and an Inclusive Economy
- Cllr Georgia Gould, Leader of the Council



4.3 CRIME PREVENTION

Introduction

A Crime Impact Assessment (CIA) has been produced in support of the planning application for the proposed development.

A Security Needs Assessment (SNA) report has also been prepared and issued to provide guidance to the design team on the areas requiring greater focus for hardening and technical systems in support of the overall security design:

- QCIC - 03692 - 01001a- Saville Theatre SNA Report

The above document helps to identify appropriate security mitigations to reduce the impacts of identified risks.

Objective

In keeping with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the London Plan the following Crime Impact Assessment provides an outline approach to how the project will take steps to deter crime by:

- Reduce the ease of identification of vulnerable assets or material
- Make it harder to commit a crime without detection
- Make it easier to identify a criminal act
- Reduce the likelihood of escape without detection
- Increase the likelihood of being successfully prosecuted
- Reduce the impacts of terrorism and unlawful acts of violence

During the delivery of the RIBA Stage 2 development pre & post planning, the introduction of information from risk assessments or Security Needs Assessments and their recommendations shall be used to determine the most actionable risks and vulnerabilities of the proposed development.

The recommendations will provide measurable implementation opportunities for physical, technical, and operational overlays to improve the security profile of the completed development which will in turn reduce the opportunity and fear of crime or antisocial behaviours.

Where terrorism is indicated to be a potential direct or indirect threat to the development appropriate improvements to vehicle management, façade glazing systems, hostile vehicle mitigation, and lockdown incident management strategies will be developed.

Security Design Approach

To develop appropriate design modifications to create the crime prevention approach and development profile, appropriate to the threat and vulnerabilities of the development, the following considerations will be implemented during the design development stages. These will include use of police crime prevention, statistical resources, and advisory materials as well as reference to local Designing Out Crime Officer (DOCO) and Counter Terrorism Security Advisors (CTSA).

A meeting was conducted on 21st June 2022 with the MET Counter Terrorism Security Advisor (CTSA) representing Physical Security Operations in the Lambeth ward. Minutes noting recommendations have been referenced within supporting documentation (ref. QCIC – 03692 – 09001a – CTSA Engagement for Saville Theatre and Hotel).

In conjunction with the Security Design Consultant the Professional Team will be engaged to target those risks identified which fall above an actionable level. The following techniques and measures will be considered during the Stage 2 Post-Planning Design and Stage 3 Strategic Design Development with the design and cost approval of the Employers Representative or Responsible Person from an informed position of risk and mitigation options.

Provide greater levels of difficulty in obtaining access to areas beyond the public realm:

- Use of certified intrusion resistant door and window schemes
- Use of access controls with anti-tailgating features (where possible)
- Provision of cycle parking schemes providing multiple locking and anchor points
- Overlay security systems to alert security operations of potential incidents
- Where appropriate restrict vehicular access to pedestrian or inner building facilities

Create deterrents to crime by:

- Using clear demarcation techniques indicating demise boundaries
- Providing greater levels of natural surveillance through liaison with landscaping
- Reduce areas of concealment and dead space to discourage loitering
- Improving head level visible or covert night-time lighting if appropriate
- Increasing the likelihood of failure of an attempted criminal act

Reducing the potential profitability of crime:

- Increasing likelihood of being caught and successfully prosecuted.

Use of Video Surveillance Systems (VSS) to capture:

- Context and understanding
- Surveillance for proactive intervention
- Identification of crime
- Prosecution of criminals.

Incident management strategies providing:

- Operational overlay supported by the physical and technology solutions provisioned
- Identification of incidents and provision of operational & technical solutions
- Protective glazing measures to reduce injury from flying glass
- Lock down systems and strategies
- Reduction of onward progress to limit damage or injury.
- Reduce crime using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principals

The security design approach above is reliant upon the provision or appropriate commissioning of a suitably experienced security professional with appropriate years of security design and development credentials and in this instance, QCIC are instructed to advise the design team and the Applicant on the security considerations.

- It is envisaged that a three point fire exit locking mechanism is used.
- Evacuation corridors will be monitored by CCTV.

Lighting

All lighting within the site will offer minimal upwards light spill and all functional lighting will be designed to offer good vertical illumination and good facial recognition, to create 'defensible space' around pedestrians and to ensure good quality lighting conditions for CCTV cameras.

The proposed lighting will be sustainable in terms of energy use, environmental impact and durability/ vandal-resistance.

All automatic lighting will be photocell activation type fittings.

4.4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

One of the challenges in re-creating a historic theatre has been the work undertaken to develop a space which is in line with the current standards of technical compliance. There has been several considerations to consider during this process, including regulatory and building compliance changes through to operator led demands in line with consumer expectations of a theatre in 2024.

Technical/Regulatory Changes

FF Core Requirement

- Building Compliance Changes
- Increased Toilet Provision
- Increased FOH Requirement (Bars, Food)
- Operational flexibility (use of space in non theatre hours)

Client/Operator Led

- Increased FOH Requirement (Bars, Food)
- Operational flexibility (use of space in non theatre hours)

FF Core Requirement

- The London Plan requires all new developments to be at the highest standards under the Fire Safety London Plan Guidance.
- This includes the provision of a fire fighting core (with a designated FF lift, as well as an evacuation lift) which shall service each level of the development.
- In addition to this, there must be an additional means of escape, depending on the orientation of the stage and the proposed capacity numbers.
- In summary, this means that we will at minimum need 2 cores to service the theatre and potentially a third, which will reduce the capacity of the theatre.

Building Compliance Changes

- The previous design for the Saville was challenged in many ways. To maximise the seat count and allow for sightlines to the stage area, the rake of the dress and upper circles is up to 35 degrees.
- For example, under the Building Regulations (Approved Document K: protection from falling, collision and impact) this would not be compliant in 2023. Anything above 25 degrees in steepness is recommended to have fall protection such as a barrier, hand rail or higher seat backs.
- This will require additional space which will impact on the capacity calcs.

Increased Toilet Provision

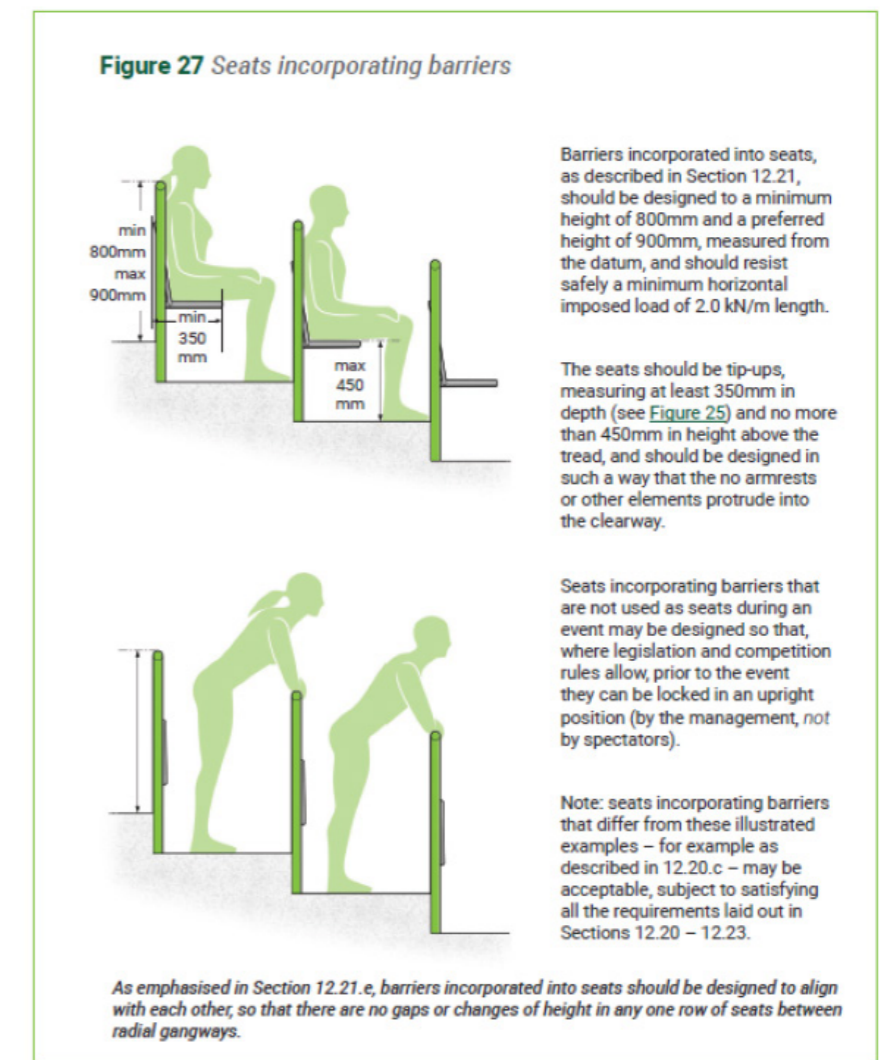
- The requirements for adequate toilet provision has changed since 1931.
- A compliant scheme will be required to comply with the Technical Standard for Places of Entertainment (Yellow Book) his requires additional area previously used within the auditorium or FOH to be used for services.

