

Report to Executive

Agenda
Item:

A.5

Meeting Date: 1st July 2013
Portfolio: Culture, Health, Leisure and Young People
Key Decision: YES
Within Policy and Budget Framework NO
Public / Private Public

Title: ARTS CENTRE DEVELOPMENT
Report of: The Director of Community Engagement
Report Number: CD37/13

Purpose / Summary:

The purpose of this report is to allow consideration of the use of the redundant Warwick Street Fire Station in Rickergate as a venue for an Arts Centre for Carlisle and, on the basis of a decision to progress, make available funds to allow this development.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Executive:

1. Approve the Warwick Street Fire Station for development as an Arts Centre for Carlisle
2. To approve the increase in the capital programme from £586,000 to £1,064,500, for recommendation to Council, noting that the increase will be funded from additional capital receipts generated from the Asset Review Programme;
3. To approve the release of the current budget and re-profiling of the overall scheme, subject to Council approval above, with £50,000 being incorporated within the 2013/14 Capital Programme and £1,014,500 in the 2014/15 Capital Programme;
4. Delegate authority to the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Health, Leisure and Young People in consultation with the Director of Community Engagement to produce and progress the plans to deliver the Arts Centre as detailed in this report
5. Make this report available for consideration by the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Tracking

Executive:	1 July and 5 August
Overview and Scrutiny:	11 July
Council:	10 September

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1** There has been a long history of exploring the idea of a mid-scale arts centre and performance venue in Carlisle. The Carlisle Plan (ref PC 08/13) provides a pledge for the development of an arts centre within the city.

The Plan's overarching Vision is to *'promote Carlisle as a prosperous City, one in which we can be proud'*. To help achieve this, it commits to *'develop vibrant sports, arts and cultural facilities, showcasing the City of Carlisle'*.

2. PROPOSAL

2.1 Outputs

It is proposed that a venue be identified for an Arts Centre which can:

- bring a new performing arts and entertainment focus into the Carlisle, delivering an offer to the city and its wider hinterland.
- deliver exciting and developing programmes of quality arts and entertainments, aimed at building and broadening audiences.
- offer a varied range of opportunities for Carlisle residents as participants, creators and performers.
- stimulate local talent and build the profile of Carlisle and Cumbria's creative and digital industries sector. This will include supporting emerging, Carlisle based, commercial artists and designers and potential collaboration with Carlisle College and the University of Cumbria.
- contribute distinctively to Carlisle's visitor offer, linking into, and being a resource for, festivals, events, projects and cultural providers.
- provide the foundation for future developments in arts and entertainment.

Having considered potential venues in Carlisle, the former Fire Station in Rickergate is proposed as the preferred option. It is a substantial building with a straightforward structure on a prominent corner site on the edge of the historic quarter.

- 2.2** The proposed format is to use the Warwick Street fire engine range as the main auditorium with the public entrance facing Peter Street. This would provide a larger flexible foyer space and open up the west end as a strong and attractive public face. At first floor level across the west end would be two substantial performance and multi-use studios,, making it a useful function space. Ground floor audience capacity is estimated to be 266 seated and 400 standing. At first floor level the two multi-use studios would each have space for around 110 seated and 200 standing.
- 2.3** New build within the enclosed courtyard, along the rear of the Warwick Street wing, would be required to enable independent access to all main spaces, back of house, dressing rooms and administration spaces.
- 2.4** The Fire Station also includes other usable spaces which could further broaden its offer. On the North side of the yard entrance it includes:

- the former maintenance bay which would accommodate, for example, gallery space, visual arts projects and/or set and street performance building opportunities
- a large meeting room, with potential for managed and incubator workshop space for emerging commercial artists and/or sub-letting

It also has a large loft space over the Warwick Street frontage which may offer substantial visual arts or other studio opportunities

Developed effectively and with a strong design concept, the Fire Station could deliver the Arts Centre concept well.

