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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Kent County Council are working together to create a Cultural & Learning Hub for Tunbridge Wells. Joining the Museum & Library building and Adult Education Building to create an exciting redevelopment. Conserving the two buildings and adding on an extension to house the Museum, Art Gallery, Library, Adult Education, Visitor Information and gateway services.

The project has received stage 1 funding from both Arts Council England and Heritage Lottery Fund, with stage 2 funding applications being submitted to ACE in July 2017 and to HLF in December 2017.

Since Spring 2015, a number of public engagement sessions have taken place, including questionnaires asking about heritage themes and the types of displays visitors might wish to see, artist consultation around print room facilities, stage 1 concept designs and rebranding.

1.2 Purpose of consultation

The purpose of the public consultation was to inform the public and stakeholder organisations about the proposed design in order to provide them with the opportunity to ‘Have their say’ and to gain feedback to inform changes or improvements to the scheme in RIBA stage 4.

1.3 Purpose of report

This report presents the analysis and findings of the responses to the public consultation on the proposals. In addition the report summarises the consultation process and the engagement and promotional activities that took place. The report also states how the feedback will be used to progress the proposal and identifies the next steps in for the project.
2. Consultation Process

2.1 Stakeholder Groups identified and targeted:

- Service users & non users
- Councillors TWBC & KCC
- Staff and volunteers
- Tunbridge Wells Access Group
- Town Forum
- Tunbridge Wells Civic Society
- Friends of Tunbridge Wells Museum, Library & Art Gallery
- Tunbridge Wells Museum & Library User Group
- LGBTQ Panel (Museum)
- Young Consultants (Museum panel)
- Paddock Wood Youth Council
- Southborough Girl Guides
- Local Secondary Schools
- Primary School Teachers
- TN2 Community Centre
- District Library users
- Cultural Consortium
- Trinity Theatre
- Assembly Hall Theatre
- Applause Rural Touring
- Strangeface
- Tunbridge Wells Puppetry Festival
- Friends of Grosvenor and Hilbert park
- Friends of Tunbridge wells Cemetery
- Tunbridge wells Islamic Centre
- Tunbridge Wells Muslim Women’s Forum
- Tunbridge Wells Art Society
- IMAGO
2.2 Consultation and communication methods used:

- Copies of the Concept designs and all consultation material, including the questionnaire were available to be viewed, download and filled out online via the C&LH webpage.

- Hard copies of the questionnaires were available in each service (Museum, Library, Gateway, Adult Education Centre and TIC).

- Posters with consultation dates and information on how to get involved were placed in each service, as well as around the town in local shops and cafes and also in the district libraries.

- Social media was used to promote the consultation with posters and links to the online questionnaire being shared via the Museum, TWBC & KCC and Adult Education Facebook and Twitter accounts.

- A series of ‘pop-up’ session took place in the foyer of the Museum & Library building with project team members on hand to take questions and encourage those using the building to take part in the consultation.

- Two formal presentations by the design team took place in the art gallery along with a pop-up shop in Ely Court of the Royal Victoria Shopping Centre.

- Information about the consultation was sent to the 300+ strong mailing list for the C&LH project.
2.3 Timeline of activities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consultation event venue</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formal Design Presentation</strong>&lt;br&gt;Tunbridge Wells Museum &amp; Art Gallery, Civic Centre, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 1JN</td>
<td>15/06/2017</td>
<td>2PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formal Design Presentation</strong>&lt;br&gt;Tunbridge Wells Museum &amp; Art Gallery, Civic Centre, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 1JN</td>
<td>15/06/2017</td>
<td>6PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Drop in and chat to the team</strong>&lt;br&gt;Unit CK03, Ely Court, Royal Victoria Shopping Centre, Tunbridge Wells (Near Mr Simms Sweet shop)</td>
<td>17/06/2017</td>
<td>10AM – 2PM</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Drop in and chat to the team</strong>&lt;br&gt;Tunbridge Wells Museum &amp; Library foyer.</td>
<td>29/06/2017</td>
<td>10AM – 12NOON &amp; 5PM – 7PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Drop in and chat to the team</strong>&lt;br&gt;Tunbridge Wells Museum &amp; Library foyer.</td>
<td>05/07/2017</td>
<td>10AM – 12NOON</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Drop in and chat to the team</strong>&lt;br&gt;Tunbridge Wells Museum &amp; Library foyer.</td>
<td>15/07/2017</td>
<td>10AM – 12NOON</td>
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2.4 Equality and accessibility considerations

Consultation information and questionnaires were available in print and online. Digital copies could be sent on request along with Large Print versions of all materials.

The Project Team attended a meeting of the Tunbridge Wells Access Group to discuss the plans with them and take on further feedback.

In order to gain feedback from young people, the Project Co-ordinator attended a meeting with the Paddock Wood Youth Council, Southborough Girl Guides, Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys and Bennett Memorial School. Presenting the designs in person and providing questionnaires.

Consultation activities were scheduled to cover a range of times including morning, afternoon, evening and weekends to ensure a time to suit as many people as possible.
3. Respondents

130 responses to the questionnaire were received. 100 were hard copies and 30 filled out online.

Please let us now in what capacity you are providing comments to help us understand your interest in the project.

Responses on behalf of organisations:

The following section documents the demographics of the respondents. This data was collated using the ‘About You’ questions in the questionnaire.

Are you…?

Which of these age groups applies to you?
Do you regard yourself as belonging to a particular religion or belief?

Which of the following applies (if YES)

Do you consider yourself to be disabled?
If you answered YES

To which of these ethnic groups do you feel you belong?

White English – 79
White Scottish – 1
White Welsh – 1
White Northern Irish – 1
White Irish – 2
White Gypsy/Roma – 0
White Irish Traveller – 0
White Other – 8
Asian & Asian British Indian – 1
Asian & Asian British Pakistani – 2
Asian & Asian British Bangladeshi – 1
Asian & Asian British Other – 0
Mixed White & Black Caribbean – 1
Mixed White & Black African – 0
Mixed White & Asian – 0
Mixed Other – 4
Black or Black British Caribbean – 1
Black or Black British African – 1
Black or Black British Other – 0
Arab – 0
Chinese – 2
I prefer not to say – 14

Are you?

