

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee	Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Committee
Date of Committee	10th July 2007
Report Title	Nuneaton and Bedworth Masterplan - Consideration of Colleges Relocation Option
Summary	<p>At Area Committee on 24th May 2006 Members asked that further work be carried out to examine the impact of the possible relocation of North Warwickshire and Hinckley College and King Edward VI college to Nuneaton Town Centre. This report describes the potential impacts of the relocation and compares them to the original masterplan proposals.</p> <p>As the proposals would have an impact on the existing Library, the report also considers options for relocating the library and highlights the significant capital and revenue cost implications of building a new library/cultural centre. The report requests Members to take a view on the preferred option for the library.</p>
For further information please contact	<p>Chris Simpson Regeneration Engineer Tel. 01926 418637 chrissimpson@warwickshire.gov.uk</p>
Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?	Yes/No
Background Papers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Masterplan for Nuneaton and Bedworth Town Centres : November 2004. 2. Economic Impact Assessment of College Co-location in Nuneaton Town Centre by Roger Tym and Partners December 2006. 3. New Library and Cultural Centre Feasibility Report (Draft) by Turner and Townsend June 2007.

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-*Details to be specified*

- Other Committees Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Committee 24/5/06
– Nuneaton and Bedworth Masterplan: Member
Consideration of Implementation Strategy.
Cabinet 1/2/07 – Nuneaton and Bedworth Town
Centres Masterplan Phase 1 Development.

- Local Member(s)
(With brief comments, if appropriate)
- Other Elected Members
- Cabinet Member
(Reports to The Cabinet, to be cleared with
appropriate Cabinet Member)
- Chief Executive
- Legal Peter Endall – comments incorporated.
- Finance Charles Holden – comments incorporated.
- Other Chief Officers David Clarke
- District Councils Christine Kerr (NBBC)
- Health Authority
- Police
- Other Bodies/Individuals Mark Gore, Head of Service - Education
Partnerships and School Development Division.

FINAL DECISION **YES/NO** (If 'No' complete Suggested Next Steps)

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS :

- Further consideration by this Committee
Details to be specified
- To Council
- To Cabinet Cabinet on 6th September 2007 (to be confirmed).
- To an O & S Committee
- To an Area Committee
- Further Consultation

Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Committee - 10th July 2007

**Nuneaton and Bedworth Masterplan – Consideration of
Colleges Relocation Option**

**Joint Report of the Strategic Director for Environment and
Economy and the Strategic Director for Adult, Health and
Community Services**

Recommendation

That Members:-

1. Note that the Cabinet decision on 1st February 2007 to implement the Masterplan may have considerable capital and revenue resource implications for the Council (as regards the financing of the proposed replacement library and providing temporary accommodation during construction) and that officers will need to clarify those issues fully prior to final approval by Cabinet of detailed proposals of the Masterplan.
2. Note the likely implications of the North Warwickshire and Hinckley College (NWHC) and King Edward VI College (KEC) alternative proposal for co-location in the town centre on the Vicarage Street site (“the Colleges’ Option”) compared to the original proposal for the Vicarage Street site in the Masterplan.
3. Recommend/does not recommend to Cabinet that it approves varying the Masterplan to accommodate the Colleges’ Option. Approval would be subject to Cabinet being satisfied regarding (a) a full business case and the outcome of the Value for Money Review to justify the relocation of the library, and (b) full funding for the relocation of the library having being confirmed.
4. Subject to the satisfaction of the conditions mentioned in Recommendation 3, support the principle of selling the site of the former Magistrates Courts and the existing Library site at full market value to the colleges to allow the colleges to take vacant possession in October 2008 and enable implementation of the Colleges’ Option.
5. Authorise officers to undertake further work to determine the preferred location of the Library, carried out on the understanding that there is a fall-back option of the Church Street Car Park as per the original Masterplan Proposal, and agree that a further report be brought to Area Committee seeking approval of the preferred location for the new library.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The focus of the Masterplan vision for Nuneaton town centre is to support and attract greater numbers of people to live, work and visit the town centre. Alternative proposals have been put forward for the largest priority site in the Masterplan by the Colleges and this report compares the comparative benefits and impacts of the different options.
- 1.2 The original Masterplan proposal was for a mixed-use development which would provide primarily office and residential units, give a positive impact in terms of image for the town and help to improve the viability and vitality of the town centre. The focus on office accommodation is not without risk, however, as office demand in the centre of Nuneaton is unproven and recent studies have questioned whether or not the scale proposed in the Masterplan is realistic.
- 1.3 Colleges Option would also contribute towards the vision for Nuneaton town centre but with less risk. Once funding and planning consent is secured there is a high degree of certainty that the scheme will be delivered. The scheme would also deliver benefits in a shorter timescale than the original Masterplan as well as having the added advantage of further social benefits including developing the skills agenda and would contribute to the County's refocused vision of raising levels of educational attainment. As the viability of Nuneaton town centre is still under threat from competing centres (The Arena, Leicester, Solihull, Coventry) the early development that the colleges option brings is a large advantage.
- 1.4 It should be noted that the two options are not mutually exclusive. If the college option were adopted on the Vicarage Street site then the original Masterplan proposals could be moved to other town centre sites. The greatest benefit to the town centre is likely to come from accommodating both college and office/residential development and this is an opportunity to bring about real transformational change to Nuneaton Town Centre as both options do have considerable benefits.
- 1.5 Support of the Colleges Option will mean the library will have to be relocated but advantages of relocating the library in terms of service delivery and success of the Masterplan have been identified in various studies. This is seen as a good opportunity to re-develop the existing library especially considering that it currently needs £3.6 million Net Present Value (NPV) maintenance.
- 1.6 The most advantageous option for relocating the library is Option 4 on the Post Office/ Wilkinson site but this is also the most complex and expensive option. It is recommended that Members authorise officers and provide resources to undertake further work to investigate the commercial viability of Option 4: a new civic and cultural centre including a new library. This will be carried out on the understanding that if the business case for this option is not favourable then the library will move to Church St as a fall-back option (subject to detailed negotiation with Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council (NBBC)) in line with the original Masterplan proposal for the library (which NBBC have endorsed).

