

QUESTIONS FOR THE STUDY

- Nature of the Study
- Can the building be adapted to a more general arts/cultural use?
- If this were to happen, what activities could take place in the building and who would come?
- How could such a building and programme of activities be managed?
- Is the underlying concept financially viable?

QUESTIONS FOR THE CITY?

- What could the new building look like? What could it programme? What could be described as its essential nature?

- How could the building operate? What operational or organisational model would it follow?

- How viable could the venture be and would its establishment have a negative impact upon other venues / organisations in the City?

- How could the works be funded? What scale of subsidy could be required to maintain the proposed venue?

THE BUILDING

- ☐ Allow the building's use to move with the times.
- ☐ Art and culture – presenting work.
- ☐ Community – opportunity for community organisations.
- ☐ Social cohesion – support, resources and opportunities for groups, bodies and agencies working with excluded communities.

LESSONS FROM OTHER BUILDINGS

- There is a constant need to keep users and audiences involved in programming usually through focus groups with Board/Trustee representation.
- A mixed programme (professional, semi-professional and non-professional) is needed to keep audiences at a sustainable level.
- A strong link between touring-in product and education/outreach activities is vital if the investment in the touring production (could be in excess of £ 1,000 per night) is to be realised as providing good value for money.
- Cinema is a vital tool in the marketing portfolio as it represents the art form enjoying the widest support.
- High profile, local/regional political support is absolutely vital if the venue concerned is serious about having a solid future.

THE OPERATION

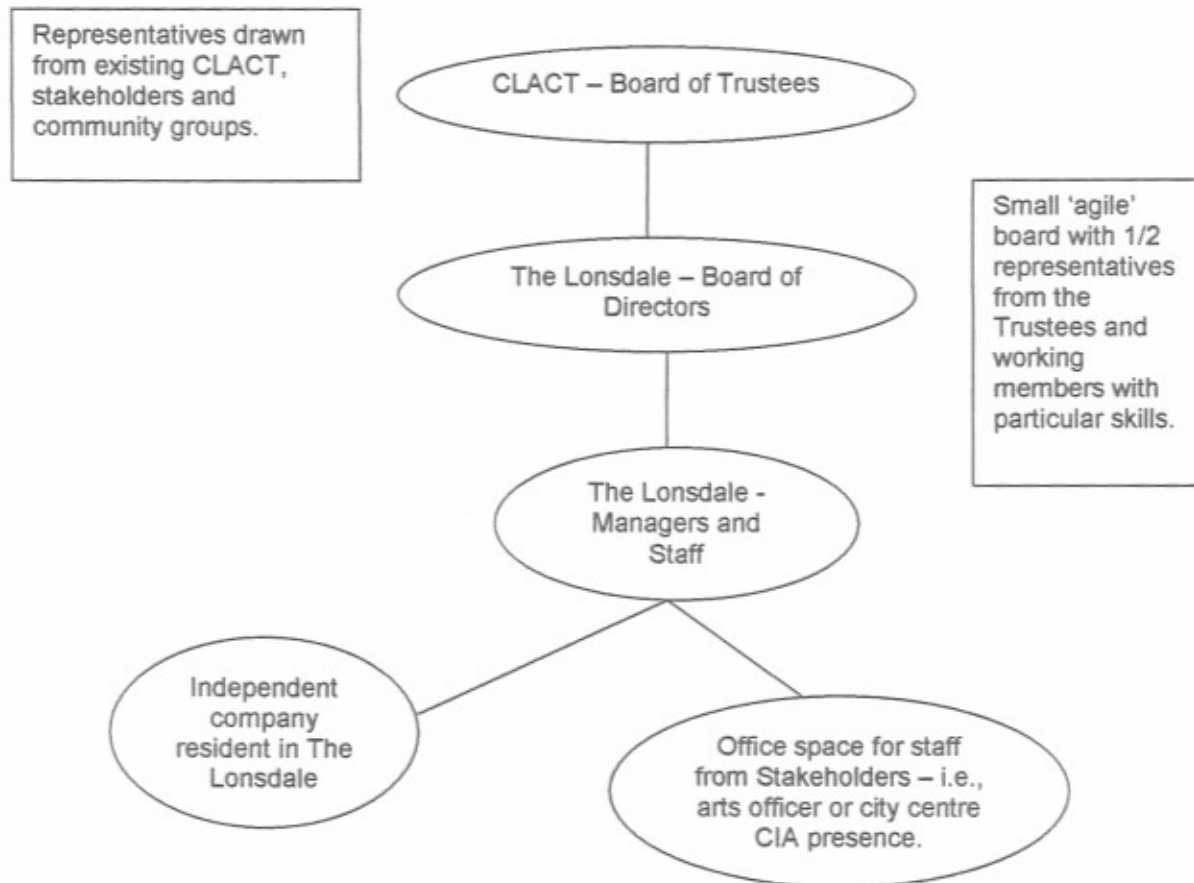
- Ownership: Acquisition of the building on a freehold basis and to operate it either as a Charitable Trust or Company Limited by Guarantee with Charitable Status.

