

Ladywell Playtower Cinema

Proposal

Our vision is to reimagine the Ladywell Playtower as a publicly accessible leisure destination for the Borough of Lewisham. In response to strong local demand and drawing upon the original concept for the building which saw the First Class Pool Hall seasonally decked over for use as an entertainment venue, we propose to reopen the Playtower as a three screen cinema, complete with freely accessible public events foyer and complementary café, bar and restaurant uses.

Community Benefit

The key benefit of the proposal is to reinstate the long established use of the building as a public events space at the heart of the community. A swift and highly visible regeneration process will be informed by workshops and public engagement events so that our team can understand what the past, present and future of the Playtower means to this community.

Key benefits include:

- Saving and restoring the endangered heritage of the Playtower
- Meeting pent-up local demand for a cinema in the Borough
- Creation of a new local destination, a place for the community to gather
- 27 full-time equivalent new jobs, which never pay less than the Living Wage
- Multiplier effect of benefits to local economy
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The project will generate an activity programme, which ensures that the offer is accessible to a wide range of audience groups:

- Creating sustainable links with the local and wider community through programmed activities
- Cross-generational events and workshop, with bespoke activities for different audiences
- Upskilling opportunities for volunteers
- Behind the scenes guided tours
- Film project to record and bring back to life local oral histories, memories and archive material

Deliverability

A compelling vision is a necessity for any project, but is lost without a team possessing the track record and capacity to deliver it. Our key team members and their relevant achievements to date include:

Architect: Pringle Richards Sharratt

PRS are the visionary architects behind the re-creation of numerous derelict, under-used or under-appreciated historic buildings as vibrant community, arts and cultural facilities all across London, including the award winning Black Cultural Archives in Brixton and the William Morris Gallery in Walthamstow.

Operator: Curzon Cinemas

Curzon cinema is acclaimed for its dedication to heritage led, community asset projects. The proposal for Ladywell Playtower builds upon Curzon's experience in establishing successful partnerships with communities in London and throughout the UK.

Developer: Guildmore

Guildmore have the team, the experience and the resources to transform neglected heritage buildings into award winning destinations at the heart of community life, including the award winning Poplar Baths in Tower Hamlets, which Guildmore saved from 30 years of dereliction and reinstated as a thriving leisure centre for the local community.

Our model for the project envisages the construction of 'enabling development' - a mix of residential, nursery and supported living uses across the remainder of the site. The receipt from this development will be adequate to fund the cinema development, without relying on external sources of support such as Heritage Lottery Funding. This approach, combined with our relevant experience, gives the Council and the local community confidence in our ability to begin rapidly and complete the project within our projected timeframe.



Above: View of Ladywell Playtower Cinema from Ladywell Road