4. Consultation responses

Do you use, or have you used, any of the following services?
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the design of the Library, Museum & Adult Education Centre building?

Total comments 69

38 comments indicated support for the project and new design.

Quotes:

“It is quite a challenge to connect the two buildings given their diverse styles, it is neither the less the way to go, if you are to preserve the facades. I see this project as a great opportunity to upgrade a rather tired facility to make it something TW can justifiably be proud of.”

“Like the design - it looks like a place you can learn, study and have fun”

“The designs complement the existing buildings and addresses the need to create accessible floor levels for all.”

“I’m extremely excited to see all of the services come together in a way which allows free movement through the space and a greater exploration of what is available.”

“The proposed building looks like it will rejuvenate the town and culture surrounding it. I think it will attract new visitors and encourage existing residents to use the facilities.”

“Really exciting and innovative designs that will engage all audiences and particularly young people and encourage investigation, learning and creativity”
19 comments indicated concerns around space for individual services or how they will use the building.

Quotes:

“Use of courtyard area is welcome. I have reservations about separating the children’s library from the adult library, and the visibility of the café. Are staff to be available to people using computers? The integration of library & Museum facilities might cause problems for staff, and the public in knowing when to approach different services.”

“As long as the adult education classes continue.”

“Broadly acceptable BUT NOT acceptable to have the lending library upstairs - exactly the mistake made by the local Boots putting pharmacy upstairs. It means the users won’t be able to use it. Also only one lift apparently. Not happy if we lose the fine stained glass windows currently at the back of the A E Building.”

“Need to ensure all areas are easily accessible to all users. EG if all fiction stock is on 1st floor that may be a disincentive for customers with mobility or time issues.”

“Most of the grouping and follow appear to work well however I feel that some elements such as the "gateway office" are tucked away in a forgotten corner surely customer centric facilities should be grouped in one place perhaps with the computers on the ground floor. Also where does the TIC element fit within this design or is this essential service for visitors provided by the reception desk”

“Strongly disagree with the internal space allocation for the Tunbridge ware collection”

“I don't feel that the proposed adult ed pottery area is sensibly worked out. We need a bigger, ventilated kiln room and more space for throwing wheels and hand building. Pottery classes are over subscribed - 170 students this year I believe. This surely is a great source of revenue for adult education. Please don’t disregard its importance.”

9 comments made suggestions for the design or future operations

Quotes:

“Will the workrooms print rooms have butler sinks and work surfaces? So many developers do not understand that for art and printmaking large butler sinks are essential for cleaning materials and equipment”

“Looks good, however disagree on the Victorian look of the young peoples room, potentially more modern?”
“The layout could be more inspiring and informal, and feels like just another boring library”

3 comments indicated that they did not understand the question

Quotes:

“I don’t understand the question. Does it mean do I like the design of the present buildings? Library and Museum are pretty awful - museum far too small & whole building off putting to visitors”

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to join the Museum/Library and Adult Education Buildings together, including the new build element?

![Survey Results](image)

Comments:

In total 61 comments were given, 39 were positive or in favour of the join, 17 were negative or raised concerns and 5 referenced their previous answers to the first question.

Positive

“The buildings must be joined, the hub concept wont work if they are not. I’m very happy with the new build design, its honest and allows the fabric of the museum/library and AEC to shine through”

“Particularly love the glass atrium”
“An excellent idea, would make much better use of facilities and substantially increase the available floor space/footprint. Would enable staff to feel more connected and cohesive unit”

“Joint building will enable people to explore the whole building and use other services. Better to join and bring together.”

“As mentioned in my previous answer this is an exciting prospect as so many local residents who don’t currently engage with services such as the museum or gallery will have the opportunity to engage with the collection and fantastic learning opportunities.”

“Like how accessible it’s being made. Open plan is cool.”

“I definitely agree that this is a refreshing idea for the layout of a central town building. Some people may not be used to the format but I think it will encourage people to make full use of everything available.”

“It looks like a large economic benefit for Tunbridge Wells”

Negative/Concerns

“Adult Ed, as well as library seems to be turned over to child minding. None of it will be sufficiently adult orientated.”

“Initially in favour of joining adult ed and museum/library but having seen plans now think adult ed is better left separate with improved heating, library/museum should be extended with improved gallery and museum space, but without gateway”

“Continuous Disabled Access”

“I think this is a good idea, so long as there isn’t a sort of ‘limbo’ area in the joining bit. There can be a bit of a ‘join’ between two buildings but this should be seamless”

“See above please. The Gateway area is small: all part of a policy to discourage face to face contact with the public? The new build is welcome, particularly using the courtyard (at present wasted space) and the huts which obviously need replacing.”

“But - presumably the adult education building (i.e. The original Carnegie library) is a listed building and I hope this will be respected. N.B. If not listed, should Tunbridge Wells consider adapting local listing as is now being done in Sevenoaks?”
Do you have any comments or suggestions on the look of the proposed building (architecture)?

84 comments in total. 49 were positive and in support of the proposed architecture, 10 were negative about the architecture and 25 were suggestions made either about the interior or exterior.

Positive

“So pleased the architecture of the existing AEC building is being retained”

“It looks brilliant! The modern interventions give the building new life, but are still respectful of the original features and don’t offend the vernacular”

“I like the fact that the building maintains both old and new architectural elements”

“I like how the original elements are retained and linked by modern elements”.

“Because the buildings are listed, little can be done to enhance their exterior. But the atrium, the courtyard and the attractive internal layout overcome the rather grim facade of the library”

“The vaulted ceiling, skylights and glass join will create a much brighter space”

“I really like the new glass atrium linking the buildings together. This will give a lot of light and allow people a view inside to encourage them to come in. It will also be a great ‘wow’ factor that I think we will need.”

