

# Former Chicago Rock Cafe cultural space

## Operator partner procurement

Soft Market Testing  
01 April-23 April 2021



# Introduction



The London Borough of Sutton (LBS) owns the Chicago Rock Café site which sits vacant on the High Street. LBS plans to partner with an operator to regenerate the vacant building (1,273 sqm) into an innovative cultural hub. The Project has support from the MHCLG Future High Streets Fund and will be the first of a series of strategic projects along Sutton High Street.

It is a fantastic opportunity to take on a large premises with direct ground floor access at a prominent location on Sutton High Street. You will bring this space back to life as part of the reimagining of the High Street and contribute to the social value and sustainability ambitions of the Council. We are keen to hear from operators who can:

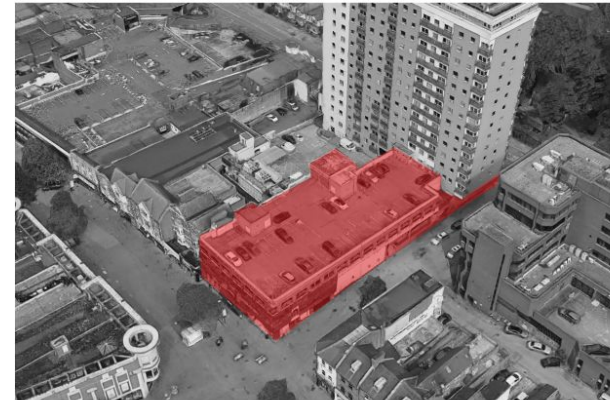
- Undertake innovative refurbishment of the shell and core premises that demonstrates sustainability and allows flexibility
- Demonstrates track record of working with the local community and delivering social value outcomes
- Willing to form partnerships and adapt to create a viable business model in the long term

# The Building

- The vacant areas of the building are arranged over ground and 1st floors. There are three main entrance points for people, and vehicle access via Throwley Way.
- The building has an assumed **NIA** of C. 1.273 sqm
- We have secured the MHCLG funding of £1.4 m for the project to help deliver a building offering an innovative and attractive cultural space.
- This building is key to the wider Town Centre regeneration and we want this ambition to be reflected in the partner operator vision.



The existing abandoned nightclub with car parking above.



Aerial view of the showing its central position on the High Street adjacent to the Trinity Square

# Funding and partnership

The Council has been successful in securing c£1.4m of external funding to support the project from the MHCLG's Future High Street Fund(FHSF). Our bid to the FHSF was focused on renovating the site into a cultural hub including: dance studio, independent cinema, food hall, events space, soft play space, work and office space and lift access.

**However, these need further testing and development in collaboration with an operator in light of COVID-19 impacts.** The Council is committed to the overall vision, however flexible in terms of how it can be delivered, the make up uses and ways achieving community benefits, in light of COVID-19 impacts.

The bid also allows for a focus on the regeneration of Trinity Square and Throwley Road, which offer direct benefits to the Trinity Studios refurbishment.

The FHSF contribution will contribute towards redevelopment costs. The operator will appoint a private contractor for the redevelopment works.

We expect an operator to

- Contribute towards fit out of the space
- Pay rent over the lease period
- Take responsibility for maintenance of the asset during the lease period.

The Council will grant an FRI lease for a period to be agreed. We will consider a variety of rental models to include a profit share arrangement.

# Indicative proposed plans- ground and mezzanine floors



Ground Floor Plan

## Key:

Workspace	499 sqm	Terrace	26 sqm
Cinema	97 sqm	Children's Play Area	52 sqm
Breakout / Foyer	140sqm	Bin Storage	31 sqm
Food Unit	117 sqm	Stairs	79 sqm
Event	321 sqm	Office	25 sqm
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1362 sqm</b>		

## Occupancies

Workspace	333
Cinema	70 seats
Breakout / Foyer	252
Food Unit	62
Event	578
Breakout / Foyer	17
Food Unit	35
Event	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1355 people</b>