3. THE MARKET POTENTIAL

- 3.1** In terms of the Carlisle market, there is clearly independent promotion going on, such as The Brickyard, College and University are active in their own ways, the West Walls Theatre is home to non-professional theatre, and the Sands has a significant offer of mainstream large-scale touring entertainment, and is the venue for the Arts Council England funded subscription concert series. None of these are considered to diminish the potential, in a significant regional city, of a well-planned and operated mid-scale mixed programme arts and entertainments venue.

Operational revenue issues are significant. To ensure long term stability and success it is envisaged that some revenue support will be required from external sources and/or City Council in the first years of operation. Important issues to note are that building and strengthening a sustainable audience base which is complementary to and not in competition with other local venues is likely take a number of years to develop. Similarly capacity building through partnerships and joint programming with local commercial promoters, venues and third sector organisations, while an immediate priority for work will be properly judged over a three to five year timeframe. This is recognised in the industry and by the Arts Council for England, which will take this into account in considering applications for funding. A separate report will be brought forward to consider revenue requirements.

4. MANAGEMENT

- 4.1** The long-term success of the enterprise will be determined primarily by the skills, knowledge, commitment and vision of the team which manages and operates it. The Carlisle development will require a genuinely dynamic team operating in a light-footed way, with real entrepreneurial flair, in a culture of innovation. It will require a genuine ability to work effectively, and with mutual respect, with a wide range of partners.

It is not proposed to make a final decision on management and governance arrangements at this stage, with the City Council retaining a central leadership role as the project is progressed. It is likely that to achieve the best balance of accountability, sustainability and entrepreneurial acumen, operational management will, in the medium term will be passed to an independent not for profit organisation. A separate report will be brought forward to consider this.

5. PROGRAMME

- 5.1 Carlisle has a recognised weakness in ‘mid-scale’ arts and entertainments programmes compared to other regional cities and large towns. The programme will need to take full account of Carlisle’s existing offer, including key venues Tullie House, the Brickyard, West Walls Theatre, Stanwix Theatre and the Sands, as well as events such as the long-standing Blues Festival, and newer initiatives like Carlisle Music City. As an audience base is developed, the programme offer will include a broad range of content across and within the core genres of touring and available product – theatre, music theatre, dance, comedy and music, aimed at different audience segments. It will mix popular commercially reliable activities with innovative opportunities. This will be based on the development of active performance and programme partnerships and strong relationships with performance companies in the north of England and southern Scotland.

6. DESIGN CONCEPT AND CAPITAL COSTS

Day Cummins Ltd (Architects) was commissioned to assess the viability of the Fire Station, alongside two other venues. The Fire Station was subsequently considered as the preferred choice., on the grounds of innovation, value and accessibility The building is situated close to a number of car park facilities and its rear yard provides off street access for event vehicles to unload. The building currently has an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C. Option design and preliminary costings are shown in Appendix 2

The proposed scheme includes a new main stair access and lift which will provide disabled access to the upper floors. At the same time it will form the transition between the main uses of the building along with vertical circulation and interesting designed views of the tower feature.

The sectional existing garage doors can be replaced with infill pod panels using acoustic materials and sensitive feature lighting to form a striking appearance along the prime Warwick Street frontage.

The total capital cost of the project is estimated at £1,064,500

<u>Capital Activity</u>	<u>Costs</u>
New build Extension, Refurbishment / conversion of existing	£700,000.00
Specialist Equipment	£314,500.00
Other design, acquisition, survey, legal & planning fees & investigation costs	£50,000.00
Total Capital	£1,064,500.00

It is anticipated that design and planning costs being incurred in 2013/14 and expenditure on new buildings, refurbishments and equipment will take place in 2014/15.

