



What is happening at the moment?

South London & Maudsley NHS Hospital Trust (SLaM) have, despite promising to sell us The Masters House & Male Receiving Wards – and recently the entire site - decided to place the whole site on the open market for a speedy, post Christmas, unconditional, cash sale. The site went onto the market on the 22nd of Sept 2017. This is a huge threat to the future of The Cinema Museum (TCM). We are told the process is to be: viewings through October; tenders in from potential purchasers in November; exchange during December; completion closely thereafter. Potential purchasers are invited to bid for the whole site, which includes The Masters House & Male Receiving Wards and Woodlands Nursing Home. Potential purchasers are property developers, so most will be looking to 'manage out' TCM by hiking up the rent or appealing against the planning conditions. The Minister at the DCMS, our MP, Kate Hoey and the Leader of Lambeth Council, Lib Peck have written to the Chair and/or the CEO of SLaM to ask them to consider the wider cultural, social and wellbeing value of TCM and reconsider their position.

What have The Cinema Museum done in response?

We have written to each of the individual trustees of the SLaM board asking them to reconsider their position and sell to us at Red Book Valuation as previously promised. They have refused to do so.

We have asked SLaM to word their tender bid to say that any bidder would need to explain how they intended dealing with The Cinema Museum & Male Receiving Wards - with a view to securing the long-term sustainability of the Museum. SLaM have refused to do so.

We have asked SLaM to refund the monies that TCM has spent over the years in delivering on SLaM demands around the negotiation of their changing purchase options. SLaM have refused to do so.

We have written to Members, both at the House of Commons and the House of Lords alerting them to the issues that TCM faces and asking them to intervene – we await responses.

We have met with and have written to The Mayors Office alerting them to the issues that TCM faces and asking them to intervene – we await responses.

We have written to the Museum of London (MOL) asking them to intervene. MOL are paid by the Government to support small independent museums in London – they are currently drafting a public letter of support.

We have met with and written to the Arts Council alerting them to the issues that TCM faces and asking them to intervene.

We are in the process of collecting signatures from local charities and organisations that we support to ensure that SLaM, potential purchasers and decision-makers understand that it is not just TCM who believe that they have considerable cultural, social and wellbeing value.

We have been in on-going dialogue for the past decade with Lambeth Council and Lambeth Councillors alerting them to the potential threat to TCM (if SLaM puts our home on the open market) asking them to intervene.

We have met with local Ward councillors; our Assembly Member, Southwark's CEO Office (our neighbouring) Council; our MP and the Leader of Lambeth Council. They are all well aware of the position and although constrained in some regards, they all say they are 100% behind TCM, politically and from a planning perspective, and will look at ways that they can help us remain sustainable at The Masters House & Male Receiving Ward. Senior officials from Southwark Council have been equally supportive and although they are not our council, they are being very innovative and active in their efforts to support us.

We have applied to Lambeth Council to register The Masters House & Male Receiving Wards as 'Community Assets' (information on Community Assets can be found on Lambeth Council website). We have been informed today that we have been successful in that application – this places an asset lock on The Masters House and the Lodge for 6 months.

We have put together an information pack for potential purchasers who come to view The Masters House and Male Receiving Wards, that welcomes them and encourages them in their plans to develop the Woodlands site. However, we also point out to them the history behind TCM trying to secure its future – and our discussions and negotiations with SLaM. We have also made them aware of our strong intent to remain, as owners of The Masters House & Male Receiving Wards. We also point out to them the omissions in Savills marketing material – where Savills are positioning the matter of the Masters House & Male Receiving Wards (and the planning condition that it MUST be used as a Cinema Museum) as a non-issue, because our lease expires in March 2018 (implying that all any developer needs to do to gain vacant possession is to refuse to grant us a new lease in March 2018 – or just rentalise us out.

We have formalised a development partnership with a local Housing Association and are considering putting in a formal bid with them for the purchase of the entire site (providing terms can be agreed). This offer is designed to: return a Red Book Valuation or above to South London & Maudsley Hospital Trust; deliver the desired number of affordable houses required by Lambeth Council; secure TCM's ownership of The Masters House & Male Receiving Wards.

We have also offered to meet (and are meeting) with any developers who intend purchasing the site to discuss with them how we might support their bid – providing it secures the ownership of The Masters House & Male Receiving Wards for TCM.

We have created an information pack for the press and the media which will be circulated this week.

What reassurances can you give us?

We can't give any cast iron promises. However, we can reassure you that we have taken professional and legal advice throughout the past 10 years of negotiations with SLAM; we have taken all the necessary steps to secure the future of the Museum; the trustees are committed to fighting for the future of the museum right to the final conclusion of this crisis – and we remain entirely confident that we will prevail.

What can we do to help?

We are preparing a support pack which we will get to you this week to give you options about how you support the Museum through this difficult period.

If you think you can help in any way, or have any questions or would just like to be kept updated then please contact martin@cinemamuseum.org.uk