- Ownership: Acquisition of the building by a third party and to lease the building to, say, CLACT on a landlord basis – CLACT being responsible for managing the asset, paying a regular peppercorn rent but the landlord being responsible for the externals.

- Ownership: Acquisition by a third party and leased to, say, CLACT (either *in toto* or partially) with the third party possibly being resident in the building (for instance the existing cinema provider) or absent.

- Governance: The simplest model of governance would be for, say, CLACT to own the building outright and operate either as a Company Limited by Guarantee with Charitable Status or via a Charitable Trust through a commercial holding company.

ORGANISATION



PROGRAMME

- Social justice and cultural equality
- High quality arts-led practice
- Fully-supportive environments
- Pathways within arts practice
- Improving the wider arts environment

	Area	Functions
Local	Carlisle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ local arts / education centre □ centre for development of accessible arts opportunities □ centre for development of accessible employment opportunities □ venue presenting high quality arts product □ venue for local amateur productions □ important local employer □ target of inward investor
Sub-regional	West Cumbria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ provider of high-quality outreach arts projects (proactive independently funded and commissioned) □ test-bed for new ways of working □ key partner to local authorities, voluntary sector, etc. □ centre for development of accessible arts opportunities □ centre of excellence for development of accessible employment opportunities □ key training / CPD provider □ venue presenting high quality disability/exclusion-related arts product □ company touring high-quality arts product □ important employer of artists, care workers and support staff
Regional	North West England & Scottish Borders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ key partner to regional arts/cultural/development agencies, etc. □ key training / CPD provider □ key network facilitator (arts, health and social care) □ disseminator of good practice □ regional centre-of-excellence for development of accessible arts opportunities □ venue presenting high quality disability/exclusion-related arts product? □ company touring high-quality arts product
National		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ key partner to regional arts/cultural/development agencies □ key training / CPD provider □ key network facilitator (arts, health and social care) □ disseminator of good practice □ national centre-of-excellence for development for development of accessible arts opportunities □ venue presenting high quality disability/exclusion-related arts product? □ company touring high-quality arts product

STAFFING

- Staffing commensurate with activities and community engagement.

- Professional staffing – a minimum of 11 paid individuals in part time and full time occupations. This would include a Director, Administrator, Technical Manager, Technician, Projectionist, Front of House Manager, Receptionist, Education Officer, Marketing Officer, Business Development Manager, Finance Officer and a support Officer working with the Front of House and Marketing/Education departments. The cost of this would be in the order of £240,000.

- Professional / voluntary staffing – 3.5 full time equivalent posts accounting for a salary bill in the region of £ 60,000. A variety of tasks being undertaken by volunteers (marketing, education, front of house, reception, etc) or being undertaken by students as part of their degree studies or being the subject of ad hoc freelance employment.

- The answer probably lies in the middle but both of the models mentioned above work and work to good effect. A professional level of service can still be maintained without the need for recourse for a fully employed staff team. One of the benefits of the second approach is that the building becomes a living space in which members of the community are intimately involved in the comings and goings and develop a very real sense of ownership. This then reflects upon the levels of visitor numbers, sizes of audience and hirers of resources and amenities.

FINANCES

- **Capital** – Guide cost for scheme is £ 4 million plus cost of purchasing the property and subject to survey.

- As NWDA recently announced “...*enhance regeneration and economic development. Work includes capital investment in cultural projects, development of cultural skills and utilising our cultural assets to drive regional growth.*” I believe there are clear opportunities for significant elements of the capital fund to be acquired and the follow-up work will take this promising start further.