- 1.7 Whichever option is preferred there will be financial implications for the County Council concerning the new library. The capital costs of which are broadly estimated as follows:-

Option	Capital cost	Additional first year revenue cost
1. Stay in the same location and maintain/upgrade the existing building	£2.39M	£300K - temporary library £239K - capital borrowing
2. Redevelop on the existing site	£4.89M	£300K - temporary library £489K - capital borrowing
3. Relocate to Church Street Car Park (original Masterplan option)	£4.41M	£300K - temporary library £441K - capital borrowing
4. Relocate to Post Office/Wilkinson site. (Library element)	£7.8M	£300K - temporary library £780K - capital borrowing

Based on current estimates, if Options 3 or 4 were chosen there would be on going additional revenue costs of around £0.3 million to £1.0 million which would need to be included in future years revenue budget.

- 1.8 Members should note, however, that funding for the new library needs to be secured and will require a financial investment from Warwickshire County Council (WCC). If a capital investment is required it is hoped that external funding will be secured from Advantage West Midlands (AWM) for the additional money required to develop a new civic and cultural quarter including a relocated the library as part of a package to deliver the Masterplan. Alternatively, private sector funding could be used and WCC lease back the library.
- 1.9 The alternative is for the Council to retain the present Library with a cost implication of £3.6 million NPV with the consequences for the successful delivery of the masterplan.

2. Background

- 2.1 In January 2005 Area Committee endorsed the Nuneaton and Bedworth Masterplan which had been commissioned jointly by WCC and NBBC and prepared by Consultants Arup. The Masterplan was also approved by NBBC but was not adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance. The Masterplan's aims are to help promote, guide and maximise the medium to longer term future development and regeneration potential of the town centres and consider the best uses for the emerging sites including the proposal to relocate the library on to the Church Street car park owned by NBBC. Since that time the WCC and NBBC multi-disciplinary Project Team has been developing the implementation strategy and progressing the delivery of the plan and recently £1.15 million has been secured from AWM towards site assembly and public realm improvements.
- 2.2 Most recently on 1st February 2007 Cabinet resolved to implement the Masterplan subject to the possibility of detailed amendments in the event that it was subsequently decided to adopt the Colleges Option.
- 2.3 The implementation strategy recognises that Masterplanning is an evolving process and needs to retain flexibility and responsiveness to change as

circumstances and opportunities are presented in the future. This report considers such an opportunity for one of the sites and the overall implications this change could have on the delivery and success of the Masterplan.