“Love the proposed designs!”

“Colourful, bright, attractive to the eye. This will interest many more people.”

“Looks great! I love the glass atrium, the outdoor garden space, and the mixing of collections and displays, with library and creative spaces. Good too that active and quieter study zones have been included.”

“It appears that you are aiming to create a light airy and open space similar to Maidstone library and I think that works very well.”

Negative

“Don’t build it”

“The building shape does not lend itself well to a modern easily accessed environment and from the drawings it appears that a number of rooms will have "dead" space created by the number of sharp corners. The artists impression seems to suggest that the new glass arched area will combine the two buildings but will this work in practice as this is a very modern building technique being forced between one beautiful building and one frankly ugly utilitarian building. Perhaps consideration
should be given to using building techniques which are more in keeping with the existing buildings rather than trying to force the building to look modern.”

“The contrast between the old style building and the glass section looks strange and the glass part looks out of place. The building on the far right side does not look welcoming and the colour is quite dull.”

“Very poor”

“Will the new entrance be all glass ie a greenhouse? If so what consideration has been given to the cost of cooling in summer/heating in winter?”

“I am concerned that the new idea for the main entrance is to have it tucked away in Monson Rd although I can see why it is being proposed. I think that we may lose an opportunity to revamp the area in front of the existing entrance as a proper public space all the way down the road. I am also puzzled as to why there is a light box above the main staircase - it is already well lit by natural light and the external aesthetic of the listed building would be compromised.”

Suggestions:

“The facades of the buildings have been preserved. I don’t mind losing the sheds at the back. I worry about the vaulted ceiling joining the 2 buildings - architecturally it borrows only from the adult ed building - I would rather it was more of a contemporary statement as it feels heavy.”

“I’d like to see some ornamental iron work on the rear entrance gates like the motif at the present entrance”

“The existing black corrugated iron workshops will be lost I believe, I wonder if it is possible to use the cladding material they are made from so there is a memory of them in the new build”

“I understand that this is at feasibility stage to obtain funding but the current proposals are a very unsophisticated response to joining the two buildings together. I would hope there would be more articulation and expression introduced when the scheme is developed beyond the sketch design. There is an opportunity for an exciting intervention here and as yet this has not been conveyed. The half cone barrel vault apart from being difficult and expensive to construct is also inappropriate and unimaginative. I also thought the extension would be three storeys to provide more space but I understand budget limits this option.”
Are there any accessibility issues within the existing buildings, which you would like to see addressed?

82 comments.

Lifts & Toilets

Many raised the issue of frequently out of order lifts and toilets needing to be addressed, along with having more than one accessible toilet on each floor of the new C&LH.

“It would be useful to have more than one elevator in case broke down”

“Often the disabled toilet and lift are out of order within the current library; it would be helpful for the issues with these to be resolved.”

“Only one lift that is unreliable, therefore prohibiting access for the disabled. The main doors are heavy and not easily accessible to all.”

“I struggle with stairs so it’s not good for me if there are no lifts, or if the lift is out of order as is sometimes the case in the museum.”

“Is there a lift in the AEC building or easy access to all floors?”

“Lifts should be right next to stairs, so that anyone entering the building has the same experience. Having to enter the second floor out the back probably doesn’t feel very welcoming.”

“Yes. The lift is not large enough for a big motorised wheelchair and doesn’t have a turning circle. This should be addressed as currently visitors have to go back down, turn round and come back up at a different angle.”

Access into and around the building

Comments suggest that the current Museum and Library building has too many stairs and changes in levels making movement around the building difficult. It was felt that plenty of seating would need to be provided throughout the building, and that the current museum space was cramped making it hard for groups to visit or those with wheelchairs and buggies. Questions were asked about the drop off points for those arriving by coach, and where bike racks will be found.

“Ramp access as well as stairs. The display cases in the museum are cramped. There could be hearing loops and audio descriptive guides. Quiet rooms for people with Aspergus.”

“Only the obvious one of levelling out the floors. I rather like spiral ramps - the museum of Liverpool has one that spirals up from ground floor to the top of the building. The library of Birmingham has a straight ramp, with a long gentle gradient. linking two floors - i appreciate they need a large footprint.”

17
“Too many stairs”

“The current museum is cramped - not good for large groups of people visiting at once. Not enough baby change.”

“seats scattered throughout the building so that people can take a rest”

“It’s a big building so a lot of exits and entrances, or a lot of signs as it is an oddly shaped building”

“Where will the drop off point for coaches/disabled persons? Where will the bike racks go? Will access through the current main Adult Education Centre still be via a ramp?”

Other

Other responders asked about fire escapes and the front of the building (public realm works) being addressed.

A number of responders questioned whether the adult fiction and children’s library should be on the same floor.

“I would rather see the money spent on services to help these disabled people who require accessibility services in the first place”

“No, I thought it was good when disabled access was added to the existing adult education building.”

“Fire escapes?”

“A family with young children making a trip to the hub to choose books would find the children and adult libraries on separate floors making the whole process more difficult.”

“Should the adult lending library be on the ground floor”

“Tourists on first visit and possibly in a foreign language need to be routed through all the TW history / museum/ art collections which will be scattered around the complex”

“currently the front is cut off from the main pedestrian walkway by a wall. If the space between the road and the building can be more of a pedestrian area it would be more inviting”

“Think the designs have addressed all areas very innovatively”

“The Gateway appears to be reduced to one room with a call centre in the room next door. I would like to think that all the services currently available at the Gateway would be easily integrated into the centre, or is the existing centre to remain? The call centre, which is, I suppose, where people can speak to employees in Town Hall
departments, needs to have some privacy features built in. Its currently extremely difficult to hear in the Gateway particularly if one is hard of hearing, and being expected to discuss private matters in public is an insult.”

