

## Nicola Gunn

---

**From:** Planning  
**Subject:** FW: Comments - 3/2025/0612

---

**From:** Tom Clarke <  
**Sent:** 16 March 2026 16:16  
**To:** Maya Cullen <  
**Subject:** Re: Comments - 3/2025/0612

### External Email

This email originated from outside Ribble Valley Borough Council. Do **NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and are sure the content within this email is safe.

Dear Maya

Thank you for getting in touch.

This evidence appears insufficient and raises some additional questions.

The brief period of re-opening following lockdown being loss-making is not surprising. Cinemas were permitted to re-open in mid-May of 2021 although full restrictions for venues were not lifted until 19<sup>th</sup> July. Many cinemas did not re-open until significantly later than mid-May, and there was also a lack of releases. The entire cultural sector saw audiences take time to return, further hit by subsequent Covid outbreaks at the end of 2021 into 2022.

The letter does not state whether the site was marketed for cinema or other cultural use specifically, or whether the asking price was reasonable considering existing use and condition. The fact there were reported viewings for residential conversion and retail suggests this building may have been marketed as a development opportunity.

It is unclear why the cinema seating was stripped out, something which occurred prior to March 2022. This would have undermined options for retention. With the building having been refurbished in 2018 which was only four years beforehand we would query whether deterioration would have been particularly substantial, unless exacerbated by neglect.

Although the site was sold at a 'reduced' price, without further detail it is unclear whether this is because it was overvalued in the first place.

This letter does not evidence that the building is surplus to requirements as a cinema or other cultural use. We would expect to see a fuller appraisal of marketing efforts, demonstrating the site was offered at an appropriate price benchmarked against similar uses. Ideally it should have been marketed through relevant local and national channels such as trade-specific publications. It might be evidenced that there is a lack of need amongst local people, including details of alternative provision.

Kind regards,

Tom Clarke MRTPI

National Planning Manager

**Theatres Trust**

22 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0QL

The Theatres Trust is the national advisory public body for theatres. The Theatres Trust Charitable Fund supports the work of The Theatres Trust, has the same Trustees and is registered as a charity under number 274697.

The contents of this email are intended for the named addressee(s) only. It may contain confidential and/or privileged information, and is subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. Unless you are the named addressee (or authorised to receive it for the addressee you may not copy or use it, or disclose it to anyone else. If you receive it in error please notify us.

You should be aware that all electronic mail from, to and within the Theatres Trust may be subject to public disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and the confidentiality of this email and any replies cannot be guaranteed. Unless otherwise specified, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of the Theatres Trust or The Theatres Trust Charitable Fund.

**Save energy and paper.**