- 2.4 Retail in Nuneaton Town Centre is currently performing very well compared to the national average but this is a recent development since Ropewalk opened. It is important that development continues to maintain the town's position in the retail hierarchy as it will experience increased competition from developments in Leicester and Birmingham. A report by Property consultant CACI in December 2005 for NBBC predicted if investment did not continue then the town would lose £10.7 million per annum on comparison goods spend between 2005 and 2010. CACI also recommend that Nuneaton differentiate itself from its surrounding competition. They continue by saying "It will never replace Birmingham and Leicester as destinations for less frequent major comparison goods shopping trips, but it needs to ensure that it offers shoppers reasons for maintaining and increasing their trips to Nuneaton as opposed to other local offers such as Arena Shopping Park and Coventry". Consequently, it is important to have a Masterplan which is deliverable and in line with the vision to attract and keep people visiting the town centre.
- 2.5 The site where a new opportunity has arisen is the Vicarage Street site on the east side of the town centre (see Map in **Appendix A** and aerial photo in **Appendix B**). Currently it consists of the former Police Station (now Justice Walk Car Park owned by NBBC), the former Magistrates Courts (owned by WCC), the Christadelphian Church, St Nicolas Church Hall (about to be purchased by WCC) and the Library. It is the largest priority site in the Masterplan and is in an area designated for both Civic and Cultural Use and Business Use in the Masterplan. The Masterplan suggested that the site is developed as a mixed-use site comprising of offices, small scale retail and residential units. This was endorsed by Area Committee and NBBC in January 2005.
- 2.6 However, in March 2006 an alternative use for the Vicarage Street site was put forward. This was to co-locate North Warwickshire and Hinckley College (NWHC) and King Edward VI College (KEC) on the site as part of a multi-million pound project to provide high quality facilities for learning within the town centre. This use was not considered as part of the original Masterplan as it is a unique opportunity and could not have been foreseen at the time.
- 2.7 The Colleges are currently preparing an In Principle Funding Application to be submitted to the Learning Skills Council (LSC) for £49.5 million in Autumn this year but before submitting their bid they need to give the LSC some assurances that the co-location project is deliverable. To achieve their current timetable the colleges require Local Authority support as major landowners this summer and vacant possession of the Vicarage Street site by October 2008. This would have an impact on the existing library and the second half of this report assesses the options available concerning the future of the library.
- 2.8 The colleges relocation matter was brought before Area Committee on 24th May 2006. At that committee Members requested that further work be carried out to

examine the impact of the possible relocation of the colleges to Nuneaton Town Centre prior to any decision making.

- 2.9 This report describes the two alternatives for the Vicarage Street site and considers and compares the comparative benefits and impacts of the different options.

3. Masterplan Proposals

- 3.1 The Masterplan states:-

“The overarching vision is for Nuneaton’s town centre to be the main urban hub for the Borough, supporting and attracting greater numbers of people to live, work and visit the town centre. The public squares and pedestrian routes will weave the town centre’s environment, heritage and uses together to create local distinctiveness and vibrancy across all areas at all times.”

- 3.2 Bedworth, on the other hand, is “to celebrate and draw on its wealth of community assets as an essential function of the town centre. These often hidden assets will form the centre of a successful market town that is capable of retaining and recapturing local services”. The current priority is the redevelopment of the two supermarkets in the centre of Bedworth.

- 3.3 A map showing the key sites identified in the Masterplan for Nuneaton is attached in **Appendix A**.

- 3.4 With this vision in mind, when preparing the Masterplan proposal for the Vicarage Street site the Masterplan suggested a mixed use development including offices, workshops, small scale retail, residential together with associated car parking. The aim is to have high quality buildings with active ground floor uses and either offices or residential above. In addition, improved public realm and accessibility would also be an integral part of the project. The reason being that these are uses which will increase the number of people living, working and visiting the town centre and extend their use of the centre.

- 3.5 A key aspect of the Vicarage Street development proposals in the Masterplan is that it shows the library relocating from its current position on the Vicarage Street site to the **Church Street Car Park site** which is an adjoining site in the civic and cultural area. This is because relocating the library will make the Vicarage Street site larger and more attractive to developers. The library aspect is discussed in more detail in Sections 5 and 6.

4. Colleges Option

- 4.1 The alternative now proposed is to co-locate the majority of the functions of NWHC and KEC at the Vicarage Street site. This is an opportunity to improve efficiency and coordination between the two colleges and provide students with a better mix of vocational and academic training in high quality facilities. In addition, it is anticipated that making education more accessible, by bringing the main training provider(s) into the town centre will help to increase aspirations and help improve educational achievement across the Borough. This is

essential if local community is to benefit adequately from economic developments in the future.

- 4.2 The more space hungry uses such as engineering and sports would be retained at the existing NWHC site on Hinckley Road with the other uses moving to the town centre. The existing KEC site will be used for college related car parking with the listed building sold separately, possibly for housing. Approximately 50% of the Hinckley Road site would be sold for redevelopment and the colleges intend to use the capital receipts towards the cost of the co-location project. Members should note the creative arts activity of NWHC would be concentrated in Hinckley, Leicestershire and is supported by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council working in partnership with the East Midlands Development Agency and NWHC. The investment anticipated from the LSC is approximately two thirds of the total project costs (£67.7 million) which includes other elements at Hinckley and on the NWHC Hinckley Road site with the investment in Nuneaton amounting to approximately £48.3 million. The colleges investment is broken down as follows:-

Colleges	£12.9 million
LSC grant	£49.5 million
AWM	£2.9 million
EMDA	£2.4 million
Total	£67.7 million