Which space/s are you most excited about?

Most responses indicated that they were excited about the new galleries and exhibits and increased access to collections, as well as support for the new library and archive study spaces being provided.

Quotes:

“The museum and gallery - having a wider range of collections and a bigger art gallery would be exceptional”

“Community Gallery/Classroom & the Activity space. Think it will get the general community to use and feel more comfortable with using the library and new hub.”

“The costume and portrait gallery as that’s my area of interest. Love the Camden portraits and we have an amazing Georgian costume collection which will be great to share. Also the temporary exhibition space. It will be great to have high calibre in house and touring exhibitions accessible to local people so you don’t have to travel to London.”

“Think the potential of the whole building is tremendous naturally I am keen on the Library and local history elements and that these also thrive in the future.”

“The library & Museum together”

“I am very excited about the new reading room and the renovation of the library.”

“I am most excited about the library, because it could be a useful place to work in the future.”

“I really like the blend of the library and museum, I like the open plan feel”

“The new library proposal; the quiet reading / research area”

“I think that the new library will inspire more people to go there and do, think, read etc.”

“Integration of library and museum. Cafe. Glass structure.”

“When I was a teenager I would have really loved the Young Adult Fiction Section with the museum display. If you can get young people to hang out in a library you’ve done a pretty remarkable thing.”
“The courtyard is an open space where people could relax or an open space I the library”

Other comments:

“Not really excited about any of it as the existing buildings met my needs perfectly adequately so this project is a large expenses for no benefit as far as I can see”

“Delighted to see the extra space which has been needed for many years, especially for the museum”

“Making and meeting spaces to provide energy and footfall. Exhibition spaces, atrium.”

“I am interested to see how the new welcome space will work, and also the exhibition space and how that will welcome national artworks into the space.”

“All of it! Too excited about it all to know where to begin yet-want my fingers in all the pies!”

Key collections areas of interest:

- Costume
- Georgian portraits
- Photography
- Tunbridge Wells Local History
- Archives
- Ashton Bequest

Which museum objects/collections would you like to find in the space?
The majority of responses related to Local History objects, the costume collection, Photography and Tunbridge ware. Those responding also indicated an interest in collections relating to the Suffragettes, change, invention and pioneers, as well as LGBTQ history, family history collections and folk art.

Local refers to any comments that mention objects relating to local history of Tunbridge Wells and the surrounding area, including the High Weald and rural villages.

Quotes:

“Local artists work - the villages & towns within the Borough have a wide range of artists”

“Early photography, Paintings, Costume collection (we have such a wonderful collection but are unable to highlight the collection at the moment) Visitor favourites such as the Rigg Doll's House, the Rocking Horse & Minnie, Tunbridge ware, Taxidermy”

“a collection of the Tunbridge Wells suffragette movement”.

“National and International collections”

“Collections that children will enjoy and learn from”

(Some of the objects that are currently in storage that the public never get to see”

“would like to see rotation of collections as space will still be limited and would rather see a lot of one collection/theme then just examples”

“World war era weapons, clothing and medical equipment.”

“Things highlighting the development of Tunbridge Wells through time, as well as the surrounding areas history.”

“The Darwin collection, furniture and more household items from past times. I'd also be interested in seeing a display on lesser acknowledged arts like woodwork, eg carving and the tools used for it.”

“Textiles - personally, I would like to see more historical fashion on display. I would also be interested in seeing the history of the Royal Family in Tunbridge Wells on display.”

“None in this space - reserve for light airy access and not clutter with cabinets or display units”

“Don't mind, but be selective and display and interpret properly and in a modern way.”
“I think if the collections could rotate regularly that would be more exciting. At the moment people won’t bother visiting the museum because they think they have seen it all before.”

“I would like to see more of the ‘unseen’ history of the area - the things that people are less aware/familiar with. I think this will be most relevant and interesting to residents who have been here for a big portion of their lives.”

Which of the following would be a reason for you to visit the future hub?

![Reasons to visit](chart.png)

Comments

“I was hoping there would be space for some live music event - small acoustic groups”

“This new building is supposed to be a learning hub. Such a claim seems to be undermined by some of the reasons you have listed above. You seem to view the hub as a community centre which is worrying. Do you not know that libraries used to be the poor man’s university? With all the noise from babies & children, there will be no quiet spaces for LEARNING & THINKING.”

“Discounts for students”

“Would like to have the opportunity to put on community creative projects.”

“Café & shop are an excellent idea and I’m sure would increase footfall to the C&L hub. It would also be a community resource & meeting place.”
“Would be interesting to see new exhibitions every now and again”

“I would hope to be able to run more workshops for the gallery; workshops that I have run at The Towner Gallery Eastbourne and Monk's House, but have been unable to because of lack of facilities. There are also several areas that I am interested in, the opportunity for a variety of exhibitions and events. A makers/artists retail area would be very good too. The Hub developers should visit 'made in Hastings' to see how this can be done successfully.”

“Fantastic that Tunbridge Wells will have a state-of-the-art space for integrated services between library and museum. The increase in access and engagement for multiple interest points will give the town an excellent focal point.”

“As a Senior Citizen, I feel this plan will give a venue I treasure a new lease of life by attracting a wider range of the town's residents: more happening, more attractive, more lively.”

“Lack of parking would deter me from visiting”

“As a writer and freelance tutor of adults I would like to see community spaces for hire at cheap rates. Small meeting rooms would assist the arts community as well as many others. There is also a need to ensure that there is always adequate gallery space, in areas other than designated ones.”

“An opportunity to use artist facilities will give new opportunities to many people, making it an attractive aspect of the new build”

“I would probably go here to get some peace and quiet”

“because of the apparently open plan layout I suspect I will be 'lured' into other areas then those I originally came for.”

Do you have any comments on the following for the C&LH site?

A selection of quotes from each.

