



42 GLOUCESTER AVENUE, LONDON NW1 8JD

WORKSHOP: 071-722 1728 • ADMINISTRATION & DISTRIBUTION: 071-586 4806 • CINEMA: 071-586 8516

Irene Whitehead,
Head of Planning,
The British Film Institute,
21, Stephen Street,
London W1.

c.c. Ian Christie.
Wilf Stevenson,
Jim Pines,
RPM,
Steve McIntyre,
LFMC Building Committee
Executive/Staff
LVA.

August 12th '91

REF: 29/31, Saffron Hill, London EC1
PLANNING ENQUIRIES/CAMDEN COUNCIL

Dear Irene,

Enclosed please find a copy of LFMG's enquiry re: planning permissions for the above site of 9th August '91.

We have already made initial queries by visit to the Planning Department on 9th August '91 and today. The Planning Officer in charge advised that no planning permission for change of use would need to be applied for in respect of the above-mentioned premises, which are registered as B1(C), (see clause/description enclosed letter). We have further been advised that confirmation of this should be sought in writing, giving a description of the operations intended, to David Pike, the Director of Planning at Camden Council. The turnaround for such confirmation, it is advised, should be expected to take two weeks.

This is because we have agreed use/permission for our purposes on the similar Gloucester Avenue site (B1), and because the buildings are in the same borough. Also such confirmation can be sought as a matter of course at this stage, thereby eliminating the considerable delays that no-one knows the outcome of until it's brought to committee, as is the case in putting in a planning permission for actual change of classification and/or use.

This latter case will apply to all or parts of the Dunn & Co. building as already intimated. The go ahead for the developer's major construction works may well be dependent on their being granted the appropriate permissions for the commercial side of the development (retail/restaurant, and office suites).

The advice given on Planning Permission in the RPM report would therefore seem to be at odds with the information and advice so far given by the actual Camden Council Planning Department. As already stated there is no application on record with Camden Council for the Dunn & Co. building (either first or second visit), so we are somewhat concerned by RPM's report that 'the planning in respect of the Camden (Dunn & Co.) option is very well advanced!'. Planning by the developers maybe, but planning applications not.

As we understand that, since the new financial proposition regarding Saffron Hill. left planning permissions as a main outstanding factor between consideration of the two premises, we felt it vital to put this information on the

table. Likewise our letter to Camden Council is in the pipeline.

Further we have been advised by Druce, agents for the lettings on the Dunn building that they anticipate planning applications to take up to some 12 weeks, provided that the matter is straightforward. The design work is being carried out contemporaneously and they cite February '92 as the earliest date to completion. This already differs somewhat from the time scale quoted by RPM on Friday 2nd August. (i.e. 3 to 4 months).

We found the report by RPM to contain a great deal of unsubstantiated information, and believe that the slant on the report was unduly biased against the Saffron Hill premises. It is not understood why this is so, particularly now that so much factual information has been submitted to the contrary. A reply to RPM's report will be with you in due course.

It would appear, however, that from the timescale, planning, rental, service charge, and most importantly location point of view, the Saffron Hill premises is the more sensible and less risky financial option.

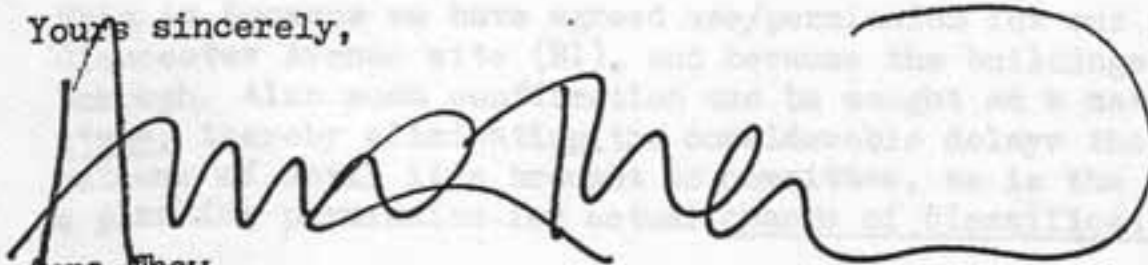
In addition to this a sum of £200,000 appeared in RPM's report with respect to Saffron Hill conversion costs. We would be interested to know on what information this figure is based. The building was thoroughly refurbished only two years ago, in 1989, to the tune of around half a million pounds. It is evident that absolutely no major construction work (with its attendant cost and timescale risks) would be involved.*

From the FIRE, SAFETY and DISABLED ACCESS point of view the building is so much superior as to leave the Dunn & Co. proposition somewhat wanting. When we are to consider housing the largest experimental film library in Europe, either in a building with concrete floors with clients of similar occupancy, or in a building with wooden floors above restaurateurs and caterers, I personally would seek the advice of the National Film Archive for an answer.

(*some estimated costings could be made in the near future, if the LFMC Building Committee were supplied with some information as to LVA and MDA's requirements in terms of subdivision and use of space)

I hope the above can be taken into account when the BFI has its first meeting with the LFMC Building Committee and hopefully with LVA also, so that all can proceed with the best co-operation and firm information on the respective buildings.

Yours sincerely,



Anna Thew
executive