

ANNEX QUESTIONS FOR THE PROJECT GROUP AND THE ARCHITECTS

Proposed at the meeting

1. What is known or assumed about the capital cost of the various works envisaged and how they would be covered?

The capital costs of the works will not be known for some time. If it is agreed that the project is potentially viable and sustainable the detailed architectural work will be tendered and a fresh commission made. That consultant will then undertake the detailed architectural design work as will be set out in a fresh Brief reflecting the requirements of the Preferred Option. This will include an estimate of the costs of the works for which the Project Group must then seek funding. Even then these estimates will vary following tendering of the building works depending on the state of the construction industry at that time. But experience suggests we are talking about a £4+ million project.

2. How was the £50k allowance for staff costs arrived at?

No detailed work has been undertaken on the staffing levels needed to operate the building and the Trust (i.e. excluding activities taking place in the building, such as the library). It will require a building manager, administrative support and cleaning and maintenance staff. The Trust may also want to employ staff to develop activities. So the £50k is just a holding sum for present purposes and is the absolute minimum that might be needed. The actual figure is likely to be considerably in excess of this when a Preferred Option is agreed and we have a better idea of the activities likely to take place in the building.

3. What assumptions have been made about the opening hours of (a) the library, (b) a café and (c) trust space?

The Project Group wants to see the building open on a 7-day a week basis and for most of the day. It will be for the users of services, such as the Library, café etc. to decide their opening hours.

4. Has allowance been made for the cost of janitorial staff for late opening?

See answer 2 above.

5. Do you have evidence of demand for a gym or any other particular facilities?

We have taken informal advice on local demand for rentable business space and for residential uses. We have not felt it necessary at this early stage to seek advice on demand for other uses but recognise that the public consultation will likely generate new proposals we have not considered and it will then be at the stage when a Preferred

Option is agreed that a Business Plan to include detailed local market research on all the agreed uses will be commissioned.

6. What more can you say about the proposal for a “circulation space and lift” (4.10)?

Given that the building was designed for single use as a library, with all rooms on the ground floor opening off one large central space, an immediate challenge when adapting it for different uses in the various rooms is how to enable people to circulate around the building (for example to reach toilets, garden or café) without passing through the central room if that is being used. This ‘circulation space’ issue will be tackled when the detailed architectural work is done.

We will also plan for full access for disabled users and those with mobility issue, including appropriately designed ramps and lifts. We feel the existing lift is intrusive and severely detracts from the space and use of the Lecture Room. We will expect the detailed architectural design team to consider these matters and bring forward proposals. The present statements are indicative of intent only.

7. Do you or Lambeth have a plan for the monuments currently stored in the basement?

We are aware of these. We will re-use or re-instate any that relate to the building. All others are a matter for the owner, Lambeth Council, and some have already been moved to other locations

Proposed after the meeting

8. How has the commercial space been valued? What comparables have been used?

We have benefit of Lambeth Council’s professional valuation advice on the rental that can be generated by the letting of the Lecture Room. We also have informal advice from a local estate agent on the rental income that might be attracted from residential lettings and other business lettings. We have adopted a conservative approach at the present stage and so these levels will likely rise in the future. Projects often fall victim to over-optimistic estimates of income so we have sought to avoid this.

9. Is it assumed that Lambeth would contribute nothing other than rent and service charge for library space?

Lambeth has funded the technical work to date and also made a grant to the Project Group from the Cooperative Borough Fund to meet other costs involved in developing the project. In addition, it has committed £400,000 from its capital budget which will be used as a major match-funding contribution towards the overall capital costs of the project. Otherwise, when the project is operational it will meet

the library only costs but may, in addition to the lending library, use the building for other activities that would incur additional costs and so possibly income to the Trust.

10. If the library were moved to the front of the building, what uses are proposed for the main room? If these include music or dance, what measures are proposed to protect library users from vibration and excessive noise?

This has yet to be agreed. The Project Group will proceed to prepare an Activities Plan, based on consultations with potential local users of the building and other research. This will set out what activities are likely to happen in the building, who will provide them and who will benefit from them. Only then can we know what will happen in the main room. We do know that it is the largest space in the building and will accommodate people for most events, meetings and performances. But we want the design to facilitate flexible multi-use and, at times, for several activities to be able to share it at once.

Soundproofing will be a priority for the capital works.

11. What assumptions have been made about library staffing?

None. This is a matter for Lambeth Council who will be a tenant of the Trust. It is for the Council, not the Trust, to decide the level and type of library service it will provide.

12. Has the possibility of a theatre or film club been considered?

These have been suggested for consideration. .

13. Have any ideas been considered about film shoots, corporate events or weddings?

These have been suggested for consideration.

14. Does the plan to excavate the basement take account of drainage and other services which pass through it?

Yes

15. How long might each option take to implement?

We do not know this yet but as a working rule are proceeding on the basis that all will take much the same time. Should the project proceed to the next stage we will commission consultants to prepare detailed architectural drawings and other technical proposals, which will then be tendered to contractors, subject to capital funding being available. The construction work will commence after that. So, at this stage it is possible only to make a rough estimate of the time needed to reach completion but we think 2 years is a minimum.

16. Would any of the proposals require the library to be temporarily closed? For how long?

It is too soon to say with certainty. It is likely that all users will have to vacate the building for a time while works are undertaken. But for how long is not yet known.

17. Please expand on the section of the report about the garages (5.9). Would Lambeth transfer them to the trust? What income would they provide if left as they are?

The garages are part of the hereditament of the building and would transfer to the Trust, together with any income that site may generate.

18. Please explain the reference to the flats in para 4.1 of the response. What would be their relationship with Lambeth and with the trust?

The entire building would transfer to the Trust and any responsibilities that Lambeth has in respect of the flats would transfer with it.

19. Have any members of the Project Group been to visit other libraries?

Yes

20. What community engagement has the Project Group undertaken so far, and with which sections of the community?

All known community groups received a letter from the Project Group at the commencement of the project seeking views and several replied, mainly confirming previously expressed positions of which the Project Group was aware thanks to the work of The Friends. Community engagement is continuing. We are starting a widespread consultation exercise and as part of this will be meeting community groups to discuss the published options report. We will be holding an exhibition of the options in the library, have distributed 10,000 newsletters to local homes, and have a live website on the project, together with Twitter and Facebook accounts.

21. Has the Project Group held back a proportion of the fee for the report?

The consultants were retained by Lambeth Council in accordance with its procedures. The Conservation consultant has been paid in full following completion of a satisfactory report. The architectural consultants are being paid on a staged basis, as is normal in architectural contracts, and the final stage will be paid on completion of their work on the Preferred Option.

22. Could the Trust sell the building?

No. The building would transfer to the Trust but in the event of a project failure provision would be included in any agreement for it to revert to Lambeth.