Client/Operator Changes

- In the past two years we have tested a number of different operators who have looked at the proposed theatre space
- Increased FOH Requirement (Bars, Food)
- Operational flexibility (use of space in non theatre hours)

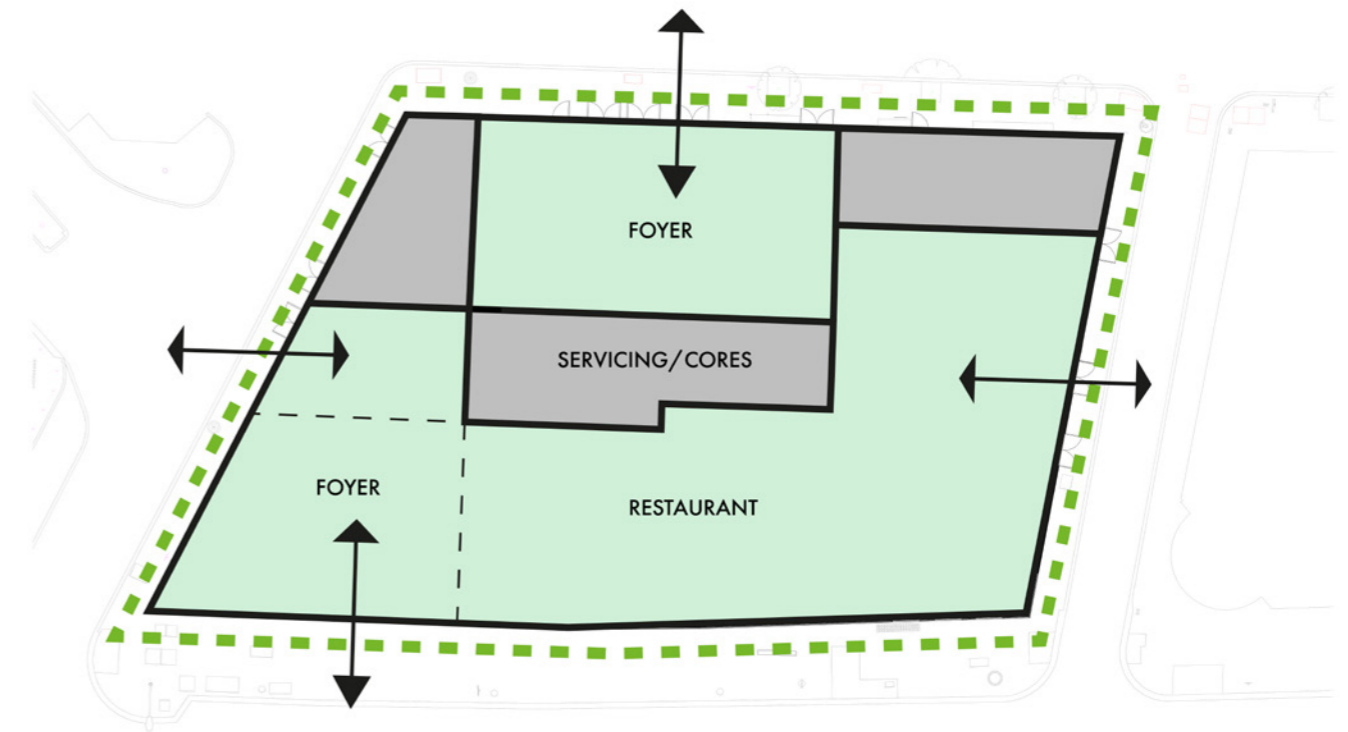
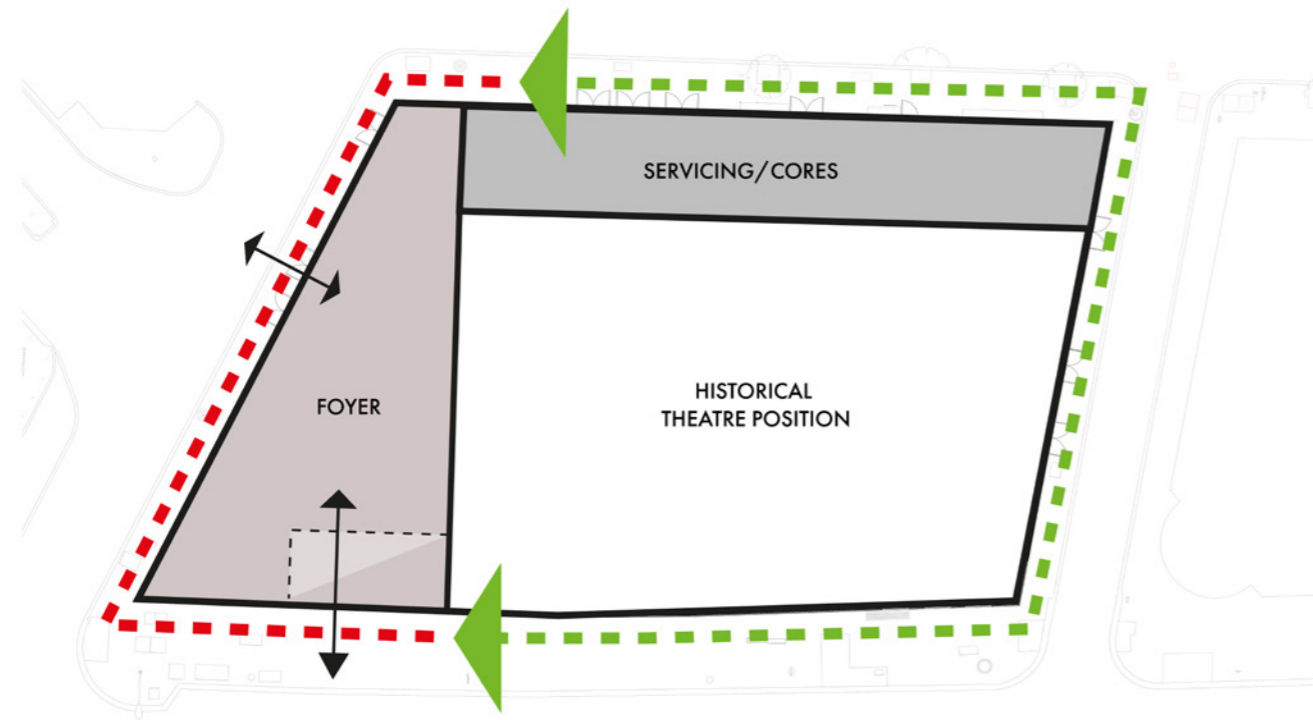
Increased FOH Requirements (Bar, Food)

- Based on the many studies we have undertaken with operators, we now know that the modern day theatre operator require an increase in FOH space to make their productions viable.
- This includes more areas designated to FOH including Bars and Food offerings.
- These spaces are required to service the Theatre space in a Pre and Post show capacity, as well as intermission.



4.4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

How can we improve the Ground Floor experience?



✗ The original layout for the Saville Theatre had the stage at B2 with a steep rake towards Stacey Street. This resulted in a poor FOH experience for the lobbys and limited interaction at Ground floor level

✗ The servicing requirements and cores on New Compton Street has blocked off any meaningful connection with the public spaces at Ground Level

✓ By submerging the theatre, this allows us to centralise the core above ground and liberate the ground floor to public use.

✓ This will result in a truly publicly accessible ground floor plane.

4.4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

OPTION 01 - Historic Theatre Position - Hotel Above

Theatre:

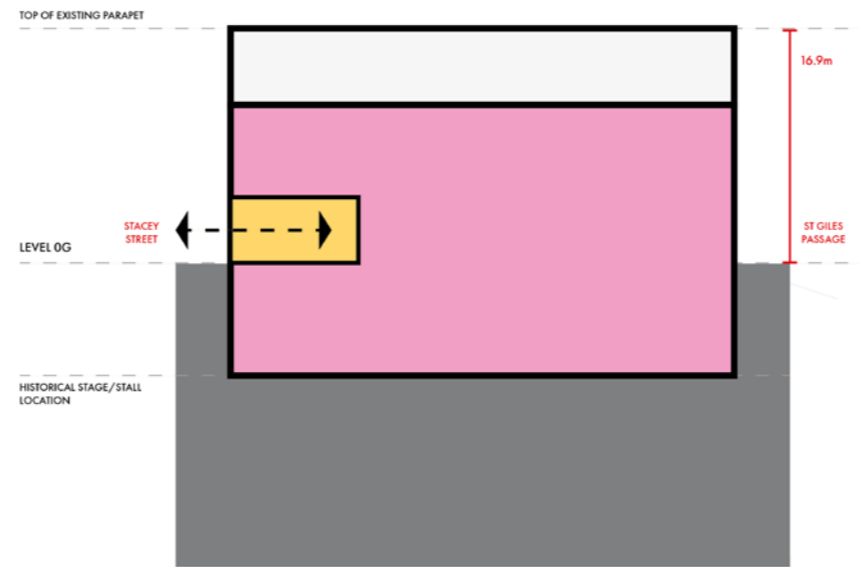
- ⊗ Compromised physical space unable to provide meaningful Capacity due to limitations of existing envelope.
- ⊗ Conflict Between Theatre & Hotel vertical & Lateral Circulation Impacting Auditoria Volume

Proposed Building Height:

- ⊗ Increased height pressure to hotel above existing parapet

Ground Floor Activation:

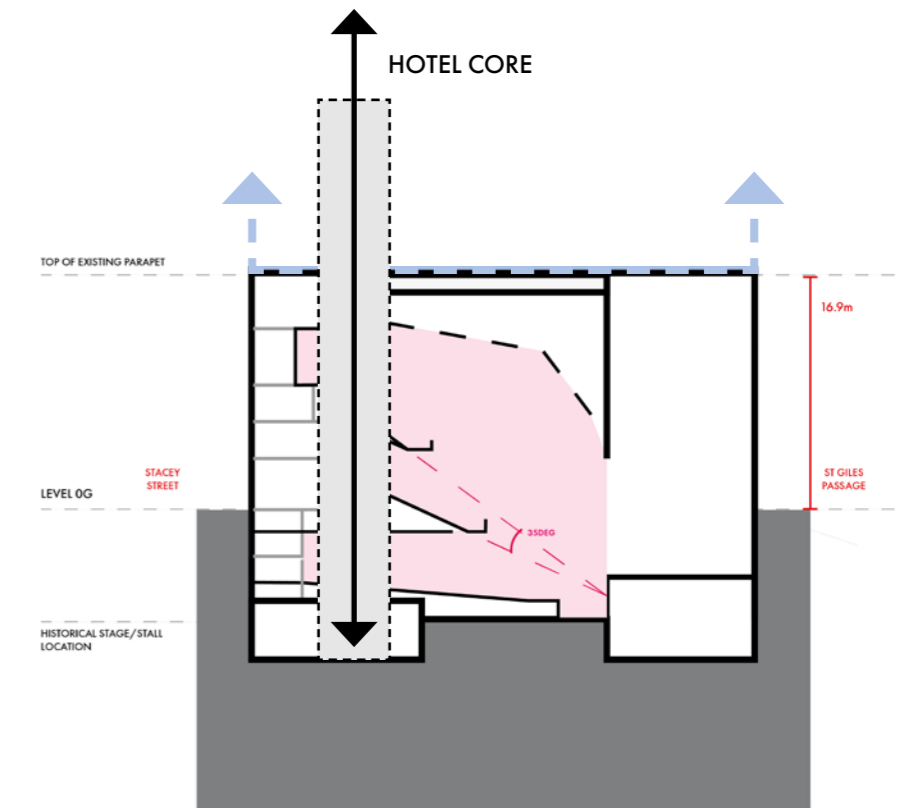
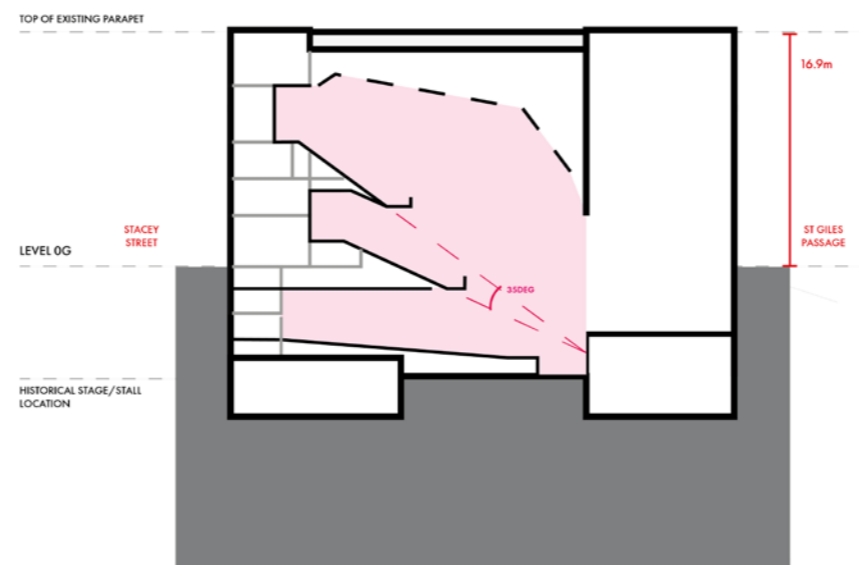
- ⊗ Limited/Poor



- ⊗ A very poor FOH experience with very little connection to the street.
- ⊗ Technical and operational changes which will cause major difficulty in the theatre layout. This includes changes to building compliance, fire safety regulations as well client/operator changes.