- 4.3 For KEC, the opportunity for the co-location is seen as an alternative to a merger which will allow the colleges to retain their individual identities and strengths and still offer added value learning opportunities to students. This has the support of the LSC and meets the curriculum and efficiency agenda.
- 4.4 KEC has been trying to rebuild for several years due to the inadequacy of their current facilities. If the co-location option in the town centre does not go ahead, then KEC will still have to move to a new location away from their current site, in all probability away from the town centre.
- 4.5 The concept proposals show a block of buildings with a range of heights from 3 to 5 floors covering 25,390 square metres in total. Each block would be designed to provide high quality civic spaces with seating, lighting and trees in the space around the blocks. The current proposals include developing a surface level car park (350 spaces) at the existing KEC site together with a park and ride service from the Hinckley Road site.
- 4.6 At the current time NWHC has 27000 enrolled learners including 24000 adult learners (average age 35+) and KEC has 920 16 –18 year old full time learners. Therefore, there would be a broad mix of students who will be visiting and using the town centre.
- 4.7 The colleges' proposals fit in with Cabinet's refocused vision for the County Council of "raising levels of educational attainment" by improving visibility of the

colleges in such a town centre location to stimulate educational aspiration in the town (an approach advocated by the 2004 Strategic Area Review).

- 4.8 The college option is also seen as complementary to the proposed new library as it would be part of a comprehensive and highly visible development which would enhance the Masterplan's aims of a cultural quarter within the town. There are potential further synergies between the two library developments which could add value to both projects. Potential examples include:-
- (i) Combining catalogues so both are available in all institutions.
 - (ii) Complementary services and training programmes.
 - (iii) Develop complementary stock policies.
 - (iv) Consider the scope for combining software licences for economies of scale.
 - (v) Combined staff development events.
 - (vi) Have a physical link from one facility to the next, enabling customers/learners to pass seamlessly from one to the other.
 - (vii) Extended opening hours.

Further discussions would take place during the detailed design phase to try and maximise these opportunities.

- 4.9 As stated above, the proposed timetable for the college re-location option is that they plan to make an "In-principle" application to the LSC this September. The commitment the colleges need from WCC to accompany their application is a decision to support the proposals and agreement to sell the land to the colleges so that they can obtain vacant possession in October 2008. If successful with their "In-principle" bid they will then submit a detailed application in July 2008, acquire the land and aim to complete construction by 2011. At the same time the two colleges have submitted an outline bid to AWM for £2.1 million to help fund the purchase of key sites from WCC and NBBC.

5. Comparison of Options

(Original Masterplan vs. Colleges' Option)

- 5.1 In order to carry out an option appraisal, WCC appointed Roger Tym and Partners to carry out an appraisal of the two options. They are a consultancy specialising in economic development and regeneration and have extensive experience in impact assessments around the country.
- 5.2 Roger Tym and Partners have produced a report on the economic impact assessment and a copy of their non-technical executive summary is included in **Appendix C**. Their findings are briefly described in the paragraphs below.

Economy

- 5.3 Both options are estimated to bring additional jobs and expenditure in the local area:-

- (i) Masterplan – 286 additional jobs (168 office, 118 retail) - £28 million additional spend/ annum.
- (ii) College – 50+ additional jobs - £5 million+ additional spend/annum from out-of-district staff and students. In addition, there is the potential to also move some of the original Masterplan proposals for Vicarage Street to other sites in the town centre to keep a proportion of the forecast 286 additional jobs and £28 million additional spend generated by the office and residential development.
- (iii) It is worth noting is that if the colleges collocation does not go ahead then it is likely that KEC will move away from the town centre. This will result in reduced expenditure from staff and students in the town centre and an adverse effect on jobs (including those at KEC) in the town centre. In addition, NWHC would also have to consider other options for its future investment plans.

Planning Context

- 5.4 Both projects fit into current national, regional and local policy by providing appropriate uses and new and attractive buildings at a key town centre site. Office and Residential uses are particularly supported in current planning policy documents.
- 5.5 It is considered by planning officers at NBBC that the colleges option, and the relocation of the library, are not fundamental changes to the Masterplan which itself recognises the need for it to be a flexible and evolving document. The colleges would bring additional visitors into the town centre in line and generally cater to the needs of the local area in accordance with the vision of the Masterplan. Furthermore, educational use is not dissimilar in terms of planning designations to the cultural and business uses originally proposed in this area of town.
- 5.6 An Issues and Options paper for an Area Action Plan (AAP), which will provide the planning policy framework for Nuneaton town centre will be the subject of consultation in June /July 2007. Both the existing Masterplan proposal and the Colleges' co-location proposal are likely to fit with the emerging AAP. Once adopted, this will give added planning weight to the delivery of the Masterplan. In the meantime, both proposals would contribute to the vision for Nuneaton in "attracting greater numbers of people to live, work and visit the town centre". The colleges have a particular advantage as they will service the needs of the local area as befits the role of Nuneaton town centre.
- 5.7 All proposals for the Vicarage Street site would be subject to the normal planning application process.

