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**Rutland County Council**

Catmose,  
Oakham,  
Rutland  
LE15 6HP

Application:	<b>2021/0855/FUL</b>	<b>ITEM 3</b>	
Proposal:	<b>The refurbishment and conversion of the Victoria Hall to a 2 Screen digitally equipped cinema with a cafe bar, foyers, multi-use 'lounge' and ancillary facilities.</b>		
Address:	<b>Victoria Hall 39A High Street Oakham Rutland LE15 6AH</b>		
Applicant:	<b>Rutland Kino</b>	Parish	<b>Oakham Town Council</b>
Agent:	<b>Philip Meadowcroft Architects</b>	Ward	<b>Oakham NE Ward</b>
Reason for presenting to Committee:	<b>Locally significant application</b>		
Date of Committee:	<b>2 November 2021</b>		
Determination Date:	<b>3 November 2021</b>		
Agreed Extension of Time Date:	<b>3 November 2021</b>		

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposed development of a cinema within the Primary Shopping Frontage of Oakham High Street would be in general accord with the requirements of CS1, CS7, CS17, SP1 and SP12 given that Oakham town centre is considered to be a sustainable location where such leisure facilities are actively encouraged. Whilst concern has been raised about the loss of a public facility the proposal would still maintain a public facility appropriate to the town centre location and the loss of the dance hall and exhibition space is not considered sufficient reason to warrant refusal of the application. The proposed development would preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the host listed building. The proposed development is therefore considered acceptable and policy compliant.

## RECOMMENDATION

### APPROVAL,

1. The development shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.  
Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown in the following listed documents or on the submitted plans listed below:  
  
Heritage statement dated July 2021  
Noise Impact Assessment dated 30.6.2021  
drawing No 2102-122  
drawing No 2102-102 REV B

drawing No 2102-103 REV B  
drawing No 2102-105 REV A  
drawing No 2102-107 REV B  
drawing No 2102-000A  
drawing No 210157-X-SK-C-0003  
drawing No 2102-08  
drawing No 2102-106 REV A  
drawing No 2102-108  
drawing No 2102-112 REV A  
drawing No 2102-113 REV A  
drawing No 2102-114  
drawing No 2102-115 REV A  
drawing No 2102-116  
drawing No 2102-117 REV A  
drawing No 2102-118  
drawing No 2102-119  
drawing No 2102-120  
drawing No 2102-121  
drawing No 2102-130  
drawing No 2102-131  
drawing No SK-001 REV P1  
drawing No SK-002 REV P2  
drawing No 2102-104A  
drawing No  
drawing No  
drawing No

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. Before any works hereby approved commence large scale details of the following items shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:

- Large scale details of proposed glazed entrance lobby (including fixings).
- Large scale details of proposed handrails to the step at the front entrance (including fixings).
- Large scale details of proposed film poster display boxes (including fixings).
- Large scale details of proposed high level LEDs to be affixed to underside of cornice (including fixings).
- Large scale details of the proposed signage to be installed on the existing canopy (including fixings)
  
- A schedule and annotated plans/drawings to a scale of not less than 1:20 showing the full extent of the works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and no works shall be undertaken except in accordance with these details.

Reason: in the interests of preserving the historic character of the listed building in accordance with Policy CS22 of the Rutland Core Strategy (2011) and Policy SP20 of the Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document (2014).

4. Prior to any works commencing precise details of the location for the careful storage of any doors to be removed as part of the works hereby approved shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The doors shall be carefully stored and made available for inspection on request by the Local Planning Authority. The doors shall be stored in perpetuity unless

reinstalled in the Hall or as otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: in the interests of preserving the historic character of the listed building in accordance with Policy CS22 of the Rutland Core Strategy (2011) and Policy SP20 of the Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document (2014).

5. Before the use of the cinema commences the noise mitigation measures set out in the Noise Impact Assessment shall be fully implemented and the noise rating at noise-sensitive-receptors: NSR1 is 41dBLAr and NSR2 is 52 dBLAr (in accordance with section 4.7 External Plant Noise Emissions Limits set out in the submitted Noise Impact Assessment) once installed a verification test shall be undertaken and the results submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to show that the insulation has achieved the acceptable sound level (in accordance with British Standard BS8233:2014 (Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings). The insulation shall then be retained in perpetuity.

Reason: To ensure that an acceptable sound level for units above the site is achieved and retained, in the interest of their amenity.

6. The uses hereby approved shall not take place other than between the hours of 07:00 and 23:00 on any day.

Reason: In order to protect the residential amenity of the occupiers of properties in close proximity to the site.

## Site & Surroundings

1. The application site relates to the Victoria Hall which is a Grade II Listed Building located in the centre of Oakham town centre on High Street. The building is two storey hall constructed from ashlar stone.
2. The site is surrounded by commercial, retail, recreation and residential land uses. The closest residential properties include Oakham School boarding flats to the rear of the hall and the residential flats located in the internal courtyard accessed via High Street to the east of the hall.
3. The application site is located within Oakham Conservation Area

## Proposal

4. The application proposes to convert the Victoria Hall into a boutique cinema. It is proposed to install 2 screens with 89 seats in one auditorium and 30 in the other. It is also proposed to have two further spaces which can be used to complement other community activities. The two screens will show the latest films as well as more specialised content including independent, classic and world cinema releases, and live screenings of theatre, music and opera productions. The smaller auditorium can cater to parents/carers and babies; retired persons; kids clubs and will be available for private hire. Both screens will be fully accessible and will be serviced by a lift.
5. Complementing the cinema will be a café seating 40 which will offer locally sourced meals and drinks throughout the day: coffees and pastries, sharing boards, small plates and a range of wines, beers and soft drinks.
6. The applicants have indicated that the proposal is to provide a new space for the community to enjoy films, lectures (working with U3A and Arts Society) or simply

time with friends. Throughout the day, the space can cater to different audiences from parents and babies in the mornings, pensioners at lunch and working families in the evenings. At weekends, kids clubs and films for teenagers can also make up the programme. The versatile lounge space can be reconfigured for different groups such as film or book clubs, knitting groups or simply private hire.

7. The proposed works to the building include the following:

- Limited change to the High Street frontage
- Main entrance doors are retained with a glazed screen with automatic doors installed in the entrance hall
- Black metal hand rails will be installed to both sides of the existing steps
- There is also a step free access from Church Street for wheelchair users
- The existing canopy is retained and adapted
- The existing display boards will be replaced with two double quad film poster display boxes
- There are no proposed changes to the ground and first floor windows
- Internal acoustic upgrading is proposed along with additional secondary glazing
- A number of internal alterations are also proposed including the removal of several doorways. The majority of the alterations are reversible.
- Installation of two new screens within the existing hall

## **Relevant Planning History**

No relevant planning history

## **Planning Guidance and Policy**

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019**

Chapter 2 - Achieving sustainable development  
Chapter 4 - Decision-making  
Chapter 6 - Building a strong, competitive economy  
Chapter 7 - Ensuring the vitality of town centres  
Chapter 9 - Promoting sustainable transport  
Chapter 12 - Achieving well-designed places  
Chapter 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

### **Site Allocations and Policies DPD (2014)**

SP1 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development  
SP12 - Town Centre Area, Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages  
SP15 - Design and Amenity  
SP20 - The Historic Environment

### **Core Strategy DPD (2011)**

CS01 - Sustainable Development Principles  
CS02 - The Spatial Strategy  
CS04 - The Location of Development  
CS07 - Delivering Socially Inclusive Communities  
CS13 - Employment & Economic Development  
CS17 - Town Centres & Retailing  
CS18 - Sustainable Transport & Accessibility  
CS19 - Promoting Good Design

