

BUSINESS CASE

Shirehall Redevelopment Library and Learning Centre



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Towns
Fund



Herefordshire
Council

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

STRATEGIC CASE

This full business case supports the proposed relocation of the Hereford library from Broad Street to within Shirehall, and the development of a Learning Centre.

The purpose of the project is to establish a modern and innovative Library and Learning Centre (LLC) in Hereford, creating a mixed-use development to support the regeneration of the city centre, and to improve the opportunities and wellbeing outcomes of the population through enhanced cultural facilities, whilst fulfilling the Council's statutory obligation to provide library facilities.

As reflected in the Hereford Town Investment Plan, town and city centres are evolving. High streets are transforming and the historic civic buildings of yesteryear are becoming redundant as public needs change. This project looks sustainably at the Council's older building stock, opting to reuse a former heritage building and reinvent it for the 21st century. It looks to create a new community hub at the heart of the city focused on culture, learning and wellbeing, giving it a new lease of life for local people.

Hereford Library has shared a site with the Museum and Art Gallery on Broad Street since 1874, but the building is no longer fit-for-purpose with significant structural issues and outmoded spaces. £18m grant funding will now see it completely renovated into the new Hereford Museum and Art Gallery and the library will move out of the building to a new location.

Library services are also changing nationally and the current set-up no longer meets guidance in terms of provision and the contemporary needs of users. The Universal Library Offer, the national guidance from Libraries Connected, promotes a combination of reading, information and digital, culture and creativity, health and wellbeing aimed at improving cultural enrichment, economic prosperity, digital access and literacy, written literacy, healthier and happier lives, and stronger and more resilient communities. Delivering the universal offer necessitates new approaches that go way beyond the current provision. Libraries need to respond to the specific needs of its communities, work with local partners and provide flexible spaces for different types of learning and wellbeing activities. The new premises within Shirehall provide an opportunity to design this new kind of service.

Our ambition is to reinvent the Shirehall building as a vibrant community hub, a place that is talked about and creates a buzz around the city. It will be for, and used by, everyone – a place of civic pride once more. In addition to the library services, the Shirehall building will be refurbished and opened up to provide hireable courtroom spaces, meeting room spaces, film and TV hire potential, heritage interpretation and tours, community skills facilities, and spaces for the Coroner's office and Registrars to operate from. It will break down the barriers, be inclusive and welcoming to all, and be able to flex to the changing needs of its residents.

The redevelopment of Hereford library is a core strand of the Hereford Town Investment Plan, alongside the £18m development of the Hereford Museum and Art Gallery. The project meets the following Stronger Town Interventions:

Intervention	Output	Outcome
Urban Regeneration, Planning and Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remediation and/or development of abandoned or dilapidated sites • Delivery of quality residential or commercial space in key locations (town centres, gateway areas, employment sites) • Delivery of new public spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced townscape that is more attractive and more accessible to residents, businesses and visitors
Arts, Culture and Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New, upgraded or protected community centres, sports or athletics facilities, museums, arts venues, theatres, libraries, film facilities, prominent landmarks or historical buildings, parks or gardens • New, upgraded or protected community hubs, spaces or assets, where this links to local inclusive growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved arts, cultural and heritage offer that is more visible and easier for residents/visitors to access
Skills Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in capacity and accessibility to new or improved skills facilities • Availability of new specialist equipment • Increase in the breadth of the local skills offer that responds to local skills needs • Increased benefit for the public education over the long term 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased share of young people and adults who have relevant skills for employment and entrepreneurship
Enterprise Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the amount of shared workspace or innovation facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of start-ups and/or scale-ups utilising business incubation, acceleration and co-working spaces

Table 1

Strategically, the project meets the outcomes and objectives of the Herefordshire County Plan 2021-24, Hereford City Masterplan and Big Economic Plan, which place communities and culture at the very heart of future ambitions to ensure 'Herefordshire is further strengthened as an arts and heritage destination'. The project supports the Herefordshire County Plan's vision to 'protect and promote our heritage, culture and natural beauty to enhance quality of life and support tourism' and to 'support education and skills development', and also fulfils the priorities of the Herefordshire Cultural Strategy 2019-29 in creating a 'connected and sustainable cultural infrastructure' that offers quality cultural experiences, and learning and career development opportunities to all its residents.



Fig 1: Artist impression of Hereford Library in the Shirehall Assembly Hall (© thedesignconcept)

ECONOMIC CASE

Herefordshire faces some significant, long-term economic challenges, further impacted by Covid-19. In particular the visitor economy, non-essential retail and cultural sectors were the worst impacted by Covid-19, having been required to close for many months during lockdowns.

Herefordshire has the lowest county tier Gross Value Added (GVA) of any county in England and is the second lowest in the UK (second to our neighbour, Powys). Average weekly wages are 20% below the national average, 39% of residents have a NVQ level 4 or above qualification compared to a national average of 43%, 24% of the population are aged over 65, and the county is a Higher Education and social mobility 'cold spot'. As younger generations reach higher education age, they have tended to move away to access university education, and the county does not have the higher level jobs to attract them back.

The proposed project will support in addressing the above issues. The redeveloped Shirehall site at the heart of the city will re-purpose a former judicial centre into a mixed use community facility, offering access to modern library services, as well as other hireable spaces, heritage interpretation and tours, community skills and kitchen facilities, and spaces for the Coroner's office and Registrars to operate from. The Learning Centre will provide local residents with access to Adult Learning Services, addressing skills gaps and enabling them to seek better higher value roles, leading to improved living standards, and provide additional sensory and

creative learning opportunities. It will also provide a central city centre location for access to wellbeing support, health advice and other public services.

The project will deliver the following outputs:

Output	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Remediation and/or development of abandoned or dilapidated sites	1		
Delivery of quality residential or commercial space in key locations (town centres, gateway areas, employment sites)	3		
Delivery of new public spaces	1		
New upgraded or protected libraries	1		
New, upgraded or protected community hubs, spaces or assets, where this links to local inclusive growth	1		
Increase in capacity and accessibility to new and improved skills facilities	3		
Availability of new specialist equipment	6		
Number of learners gaining relevant experience/being 'job ready' (makerspace, business advice)	40	50	50
Number of non-accredited community learners (ALS, sensory room, digital skills)	100	150	150
Number of accredited learners (ALS)	12	16	16
Increase in the amount of shared workspace or innovation facilities	1		

Table 2



Figs 2 / 3: Library feature seating area on the former Assembly Hall stage and main library space (© thedesignconcept)

A bespoke economic model was created to calculate the Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of the proposed project. The results are summarised below:

Value for money assessment (£M, discounted, 2021 prices)		Core scenario	Sensitivity test 1	Sensitivity test 2
			No Development Land Benefits	Optimism Bias 24%
Economic benefits				
Value of Capital Learning Investment		£751,342.00	£751,342.00	£661,180.96
Value of Development Land		£1,150,000.00		£1,012,000.00
Increase in capacity and accessibility to new and improved skills facilities		£289,927.90	£289,927.90	£255,136.55
Increased skills offer in response to local need		£4,185,953.03	£4,185,953.03	£3,683,638.67
New upgraded or protected libraries. Delivery of new public spaces		£5,319,944.40	£5,319,944.40	£4,681,551.07
Non-accredited Community Learning Number of learners inc job ready learners		£1,796,103.12	£1,796,103.12	£1,580,570.75
Accredited learning number of learners		£172,634.59	£172,634.59	£151,918.44
Remediation of Dilapidated sites - increase in GVA by site use		£124,061.34	£124,061.34	£109,173.98
Additionality Factor 0.65				
Total economic benefits	(A)	£9,101,377.80	£8,342,377.80	£8,009,212.47
Economic costs				
Towns Fund	(B)	£3,005,371	£3,005,371	£3,005,371
Optimism Bias	(C)	£360,645	£360,645	£721,289
Total public sector	(D)=(B)+(C)	£3,366,016	£3,366,016	£3,726,660
Benefit Cost Ratio	(A) / (D)	2.7	2.5	2.1

The analysis undertaken in this Economic Case was consistent with HM Treasury's Green Book and other departmental guidance. For the Library and Learning Centre proposal, we identified amenity benefits, social benefits, housing/development benefits, skills and tourism (cultural benefits).

The costings have been calibrated for Optimism Bias and discounted using HMT's 3.5%. The BCR = 2.7 provides a very high level of value for money (MHCLG Appraisal Guide classes a BCR greater than two as 'high' value for money and between one and two as 'acceptable').

FINANCIAL CASE

Cabinet is due to consider a decision paper on 26 October 2023 recommending that Hereford Library and Learning Centre move to Shirehall, and any agreed funds for the project be transferred to deliver the library in this new location. The full business case and Cabinet recommendation will go to the Stronger Towns Board in November 2023 for a final decision on the transfer of Stronger Towns grant funding for this project.

The table below summarises the funding streams and the total budget available for the project:

Type	Source	Total Amount
Public Sector	Stronger Towns Fund	£2,610,715.96
Public Sector	Herefordshire Council	£394,655.08
	Total	£3,005,371.04

Table 3

The table below summarises the capital cost breakdown for the Library and Learning Centre:

Item	Cost
Architectural enabling and Library and Learning Centre fit-out works	£1,916,792
Principal Designer Fee	£10,000
Project Management	£100,000
Clerk of Works	£10,000
Sensory Room	£25,483.10
Makerspace equipment	£30,000
Access provision	£20,000
Business IP Centre set-up allowance	£20,000
Audiovisual hardware, electricals, software, installation	£120,000
Surveys	£30,000
Exhibition Infrastructure and Display	£85,000
Orientation and signage	£35,000
Project Contingency 20%	£603,095.94
Total	£3,005,371.04

Table 4

The table below summarises the financial drawdown for the project:

Funding Profile	23/24	24/25	25/26	Total
<i>Value</i>	£m	£m	£m	£m
Towns Fund		0.67	1.936	2.606
Herefordshire Council	0.18		0.214	0.394

Table 5

The Library and Learning Centre project is dependent on the wider refurbishment of the Shirehall building to ensure it is safe and accessible for the public. Build works to open up the full Shirehall building will be carried out across five separate phases up to 2029. Phase 1 is critical to preparing the building for the LLC (Health & Safety compliance, mechanical and electrical works, replacement boiler and heating systems, roof and skylight repairs, access). The cost of the Shirehall Phase 1 refurbishment works is £4.2m (subject to approval on 13 October 2023).

The table below summarises the income and expenditure forecast for the Library and Learning Centre at Shirehall:

	Current Budget	Shirehall Operation
Income		
Grants	£1,570	-
Facilities	£2,500	£1,500
Printing / Photocopying	£4,000	£4,000
NMITE management system (off-off payment)	£7,000	-
Hire of staff (Colwall Library)	£7,000	£11,600
Admin charge/ Travel Expenses	£375	£1,100
Inter Library Loans Charge	-	£200
Lettings	£3,000	£2,500
Schools Service	£33,000	£33,000
Commission	£500	-
Catering	-	-
Adult Training Room	-	-
Events Hire	-	£6,000
Events and Programming (Day)	-	£4,860
Events and Programming (Evening)	-	£16,478
Retail	-	£1,400
Sensory Room Hire	-	£26,580
Makerspace Hire	-	£26,500
Total Income	£58,975	£135,718

Expenditure		
Payroll	£1,095,830	£1,474,929
Overheads (Sensory Room and Makerspace)	-	£15,000
Overheads (Events Hire)	-	£2,280
Overheads (Events Evening)	-	£4,560
Book Fund	£206,000	£210,000
Inter Library Loans	£3,555	£3,750
Subscriptions	£1,791	£1,791
Rent/Rates	£1,100	£1,434
Service Charge	£19,844	£19,844
Computer Expenditure	£79,266	£80,000
Buildings Maintenance	£585	£1,000
Promotion / Events	£5,530	£20,000
Advertising (Recurrent)	£2,500	£2,500
Advertising (Non-recurrent)	-	£1,500
Utilities	-	-
Insurance	-	-
Training and Recruitment	-	£6,724
Cleaning / Refuse	£660	£660
Telephone	-	-
Equipment	£2,330	£3,000
Stationery / Postage	£20,900	£21,000
Materials	£6,002	£5,000
Furniture/ Fittings	£950	£5,000
Vehicle Costs	£6,680	£7,500
Mileage	£3,954	£2,500
Agency Staff	-	£29,155
Security	-	£5,000
Other	£2,800	£3,000
Total Expenditure	£1,460,277	£1,927,127
Net Revenue Expenditure	-£1,401,332	-£1,791,409
Variance		-£390,077

Table 6

In summary, the project variance is mainly due to the uplift in staffing required to operate the additional Library and Learning Centre spaces, extended opening hours and commercial activities (£379,099). New income streams help to offset other additional costs.

COMMERCIAL CASE

A commercial feasibility study on the Library and Learning Centre redevelopment has been undertaken by external consultant, Take the Current Ltd (see Appendix 1).

The redesigned library will provide an enhanced and innovative facility for all ages across the county. Through outreach services and online opportunities the service will offer additional significant reach across Herefordshire communities. Although these services are non-chargeable, the increased footfall into the city will have an economic impact.

The new Library and Learning Centre design also provides the opportunity to rent space for a range of activities including workshops, events, programmes, learning experiences, meeting space and creative workspaces in the centre of the city, wellbeing initiatives and health clinics. There will also be opportunities for retail income and small hire income from the Sensory Room and Makerspace facilities. The multi-functional Assembly Hall library space can host events and programmes, and be hired out by third parties, with financial projections showing the cost of any overheads (staff resource, insurance etc.) offset against income received outlined in the Economic Case above.

Part of the delivery model will be for the Council's Adult Learning Services to utilise the Adult Training Room within its core offer of service, re-locating the educational programmes being delivered to this space. As Property Services remain landlords of Shirehall, any income from meeting rooms managed centrally by them will not form part of the Library and Learning Centre financial projections. This full business case will only include activities paid for, operated and staffed by the Library service.

Commercial opportunities include:

- **Paid-For Events and Programming in the Library** - The new library is not intended to be a quiet space so events can take place in the library at different times of the day. It has the benefit of a ramped fixed seating stage area (accommodating up to 65 people) with integrated audiovisual facilities which could accommodate a range of activities and also be programmed with classes, events and meet-ups both in the day and in the evening. The event space can also be hired to third party organisations after hours for events and programmes.
- **Sensory Room hire** - The Sensory Room in the Learning Centre will be kitted out with equipment of a high standard and designed by a company who has fitted out a number of other sensory rooms across the UK. It will target early years to around 12 years with special educational needs (SEN), and teenagers and adults with learning disabilities. It is anticipated that the room will also be used by family and community groups whose members have additional needs and can suffer sensory overload. The room will be charged on a low per session basis to offset overheads.
- **Makerspace hire** – It is anticipated that the Makerspace in the Learning Centre will be developed in partnership with NMITE, and complementary to their Stronger Towns-funded Skills Hub project. Shirehall has the advantage of being a highly accessible location attracting different types of user groups, for example those looking to upskill at entry level to improve their opportunities, wellbeing and skills. The Makerspace will be a digital fabrication lab only, with basic printing, sewing machines, tool hire, and a small group session programme led in partnership with NMITE to upskill local residents starting

on their journey into business, making and new skills. It is proposed that the Makerspace is operated on a tiered membership model with bookable system for specific machine hire at a low cost.

Other income will be gained from regular library services such as schools service, printing, inter library loans and a small publication retail offer. Income from the hire of the Adult Training Room in the Learning Centre will go to Property Services, who will manage and operate the booking of all meeting spaces centrally in Shirehall. Income from commercial opportunities are offset in the financial projections by any overheads, staffing, service charges and other expenses.

The income potential for each new opportunity is outlined below, and the full financial projections for the Library and Learning Centre is shown in context in Table 6 above:

Item	Cost
Events Hire	£6,000
Events and Programming (Day)	£4,860
Events and Programming (Evening)	£16,478
Retail	£1,400
Sensory Room Hire	£26,580
Makerspace Hire	£26,500
Total	£81,818

Table 7

MANAGEMENT CASE

The project is managed by Herefordshire Council's Programme Management Office (PMO). The Senior Responsible Officer is Hilary Hall, Corporate Director Community Wellbeing. The following governance arrangements are in place for the Library and Learning Centre project:

1. **Library and Learning Centre Project Board** - The project is overseen by the Library and Learning Centre Project Board, which meets at least monthly. The role of the Project Board is to direct, develop, oversee and make recommendations for the project. The Board is accountable for the delivery of the project, ensuring the project meets its strategic purpose, delivering high quality value for money outcomes for the Council and follows the Council's applied Governance model for project management.
2. **Major External Fund Delivery Board** - the purpose of the Delivery Board is to provide a regular oversight, decision and recommendation making forum for projects that are being delivered through this Board. The Board is accountable for the delivery of Council Projects (under the Board's remit), ensuring the projects meet their strategic purpose, delivering high quality value for money outcomes for the council that follows the Council's applied Governance model for project management.
3. **Hereford Towns Board** has established a Programme Management Office with responsibility for Monitoring and Evaluation of the delivery of all Hereford Town Deal projects, including the delivery of the Hereford Museum and Art Gallery refurbishment.

4. **Herefordshire Council Section 151 Officer** will report to HM Government every six months on the Library and Learning Centre project service delivery as stipulated in the Town Fund guidance.

The project manager maintains all documentation and regularly reports using highlight reports to the Senior Responsible Officer, Project Board and Delivery Board as required.

Assurance

All projects at Herefordshire Council are monitored by the Executive Programme Board. The Executive Programme Board has many roles, including exception reporting, final approvals and annual review of the Capital Programme and reviewing the PMO process. Stronger Towns Board will have oversight of monitoring and evaluation throughout.