Social Benefits

- 5.8 Educational institutions can be powerful regenerative forces in towns and cities (e.g. Swanswell) as well as contributing to a vibrant day and evening economy. Likewise a mixed use development which included offices and residential would

also contribute to a positive mood in the town but the additional numbers of students and staff that the colleges would bring would also have a added benefit on the vibrancy. As previously mentioned, the high profile of the college development, supported by evidence of new builds in Further Education, creates an incentive to participate in education and thereby can help raise the aspirations of the local community. The improved visibility of the colleges in such a town centre location will stimulate educational aspiration in the town which is vitally important in this area which has the highest numbers of 16-17 year olds not in education, training or employment in the Region (7.9% in Nuneaton and Bedworth compared to 5.5% in the Coventry and Warwickshire sub-region). The acquisition of new skills and qualifications will increase students employability and potential earnings which will contribute towards enhancing the local economy and could be the key to the continued success of the town.

Risk

- 5.9 There is more certainty surrounding the deliverability of the college option compared to the original Masterplan option. Final funding for the colleges option remains to be secured but once that hurdle is overcome we can be confident that the colleges will deliver the scheme.
- 5.10 The original Masterplan does have some positives e.g. that the land use proposed might ultimately generate more employment than the College Option. However, that prospect must be balanced against the greater difficulties in delivery. The original Masterplan is dependent on the vagaries of private sector investment in the town to develop the offices and residential units. Going down this route could mean that the benefits of the Masterplan take longer to be realised.
- 5.11 Although the retail element is doing well, the viability of Nuneaton town centre is still under threat from competing centres (The Arena, Leicester, Solihull, Coventry) and the need to act quickly is paramount. From that standpoint the speed and reduced risk that the College Option brings is a large advantage. Recent work by both Roger Tyms and Entec, who are preparing the Area Action Plan on behalf of NBBC, points to the fact that the demand for high quality offices in Nuneaton town centre is untested. Recent office developments on the outskirts of town have not been fully taken-up and this evidence challenges some of the assumptions in the original Masterplan.
- 5.12 Pursuing the College Option in the first instance would also not exclude the Councils from reverting to the Original Masterplan if, for whatever reason, the College Option was not ultimately able to proceed. The balance of interest does therefore seem to stack up in favour of the County Council supporting the colleges. If they get "In-principle" approval for the project from the LSC then we can be certain that they will be able to deliver the collocation project.
- 5.13 Another risk, which applies to both to the College Option or the Original Masterplan, concerns the funding to relocate the library. Both projects are dependent upon this being secured with WCC being the funder of last resort. Turner and Townsend have endorsed the Original Masterplan proposal, which

was to relocate the library in order to ensure the successful development on the Vicarage street site. Similarly, the colleges need the library to be relocated as they require the full Vicarage Street site for their scheme.

Capital Receipts

- 5.14 Both the Masterplan proposals and the college option have the potential to realise a similar capital receipt for WCC. The colleges have said they would acquire the land at full market value, WCC own 1.374 acres on the Vicarage St site which could result in a potential capital receipt of £1.42 million. At Area Committee on 24th May 2006, Members recommended that Cabinet agree that all funds raised by the sale of WCC land will be earmarked in order to help deliver the Masterplan and ensure WCC's influence on future development. This could go some way to contributing to a new library. However, Members should note that the project would still need to go through the procedures outlined in the County Council's Capital Receipts Strategy before the earmarking can be approved by Cabinet and that £137,000 has already been earmarked from the eventual capital receipt for the former magistrates courts.

Car Parking

- 5.15 Each option would have different impacts in terms of car parking. The original Masterplan option shows a multi-storey car park on the Vicarage Street site which would replace the parking lost on Church Street and Justice Walk. The colleges proposal provides parking for staff and students both on the existing KEC site (approx 350 spaces surface level car park) as well as a "park and ride" service from the NWHC Hinckley Road site for a further 300+ vehicles. A recent survey by NBBC has shown that the loss of 201 spaces (110 in Justice Walk and 91 in Church St) would result in a shortfall of available spaces especially on market days and on a Saturday. However, the provision of the 350 space surface level car park on the existing KEC site, if made available for public parking as discussed with the colleges, would alleviate the shortfall on Saturdays. This car park may not be available for public parking midweek and the high demand for midweek parking, particularly in November and December, would result in pressure on the car parking provision. It will be necessary therefore, to continue discussions with the NBBC, the colleges on further car parking options as part of the ongoing detailed design process.

Traffic Assessment of Development Proposals in Nuneaton Town Centre

- 5.16 The vision for the Masterplan is for more people to visit the town centre and both options will bring more people into the town centre. It is incumbent on the County Council to ensure that transport facilities within the town are able to meet this increase. To this end a traffic model for Nuneaton town centre was set-up.
- 5.17 Using this model a preliminary assessment by WCC's Transport Planning Group has been made of the traffic impact of the two development options for the Vicarage Street site in Nuneaton town centre. The two options considered are:-
- (i) The original Masterplan proposal.
 - (ii) The co-location of the colleges.