## Consultee Comments

8. **Parish Consultation** the application be refused on the grounds that the town would be losing a significant local facility
9. **Ecology Unit** LRERC Bat Protocol JAN 2021\_draft.pdf
10. **Ecology Unit** The development site is located in the centre of Oakham on a busy road lit by street lighting. There is limited bat foraging habitat in the vicinity of the development site. It is therefore unlikely the building would support roosting bats. In addition it appears from the plans that the roof space and the roofline of the existing building will be unaffected by the works. On this occasion a bat survey is not required, however I recommend the applicant reviews the information provided in the Bat Protocol I have uploaded as a separate document, and the following note to applicant is added to any planning permission granted:
- 'The property may be suitable for roosting bats, which are protected by law from harm. The applicant should ensure that all contractors and individuals working on the property are aware of this possibility, as works must cease if bats are found during the course of the works whilst expert advice from a bat ecologist is obtained. Bats are particularly associated with the roof structure of buildings, including lofts, rafters, beams, gables, eaves, soffits, flashing, ridge-tile, chimneys, the under-tile area, etc. but may also be present in crevices in stone or brickwork and in cavity walls'.
- The site is in a 'Swift Alert Area' where swift have been recorded in the recent past; as a planning condition I recommend installation of 1 group of 3 boxes/bricks in a suitable position. Further guidance on this can be found here [https://www.swift-conservation.org/Leaflet\\_1\\_Swifts\\_Nest-boxes\\_at\\_Your\\_Home-small.pdf](https://www.swift-conservation.org/Leaflet_1_Swifts_Nest-boxes_at_Your_Home-small.pdf) The locations of these should be marked on the plans, details of box specification provided, and photographs submitted after they have been installed to enable the condition to be discharged.
- Please let me know if you require any further information.
- Kind regards  
Donna
- Donna Oxbrough  
Senior Planning Ecologist  
Leicestershire County Council  
County Hall  
Leicester  
LE3 8RA
- 0116 305 0577 / 0116 305 1087  
[donna.oxbrough@leics.gov.uk](mailto:donna.oxbrough@leics.gov.uk)
11. **Highways** Thank you for the additional information, which I have now read through, and can confirm that the LHA are now satisfied that the development will not result in a

severe impact when comparing with the existing use of the site. The LHA therefore withdraw our holding objection and request for further information.

If you are minded to approve the application, please could you append the following informatives:-

Penalty for Depositing on the Highway - Section 148, Sub-Sec C Highways Act 1980

It is an offence to deposit anything including building materials or debris on a highway which may cause interruption to any user of the highway (including footways and verges). In the event that a person is found guilty of this offence, a penalty may be imposed in the form of a fine. It is the responsibility of the developer and contractor(s) to ensure that no building materials or debris are placed on or remain within the highway during or after the construction period.

Removal of Deposits on the Highway - Section 149 Highways Act 1980

If anything is so deposited on a highway as to constitute a nuisance, the Local Highway Authority may by notice require the person who deposited it there to remove it forthwith and if he fails to comply the Local Highway Authority may make a complaint to a Magistrates Court for a Removal and Disposal Order. In the event that the deposit is considered to constitute a danger, the Local Highway Authority may remove the deposit forthwith and recover reasonable expenses from the person who made the deposit. It is the responsibility of the developer and contractor(s) to ensure that no building materials or debris are placed on or remain within the highway during or after the construction period.

12. **Public Protection**

Initial holding objection subject to clarification on noise assessment, however as the information has been provided public protection are now satisfied and have removed their holding objection.

Additional comments:

The two main source of sound that had the potential to have a significant adverse impact to nearby noise sensitive receptors from the proposed development were from the new mechanical plant and noise break-out from the cinema. The first step was to calculate an acceptable sound rating for the new mechanical plant required to operate the cinema, such as air conditioning units and kitchen extract fans. These rating levels would be calculated for the noise sensitive receptors likely to be adversely affected by the sound. There are noise sensitive receptors very close to the development. These were correctly identified as noise-sensitive-receptors (NSR): NSR-1 Oakham School Multi-storey accommodation and NSR-2 a residential flat. In order to assess the potential impact of the development on the noise sensitive receptors, we asked the developer to provide a BS:4142:2014 noise assessment. The assessment measures the current sound levels (such as the current background noise levels) in the area from which suitable noise ratings can be calculated that ensure the amenity of the closest residential properties are not significantly adversely affected. The sound levels recorded reflect the fact the location of the development is on the High Street of Oakham and there are a number of other commercial establishments in the vicinity.

The following noise rating of at noise-sensitive-receptors: NSR1 is 41dB(L)Ar and NSR2 is 52 dB(L)Ar. These should be conditioned and once the work is completed a verification sound test is undertaken to verify that the noise rating levels have not been exceeded. The sometime test should be reported to the Local Planning

Authority for approval, prior to the commencement of the new use, please condition this. There is older existing plant at the Victoria Hall and it is expected the new plant will be quieter than the existing leading to an improvement in the soundscape.

The calculation of impact on the neighbourhood was based on the operating times of the cinema (including plant operate) of between 07:00-23:00 and it being closed between 23:00 to 07:00. We therefore, recommend in order to protect amenity of the area, that these hours of operation are specified in a condition.

The second potential noise issue was the noise break-out from the cinema itself. The cinema proposed sound insulation works contained in the report to prevent noise-break in, including upgrades to the windows this would be sufficient as long as these are undertaken. If the insulation work is undertaken as specified, the calculation show that noise break-out will be below the Day-Time (07:00 – 23:00) background noise and therefore this will have a low impact on nearby properties. I would advise a condition is attached requiring that the upgrades to sound insulation are documented and confirmed in writing for the local planning authority's approval prior to commencement of the new use. On this basis we remove our holding objection to this development.

13. **Conservation Officer**

Victoria Hall is an early C19, Grade II Listed building fronting the north side of High Street. It is within the Oakham Conservation Area.

It was originally known as The Agricultural Hall, its purpose to serve as a meeting place and library for Rutland's farming community. Its name was changed in to the current Victoria Hall. It has since been used as a multi-purpose venue for various events.

Consent is now sought for alterations to accommodate two cinema screens, one with 80 seats the other with 30, on the first floor of the building. The remainder of the building will continue to host other, non-cinema, related events

Whilst I have no objection in principle to the proposal, I am concerned that several doors are to be removed and no assessment has been provided to confirm they are of historic significance or not. I would have expected such an analysis (including photos) as part of the HIA and, if Consent were to be granted for their removal, details of where they are to be "*carefully stored*".

Subject to the submission of satisfactory further information on the doors it is proposed to remove, I can see no objection to the proposal from a Conservation point of view as the proposed alterations will not harm the historic significance of the building and the character and appearance of this part of the Conservation Area will be preserved.

I suggest that conditions relating to the following should be imposed:

- Large scale details of proposed glazed entrance lobby (including fixings).
- Large scale details of proposed handrails to the step at the front entrance (including fixings).
- Large scale details of proposed film poster display boxes (including fixings).
- Large scale details of proposed high level LEDs to be affixed to underside of cornice (including fixings).
- Large scale details of the proposed signage to be installed on the existing canopy (including fixings). The illuminated sign would also require Advertisement Consent.

The existing planters on the front of the building do not appear to have Consent and should therefore be removed.

## **Neighbour Comments**

14. The application has been advertised in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement and 59 letters of support have been received and these are summarised below:

- Positive facility for Oakham Town Centre
- Great new facility for the community
- Would provide a much needed attraction
- Vital if Oakham is going to develop
- Would bring people to the town and support the economy
- Would reduce the distance people have to travel to see films
- The proposal will not have a significant impact on the listed building

In addition 27 letters of objection have been received and can be summarised as below:

- Loss of existing facility
- Loss of dance hall and exhibition area
- Enough coffee shops in the town already
- One of the few remaining multi use facilities in the town
- This building is an important part of the community
- Health and safety grounds as stairs are difficult for older customers
- Impact on heritage asset (Listed Building)

The full neighbour comments are attached at the end of this report.

## **Officer Evaluation**

### Neighbourhood Plan

15. Oakham & Barleythorpe has been designated as a Neighbourhood Plan area and an Independent Examiner has been appointed to examine the plan; it does not carry any material planning weight at this stage.

### Principle of the use

16. Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy seeks to support sustainable development that helps to create safe and healthy communities and meet the needs of the local economy. The policy seeks to encourage new development in the most sustainable locations, primarily in the towns and local service centres. The policy also supports the enhancement of the role of Oakham as the main service centre serving the villages in Rutland for shopping, employment and local services.