Arts Council England	£ 500,000
Regional Development Initiatives	£ 1 – 2,000,000
European Funding	£ 250,000
Regional Capital Sponsorship	£ 250,000 – 500,000
General Fundraising	£ 250,000
Other sources	£ 300,000 - £ 1,600,000

- Unequivocal support and timely investment.
- **Revenue** – one staffing model minimum subsidy requirement in the area of £ 200,000
- Second staffing model the subsidy level could be as low as £ 50,000 - £ 60,000.

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND

- There is, on the basis of my work to date and of my experience on over 150 capital schemes on behalf of Arts Council England, no doubt that were a facility such as that proposed be placed in the very heart of the City of Carlisle that there would be a strong level of interest translating itself into high levels of take-up of programming opportunities.
- Given the present climate (in terms of pressure upon the arts funding and local authority bodies) I believe it is difficult to foresee how what is essentially a new venture will succeed in attracting in the order of £ 200,000 annual subsidy on a regular basis from 'day-one'. There also seems little point in producing a cash flow that takes the gap between income, subsidy and expenditure and call this 'annual fundraising' – in the case of **The Lonsdale** this could well account for an annual target in the region of £ 150,000.
- So, perhaps, this meeting today could be the start of this discursive process as, in my experience, a thorough understanding of the scale of availability of revenue subsidy as early as possible is a major contributory factor in the development of a successful scheme. This equally applies to discussions with bodies such as Learning & Skills Council, Departments of Health, Education and Social Service as well as enlightened donors such as Esmée Fairbairn, Lloyds TSB Foundation and Calouste Gulbenkian.
- Very few schemes see the light of day without full-hearted support from the Local Authority and Regional Office of Arts Council England.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

- In my view, there is an unequivocally strong case behind the establishment of a new performance space in a city-centre site working in collaboration with the Stanwix and partnership with what could be described as the Region's producing and touring ecology. In addition, there is, even at this early stage, an equally strong case to be made for the provision of spaces for local artists to rehearse, practice, perform and exhibit their art in a local, high quality building.
- There is also a clear need for high quality resources to support the ongoing work of organisations such as Prism Arts and the innovative presenting / programming strategy developed by the incumbent arts development officer by placing good quality work in non-traditional spaces. Similarly, there is a need to provide challenging cultural, recreational, leisure and social activities for people who, as a matter of course, are not provided with quality environments that validate their individual lives.
- The capital funding is clearly a significant hurdle that needs to be cleared, as is the question of revenue subsidy. But, on the basis of the work undertaken to date, I believe that the nature and operation of the building together with the multiplicity of interests located in the possible activities provides potential funders with an effective vehicle by which they can provide value for money investment opportunities.

.....AND FINALLY?

- Stage 2 works to develop this Study into a Development Plan in preparation for an application for National Lottery and other capital funding.
- As part of the above, or possibly in advance of, conduct a full structural survey of the building and map this against provisional accommodation requirements.
- Decide whether this capital initiative forms part of the key strategic aims of the Local Authority and Regional Office of Arts Council England.
- Upon this decision, allocate additional funds for the purpose of completing the Stage 2 works.
- Upon this decision, explore what options exist for prior purchase of the site.
- Milestones
 - + Winter 2003: commence Stage 2 Works.
 - + Summer 2004: deliver Stage 2 and submit formal funding applications.
 - + Spring 2005: commence building works.
 - + Spring 2006: pop champagne!!

*Where could **The Lonsdale** be in 5 years' time?*

We will have a beautiful building including 2 theatres, 2-screen cinema, rehearsal studios and multi-art form potential.

Prism Arts and the LADA Officer will be resident in the building.

Graeae will be rehearsing in the building.

We will have a catering centre run by people with learning disabilities serving excellent food – people will pop in and the restaurant will have a reputation as a good place to eat.

We will be running accredited weekend training events for young people, people at risk, mental health survivors and arts practitioners from across the region.

The building will house a series of exhibitions supporting the belief in contemporary archiving.

The Lonsdale will have a regional reputation - people will want to come to see work, create work and work with us from all over the country

The company will have a range of associate artists trained by us in partnership with other partners and forming a network unto themselves.

The Lonsdale will be receiving work from around the country and will be the host of a national festival of amateur lyric work.

We will be working with groups of people that haven't worked with professional arts organisations before.

The Lonsdale will be co-programming with the Tullie House Trust and The Stanwix.

In partnership with Welfare State, Walk the Plank and Grizedale Arts, The Lonsdale will be hosting a national encounter exploring creative diversity in the North West of the country.