



The Curzon Community Cinema 46 Old Church Road Clevedon North Somerset BS21 6NN

RESTORATION UPDATE

In December 2003 the Curzon withdrew its bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), on advice both from HLF and our project team.

They advised that, given the size and complexity of the planned restoration project we needed to provide additional supporting material.

With encouragement from HLF, in the summer of 2004 we submitted a successful application to HLF for a Project Planning Grant (PPG). The Board believes this was clear evidence of the commitment in principle by HLF to the Curzon Restoration Project.

- Using the PPG and grants from Clevedon Town Council and Portishead & North Weston Parish Council and the Curzon's own resources work was commissioned to look at a range of issues including audience development and access the cinema's heritage and conservation needs, a business plan and fundraising.

Most of this work has now been completed and the Board has been taking time to review them and take stock before deciding on the next steps towards the Curzon restoration.

The Curzon Board met with the project team in February 2005 to discuss the latest estimated project costs, to explore areas where there might be scope for reducing costs and to consider the project staging scenarios and options. This was an extremely useful meeting, and provided the Board with the information it needed to make decisions on the phasing and funding of the project.

The Board has given a lot of attention to the question of both the phasing of the development and the elements within the completed scheme. It has recognised that its decisions have to reflect the project team's professional advice and the likely availability of funding streams. It has looked constructively at ways to both conserve and develop the heritage project, in addition to identifying a programme for raising the necessary capital for the restoration and renovation of the building, seeking to have the Curzon's historic, national and international importance properly recognised.

The Board met on 5th April 2005 and has unanimously settled on its preferred phased development framework and re-affirmed the principle elements of the original restoration scheme. This includes the construction of the new Educational Lecture

Theatre to support the charity's Community Education Programme and provision of accommodation for an expanded Heritage Archive Collection.

The proposed phased development framework is as follows:

- Preliminary Phase:** Application for Development Funding from HLF
- Phase One:** Roof Structure
- Phase Two:** Construction of Educational Lecture Theatre, and refurbishment of 'stable block'
- Phase Three:** Restoration of main auditorium, screen and metal panelling (excluding fit-out of Grand Circle & restoration of side boxes)
- Phase Four:** Restoration and fit-out of Grand Circle, boxes and installation of lift and staircase access to upper floors (includes construction of atrium foyer, subject to availability of funding)
- Phase Five:** Restoration of Oak Room Café and windows, creation of top floor conference suite (would include atrium foyer if not constructed under Phase Four).
- Phase Six:** Façade and stonework and restoration of shop units.

The next stage is to consult on this initial phasing framework with the project team, in order to develop its thinking on the detailed elements of the principal project stages and how these would be managed. The project team would then be commissioned to prepare a revised cost estimates on this basis.

The Board will then meet with both English Heritage and HLF's Regional Development Team to outline initial proposals and to seek early feedback. This is seen as a vital element in preparing the final project brief that would form a Stage One funding application to HLF. The Board see this consultation stage as the first of many opportunities for key stakeholders to comment on the project outline and to influence the content of the Stage One funding application.

We believe that the total cost of the project as outlined above will be in the order of £5m. The requirement to match funding from the Lottery will be very demanding. A phased approach will enable us to manage our fundraising more effectively. The Board is keen to make sure that it can move forward confidently at each key stage of the restoration project, which means testing preparedness and capacity at each major juncture. The Board will work with professional experts, English Heritage and HLF to prepare and execute each stage of the project.

The Board are committed to remaining in constant communication with HLF and English Heritage throughout the process, providing space and opportunity for regular dialogue and consultation.

Chris Brain
Chair, Curzon Clevedon Community Centre for the Arts

8 April 2005