17. Policy SP1 also indicates that the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

18. Policy CS7 supports development proposals and activities that protect, retain or enhance the provision, quality or accessibility of existing community, education, leisure and cultural facilities that meet the diverse needs of all members of the community.
19. Proposals involving the loss of services and facilities, such as schools, nurseries, village halls, village shops, post offices, public houses, places of worship and health services will not be supported unless an alternative facility to meet local needs is available that is both equally accessible and of benefit to the community or all options for continued use have been fully explored and none remain that would be financially viable.
20. Policy CS7 also states that development should take account of the needs and requirements of all people in the community, including people with disabilities or special needs, elderly people, and young people. Appropriate measures or adaptations should be included where necessary.
21. Policy CS13 supports amongst other things the provision of a greater range of employment opportunities focused on high skilled, knowledge based, leisure and tourism industries in the county.
22. Policy CS17 states that the vitality and viability of the town centres will be maintained and enhanced so they continue to provide a range of retail, leisure and business uses. This will be achieved by amongst other things:
  - a) supporting the following hierarchy of town centres: Oakham: Main Town Centre – serving the whole of Rutland
  - b) focussing main town centre uses in the defined town centres.
  - c) supporting suitable proposals for the development of the 'evening economy' and complementary leisure uses
23. Policy SP12 seeks to protect primary shopping frontages and indicates that proposals for non A1 uses in the primary shopping frontages will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that the proposal: a) will not result in an adverse cluster of non-retail A1 uses in the primary shopping frontage; b) will retain a 'shop-like' appearance with an active frontage; c) will not harm the predominantly retail character of the primary shopping frontage, and d) will provide a direct service to the public
24. The proposed development would not result in any significant impact on the Primary Shopping Frontage as the building would maintain its appearance and use as a public leisure facility appropriate to a town centre location.
25. The proposed development would be located within the Primary Shopping Frontage of Oakham High Street and would therefore be in general accord with the requirements of CS1, CS7, CS17, SP1 and SP12 given that Oakham town centre is considered to be a sustainable location where such leisure facilities are actively encouraged. Whilst concern has been raised about the loss of a public facility the proposal would still maintain a public facility appropriate to the town centre location and the loss of the dance hall and exhibition space is not considered sufficient reason to warrant refusal of the application.

Impact of the use on the character of the area

26. Policy CS19 sets out the criteria against which the design quality of new developments will be assessed against and states that all new development will be expected to contribute positively to local distinctiveness and sense of place, being appropriate and sympathetic to its setting in terms of scale, height, density, layout, appearance, materials, and its relationship to adjoining buildings and landscape features, and shall not cause unacceptable effects by reason of visual intrusion, overlooking, shading, noise, light pollution or other adverse impact on local character and amenities.
27. Policy SP15 sets out additional criteria against which new developments designs are assessed.
28. The proposed external alterations are relatively minor and will not have any significant impact on the character and appearance of the street scene or on the host listed building. It is therefore considered that the design of the proposed alterations complies with the requirements of policies CS19 and SP15.

#### Heritage

29. The Local Planning Authority is required to ensure that special regard to preserving the Listed Buildings and their settings in relation to Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the 'Act').
30. The Local Planning Authority is required to ensure that with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area, through the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 at Section 72.
31. Furthermore, the importance of considering the impact of development on the significance of designated heritage assets is expressed in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2021). The NPPF advises that development and alterations to designated assets and their settings can cause harm. These policies ensure the protection and enhancement of the historic buildings and environments. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance should be treated favourably.
32. Policy CS22 and SP20 seek to ensure that the quality and character of the built and historic environment is conserved and enhanced. All developments, projects and activities are expected to protect and where possible enhance historic assets and their settings, maintain local distinctiveness and the character of identified features. Development should respect the historic landscape character and contribute to its conservation, enhancement or restoration, or the creation of appropriate new features.
33. Victoria Hall is an early C19, Grade II Listed building fronting the north side of High Street, within the Oakham Conservation Area.
34. It was originally known as The Agricultural Hall, its purpose to serve as a meeting place and library for Rutland's farming community. It's name was changed in to the current Victoria Hall. It has since been used as a multi-purpose venue for various events.
35. Consent is now sought for alterations to accommodate two cinema screens, one with 80 seats the other with 30, on the first floor of the building. The remainder of the building will continue to host other, non-cinema, related events

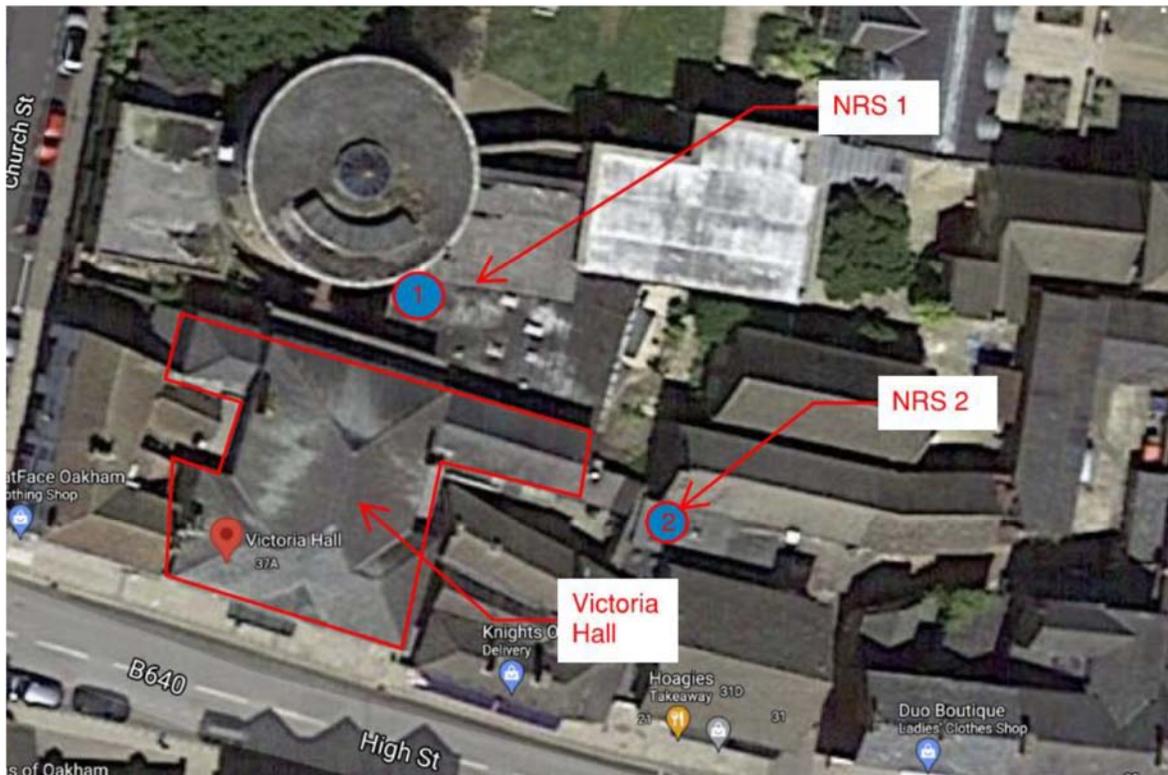
36. The Council's Conservation Officer has advised that whilst he has no objection in principle to the proposal, he has raised concerns that several doors are to be removed and no assessment has been provided to confirm they are of historic significance or not. It is therefore recommended that if Consent were to be granted for their removal, details of where they are to be "*carefully stored*" will need to be secured via condition.
37. Subject to the submission of satisfactory further information on the doors it is proposed to remove, the Conservation Officer has raised no objection to the proposal from a Conservation point of view as the proposed alterations will not harm the historic significance of the building and the character and appearance of this part of the Conservation Area will be preserved.
38. The following conditions will need to be imposed on any consent:
- Large scale details of proposed glazed entrance lobby (including fixings).
  - Large scale details of proposed handrails to the step at the front entrance (including fixings).
  - Large scale details of proposed film poster display boxes (including fixings).
  - Large scale details of proposed high level LEDs to be affixed to underside of cornice (including fixings).
  - Large scale details of the proposed signage to be installed on the existing canopy (including fixings). The illuminated sign would also require Advertisement Consent.
39. By virtue of the design, scale and materials to be used, the proposal would be in keeping with the host building, streetscene and surrounding context. The development would not cause harm to historic character and appearance of the host listed building or the conservation area in accordance with Sections 12 and Section 16 of the NPPF (2021), Policies CS19 and CS22 of the Rutland Core Strategy (2011) and Policies SP15 and SP20 of the Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document (2014).