Museum/Gallery 53 comments

“A new purpose made and larger exhibition space or spaces would greatly benefit the museum and gallery and also the town and surrounding borough.”

“It looks very exciting and inviting and will be an amazing facility for all users”

“looks nice. Will be interesting to see artefacts displayed in more varied and interesting ways”
“I would like to think that more adventurous exhibitions could be held in the gallery. It is probably too much to ask but I would like to see the Mascalls Gallery restored and installed here.”

“Really strong and innovative designs. Would be good to see hands-on activities for families linked to museum gallery displays such as art activities, object investigation and try on costume.”

“The current museum feels very dated and the displays rarely change even the exhibitions seem to go on too long. It would be good for regularly visitors if the content changes regularly rather than being left to stagnate”

“I like the kind of glass cabinets with walkways to view everything inside.”

“This will be useful for people visiting the area.”

“The learning space in the basement will need careful consideration in terms of fit out to encourage inspiring visits and experiences. Handling collection on display so it looks less of a formal classroom. Don’t have a problem with it being in the basement Clore suites at BM are also there.”

“Love the idea that visitors will encounter objects all around the hub and do not now have to make a special effort to visit the museum.”

“The museum and gallery has obviously suffered from outdated and restricted space. This design will allow for flexible and increased space use including the ability to improve archive accessibility”

**Adult Education 36 comments**

“Ground floor: print studio and pottery it’s a pity to divide this room and also for it only to be accessible to those doing pottery, but I can’t see anywhere else it can go.”

“make sure original decorative details (stained glass, tiles etc) are retained”

“This is a fantastic facility in a great building yet the rooms and facilities at present seem to be a bit the poor relation. It will be good to see it all brought into line and upgraded. But I do hope the excellent Nicolette’s cafe is not removed. Good food, excellent and friendly service and always busy. This relationship should be nurtured.”

“Hopefully the adult ed space will be more inviting and be contemporised. Having used the space many years ago it was not particularly welcoming as it was so austere.”

“Need mirrors incorporated into one of spaces - for use in dance / exercise classes”

“It seems absurd to me have a designated purveyor of high quality education side lined and disparagingly described as a ‘tenant’. How can this be justified in a ‘learning’ hub. I get a slight whiff of petty rivalries and different governing cultures
working against true integration in the Hub. It doesn't sit well that AE is seen as being an outsider, rather than a true cultural, artistic and educational partner. I have attended several consultations and have never heard this flaw properly explained or defended - probably because it can't be.”

“As this is more private, I really agree with the placement of the studios up on the second floor away from the more public areas.”

“I can't currently warrant spending the course fee.”

“I think the designs will really play to the beauty and aesthetics of the old building. Restoring it to its former glory.”

“Modern and up to date facilities - and a wider range of learning opportunities to encourage wider range of ages and abilities.”

“The adult education build provides an excellent service and a wide variety of courses however I do feel that the services/course are not publicised very well. It would be great for the residents of the borough if the facilities were more publicised and perhaps you could display work created in AE classes within the building to inspire visitors to sign up to courses. Tying displays in with TV trends would no doubt see a massive increase in the number of people signing up for classes for example doing a pottery display at the same time as the Great pottery throw down is on and having sign up details as part of the display would guarantee a full classroom”

“Much more flexibility of hours, drop in taster sessions, pay as you go classes, talks by artists and artisans showcasing their work and introducing the Township at large to the craftsmanship that currently is not given a platform on the centre of town”

“Invest in the classes that bring in the revenue like pottery. Is sugar craft or similar something we need to focus on these days?”

“I am rather disturbed to find only one studio space with kiln described as ‘pottery’, no reference to the ‘sculpture in clay’ classes which need as much space.”

“We currently have difficulty accommodating all the work in progress and completed, fired pieces and I know from taking work to be fired that the pottery classes have equal quantities of work. I don’t see how it will all be fitted into one room. I see that silver smithing has its own large studio.”

“It will be good to have a dedicated space for school groups and visits, as accommodating school sessions in the current building is difficult. Currently, I don’t feel like a reason to go into the Adult Ed as I don’t take any classes there. It can feel a bit intimidating with the grand staircase. Joining the building with the glass structure and integrating into one site, will give this building more exposure.”
“The replacement of the existing huts with the fantastic new building has got to be a plus”

“Less bureaucracy for students, i.e. no assessment forms to be filled in at the start and end of each course. Very, very boring.”

**Library 49 comments**

“Access to the archives. Knowledgeable and well trained staff.”

“The library looks fantastic and the layout again is very modern and creative - not at all stuffy! The mix of furniture and inclusion of museum exhibits makes a for very funky vibe, certainly brings the concept of a library bang up to date!”

“I wonder if parents are worried about the children's library and the adult's library being on separate floors? I love the reading room at the Wellcome Collection with the relaxed atmosphere and multidisciplinary approach. The Library in the new building appears to follow this approach, which will hopefully also attract new library users. Or people who just want to browse in books!”

“Spend the money on books and resources, not buildings”

“It looks to be quite a limited area, but very user friendly with seating and browsing space. Hope it won't also become the spilling of coffee space.”

“I can see the majority of the library is upstairs....it would be nice to have library on the ground floor as its the most important part of the new hub”

“Comfortable seating areas and space with tables for research and reading”

“The library will have more space for people to read and study, more convenient facilities, relax and peaceful atmosphere.”

“This is a fantastic service especially for youngsters. Would like more talks for adults in the daytime. Lots of older people not too keen on coming out in the evening”

“A much better layout”

“The library space has a great opportunity to integrate museum elements with it and it is key that we get the layout of this space right along with all other elements so that it compliments the architecture of the building and has room to breath, flow, books located in a sequence that make sense for customers and provide a multitude of functions. This may also be a wider issue but as well as the purposeful study areas like the local studies spaces there needs to be flexibility for study spaces around the building and the furniture in all areas needs to be carefully considered to meet a variety of needs.”