Project Scope

The project team will continually monitor the scope of the project and will implement the PMO's change management process to ensure that any change to scope is correctly managed.

In Scope	Out of Scope (covered by a separate project)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocation of the Library from Friars Street temporary location to the Assembly Hall at Shirehall, and create a Learning Centre within the Undercroft. • Building enabling works to support relocation of Library and Learning Centre in Shirehall. • Ensure all public areas of Library and Learning Centre are accessible and have access to appropriate facilities. • Provision of a goods lift • Access porch to the Undercroft and entrance works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider refurbishment to Shirehall including H&S compliance, electrical works, replacement boiler and heating systems, roof and skylight repairs, court reinstatement, building repairs • Redecoration of any areas not Assembly Hall/Undercroft • Platform lifts/accessibility to other areas of Shirehall • Fire escape from Assembly Hall

Table 8

Project Programme

Stage/Milestone	Indicative Date
Stage 0 - Project Mandate approved	N/A
Stage 1 - Outline business case completed	N/A
Stage 2 - Full business case completed	Oct 2023
Full Council approval	Dec 2023
Approval to spend obtained	Feb 2024
Stage 3 - Delivery	Feb 2024
<i>Construction commences</i>	Jan 2025

Stage 4 – Handover and Opening	May 2026
Stage 5 - Project Closure	July 2027

Table 9

Dependencies

This project is independent of other Town Investment Plan projects so has no reliance on other timescales within the programme. The wider refurbishment of the Shirehall is NOT dependent on the installation of the Library and Learning Centre. Whilst they are mutually beneficial, the Council has provided a commitment to the refurbishment of the building and to secure the building for civic use.

The project is wholly dependent on the refurbishment of the Shirehall building including heating, rewiring, roof works to ensure it is safe and accessible for the public. The refurbishment is dependent on gaining further budget approved by full Council.

The project is dependent on securing external funding (Stronger Towns) within the anticipated timescales. The project is also dependent on achieving listed building consent.



Fig 4: Artist's impression of the Digital Skills Lounge (© thedesignconcept)

INTRODUCTION

Herefordshire Council will deliver a new, innovative and modern Library and Learning Centre, creating a mixed development to support the regeneration of the city centre, and to improve the opportunities and wellbeing outcomes of the population through enhanced cultural and learning facilities. The aim is to improve the quality of life for local people, to create the infrastructure required to support the development of critical skills in the county, addressing the gap identified in the Town Investment Plan, and create an ‘attractor’ to bring people into the city centre, which will support in the delivery of the Council’s County Plan.

The Council aims to develop an efficient service that makes the best use of the assets available in order to meet its core objectives and vision, whilst recognising the constraints on resources. By integrating services and opportunities, Shirehall will provide a multi-purpose destination for learning, encouraging literacy, access to advice, information, and digital skills, and supporting more people in the community to fulfill their potential in an inclusive and accessible environment.

The existing library is located in Broad Street within a building also housing the Hereford Museum and Art Gallery. As the owners of Shirehall, it is the intention of Herefordshire Council to relocate the library and redesign the available space to provide a Library and Learning Centre within Shirehall allowing the existing Broad Street building to provide a dedicated and enhanced facility for the new Hereford Museum and Art Gallery.

The Library Service

Herefordshire Council is a designated “library authority” with statutory duty to provide library services under the 1964 public libraries act. This requires the Council to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for residents, students and people working in Herefordshire. The library duty is broadly drawn, which gives wide scope for interpretation. Over the past decade or so, library authorities have expanded their offer, acknowledging the unique potential that libraries have in their communities, as spaces which are universally accessible, able to reach to residents with a diversity of interests and needs, to deliver social as well as cultural outcomes.

Herefordshire has 11 libraries across the county with a mixture of staff and volunteer-led operations and also has a library van that visits communities and schools.

Hereford library has historically been the busiest library in the county and its book stock is key to supporting the other library sites, and to giving the widest possible access to stock; service users can request items from other libraries free of charge. The service and building has not undergone major renovations for a significant amount of time and in its current state is not offering the wealth of opportunities that could be provided from a remodelled, redesigned and repurposed building.

Since its inception, Hereford library has endeavoured to support reading, learning and research. The library team delivers a range of services from the current site at Broad Street including, but not limited to, a book lending service (including new books). This is a statutory obligation under the Public Libraries and Museums Act (1964) which states: *'...a library authority shall in particular have regard to the desirability...of securing, by the keeping of adequate stocks, by arrangement with other library authorities, and by any other appropriate means, that facilities are available for the borrowing of, or reference to, books and other printed matter... sufficient in number, range and quality to meet the general requirements and any special requirements both of adults and children'*. The library team also delivers rhyme time and schools activities, programmes for vulnerable adults and carers, and community events from Hereford library.

Libraries are trusted by the public and have extremely high levels of satisfaction and confidence. They remain a free service accessible to everyone, providing the entry point for many on their journey to improved literacy and skills development.

Although books have become increasingly more available to many, there are still large sections of the population who cannot easily buy books or have no digital access or the means to buy eBooks or audio books. The development of eBooks has interestingly increased reading and engagement with physical books amongst all ages. The physical book remains the first entry point for toddlers and pre-schoolers when the early development of a reading habit is so important.

A 2015 report on reading for pleasure and empowerment by BOP Consulting describes how recreational reading events (e.g. book groups, school and library events) are linked to enhanced social skills, decreased loneliness, and engagement in an aesthetic process. It also notes that reading improves not only vocabulary and spelling in young people but also has a beneficial impact on mathematics. It has a more beneficial impact than having a parent with a degree in terms of the attainment of young people. There are countless studies and papers proving the benefits of reading for society; better communication, self-expression, self-esteem, motivation to learn and relatedness, to name a few.

For those with additional needs, less socially confident, or having low incomes, a “free at the point of use” library service is crucial. For adults with additional needs, reading has proven to help reduce depressive symptoms, reduced/delayed onset of the symptoms of dementia and increased health literacy. Libraries are often at the heart of initiatives designed to encourage readers with specific groups or in particular communities e.g. migrant communities.

However, the number of people using public libraries has decreased over the last decade, which has caused a number of papers investigating and imagining the future for libraries. Councils across the UK have started to think about the role that libraries play, investing heavily and placing them at the centre of towns in beautifully designed buildings. This has radically changed the ‘user experience’ broadening the cultural activities, events and workshops on offer whilst not losing sight of the core purpose of a library and who it best serves. This approach uses the book, and the ability to read and write, as a jumping point for discovery, enjoyment, connectedness, learning and self-improvement.

Library and Learning Centre Vision

To establish a showpiece Library and Learning Centre which brings culture, entertainment, skills and education together into a vibrant cultural hub. It will create a place that the community will be rightly proud of and where they feel they belong. It will be a home for creatives, for culture and for community, and will emphasise the importance of learning and literacy to the county's future success.

Aims

- To regenerate a disused civic building at the heart of Hereford, bringing a contemporary twist on a heritage statement.
- To provide access to information, resources, and services that promote personal growth, cultural enrichment and lifelong learning for all members of the community.
- To act as a counterpart to the transformational vision for a world-class museum in the city centre.
- To provide a multi-functional infrastructure that promotes skills, learning, enriching activities and education.
- To create an opportunity to build sustainable partnerships across sectors and facilitate health and wellbeing initiatives.
- To create a thriving and connected cultural hub open to collaboration and innovation.



Fig 5: Artist impression of Hereford Library in the Shirehall Assembly Hall (© thedesignconcept)

The Library and Learning Centre sits within the wider Shirehall complex. Our ambition is to reinvent the building as a vibrant community hub, a place that is talked about and creates a buzz around the city. It will be for, and used by, everyone – a place of civic pride once more. In addition to the library services, the Shirehall building will be refurbished and opened up to provide hireable courtroom spaces, meeting rooms, film and TV hire potential, heritage interpretation and tours, community skills facilities, and spaces for the Coroner’s office and Registrars to operate from. It will break down the barriers, be inclusive and welcoming to all, and be able to flex to the changing needs of its residents.

The ambition for the Library and Learning Centre is to deliver outcomes under the four key Universal Library Offer themes of Health & Wellbeing, Employment & Skills, Digital Literacy and Culture & Creativity (including reading for pleasure). Some of the ambitions are set out below:

- **Library as a cultural asset** – the LLC is a key space with diverse footfall that forms part of the cultural heartbeat of the city. Partnership with other cultural providers seeking space and audiences will help build its reputation as a place to experience a range of cultural experiences, while at the same time helping smaller cultural organisations to reach bigger audiences.
- **Library as a “third space”** – the LLC is a third space (not work or home) providing a safe and supported social space and relaxed atmosphere where everyone feels like they belong.
- **Library for children** – the LLC is a place where children and families can access books and activities such as rhyme time, storytelling and crafting sessions to help early years’ development, leading to a lifelong love of reading, as well as offering families a way to connect, play and get to know each other. Progression reading is an important element of literacy, while reading for pleasure enhances quality of life.
- **Library and digital access** – the LLC is a place where people can learn the skills required to use digital technology purposefully and confidently to communicate, find information, purchase goods/services, problem solve and create.
- **Library for young people** – the LLC is a place for teenagers and young people to access independently for quiet study, homework or revision, or to find resources and a quiet space and time to think and engage with topics outside school or college.
- **Library for learning** – the LLC is a space for teaching and learning with adult education classes and flexible spaces which can be hired by external partners for skills development.
- **Library as an advice hub** – the LLC is a neutral and accessible space for advice and confidential consultations to avoid “white coat syndrome”, supported by access to professional advice and information and signposting to library resources on healthy lifestyles, financial advice and job support and the Talk Community network.
- **Library as a creative start-up incubator and co-working space** – the LLC provides a complementary outpost to the NMITE Skills Hub, building in makerspace and fab-lab capability to enable the library to play a role in supporting creative future skills, business advice or digital fabrication.

The space proposed for the Library and Learning Centre is the Assembly Hall and its Undercroft. This site combines the opportunity to create a state-of-the-art public library, with a modern, accessible learning centre beneath.

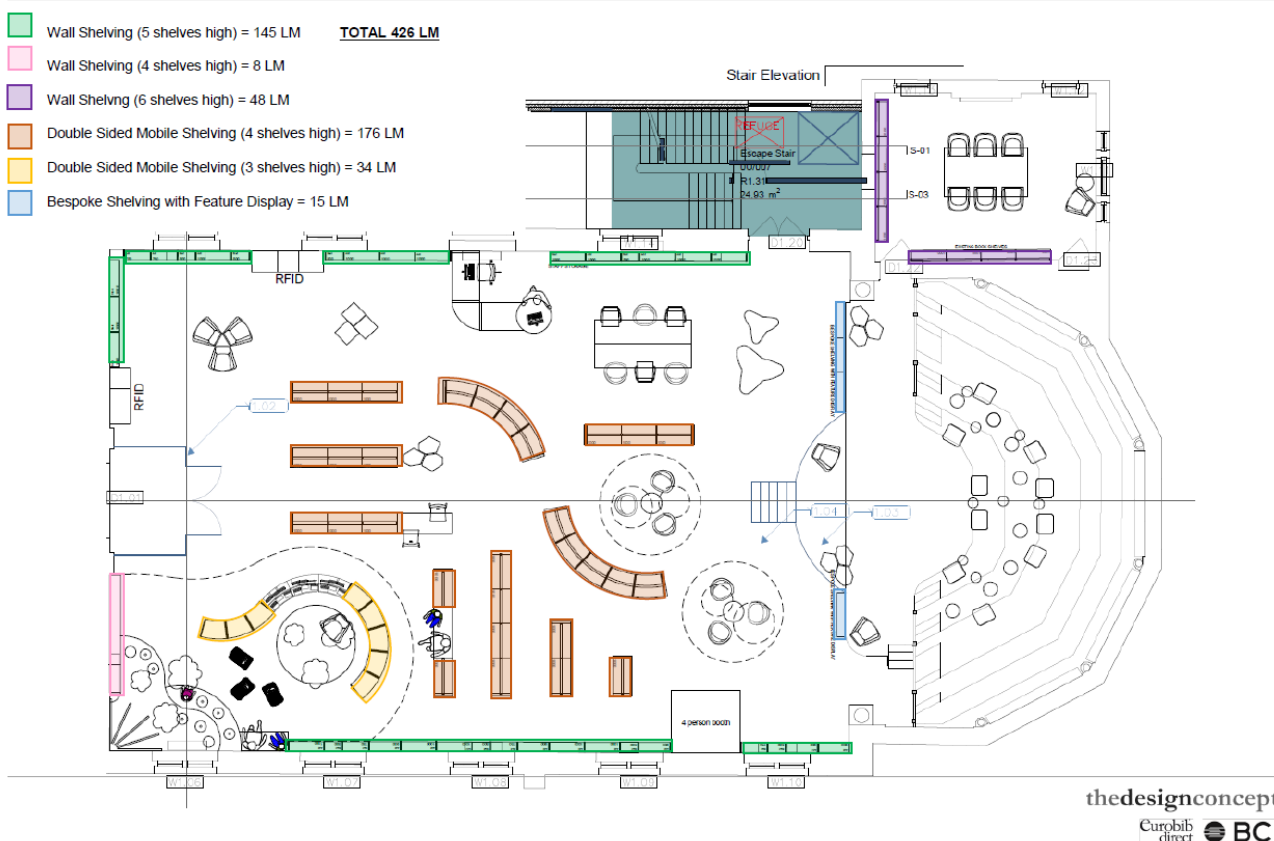
The lending, reference and children’s library and the local history collection will be located in the grand Assembly Hall on the first floor. The Undercroft on ground level will provide important space for the Learning Centre: informal learning and advice, digital skills lounge, creative learning (Makerspace), sensory learning (Sensory Room), adult learning (consultation and adult training room) and back of house storage and staff working spaces.

The location of the two elements over different floors mean that the Library and Learning Centre can be operated independently of each other, for example, so that evening classes can take place in the Undercroft without the need for the Assembly Hall to be open and staffed upstairs.

The Library

The Shirehall provides a unique opportunity to create a purpose-built library offer in the former Assembly Hall space. This open-plan concert hall on first floor will be redesigned and carved up to deliver the different library services. The Assembly Hall is a light and airy triple height space with a stage and backstage areas (including a green room and basic facilities) to the rear. From a design perspective, the Assembly Hall presents a heritage ‘wow’ factor and the amphitheatre-style stage area will be repurposed for feature amphitheatre seating.

Shirehall Library – Linear Meterage



thedesignconcept
Curbil direct BCI

Fig 6: Plan of the proposed Library in Shirehall (see Appendix 5 for more detail)

The library will create an atmosphere for people to dwell and enjoy the activities and resources available, with a “living room” feel and a variety of informal seating, study and engagement areas. Key elements include a staff welcome point with self-serve kiosks, printer services and small retail offer, a core arrangement of fiction and non-fiction library stacks totalling 426 linear metres, a children’s library with feature display, and a meeting pod.

The stepped area of the stage will be repurposed as a feature seating area for up to 45 library users with scatter cushions, movable ‘lap stations’ and other contemporary features to make it a large-scale informal area to ‘hang out’. The main stage area will also provide a space for presentations, activities and events directly facing the amphitheatre-style seating area (capacity 65 people) for programmable events. This multi-purpose flexibility enables the operation to remain agile to changing programmes and needs going forward. The former Green Room will become a dedicated Local Studies room housing the local history and reference book collection, with a central study area with tables and chairs.



Figs 7-9: Artist impression of Hereford Library including the Children’s Library (© thedesignconcept)

The Learning Centre

The Learning Centre will be a multi-functional community hub space on ground floor that can be accessed directly from car park or via the central circulation core of the Shirehall. It is in the vicinity of the library, but not physically connected to it. The Undercroft space will be opened up to create a warm, open-plan welcome point and buggy park at the entrance.