Additional Design Challenges

- Technical issues with historic design (ie. Inadequate foyer space, connection with public, sightlines, stage size, servicing strategy etc.)
- Technical and building regulation changes
- Accommodation of additional service facilities such as cycle storage, staff facilities etc.
- Box in box construction within a listed façade would result in significant loss of area making theatre not viable
- Fire strategy – upgrading the space to be compliant as per London plan
- Spatial requirements for tenants (BOH kitchen space, FOH requirements)
- Changes to MEP requirements including plant replacement strategy



NON COMPLIANT THEATRE AUDITORIA IF ORIGINAL FORMAT REPLICATED

Impact =



UNABLE TO ATTAIN BRIEF

4.4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

OPTION 02 - Raise Theatre - Hotel Above

Theatre:

- ⊗ Compromised physical space unable to provide meaningful capacity due to limitations of existing envelope.
- ⊗ Conflict between theatre & hotel vertical & lateral circulation impacting auditoria volume.

Proposed building height:

- ⊗ Above camden advised height limit to achieve client brief
- ⊗ No historical reference to original stage level
- ⊗ No ability to liberate volumetric entrance around original glazed arch window

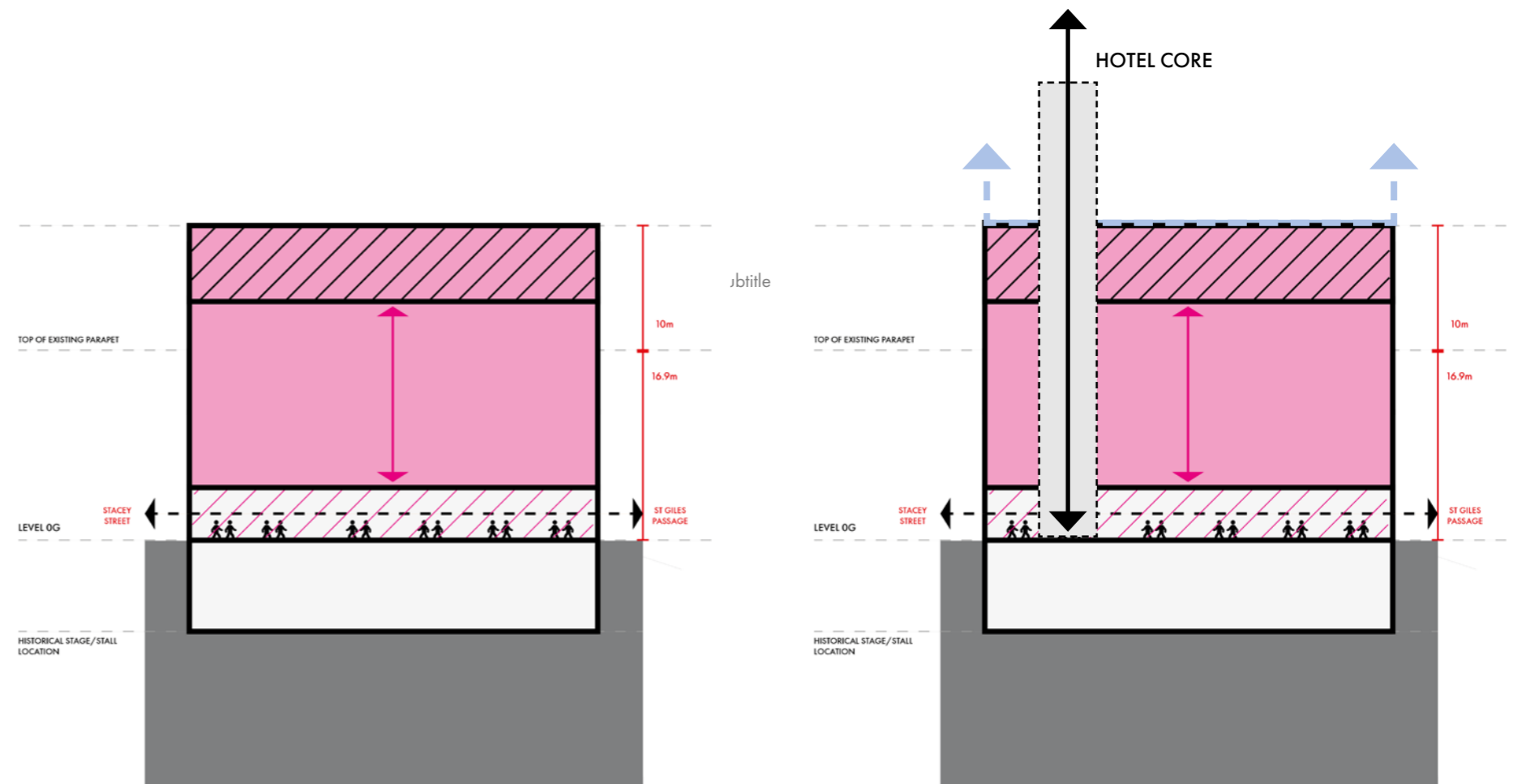
Ground Floor Activation:

- ⊗ Improved, but compromised due to relationship between theatre and hotel above

Additional Design Challenges

- Box in box construction within a listed façade. Complexities/additional space requirements.
- Acoustic concerns due to new theatre box protruding higher than the existing listed facade. Noise concerns for neighbours.
- Poor compositional relationship between elevated theatre box and hotel above.
- Accommodation of additional service facilities such as cycle storage, staff facilities etc. Compromising auditoria space

- ⊗ Creating greater generosity at ground level disrupts theatre capacity
- ⊗ Reduced theatre experience.



ASPIRATION TO IMPROVE GROUND FLOOR VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Impact =



UNABLE TO ATTAIN BRIEF

4.4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Option 03 - Lowered Theatre - Hotel Above

Theatre:

- ✓ Adequate space for provision of meaningful theatre reinstatement
- ✓ Reference to original stage position
- ✓ No impact from hotel core above

Proposed building height:

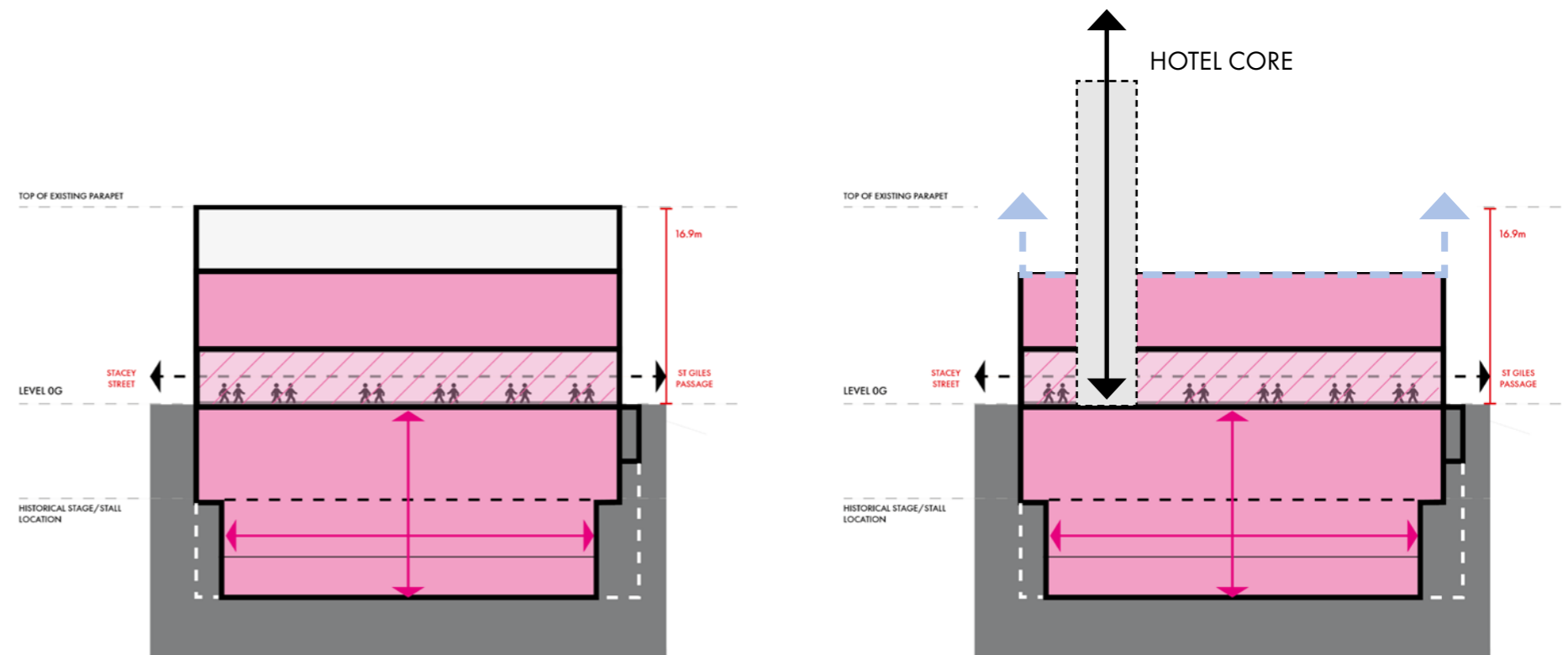
- ✓ Reduced overall height of the building additions possible

Ground floor activation:

- ✓ **Excellent.** Enhanced foh experience able to link shaftesbury avenue and phoenix gardens to activate theatre awareness and use.