#### Highway issues

40. Policy CS18 seeks to ensure that developments are suitably accessible and that proposals do not have a detrimental impact on highway safety.
41. The proposal would result in adequate access, parking and turning facilities and would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on highway safety in accordance with the Section 9 of the NPPF (2021).

#### Noise

42. The application is supported by a Noise Impact Assessment which assesses the potential impacts of the development on the nearby noise sensitive properties.
43. The nearest noise sensitive residential receivers are Oakham School boarding flats to the rear of the hall (NSR1) and the residential flats located in the internal courtyard accessed via the High Street (NSR2). These are shown in the Google map image below.



44. The council's Environmental Health Officer has considered the findings of the report and has advised that subject to conditions there will be no significant adverse impact from the proposed development as a result of noise outbreak from the proposed use. It should also be remembered that the building is already used as a public venue and that the existing authorised use could also generate the potential for noise and disturbance. The proposed conditions will ensure that any risk is suitably mitigated and controlled.
45. Taking into account the nature of the proposal, and adequate separation distances and the finding of the Council's Environmental Health Officer, it is considered that there would be no unacceptable adverse impact on the residential amenities of the occupiers of adjacent properties in accordance with the Section 12 of the NPPF (2021), Policy CS19 of the Rutland Core Strategy (2011) and Policy SP15 of the Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document (2014).

#### Crime and Disorder

46. It is considered that the proposal would not result in any significant crime and disorder implications.

#### Human Rights Implications

47. Articles 6 (Rights to fair decision making) and Article 8 (Right to private family life and home) of the Human Rights Act have been taken into account in making this recommendation.
48. It is considered that no relevant Article of that act will be breached.

## Conclusion

49. The proposed development would be located within the Primary Shopping Frontage of Oakham High Street and would therefore be in general accord with the requirements of CS1, CS7, CS17, SP1 and SP12 given that Oakham town centre is considered to be a sustainable location where such leisure facilities are actively encouraged. Whilst concern has been raised about the loss of a public facility the proposal would still maintain a public facility appropriate to the town centre location and the loss of the dance hall and exhibition space is not considered sufficient reason to warrant refusal of the application. The proposed development would preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the host listed building. The proposed development is therefore considered acceptable and policy compliant.

## 50. Neighbour Representations

Mr Jason Allen      The Discover Rutland Management Committee are in full support of the plans submitted by Rutland Kino and believe it will provide an attractive new offering to the county and boost footfall to the town. It is also believed the facility will provide a much needed year round attraction to Rutland's night time economy and support Oakham's existing businesses.

It is hoped that the plans come to fruition as we believe it would be a great asset for the town and the wider county, supporting the local businesses and appealing to residents and visitors alike.

Mrs Davina Cotton      This would be a fantastic asset for the town

Lady Kelly Bright      Fabulous idea as a mother to a 12 year old daughter this would be the only way I'd allow her to visit a cinema with friends without me there is very little for children to do in Oakham so I'm definitely excited at the news this could be coming.

Mr Stuart Maris      I believe this is of interest to the community, create local jobs and help our carbon footprint.

Mr Philip Henderson      I wish to say I wholeheartedly support this planning application for a cinema in Oakham. As a resident living in the nearby town of Uppingham with a young daughter, I feel the cinema would be a fantastic addition to Oakham and the surrounding area. It would bring a much needed amenity to Rutland and I would certainly use it regularly!

Mrs Julie Hitchcock      This will be a wonderful addition to Oakham and will encourage people to stay local and spend their money locally.

Ms Andrea Headley      From a personal perspective, as an artist I use the Victoria Hall regularly to exhibit my work and have been part of many exhibitions over the years. It would be a great detriment to me if the hall was to go. As a Lindy Hop

dancer I use the hall weekly to enjoy keeping fit and socialising with other dancers. The Victoria Hall is a beautiful building and helps to retain the character and charm of Oakham.

Mr Stephen  
Baines

Enough coffee shops in town already, and cinema in museum underused and underfunded.

Mr David  
Maughan

Projects like this are absolutely vital if Oakham is to transform itself from a sleepy, steadily declining market town. One that is currently dominated by estate agents, hairdressers, charity shops and empty shop premises. It currently has a Saturday market of less than 10 stalls. Nearby Stamford has more than 30 on a Friday.

This facility will bring many more visitors to the town which in turn will support local shops, businesses, restaurants, bars and pubs. It will generate a virtuous circle of growth. And has to be centrally located for this to happen.

There are plenty of underused alternative locations to which existing users of the Victoria Hall can be relocated. There is little logic in the majority of those users being located centrally as now where parking is an issue.

Mr Leslie  
Moverley

The proposed cinema would be a major benefit for the community. It would maximise the use of the Victoria Hall from the very intermittent use it has today.

A cinema would bring people into the town especially at night thereby supporting other businesses in the town

The failure of this application would be a distinct lack of foresight and business acumen by councillors, which would be to the detriment of the town

Mrs Sarah  
Boumphrey

I think this is a great idea. The town, indeed the entire county, is lacking in cultural facilities. It will provide somewhere for all age groups to socialise, bring employment opportunities and hopefully provide a boost to other venues in the town.

Mr Gerry  
Robinson

Victoria Hall is already a major asset to Rutland however it is underused and the current funding model will in the long-term fail to cover the costs of maintaining a building of its age. I understand that this situation was exacerbated by the departure of the Town Council and the loss of their rent payments.

Having a cinema return to the centre of Oakham, with proper seating and showing current releases as well as a programme of films aimed at different sections of the community will draw people right into the heart of Oakham instead of losing that footfall to Melton or Peterborough and revitalise that part of town. The planned concurrent activities / offerings will go a long way towards replacing those that some objectors have claimed will be lost.

Finally, those activities that can't be held in the remodelled building could move a short way up the road to the Voluntary Action Rutland buildings with VARs three function rooms which would be a welcome increase in footfall there too.

I see only positives with this proposal.

Mr Paul Mills  
I support the conversion of the Victoria Hall to a cinema 100%.  
The town is crying out for such a facility as there is so little entertainment in the town.  
There are plenty of good quality halls and facilities for small groups and associations to use.

Mrs Christine Fairs  
This application should be approved. Oakham is sadly lacking in so many amenities. Something as simple as this would be so beneficial to the town centre and the residents of this really rather boring town

Mrs Sally Ann Mullins  
I have read many sides for this application in both amusement and dismay.  
  
One of the issues regarding the recent planning issues in Rutland was concerns relating to the lack of amenities not only in Oakham but in the County. Indeed if you go to one of the private schools and can afford the benefits and trappings that Rutland has to offer it is a great place to live but many of the public are not able to have this luxury.  
  
I have read that a community asset will be lost. I am sure that those behind the Cinema will have the foresight to organise exhibitions in the Foyer to coincide with important Film release dates - indeed the artists may find their art gets far more of an audience than it might have had from passers by.  
  
Meanwhile the arrival of the cinema will help the economy - you only have to look at Stamford - meals out are combined with a trip to a restaurant or pre film drink - or shopping for parents taking a break from the children who are watching a film or partaking in a gaming session.  
  
Given the location - many families who live in Oakham can walk from their house to the town and the cinema cutting down on the carbon footprint in Rutland - there will be no requirement to drive to other urban areas with a similar facility.  
  
For these many reasons I urge the Council to approve this community asset.

Mrs Jayne Williams  
The hall has the best dance floor for size and quality in the county. Local groups of all ages rely on this facility for lessons and social dances and if lost, due to the cinema refurbishment, it will never be replaced.  
  