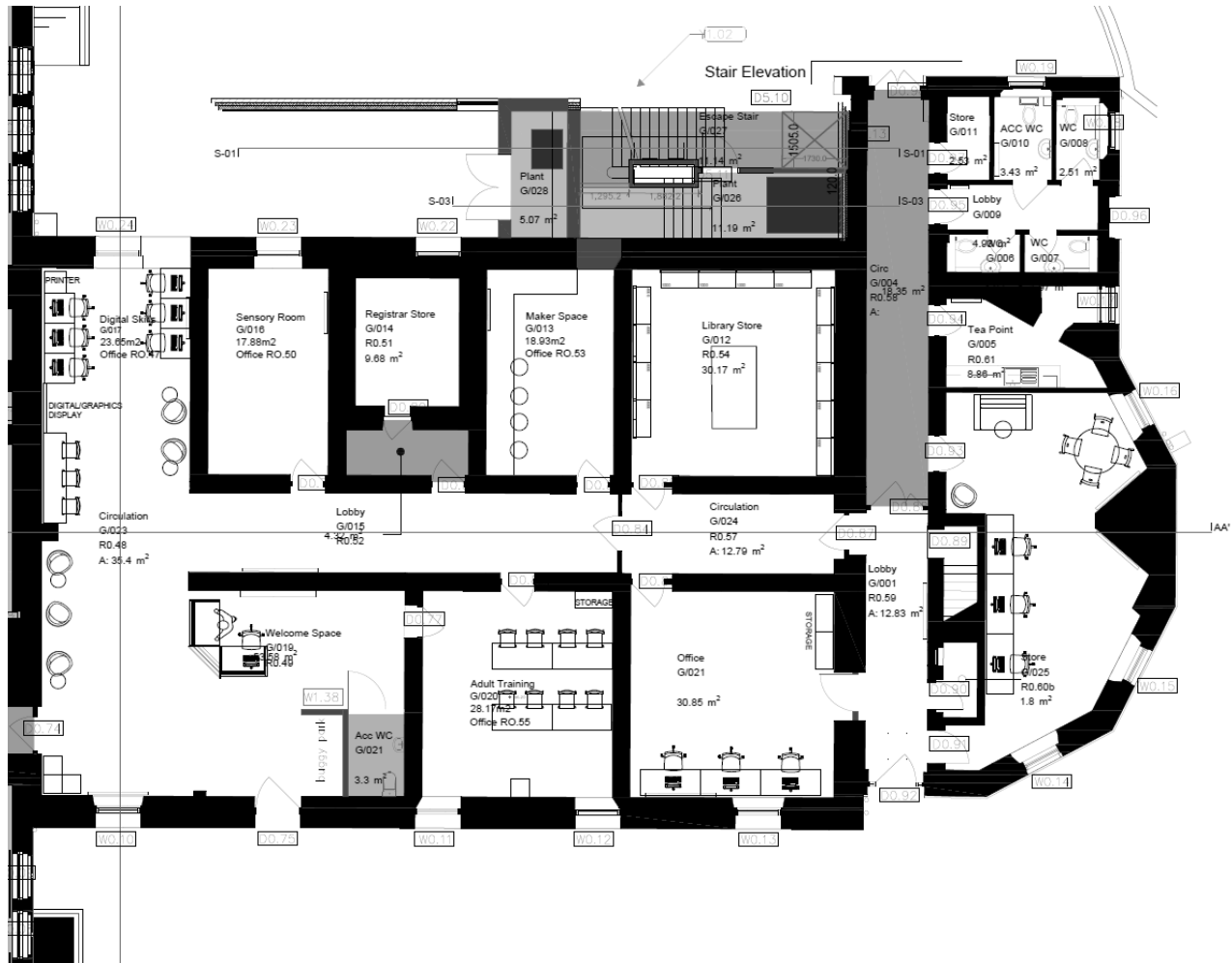


Fig 10: Plan of the proposed Learning Centre in Shirehall (see Appendix 7 for more detail)

The Centre will have a number of rooms specifically designed for different types of learning and development:

- **Digital Learning** – a digital lounge with 6no. fixed terminals, workstations and free seating/work stations for Bring Your Own (BYO) device customers. The lounge is designed to support co-working, informal meetings and be a safe and welcoming space for the community to access their digital needs. The entire space will be WI-FI enabled and have ample charging points and seating throughout.
- **Sensory Learning** – a Sensory Room with a variety of equipment for the development of learning, communication and skills for early years, families with SEN needs and adults with learning disabilities.
- **Creative Learning** – a digital fabrication lab developed and managed in partnership with NMITE, with hireable equipment, software, tooling, materials and workstations. Complementary 'Future Skills' activities will help users to develop skills and offer entry level advice for local people.

- **Skills, Advice and Wellbeing Support**– a hireable, digitally-enabled meeting room for a range of services, including for the council's Adult Learning Service (ALS), and health and wellbeing clinics. Other flexible rentable spaces will also be available throughout the Shirehall providing even more opportunities to bring council services under one roof. The council's ALS team has a strategic aim to engage with local people who are least likely to participate in learning and enable them to access a range of high quality learning opportunities. This will enable participants to lead more independent lives, support their families, gain a qualification, get a job, volunteer and become less socially isolated.

The Learning Centre will contribute to a wide range of outcomes for individuals and the wider community including personal and social, educational attainment, economic regeneration, and improved health and wellbeing. Supporting adults back into learning, training and employment, through community outreach provision delivered at local venues. In order to achieve the above, the service will widen adult participation in learning through a targeted approach, promoting equality and diversity and improving access to learning for particular under-represented groups and those who have not been engaged in learning for a significant period of time.

In particular the service will continue to work with those people who are:

- unemployed;
- residents with learning difficulties and/or disabilities;
- mental health service users and adults with mild to moderate mental health problems;
- homeless, or in danger of becoming homeless;
- living in sheltered accommodation;
- carers of people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including mental health issues;
- care leavers;
- yet to achieve a prior level of attainment at full level 2 qualification;
- yet to achieve level 2 in English and Maths;
- families, where parent/carers, have basic English and Maths needs or who have not reached level 2, where there is a single parent or families with complex needs;
- wishing to improve their parenting skills;
- from areas identified as local areas of deprivation;
- earn less than £16,009.50 annual gross salary;
- digitally excluded (unable to access ICT based services or opportunities due to having little or no knowledge of ICT);
- Refugee or Asylum Seeker status;
- ex-Armed Forces personnel.

Currently, as the council has no Learning Centre of its own, delivery is through community facilities, third party organisations and by subcontractors. However, the new facility will allow a move towards either direct delivery or a hybrid model. As well as supporting the ALS, the facility will provide space for health and wellbeing clinics which provides an opportunity to reach our most vulnerable groups that will be accessing the library and ALS, as well as providing a central location in the city centre. Providing health on the high street and within this facility supports the national direction for the NHS service, including:

- running health services from vacant property, including vaccination programmes
- broadening the range of services provided within communities
- supporting and participating in the design of healthy communities and places

Shirehall

The Shirehall is an iconic building situated in St Peter's Square in the heart of Hereford city centre. The Shirehall opened in 1817 as a home for the courts of justice in Hereford. Designed by Sir Robert Smirke, this Grade 2* listed building occupies a significant place in Herefordshire's heritage and stands on a prominent site (the former gaol house) in the city centre. The Assembly Hall was added in 1862 at the rear of the building. The Shirehall itself is no longer occupied and has been identified as a key strategic site, needing investment to bring it back into use.



Fig 11: Front of Shirehall building

The Shirehall building contains two working court rooms and judge's quarters, a grand jury room, a custody suite, a series of large meeting rooms, a kitchen and a large assembly hall also used as a concert hall, and for dinners, meetings, events and celebrations. The Undercroft underwent a full refurbishment in 2015 and was then used as council offices for Library, Archives and Committee services. It operated as Hereford Crown Court and was used by Herefordshire Council up until 2020, when a ceiling collapse forced the closure of the building. The Crown Court has now formally moved out of the building and will not return.

The Shirehall is owned and managed by Herefordshire Council. A separately-funded project led by Property Services will refurbish the building (roof and masonry repairs, damp-proofing, window repairs, replacement of heating systems and outdated mechanical and electrical services, decoration, lighting, safety and access compliance). Some of this work has already begun to secure the collapsing roof of the courtrooms. These critical works will make the building good for the fit-out of the Library and Learning Centre and wider Shirehall in Phase 1, and future works to open up more of the building will continue in a phased approach up to 2029. Once complete, the Shirehall ancillary spaces (outside of Library and Learning Centre service operation) will continue to be managed and operated by Property Services.

Phase	Outline scope of works	Proposed Programme
Phase 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic refurbishment and repair of the Shirehall building (H&S compliance, mechanical and electrical works, replacement boiler and heating systems, roof and skylight repairs, access) • Court reinstatement – Courtroom 1: ceilings, lighting, heritage repairs, ventilation and Courtroom 2: flooring repairs, floor coverings, ceiling repairs, lighting installation, ventilation, and removal of barriers/ screens. • Library and Learning Centre enabling build works (paid for by LLC project) • Relocate CCTV to Maylord Orchards Management Suite / mothball existing • Exhibition space / accessible WC works (custody suite) • Dilapidation report • Pedestrianise front and vehicular management 	2023-26
Phase 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LED lighting upgrade • Window repairs • Photovoltaics installation (including removal of CCTV block) • Kitchen refurbishment including fire escape route and move to a community centre style kitchen • New lift to lower level to improve DDA and catering access as well as remove existing lift on other staircase and make good 	2025-26
Phase 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reception reinstatement works (heritage request to remove arched infills and reinstate original ceilings, lighting, family room reconfiguration, DDA WC and FOH area) • External seating, public space revamp and front of building additions 	2026-27
Phase 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courtroom 2 modernisation - two tier floor levels, access lift, new coverings and furniture. 	2027-28
Phase 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full redecoration • Carpets as required (full clean where not) • Paintings restoration and conservation 	2028-29

Table 10

STRATEGIC CASE

STRATEGIC CASE

INTRODUCTION

This part of the full business case positions the development of the Library and Learning Centre within the strategic context of the development of the cultural, community, leisure and tourism infrastructure in Hereford and wider county.

The purpose of the library service is to promote wellbeing and enrich lives for people at different stages in their life. Libraries are ideally placed to be safe spaces that the community feel comfortable using, which have no barriers to age, background or income level. The range of services provided are particularly relevant to children at the foundation of their learning and for people of different ages that want to feel connected to others and their community. Libraries are also resource centres with access to technology and advice, often shared with other support services, and used by voluntary groups for community activity.

Towns and city centres are evolving. High streets are transforming and the historic civic buildings of yesteryear are becoming redundant as public needs change. The Hereford Town Investment Plan states, ‘the cluster of assets at the heart of the city currently controlled by the City Council, Herefordshire Council and the Diocese represents significant collaborative potential to repurpose the city centre’. This project looks sustainably at wider city planning and the Council’s older building stock, opting to reuse a former heritage building and reinvent it as a Library and Learning Centre for the 21st century. It will create a new community hub at the heart of the city focused on culture, learning and wellbeing, giving it a new lease of life for the local population.

The proposed project directly addresses some of the key issues identified in the Hereford Town Investment Plan, enabling the wider regeneration of the city centre and providing a new facility that offers a fairer, heritage-focused, creative, digital, connected and skills-based offer.

The Plan identifies a number of issues that the proposed project will seek to address through the provision of educational facilities at the heart of the city centre: *‘there are 15% fewer workers qualified to NVQ level 4 and above than the national average. At a county level, wages earned in Hereford make up 44% of all incomes, with the county average salary almost exactly £100 per week lower than the national average [23]. Hereford scores lower than the England median in relation to income, education and living environment domains within the English Indices of Deprivation 2019[24]. Herefordshire is a cold spot for social mobility; it is one of the worst 20% of local authorities in England in terms of school achievement for disadvantaged children who go on to get a good job and secure housing.’*

CASE FOR CHANGE

Library services are changing nationally. Old ways of working are being challenged and new models of service delivery are being developed - that is the strategic position from Government on future library and learning services. There has never been so much change and innovation across national library services. Alongside this, many library services are seeing the enormous benefits that technological and digital innovation can bring – giving them opportunities to offer new services, bring in new customers and extend their reach into communities.

Public libraries provide a unique ‘cradle-to-grave’ service. They reach and support the whole community regardless of age, gender, socio-economic status or educational attainment, and they – and the people who work in them – can also support other public services to achieve the outcomes needed for individuals and communities to flourish.

Through their buildings, outreach activities and online digital services, libraries are being seen increasingly as community hubs – bringing people together and giving them access to a greater breadth and depth of services and support, and acting as a gateway to physical and digital information; from public health to adult learning, school readiness to employment, and a broad range of business, community and cultural services. But libraries face significant challenges as almost every aspect of modern life continues to change rapidly. People’s experience and expectations around living, learning, shopping, leisure and entertainment are radically different to those which existed a decade before. And like all public services, libraries have to adapt accordingly – continually developing their offer and responding to changing needs and circumstances.

The best libraries offer far more than their original role of making books and other published material available. A mix of on-site resources including books, e-books and magazines, job-seeking assistance, computer stations, free Wi-Fi tech-hubs, refreshments, meeting rooms, community spaces and safe spaces for groups of all ages are provided.

Hereford Library no longer adheres to the contemporary needs of users. The Universal Library Offer, the national guidance from Libraries Connected, promotes a combination of reading, information and digital, culture and creativity, and wellbeing aimed at improving cultural enrichment, economic prosperity, digital access and digital literacy, written literacy, healthier and happier lives, and stronger and more resilient communities. Delivering the universal offer necessitates new approaches that go beyond the current provision. The new Shirehall development provides an opportunity to design this new kind of service.

As social places, libraries offer much-needed public spaces helping with the social outcomes of companionship for older adults, club-space for a variety of groups, de facto childcare for busy parents, language assistance for those in need and welcoming public spaces for the poor, the lonely and the young. They have proved their resilience as social institutions funded by local authorities in the UK for over 150 years and can serve – along with museums – as important places to foster positive mental health and social wellbeing. Research has demonstrated that libraries remain highly trusted places in a world grappling with fake news and deliberate fabrication. As such, a design which offers open, easy access, a variety of spaces and free-to-use services over long opening hours, all within a safe and welcoming environment, is key. In

this way, the modern library can supplement other activities in a town centre location, such as that proposed in Hereford.

The current library is co-located with Hereford Museum and Art Gallery in the city centre within a Grade II listed building where limited investment has been made over the years. Although the library has space for activities the current building has a number of areas that are inaccessible due to dilapidation, and the environment does not meet the future vision of the service. The building is also subject to proposed changes to be solely used as an innovative and progressive Museum and Art Gallery project also through Stronger Towns and other funding sources.

Hereford library, as with other public-facing activities, was also greatly impacted by the pandemic. The table below shows that the number of visits fell by 55% (comparing the 2019/20 with 2021/22). The number of active borrowers fell by 27%, new members fell by 26% and computers sessions were less than a quarter what they were in 2019/20. Numbers have started to increase in 2022/23, but have not yet reached pre-pandemic levels. More needs to be done to engage in new and different ways to drive footfall back.

Year	Visits	Issues	New Members	Public Computer Sessions
22/23	84,510	119,058	2567	6,521
21/22	65,390	100,819	1898	3146
19/20	144,410	142,138	2570	13590

Table 11

Hereford library consistently falls short of recommendations in terms of book stock compared to similar-sized settlements. For the catchment area it services, Hereford library should have around 20% more book stock than it currently has. There is a need for a flexible space which can be used for a variety of events and activities, and this would need to be able to facilitate performances, rhyme time etc. with sufficient room for audiences and pushchairs:

- Space for a children’s library including sufficient space to accommodate pushchairs etc.
- Sufficient space to facilitate school class and early years setting visits
- The facility and space to deliver services, advice and skills sessions with community partners such as Heathy Lifestyles, Adult Learning Service and other health providers as well as for small exhibitions and displays
- Study space (appropriate tables and chairs) as well as comfy seating
- Fast and robust Wi-Fi
- Public access

There is no doubt that these are challenging times for councils and the library services they run are no exception. The way people use libraries, together with their expectations of public services are changing. The pressures on public finances are being compounded by demographic changes and increasingly speedy technological advances by the private sector. We need to embrace this change and make adjustments accordingly.

The social commentator Richard Watson suggested that the future of libraries: *“is one of being gathering places where people exchange knowledge, wisdom, insight and, most importantly of all, human dignity”*. He went on to say that: *“a good public library is a showroom for culture and learning. It’s a place that celebrates creativity, encourages exploration and discovery, helps people to work productively, and provides community engagement and empowerment... They are where people come to ask for help in finding things, especially themselves. They are places where people come to improve themselves.”* The library of the 21st century is thus one where people meet, maybe browse through a book or a newspaper. As a locally-accountable service,

libraries are well-placed to respond to local needs and issues. Libraries can therefore have a critical role in helping people to realise their potential, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

NATIONAL LIBRARIES GUIDANCE ALIGNMENT

The Public Libraries and Museum Act 1964 places a statutory duty on councils to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient library service' for all people working, living or studying in the area who want to make use of it. This has never been formally defined, in order to allow local areas to design services that best meet their unique local circumstances and needs. Herefordshire Council works closely with DCMS to deliver on its statutory obligations across the county.

The National Libraries Taskforce has specifically identified seven outcomes that libraries contribute to in their '***Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England: 2016-21***':

- **cultural and creative enrichment**
- **increased reading and literacy**
- **improved digital access and literacy**
- **helping everyone achieve their full potential**
- **healthier and happier lives**
- **greater prosperity**
- **stronger, more resilient communities**

The ambition is for everyone to:

- choose to use libraries because they see clear benefits and positive outcomes.
- understand what library services offer and how they can make the most of what's available to them.
- be introduced to new ideas and opportunities, then given confidence and quick and easy access to tools, skills and information they need to improve their quality of life.
- receive trusted guidance through the evolving information landscape and build the skills needed to thrive in a changing world.

And for communities to have:

- a library service that helps different groups come together, co-designed with local people to meet local needs and strengthen the local community
- local services available through well-designed and well-regarded 'community hubs', bringing together different partners' offerings in a seamless way
- safe, welcoming and accessible physical and virtual environments freely open to all, which encourage participation, creativity and mutual learning and support

The new Shirehall Library and Learning Centre will create a safe community space where local people can come to in order to gain skills and confidence, be exposed to new opportunities, and improve their health and wellbeing. It will go beyond the current library offer and provide additional learning centre facilities to a one-stop community hub in the heart of the city.

