

| <b>Application No:</b> | <b>Consultees Name:</b> | <b>Received:</b>    | <b>Comment:</b> | <b>Response:</b>  |
|------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|---|
| 2024/0601/P            | Olly Beckett            | 26/07/2024 13:02:50 | OBJ             | I object to this change. The developer committed to creating a permanent cinema for the community and were therefore granted permission. They should not be permitted to weasel out of this commitment. |

---

| Application No: | Consultees Name: | Received:           | Comment: | Response:  |
|-----------------|------------------|---------------------|----------|--|
| 2024/0601/P     | Alan Morris      | 27/07/2024 23:49:23 | OBJ      | <p>Objection to the submitted application<br/>Application – 2024/0601/P - Site address: 187 Kentish Town Road London Camden NW1 8PD</p> <p>On behalf of: One Prince of Wales Road Residents Association<br/>From: All residents at the above address</p> <p>Number one prince of Wales Road houses 59 flats in the old teaching block of the North West Polytechnic constructed in 1929. The building was converted to residential in 1998, by the architects Allies and Morrison. The subject site (originally the polytechnic assembly hall) has a party wall with our building and forms the corner with Kentish Town Road.</p> <p>Our residents association (along with other local RA's) has been working for many years to try to get the best result for the development of the old assembly hall site. Objections against the first poor quality scheme go back to 2007 with the constructed scheme granted planning in 2015. The building is now finished but the promised cinema on the ground floor is still nowhere to be seen.</p> <p>People's choice<br/>As part of the planning permission granted in March 2015 (following extensive neighbourhood consultation by the developer including meetings with KTNF) the ground floor element of the block was given permission for use as a "Cinema (D2 class)". This followed a vote taken at the exhibition of the developer's scheme where the overwhelming public request was for a new cinema to occupy the space. It was felt strongly that the historically important community use of the site should be able continued. The idea for a cinema recalled also the fact that Kentish Town possessed no less than seven cinemas in the hey-day of moving picture popularity. The developer received the community desire for the cinema positively and proceeded to develop the design to incorporate a community cinema.</p> <p>A long history of community use<br/>This building was an important local meeting place not only for students but also for the visiting public. It was the assembly hall and social meeting place of the North Western Polytechnic opened by the Prince of Wales in 1929 to the designs of the well respected architect W E Riley. Much later the assembly hall was also the students union of the North London Polytechnic and became an integral part of Kentish Town and Camden life for over 40 years. Events were held there and people still to this day remember attending memorable concerts and exhibitions. One notable example was an early gig of the Pretenders in September 1979.</p> <p>Five storeys with a cinema<br/>This was the promise of the developer. Essentially it was in return for building an extra storey a cinema would be provided for the community on the ground floor. But if only four storeys are permitted then the community don't get their cinema. It was as simple as that and it's important to remember that the deal was very clear indeed. The developer was very clear about it and it made commercial sense. So Uplift Properties submitted two schemes for planning in 2015. At committee, permission was given for both schemes, a five storey block with a cinema and a four storey block without a cinema. Camden's planners had recommended approval only for the four storey scheme, and wanted to fail the five storey scheme. After our lobbying (together with KTNF) and also by making a strong representation on the night, the five storey cinema scheme was approved by all councillors against officers' recommendation.....Kentish Town would now get its cinema and the southern part of the High Street would reclaim its identity as a place for the arts and social events, something lost in 1995</p> |

Application No:    Consultees Name:    Received:

Comment:    Response:

when the Polytechnic closed its doors.

A promise not kept

It should not be underestimated that the promise of a cinema was a major factor in gaining permission for the five storey 12 flat block, and on committee night David Kelly (then running Shortwave Cinema in Bermondsey) was present on invitation of the developer (Uplift Properties) and spoke in response to councillors' questions on how the cinema would work in practice. It would be an active part of the community seven days a week as opposed to purely a space for showing films. A multi-use community space with a cinema was the plan. David Kelly subsequently signed an option on a lease agreement with the developer and he remains to this day an enthusiastic supporter for a special kind of community cinema at this site. Uplift Properties however sold on the site during the build to a new developer (Vabel) who have now completed the construction, minus the cinema.

Rio of Dalston

In 2021 David Kelly helped again by putting us in contact with Rio Cinema of Dalston and an article appeared in the CNJ by Dan Carrier, reporting Rio's formal offer to Vabel to negotiate a lease. The developer however said that they had other better options. Three years on, everyone can see that the developer has not produced the much awaited cinema and only a basic concrete shell space is waiting inside. The risk now is that the developer will not deliver the cinema at all, even though the planning permission was very clear that a cinema must occupy the ground floor. The councillors' interest (at committee) in the 60 seat multi-use cinema proposal and the specific questions asked to David Kelly on the night underlines that the vote in favour of the 5 storey scheme was dependent on delivering the cinema, as was promised in the approved application drawings.

Lack of viability?