Additional Design Challenges

- Clean separation between uses which allows for an activated ground floor with theatre below and hotel above.
- Allows for introduction of restaurant which will activate the ground plane, as well as additional servicing / staff facilities.
- Improved acoustic performance of theatre by utilising inherent ground conditions encapsulating the auditoria.
- Reduced complexity in construction within listed façade.
- Reduced complexity regarding structural isolation of theatre / plant and hotel spaces above
- Reduces building height, activates ground floor and creates meaningful theatre capacity and volume to meet operator brief.
- Flexible theatre box able to accommodate a range of stage configurations



CREATION OF MEANINGFUL THEATRE WITH
HISTORIC REFERENCE TO STAGE LEVEL AND
ACTIVATION OF ENHANCED GROUND FLOOR
FOHEXPERIENCE

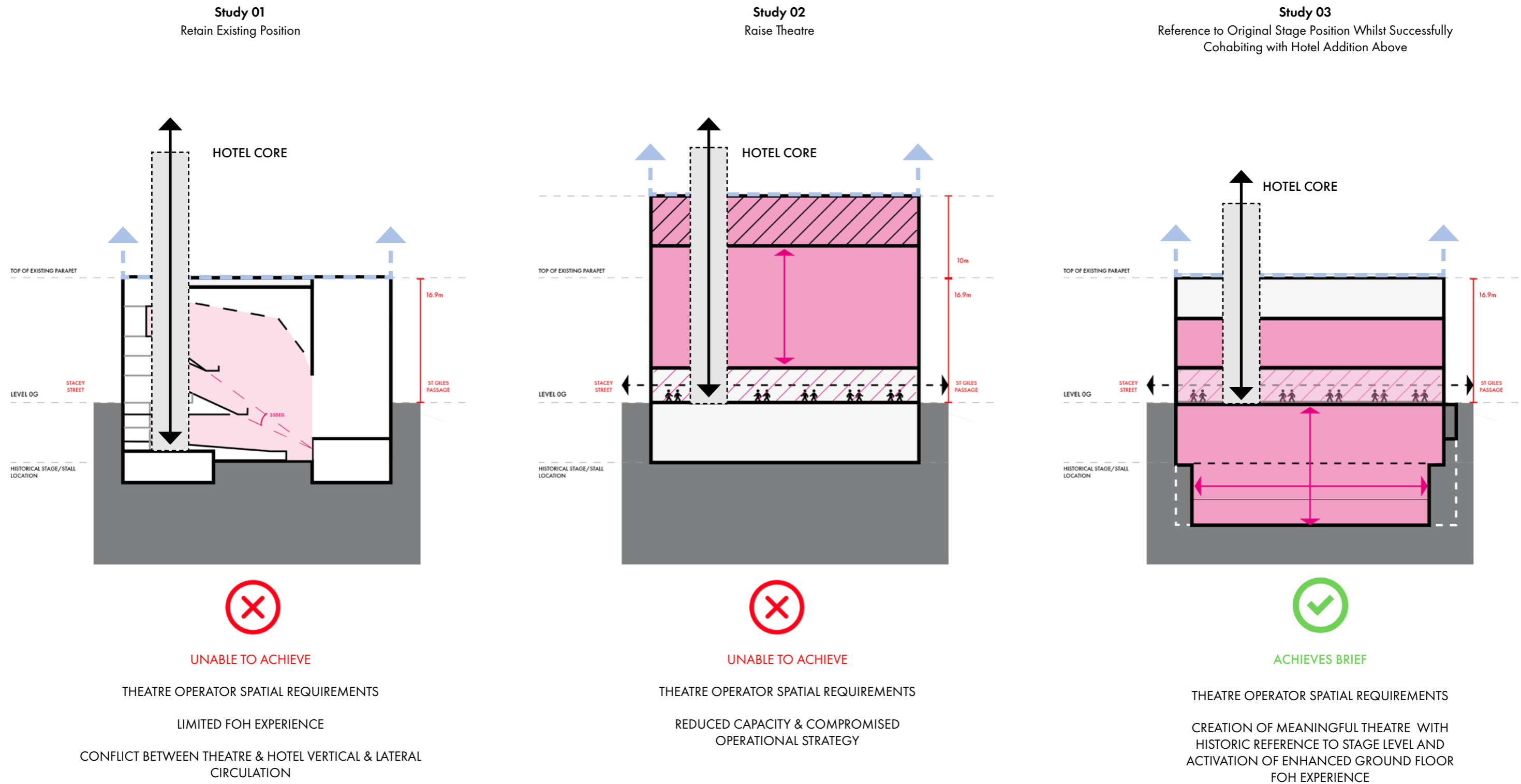
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ACHIEVES BRIEF

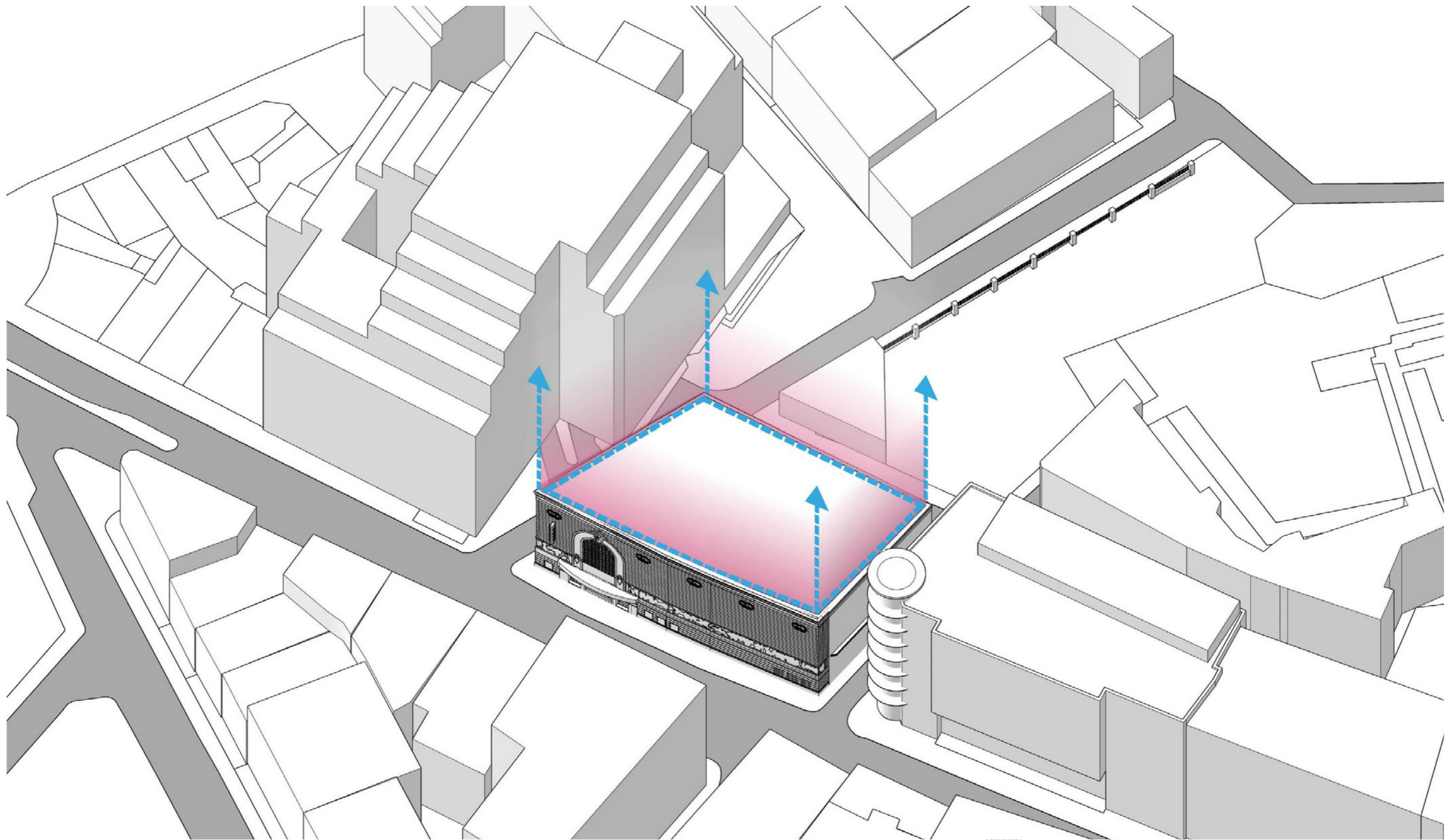
4.4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Testing the Position to create the best in class Theatre