The anticipated timetable for the scheme is as follows:

a) Preparation of Tender Documentation	12/8/13
b) Tenders out for Design & Build Package	12/8/13
c) Tenders back	6/09/13
d) Review returns & Inform successful Design Team	20/09/13
e) Cool off period	02/10/13
f) Award to D&B team	03/10/13
g) Planning Application Submission	15 /11/13
h) Consideration of Planning Application	31/01/14
i) Contractor mobilisation up to	3/03/14
j) Start on site	3/03/14
k) Estimated completion by	31/10/14

7. CONSULTATION

Consultation has taken place throughout the appraisal process to date including through:

- Engagement with key stakeholders involved in the cultural sector to understand the current offer and conduct a gap analysis;
- Discussions with similar providers such as: Queens Arts Centre Hexham, Kendal Arts Centre,
- Dialogue with promoters and providers of cultural offer and community arts activities to understand the current market offer and any opportunities.
- The further and higher education sector - Carlisle College, particularly linked to joint working around its arts and digital programme (including facility development and curriculum support) and the University of Cumbria linked to undergraduate/postgraduate programmes, galley provision and workshop space

Ongoing dialogue through the City Council's overview and scrutiny process and with local residents, community groups and the education, private and third sector is being scheduled over the coming weeks.

8. CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1** Carlisle has a recognised weakness in 'mid-scale' arts and entertainments programmes and in line with the Aim of the Carlisle Plan now seeks to develop a sustainable facility which will act as a focal point for creative arts complementing and supporting the existing offer in and around the City. This is in line with the vision and actions in the Carlisle plan.

In order to progress this it is proposed that Executive:

1. Approve the Warwick Street Fire Station for development as an Arts Centre for Carlisle
2. To approve the release of the funding (£586,000) approved as part of the 2013/14 budget for the building development (as Section 6);
3. Make recommendations to Council to increase the capital programme for the scheme to £1,064,500 from £586,000 with the increase to be funded from additional capital receipts generated as part of the asset review programme and that the expenditure be re-profile in line with revised expenditure requirements at Section 6.
4. Provide delegated authority for the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Health, Leisure and Young People to produce and progress the plans to deliver work as outlined in this report
5. Make this report available for consideration by the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

9. CONTRIBUTION TO THE CARLISLE PLAN PRIORITIES

- 9.1** This project will deliver Action 1 'to deliver a city centre Arts Centre and therefore contribute to meeting one of the Council's key corporate objectives **'We will develop vibrant sports, arts and cultural facilities, showcasing the City of Carlisle'**

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Appendices	Appendix 1: Indicative Income & Expenditure	
attached to report:	Appendix 2: Architects Concept Designs & Cost	

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:

- **None**

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS/RISKS:

Chief Executive's -

Economic Development – The proposal will be subject to planning permission, however, in view of the buildings former use that in principle the use is acceptable subject to conditions relating to noise and opening times.

Governance – The Local Government Act 2000 (Section 2) provides that the Council has the power to do anything which it considers likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of its area. The power may be used in relation or for the benefit of the whole or any part of the community or all or any persons present or resident in the Council's area. The Council is able to incur expenditure in relation to the Fire Station as it owns the said property. In exercising the power, the Council must have regard to its Community Strategy.

The future use of the premises as an Arts and entertainment venue is subject to the planning and licensing regulatory regimes and it is important that these are accounted for prior to significant commitment and expenditure. Goods, services and works must be properly procured and contracts should be subject to appropriate terms and conditions.

Local Environment – None

Resources – The capital programme approved by Council in February as part of the 2013/14 budget process, provides capital funding for this scheme of £586,000 (2013/14 - £250,000, 2014/15 - £161,000, 2015/16 - £175,000). If the scheme outlined above is approved, the capital programme would need to be increased by £478,500. This could be funded from additional capital receipts generated from the asset review (£813,686). There are also surplus general capital receipts available within the MTFP of £360,333. The capital programme would also need to be re-profiled in order to meet the anticipated spend on the project, with £50,000 being incurred in 2013/14 and £1,014,500 being incurred in 2014/15. The use of additional asset review receipts will forego the possibility of generating additional rental income for the Council in line with the Asset Business Plan.