“2 storeys would be amazing, as well as an open area to read and study in”
“The extra space and the new reading room would be excellent.”

“Will there be free WiFi for people to use in order to do research?”

“The library has to have modern technology with comfortable seating and convenient plug sockets.”

“If the library had people on hand and available to help the public when searching for something.”

“Bigger / newer / better / easier / exciting space to be in / interactive with museum”

“I think the library areas look spacious and well planned. Agree with kids library on ground floor.”

“Too small, (at the moment). I know it’s hard to keep up with Amazon etc, but every time I have come in looking for a particular subject (non-fiction) I’ve always felt disappointed.”

“I would like to see a dedicated space for author talks, activities and training”

“Disagree with the rocking horse being displayed as unfair to young children and more likely to be damaged as they will touch? Ride on it… Could we not have a replica that can be used? But excited by other exhibits being displayed on the walls.”

“The improved and integrated library space will provide a communal feeling for those in the town that will benefit from social interaction and a place to spend time amongst others.”

“I like the idea of the childrens library, childhood objects and cafe being close.”

Welcome/Reception 42 comments

“A waste of space which is better given over to shelving of books. Despite the extra area at the back from building on the sheds, the library/museum/art gallery will still be a very small area. I sincerely hope we will not be reducing the NUMBER of books available to borrow.”

“Throughout the building I’d like to see screens advertising what’s on that day and what’s coming up (Library of Birmingham use this to good effect) also, will there be a PA system to announce useful info (eg building closing 5 minutes, 3 minutes silence) and to publicise events (eg guided exhibition tour in 5 minutes)?”

“Move mayor emerson bust from Council chamber & put on display here with bell and stand originally in calverly park”

“Would like to see floor walkers”

“Don’t overcrowd entrance. Lots of signage. Nice and open plan”
“This should make it very clear what people are entering, so not to confuse. It should be well staffed. This is the interface with the public - locals and tourists alike.”

“The current orientation is only just functional. A welcome area is a great improvement.”

“Most important - to be with the wow factor, airy and spacious, not overcrowded”

“We need to consider space for visitors to circulate and queuing. We sometimes have large numbers of tourists / visitors in organised groups. Staff will have to be really visible. We will need storage at the reception - leaflets, I pads, trails and activity packs.”

“There should be leaflets to advertise small businesses in the foyer.”

“Will the entrance have rotating doors? Or, how will the assisted doors stop the wind from circulating in the gallery p the main stairs, causing environmental problems for collections & discomfort for staff and visitors on a a cold day?”

“The reception area needs to feel friendly and should only be used for directing people around the building. There is nothing worse than visiting a building and finding a queue on the way in.”

“Needs to look very inviting essential that it is not cluttered. Needs good signage. Should be an open space no barriers or central desks where queues might form. Looking up a great idea needs to draw people in”

“I like how the welcome area/reception aims to give visitors/users a snapshot of what to expect while also ensuring quick way finding. I'm slightly worried about how one reception area can provide for all the needs of different users/visitors.”

“Welcome area looks inviting and creates a great first impression on entering the building”

**Courtyard/Garden 59 comments**

“I like it as an organisational device and also the potential to display sculpture. I would question whether it gets used as an extension of the cafe. The cafe might want to address Monson Colonnade instead?”

“The courtyard garden will provide a tranquil oasis in the middle of the building”

“I'm excited that there will be an outside space that can be used for a variety of purposes”

“It also widens the possibility of collections/exhibitions display - it could enable temporary exhibitions to spill out into the outside space”

“Only that it is a bit wasted as for half the year will be unusable due to weather.”
“One of the highlights. And will encourage visitors. Make sure plenty of accessible seating here and around rest of building.”

“keep it as free of unmoveable objects as possible to allow for the space to be used to its max. Could be used by market stalls, etc.”

“Bee friendly please.”

“I don’t know whether this is necessary, with English weather!? Could be interesting to have a garden of local fauna or something for minibeast talks.”

“I like the idea of an open space, possibly with opportunities for temporary exhibitions. It would be good to have it mirrored in a new public open space at the front of the building”

“Fabulous. An outside area will add to the exceptional outside spaces in Tunbridge Wells and be an additional attraction to the Hub.”

“Nice to have as much grass and trees as possible. It really makes a difference, I’ll help if you like, I’m a keen weeder.”

**Shop space and café 56 comments**

“Souvenir relating to the museum. Auctions selling work by local artists. Cake! Reasonably priced. Hot drinks. Allergy advice clear on labels”.

“Another café? Not required & would be XXXX other local businesses especially independents”

“I’m sure the café will be popular with families but it needs to be reasonably priced”

“Perhaps a weekly 'youth club' type evening where local young people can meet up and partake/enjoy various activities? Perhaps a art31 group? Drop in sessions for local people to get advice on a variety of issues and topics? Annual networking evenings for local artists.”

“Could the café and shop be incorporated into one. The size of café seems small in comparison with e.g. temporary exhibition space.”

“Some current council owned cafes in the parks offer poor food and unhealthy choices. This café should champion local healthy food, fair trade and nutritional guidance. Please, no chips and burgers”

“If you make the coffee cheap you could compete with the local coffee chains, - could be a really cool place to stop and chat”

“Make toilets easily accessible from cafe.”

“Easy access for buggies and wheelchairs in both. Shop - need to think about space for shop stock storage.”
“This may be one of the more popular features.”

“Would definitely use café if studying”

“Is there enough circulation around the shop, reception desk and the link with the Tunbridge Wells story room- could be a high footfall area.”

“Make sure shop items are high quality and inspired by museum and art gallery collections and include craft items for sale by local artists. Employ a retail consultant here to work with Hub team to identify items to be replicated for sale. make sure there are imaginative items for children and families to buy... not just rubbers and pencils! Plus adult and family trail, guidebook.”