'Libraries change lives for the better. They not only provide access to books and other literature but also help people to help themselves and improve their opportunities, bring people together, and provide practical support and guidance. As a locally accountable service, they are well-placed to respond to local needs and issues.' Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England, 2016-2021

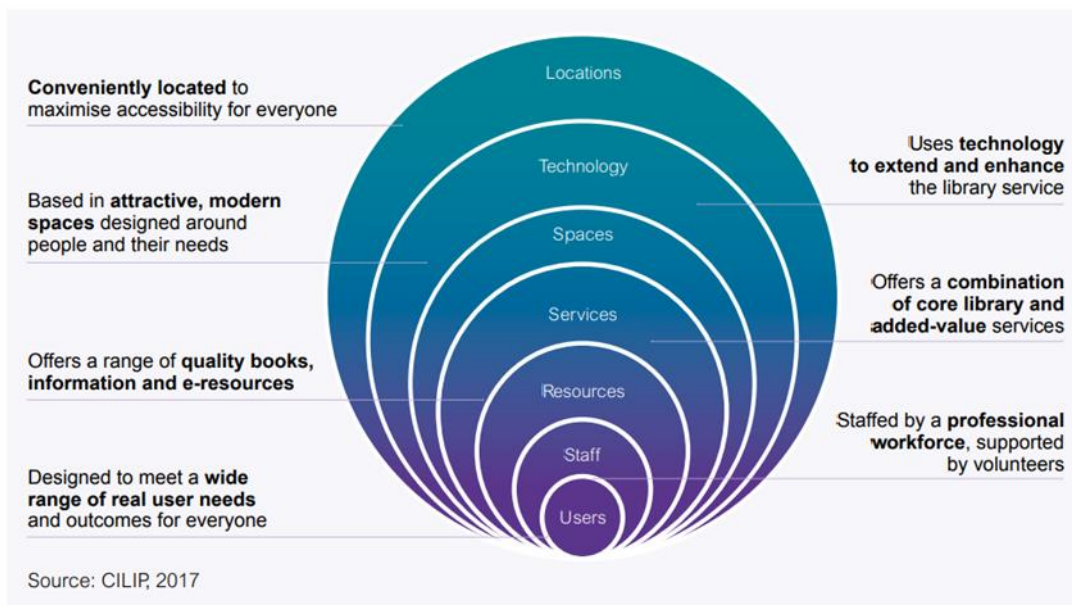
Libraries Connected ‘Universal Library Offers’ - The Shirehall Library and Learning Centre design follows the Universal Library Offers framework, which aims to connect communities, improve wellbeing and promote equality through learning, literacy and cultural activity. Its four key pillars are: 1) Culture and Creativity, 2) Health and Wellbeing, 3) Information and Digital and 4) Reading. The Universal Offers were launched in 2013 to demonstrate the power of public libraries to enrich the lives of individuals and their communities. Two of the offers (Reading, and Health and Wellbeing) are delivered in partnership with The Reading Agency. The offers were reviewed with the public library sector and stakeholders in 2019 and relaunched to create a new streamlined and consistent framework.



- Culture and Creativity** - Curious, Creative and Cohesive Communities
- Health and Wellbeing** - Healthier, Happier, Connected
- Information and Digital** - Inform, Inspire, Innovate
- Reading** - Engage, Imagine, Discover

CILIP – The Library and Information Association has developed the diagram below which identifies that public libraries are perfectly placed to deliver through staffing, building, location, accessibility and resources available making them ideal as ‘community hubs’ delivering core and added-value services:

Diagram 1: Visualising the library of the future



The most recent Libraries All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) report (2021) concluded that: **“Common ground (in the Group) was most clear when it came to the likely form of a future library”**. The panel converged towards the concept of a library, not as a place, but as a platform. The most vivid of these came from Richard Heseltine who said: *“compare a library to a*

smartphone. A smartphone is a platform on which a personalised collection of apps is assembled. The task of the librarian is to create a platform on which different apps are assembled to meet the needs of specific groups or communities, but some will be common to all libraries”.

POLICY ALIGNMENT

This proposal provides the opportunity to revitalise the Shirehall into an innovative, sustainable community cultural hub in the city centre, and align with national, regional and local plans.

National and Regional

Levelling Up the United Kingdom

The project will directly deliver the following Levelling Up White Paper missions:

- By 2030, pay, employment and productivity will have risen in every area of the UK, with each containing a globally competitive city, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing – *Enhancing Hereford as a city to live, work, study, and visit. Offering access to learning, wellbeing and public services at the heart of the city.*
- By 2030, wellbeing will have improved in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing – *Providing a new public facility for local people, improving education, and enabling access to culture.*
- By 2030, pride in place, such as people’s satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing – *Regenerating the city centre creating a new modern library and learning resource centre.*

The proposed project will deliver the government’s ‘Build Back Better Strategy: our plan for growth’, specifically ‘Regenerate struggling towns in all parts of the UK via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and the UK-wide Levelling Up Fund’. Government have reviewed the Hereford Town Investment Plan and related projects, selecting those to go forward which meet their national priorities.

Arts Council England Strategy 2020-30

The project supports the aims and recommendations in the Arts Council England (ACE) 10 year plan 2020-30, which has three stated outcomes:

- **Creative People** - Everyone can develop and express creativity throughout their life
- **Cultural Communities** - Villages, towns and cities thrive through a collaborative approach to culture
- **A Creative & Cultural Country** - England’s cultural sector is innovative, collaborative and international

This will be achieved through four investment principles:

- **Ambition & Quality** - Cultural organisations are ambitious and committed to improving the quality of their work

- **Dynamism** - Cultural organisations are dynamic and able to respond to the challenges of the next decade
- **Inclusivity & Relevance** - England's diversity is fully reflected in the organisations and individuals that we support and in the culture they produce
- **Environmental Responsibility** - Cultural organisations lead the way in their approach to environmental responsibility

ACE highlight their organisational aspirations for the period of the plan:

- Creating opportunities for children and young people to reach their creative potential and to access the highest quality cultural experiences.
- We will support our cultural organisations to present the best of world culture, to excite and inspire audiences.

Skills and Post-16 Education Act (2022)

The new Skills and Post-16 Education Act (2022) will help transform the skills and training landscape and level up opportunities across the country. The legislation will help economic recovery and growth by making it easier for people to get the skills they need to secure well-paid jobs in industries with skills gaps, such as health and social care, engineering, digital, clean energy and manufacturing. The Act underpins the government's transformation of post-16 education and skills as set out in the [Skills for Jobs White Paper](#) (Link) and will help level up and drive growth across the whole country. The project will support the delivery of the government's ambitions set out in the Skills for Jobs White Paper underpinned by The Skills and Post-16 Education Act (2022). Specifically:

- Making sure people can access training and learning flexibly throughout their lives and are well-informed about what is on offer through great careers support
- ensure everyone has access to education and training that will help them to get a great job
- Continue to support participation in english, maths, and digital training to meet employer's needs and support people to progress in employment or further study

Marches LEP regional strategies and policies

The project will deliver the following Marches Strategic Economic Plan 2019 priorities:

- A growing place, attracting more people to come, stay and build their careers and businesses.
- A destination not a boundary - gateway to markets in the Midlands, Wales, South West, North and Europe. A visitor destination with significant natural and cultural resources that is well known and attracts people looking for a high-quality experience.
- An inclusive place that enables residents from all communities to thrive and develop with quality jobs offering good wages, training and progression.

The project will also deliver the following priority within the draft Marches Local Industrial Strategy: 'Place – develop prosperous and resilient places for people to live, work and visit, and for businesses to succeed by improving infrastructure, delivering the Opportunity Towns Programme, developing a campaign to attract people to the Marches, and developing a coordinated Visitor Economy Strategy'.

The Marches LEP Skills Advisory Panel, of which the Council is a member, provides local leadership by increasing understanding of our labour market and skills issues, driving engagement with employers and liaison with training providers. It has developed a Local Skills Report in 2021 (Link: [Marches LEP](#)). This set out local strengths and skills needs, in line with

the Marches Strategic Economic Plan and included an action plan detailing how the Marches SAP proposed to address its key priorities. The Marches Local Skills Report has been updated in January 2022 to reflect progress made by partners, to ensure alignment with the Marches Economic Recovery Plan and to take account of the changing policy landscape. The Learning Centre will contribute to the delivery of the priorities in the Skills Report: Delivering responsive demand led-provision: Tackling barriers to participation: harnessing our ageing workforce; Inspiring young people.

The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964

The project delivers The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964. In providing this service, councils must, among other things: encourage both adults and children to make full use of the library service and lend books and other printed material free of charge for those who live, work or study in the area.

Local

Hereford Town Investment Plan

The Town Investment Plan identifies the creation of a new modern Library and Learning Centre within the ‘cultural assets package’, which was considered by government and included in their £22.4m award to the city announced on 8 June 2021. It is an opportunity to regenerate city centre buildings, and address issues in terms of skills gaps and access to public services. The Town Investment Plan states ‘The cluster of assets at the heart of the city currently controlled by the City Council, Herefordshire Council and the Diocese represents significant collaborative potential to repurpose the city centre.’

Although this was originally considered in terms of the regeneration of retail spaces, there is still a need to address empty historic building stock in the city centre and reinvent their use for a modern audience. Looking at city regeneration from a sustainable perspective, and making use of existing buildings rather than constructing new ones, allows us to address our statutory library needs whilst meeting our environmental obligations. This project goes further in terms of meeting the following Stronger Town Interventions:

Intervention	Output	Outcome
Urban Regeneration, Planning and Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remediation and/or development of abandoned or dilapidated sites • Delivery of new public spaces • Delivery of quality residential or commercial space in key locations (town centres, gateway areas, employment sites) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced townscape that is more attractive and more accessible to residents, businesses and visitors
Arts, Culture and Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New, upgraded or protected community centres, sports or athletics facilities, museums, arts venues, theatres, libraries, film facilities, prominent landmarks or historical buildings, parks or gardens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved arts, cultural and heritage offer that is more visible and easier for residents/visitors to access

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New, upgraded or protected community hubs, spaces or assets, where this links to local inclusive growth 	
Skills Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in capacity and accessibility to new or improved skills facilities • Availability of new specialist equipment • Increase in the breadth of the local skills offer that responds to local skills needs • Increased benefit for the public education over the long term 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased share of young people and adults who have relevant skills for employment and entrepreneurship
Enterprise Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the amount of shared workspace or innovation facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of start-ups and/or scale-ups utilising business incubation, acceleration and co-working spaces

Table 12

Strategically, the project also meets the outcomes and objectives of the Herefordshire County Plan 2020-24, Hereford City Masterplan 2050 and Big Economic Plan 2050, which place communities and culture at the very heart of future ambitions to ensure 'Herefordshire is further strengthened as an arts and heritage destination'.

Hereford County Plan 2020-24

The project supports the Herefordshire County Plan's vision to 'protect and promote our heritage, culture and natural beauty to enhance quality of life and support tourism' and to 'support education and skills development'. A priority of the County Plan 2020-24 is to 'Use council land to create economic opportunities and bring higher paid jobs to the county', and to 'Invest in education and the skills needed by employers'. The County Plan also states 'We will work with partners to maximise the Stronger Towns Fund grant (up to £25m) awarded to Hereford and to support investment programmes across all our market towns'.

The project supports the ambitions as detailed within Herefordshire Council's Delivery Plan priorities, specifically:

- **CO0** - Plan capital works for the Shirehall to bring back into council and community use.
- **EC2** - Work with partners to develop and implement a £25m Town Investment Plan for Hereford, to be funded through the Stronger Towns Fund
- **EC3** - Work with partners to expand our adult and community learning programme, with a particular focus on those at risk of long term unemployment, and young people at risk of not being in education, training or employment. Supporting objective EC3 Work with partners to increase the Skills and Workforce in the county (delivery plan 2022/23)

Herefordshire Local Plan

Herefordshire Council's Local Plan sets out the strategy and direction for how the county will develop. The existing Local Plan (being updated at the time of writing) will guide development up until 2031 and sets out a number of objectives for Hereford. These focus in particular on mitigating and adapting to climate change, protecting the natural environment and built heritage,

improving air and water quality, revitalising the city centre, achieving high-quality design and minimising the use of new resources, an ethos that supports the development of this proposal.

Herefordshire City Masterplan 2050

This project helps meet the objectives of the City Masterplan (currently under consultation) which talks about: ***'celebrating and growing our best places, reinvigorating our less-loved ones, rediscovering our historic places, adapting places for the future and planning new places that excite us'***. The Shirehall proposal specifically addresses themes:

2) ***Communities and Culture*** - Create a healthier and more equal city, by reducing deprivation and enabling prosperity for all across the city. This will provide greater opportunities for people to be active and healthy and to engage with their community.

3) ***The Economy and Opportunities*** - Reinvigorate the city, maximising opportunities for living, learning and creating. This includes providing new affordable, high-quality homes for a range of people and revitalised commercial and leisure opportunities and community uses. Also, supporting education and training opportunities and providing spaces to develop and grow businesses.

5) ***Places and Spaces*** - Deliver outstanding design, which respects and enhances Hereford's built and natural heritage and deepens the 'sense of place' within the city. Good design should make Hereford more attractive for those who live, work in and visit the city. It would also help adapt to the effects of climate change and better meet the needs of an ageing population.

- Big Idea 4 – Revealing the historic core
- Big Idea 5 – A vibrant historic core

Herefordshire Big Economic Plan 2050

Herefordshire's vision for 2050 is ***'a vibrant, healthy, zero carbon, and inclusive place to live, work, study and visit at all stages of life. Our rural communities, market towns and university city are thriving with high-quality employment, housing and services. A high-technology, higher value and creative economy has enabled living standards to rise. We have protected our rich natural environment.'***

The Shirehall project fits with several identified themes:

- **People** - A great place to grow up and to grow old, with a growing, highly skilled population, attracting young people and families who move here and stay. Herefordshire in 2050 will give children the best start in life. They will be safe and healthy, growing up with the confidence and skills to reach their full potential. Our residents will be equipped with the skills that local businesses need and will enable them to access opportunities, progress their careers and earn more, if they choose to. The county will be an attractive place for young people, professionals and families to move to with access to education and training, quality housing, competitively paid job opportunities, high-quality services, and an arts, heritage, food and drink and leisure scene.
- **Community and Partnerships** - Strong and inclusive communities in our towns, villages and rural areas, with flourishing high streets and services. Herefordshire in 2050 will have empowered and resilient communities that are inclusive, well connected and engaged in

decision-making, creating balanced and thriving places. Partners across the public, private and third sectors will have formed established ways of working to deliver our shared vision and outcomes through transformational and meaningful action, drawing on our collective resources and levers.

- **Enterprise** - Innovative and productive businesses in cyber and technology, culture and creative industries, tourism, construction, agriculture and food production, manufacturing and engineering, and healthcare. Herefordshire in 2050 will be known as a good place to start and grow a business, both for people within and outside of the county, with access to sites, infrastructure, support services and networks. We will have a thriving arts and heritage sector which, combined with the natural beauty of the county, will be at the heart of our thriving places and high streets, attracting and retaining young people, professionals and families.

Herefordshire Cultural Partnership 2019-29

The project also fulfils the priorities of the Herefordshire Cultural Strategy in creating a 'connected and sustainable cultural infrastructure' that offers quality cultural experiences, and learning and career development opportunities to all its residents. The conversations and research that formed the development of the strategy highlighted a wide variety of issues that individuals and groups in the county wanted to see addressed:

- The need to support and nurture talent, including local artists working across all genres and art forms;
- The need to build a stronger and more visible creative economy;
- The need to increase participation and promote inclusion in cultural and creative activity;
- The need to engage more effectively with children and young people;
- The need to raise the profile of Hereford and Herefordshire as a great place to live, work and visit.

The overall vision for Herefordshire is '***For Herefordshire to be a culturally vibrant, prosperous and sought after county in which to live, work and to visit. Hallmarks of the County will be its glorious landscape, its heritage and history, its diverse creative and cultural offer and its sense of ambition.***'

This is delivered through six key priorities:

- **Great Place - A resilient cultural infrastructure that makes Herefordshire a great place to live, work and to visit.** Herefordshire will have a connected and sustainable cultural infrastructure underpinned by a creative workforce offering high quality arts and heritage activity and experiences available to all residents and visitors.
- **Cultural Democracy - The arts and heritage are for everyone.** Herefordshire's communities will have the opportunity to be fully engaged and proactive in shaping, participating and growing the county's cultural offer.
- **Children and Young People - Listening to children and young people, and connecting them to culture and connectivity.** All children and young people in Herefordshire will have access to high quality contemporary cultural education and career development opportunities.
- **Creative Economy - Building and supporting vibrant creative enterprises.** Culture and the creative industries will play a distinctive role in contributing to the economic success of the county and region.
- **Cultural Tourism - Raising Herefordshire's national and international profile.** Herefordshire's cultural profile and offer will attract national and international audiences, visitors, and new businesses.

Adult and community learning programmes contribute to the ambitions of the Herefordshire Children and Young People's Partnership plan 2019-2024 by:

- Targeting resources and supporting vulnerable people aged 19 and over into learning including care leavers
- Improving the emotional and mental health and wellbeing of adults including parents and carers
- Achieving success in life, learning and future employment e.g. family learning, english, maths and employability programmes

STRATEGIC VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Aim:

To develop a new, innovative and modern Library and Learning Centre, creating a mixed development to support the regeneration of the city centre, and to improve the opportunities and wellbeing outcomes of the population through enhanced cultural facilities.

'Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016 to 2021' and the Universal Library Offer sets out shared outcomes for library services and 'urges commissioners across the public sector to consider a 'library first' approach when planning services for their communities', which is outlined above.

Arts Council England (ACE) holds the national remit for supporting arts, libraries and museums through funding, advocacy, advice and support. ACE has five goals that link to the Herefordshire County Plan. These are:

- to see excellence thriving and celebrated in arts, museums and libraries.
- to reach more people, broaden the groups being reached and improve the quality of their experience.
- to support resilience and sustainability- financial, environmental and digital.
- to be sure the work draws on and reflects the full range of backgrounds and perspectives in society.
- to ensure children and young people access excellence in libraries, arts and museums experiences.

Objectives:

- Regeneration of a key city centre site creating a new focal point to drive footfall and increase economic spend in the city.
- Embedding a new innovative and sustainable library and learning centre in Hereford City that attracts residents of all ages.
- To provide an enriching environment that creates learning opportunities, increases the skills of our communities and offers access to information, resources and services to promote personal growth, enrichment and lifelong learning for all members of the community.
- Creating a community hub and infrastructure that provides multi-faceted working environments and increased collaboration, partnerships and innovation between sectors.
- Supporting residents to remain well, healthy and independent by offering an improved cultural services in the city.
- Creating an environment to enable people to feel safe and be safe

- Improved digital infrastructure that is agile and automated to support the digital needs of the future.
- Increasing the number of residents visiting and continuing to visit the library and learning centre.