There are many other community groups that use the hall for meetings, exhibitions and run their fledgling local businesses from the building. Where will they go if the cinema goes ahead? This will be another community space sacrificed to commercial gain. If the business proposal fails, what then?

Mrs Lynne Jones  
I strongly support this Kino application.  
The Victoria Hall is looking sorry for itself and requires investment as a central community hub in Oakham. Many meetings of societies and other forums will still be able to meet at the Hall, otherwise there are many other suitable venues in the town with accessible parking... Many school rooms

and halls, Quaker Friends Meeting House, the Rutland Museum, the Rutland County Council building, the library amongst others. What there are not are sufficient vibrant cultural facilities for all age groups in Oakham..a growing town. Oakham desperately needs more to do for all ages and bring more footfall to the town. Kino offers the opportunity to sustain the difficult building which needs investment and income, and create an even more vibrant cultural centre. Please look to do all you can support this proposal.

Karen Mellor

See letter online.

Mr Michael Westrup

I support the Victoria Hall becoming a cinema. Currently to see a film requires a 40 mile round trip to Leicester or Peterborough. We have recently lost the swimming pool in Oakham so the rate payers have no local entertainment venues. Oakham cinema closed down in 1988 and I believe the people of Rutland are being denied this opportunity by people who are adverse to change. Why do people who do not live locally have a say on this matter? I have seen that people from as far away as Leeds have objected, what has it got to do with them?

Miss Andrew Swift

This is a splendid idea for a tired underused building. There are plenty of other venues for Yoga classes etc. Oakham having its own cinema again is a brilliant idea and should be encouraged by the Council.

Ms Cornelia Friedrich

The narrative, that the Victoria Hall NEEDS this due to financial pressures (DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT) is strictly not true. The former OTC offices have been rented out again, and currently Victoria Hall is providing work and office space to 5 local (all Oakham residents) businesses - 4 downstairs and one upstairs. The proposed conversion will displace all those businesses.

The Allman Gallery and Foyer are used for exhibitions, craft fayres and sales events, many of them featuring predominantly local makers and artists. The proposed conversion will take away that facility for those Oakham residents.

The Ball Room is used by a number of local people for yoga, dancing, kick boxing, it is also used for weddings, wakes and venue hire for a number of local community groups (Oakham in Bloom, Oakham Late Night Shopping, Oakham Food Festival, Rutland Home Education Group). The proposed conversion will take away affordable venue hire for those Oakham residents and groups.

Opposite the Hall Otters's Fine Foods are running a successful café and deli. The proposed conversation will be in direct competition to this local business run by Oakham residents.

This is the only multi-purpose not-for-profit flexible use space in Oakham. By its own admission RCC has no funds to even fix the swimming pool, let alone support the replication of a similar space like that in a different place in town. By rejecting the proposed conversion RCC is safeguarding

against the loss of this essential community space for the next 25 years at least - if not forever. For this town and its population Rutland Kino is a 'nice to have'; the Victoria Hall in its current use, however, a 'need to have'

Mr Paul Westrup A great idea. Oakham is severely lacking in entertainment facilities. It would be nice to be able to see a film without having to drive to Peterborough/Leicester

Miss Melanie Leithead I consider this proposal would result in a facility that is there for the benefit of all, becoming only available to a few with specific interests and income. I think better and wider use of the facility could be made, but this is not it.

Mrs Katie Wilkins-Moverley This is such a wonderful use of the space. The town desperately needs this kind of service and will be fantastic for the local families. It is such a shame that the largest public building in Oakham is barely used and to have a cinema as the heart of the town would add value to the community and help local business. I support this whole heartedly

Mrs Deborah Alderman

Mrs Paula Brunt Great idea Oakham needs more facilities ¿

Mr Jonathan Glick Having a cinema will be a great asset to Oakham. We have three children who will benefit enormously from this. Currently there is very little for children and teenagers to do in the town in the evening. I believe it upholds the traditions of the town.

Mrs Patricia Munro The Victoria is the only public amenity of any size left in Oakham, run by trustees and used by many groups. To loose this facility would be detrimental to the town now and in the future. Suggest trustees find other ways of raising a bigger income. Oakham and district is not big enough to sustain a cinema, most people happily travel to Melton or Stamford for this form of entertainment.

Ms Simone Apel This building has been an important hall for the community, for community events. Build a commercial cinema somewhere else, NOT in this lovely listed public space. It's not the right building for this use.

Mrs Kim Snell I object to the Kino proposal on the grounds of, firstly lack of car parking space, the town, in the evening it is overflowing with cars parked on yellow lines already how bad could it be with another 40 to 50 cars looking to park.

Secondly this would be the end of 125 years of the this community space available to the the people of Oakham and Rutland to stage their own events. The closure of community activity groups using the hall could well be lost for the future wellbeing of local citizens.

Finally would a cinema not be better located out of town with plenty of parking space in a purpose built unit, surely this would be cheaper than the 2 million pound price tag and far better suited.

Mrs Valerie Pike

Victoria Hall is a multi-function Hall for the residents of Rutland. It is not a single use premises. And do we want another cafe and bar in Oakham? I think not!

Miss Blaize Jones-White

Fantastic idea!!!

Mr Richard Horner

I support this application. It's a very positive move to promote a night-time economy in Oakham, as apart from the pubs and a sparse number of restaurants, it is largely dead at night and doesn't reach its potential as a growing county town.

Ms Hanri Van Wyk

Ms Imelda Dunlop

As an Oakham resident I am extremely supportive of this planning application. I believe that the town would benefit hugely from an investment which will add vibrancy, events and enjoyment to what is in danger of becoming an emptying community high street.

Mr Stuart Taylor

The Cinema will destroy the existing community space. At present we have art, dancing, yoga, pottery, gatherings, social events all happening in the Victoria Hall. This space is home to more than 5 local businesses operating with local people, all of which benefit the local community. Everyone who goes in comes out with a smile and a very positive view on the space. Being used for something different, not a charity shop, estate agent or betting shop, but something different, something that gives life to the high street. Let's not give way to a cinema with a pie in the sky, and unsustainable .business plan, let's stick with what we have have, local, meaningful and useful. We must have something that is great for the community, let's not lose what we have, we build on what we have. I say no to the proposed development.

Miss Emilie Gharbi

Bringing more culture to Oakham through a cinema screen is an absolute necessity! Oakham is a town of history and of arts, of artisan and homemade shops. It would just fit right in and allow people not to drive miles to go to see a movie.

Mr Tim Hart

I am the owner of local businesses Hambleton Hall and Hambleton Bakery. I strongly support the Kino project because  
It will secure the future of a fine building in the centre of Oakham.  
It will bring much needed life and prosperity to the high street which is currently at risk.

Mr Allan Goodwin

I think that the addition of a cinema to Oakham is an absolutely fantastic Idea

Mr Martin Brookes

Has anyone actually read the deed for Victoria to lease this property?  
The exclusive use by this cinema would be a breach of the deed.

I think it would be fair to say for many years the Trustees have not really worked in accordance with what the deed requires of them. The Building is meant to be used by members of the agricultural community. To fund the running costs and maintenance costs the trustees registered with the charity commission and state the funds they hold are for Maintenance of the Victoria Hall in Oakham for use by the public and local organisations for recreation, public functions, weddings and parties. Which is true and the loss of the use of this venue would be a great loss to Oakham. The Trustees don't even follow the requirement for them to appoint more than one councillor from Oakham and Rutland Council as official trustees. So it does not surprise be they think they can ignore the deed and agree to support leasing out the entire building to a business depriving residents of a great venue and also a art gallery would be lost. There is a legal procedure that the trustees could follow to revoke Victoria Halls deed. They cant just ignore it and ignore the main purpose of the hall. I am no planning expert but I assume Rutland County Council Planning will consider the deed when determining this application. It also disappoints me that pre covid the Trustees appear to be happy to keep the doors closed for most of the year. Over the years a lot of money has been awarded by the lottery for various projects because Victoria Hall Trustees claim the hall is for community use. One of my biggest fears is the ceiling upstairs which is very fine will be boxed in again this should not happen I am aware people have visited the town in the past just to see this construction.

