



**THE RECOGNISED ASSOCIATION REPRESENTING
THE INTERESTS OF BARBICAN RESIDENTS**

The City Planning Officer
Department of Planning and Transportation
City of London
PO Box 270
Guildhall
London
EC2P 2EJ

14 February 2011

For the attention of Rob Chipperfield

Dear Sir,

Barbican Exhibition Hall 1 - Internal and external alterations to include the installation of new external facade cladding in lieu of existing and new plant equipment alterations for internal enabling works – 10/00874/FULLR3

I write on behalf of the Barbican Association to object in respect of the above planning application.

The Barbican Association does not object in principle to the location of cinemas in the exhibition hall. However, we believe this permission should be granted with conditions that will ensure the proposed use does not reduce the residential amenity enjoyed by Barbican residents.

Cinemas 2 and 3 of the Barbican Arts Centre were operated in Frobisher Crescent until recently when they were closed due to concerns about leakage of noise to the residence above. This proposal seeks to locate the cinemas below another residence. We have had a meeting with the applicant's sound engineers Arup and we accept that it should be possible to create these new cinemas in this location while avoiding noise leakage (both air borne and structure borne). However, it was also made clear that the execution of the construction must be well done and the cinema must be operated within certain parameters to deliver a cinema without noise leakage. Given this we believe that approval must be based upon active noise monitoring. We also believe that certain other conditions are necessary to preserve the residential amenity of the Barbican residents.

We therefore propose the following conditions:

- 1) That explicit maximum allowed levels be specified for sound within the two new cinemas.
- 2) That the completed cinemas be tested by playing sounds in the cinemas at the specified maximum sound levels and that the expected attenuation is achieved for both air borne and structure borne sound. The sound tests should use at least generated single tones stepping through every note of every octave in the human hearing range and pink noise and a sample loud film trailer all to be played at the specified maximum sound level or to peak at that level in the case of the trailer. During the test or tests the sound clip should be played in a loop over a period of time such that residents of flats above and around the cinemas can move about and listen from various locations within their flats and around the estate.
- 3) That there be active multi-point monitoring of structure borne sound over the operational life of the cinema and that this monitoring system be fully functioning in order that the cinema may be operated. The data from the monitoring system shall be available and viewable at all times to at least all residents of homes above and around the cinema in a form and format which does not require purchase of licenses.
- 4) That there be active monitoring of air borne sound within the cinema complex to monitor areas for which there are specified sound level limits.
- 5) NAVIGATIONAL "TOTEM" / DIRECTIONAL ARROW
 - a. Whilst we agree that there should be a wayfinding aid at the corner of Beech and Whitecross Streets, we object to the particular proposed design of this wayfinding arrow as people may be tempted to sit on the large shelf that it provides or leave bottles, cans, cups and other rubbish on it. It should, at minimum, have a curved top surface. Also, the current "Tree" signage includes pointers to other destinations and any wayfinding aid(s) should include the destinations currently indicated.
- 6) OTHER SIGNAGE
 - a. We object to the very large "cinema 1" and "cinema 2" signs proposed for the north elevation. These signs are likely to lead to confusion as they are not mounted on doors that lead into the cinema complex, and they may lead to people coming down Whitecross Street not recognising that they are entering a residential area.
- 7) MAIN DOOR

- a. The applicant proposes one set of doors for the main entrance to the cinema foyer etc. In consultation we indicated that we believed that TWO successive door sets were necessary, primarily to ensure that as little sound as possible (from patrons, announcements and trailers) leaks out and disturbs residents (including children) across the road in Cromwell Tower and above in Ben Jonson House. Two door sets would also increase the thermal efficiency of the foyer, particularly when you take into account not only the large volume of pedestrian traffic passing the entrance doors (but not entering through them) but also the high winds that sometimes occur in that location, across the road from the 40+ storey Cromwell Tower.

8) FACADES

- a. All of the exterior aluminium or steel or stainless steel metalwork, including doors, louvre panels, screens and fascia boards, should be coloured. This will be in conformity to the rest of the Estate where metal is painted.

9) LIGHTING

- a. We have read the technical lighting report. The consultants did not visit any of the flats in Cromwell Tower which face on to the site of the proposed development and do not offer any estimate of the increase in light that will reach bedroom windows (including those of children). We would like to remind you of the particular design of Barbican balconies with their painted white soffits. As a result, we believe that no glazed facade, apart from necessary signage for the cinema and the two retail units, should be backlit or have images back-projected on to it. And any lighting should be white only. We note that much of the proposed upper storey glazing has either voids or a storage room behind it. This will reduce light spillage in what is a residential area and avoid nuisance, thus protecting residential amenity of the flats above and nearby. We believe if this area is over illuminated, as in the proposal, cinema patrons and other pedestrians may not recognise the residential aspect of the area.

10) PLANT ROOMS

- a. The plant rooms (on the ground floor, mezzanine floor and in the basement car park) and the associated equipment must be designed, installed and mounted in such a manner that all resulting noise, including structurally borne noise and vibrations, is less than the background noise and vibration, twenty four hours per day, seven days a week. The plant in the basement car park must be enclosed in such a manner that no sound or

vibration can escape from it, enter the service ducts that lead to the flats above and then enter the flats. We have read the “Acoustic Strategy” in the “Technical Report”. It makes no mention of the plant that is to be in the Plant Room on the mezzanine level on the south side (Beech Street frontage) of the proposed complex, from whence any sound may disturb residents of Cromwell Tower and Ben Jonson House. This must be remedied.

11) DISABLED WCs AND THE CHANGING PLACES

- a. The building and fitting out, and opening to the public of the two Disabled WCs as well as the “Changing Places” should be an express condition.

12) ONSITE MANAGEMENT AND CONSTRUCTION NOISE

- a. The applicant proposes site hours of 0800 – 1800 Mon – Fri and 0900 -1400 Sat “to comply with City of London code of practice” (Barbican Cinema – Visitor Management Strategy Plan, p. 7) As these works are taken place within a building that is part of the Barbican RESIDENTIAL Estate, with a high probability of structurally borne and other noise penetrating flats, particularly during the demolition and heavy construction phases, we believe that the work hours and noisy work time should be the Barbican hours, not the city hours.
- b. agree a construction protocol with residents and others affected by the construction work that incorporates the best-practice modes of operation outlined in the City’s Code of Practice for Deconstruction and Construction sites, including noise and vibration monitoring.

Yours faithfully

Randall K Anderson
Chairman, Barbican Association Planning Committee