Key Performance Indicators

The following KPIs will be used to monitor services once operational:

- Number of new library members
- Number of books/activities issued
- Active library members
- Number of schools engaged and utilising the library/number of visits from schools
- Unique users to the website and accessing the resources
- Increased number of community events and programmes for all ages and increased accessibility for the library
- Number of volunteers supporting the library/hours provided
- Number of public computer sessions
- Number of adult training sessions
- Number of sensory room users
- Number of makerspace users
- Case studies of improved wellbeing
- Improved customer experience

THE PROPOSED INVESTMENT

Short-list of options:

Option	Short-list Y/N	Reasons
Do nothing	Y	Base case
Develop Library and Learning Centre in the Shirehall building	Y	Option could offer more benefit and maximise Stronger Towns funding on user experience rather than capital works to the building.

Option 1 – Do nothing	
Cost	£3m
Benefits	None
Deliverability	N/A
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No disruption to library services (but still limited offer)
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of grant funding (£3m) • Library impacting on main function and use of the Museum Resource and Learning Centre (MRLC) for the Herefordshire Museum Service. The move to the MRLC was only intended as a temporary measure until the new library location is secured. Remaining on site could impact on the number of museum events, programmes, school visits and other activities the Museum Service can deliver.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Library impacting on original conditions related to National Lottery Heritage Fund grant re: use of MRLC for museum service activities. Shirehall building could fall further into disrepair or be sold. Lack of mixed use purpose in the city centre may result in a further decline to footfall, impacting future economic viability.
Recommendation	Rejected
Option 2 – Delivery of the Library and Learning Centre at Shirehall	
Cost	£3m
Benefits	Creates new redeveloped city centre offer, modernising an historic civic building and uplifting footfall and community services in the wider city centre.
Deliverability	Deliverable subject to refurbishment of the wider building (as part of separately funded project), further development of the design and costs to RIBA 4, and revenue income generation meeting operational costs.
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a new Library and Learning Centre to offer residents access to important cultural, wellbeing and skills services. Regeneration of a key city centre building that may otherwise fall into disrepair /or be sold. Creates a new public space to drive footfall and increase economic spend in the city. Provides more space for learning opportunities and events programming for local people, with the additional inclusion of a local studies room, digital lounge, sensory room, makerspace and adult training rooms. Enables the linked Museum and Art Gallery project to proceed due to relocation of the library.
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible disruption to neighbouring properties and users of Gaol Street car park. Possible disruption to library users during the relocation. Current library operational costs will increase. Removal of a concert hall venue from Hereford city (although use is infrequent).
Observations	The development of this full business case further to RIBA 4 will help to explore this option, better understanding costs and outcomes.
Recommendation	Preferred

Table 13

Subject to the successful development of the project (including full design, tendered costs and planning permission), **the preferred option is option 2.**

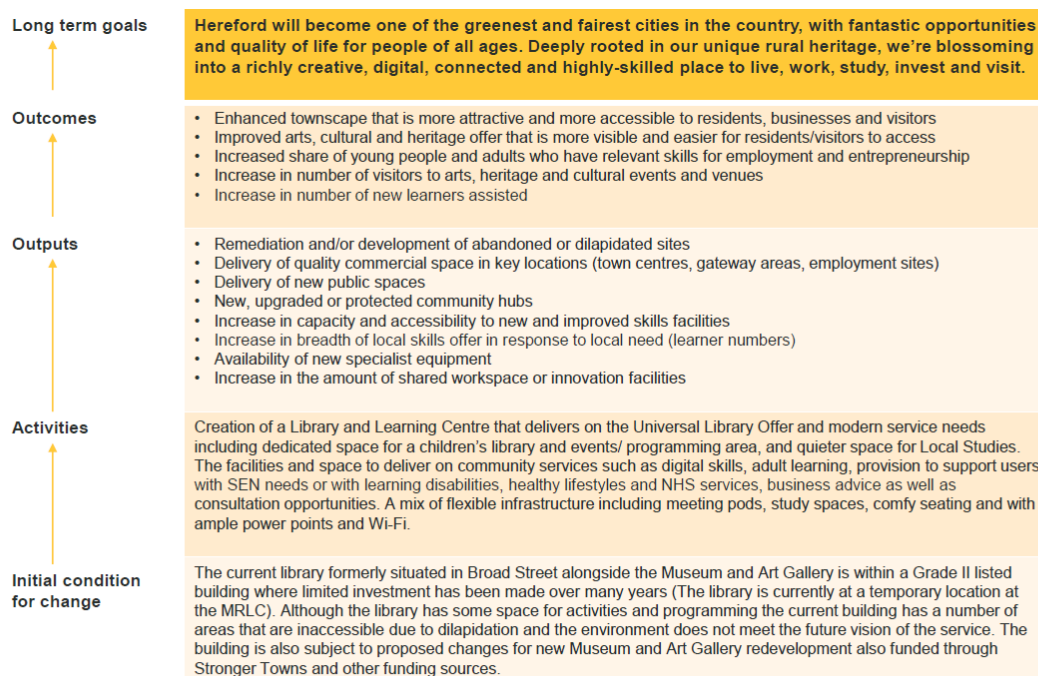
Critical success factors

- Gaining Cabinet approval.
- Securing the Town Investment Plan grant.
- Gaining Full Council approval.

- Securing planning permission.
- Design and fully procured services within the available budget.
- Shirehall refurbishment works delivered to time and budget (as part of separate, but inextricably linked, project)
- Timing of library relocation aligned to the Shirehall refurbishment works and exit of MRLC.
- Revenue income can sustain increased operational costs.
- Key partners support the operation and management of the LLC.

THEORY OF CHANGE

A Theory of Change arising from the development is set out below:



STAKEHOLDERS

Key stakeholders for the project have continued to be engaged, following on from the original review of Shirehall as a potential location. As well as the Stronger Towns Board, this has included the Herefordshire Cultural Partnership (which includes a wide range of organisations representing the cultural sector in the county), internal delivery partners including library staff as well as Talk Community, Public Health and Post 16 Adult Learning Services, Hereford Business Improvement District, NMITE, Hereford City Council and the Joint Action on Herefordshire Libraries (JAHL) group, representing service users.

The Shirehall building has also been opened up for a number of site visits to council members and stakeholders over the course of the full business case development to allow people to walk the space and ask questions about the overall potential of the building.

Discussions with consultees centred on general plans for the use of both the Assembly Hall and Undercroft spaces with thoughts on how they might be used by the library service. Consultees were asked their thoughts on the ideas, in principle, and whether they thought this was an appropriate use of the space. Those engaged with were asked if they felt this was a project which they would support and be able to work in partnership with the council library service at this location.

Responses were positive and a number of partners offered suggestions for opportunities where they could work with the service and potentially utilise bookable space in other areas of the building as well. Specific comments received included statements such as *'Sounds exciting'* and *'exciting opportunity'*, while one comment stated *'this project might breathe a fresh lease of life into both the building and the library service'*.

There were no comments or views recorded that expressed a preference for Maylord Orchards as a venue ahead of Shirehall. Some comments were made about the high cost of parking in the vicinity of Shirehall and there were a number of comments about the imposing nature of the building. It was felt that this may be a barrier to some people crossing the threshold, but it was also felt that this could be addressed with a 'softening' of the physical approach to the building such as external landscaping, good signage and good use of colour and layout in the building's forecourt. All those involved in the discussions asked to be kept involved as conversations developed to look at opportunities for working together to deliver the best possible outcomes.

List of Consultees

- Herefordshire Council Library Management Team
- Hereford Library Staff
- NMiTE
- Hereford City Council
- Hereford Bid
- Joint Action For Herefordshire Libraries (JAHL)
- Herefordshire Cultural Partnership (HCP) (specific conversations/engagement also with member organisations of HCP – Open Sky Theatre, 2Faced Dance Company, Rural Media Company, Three Choirs Festival, Ledbury Poetry Festival)
- Herefordshire Council Talk Community
- Herefordshire Council Public Health
- Herefordshire Council Post 16 Advisor
- Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

ECONOMIC CASE

ECONOMIC CASE

INTRODUCTION

Herefordshire faces some significant, long-term economic challenges, further impacted by Covid-19. In particular the visitor economy, non-essential retail and cultural sectors were the worst impacted by Covid-19, having been required to close for many months during lockdowns.

Herefordshire has the lowest county tier Gross Value Added (GVA) of any county in England and is the second lowest in the UK (second to our neighbour, Powys). Average weekly wages are 20% below the national average, 39% of residents have a NVQ level 4 or above qualification compared to a national average of 43%, 24% of the population are aged over 65, and the county is a Higher Education and social mobility 'cold spot'. As younger generations reach higher education age, they have tended to move away to access university education, and the county does not have the higher level jobs to attract them back.

Where retail has been the primary footfall driver for many years, town centres (local residents as well as visitors from other places) are now looking for a range of experiences, for example, leisure, events, café culture, socialising, meeting friends and/ or seeking independent retail. The Towns Funding guidance recognises the challenges cities such as Hereford face. The national guidance states that: ***'Town centres may be hit hard by the impacts on retail, adding to longer-running trends and pressures. In particular, towns may want to consider how they can reconfigure town centres for mixed uses'***.

The Towns Fund aims to drive the sustainable economic regeneration of towns to deliver long term economic and productivity growth. The Shirehall project meets the 'Urban Regeneration' objective head on by strengthening a local economic and cultural asset, and remediating and developing a key city site to increase footfall density.

The proposed project looks to repurpose a former judicial centre into a mixed use community facility, offering access to modern library services, as well as hireable courtroom spaces, meeting rooms, film and TV hire potential, heritage interpretation and tours, café facilities, and cultural events and programming. The Learning Centre will provide local residents with access to Adult Learning Services, addressing skills gaps and enabling them to seek better higher value roles, leading to improved living standards, and provide additional sensory and creative learning opportunities. It will also provide a central city centre location for access to wellbeing support, health advice and other public services.

Creating new reasons to visit and spend time in the city centre will increase footfall, and spend across the city centre as a whole.

APPROACH TO ECONOMIC CASE

Project options are fully considered in the strategic case.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

The project will deliver the following outputs:

Output	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Remediation and/or development of abandoned or dilapidated sites	1		
Delivery of quality residential or commercial space in key locations (town centres, gateway areas, employment sites)	3		
Delivery of new public spaces	1		
New upgraded or protected libraries	1		
New, upgraded or protected community hubs, spaces or assets, where this links to local inclusive growth	1		
Increase in capacity and accessibility to new and improved skills facilities	3		
Availability of new specialist equipment	6		
Number of learners gaining relevant experience/being 'job ready' (makerspace, business advice)	40	50	50
Number of non-accredited community learners (ALS, sensory room, digital skills)	100	150	150
Number of accredited learners (ALS)	12	16	16
Increase in the amount of shared workspace or innovation facilities	1		

Table 14

The project will deliver the following outcomes:

- Enhanced townscape that is more attractive and more accessible to residents, businesses and visitors
- Improved arts, cultural and heritage offer that is more visible and easier for residents/visitors to access
- Increased share of young people and adults who have relevant skills for employment and entrepreneurship
- Numbers of visitors to arts, heritage and cultural events and venues
- Numbers of new learners assisted

For the **Library** project, the economic modelling included a number of monetised benefits, consistent with Governmental guidance. These included regeneration benefits, social benefit skills, enterprise and tourism (cultural benefits). These benefits are outlined in more detail below (in relation to the broad Town Fund intervention framework):

Towns Fund investment theme	Key benefits	Wider social and economic benefits (note adding all benefits may lead to double counting)	Key guidance to model and monetise benefits
Local transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> User benefits (time savings, cost savings) Reduction in accidents Environmental benefits Amenity benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health benefits (from increased physical activity and improved air quality) Productivity benefits (e.g. agglomeration) Employment impacts Attraction of investment Social inclusion 	DfT's Transport Appraisal Guidance (TAG)
Digital connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> User benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Productivity benefits for businesses which experience higher efficiencies Attraction of investment Social benefits from improved access to communication 	
Urban regeneration, planning and land use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land value uplift User benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases in local employment and GVA Community cohesion Health benefits from increased active travel or use of new public / green spaces Social benefits 	MHCLG guidance
Arts, culture, and heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased revenue from increased footfall Amenity benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social benefits from improved access to culture Increases in local employment and GVA Community cohesion 	
Skills infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land value uplift User benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased employment and income Attraction of businesses interested in the skills offered by the new infrastructure 	MHCLG guidance
Enterprise infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land value uplift 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased employment and income Attraction of more businesses in the long term 	MHCLG guidance

Table 15

APPROACH

The assessment of economic benefits for this **Towns Fund** scheme has been undertaken in full compliance with the latest **HM Treasury Green Book** (2020) and relevant Departmental guidance, such as Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

There are a number of overarching assumptions which apply to the value for money assessment (unless otherwise stated):

- all short-listed options have been appraised over a **20-year period**, consistent with the estimated life of the project.
- where Present Value figures are presented, cost and values have been **discounted at 3.5%**
- all monetised costs and benefits have been converted to **2023/24 prices**, with general inflation excluded.

- the costs and benefits of the intervention options are presented in net terms and relative to the Base Case. Adjustments have also been made for **Additionality** e.g. leakage, displacement and multiplier effects where appropriate (as detailed below).
- **Optimism Bias** of 12% has been calculated using HM Treasury methodology and included in the value for money analysis. We have set this at a mid range taking account of the capacity of the council to oversee large capital projects. Based on Green Book Supplementary Guidance Range for Standard Buildings (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/191507/Optimism_bias.pdf)

The framework for assessing the economic benefits of the **Library** project has been developed having regard to the HM Treasury Green Book, MHCLG (DLUHC), BEIS and DCMS guidance. As set out within the MHCLG (DLUHC) Appraisal Guide, projects should be appraised based on a **Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR)**.

The calculation of costs and benefits has accounted for latest recommendations from MHCLG (DLUHC) in relation to the Towns Fund, as well as other recent publications for regeneration and cultural projects. Reflecting the diverse nature of the interventions and their expected impacts, as well as the existing conditions within Hereford, a wide range of external benefits have been assessed in accordance with guidance as set out in the Economic Benefits section below.

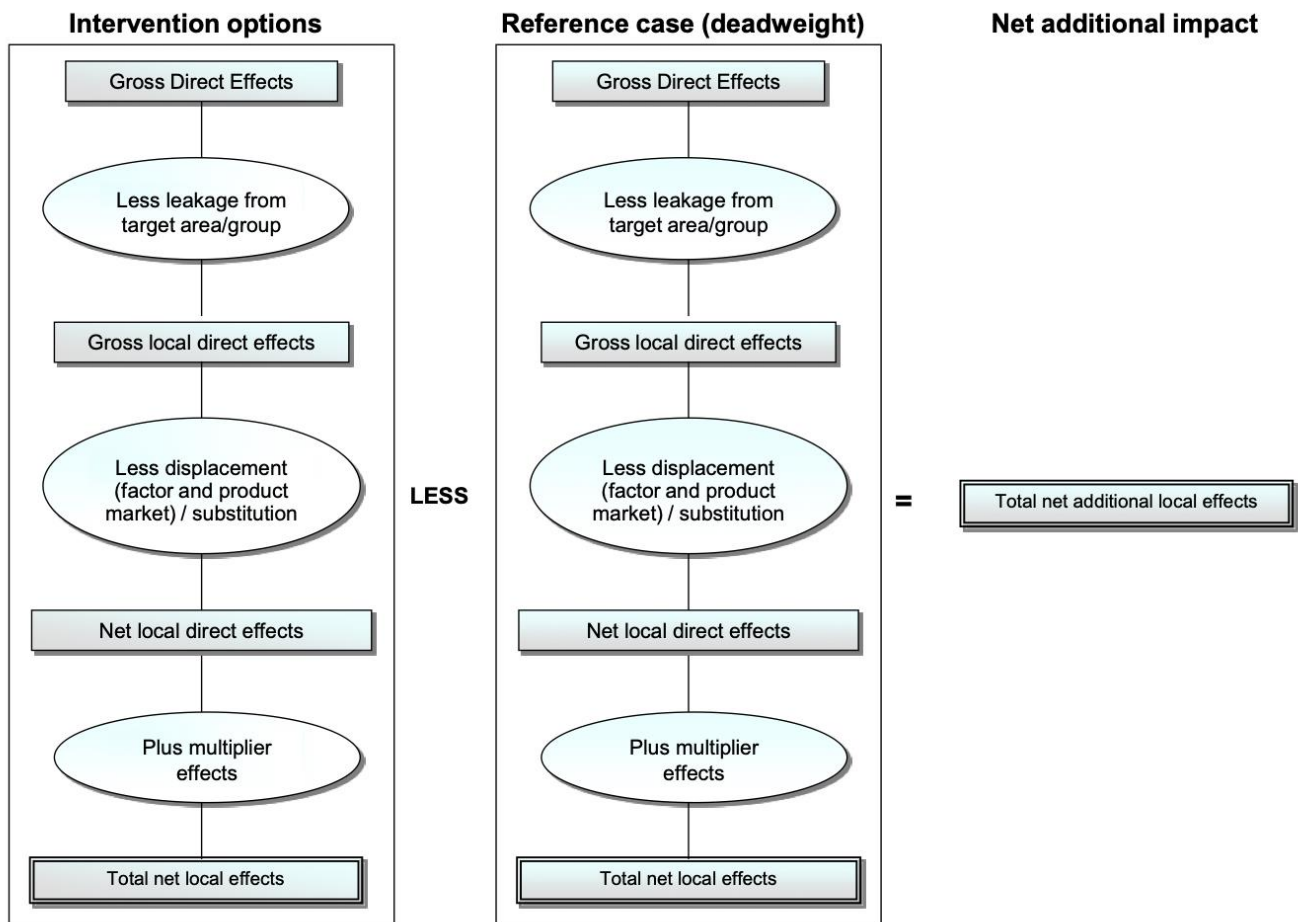
ADDITIONALITY

Of key importance in assessing the impact of the proposals on the local economy is the extent to which new activity is truly additional, in other words it does not simply displace existing activity. Furthermore, it is important to understand who is likely to benefit from the impacts generated and the degree to which further demand and investment is stimulated.

