

Falcon Centre – Wylam - Northumberland

Brief for a Pre-feasibility Study into creating a *Community Hub*

Agreed at a meeting of the *Falcon Centre Action Group* on 4 November 2020

Introduction

This document is intended as a brief for work to be undertaken by consultants to be appointed by the Falcon Centre Action Group to prepare a Pre-feasibility Study for creation of a community hub on a site in the centre of the village of Wylam.

The buildings on the site were the village junior school until the late seventies. They are now called the Falcon Centre and house the Library and a Railway Museum plus space for other community activities. A newsletter style brochure on the setting, the Centre itself and the work of the Group is appended and should be read as part of this brief.

An indicative floor plan of the Centre as existing is at the end of this document together with an outline plan for the site as a whole. Please note the site is sloping, so that these plans do not tell the whole story! External and internal photos of the site and buildings are online; link on request. A open licence online map showing the Centre is at www.openstreetmap.org/#map=18/54.97694/-1.81755.

Aim of the group and the project

The central aim of the Group as set out in its draft constitution is:

“providing, in conjunction with local authorities, voluntary and other organisations as appropriate facilities for recreation, education, arts and culture, heritage, environment, health and wellbeing and community based business activity in the former school building and site (known as the Falcon Centre) on Falcon Terrace, Wylam”.

The brochure attached to this document as an appendix describes this as a *community hub*.

The objectives of the Pre-feasibility Study

The objectives of the proposed Pre-feasibility Study are set out in the attached brochure on page 3, covering the key areas that the Group want covered. The suggested project steps in the next section below are closely linked to these objectives.

Suggested project steps:

The consultants invited to tender will be asked to draw up an outline programme of proposed works, but the following is suggested as a starting point:

- A Take the results of the recent community mapping exercise and identify the community aspirations for what might be delivered at the Centre;
- B Carry out a building condition survey and provide an estimate of costs of immediate urgent repairs and ongoing maintenance costs if kept in its present form;
- C Review the configuration of the building and consider the opportunities and limitations of the layout within the existing building shell and go on to examine other

possibilities including reconfigured layouts, expansion and/or complete new build, including opportunities offered by the lower playground area;

- D Assess the viability of existing activities and of a range of possible new activities, notably for tourism and heritage, healthcare and well-being (including specific reference to younger people), spaces for small businesses, activities for young people and ancillary catering;
- E Research and advise on introducing environmentally friendly technology and ways of working in the Centre and assess how the development would impact on the locality;
- F Investigate and advise on sources of possible funding for short term capital costs and longer term ongoing revenue expenditure;
- G Taking all the above into account prepare a small number of options for development of the Centre and on activities that might take place there and work with the Action Group to establish a preferred option for further study;
- H Help develop the capacity and governance structure of the Action Group and provide advice on responsibilities and the most appropriate legal structure.

Possible structure of the Pre-feasibility Study report

- Section 1: Brief description of the Falcon Centre, its recent history and uses
- Section 2: Summary of the results and analysis of the community mapping
- Section 3: Overview of the condition of the current building and related liabilities
- Section 4: Overview of the opportunities and limitations of the current facilities
- Section 5: Overview of likely continuing and potential new users and uses
- Section 6: Likely grant support for capital costs and income generation to meet revenue costs
- Section 7: Options for the building/site with projected cash flow forecasts for each
- Section 8: Local impacts of options, including planning and highways issues
- Section 9: Preferred option with more detailed study of projected cash flows
- Section 10: Advice on future ownership and management of the Centre
- Section 11: Next steps for the Action Group

Technical appendices

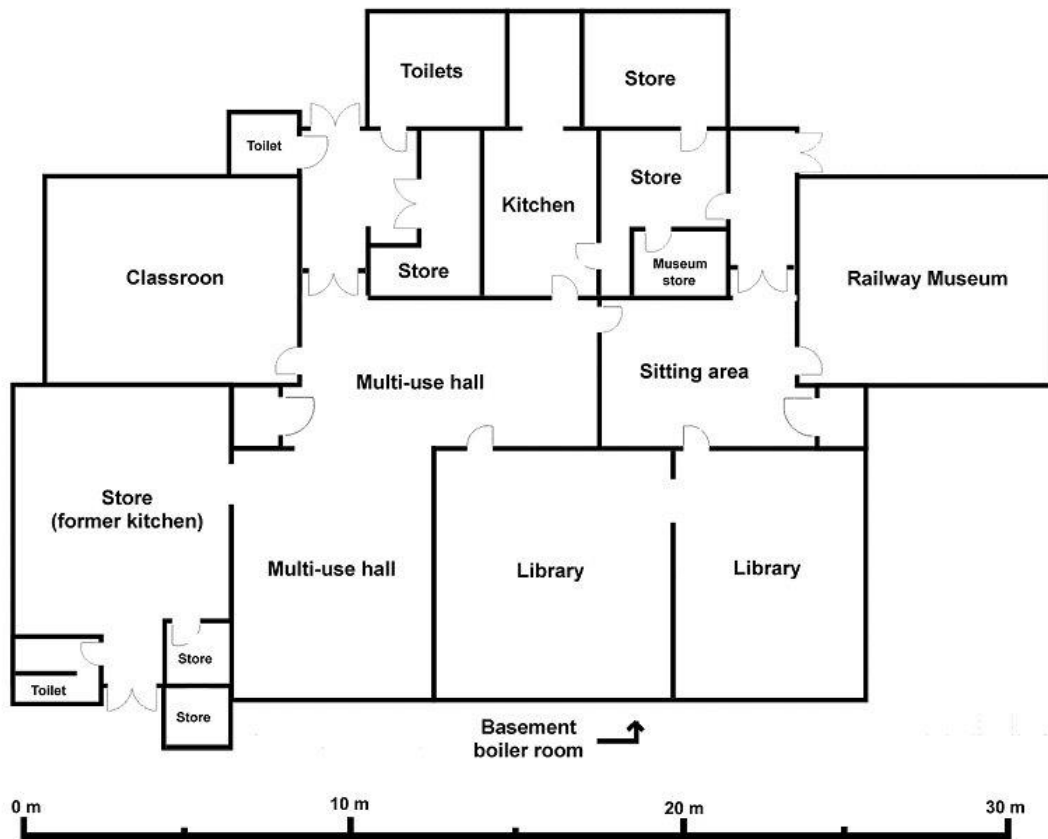
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Falcon Centre, Wylam – indicative internal layout:



Falcon Centre, Wylam – indicative site plan:

