

4<sup>th</sup> May 2024

**Odeon Cinema (Former Saville Theatre), 135-149 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2H 8AH  
Planning Application - 2024/0993/P and Listed Building Application - 2024/1005/L**

The Covent Garden Area Trust objects to applications 2024/0993/P and 2024/1005/L, relating to the proposed near total demolition and redevelopment of the Odeon Cinema site at 135-149 Shaftesbury Avenue, in the strongest possible terms. The Trust believes that these proposals will cause substantial harm to the special interest and significance of the listed building, and a high level of less-than-substantial harm to the setting of the Seven Dials Conservation Area.

The existing building is listed at Grade II for the high quality of its architectural composition, form, sculptural work and historic interest. The proposed seven-storey extension is taller than the listed building itself – in both height and bulk, this extension would completely overwhelm the ‘restrained and carefully proportioned form’ of the listed building. This proposal would have a heavily detrimental impact on its special interest – its original architectural form would be entirely overpowered by the sheer size and visual weight of the extension above. The aesthetic context of the existing building’s sculptural frieze by artist Gilbert Bayes, which is a key element of the building’s special interest and was designed specifically for this building, would be altogether demeaned by the addition of such an incongruous and oversized extension.

This proposal would lead to serious damage to the architectural and historic integrity of the listed building, through both the massive scale of the unsympathetic upward extension and the loss of all remaining internal structure and features. This would cause a high level of harm to both the listed building and the setting of the Seven Dials Conservation Area. This substantial level of harm has not been justified and there is an absence of potential benefits of such an order that would outweigh such harm. These proposals are therefore contrary to Sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policies D1 and D2 of Camden’s Local Plan. It also does not meet the requirements of NPPF paragraphs 201, 205, 206 and 208. The Covent Garden Area Trust strongly urges its refusal by Camden Council.