To assess the net additional impact of the proposals and overall anticipated additionality of the proposed project options, the following factors have therefore been considered:

- **Leakage** – the proportion of outputs that benefit those outside of the project’s target area or group
- **Displacement** – the proportion of project outputs accounted for by reduced outputs elsewhere in the target area. Displacement may occur in both the factor and product markets
- **Multiplier effects** – further economic activity associated with additional local income and local supplier purchases
- **Deadweight** – outputs which would have occurred without the project (Base Case)

The approach to assessing the net additional impact of a project, taking into account the above adjustments, is shown diagrammatically below.



For the economic modelling, we have assumed a composite **Additionality Factor of 66%** based on HCA norms for people using refurbished cultural facilities

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/378177/additionality_guide_2014_full.pdf)

BENEFIT ASSESSMENT

For the Library and Learning Centre project, the economic modelling included a number of monetised benefits, consistent with Governmental guidance. These included regeneration benefits, social benefit skills, enterprise and tourism (cultural benefits)

These benefits are outlined in more detail below (in relation to the broad Town Fund investment themes in the TF prospectus).

Towns Fund investment theme	Key benefits	Wider social and economic benefits (note adding all benefits may lead to double counting)	Key guidance to model and monetise benefits
Urban regeneration, planning and land use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land value uplift 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases in local employment and GVA Community cohesion Health benefits from increased active travel or use of new public / green spaces 	MHCLG guidance

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social benefits (e.g. improved personal security) 	
Arts, culture, and heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased retail revenue from increased footfall Amenity benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social benefits from improved access to culture Increases in local employment and GVA Community cohesion 	
Skills infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land value uplift 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased employment and income Attraction of businesses interested in the skills offered by the new infrastructure 	MHCLG guidance

Table 16

ECONOMIC COSTS

The financial costs of the proposed intervention have been developed by the **Library Project Team**.

The nominal financial costs in the Financial Case have been converted to economic costs in line with the Green Book approach by using the HM Treasury's GDP deflator index to convert estimates of future costs to constant (2021/22) prices. The constant price costs have been adjusted to present value costs by applying the Treasury's Social Time Preference discount rate of 3.5% per annum. Public capital expenditure within the programme is expected to run until 2024/5, in line with the Towns Fund guidance.

Type	Source	Total Amount
Public sector cost (20 yrs)	Green Book STPR	£3 million
Optimism Bias (12%)	CCB Precedent	£0.36 million
Public sector cost (with OB)	-	£3.36 million

Table 17

VALUE FOR MONEY ASSESSMENT

A bespoke economic model was created to calculate the Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of the proposed project. The results are summarised below:

Value for money assessment (£M, discounted, 2021 prices)	Core scenario	Sensitivity test 1	Sensitivity test 2
		No Development Land Benefits	Optimism Bias 24%
Economic benefits			
Value of Capital Learning Investment	£751,342.00	£751,342.00	£661,180.96
Value of Development Land	£1,150,000.00		£1,012,000.00
Increase in capacity and accessibility to new and improved skills facilities	£289,927.90	£289,927.90	£255,136.55

Increased skills offer in response to local need		£4,185,953.03	£4,185,953.03	£3,683,638.67
New upgraded or protected libraries. Delivery of new public spaces		£5,319,944.40	£5,319,944.40	£4,681,551.07
Non-accredited Community Learning Number of learners inc job ready learners		£1,796,103.12	£1,796,103.12	£1,580,570.75
Accredited learning number of learners		£172,634.59	£172,634.59	£151,918.44
Remediation of Dilapidated sites - increase in GVA by site use		£124,061.34	£124,061.34	£109,173.98
Additionality Factor 0.65				
Total economic benefits	(A)	£9,101,377.80	£8,342,377.80	£8,009,212.47
Economic costs				
Towns Fund	(B)	£3,005,371	£3,005,371	£3,005,371
Optimism Bias	(C)	£360,645	£360,645	£721,289
Total public sector	(D)=(B)+(C)	£3,366,016	£3,366,016	£3,726,660
Benefit Cost Ratio	(A) / (D)	2.7	2.5	2.1

Table 18

The source for each monetised benefit is set out in the table below:

Increase in capacity and accessibility to new and improved skills facilities		
Source: https://www.powertochange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/PTC_RoomHire_A5_AW-1.pdf		
Measure: Hourly rate for room hire		
Number: Facility open 48 weeks a year, 6 days 8 hours per day		
Value	£27	£289,928
Increase skills offer in response to local need		
Source: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/valuing-adult-learning-comparing-wellbeing-valuation-and-contingent-valuation		
Measure: adult learning benefits		
Number: 3579 over 20 years based on council projections		
Value	£2,234	£4,185,953
New upgraded or protected libraries and Delivery of new public spaces		
Source: https://www.social-value-engine.co.uk/calculator/Quantifying and valuing the wellbeing impacts of sport and culture .pdf		

Measure: library users		
Number: 4184		
34% of population uses library - 61,000 population 20% increase = 4148 people		
Value	£149	£5,319,944
Non-accredited Community Learning Number of learners inc job ready learners		
Source: http://social-value-engine.co.uk/calculator/Two%20Day%20Personal%20Development%20Training%20Course.pdf		
Measure: Council projected learners		
Number 2882 over 20 years		
Value	£1,081	£1,796,103
Accredited Community Learning Number of learners		
Source: http://social-value-engine.co.uk/calculator/RR821.pdf		
Measure: Council projected learners		
Number: 231 over 20 years		
Value	£1,291	£172,635
Remediation of Delapidated Sites – increase in GVA by site use		
Source: https://historicengland.org.uk/content/heritage-counts/pub/2019/heritage-and-the-economy-2019/		
Measure: Council projected learners		
Number: 1 site over 20 years		
Value	£14,413	£124,061
Value of Capital Learning Investment		
Source: https://socialvalueportal.com/solutions/national-toms/		
Measure: Site impact		
Number: 1 site		
Value	£751,342	£751,342
Value of Development Land		
Source: https://www.landsite.co.uk/blog/latest-news-on-land-prices-in-the-uk-2021		
Measure: 0.5 ha		
Number: 1 site		
Value	£1,150,000	£1,150,000

Table 19

SUMMARY

The analysis undertaken in this Economic Case was consistent with HM Treasury's Green Book and other departmental guidance. For the Library and Learning Centre proposal, we identified amenity benefits, social benefits, housing/development benefits, skills and tourism (cultural benefits).

The costings have been calibrated for Optimism Bias and discounted using HMT's 3.5%. The BCR = 2.7 provides a very high level of value for money (MHCLG Appraisal Guide classes a BCR greater than two as 'high' value for money and between one and two as 'acceptable').

FINANCIAL CASE

FINANCIAL CASE

INTRODUCTION

As part of the RIBA stage 2 report, a summary cost plan has been provided by Mace and The Design Concept for the Library and Learning Centre fit-out works:

Item	Cost
Architectural enabling and Library and Learning Centre fit-out works	£1,916,792
Principal Designer Fee	£10,000
Project Management	£100,000
Clerk of Works	£10,000
Sensory Room	£25,483.10
Makerspace equipment	£30,000
Access provision	£20,000
Business IP Centre set-up allowance	£20,000
Audiovisual hardware, electricals, software, installation	£120,000
Surveys	£30,000
Exhibition Infrastructure and Display	£85,000
Orientation and signage	£35,000
Project Contingency 20%	£603,095.94
Total	£3,005,371.04

Table 20

The cost of the full Shirehall Phase 1 refurbishment works (from a separately funded Herefordshire Council budget) is £4.2m. This includes the necessary refurbishment and repair of the Shirehall building to open it up to the public (Health & Safety compliance, mechanical and electrical works, replacement boiler and heating systems, roof and skylight repairs).

FUNDING AND REVENUES

The Cabinet is due to consider a decision paper on 26 October 2023 recommending that Hereford Library and Learning Centre move to Shirehall and any agreed funds for the project be transferred to deliver the library in this new location. The full business case and Cabinet recommendation will go to the Stronger Towns Board in November 2023 for a final decision on the transfer of Stronger Towns fund for this project. The table below summarises the funding streams and the total budget available for the project:

Type	Source	Total Amount
Public Sector	Stronger Towns Fund	£2,610,715.96
Public Sector	Herefordshire Council	£394,655.08
	Total	£3,005,371.04

Table 21

The table below summarises the financial drawdown for the project:

Funding Profile	23/24	24/25	25/26	Total
<i>Value</i>	£m	£m	£m	£m
Towns Fund		0.67	1.936	2.606
Herefordshire Council	0.18		0.214	0.394

Table 22

The table below summarises the income and expenditure forecast for the Library and Learning Centre at Shirehall:

	Current Budget	Shirehall Operation
Income		
Grants	£1,570	-
Facilities	£2,500	£1,500
Printing / Photocopying	£4,000	£4,000
NMITE management system (off-off payment)	£7,000	-
Hire of staff (Colwall Library)	£7,000	£11,600
Admin charge/ Travel Expenses	£375	£1,100
Inter Library Loans Charge	-	£200
Lettings	£3,000	£2,500
Schools Service	£33,000	£33,000
Commission	£500	-
Catering	-	-
Adult Training Room	-	-
Events Hire	-	£6,000
Events and Programming (Day)	-	£4,860
Events and Programming (Evening)	-	£16,478
Retail	-	£1,400
Sensory Room Hire	-	£26,580
Makerspace Hire	-	£26,500
Total Income	£58,975	£135,718
Expenditure		
Payroll	£1,095,830	£1,474,929
Overheads (Sensory Room and Makerspace)	-	£15,000
Overheads (Events Hire)	-	£2,280
Overheads (Events Evening)	-	£4,560

Book Fund	£206,000	£210,000
Inter Library Loans	£3,555	£3,750
Subscriptions	£1,791	£1,791
Rent/Rates	£1,100	£1,434
Service Charge	£19,844	£19,844
Computer Expenditure	£79,266	£80,000
Buildings Maintenance	£585	£1,000
Promotion / Events	£5,530	£20,000
Advertising (Recurrent)	£2,500	£2,500
Advertising (Non-recurrent)	-	£1,500
Utilities	-	-
Insurance	-	-
Training and Recruitment	-	£6,724
Cleaning / Refuse	£660	£660
Telephone	-	-
Equipment	£2,330	£3,000
Stationery / Postage	£20,900	£21,000
Materials	£6,002	£5,000
Furniture/ Fittings	£950	£5,000
Vehicle Costs	£6,680	£7,500
Mileage	£3,954	£2,500
Agency Staff	-	£29,155
Security	-	£5,000
Other	£2,800	£3,000
Total Expenditure	£1,460,277	£1,927,127
Net Revenue Expenditure	-£1,401,332	-£1,791,409
Variance		-£390,077

Table 23

In summary, the project variance is mainly due to the uplift in staffing required to operate the additional Library and Learning Centre spaces, extended opening hours and commercial activities (£379,099). Volunteer recruitment could be explored to further offset this revenue cost to supplement paid roles.

New commercial income streams help to offset some, but not all, additional costs. The revenue uplift required to fund the future model for the library service has been part of briefings with members and senior council officers. The funding to ensure appropriate levels of staffing and to cover necessary overheads will be supported as part of the council's annual budget forecast process. The council is committed to ensuring the services have the appropriate level and skills of staff to deliver the proposed new model of delivery. Detailed business planning will continue to be developed to ensure the transition to the future model and delivery of the service.

AFFORDABILITY ASSESSMENT

Please see above.

As outlined in the cabinet decision paper, the council will look to meet the ongoing increased operational costs.

WIDER FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Proposed/Agreed charging mechanisms

- Income from the proposed paid for library events programme, printing services, Sensory Room hire and Makerspace hire will support the operational cost of the Library and Learning Centre.
- Room Hire service charges will apply for the use of the Assembly Hall for events and programming. This is charged to Property Services at £53 per hour for evening events. The Sensory Room and Makerspace will be offset by basic utilities overheads included in financial projections.

Proposed/Agreed contract lengths

- Professional adviser contract lengths for period of design and implementation.
- Contractor contract length for construction period.

Personnel implications (including TUPE)

It is anticipated that TUPE will not apply to this project as salaried staff are already part of the Herefordshire Council staffing establishment.

Some staff may be required to work from a different location as a result of this project, due to the proposal of this project to move the Library to the Shirehall building.

It has been identified through further operational and financial analysis completed by Herefordshire Council, that additional staffing will be required as detailed above to support the Library and Learning Centre, including the management of additional facilities in the Learning Centre offer.

COMMERCIAL CASE

COMMERCIAL CASE

INTRODUCTION

This section of the full business case sets out our arrangements to procure and implement the capital refurbishment of the Shirehall to deliver a Library and Learning Centre. It also sets out our rationale for ensuring that the revenue generated by our activities underpins the ongoing operation of the facility.

COMMERCIAL DELIVERABILITY

The commercial case and potential for income generated by a the Library and Learning Centre is outlined in the report 'Hereford Library and Learning Centre & Shirehall Commercial considerations' from September 2023 (Appendix 1). The report was written by Take The Current Ltd who were commissioned to review the commercial potential of the Library and Learning Centre at Shirehall. Various factors were considered as part of this including retail income, income from events and programmes, hire from letting event space, as well as costs incurred relating to staffing, advertising and promotion, insurance and service charges. Commercial opportunities include:

- Paid-For Events and Programming in the Library** - The new library is not intended to be a quiet space so events can take place in the library at different times of the day. It has the benefit of a ramped fixed seating stage area (accommodating up to 65 people) with integrated audiovisual facilities which could accommodate a range of activities and also be programmed with classes, events and meet-ups both in the day and in the evening. The event space can also be hired to third party organisations after hours for events and programmes.

Commercial Activity	Numbers	Ticket Price/	Notes	Income
Daytime				
3 events per week	10-12 people	£3 per person	45 weeks of the year	£4,860
Evening				
30 events per year	65 people	£15 per person (60%) £10 per person (40%)	65% attendance	£16,478
Events Hire				
20 events per year		£300		£6,000

Table 24

- Sensory Room hire** - The Sensory Room in the Learning Centre will be kitted out with equipment of a high standard and designed by a company who has fitted out a number of other sensory rooms across the UK. It will target early years to around 12 years with special educational needs (SEN), and teenagers and adults with learning disabilities. It is anticipated that the room will also be used by family and community groups whose members have additional needs and can suffer sensory overload. The room will be charged on a low per session basis to offset overheads.

User	Price	No. of Attendees	Number of bookings per week	Number of weeks per year	Income
Child	£5	1	4	50	£1,000
Child Group	£5	3	20	50	£15,000
Adult	£6.50	1	5	50	£1,625
Adult with Carer	£6.50	2	12	50	£7,800
Adult Group	£6.50	3	8	50	£7,800
Total					£33,225

Table 25

Income forecasts are based on **80% usage** giving **£26,580** potential income.



Fig 12 – Artist impression of the Sensory Room at the Learning Centre (© Experia)

- Makerspace hire** – It is anticipated that the Makerspace in the Learning Centre will be developed in partnership with NMITE, and complementary to their Stronger Towns-funded Skills Hub project. Shirehall has the advantage of being a highly accessible location attracting different types of user groups, for example those looking to upskill at entry level to improve their opportunities, wellbeing and skills. The Makerspace will be a digital fabrication lab only, with basic printing, sewing machines, tool hire, and a small group session programme led in partnership with NMITE to upskill local residents starting on their journey into business, making and new skills. It is proposed that the Makerspace is operated on a tiered membership model with bookable system for specific machine hire at a low cost.

User	Price	Ratio	Members	Income
Individual	£60	3	30	£1,800
Student	£45	2	20	£900
Start-Up	£150	2	20	£3,000
Profit Business	£250	1	10	£2,500
Low Income	£20	3	30	£600
Total		11	110	£8,800

Table 26

Machine	Quantity	Daily Charge	Days	Total Income	Usage (%)	Income
3D/ Maker	3	£30	300	£27,000	60%	£16,200
Sewing	2	£5	300	£3,000	50%	£1,500
Total						£17,700

Table 27

Total income from the Makerspace is **£26,500**.

Other income will be gained from regular library services such as schools service, printing, inter library loans and minor publication retail offer. Income from the hire of the Adult Training Room in the Learning Centre will go to Property Services, who will manage and operate the booking of all meeting spaces centrally in Shirehall.

Income from commercial opportunities are offset in the financial projections by any overheads, staffing, service charges and other expenses. The income potential for each new opportunity is outlined below, and the full financial projections for the Library and Learning Centre shown in context in Table 23:

Item	Cost
Events Hire	£6,000
Events and Programming (Day)	£4,860
Events and Programming (Evening)	£16,478
Retail	£1,400
Sensory Room Hire	£26,580
Makerspace Hire	£26,500
Total	£81,818

Table 28

PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

Procurement of any additional services will follow Herefordshire Council's procurement procedures and procurement colleagues are members of the project board.