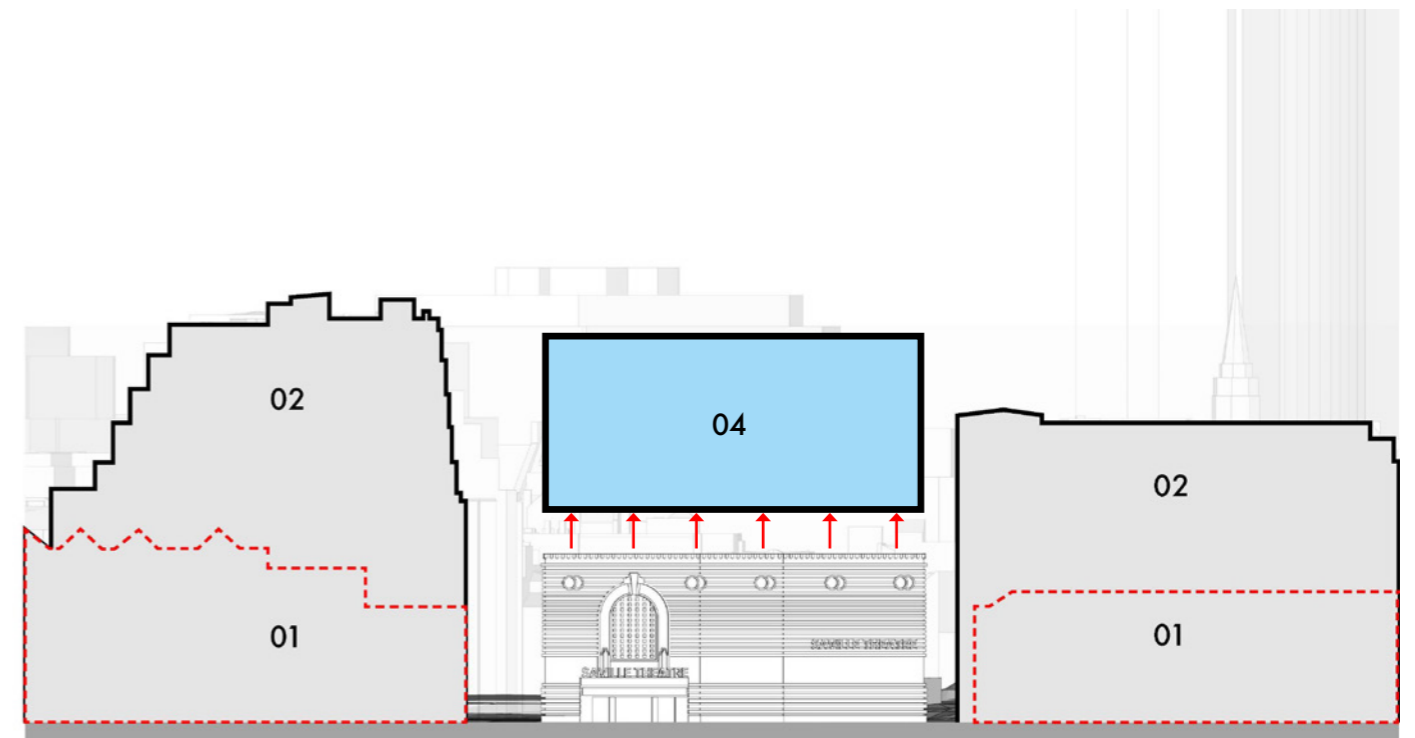
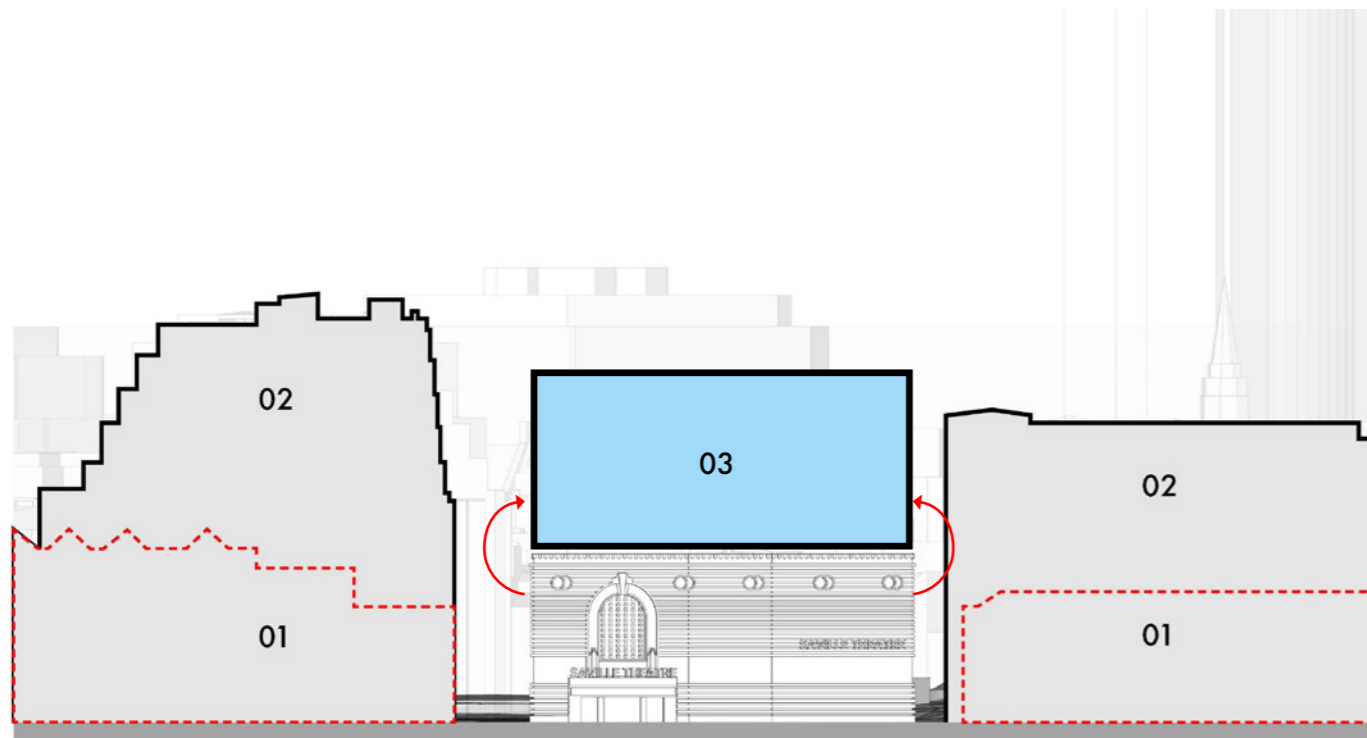
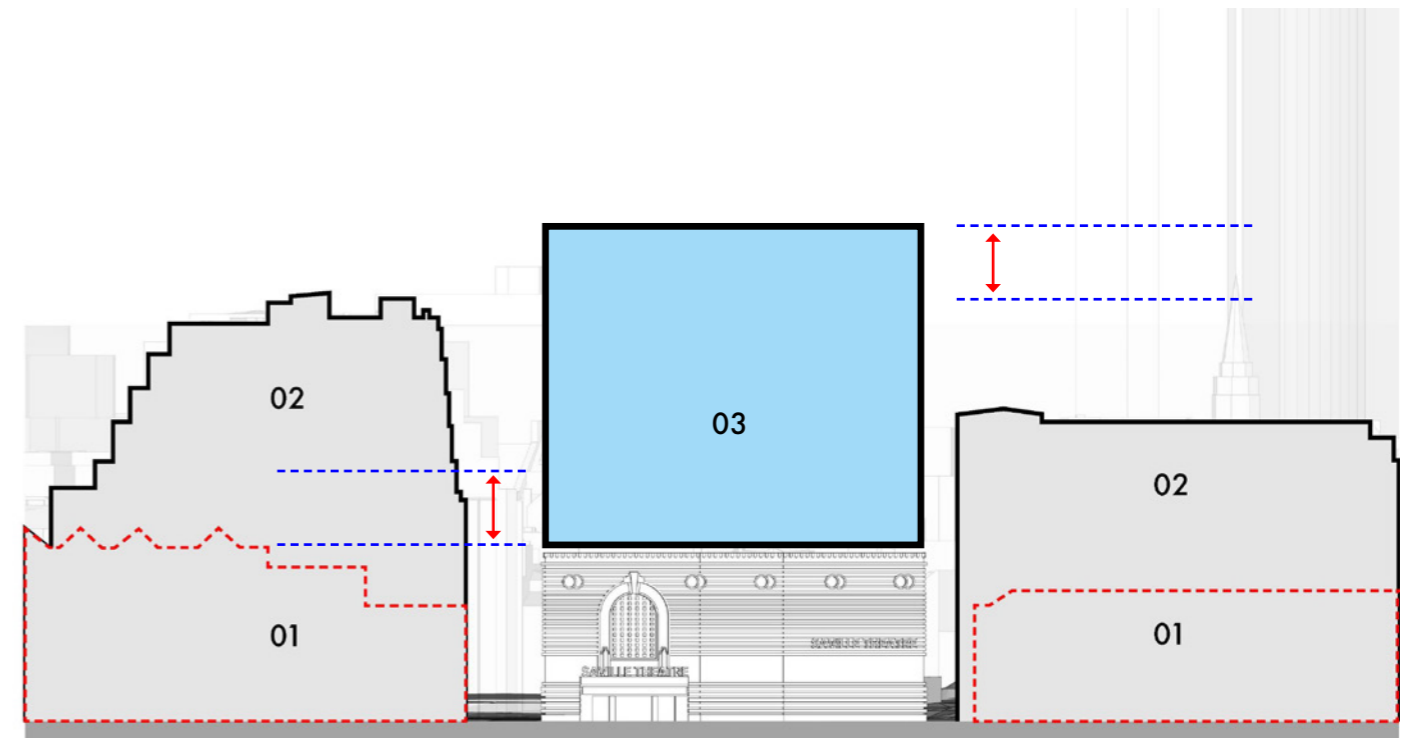
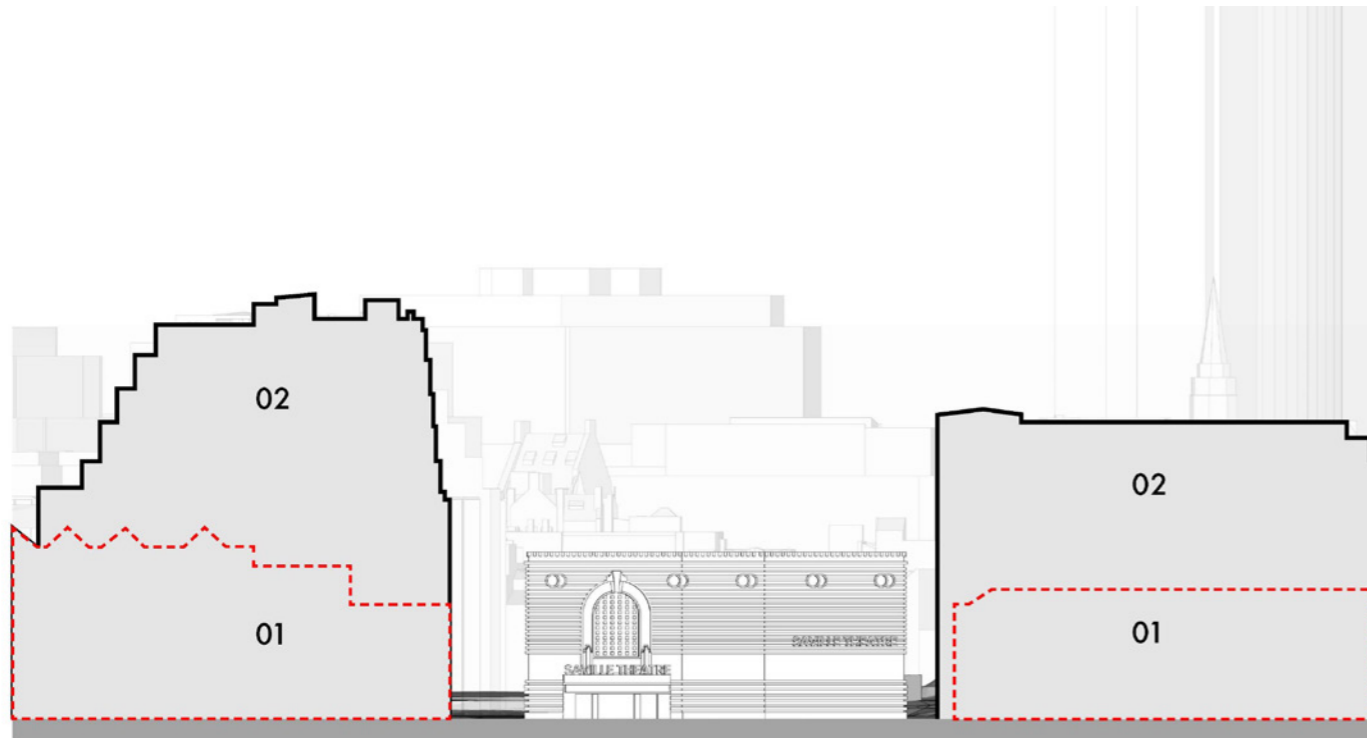
4.4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Testing the Appropriate Heritage and Townscape Response



4.4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Testing the Appropriate Heritage and Townscape Response



Legend

01 - Neighbouring 1930's context.