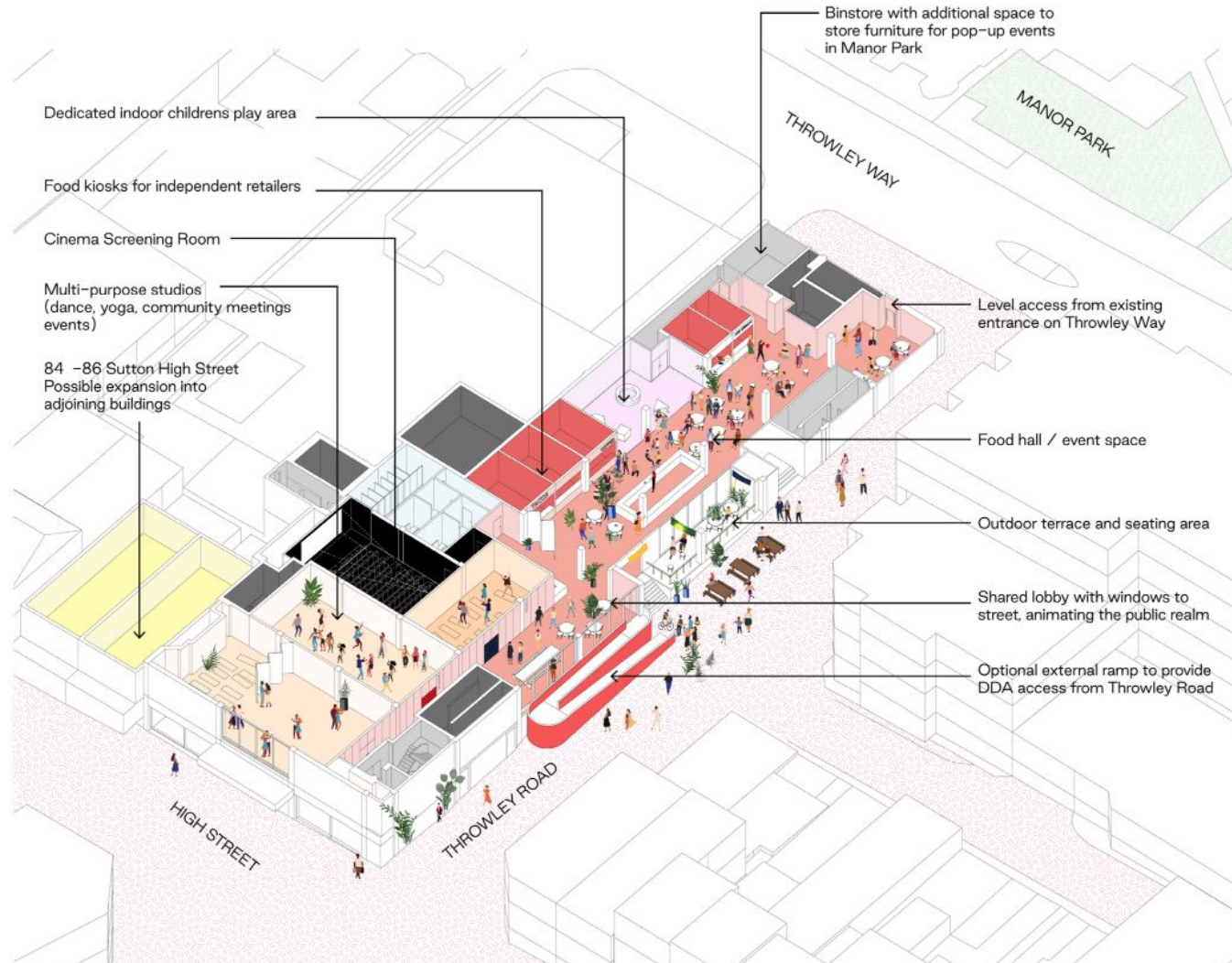
Sutton Town Centre



0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10m



Credit: Turner Works



An illustrative axonometric view  
from Trinity Square  
Credit: Turner Works



# Expression of Interest

The London Borough of Sutton would like to gain an insight from the market on the project, particularly relating to the construction delivery, viability and potential partnership structure. The Council is therefore inviting all providers to participate in this soft market testing exercise to refine the scheme for this commission. The Council will then use the information gathered during this soft market testing exercise to inform the final project brief and Invitation To Tender.

In particular, would welcome your comments on:

1. The proposed uses, considering how do you feel COVID-19 has / will change cultural spaces
2. The viability of the project:
  - a. Construction budget of £1.4 m
  - b. Your investment appetite
  - c. Rental levels to the Council
  - d. Partnership arrangement
3. How could we best deliver the construction project
4. Tell us a bit about yourselves and your outline vision for the property

# Timescale



- The Council has commenced the strip-out works and working to the completion by May 2021.
- There will be an open day and site visit slots for potential bidders available as soon as works are completed.
- The Invitation to Tender will be launched following the soft market testing as a single stage procurement and expecting to award the contract in June 2021.
- Concept design , engagement and planning led by an operator- Autumn 2021
- Detailed design, tender and works commence by the end of 2021
- Completion and launch in Summer 2022

The closing date for the Soft Market Testing will be 23rd April 2021 at 12 noon.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Olyver Cox at [olyver.cox@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:olyver.cox@sutton.gov.uk) or email [opportunitiesutton@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:opportunitiesutton@sutton.gov.uk). We are happy to arrange a video call and virtual site visit.

Thank you for your interest in the project and we look forward to receiving your expression of interest.