Procurement will follow the programme identified in the Management Case section on page 64.

Mace and the design team are commissioned on a RIBA stage basis. Procurement options have been fully assessed.

- RIBA Stage 2b onwards – Professional team to be procured to support the detailed design stage of the project up to planning approval.
- Implementation – Contractor to be procured to implement the development of the Library and Learning Centre and wider refurbishment works.

Any procurement will adhere to the Herefordshire Council's Contract Procedure Rules. The purpose of the Contract Procedure Rules (CPRs), together with the guidance document and the contracting toolkit is to help officers involved in commissioning, procurement and contract management to carry out their roles effectively, ensuring that:

- a) contract selection and award procedures are conducted in accordance with the relevant legal requirements under an equitable, transparent and regulated process;
- b) ensure the council obtains value for money and minimises the cost of procuring goods, works and services, utilising strategic delivery partners wherever possible;
- c) strategic policies are taken into account, for example in promoting the economic development of Herefordshire and in relation to protecting the environment;
- d) procurement procedures are kept under review in order to ensure continuous improvements to services and provide best value to the community of Herefordshire;
- e) contracts are managed to ensure they are delivered as specified, achieve the desired outcomes and are received on time and within budget.

Link: [Herefordshire Council CPR](#)

WIDER CONSIDERATIONS

The Library and Learning Centre will be part of a wider Shirehall offer. In addition to the library services, the Shirehall building will be refurbished and opened up to provide hireable courtroom spaces, meeting rooms, film and TV hire potential, heritage interpretation and tours, community skills facilities, and spaces for the Coroner's office and Registrars to operate from. As such, the commercial potential and feasibility of the Library and Learning Centre element (focused at the rear of the building) should be seen in the context of the overall site. The building could both offer additional opportunities and also impact commercial potential (e.g. as there are other spaces available to hire and other offers etc.).

The wider Shirehall commercial potential has also been explored as part of this early phase of work and the full findings can be found in the 'Hereford Library and Learning Centre & Shirehall Commercial considerations' report in Appendix 1.

These include opportunities for:

- An on-site café or kitchen facilities (for community training)
- Weddings
- Room hire for corporate events, away days, functions and meetings
- Courtroom hire
- Film and TV Courtroom hire
- Paranormal events
- Guided Tours
- Sleepovers

MANAGEMENT CASE

MANAGEMENT CASE

INTRODUCTION

This Management Case details the delivery programme and process for the Library and Learning Centre project.

PROJECT ORGANISATION AND GOVERNANCE

The project is managed by Herefordshire Council's Programme Management Office (PMO). The project is overseen by the Library and Learning Centre Project Board, which meets at least monthly. The Board comprises:

Role	Name	Job Title
Senior Responsible Officer - Service	Hilary Hall	Corporate Director – Community Wellbeing
Senior Responsible Officer - Refurbishment	Sarah Jowett	Strategic Assets Delivery Director, Corporate Services
Senior User	Lesli Good	Service Director Communities
Programme Manager	Susan White	PMO Programme Manager
Senior Project Manager	Johnathan Pritchard	PMO Senior Project Manager
Project Support	Isabelle Sheehy	PMO Project Coordinator
Service Area	Sarah Lee	Culture and Leisure Lead
	Jonathan Chedgzoy	Libraries and Archives Manager
Finance – Capital	Karen Morris	Strategic Capital Finance Manager, Corporate Services
Legal	Emma-Jane Brewerton	Head of Law, Corporate Services
Legal	Adam Powell	Lawyer 1 contracts and major projects
Finance - Revenue	Kim Wratten	Finance Manager, Corporate Services
Communications Lead	Luenne Featherstone	Communications Manager, Corporate Services
	Joanne Lilley	Press and Publicity Officer
Property Services	GianCarlo Paganuzzi	Buildings and Compliance Manager

As and when by invite exception	Lee Robertson	Commercial Manager, Corporate Services
Other attendees as required such as Professional Leads (Finance, Procurement, Property, Legal, Communications, Planning, External Grants, Performance Management, Adult and Community Learning Services etc) Technical Leads (sustainability, communities, etc)		

Table 29

Major External Fund Delivery Board provides a regular oversight, decision and recommendation making forum for projects that are being delivered through this Board. The Board is accountable for the delivery of Council Projects (under the Board's remit), ensuring the projects meet their strategic purpose, delivering high quality value for money outcomes for the council that follows the Council's applied Governance model for project management.

Hereford Town Board has established a Programme Management Office with responsibility for Monitoring and Evaluation of the delivery of all Hereford Town Deal projects, including the delivery of the Hereford Museum and Art Gallery refurbishment.

Herefordshire Council Section 151 Officer will report to HM Government every six months on the library and learning centre project service delivery as stipulated in the Town Fund guidance.

External consultants

Herefordshire Council has appointed Mace Limited to undertake the roles of lead consultant, project manager, programme manager, cost management and also contract administrator, reporting into Herefordshire Council's PMO and Project Board.

As lead consultant Mace will procure the sub-consultant design team for the refurbishment and core works on behalf of Herefordshire Council. As project managers Mace will then manage the team, ensuring the design aligns to the Clients' vision, driven by a programme managed approach. Throughout the design stage, Mace's cost management team will work alongside the design team to provide robust support so that designs can be progressed aligned to any budget constraints, as well as ensure suitable robust costings are provided to support the Business Case.

Mace will lead the procurement strategy workshop with the Council and the design team, and work with the Council's procurement and legal advisors during the procurement and tender of the main contractor for refurbishment and core works.

Glazzard will undertake the roles of Architect, Lead Designer, Sustainability Consultant as well as Historic Building Designer. Undertaking these roles will enable Glazzard to craft a fully collaborative design solution that responds to the aspirations of Herefordshire Council to create a leading Library and learning Centre for the city. Glazzards have been involved in the Shirehall refurbishment project from initial stages in 2021 and are well placed to build on the knowledge and understanding of the project to realise the aspirations of both the council and the community.

Barnsley Marshall, Mace's selected Structural and Civil Engineers are passionate about design and believe that great Architecture and design, supported by sound engineering, creates

better buildings and environments that improve the quality of people’s lives, bringing tangible social and economic benefits to communities.

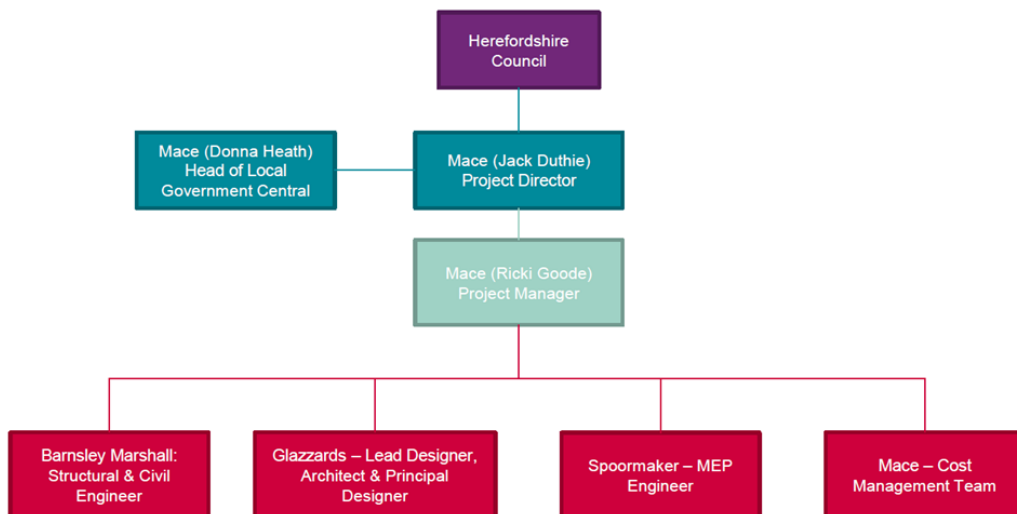
Spoormaker and Partners (S&P) are an award-winning international firm of mechanical and electrical consulting engineers, originally founded in 1964. It has a total headcount of approximately 100 staff, delivering all aspects of mechanical, electrical and public health building services design across a wide range of sectors.

Take the Current have been commissioned by Herefordshire Council to undertake an income generation options report. The requirement was to review and revise as appropriate the outline business appraisal options in the report on ‘Library Feasibility Report’ (Appendix 1). The aim is to maximise income generation in a refurbished library and resource centre at Shirehall.

The Design Concept have been commissioned to provide specialist expert design and costing specifically for the design of furniture fittings and equipment (FF&E) for the Library and Learning Centre. They are part of Lamnhults Design Group and can provide the installation of high quality furniture with a Scandinavian design.

Experia are industry experts in UK sensory equipment and have many years of experience as well as knowledge and understanding of why sensory equipment is so vital for the development of individuals. Experia have been commissioned to provide a free outline plan and costings for installation of a sensory room in the Learning Centre.

Mace’s project team structure:



ASSURANCE

All projects at Herefordshire Council are monitored by the Executive Programme Board. The Executive Programme Board has many roles, including exception reporting, final approvals and annual review of the Capital Programme and reviewing the PMO process.

Stronger Towns Board will have oversight of monitoring and evaluation throughout

SCOPE MANAGEMENT

The Shirehall Library and Learning Centre is a £3 million project.

The project will create a modern Library and Learning Centre in the Assembly Hall and Undercroft areas of the Shirehall, Hereford. The space will be fully accessible and will suit a range of functions. There will be the traditional elements of a library, coupled with space for meetings, working and relaxing. It will have space to hold small events such as book talks, poetry readings and small film viewings. The Learning Centre will have space for digital learning and working, a sensory room and a training room to provide for a range of adult learning functions. There will also be a makerspace.

Library	Learning Centre
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library welcome point • Small retail offer • Flexible display infrastructure • Self service kiosks and printer services • Lending stacks - Adult Fiction and Non Fiction • Teens & Young Adults • Children’s Library • Local History & Reference Library • Events and programming space • Multipurpose seating, workspace, group spaces, meeting pod 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome space and reception • Buggy park • Digital lounge with fixed terminals/ WiFi • Adult Training Room • Makerspace • Sensory Room • Storage • Staff Office, Delivery Room and Facilities

Table 30



Fig 13: Artist impression of the Shirehall Library in the Assembly Hall (© thedesignconcept)

To enable the installation of all of the above elements, the project will ensure that all public areas are fully accessible with appropriate facilities. There will be back office space for a book store, delivery room and offices for staff to work efficiently, including a new goods lift to enable books to be delivered safely up to the library area. The staff kitchen and toilets will be updated as necessary. The lighting will be modernised to LED and the window blinds will also be updated to ensure that the spaces are controlled appropriately.

The stage area will be altered to ensure renovations are sympathetic to the heritage features, but that it can be utilised for a more modern purpose – the tiered seating will act as the audience amphitheatre-style seating for events and also for informal working, reading and relaxing. There will be integrated power points for phones/computers. Any structural strengthening to the Assembly Hall floor that is required will also be provided by this project.

Project vision and purpose is agreed at a senior level of the Council through the Cabinet and Corporate Leadership Team. The project will be driven by the Project Manager and Service Lead. The Senior Responsible Officers will provide all operational decision-making in consultation with the Cabinet Member. The Project Board will ensure that there is oversight and advice to the Senior Responsible Officer. Any matters requiring escalation will pass to Delivery Board and ultimately Executive Programme Board. The overarching project board will be the Shirehall Project Board, who will be responsible for looking at all aspects of the Shirehall refurbishment including shell and core design works, cost/budget build up and procurement/delivery. The Library and Learning Centre sub-group will be responsible for the design and fit-out of the Library and Learning Centre spaces, developing the full business case (including commercial aspects) and will manage interactions with stakeholders including the Stronger Towns Board.

Mace will act as project managers to the design team for all ‘shell and core’ works necessary as part of the wider refurbishment of Shirehall. This will ensure that there is a consistent and coordinated approach to the full works required on the Shirehall including base build repairs. Regular full design team meetings (DTM) including shell and core design team, service leads, library design team and conservation officer will ensure that the Shirehall as a whole is developed efficiently coordinating all work layers. As detailed within this document, overall project management will be led by Herefordshire Council’s PMO and the Project Board who will work together, with input as required from externally appointed partners to ensure that the project is developed and implemented effectively. The project team will continually monitor the scope of the project and will implement the PMO’s change management process to ensure that any change to scope is correctly managed.

In Scope	Out of Scope (covered by a separate project)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocation of the library from Friars Street temporary location to the Assembly Hall in Shirehall, and create a Learning Centre within the Undercroft. • Building enabling works to support relocation of LLC to Shirehall. • Ensure all public areas of Library and Learning Centre are accessible and have access to appropriate facilities. • Provision of a goods lift • Access porch to the Undercroft and entrance works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider refurbishment to Shirehall including Health & Safety compliance, electrical works, replacement boiler and heating systems, roof and skylight repairs, court reinstatement, building repairs • Redecoration of any areas not Assembly Hall/Undercroft • Platform lifts/accessibility to other areas of Shirehall • Fire escape from Assembly Hall

Table 31

PROGRAMME/SCHEDULE MANAGEMENT

Procurement	Indicative Dates
RIBA Stage 2	
Procurement of Design team and consultants for Full Business Case	July 2023
Full Business Case Present to Cabinet	October 2023
Full Business Case present at the Stronger Towns Board	November 2023
Project Adjustment Report Submission to Department of Levelling Up Housing Communities	November 2023
RIBA Stage 3	
Multi-discipline Team Procured to take the project through to RIBA 6	January 2024
Any Identified Required Surveys	March 2024
Procurement of Sensory Room designer	January 2025
Listing Building Consent Application Submitted	April 2024
Planning Application Submitted	April 2024
RIBA Stage 4	
Listed Building Consent Received	August 2024
Planning Consent Received	August 2024
Construction Partner Tender Package Published	September 2024
Construction Partner Tender Response Received	October 2024
Construction Partner Tender Responses compliance checked and evaluated	November 2024
Construction Partner Appointed	January 2025
RIBA Stage 5	
Contractor Mobilisation	January 2025
Pre-commencement of Planning conditions	January 2025
Construction Works Start	February 2025
Practical Completion	April 2026
RIBA Stage 6	
Handover of Site to Client	May 2026
Client Familiarisation and Testing	May 2026
RIBA Stage 7	
Opening Event	June 2026

Table 32

RISK AND OPPORTUNITIES MANAGEMENT

Identifying and managing risks is a normal part of project management. Whilst many risks will be mitigated or accepted as part of the project management process, there may be at times, significant project risks (those whose score is over 16) that require the SRO to escalate details to the Delivery Board. If this occurs, the Project Manager will notify the Business Intelligence Team, record this action under the Project Board and monitor updates or actions around the risk. The Capital Portfolio Manager will ensure that an agenda item at the Delivery Board reviews escalated and de-escalated risks, providing a flow of information and robust audit trail.

Risk Transfer

Shirehall Library and Learning Resource Centre Risk Register				
Risk Number	Risk Description	Risk Score	Consequence	Mitigation
1	Specialist contractor requirement/ volatile construction market	12	Delays to project timetable and additional costs	Contractors capable of working on a historic building like the Shirehall are a specialist resource, which reduces the procurement field of suitable suppliers. The construction market is running at high capacity while material supplies continue to be difficult. Risk of delay in securing a timely start date with suitable contractors, and subsequent delay during construction from materials shortages. Also increases in cost due to the supply and demand effect of both contractors and materials.
2	Financial - Project runs over budget due to incorrect assumptions at feasibility	8	The project would face value engineering to bring the cost within in budget and some objectives may not be delivered. This could also delay the project.	The project team will continue to work with the design team/ consultants to ensure the various elements come within the budget envelope through monthly project boards, weekly DTMs and ad hoc cost plan meetings.

3	Procurement timeframes are longer than expected	8	Delays to project delivery and additional cost	The project team is working closely with Herefordshire Council procurement team as is Mace Ltd procurement team, who understand the current market to mitigate this risk.
4	DLUHC and Stronger Towns do not support Shirehall project	8	The projects will not move forward if we do not receive positive feedback from the Stronger Towns Board and Central Government once the FBC has been submitted within the timeframes that match the project programme.	We are working closely with both parties involved to ensure they are updated throughout the Cabinet decision process. Fully inform both parties of the benefits of the chosen location.
5	Resources - Unable to fund and recruit suitable experienced Library staff	8	Delivery of the service would suffer reputation damage	The project team is working closely with the project Service Lead and the current service to assess the needs required to run the new services (LLC). Negotiations for management partnerships have been initiated with NMITE.
6	Reputational/Financial - Project fails to secure listed building consent	6	If consent is not obtained the project will face delays to delivery and cost implications	The Conservation Officer is part of the project team and has input/ is fully informed of all designs. Pre-application advice had been requested from Historic England.
7	Reputational - The Library and Learning Centre is not used by local residents, business, partners, etc.	6	If the LLC doesn't generate the required income to cover the service charges this would create a cost pressure on the service.	The Project team have identified existing council services who will utilise some of the bookable spaces daily once available. In addition the rentable spaces are being designed to remain flexible to maximise their use. The project team has also procured expert consultants Take The Current who has produced a revenue report to strengthen the need for commercial opportunities.