- The Saville sits proudly on Shaftesbury Avenue with a prominent street presence

02 - Neighbouring 2024 context

- The Saville is dwarfed by its neighbours.

03 - Massing Study

- Reintroducing the height relationship with neighbouring building to match the existing Saville.

04 - Proposed Massing

- A reduction in height which sits sympathetically within the parameters of the existing urban fabric.

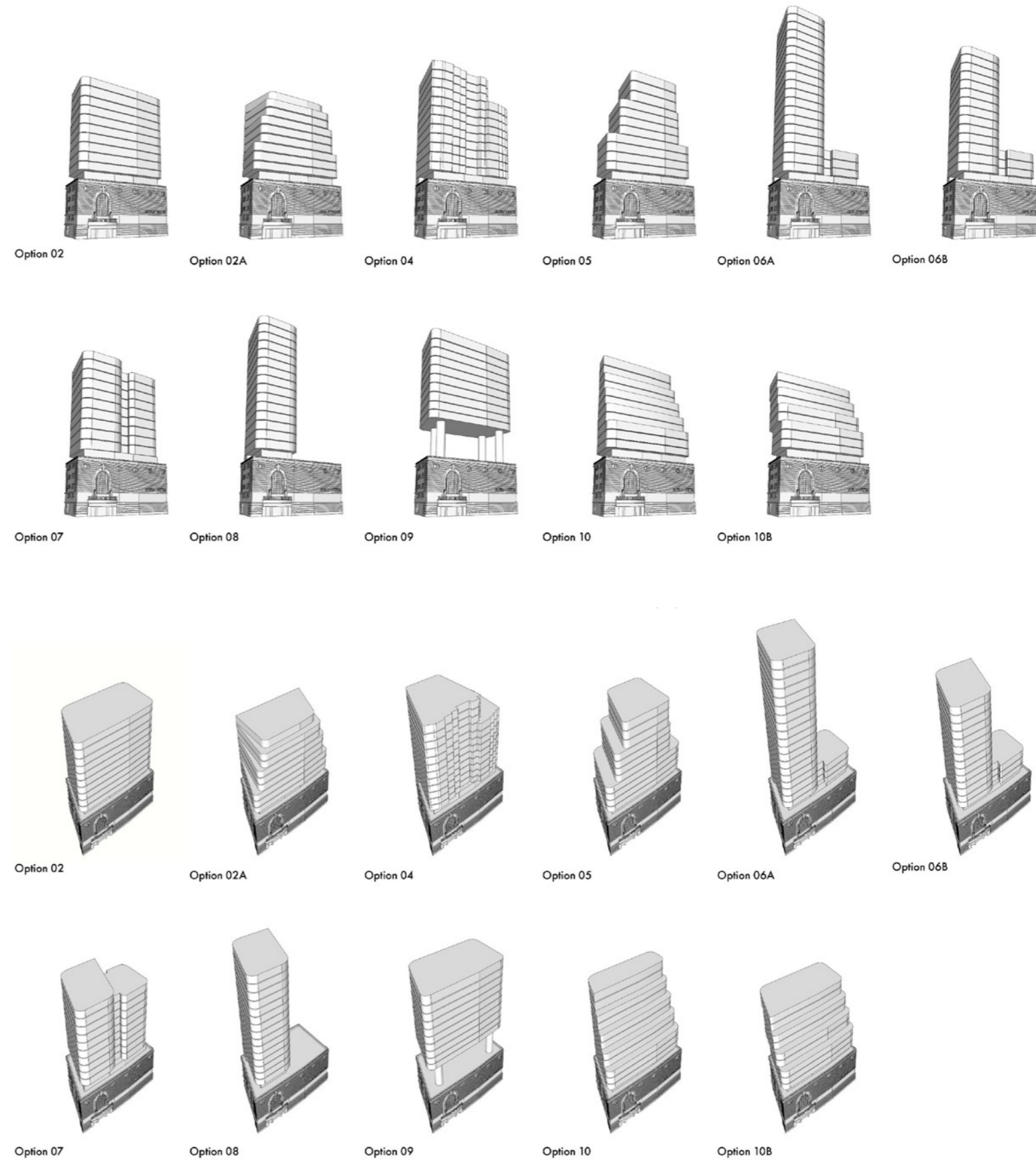
4.4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Extensive Analysis of Upper Level Addition Format and Scale to Achieve a Successful Co-Habitation Above the Grade Two Listed Building, whilst achieving the required quantum of Hotel Accommodation

- Officers noted the need to respond to the hierarchy of the listed building and the character of the surrounding conservation areas, with initial concerns raised over the originally proposed 12 storey addition over the Grade II listed building as being overbearing on the heritage asset.
- A series of upper level additions over the existing building were tested across a multiple of forms and configurations with concerns raised over the existing hierarchy and impact upon neighbouring properties;
- Massing options for were considered iteratively, with an appropriate position reached regarding the massing relationship to the existing Grade II listed building and to the neighbouring context, in townscape and amenity terms.

Architectural design

- Iterations of architectural design approaches were tested in relation to the listed building extensions;
- The singular nature of an extension to Shaftesbury Avenue was encouraged to be explored with a set back massing approach to Phoenix Gardens.
- Officers supported the references within the extension to the existing building, including the pleated perforated brick informed by the Grade II listed host.



4.4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Throughout the design process, testing and analysis has been undertaken to balance matters of heritage primacy, height, mass and scale.

Early studies sought to understand the height relationship of the Saville in 1931 against its immediate neighbouring scale when first constructed and how this relationship could reference the modern scale of the neighbouring buildings to achieve the intended primacy of the Saville along the street.

Image 01 below indicates the height required above the existing Saville building to achieve the same height primacy next to its now much larger neighbours.

Continued studies have continued assessed in detail the appropriate scale above the host Grade II listed building and the contextual setting of the immediate townscape.

Images 02 – 07 summarise the explorations.

Image 08 – The proposed massing above the Grade II listed building balances matters of proportion and scale with a respectful relationship above the original façade whilst reinstating the civic primacy of the theatre to the street.



01



02



03



04



05



06



07



08

4.4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

SPPARC presented to the London Borough of Camden Design Review Panel on Friday the 10th of November 2023.

18 people were in attendance including members of Yoo Capital, SPPARC, Montagu Evans, Hoare Lea as well as representatives from Camden.

Camden officers noted that the scheme had been in pre-application for approximately 18 months and that the officers were broadly supportive of the scheme principles. The major points of interest were the panel's views on height, mass and bulk, adaptability and the extent of change.

Following the DRP comments, significant design changes have been adopted in response including:

- The introduce of an additional civic space to the internal function of the building;
- An increased coherence to the theatre entrance and the original plan form;
- The reintroduction of the welcomed separation above the parapet of the upper-level massing to separate the modern interventions from the Grade II Listed building;
- The introduction of a massing setback to Phoenix Gardens at the upper level to reduce impact on Phoenix Gardens;
- The introduction of planting to the Phoenix Garden elevation;
- A greater integration of the plant screen into the architecture;
- A revisit of the sustainability strategy to inform the façade approach;
- Greater articulation to the façade to remove the conflict of potential overlooking;
- A return to a brick appearance that binds the character of the proposed interventions into the Grade II Listed Building.



01

Investigation of height relationship required if the upper-level additions are to reinstate the civic scale primacy that the Saville once enjoyed with its immediate neighbours in 1931



02

Stepped Massing that addresses the varied scale of the surrounding context



03 - DRP SCHEME

Singular massing that grows from the existing parapet of the Grade II listed fabric



04

Expressing the exposed soffit with introduction of vertical emphasis in masonry



05 - SUBMISSION SCHEME

Greater set backs above level 3 addition with integrated planters and playful ceramic influenced by the pattern and form of the Grade II listed cornice details

PROPOSED DESIGN

5.0

5.1 DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

Introduction

The Saville Theatre holds significant historic importance as a renowned venue for live performances. Throughout its early years, it hosted a variety of prestigious plays, musicals, and performances, becoming an integral part of London's vibrant West End theatre scene. The Saville Theatre featured prominent artists and showcased some of the most memorable productions of its time, contributing to the rich cultural tapestry of London's entertainment district.

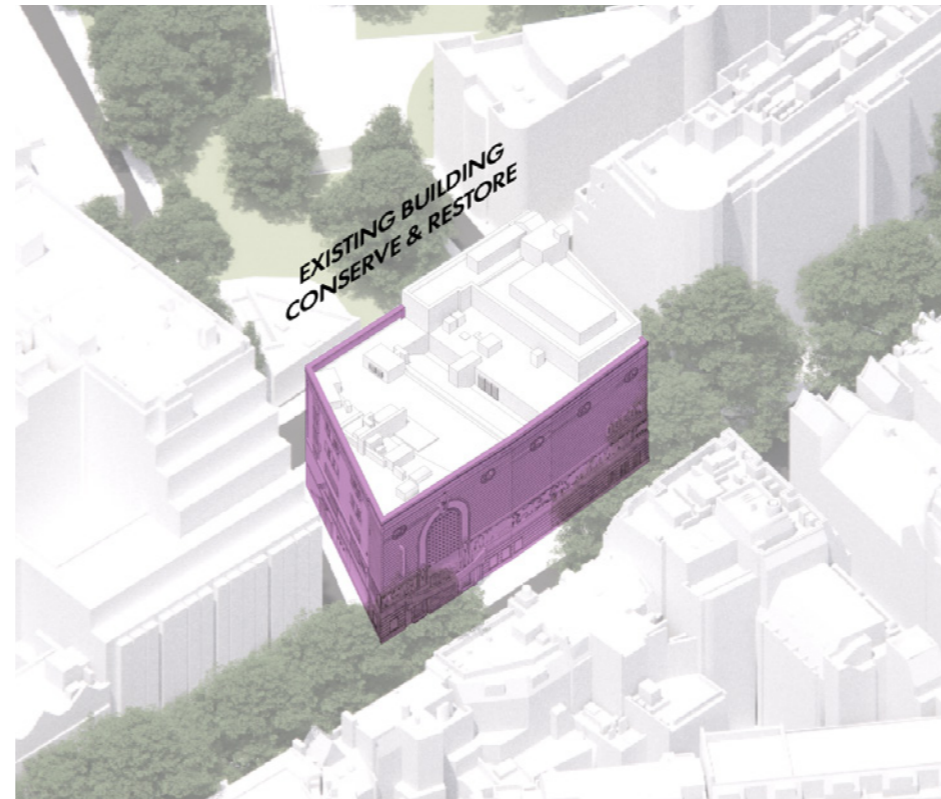
However, the Saville Theatre experienced a period of gradual decay when it was converted into a cinema in the 1970s. The change in function and subsequent neglect led to a decline in the building's condition and a departure from its original cultural purpose. The once-thriving live performance venue lost its lustre as it struggled to adapt to the demands of the cinematic experience, marking a significant chapter in its history.