- 5.18 The initial assessment compared the likely traffic generation from each proposal by comparing observed behaviour for developments of a similar type and scale. Subsequently this work has been recently supplemented with data from the colleges on the predicted arrival patterns of learners and staff and work carried out by Arup on behalf of the colleges to advise on the car park capacity needs of the town centre college site.
- 5.19 The additional data has shown that, compared to observed behaviour for similar developments where traffic flow arrivals are highest between 9:00-10:00 am, the Nuneaton college proposal is anticipated to be at 90 per cent capacity by 9 am. The traffic generation flows have therefore been adjusted to better reflect the expected arrivals pattern of the college and the “worst case” scenario of the colleges car park at full capacity.
- 5.20 The issue of the potential loss of parking spaces for general town centre use which arises with the college proposal has also been factored into the traffic model of the college proposal. Again, to generate the “worst case” scenario, it has been assumed that parking could be accommodated on the Church Street site for both the college (at 350 spaces) and general town centre use (at 200 spaces) via a multi-storey car park (one of a number of car-parking options which could be investigated as part of the ongoing detailed design process).
- 5.21 Table 1 below updates the position on traffic generation taking into account the above modifications.

Table 1. Traffic generation of College relocation vs Masterplan proposal.

	Masterplan proposal		College proposal	
	Arrivals	Departures	Arrivals	Departures
TOTAL VEHICLES (peak periods 7-9 am and 4-6pm)	621	639	497	322
Residual trips on the Vicarage St site (includes town centre parking)	991	1221	991	1221
TOTAL	1612	1860	1488	1543

5.22 Table 1 highlights that:-

- (i) Whilst the modifications described above have increased the impact of the college proposal in traffic generation terms, the college option is still favourable in traffic generation terms when compared to the Masterplan proposal. Whilst the total number of trips in the morning peak is comparable, there is a noticeable reduction in number of trips for the college proposal in the evening peak compared to the Masterplan proposal.
- (ii) The transport plan of the colleges could be discussed with a view to minimising the impact on peak period flows, for example by staggering start times to spread the arrivals across a longer period, or providing

more remote parking combined with a shuttle service. This would be more difficult to achieve with the Masterplan proposal which incorporates multiple uses and occupiers.

- 5.23 Further modelling work has been undertaken by WCC to assess the impact of traffic generated from the development proposals on the wider town centre road network and to identify the optimum access arrangements to mitigate this impact. This work has confirmed that, even with the worst case scenario, there should be sufficient ability with the introduction of some improvements and changes to the highway network to accommodate the increase in traffic. The exact nature of these changes would need to be determined once a detailed proposal for the use of the area had been identified. However, it is unlikely that large scale alterations to the operation of the gyratory system or ring road would be required. These would be funded via S106 and S278 contributions.

6. Impact on the Library

- 6.1 A major result of implementing either option is that the existing library will have to be relocated. The original Masterplan showed the library moving across the road to the site which is currently Church Street Car Park in order to make the Vicarage Street site larger and more attractive to developers. The colleges require the whole of the Vicarage Street site for their scheme and so require the existing library site to achieve this.
- 6.2 Therefore if Members agree to support the colleges option it would mean that WCC agree in principle to the sale of the existing library site to the colleges. As the colleges would require the whole site by October 2008 it will also require a commitment to constructing a new library in the near future.
- 6.3 Similarly, if the Vicarage Street Masterplan option were pursued then a new library would need to be delivered. However, with this option there would be less pressure to deliver a new library in a short timescale.
- 6.4 Nuneaton Library is the County's second busiest library with over 300,000 visitors per year and contributes significantly to a CPA performance which is currently rated as 3 star. However, the existing library was built in 1962 and is now obsolete in fabric and design, does not offer essential facilities for the public and staff and is in need of extensive redevelopment and maintenance to meet the need and aspirations for a 21st Century library.
- 6.5 Relocating the library would provide an opportunity to construct a new library for the 21st Century. It could potentially be a landmark feature to increase WCC presence within the town centre as well as being a good example of a sustainable and environmentally friendly building. It is possible it could accommodate other WCC services which would fit in with the Corporate Property Strategy. Subject to the results of the Value For Money (VFM) review of libraries, the exact nature and detail of the type of service required is as yet unknown. The results of the VFM review are due to be reported in July but, in any event, Nuneaton will require a major town centre library on a par with Rugby and Leamington.

- 6.6 The Library and Information Service has indicated that they are willing to move into temporary accommodation whilst the new library is constructed in order to facilitate the development of the Vicarage Street site at an early stage. This is not ideal as a prolonged temporary library would have an adverse effect on customer satisfaction and quality of service. However, a move into temporary space may be required anyway in the event of refurbishment of the existing building. Moving into temporary accommodation would incur substantial relocation costs (estimate £400,000), but has happened elsewhere to facilitate other projects e.g. Rugby. The library service recognises although there will be difficulties to overcome in the short term whilst they are in temporary accommodation, there will be long term benefits. One possible site for temporary relocation which is being investigated is “The College in the Town” and the empty premises next door.
- 6.7 The work done by the Masterplan project team and comments made by Roger Tyms in their report has highlighted that there are a number of different impacts and options for the Library which need to be considered and are linked with the future development of the Vicarage Street site. Therefore WCC commissioned further work by consultants Turner and Townsend and they have worked with officers from Environment and Economy Directorate (EED), Adult Health and Community Services (AH&CS) and Resources to assess the options, impacts and costs of the different alternatives for the future library development. The majority of this work has been paid for by AWM as they have recognised the importance of the two projects regarding the implementation and success of the Masterplan.