8	Political - Change in political priorities	6	Loss of political support, leading to loss of resources.	We will consult with, brief and provide up-to-date information to all Council members.
9	Financial - Rise in inflation may result in an increase in costs	4	Unstable markets may increase inflation across the life of the project above expected levels. This could have consequences on the delivery of work packages and require value engineering to reduce the costs to within budget.	Value Engineering required. Scope may need to be reduced. Additional funding may be required.
10	Financial - Unforeseen works found during fit-out	4	Shirehall is a Grade II* listed building and there is a high possibility that during the construction phase we will discover issues which could possibly push back programme and add cost.	There is a generous contingency for this project within the budget. Extensive surveys and site investigations have been carried out to understand the building and its requirements.
11	Accessibility within the building	4	Despite best efforts, the building is deemed not adequately accessible for the purposes of a Library and Learning Centre	The design team are ensuring that all public areas of the building are fully accessible. During RIBA Stage 3, there will be a full accessibility audit to ensure there are no gaps. Stakeholder consultation will include a wide spectrum of user groups.
12	Reputational - The library doesn't meet statutory requirements	3	Reputational damage, cost pressures on the service	The design team will continue to work closely with the Library services to ensure the new design provides the spaces and area required to fulfil its statutory obligations.

Table 33

As the owners of the Shirehall and operator of the proposed Library and Learning Centre the council would ultimately be responsible for the risks relating to the project. However, risks will be mitigated through:

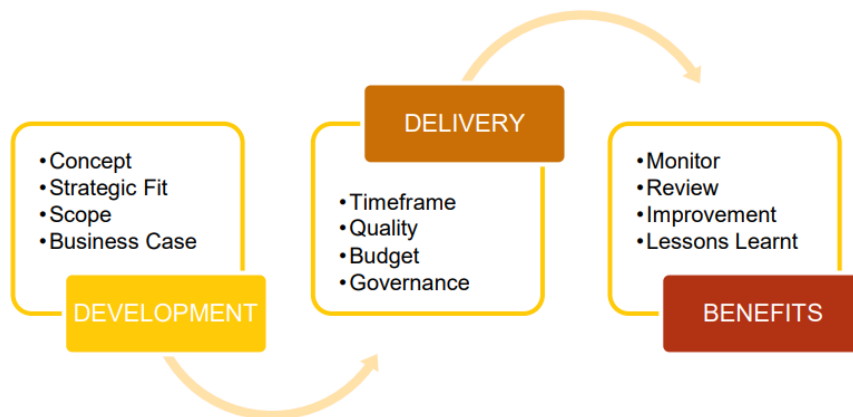
- Procuring appropriately qualified (with relevant indemnity insurance) professional services to design the development, undertake full building condition surveys etc.
- Procuring a qualified contractor to deliver the capital works to time and budget.
- Seeking appropriately qualified (with relevant indemnity insurance) professional advisers regarding the development and operation of the LLC, including review of revenue income opportunities.
- Experienced and qualified council staff operating the library.

Project Dependencies

- This project is independent of other Town Investment Plan projects so has no reliance on other timescales within the programme.
- The wider refurbishment of the Shirehall is NOT dependent on the installation of the Library and learning centre. Whilst they are mutually beneficial, the council has provided a commitment to the refurbishment of the building and to secure the building for civic use.
- The project is wholly dependent on the refurbishment of the Shirehall building including heating, rewiring, roof works to ensure it is safe and accessible for the public. The refurbishment is dependent on gaining further budget approved by full council.
- The project is dependent on securing external funding (Stronger Towns) within the anticipated timescales.
- The project is also dependent on achieving listed building consent.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

As outlined above, the project is overseen by Herefordshire Council’s PMO. The Programme Management Office team of Portfolio Managers, Programme Managers, Project Managers and Project Support drive delivery of capital and transformational projects across the Directorates.



The Project Manager will take control of the day to day actions and manage the project as closely as possible, this will include but are not limited to:

- Monitoring and managing project actions and progress and reporting to the SRO where the budget, timescales or quality is under threat or any other significant issue.
- Recording and managing project risks and issues and escalating where necessary.
- Managing project scope and initiating change control where necessary.

- Approving spend against the project budget, under their control, and monitoring the project budget in conjunction with the Finance lead whilst providing regular updates to the SRO.
- Monitoring the Communications Plan in conjunction with the SRO and Communications Lead.
- Monitoring the progress of legal requirements in conjunction with SRO and Legal Lead.
- Monitoring the progress of planning requirements in conjunction with SRO and Planning Lead.
- Co-ordinating & monitoring the development and approval of all governance reports.
- Co-ordinating & monitoring all project reporting and updates as required.
- Supporting the library service transition and operational development at Shirehall.
- All templates for managing the project will be via Verto (the council's project management system).

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Stakeholder engagement is detailed on page 40 of the Strategic Case section.

BENEFITS, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Cashable benefits

- Potential income from the Library events and programming supporting the operational cost of the LLC.
- Potential income from Sensory Room hire supporting the operational cost of the LLC.
- Potential income from Makerspace hire supporting the operational cost of the LLC.

Non-cashable benefits

- Refurbished and modernised mixed use centre attracting people to visit and spend.
- Creating new job or volunteering opportunities.
- Improving quality of life for local people through the new LLC.
- Providing a prominent city centre location for public services to engage local people.
- Supporting the improvement of skills of local residents.
- Providing new community facilities for digital learning, adult learning, sensory learning, creative design and business skills.
- Improved public sector service delivery through enhanced community engagement.
- Opportunity to review the delivery model of the library service to ensure it meets required need and can support council objectives and priorities

Dis-benefits

- Disruption to library users during the relocation of the service. The Council will seek to ensure disruption is minimised as far as possible.
- Possible disruption to neighbouring properties and users of Gaol Street car park.

ENVIRONMENTAL CASE

Whole life carbon of construction

The project will modernise and reuse a Grade II* listed building, seeking wherever possible to improve the environmental impact of the building. A decision was made to re-use and restore the Shirehall providing the opportunity to secure the future of this dormant heritage asset in an accessible location in the city centre and to offer the most sustainable solution in terms of embodied carbon by repairing an existing structure.

Energy Efficiency

The current boilers are end-of-life, so this is part of the essential scope in Phase 1 of the Shirehall wider refurbishment works. Air source heat pumps were considered, but due the high installation cost versus modest carbon reduction when compared to the latest technology gas-fired boilers (shown in the table below) the project team has made the informed decision to progress with a 'green gas' boiler approach.

Summary of Options vs CO2e and Construction (Value Index)

Option	Option Description	Const Cost	CO2e saving	Value Index
1	Air Source Heat Pumps	£1,200,000	-24124	0.020
2	Upgraded Efficient Boilers	£125,000	-26456	0.212
3	Upgraded Efficient Boilers and Green Gas	£125,000	-57654	0.461

Note: Notional - Value Index = CO2e kg saving/ £ Estimated Construction Cost.

Gas CO2e savings are based upon similar de-carbonisation to that of Electrical Power since Hydrogen and/or Green Gas grid data has not been provided by BEIS.

The gas boilers can be converted to 'green' gas in the future (emerging technology), potentially at that point far surpassing the carbon reductions of air source heat pumps futureproofing the build works to an even greater extent. The poorer than expected carbon performance of heat pumps is largely down to the inefficient fabric of the building combined with large room volumes (air source heat pumps are most effective when putting low levels of heat into well insulated buildings). There are also practical issues with air source heat pumps in finding sufficient space externally for the external units needed (and the conservation view on these being visible) as well as the disruption to the historic fabric internally.

Options for renewable energy sources such as solar photovoltaics (PVs) are limited due to heritage conservation, who do not want to see panels on more prominent roof surfaces. The project team is currently exploring whether an array could sit on the flat roof of the CCTV room, subject to it being strong enough (or strengthened accordingly). Solar PVs are not included in the essential Phase 1 works scope, but have been included as part of the Phase 2 works.

LED lighting and intelligent lighting controls are also included as part of the Phase 2 build works. The library has been designed to make best use of natural daylight to minimise the use of artificial lights during the day. Blinds are being installed within the Assembly Hall to control sunlight.

It is proposed that the electric system is maintained rather than gas for water heating, thereby taking advantage of the ongoing decarbonisation of the power supply grid, and taking advantage of the solar PVs generation when fitted.

There is limited opportunity for building insulation due to the heritage nature of Shirehall. Open roof spaces and flat roofs being recovered can be insulated, but listed building constraints prevent insulation lining to walls. Repairs will be made to the windows but, as they are part of listed status, they are likely to remain single-glazed when refurbished.

Ventilation

Ventilation is being incorporated where necessary to maintain statutory compliance in unventilated or poorly ventilated spaces, but will include the latest heat recovery technology where fitted.

Audiovisual hardware

All audiovisual display and electrical equipment within the Library and Learning Centre will be LED and designed with energy-reduction aims in mind. The exhibition equipment will be on an individual control system so that they can all be switched off when visitors are not in the building. AV hardware and software can be programmed so that they can go into low power mode with a screensaver when not being used during opening hours.

As part of Herefordshire Council's ITT procurement for the main contractor and exhibition fit-out contractors, documentation will include, as standard, 'considerate contractor' principles – clear objectives that the Council expects all organisations that do business with us to comply with. Considerate Practice embodies the high standards the build industry can and should achieve, to encourage them to make positive changes in the way they work and to operate more responsibly and respectfully.

This includes minimising their impact and enhance the natural environment, by:

- Prioritising environmental issues to protect the natural environment and minimising negative impacts
- Optimising the use of resources, including minimising carbon throughout the value chain
- Using sustainable or responsibly-sourced materials
- Re-using materials where possible to reduce waste
- Engaging with the community to improve the local environment in a meaningful way.

HERITAGE CASE

The Shirehall, located on St Peters Square in Hereford, is Grade II* listed. The subject site is also located within the Hereford Central Area Conservation Area. Historic England citation notes:

Shire Hall. c1815-17, with mid C19 extensions. By Sir Robert Smirke. Ashlar sandstone; brick; slate roof; various brick stacks. In neo-Classical style. Giant Doric hexastyle portico; moulded pediment with triglyphs; 3 double doors within. Symmetrical wings, with single 6/6 sashes in moulded stone architraves; moulded bands and pediments. Wings: simplified bands and cornice continue the portico entablature. INTERIOR: an imposing interior, with many ornamental features. Staircase: straight flight. Lobby: ornamental plasterwork; domed amphitheatre with marble Corinthian columns. Great Hall: ornamental plasterwork. Court rooms and retiring rooms: wood panelling. Library: plasterwork ceiling. Grand Jury Room: plasterwork ceiling; panelling; 6-panel doors with entablatures; painted fireplace. Committee Room 1: late C19 wood fireplace. Committee Room 2: late C19 wood fireplace.

The significance of these heritage assets principally derives from their relatively early date and the intactness of their built fabric which generates their historic and architectural special interest. Dating from the mid- late 19th century, the high-quality craftsmanship and materiality of the building's construction are clearly evident. The buildings derive communal (illustrative) value from their historic and present-day functions related to the judicial system and local governance which together contribute towards the group value of other related buildings within the historic core of the city. Owing to their location on the east of St. Peter's Square at the junction of three roads the substantial and imposing west elevation, particularly of the Shirehall affords it some landmark status in terms of impact on its immediate and wider environs. Shirehall in particular also generates further historic interest with its connections to the nationally important architect Sir Robert Smirke (4.18 Heritage Stagement by Orion Consulting, December 2021).

This significant building is currently closed to the public and in a state of disrepair. Through the project the Shirehall will be refurbished and left in better condition through the conservation of historic features of the building, critical repairs to the structure, repair, access improvements and new facilities:

- The Heritage Officer has been a core part of the design team from the outset.
- The Shirehall will become a civic space for the 21st century once again repurposed as a community cultural hub.
- The design of the LLC has been developed to maximise heritage features, celebrate the history and usage of the building and be sympathetic to the original design intent.
- The heritage stage of the Assembly Hall will be reinstated back to its original scale and re-purposed as a feature seating area for the library.
- The library FF&E design will retain the balance and symmetry of the Assembly Hall, with the library stacks and structures sitting underneath the wall cornice. Wall and barrier installations will be in glass to maintain views across the space.
- The history of the building and paintings will be told in a new interpretative space (created as part of the wider refurbishment works in the Atrium).

ACCESSIBILITY CASE

Although the heritage building offers some constraints in terms of major architectural changes, the Library and Learning Centre can be made fully accessible to modern standards as part of the refurbishment works and new LLC design:

- The Shirehall is accessible using public transport (easily walkable from train and bus stations, and with a bus stop right outside). New bicycle racks will be installed outside. The new library website will clearly display green travel options for visitors on its 'Visit Us' page.
- A buggy park has been introduced in the Learning Centre for users to store their belongings in a safe and secure way.
- A new platform lift will be installed at the front columned entrance to the Shirehall that meets all access requirements as part of the refurbishment works. Other integrated platform lifts will be introduced where needed near the toilet block and in the Assembly Hall to move people from library floor up to the stage seating area.
- The central circulation core includes stair and lift options. All floors can be accessed from this point. Clear signage and orientation in different formats will aid people around the building.

- A new fire escape annexe adjacent to the Library will provide improved escape routes and include a wheelchair refuge.
- The design of the Library and Learning Centre will be fully compliant with the Equality Act and offer different approaches for different learning styles – sensory, creative, digital, tactile, reading, verbal, visual.
- The Library and Learning Centre will become a social and cultural hub for the local community, providing a place of sanctuary and allowing them to feel supported and valued.
- Local people’s wellbeing will be boosted through participating in targeted activities and programming that specifically address mental health, social isolation or disadvantage.
- New job creation, skills attainment and volunteering opportunities will provide local people with more opportunities to improve their lives and wellbeing.
- Staff and volunteers will be trained in diversity, inclusion, mental health, dementia awareness and neurodiversity, and in the delivery of activities for different needs.
- A designated Sensory Room for early years, SEN families, adults with learning disabilities and those wanting quiet space will be identified and clearly advertised on library literature and the website.
- New accessible toilets will be installed in key locations in the entrance atrium and Learning Centre welcome.

Consultation with user groups that need special access considerations will be an integral part of the RIBA 3 in shaping the design of the building, internal spaces and the approach to the library, learning centre and visitor experience as a whole.

Equality Impact Implications

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the ‘general duty’ on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Equality Act 2010 established a positive obligation on local authorities to promote equality and to reduce discrimination in relation to any of the nine ‘protected characteristics’ (age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; marriage and civil partnership; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation). In particular, the council must have ‘due regard’ to the public sector equality duty when taking any decisions on service changes.

The Library and Learning Centre will be open to all, aiding the development of skills to enable people to access higher value employment opportunities and improve their health and wellbeing. Adult Learning Services will deliver courses to improve people’s skills and there will be space in the resource centre and library to work with partners to deliver events and activities to promote positive health and wellbeing agendas.

The full Equality Impact Assessment is attached as Appendix 4.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Project Board has oversight of all health and safety risks for the project.

All appointed providers must also adhere to health and safety requirements as detailed within the Council's contract agreements, specifically:

- The Provider shall promptly notify the Council of any health and safety hazards, which may arise in connection with the performance of the Agreement. The Council shall promptly notify the Provider of any health and safety hazards that may exist or arise at the Council's Premises and that may affect the Provider in the performance of the Agreement.
- While on the Council's Premises the Provider shall comply with any health and safety measures implemented by the Council in respect of staff and other persons working on the Council's Premises.
- The Provider shall notify the Council immediately in the event of any incident occurring in the performance of the Agreement on the Council's Premises where that incident causes any personal injury or damage to property that could give rise to personal injury.
- The Provider shall comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and any other acts, orders, regulations and codes of practice relating to health and safety, which may apply to staff and other persons working on the Council's Premises in the performance of the Agreement.
- The Provider shall ensure that its health and safety policy statement (as required by the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974) is made available to the Council on request.

SOCIAL VALUE

Herefordshire Council has a responsibility to comply with the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 which means it needs to consider how it might improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the relevant area in which our contracts will operate as part of its commissioning and commercial activity.

Herefordshire Council defines social value as:

“The positive impact on local people and communities, the local economy, and the environment, that we can create by the way we spend public money to buy goods and services.”

- **Social and Community** - strengthen communities to ensure that everyone lives well and safely together.
- **Health and Wellbeing** - sustain resilient people and communities, increasing both physical and mental wellbeing.
- **Crime and Justice** - support our local people, communities, and businesses to feel safe in their homes, communities, and places of work.
- **Economy** - develop a strong local economy which builds on our rural county's strengths and resources.
- **Education and Skills** - develop and increase high quality education and training that enables local people to fulfil their potential.
- **Jobs** - support local businesses to grow jobs and keep unemployment rates low to help our rural county prosper.
- **Environment** - protect and enhance our environment and keep Herefordshire a great place to live and work.

- **Leadership** - Herefordshire Council to lead and encourage others to adopt forward-thinking strategies that develop, deliver, and measure social and local value.

The council procurement process includes as standard a 12% social value outcome. This ensures that any organisation the Council works with complies with our ambition to support our local economic, social and environmental wellbeing. Herefordshire Council is committed to, and expects suppliers to be committed to, the following objectives:

- Supporting the local economy including small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs) and the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector.
- Delivering at neighbourhood level wherever appropriate and including the local supply chain.
- Including measurable clauses in contracts to demonstrate both social value and value for money.
- Supporting the business and voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sectors through transparent and proportionate procurement processes and contracts.
- Ensuring robust contract management is in place to monitor and measure social value outcomes in partnership with providers and suppliers.
- Paying our providers and suppliers promptly.
- Payment of the Real Living Wage
- The creation of local training, educational and employment opportunities.
- Financial investments in local communities by contractor partners.

Through understanding the priorities for the county, the council can promote the delivery of Social Value where it will have the most significant impacts for the residents of Herefordshire. Aligned to each of the pledges are key value indicators and their associated supplier commitments. These are provided in the framework spreadsheet available to all suppliers during the tender process. This approach ensures transparency for all types, legal structures, and sizes, of organisations when responding to social value questions in tender opportunities.