As part of the 2013/14 revenue budget approved by Council in February 2013, recurring revenue funding for the Arts Centre scheme was approved with £129,000 approved for 2013/14, £104,000 approved for 2014/15 and £159,000 approved for 2015/16 and beyond. A further report will need to be prepared for a future Executive detailing the on-going revenue costs.

There may be possibilities to apply for external funding to support the capital or revenue costs of the project and these will need to be investigated further.

Due to the value of the capital works anticipated, a competitive procurement process will need to be undertaken in order to appoint a contractor to undertake the developments.

APPENDIX

ARCHITECTS CONCEPT DESIGN AND CAPITAL COSTS

ARCHITECTS CONCEPT DESIGN & COST

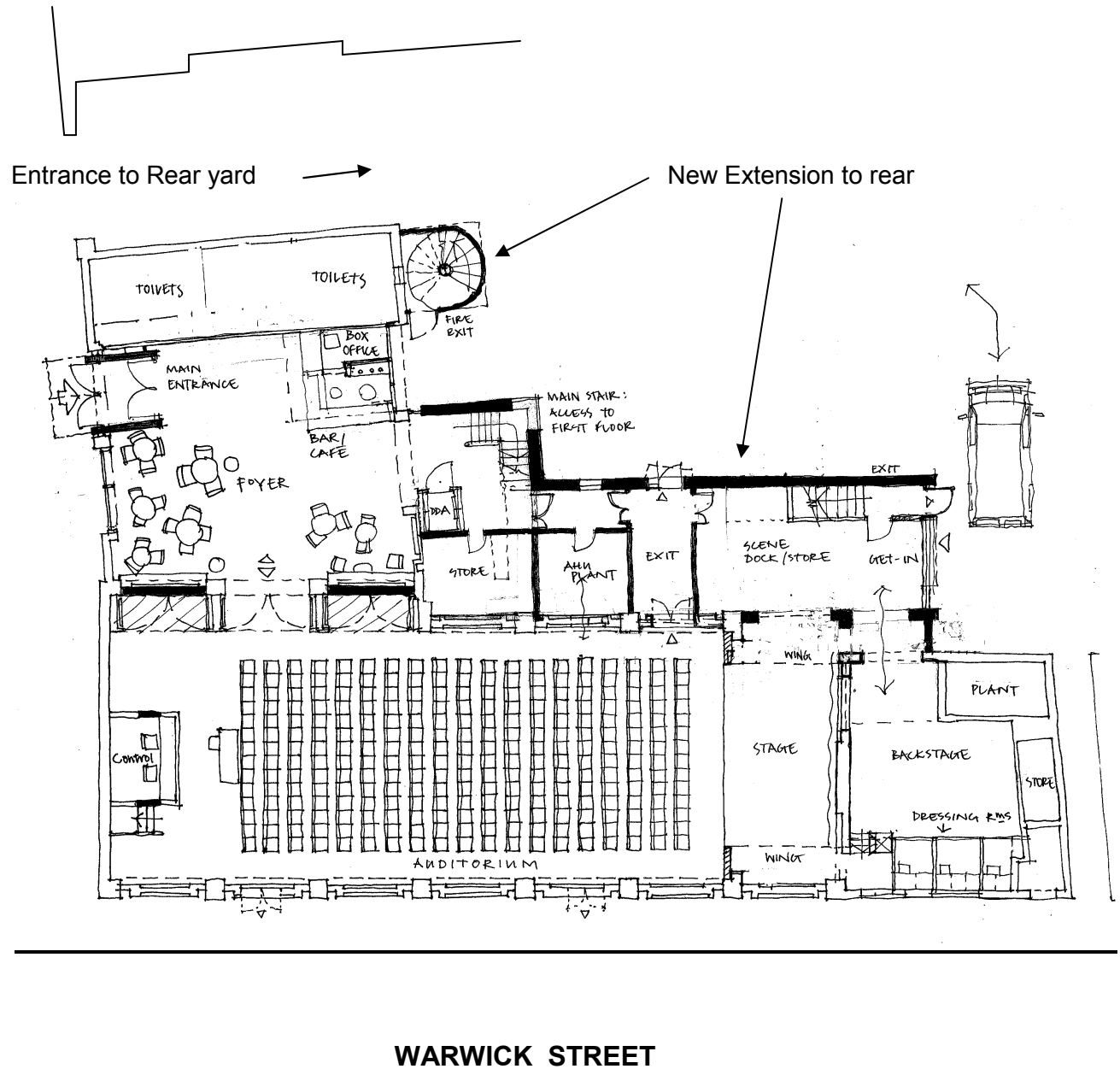
FORMER FIRE STATION, RICKERGATE



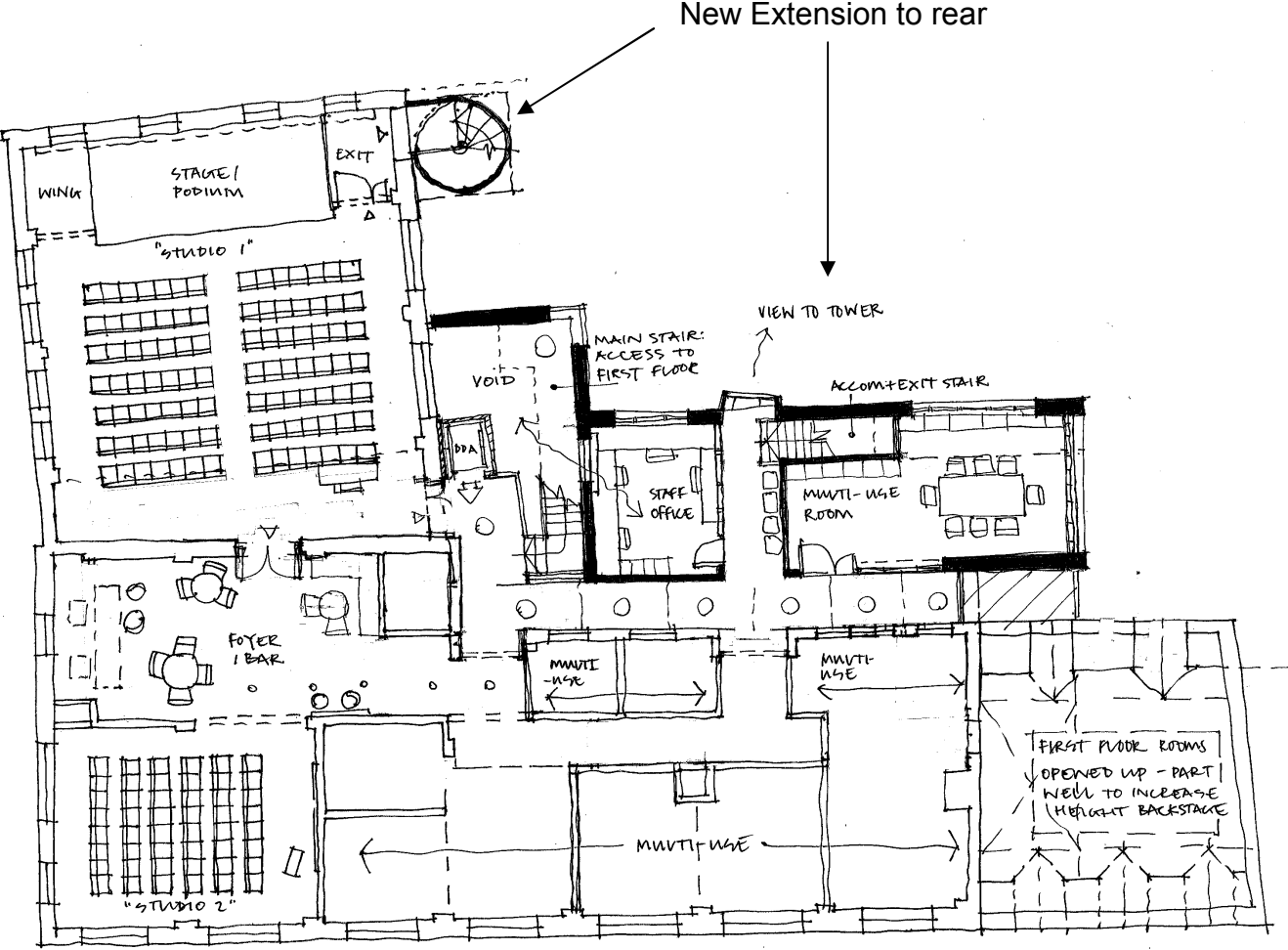
DESIGN & CAPITAL COSTS

<u>Capital Activity</u>	<u>Costs</u>
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<u>Total Capital</u>	<u>£1,064,500.00</u>

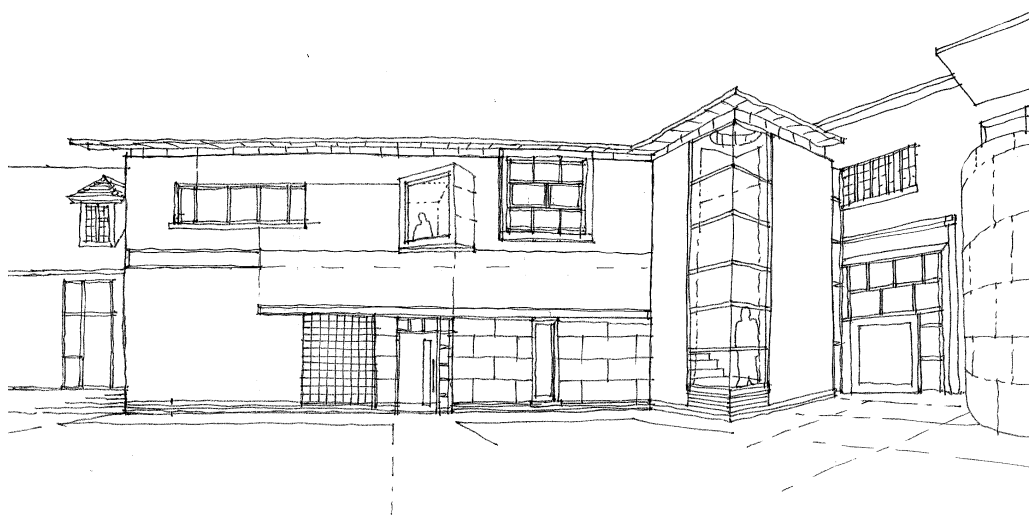
Ground Floor Proposals Plan



First Floor Proposals Plan



View of Rear new Extension from within yard



Specialist Capital expenditure (Included in design & Capital costs above.)

	COST
BACKSTAGE	
Mirrors	£1,000
Lighting	£5,000
Tables and Chairs	£1,500
Toilets Showers	£20,000
FRONT OF HOUSE	
Sofa Cinema – Screen, projector, sound system, sofas	£25,000
Soundproofing	£5,000
Catering equipment	£10,000
Café bar tables chairs and equipment	£7,500
Bar	£20,000
Repairs to cracks	£2000
Box office	£12,500
Cloakroom	£12,500
Chairs	£18,000
F/A, emergency lighting and signage	£22,000
Electrics & lighting	£10,000
Mechanical/heating improvements	£12,000
Stage Lighting	£15,000
Gallery lighting	N/A
Air conditioning	£8,000
Sound system and microphones	£25,000
Sound desk	£5,000
Decoration	£12,000
Stage appropriate for venue	£25,000
Stage curtains	£2,500
Storage area for stage scenery	£2,500

Carpets / flooring	£7,500
Conditional survey requirements	£6,000
Asbestos signage	£500
Conference / meeting room facilities	£5,000
Tables and Chairs	£2,500
Projectors	£1,000
Whiteboards	£500
Screens	£500
PA system	£2,500
IT and telephone system	£10,000
	£314,500