7. Options for the Library

- 7.1 Turner and Townsend were asked to appraise the costs and benefits of relocation or redevelopment for the Library. They were also to advise on sustainable and innovative but affordable solutions. The four options they were asked to consider were:-

- Option 1** – stay in the same location and maintain/upgrade the existing building.
- Option 2** – Redevelop on the existing site.
- Option 3** – Relocate to Church Street Car Park (original Masterplan option).
- Option 4** – Relocate to Post Office/Wilkinson site.

- 7.2 The Executive summary of Turner and Townsend's report is included in **Appendix D**. The findings are briefly summarised below.

Option 1 - Maintain/Upgrade the Existing Building

- 7.3 This is a baseline do-minimum option which would make the library fully accessible for both public and staff but there would be no expansion to improve service pressures and service delivery. The location would remain poor in relation to pedestrian footfall and the library would continue as a stand alone service.

- 7.4 The cost of maintaining the existing building is expensive and estimated to be **£3.6** million (NPV – net present value) over the next 25 years due to the works required. It is questionable whether it is good value for money to commit this level of expenditure on the existing library when considerable advantages can be realised from a new building.

Option 2 – Redevelop on the existing site

- 7.5 A redevelopment on the existing site would have additional benefits beyond those described in Option 1. It would ease some accommodation pressures and allow for new services and facilities for the library to meet 21st Century expectations including space for toilets currently not provided.
- 7.6 The library service would have to move into temporary accommodation to facilitate the new build which would add to the cost of this option which is calculated to £5.7 million (NPV). However, even with this substantial investment there would be no long term benefits to service provision, the Vicarage Street site would not be released for future development and the library would remain as a stand alone service in an inferior location in terms of footfall.
- 7.7 It is unlikely that external assistance would be available for either Option 1 or 2, and the full cost would rest with WCC without the possibility of a capital receipt from the sale of the library site to off-set the cost

Option 3 – Relocate to Church Street Car Park

- 7.8 This is the location for the library shown in the original Masterplan although the latest design differs as the library is shown in a slightly different position on the site together with residential development instead of a hotel. Residential was chosen as the capital receipt would be greater and this could contribute to the cost of the new Library.
- 7.9 This option will have similar advantages and disadvantages to Option 2 but would allow for full development on the Vicarage Street site which itself would increase footfall in the area.
- 7.10 The cost of Option 3 is £5.1 million (NPV) which is less due to the residential contribution.

Option 4 – Relocate to Post Office/Wilkinson Site

- 7.11 Option 4 is the more ambitious proposal of combining the new library with other appropriate services on the site currently occupied by Billberries, the Post Office, Wilkinsons and the Tax Office. The proposal consists of ground floor retail with the library together with other appropriate services above.

7.12 Some of those services could potentially include:-

- (i) Youth and Community Services.
- (ii) Leisure Trust.
- (iii) Nuneaton Arts Council/ Abbey Theatre.
- (iv) Nuneaton Disability Day Services.

7.13 This would be the largest, most costly and lengthy option, but would have numerous benefits if realised. These would include:-

- (i) The existing library site could be released for development.
- (ii) A better position in the town with the potential to greatly enhance visitor numbers.
- (iii) Potential for a larger library space if required.
- (iv) Provides the opportunity for provision of community function space and a wide range of complementary community and public services.
- (v) A development such as this will be a catalyst for the development plans for the town centre.

7.14 Ballpark estimates indicate that such a comprehensive scheme could cost in the region of **£30 million - £40 million** to deliver including the cost of acquiring the site. The library element could be approximately **£7.8 million** (NPV) of this but this could vary depending on the space required for the library service and the level of external funding that could be levered-in.

7.15 Members should note that this is a complex option and will require a full development appraisal. However, because it has several advantages it is officer's view that it should be explored and more time be given to fully assess this option, decide if the business case can justify a new library as part of a community facility, continue discussions with the various other services who have expressed an interest in being involved with the project, continue to discuss the proposals with the existing owners, undertake more work on the funding opportunities and get a commercial view on the viability of the project from the private sector.

7.16 The advantages to developing this site are common to both Vicarage Street options and so there is no additional risk in supporting one or the other.

7.17 Through this work it has become clear that each site is closely linked with the development on the others and only by considering all the sites as a whole will we be able to get co-ordinated development to fulfil the vision of the Masterplan. For example, the Tax Office at Powell House could be moved to the office development on the bus station site. This will be a factor when considering the commercial viability of the scheme and will be examined further with NBBC.