In light of its storied past and architectural significance, there is a pressing need to revitalize the Saville Theatre. Recognizing the importance of preserving historical landmarks, there is a growing initiative to restore the building to its former glory and reinstate it as a cultural destination in London's West End. Through careful restoration and thoughtful programming, the revitalized Saville Theatre could once again become a hub for live performances, attracting both locals and tourists and contributing to the continued vibrancy of London's renowned entertainment district.

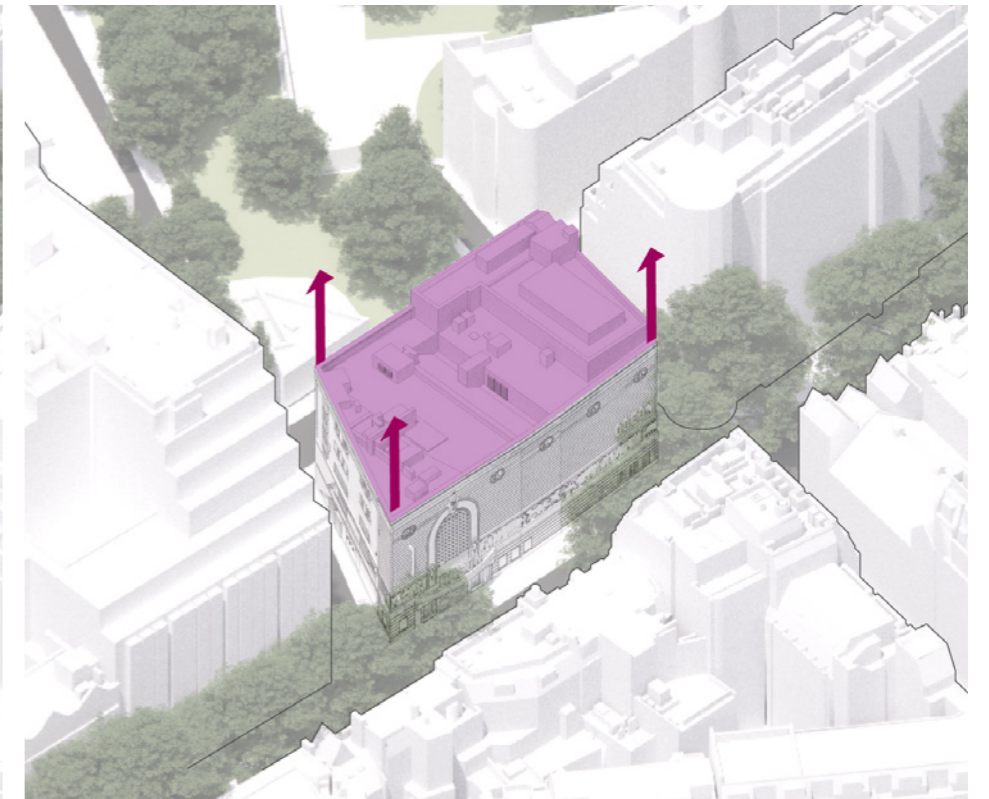
Development Principles

A summary of the development principles is outlined below and opposite:

- Protect and enhance the heritage asset
- Increase the amount publicly accessible space
- Create high-quality and sympathetic additions to the existing building
- Create an exemplar entertainment venue that seamlessly integrates into its local context



01. Retain and Make Good Existing Heritage Facade



02. Additional New-Build Extension



Part 1: 30's Theatre



Part 2: 60's Hendrix & The Beatles



Part 3: Current Condition



Part 4: The Return Restoring the theatre to its former glory

5.2 A HERITAGE LED SCHEME

Proposed Redevelopment

The proposal is for a substantial investment in the historic Saville Theatre, securing a long-term sustainable future for this heritage asset. The proposed scheme is one that has been considered from a heritage-first approach and the design has been continually assessed against the following principles:

- Conservation as a leading principle
- Celebrating original design
- Reintroducing the historic theatre use
- Sympathetic introduction of a new use
- Improving public access to the building
- High quality heritage led design

Integrated Heritage Led Architecture and Sustainable Solutions

Adopting a heritage led response to the scheme, significant time has been expended ensuring that the architecture explores the mechanical services installations to ensure an optimum solution that respects the heritage of the buildings whilst producing an exceptional environmental and sustainable approach.



5.3 RETENTION / DEMOLITION STRATEGY

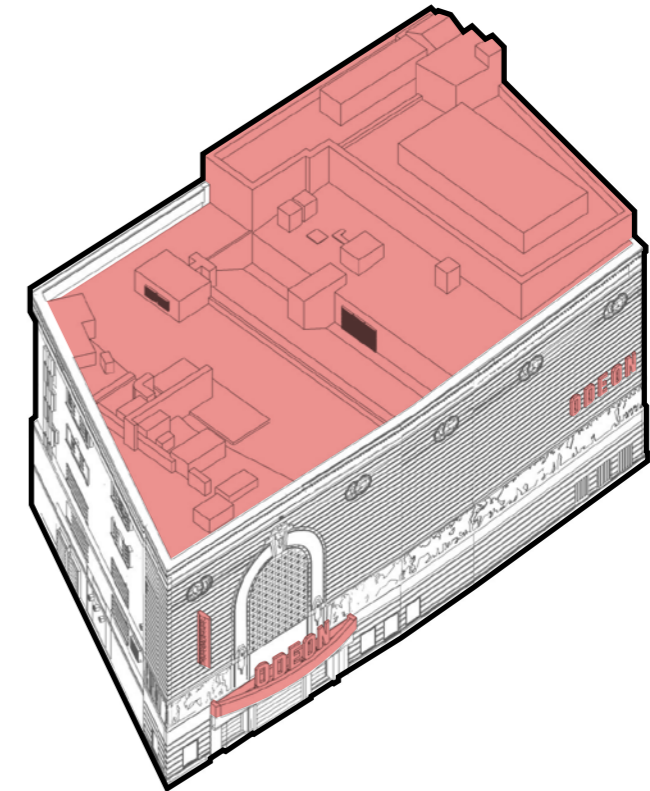
Restoring the Built Heritage

A heritage led scheme from the start, the design team has been working closely with heritage consultants Montagu Evans, who were commissioned to provide independent advice on heritage and related design matters from the project's conception.

From the outset, it has always been proposed that the Grade II listed building is retained, with particular value given to the external fabric. While the facade retains many original elements, it is in generally poor condition and will require repair where necessary. As a part of this process and to inform the design team, Ingram Consultancy have been engaged to provide a facade condition report.

The interior of the building has unfortunately lost most of its original elements and character, with the existing cinema layout wedging in four cinemas within the volume that was once a single theatre. While intervention and partial strip out will be necessary to bring the building back into use as a singular theatre, the design has been informed by the assessment of heritage significance to ensure that historic fabric that is identified as having a high level of heritage interest will be retained in-situ.

To mitigate any impact that would result from the demolition, the proposals seek to retain sufficient historic fabric to maintain the legibility of the original design and representative elements where applicable. In addition, the development would incorporate new design sensitively detailed to reflect the characteristic elements that contribute to the buildings heritage interest.



Above: The External Fabric to be Redeveloped

5.3 USES

Proposed Land Uses

A key driver of the proposal is the desire to create an exemplar theatre venue along with a high quality hotel development, with the inclusion of a mix of ancillary uses:

- Theatre (Sui Generis)
- Hotel (Use Class C1)

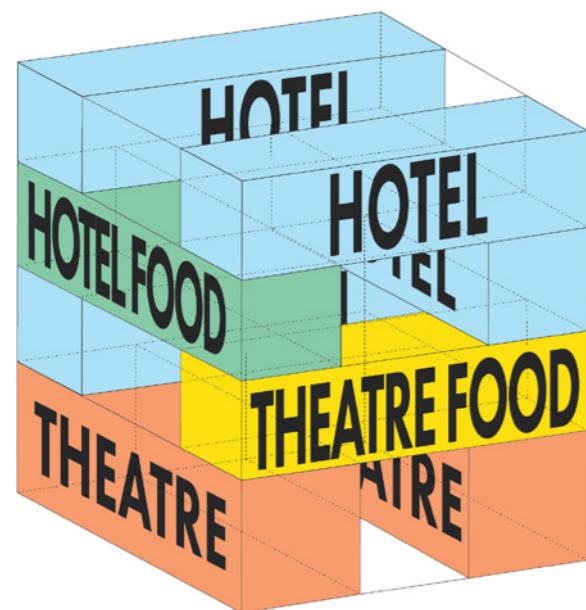
Repurposing the former theatre to its original use aligns with the preservation of cultural heritage and the revival of a once-thriving artistic space. The unique architecture and historical significance of Saville Theatre make it a fitting venue for live performances, ensuring the preservation of its legacy and contributing to the cultural fabric of the community.

Simultaneously, the coexistence of a well-designed hotel within the space can offer a harmonious blend of historic charm and modern luxury. The inclusion of a hotel use enhances the overall appeal of the venue, providing a sophisticated and convenient accommodation option for visitors attending performances or exploring the vibrant West End, fostering a symbiotic relationship between cultural and hospitality experiences.

Amount

The proposal includes the following amounts for each use:

- 2,3259m² GIA of theatre floor area, over Ground + 4 Basement Levels.
- 6,164m² GIA of hotel floor area, over Ground + 10 Levels



Above: Citizen M Hotels



Above: Examples of the Proposed Theatre Use

5.4 PROPOSED BUILDING STRATEGY

Unlocking the Ground Plane

The former theatre layout was organised around a single point of entry for visitors from Shaftesbury Avenue into a constrained lobby that promoted swift movement into the auditorium and was able to take no advantage of the generous glazed arch window fronting Shaftesbury Avenue due to the format of the auditoria above.

