



MEETING NOTE

Project: **135-149 Shaftesbury Avenue, London**
Meeting: **PPA Pre-Application Meeting 2**
Time/Date: **12:00 – 14:00, 20 June 2017**
Venue: **LB Camden Council**
Present:

- Gideon Whittingham – LB Camden (Planning)
- Alfie Stroud – LB Camden (Conservation and Design)
- Neil McDonald – LB Camden (Team Leader)
- Freya Turtle – Icení Projects
- Nick Spall – Icení Projects
- Laurie Handcock - Icení Heritage
- Carlos Gonzalez – Jestico and Whiles
- James Dilley – Jestico and Whiles
- Haim Danous – Client (Capital Start Ltd)
- Sue Wheldon - Client Representative

KEY FEEDBACK FROM OFFICERS

1. The retention of the cinema use is welcomed and the principle of hotel and restaurant development is acceptable in planning policy terms, subject to matters relating to design/heritage and residential amenity impact to neighbouring properties.
2. The original pre-application advice (dated December 2016) set out how a full length 2-3 storey roof extension could potentially be appropriate subject to quality of design. The latest proposal at 5.5 storeys is not considered appropriate.
3. It was acknowledged that the original pre-application advice highlighted that significant additional height could be achieved if asymmetrical, set-back and exceptional design. However, the position now is that 2-3 storeys is likely to be the most appropriate scale of development if it proven to not be feasible or appropriate to work within the existing building envelope. This is still subject to the acceptability of numerous matters that need to be carefully considered and assessed, including a lightweight and subordinate appearance/character and its relationship with the listed building. Furthermore, such scale cannot be considered in the absence of a viability case.
4. Officers noted the urban design / townscape case that, assuming the existing building in fact had no heritage / retention value, a replacement new building of the scale previously suggested would appear reasonable in streetscape and townscape terms at this location in Shaftesbury Avenue. However, the heritage constraints borne by the presence of the listed building is an overriding consideration, meaning the scale of development that can be achieved on the site is more challenging.
5. The proposed form helps remove massing above the entrance, which is agreed to be a feature of heritage significance.

6. It still needs to be demonstrated that the existing use and form of the building as solely a cinema is not viable and also that an appropriate proposed development that works within the existing envelope of the building (e.g. remodelled cinema with restaurant) is not viable. From this baseline, it should then be possible to consider what other uses and level of additional roof-top massing are appropriate to ensure viability and to also be acceptable in heritage/design terms.
7. The failing nature of the existing Odeon cinema was noted by all, with very low visitor numbers and only 5 staff members being currently employed. The mixed use scheme would greatly enhance entertainment provision, tourism potential and local employment.
8. It was agreed that a viability case needs to be prepared and presented for the next pre-application meeting. It was acknowledged that a full viability report may not be feasible nor reasonable to provide at this stage of pre-application discussions but that some level of viability information would be necessary in order to progress discussions.

ACTIONS

1. Gideon and Alfie to list what level and sort of information they would need to see ahead of the next pre-application in regards to viability and proving that it is not viable or appropriate to develop within the existing building envelope.
2. Development Team to re-assess the proposed design ahead of the next pre-application discussion, particularly in regards to scale.
3. Development Team to collate information to form a reliable viable case to present and inform discussions at the next pre-application meeting.
4. Date for third Pre-Application Meeting to be scheduled.