Mrs Jackie Vecqueray

I object on health and safety grounds! The stairs are very difficult for older people unsteady on their feet Also for mums and toddlers! I know there's a lift but it 's very slow with limited capacity! This could n't be used in the event of a fire emergency!

Mr Martin Cox

I fully support the proposal for a cinema in Victoria Hall. It will bring much needed footfall and business to the town centre.

Mr Matthew Edge

What a brilliant proposal. Oakham needs facilities like this. The town will die without such changes. Look to the future, not be stuck in the past please Oakham.

Mr Bryan Steele

The Victoria Hall is the only large hall that is available for hire as a public facility.

The loss of this facility will have an adverse impact on the ability of groups to hire space for larger events.

Mr James Darrall

Fully support this idea, can only bring more footfall to the high street and provide a desperately need leisure activity for the whole county.

Mrs Jackie Piper

This is a much needed recreational addition to the high street & would bring more life to Oakham. Families in the area desperately need local entertainment & this seems the perfect fit. Whilst I appreciate there are some local businesses who currently use the site surely there are options of empty shops & premises that with council support these businesses could relocate to which may in fact give another dimension to shops in the High Street. It would be great to see RCC support this application.

Ms  
Maggie  
Robinson

As a newcomer to Oakham I'm finding the town council's view on progress more and more puzzling. The first reason a cinema in the town, particularly one which is going to offer more than one film screen and a cafe/bar, is clearly a great asset is it will discourage people of all ages from getting in their cars whenever they want to see a film and driving to Melton, to Stamford, to Leicester. Stay in our town, eat in our town, drink in our town, use our businesses, do not take our spending power out for another town's benefit. This town will die if the council do not look around them and see how it needs to improve facilities to give the residents who want more than just housing estates what is needed to stop them from moving on. We need a progressive Town Council not one which refuses to move forward.

Mr Paul Stocker

I support this application, not least because:  
- it will broaden the range of cultural offerings in Rutland  
- it will bring life to the middle of a town which otherwise only has pubs and restaurants  
- it sensitively and creatively re-purposes an old building  
- no new green-site buildings or car-parks are needed  
- it's a long time since Rutland had a cinema!

Mr Paul Beech

Let us first of all say that we are NOT against a cinema in Rutland per se. What we do oppose to, is its location - as being suggested by the group behind the proposal to change the use of the Victoria Hall from a community focussed amenity to a profit orientated single use facility that will require the virtual internal demolition of the ground and upper hall's floors. The Trustees are fully aware that the upper dance hall, bar and fully functioning upgraded kitchen is for people to book and use as a multi-function area with the general public in mind, including people from outside the area to book for receptions, meetings, exhibitions, exercise/fitness classes, dance classes, big band concerts and even Christmas Fair's. Not to put too fine a point on it we think the idea is crazy. Why?

If we were so inclined and we had raised £2.4m to open a local cinema I'm sure our investors would be looking for a return on their investment, sooner rather than later, based on local research and a more than favourable business model. Not some whim or fantastical idea that has a lot of hurdles to get over - even before the 'bulldozers' move in.

Here's a suggestion for you to consider:

With that sort of funding, you could construct a purpose-built cinema on the outskirts of town where there is growing investment by businesses, pubs and restaurants with the chance of open land for parking and even a popcorn stand in the entrance.

Costs - There are large buildings being erected right now that are costing nowhere near that sort of money. It wouldn't surprise us if you could build a fully functioning cinema for £1m when you consider how big you would need the build to be. I'm sure that, for that sum, it would be fully functioning, easy to get at, plenty of parking space and other facilities looking to attract people from around the region. Ask around and see what other business developers have set aside to fund their future plans around MacDonald's, Aldi, C&M Tractors and Moore's Estate Agents. We

did just that and honestly, you'd be surprised what you'd find out and could get for your money.

So, let's look again at the Victoria Hall. It's a Grade 11 listed building for a start. What is English Heritage's opinion likely to be? Our conservation officer may well have a big say in what is to be done and it won't be a simple 'Dot & Dab' solution either. This is major reconstruction of a building that has been part of the fabric of the town centre since 1858 and in the past was designed to be a meeting place for the Agricultural Society and even a library at one stage, but it seems they, the trustees, have lost interest and the ability to market the place to its full potential. Why is it not used more? You have to ask the Trustees. They are the people that should be planning, prospecting for custom and creating an environment for The Victoria Hall to be successful. I can't believe that all the trustees are in favour of this venture and certainly, on the single cinema issue, that all county councillors are either.

How are people and in particular children, going to be managed while queuing outside the cinema, most likely transported by parents, or grandparents, on the busiest shopping days into the town with no parking available and probably blocking the pavements while waiting for entry into the theatre and probably vying for space inside with the other exhibitions, and the like, that are being proposed by the investors.

If this cinema doesn't work out then there must be a contingency plan in place to put all the alterations they have made back to where they were before they took over. In particular the sprung dance floor. The tenants must be held responsible for the costs..

One final thing - what will they, the cinema planners, do if/when a major screen group get the idea that it might be a good business model to build a 2/3 screen cinema on the outskirts of Oakham? The idea is already out there.

From.

Carol & Paul Beech

Mrs Fiona  
Calder

This would be great!!! The museum cinema has been well supported demonstrating a desire for film. Will also bring more business to eateries in town helping to revitalise the town. I feel strongly that this is needed.

Mr & Mrs Paul  
Dowse

Fully support the conversion of Victoria Hall for use as a cinema. It's little used for other events and activities.

Mr & Mrs Jan  
And Graham  
Lucraft

We regularly attend this building for dance classes, it's a great space for social events and it would be a great blow to many peoples physical and mental health if it was gone. Surely it would be more cost effective to put a cinema in a newer industrial build than destroying a victorian building that is already used by the community.

Mrs  
Antoinette  
Robertson

I think taking a great local & well supported amenity away from Oakham would be detrimental to the local community. Changing a facility which is currently used by local arts groups, older people for exercise etc & committing to a corporate funded project is not in the best interest for the town or Victoria Hall's long term viability.

Oakham would lose a great & affordable community space. I would also be concerned for the future of the hall, should such a facility not be viable in future years.

Mr Michael  
Robertson

I object to this proposal.  
The Victoria Hall is available for all of the community for a wide variety of uses and is the only space of this size in the town. Converting it to a private business will rob the town of this valuable resource and expose the hall to a risk for its future should the proposed business fail.

Mr & Mrs Jillian &  
Richard Harris

Oakham and Rutland residents of all ages need more entertainment opportunities. This project will fill a big and long overdue gap AND save expensive and non-green journeys to other towns and cities. It will also bring in people from adjoining areas. In addition the incorporation of art gallery space downstairs makes it much more than "just another coffee shop". When the cinemas are not showing films, (of all genre we hope), the raked seating and professional projection in the auditoria will be ideal for monthly Arts Society lectures and we feel sure other organisations will want to rent the spaces for meetings too, in a very central location. This new, modern facility could offer the town and the extended community multiple benefits 7 days a week. It deserves the go ahead.

Mr Mike  
Boumphrey

I think it's a great idea. Oakham has needed a proper cinema for years. This will be a great addition to the town, bringing employment and a focal point for entertainment. This will give particularly (but not only) young people something to do.

Mrs Marie  
Shelton

This would provide a facility that would potentially attract all age groups and add greatly to the community.

I am writing on behalf of the Rutland Access Group to make comment on the access issues associated with the above applications

The Rutland Access Group has had long standing issues with the wheelchair access to the Victoria Hall in Oakham, and I am disappointed to see that the current applications do not address these issues.

The current wheelchair access is via a side entrance directly off Church Street. There is a slope up to a pair of double doors which open outwards. There is no level platform for a wheelchair user to position themselves safely to be able to open one of the double doors. That is assuming that the doors are even unlocked. Currently there is no bell on this door so if locked there is no access at all. Whilst the front entrance of the proposed cinema shows that the existing double front doors will be kept open when the building is in use there is no indication that this will happen at the back door. To be accessible the back doors need to be open, but this will then pose a security risk. This is not mentioned or discussed in the design and access statement.

By scaling 1:200 plans it is difficult to see if the door widths are adequate or not for wheelchair access.