“There should also be communal areas for those who don’t want to buy coffee or merchandise but places to meet friends and relax. Think Barbican/Festival Hall - community hub”

“I hope there will be opportunities for all local artists/makers to have their work sold and/or exhibited in them”

Other 22 comments

“I hope there will be privacy for clients in the Gateway so that other visitors cannot overhear their conversations.”

“The new design look so much more fresh and attractive. The design is less cramped and spacious. Looks great!”

“This proposal is just wrong”

“Lots of accessible seating. Is there space for a Changing Places toilet. Would be great if there was! Make sure you have good bike racks. Consult with local cyclists.”

“We have waited a very long time for this we very much want it to succeed!”

“commercial hiring of space in the additional bit should be a priority to raise money. The resulting exhibits and events can be to the benefit of the local people”

“Buggy park is an essential”

“Meeting rooms, or rooms set up for talks - museum & library and community groups”

“To be able to buy local artists work. Children’s art space for making”

“It would be really great if young people & local community groups could have accessible and affordable access to artists facilities and workshops so that they can have access to equipment and skilled professional that they might not have access to in school, at home or because they might not have the necessary room to facilitate these activities.”
“It would be helpful for the entrance to the birth/death registrars office to be moved away from archive/research library.”

“The front of the library/museum building is imposing and needs to be addressed. I understand this is being looked at separately - creation of pedestrian area, banners, outdoor exhibition space perhaps?”

Would digital technology enhance your experience in the Hub/Services provided in the Hub?

Key points raised:

- Fast, reliable Wi-Fi is essential, especially for young people.
- Catalogue of collections accessible online to be viewed in the Hub or from home
- Digital technology throughout the building, not just in certain areas.
- Access to equipment such as computers, scanners and printers.
- Access to plug sockets for use of personal electronic devices.
- Digital interactives should be robust and withstand use. Out of order technology to be avoided.
- Technology shouldn’t replace staff.

“Absolutely. Essential to attract young generation too”

“Audio tour guides. Online catalogue to browse. Interactive quizzes.”

“wifi and touchscreens in museum”

“Wifi definitely. Tablets, touch screens and table top interactives are all great ideas if money is available to keep content fresh and maintain them. There’s nothing worse than machines out of order. I do like the idea of a wonder wall somewhere - it can be as simple as a projector aimed at a plain wall (again library of Birmingham do this)”

“Yes, the self service library pods are very helpful. Maybe it would be good to see some digital/interactive exhibits in the museum aswell.”

“Yes plus desks where we could plug in devices to work on site”

“Having wi-fi would be great as you could have the choice to use your own laptop or tablet to work on as well as having the option to use the computers provided. Perhaps tablets, touch screens and accessible wifi would be a good starting point for engaging young people.”

“Wifi would definitely help. I know the existing library has it but it isn't always easy to get access on a laptop. I wouldn't have thought tablets were necessary, would people use them?”
“I think good wifi will be an important feature as so many individuals are accessing mobile devices on the go. Whilst I don’t know how relevant other features will be on a permanent level, they may be useful within the context of certain events/workshops etc.”

“Yes, A3 scanners would be useful and good photocopiers for book arts”

“Searching library catalogues I do at home, to order and reserve books which is brilliant. I would not come into the library to do this. In a museum, I would prefer a good, clear label, low tech, but which engages me by asking me to consider what I am looking at, asks me to compare, or consider a question, to a touch screen which I just fiddle with then move on. If there is any digital technology in the display areas it MUST WORK 99% of the time. I have lost count of the number of museums / exhibitions I have visited or worked in where "interactive" displays are anything but active. Need to have a budget for long term maintenance.”

“Be careful not to be out of date too soon... But touch screen displays on Hastings Pier showed a wide range of history through film which was really interesting.”

“Not really - use at home.”

“Yes. Please include digital technology in children’s as well as adult library.”

“Yes as both a member of staff and a visitor. Staff - we could do surveys / feedback and give general info from a tablet. Audio trails and interactive for galleries. Visitor - I like to use my own smartphone, so wifi essential. My children love interactive games and apps”

“Yes. Wi-fi enabled throughout (particularly in stores and archives). Overhead scanners for reproducing archival images. A professional digital camera and photography set up for digitising collections.”
How would you like to use digital technology to engage with local history archives and collections?

“How would you like to use digital technology to engage with local history archives and collections?”

“Being able to view/search items within the collection digitally”

“FREE WIFI”

“Remotely, due to poor public transport links”

“Well the National Trust does a really good virtual reality tour of their homes. This is so the houses can be appreciated from downstairs. Could the main collection & important archives be made into a virtual reality tour?”

“You could view different types of archives on a tablet. The tablet could contain extra information about pieces in the collection.”

“It might be useful to have a 'digital archive' where people can see what is available to see or read or what may be displayed in the future.”

“Access to headphones to listen to recorded interviews in the Oral History collection.”

“It would be useful to have most documents online with the ability to ask to see some of them in the flesh”

“An in-depth website with information on each exhibit would be great, in case people want to refer back to something when they get home.”

“V. Important for children and those with learning disabilities”

“There could be information videos with headphones and pictures as they are more exciting than just writing to read.”
“If it had an app or a Facebook page to notify the public about events and new exhibitions.”

“You could use VR headset to send the user back in time to historic Tunbridge Wells”

“to be able to access digitised archives at home.”

“Video projection to display historical film footage”

We have completed a consultation stage Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for this project.

Please add any comments here:

“Is the entrance prominent enough? As well as being attractive and inviting? Ease of access is essential to maximise footfall. Are the opening hours going to reflect the opening hours of the surrounding area?”

“As a person with mental health difficulties the only thing I’d say is that the librarians at the desk can appear unwelcoming and difficult to deal with. I have experience using several different public libraries & those at the desk went out of their way to be helpful & friendly & explain the system. There is then less of a barrier to entry.”

“A manual of frequently-asked questions regarding computer access. (One finds that computers do not play up younger people in the way they play the rest of us up - it’s called age discrimination!”