Described at the 1931 opening as 'The foyer, with three exits to the street, is large enough to prevent any crushing, and although rather low-roofed is as handsomely decorated as any other part of the house, and is illuminated by concealed lighting.'

Whilst the wholly lost 1931 interiors were opulent in finish and superior in many ways to the Victorian play houses, the front of house experience was compromised by the definition of today's standards and requirements of a modern theatre to ensure that

the revenue producing facilities of F&B are available to the public outside of show times.

The proposal recognises the opportunity for the Saville Theatre to significantly contribute to the northern part of Shaftesbury Avenue which currently lacks a quality pedestrian experience from Cambridge Circus to St Giles Circus.

The proposal seeks to optimise the potential of the four elevations by creating a series of well-defined entrances and public porosity rarely available to a theatre but made possible at the Saville through a considered layout and internal programme of uses and how they are arranged.

The placing of the theatre, which references the historic location of the original stage below street level, liberates the ground floor by allowing the theatre entrance foyer to connect with the surrounding streets to promote activity and dwell time into the building.

The generous original arched glazed window will finally be able to be appreciated within the proposed 4 storey height void that will welcome visitors into the new flush level ground floor entrance foyer. Natural light will be able to flood into the space with an appreciation of the original theatre volume being available to all.

The location of the hotel entrance on the corner of Stacey Street and Phoenix Gardens (which is separate to the theatre) provides a measured amount of activity to mitigate the current anti-social behaviour which is prolific onto New Compton Street.



The 1931 Saville Theatre Volume Ground Floor Plan



Proposed Ground Floor Plan

5.4 PROPOSED BUILDING STRATEGY

Creating a Worldclass Theatre

The design of a new theatre contemplates an emulation of the original Saville Theatre layout, particularly in locating the stage level in the basement. This deliberate homage to the past not only pays tribute to the architectural legacy of the Saville Theatre on Shaftesbury Avenue in London but also strategically leverages its proven spatial dynamics for contemporary objectives.

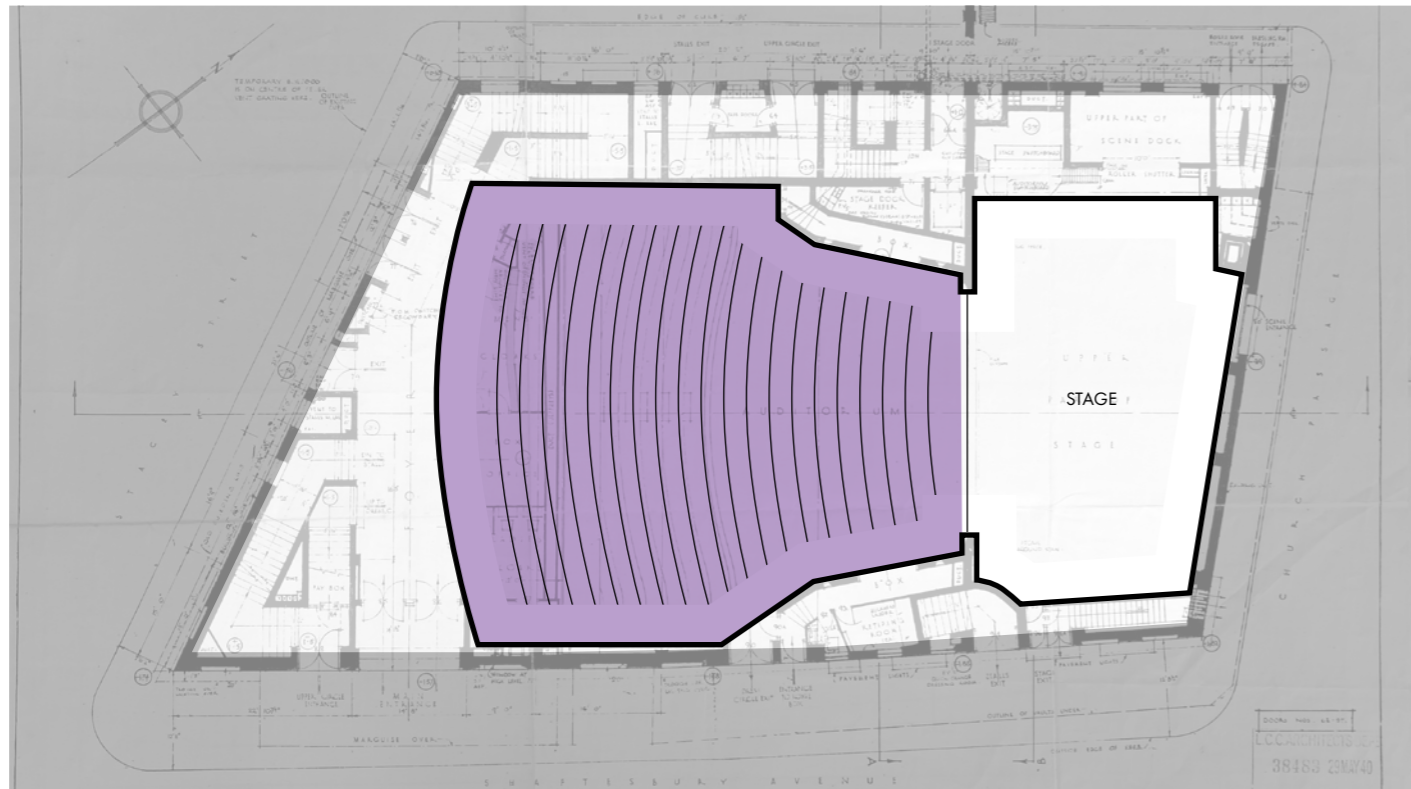
In contrast to the original 1931 layout, which positioned the stage and stalls at Level B1, the proposal moves the stages level further down to Level B3. By moving the stage level to a lower level within the scheme, the new theatre aims to create a more capacious auditorium, fostering an environment that not only accommodates a larger audience but also enhances the overall visitor experience.

At the heart of this design philosophy lies the aspiration to elevate the audience's engagement with performances. The larger auditorium allows for increased seating capacity without compromising sightlines or acoustics. This expansion translates into a more immersive and communal experience for spectators, creating an atmosphere conducive to the shared appreciation of the performing arts. The strategic placement of seating maximizes both intimacy and inclusivity within the larger space, ensuring that each audience member feels an integral part of the performance.

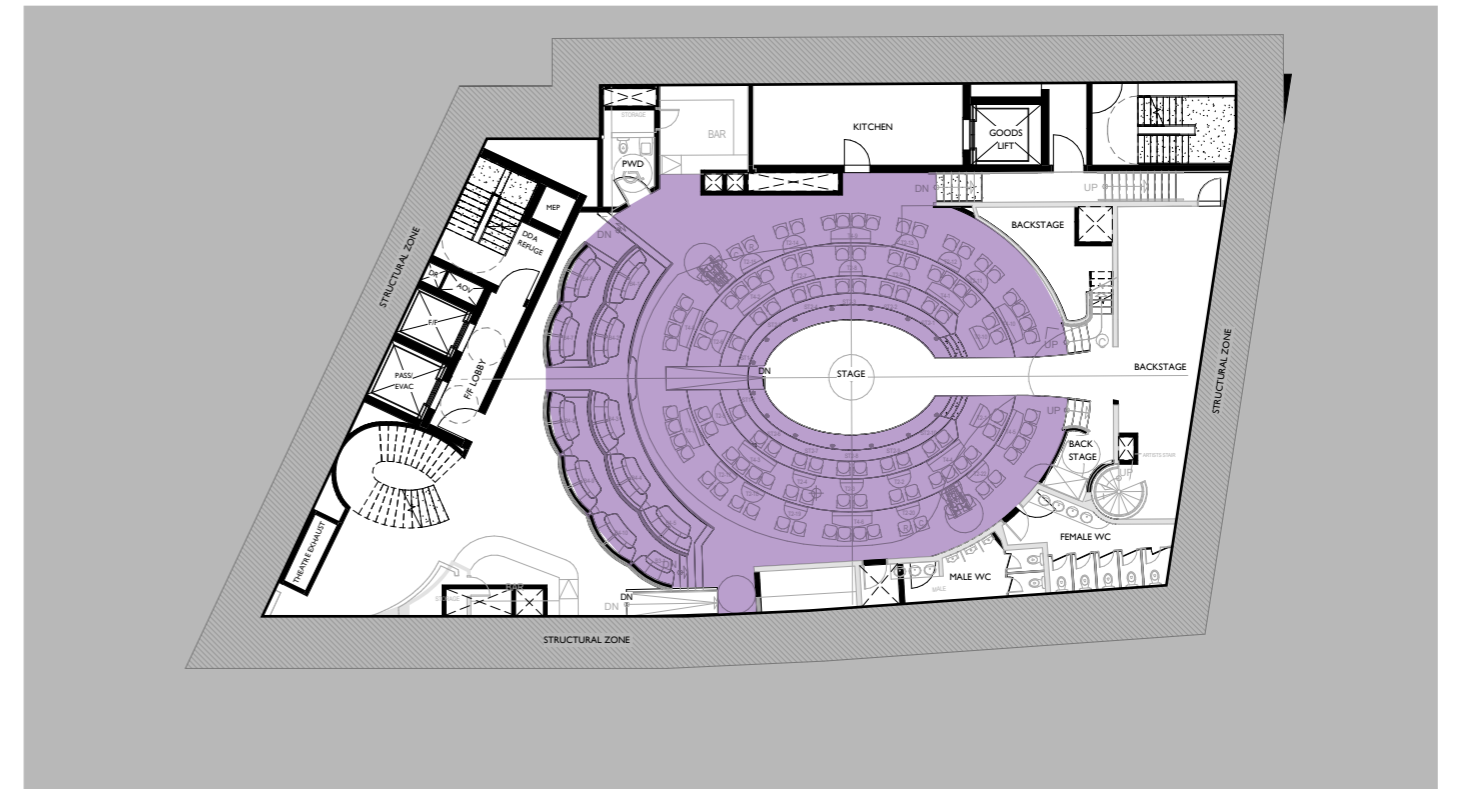
Furthermore, placing the auditorium base at the third basement level not only addresses the scale of the auditorium but also introduces a heightened level of flexibility to the stage and performance space. The modular nature of the design facilitates a dynamic adaptation of the stage, enabling a spectrum of productions to unfold

seamlessly. This versatility aligns with contemporary trends in performing arts, allowing for an array of theatrical and musical performances, ensuring that the new theatre remains a vibrant and adaptive cultural hub.

The repositioning of the original Saville Theatre layout thus emerge as keystones in the creation of a modern venue that seamlessly blends historical charm with functional innovation, offering an enriched experience for both performers and patrons alike.



Indicative Diagram of the 1931 Saville Theatre Level B1



Proposed Level B3 (Stalls)