Once in the building access to the front of the building to the ticket desk is via another set of double doors that would open towards the wheelchair user. For these to be fully accessible both of these doors should be maintained open, though for fire reasons I suspect that they will be kept shut. There is no mention of this problem in the design and access statement, or how this is to be overcome.

It is noted that a wheelchair accessible toilet is proposed on the ground floor to replace the existing one on the ground floor. The existing wheelchair accessible toilet on the first floor is being retained. This is improved by the removal of a cupboard to provide an adequate turning circle for a wheelchair but given the money that is proposed to be spent on this development, it would have been better if the access door was changed to an outward opening door as is required by current standards. With the first floor toilet having left hand access it would also be better if the proposed toilet on the ground floor offered a right hand access as the present disabled toilet on the ground floor, which is proposed to be removed.

It is noted that baby changing facilities are included within the accessible toilet on the ground floor. Whilst the thought is good, this is contrary to the building regulations part M section 5.5. The design and access statement also mentions an accessible toilet for ambulant disabled. This does not appear on the drawings as it will require an outward opening door.

Mention is made of colour and textural contrast. There is no indication of this on the plans and the only internal photograph in the design and access statement does not support this statement.

It is noted in the design and access statement that the objective is to go beyond statutory requirement as set out in the building regulations and British standards. The designs as presented do not fully conform to these standards, so this is not an accurate description of the proposals.

The proposed additional handrails to the front entrance and the staircase are an improvement and are welcomed.

Yours faithfully  
Karen Mellor  
Chairman Rutland Access Group

Mr Jon Hudson      What a brilliant idea, would be an asset to the town for sure.

Mr & Mrs Tim & Joy Clough      Letter emailed to Planning 17/09/21

16th September 2021

Dear Sirs

Planning applications 2021/0855/FUL and 0856/LBA - Refurbishment and Conversion of the Victoria Hall to a ... cinema, &c

We are pleased to write in full support of this project which we believe to be a very worthwhile enterprise. We are aware that the applicants, having carefully developed and researched a sound and detailed business plan,

have been searching for some time for premises suitable for conversion to a small cinema which would fulfil the needs of the population of Oakham and surrounding villages. We are also aware that the Trustees of the Victoria Hall have found themselves considerably challenged, particularly following the decision of Oakham Town Council to terminate their lease of part of the premises, with regard to the future viability of the Hall.

The Victoria Hall is a Grade II Listed Building dating from the mid 19th century, erected by the Rutland Agricultural Society to provide facilities for the farming community and otherwise for the benefit of the community as a whole, as set out in the Trustees' Scheme of Governance. There would not seem to be anything in the current proposals which would be incompatible with that scheme given that the purpose of the application is to provide a self-sustaining community facility on the basis of a lease (not that any incompatibility would be a material consideration in the planning process).

Given its Listed status and its location within the Oakham Conservation Area, the impact of the proposals on the building and on its setting must be considered. The applicants' Heritage Statement of 6th June 2021 makes it clear that they have given careful thought to this matter. Apart from changes to signage, any changes to the exterior and thus to the setting of the building are minimal, whilst changes to the interior which will be visible from the exterior have been sympathetically specified and raise nothing of concern. As to the interior, clearly more substantial changes will be required as shown on the detailed plans accompanying the application. Some of these will improve on the existing layout and appearance of the interior, whilst the architectural specifications make it clear that in the event of the cinema and its attendant facilities ceasing to operate virtually all of the changes would be reversible. There is thus no permanent harm to the building; those few internal features which may be of interest such as the dance floor will be protected, and evidently the internal roof structure will largely remain on view. Although at the time of writing there appears to have been no response from Historic England or from the appropriate national amenity societies regarding the application, there seem to us to be no grounds for refusal of the application on the basis of its Listed Building status.

With regard to the proposed detailed layout of the new facilities, with its twin cinemas, lounge and café-bar provision, we make no specific comment, save to note the concerns of the Rutland Access Group in their representation of 25th August. We would anticipate that the architects' plans might be subject to some modification in order to meet those concerns as far as possible, and thus that those in themselves would not be sufficient to justify refusal.

There have been many expressions both of support for and of opposition to this proposal. Those who have objected seem to have done so largely on the basis of the loss of meeting facilities used by particular groups. Those in support point out that such meeting facilities can be found to a greater or lesser extent elsewhere in the town. Some are worried about the impact of another catering facility on existing similar enterprises, but this is aimed primarily at those patronising the cinema and to us does not seem to be a significant concern. Others suggest that the applicants should be looking for a site on the edge of town, but this would defeat the whole purpose of providing the cinema in the town centre, something which would help to sustain and revitalise the core of the town including its night-time economy. Like small towns everywhere, Oakham is more and more challenged by

social and commercial change, and any development like this will help to bring people into town, not just to use the cinema but with a spin-off to other businesses too. To attempt to site a small boutique cinema on the outskirts of town in areas mainly dedicated to industrial and commercial use would be quite inappropriate and to us such a suggestion simply does not hold water. Beyond that, it seems environmentally irresponsible to encourage people to drive to Melton, Peterborough, Leicester or Corby for cinema visits when here there is a wonderful opportunity to provide that facility locally and to support the local economy. Many of those supporting the application are firm in their belief that there is a need and a demand for an Oakham cinema of a high standard, which is what this application is intended to provide.

We believe that this application is absolutely in line with the recommendations of the County Council's Oakham Town Task and Finish Group regarding the future of the town which were accepted by Rutland County Council. The recent decision of Oakham Town Council to recommend refusal of the cinema project runs counter to policies and ambitions outlined by the Task & Finish Group, but the town council made a minimal contribution to its researches and, as others have commented, this latest decision reflects a continuing negativity on the part of the town council when it should be making better efforts to support the parish for which it is responsible; to us, therefore, that recommendation carries but little weight. The town needs the benefit of every facility which will draw people into the centre in order to support existing and new high street businesses. Approval of the application would secure the future of the Victoria Hall, which is a valuable community asset, and would enable the applicants to fulfil their long-held desire to meet the undoubted demand for a modern well-appointed and appropriately scaled cinema in Oakham town centre. We see nothing either in the detail of the application or in the objections raised to date which would justify its refusal on social, economic or planning grounds. We are therefore entirely in accord with those who have expressed their support for the application.

Yours faithfully,

T H McK Clough FSA  
Joyce I Clough

Ms C  
Taylorson

My family would love to have a cinema in Oakham Fully support the planning application

The sooner the better!!

Ms Christine  
Jeffer

Surely there are other venues for this project without using Victoria Hall. Who wants another café, there's a different one for each day of the week as it is. I feel very sorry for the small businesses who are using the Hall, will they get any compensation???

DEFINITELY A NO FROM ME

Mr Keith Radley

To reject this application is to deny the people of Oakham a much needed community resource. It is an opportunity to develop a neglected and decrepit building, at no cost to the town, into a multi-purpose facility serving people of all ages. It will be a resource that will bring income to the town

from Rutland and further afield. The success of similar resources in Melton and Stamford should indicate that to reject this application is wrong for Oakham and Rutland.

If you care about a community facility that will benefit the people of Rutland you must support this planning application.

Mr Tony Mathias I completely support this application for a change to a building that is grossly underused, underfunded and is probably a thorn in the side of the trustees.

A very positive move for rejuvenation of Oakham town centre.

Mr Neil Moverley Oakham is a town that is growing in size and with changing demographics it is vital that the amenities of the town grow with the population. A cinema would be a vital addition to a mixed town centre economy which is recognised as a key way to revitalising town centres. A cinema will provide a community hub for a range of ages and tastes, from childrens /family activities during the day and films for teenagers and above in the evening, this is sorely lacking in the town and will attract residents and visitors into the town centre with a knock on effect for local retailers who are largely independent shop owners and the night time economy.

Cllr Ian Razzell Having reviewed the application and most importantly, listened to the growing number of voices across my ward and the community regarding infrastructure and opportunity for local (not requiring a 20 mile round trip) entertainment that suits the whole family, I support the application in principle

It is of course, easy to view an historical building with historic eyes but in order to reach out to an evolving and younger demographic, Rutland and Oakham do need to consider entertainment for those who are not fortunate enough to be able to travel widely for that purpose and equally, said entertainment needs to captivate the most, not the few.