“The museum and gallery and library have done their best to address these issues and worked hard on community inclusion.”

“A vital part of this project - to ensure that the cultural facilities are for the benefit of all - not just accessed by a minority.”

“The proposals for the library in the absence of more and capacious lifts would impede its use by the elderly and handicapped and those with baby buggies - clearly the greatest proportion of users.”

“Very exciting project - hopefully will be open every day with several evenings openings. Will there be a suitable area for young people to use i.e. 11+? - one new library in a small village in France has a “open” small computer games room off the main “book area” - but visible to staff & visitors...it is very well used.”

“All toilets should multifunction and be genderless. Each cubicle should encompass the best modern practice and be self contained for any need including baby change. There should be no signs stating gender or disability.”
“I like the integration of library, museum, Gateway and adult ed. Building is a bit ‘bitty’ - brick, glass and masonry. Would like to see how this will appear. Like the idea of artists in residence, sculptures in courtyard. Council services may be an issue.”

“By having all the fiction books on the 1st floor it could mean that these customers / borrowers would only be able to access by lift which could be called into question. Is there going to be an area for babies / parents / carers?”

“This survey is not very accessible and neither are the Word or PDF versions.”

Other forms of feedback

Feedback also came in the form of emails from eight individuals.

Quotes:

From a local artist and dress maker:

“Is it possible to make available some sort of database which the public can search, of all previous Council Art Exhibitions, in particular those of work by local artists, with the details of the works as well as contact information for all artists who had their work selected for exhibitions in the Museum, Library (e.g. Big White Wall) etc.? Not just shows that start when the Hub is up and running, but going back as far as possible in the records, so that the artists, who will have spent a lot of unpaid time preparing work for those Council shows, can continue to have exposure of their work to assist them in sustaining their livelihood?”

From Library staff member:

“It would be great to have a dedicated room/space for talks/seminars/training, similar to the multi-space room at KHLC. It could have facilities including projector, interactive screen, Hearing Induction loop/Wifi and furniture including chairs and tables. Coffee/tea making facilities would be nice too! This space could be used by library, museum and adult ed.”

“Imaginative & practical design. Loved the exterior with its blend of old and new & its interior mix of functions. Noticed computers in an area of heavy traffic, adult and children’s library on separate floors and the size of temp. exhibition vast in comparison with space for income-generating cafe.”

Concerns

“The diagrams for the proposed new design simply lump together the museum and library. These should be shown as separate entities as the activities conducted in
each are completely different. I would like to be assured that the library is a place of quietness (the proposed café is worrying)"

From a current Pottery tutor at the Adult Education Centre:

“The plans in terms of the pottery seem disappointing. Good that there is one room but it is smaller so group sizes must be considerably reduced. With the wheels and storage having to be in there as well as all the glazes and ingredients it is certainly not an improvement.”

“Also the kiln room is FAR too small! We stack drying work there, it’s not just fit kilns. Only two kilns shown and yet we have three that are working all the time to try to process work, and really need one more not one less in order to cope. The room for the kilns also has no outside walk for venting and a very low ceiling. I don’t see how this will work safely, or allow us to fit in there loading one kiln while the other is on. They would need to include at least the space currently occupied by the toilets - this would also allow a bit of space in there to mix and store glazes; health and safety wise this would be preferable, it’s not great having them in the room where people work”.

“I feel the current layout proposal would necessitate smaller and fewer classes, especially from a health and safety point of view, as well as work storage and processing, which will have an impact on revenue and feasibility for running the subject.”
5. Equality Analysis

We analysed the feedback to see if it identified any specific potential impacts or issues for people because of a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender, gender identity, race, religion / belief or none, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership and carer’s responsibilities).

The following issues were identified:
- Adult Lending Library upstairs - concern about broken down lifts and access to 1st floor
- Plenty of seating needed throughout the building for elderly visitors
- Lifts large enough for mobility scooters
- Disabled access toilets
- Will there be a changing space provided?
- Will a hearing induction loop or audio descriptive guides be available?
- Staff should be welcoming to those with mental health conditions
- Will there be more baby changing facilities?
- Will there be somewhere to register births on the ground floor?
- Where will pushchairs be stored during parent’s visits?

Measures to be put in place include:
- There will be self-service machines on the ground floor to drop off books and ‘quick picks’ selection.
- There will be more than one lift.
- There will be plenty of seating throughout the building.
- There will be staff on hand to help visitors with their enquiries and appropriate training will be given to all staff to ensure every customer feels welcome.
- The lifts will be big enough for scooter with space to turn as you leave/doors open on next floor on opposite site.
- All toilets will be accessible; there will be more than one toilet and toilets available on every floor.
- Changing spaces will not be available in the building; a wider discussion at TWBC is taking place to decide the best place for it.
- The building will be equipped with hearing loops.
- Audio guides are being discussed for programming.
- Toilets will be genderless and plenty of baby changing facilities will be available in the building on each floor.
- There will be a designated buggy park for push chairs.
- The children’s library will be on the ground floor.
- Lifts will be able to fit pushchairs.
- There will be meeting rooms for birth registration available on the ground floor.
6. **Next Steps**

The consultation responses are being used to help refine the design of the building for the proposed Tunbridge Wells Cultural & Learning Hub.

This report will be presented to the Project Board, Project Group, Architects and Interpretation Designer.

The project team will present findings of the consultation in a ‘you said, we did’ display in the foyer of the Museum & Library building.

The next stages of the project are as follows:

- Submission of Heritage Lottery Fund stage 2 funding bid in December 2017
- Decision from Arts Council England due December 2017
- Planning application submitted November 2017
- Planning Application Decision January 2018
- Decision from Heritage Lottery Fund due April 2018

If the funding applications are successful, work will begin on site in Spring 2019. With both the Adult Education Centre and Museum & Library buildings being closed to the public, and an interim service provided at another location.

It is estimated that construction will take two years, with the new site opening in 2021.