Uplift Properties never saw the cinema as a high rent ground floor use. They knew it was a purely a community "sweetener" to be provided only because extra flats could be built in the fifth storey and later sold at profit. For the current developer to argue lack of viability for cinema use, as is happening in this application, is completely missing the point. The rest of the block was the viable development and the cinema space was a concession by the developer in exchange for a taller building. Of course it's easy to see why any developer wouldn't want to actually deliver a cinema as was a condition of planning. It would never be as profitable as a host of other potential uses that would have much lower fit-out costs to get up and running. A small cinema provider interested in the 65 seat space would struggle to fund high up-front costs. The shell space is definitely there but it's only a bare structural shell meaning that the cinema up-front costs are very high indeed. It seems inevitable that the developer would eventually seek change of use and this has been the community's widely held fear for the last few years now.

A "multi-use" cinema space

We have always promoted the use of the cinema space as a truly sustainable multi-use Community Cinema that is flexible in hosting many types of community events, something that is most certainly feasible. I enclose an image as published in the CNJ in April of last year that shows a gathering of local residents outside 187 Kentish Town Road to protest about the absence of "our cinema". One resident's placard sums up the hope for this important site "No ordinary cinema - a special community space". Rio Dalston proved to us that it could be done. We visited Community cinemas that are flourishing in several areas of London and it is clear to us that if Camden can keep its word and not flinch on this vital planning condition then it is a real possibility that

| Application No: | Consultees Name: | Received: | Comment: | Response:   |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------|----------|---|
|                 |                  |           |          | <p>the cinema can become a reality. If not then years of community expectation risks withering away without trace..... Just another coffee shop, boxing ring or who knows what? The potential for a vibrant community cinema that can re-establish the historically important creative character of the southern end of the high street will be forgotten.</p> <p>It's now 8 years since the planning condition was imposed. Our community really does deserve to get what was promised after all this time. We sincerely believe a community multi-use cinema space can become a reality if Camden will reject the application and give Kentish Town something special rather than the ordinary..... so typical of nearly every high street these days. Planners and communities can work together to achieve extraordinary things sometimes and this is a case in point. It can really be done here at 187 Kentish Town Road!</p> <p>We urge Camden LPA to refuse this application. The restriction of "D2 Cinema" as was the original condition of planning approval must not be changed. Furthermore any decision on this application must be determined at committee in recognition of the significant public interest in this site as borne out by the weight of objections received.</p> <p>Alan Morris<br/>Chair, and on behalf<br/>1 Prince of Wales Road, Residents Association (1/POWRA)<br/>NW5 3LW</p> |

---

|             |                 |                     |     |  |
|-------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----|--|
| 2024/0601/P | Cllr Meric Apak | 27/07/2024 22:51:41 | OBJ | Please add my objection. A cinema was promised at this location. This is the only reason permission was granted. This application, is granted potentially goes back on that promise. |
|-------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----|--|

---

| Application No: | Consultees Name: | Received:           | Comment: | Response:  |
|-----------------|------------------|---------------------|----------|--|
| 2024/0601/P     | Denise Searle    | 26/07/2024 10:41:54 | COMMNT   | <p>Application – 2024/0601/P</p> <p>Site Address - 187 Kentish Town Road London Camden NW1 8PD</p> <p>I ask Camden Council to reject application 2024/0601/P because they have failed to live up to the spirit of the original 2014 planning permission which specified that a two-storey roof extension could be added in exchange for providing a cinema. This was instead of the alternate application for a one-storey roof extension and no cinema. In granting this application, Camden Council accepted that it was important to the Kentish Town community to be provided with a cultural asset in keeping with the original community and cultural uses provided by the former students' union building of North London Polytechnic on that site.</p> <p>The developer, Vabel, has abided by the letter of the original planning permission in leaving the ground floor of the building unoccupied, but they have not lived up to the spirit of the permission because they did not install a working cinema as part of the development.</p> <p>Vabel have applied for a change of use for the erstwhile cinema space because they say they have been unable to let it. However, according to potential cinema operators contacted by local community groups, they have shown no flexibility regarding the high rent (£90,000 per year) they want to charge for the 235.97 sq m space, which is a shell and would require complete fit-out. Consultations with experienced cinema operators revealed that it would cost between £500,000 and £1 million to fit out the space. Another issue is that Vabel are offering a relatively short lease and have set the freehold at £1 million, despite the slump in commercial property prices.</p> <p>Application 2024/0601/P is for a change of use for the empty ground floor of 187 Kentish Town Road from "Cinema (Sui Generis) to Flexible Use for Cinema (Sui Generis) / Class F.1 / Class F.2 / Class E". The inclusion of Class E in this application is worrying because Class E is a very broad use class that encompasses a wide range of commercial and industrial applications and would almost certainly mean the loss of a community asset.</p> <p>It may be that the empty shell left by Vabel is not attractive to potential cinema operators at the asking price. However, I feel Vabel needs to do more to explore whether flexible use for a cinema or other cultural activities is possible.</p> <p>I therefore ask the Council to refuse this application.</p> |