At some point, Rutland needs to consider how it can accommodate a new demographic and perhaps, this opportunity is one of those that need to be considered.

My only reservation is that of break-clauses. I do believe that the lease needs to be robust enough to support the venture but it should also, protect the asset from applications for a change of use within the agreed lease term or allow the tenant / trustees to terminate at periods within the longer lease.

Conditions must also apply (and be secured) to return the building to its original state at the conclusion of any agreed lease.

Mr Barnaby Staniland I think this would be great for the town, it will give local people something to do and provide jobs - on top of this, town centre businesses will benefit from more footfall.

Mrs Diahann Berridge We visit the Victoria Hall for many of the events held there especially the Arts & craft fairs, food festivals, Ball events and many more.

I set up Oakham Swing Dance in 2018 and use the Hall weekly and for weekend events as it has the most beautiful Ballroom floor which is the only one for miles. These dance events and the many other events bring people into the town which is great for the economy especially after the difficult last 18 months.

The town uses the Hall for so many things throughout the year and this seems a shame to put a cinema here with little parking when there are numerous other places which can be used instead.

Mr & Mrs  
Catherine  
Gardiner

This is a valuable multi- purpose space . This change will impact on dancing sessions., art exhibitions and other activities all of which enrich the lives of the community. Changing it to a single use venue will deprive a wide range of the community of many activities and opportunities to socialise.

Mrs Stephanie de  
Vries

It would be such a shame to loose this beautiful dance hall. I have attended many classes and dances here, there is no other space in Oakham where dancing can be facilitated.

Whereas, the cinema could be built either near the new development on the ring road nr McDonald's or could the council offices be turned into a town cinema with onsite parking?

Mr Robert Miller

For a number of years, I have attended the thriving Oakham Lindy Hop dancing classes held by Diahann and Mark Berridge on Thursday evenings in the ballroom of the Victoria Hall. This space is a fantastic amenity for the people of Oakham and Rutland to gather in with its large sprung dancefloor and elegant Victorian atmosphere.

I believe it would be a tragedy to convert this space into a cinema. A modern cinema would be much more suited to a single-story building on the periphery of the town where adequate parking provision and access could be assured.

Rutland Kino's ambitious business plan, though marketed as a public service changes the Victoria Hall from its current public amenity status to a business premises, where the due to the risky nature of the enterprise the future of the Hall is also at risk.

Rutland Kino plans a significant revenue stream from the ground floor café service that will be open during the day and evening, it will be possible for them to cross finance the two areas of their business or run a loss-leader campaign to unfairly compete with the business that already provides the food and beverage market in the town centre. Their business plan also requires significant attendance for daytime showings which must exacerbate the already difficult parking situation in Oakham.

I therefore wish to register my objection to the application for change of use of the Victoria Hall.

Mr Garth Delikan I think this a fabulous idea and give it my 100% support

Mr Garth Delikan I think it's a fabulous idea and 100% support it

Mrs Wendy Dalton

Mr Ian Duckering

I fully support this investment. Victoria Hall is in much need of a refurbishment and this investment will deliver this and bring a much needed boost for the hospitality industry in Oakham for all generations to enjoy in the future.

Ms Zelda Durrance

As a child I loved coming into Oakham whilst my parents went shopping my sister and I got to go and watch a film at the old cinema. A new cinema in Oakham would be an asset to the local area.

Mrs Frances Port

This is a fabulous proposal. I frequently visit Melton Cinema with my family, but having a local and independent cinema so close to us would be ideal! It is a beautiful building which will lend itself as a centre for the arts. It would only enhance the high Street and give people a reason to visit oakham, particularly from surrounding villages.

I can't think of any reason why this should be opposed!

Mr & Mrs Alison Carver

It is our opinion that the Victoria Hall is a valuable resource for the local community. We have travelled into Oakham for several years to attend a variety of events held at the Victoria Hall, from fashion shows to community social events, dance classes and dances. We don't know of another venue as beautiful as this in the area that could replace it in terms of accessibility, versatility and affordability. We have taught numerous dance classes at this venue and at many other venues across neighbouring counties and count the dance floor as one of the best and, once destroyed, would cost an exorbitant amount of money to replace. We feel a cinema, if there is a demand for one, would be successful housed anywhere, even on an industrial estate or retail park and, as such, shouldn't be the cause of the desecration of such a beautiful and iconic building.

Ms Kirsteen McVeigh

This would be a great asset to oakham. Both myself and my family wholeheartedly support this application.

Mrs Alexandra Eager

A fantastic idea! A really good addition to Oakham and the whole of Rutland

Mrs Susan Young I fully support this application.

Dr H Crowden

revitalize an underused community asset

Mr Andrew Forbes

I think this is an excellent idea. Rutland does not have a cinema or theatre. At the moment Corby and Melton are the options for cinema. Corby and Stamford are the options for theatre. I believe that this amenity would benefit the whole community. It would be a valuable addition to Oakham High Street.

Miss Anastasia Morris I am commenting to support the case of turning the Victoria hall into a small cinema. I think this would definitely benefit not just Oakham, but the whole of Rutland. It would encourage more visitors and tourists too.

Mr Harro de Vries Dear Sir/Madam,  
Victoria hall has an unique position within Oakham as a multi purpose building. If there is a requirement and a positive case for a cinema in Oakham, I would argue there are better places available for these such as ex Oakham prison site or on the outskirts of the village near Aldi/McDonalds. These sites would have ample space for parking and keep disruption to the town centre to a minimum. Oakham town centre has sufficient pubs and restaurants that do not require the competition of a further cafe/restaurant within a cinema in the town centre. If there is an idea that the Victoria hall is failing, which I do not believe it is, the town would be better off by promoting Victoria hall better and to the wider community.

Mr Andrew Bennett Will destroy a listed, historic community amenity. There is already a good, independent cinema in Melton, and should one really be needed in Oakham surely another space could be found that would not deprive numerous other groups of a convenient venue.

There is certainly no need for yet another cafe/bar in central Oakham.

Jocelyn Orr It was such a delight to go into The Victoria Hall today and find the 'Artistic Collective' displaying their work.  
What a lot of 'Talent' in Oakham under one roof. It was with dismay that I learnt about the Cinema project that is being proposed to refurbish the Victoria Hall as a cinema at a horrendous cost circa £2M.  
If I recall the cinema within the Museum was not a great success.

How much more needed is an Art Centre combining café/restaurant and Dance Hall which previously was a well utilised venue - Remember the Rugby Club Dances, Tea Dances and other activities. I quote from a newspaper Rutland & Stamford Mercury 10 November 2019

Peter Jones, chairman of trustees, said: "The Victoria Hall is a real asset to Oakham, and a great benefit to the local community. The main function room can accommodate up to 200 guests and the Allman Gallery downstairs provides local artists the opportunity to display their work and host exhibitions. There is no facility quite like it!"

Now I understand that Peter Jones is wanting it turned into a Cinema - this seems to be a change of tune.

I suspect there is an attractive sum of cash behind his decision.....?

Recently I had the wonderful experience of AlfrescoFilm of viewing cinema outside at the Blue Pool in Dorset.  
Whilst there I thought how wonderful an opportunity to link Rutland Water and offer outdoor cinema to Rutland.  
This could even be located at the Castle or Cutts Close.

The attraction to me of the 'Artistic Collective' is it has reminded me just how important stimulating imagination is for Mental Health.  
We need more Live Art & Music not cinematic screening which we can see on our widescreen T.V's of Films at home.  
How more joyous to see real Art projects being created.

Please do not bend to the pressure of Andrew Robinson and Genevieve Margrett wanting to bring this change to Victoria Hall at a ludicrous expense. We do not need this type of 'Joy of social interaction's. We need encouraging to use our artistic skills and recreating some Jolly old times with dancing, debates, and banquets.

Mrs Jacqueline  
Young

This County needs a place for entertainment it would be great to have a cinema .Without having to go outside the County spending money in this County is surely better than spending outside gaining others like Corby or Peterborough Councils more income.?