



Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP
Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

Thursday 11 January 2018

Dear Mr Hancock.

RE – Northern Cultural Regeneration Fund consideration, Bradford Odeon

My name is Si Cunningham, and I am the Chair of Bradford Civic Society. Since 1942, our group has existed to preserve Bradford's heritage and promote a more beautiful built environment for the city. Bradford has suffered setbacks and economic hardships over the last few decades, yet when I took over as Chairman last year I made a pledge to look to the future and identify opportunities for tangible, positive change.

That's why I'm writing to you today – to urge the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to award the shortlisted Bradford Odeon project the maximum possible funding from the Government's Northern Cultural Regeneration Fund.

This project will provide the West Yorkshire region with a flagship 4,500 capacity venue capable of hosting a variety of cultural attractions, bringing families back into our city centre and acting as a much-needed catalyst for wider regeneration – as restaurants, hotels and cafes open in the area.

Complementing the Alhambra Theatre, National Science and Media Museum, and the magnificent City Hall, the Odeon could become the city's iconic fourth grace – all framed beautifully by that world-renowned shared space of ours, City Park. Furthermore, a rejuvenated Bradford Odeon will be symbolic of the city's rebirth as a cultural powerhouse and will inspire a whole new generation of Bradfordians – from all backgrounds – to immerse themselves in the creative industries.

This is, of course, a building with a tremendous history and has a very special place in the hearts of many Bradfordians. It's where The Beatles played; where many met their future partners; where children saw their first big-screen blockbusters; and – most recently at a special one-off screening – where the world was introduced to the first Yorkshire Time Lord! And it's why thousands upon thousands protested against its proposed demolition over a decade ago, and why over 2,700 people signed our more recent petition to urge Leeds City Region to bid for Northern Cultural Regeneration Funding. *(Continues...)*

Bradford Civic Society is a registered charity, number 1115384

bradfordcivicsociety.co.uk



Leeds City Region have now acknowledged the importance and significance of this project, and I urge you to do the same. I hope you enjoyed your recent visit to Bradford, but I also hope that you saw the potential to make a huge positive change to our city centre and enhance the lives of our great and diverse communities while you're at it.

With a developer on site, the majority of funding in place, and the overwhelming support of the public, this project is ready to deliver something great for Bradford. Please help push it over the finish line by supporting us with this funding.

Yours sincerely,

Si Cunningham
Chair

(CC Judith Cummins MP, Philip Davies MP, John Grogan MP, Imran Hussain MP, Naz Shah MP, Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe, Cllr Alex Ross-Shaw, Lee Craven)