Financial Implications

7.18 Table 2 below illustrates the costs of the options 1 to 3.

Costs of Options

	Option 1 £'000 (Note 2)	Option 2 £'000 (Note 3)	Option 3 £'000 (Note 4)	Option 4 £'000 (Note 5)
Capital Cost				
Building Improvements	2,600			
Professional Fees	200			
Demolition of existing library		250		
Demolition of existing buildings			75	
Site acquisition			850	
Building of new library		3,300	3,300	
External works		250	500	
Inflation, fees & contingency		1,000	970	
Provision for fixtures, fittings & equipment for new library		500	500	
Total	2,800	5,300	6,195	?
Income from disposal of vacant land at former Magistrates courts (note 1)	-415	-415	-415	
Income from disposal of residual land for residential use			-500	
Income from disposal of existing library site (note 1)			-871	
Shortfall	2,385	4,885	4,409	?
Potential sources of funding to be investigated	WCC only	WCC only	?	?
Revenue				
Fitting out of temporary library	200	200	200	
Annual lease of building for temporary library accommodation	100	100	100	
Annual cost of capital borrowing (Note 6)	239	489	441	
Average Saving on Annual Maintenance Budget	-4	-6	-6	
Average Saving on Annual Running Cost budget	0	-8	-8	
Provision for new stock	0	300	300	
Total revenue to be found	535	1,075	1,027	0

- Note 1 Subject to approval to use of capital receipt
- Note 2 It is anticipated that further maintenance would be required in year 12 at a capital cost of approx. £574k.
- Note 3 It is anticipated that further maintenance would be required in year 15 at a capital cost of approx. £495k.
- Note 4 It is anticipated that further maintenance would be required in year 15 at a capital cost of approx. £495k.
- Note 5 Requires further feasibility studies, subject to members' approval.
- Note 6 This is a worst case scenario, which assumes all capital funding would have to be met by WCC.

Table 2 Financial summary table

Option 1

7.19 In order to carry out essential maintenance to the existing library building, WCC would need to identify additional capital resources of £2.4 million in the short-term, and a further £574,000 12 years later to ensure the ongoing viability of the building. This estimated capital cost would be reduced by £415,000 through the disposal of land at the former Magistrates courts (subject to member approval). It is assumed that the ongoing running costs of the library would continue to be met from within existing budgets.

- 7.20 The NPV of this option is £3.6 million, which includes both the immediate and future capital costs, and the annual revenue costs of the building, over a 25 year period.

Option 2

- 7.21 The estimated net capital cost of building a new library on the existing site is £4.9 million, assuming the use of the capital receipt from sale of land at the former Magistrates courts site.
- 7.22 As with option 1, it is assumed that the ongoing running costs would be met from within existing budgets. However, there would be one-off additional revenue requirements, currently unfunded, from the need to equip and stock the new library. This is estimated at £800,000.
- 7.23 The NPV of this option is £5.7 million, which, like option 1, includes the short-term capital costs plus capital maintenance in year 15 of £495,000, plus annual revenue costs.

Option 3

- 7.24 The estimated net capital cost of building a new library on the Church Street site is £4.4 million. This assumes that the capital receipts from disposal of the former Magistrates courts, the existing library, and residual land on the Church Street site could be used towards the overall capital cost.
- 7.25 Again, it is assumed that the ongoing running costs would be met from within existing budgets, and there would be additional revenue requirements, currently unfunded, from the need to equip and stock the new library. This is estimated at £800,000.
- 7.26 The NPV of this option is £5.1 million, which again includes the short-term capital costs plus capital maintenance in year 15 of £495,000, plus annual revenue costs.

Option 4

- 7.27 The costs associated with option 4 would be assessed as part of a further feasibility study, subject to members approving that this work proceeds. The library element of this scheme would be more ambitious, and the NPV of this scheme is currently estimated at £7.8 million. Feasibility work would include further investigation of external funding opportunities.

Funding the shortfall

- 7.28 Funding the £4.9 million shortfall (£2.4 million essential maintenance + £2.5 million net additional cost to relocate the library with Option 3) could be met from:-
- (i) WCC.

- (ii) External Funding.
- (iii) Public/Private Sector scheme.

At the present time, there is nothing in the capital programme either for the essential maintenance or the additional cost for a new library. However, there is the opportunity when discussing with external funding providers or the private sector to secure all or a significant amount of this shortfall. The argument being that it is only with new library and the full £4.9 million will the delivery of the Masterplan occur and the associated benefits to the town that that will bring.

Preferred Option for the Library

- 7.29 Subject to the value for money review, it is inevitable that the present Library will either be substantially refurbished or replaced. Relocating the library is desirable due to the benefits it would bring both to improvements to the library service and the delivery of the Masterplan as originally envisaged.
- 7.30 Both Option 3 and Option 4 would therefore achieve these benefits with Option 4 having the potentially bigger impact to bring a wider range of benefits for the whole County Council. This is explored in greater depth in the outline business case attached in **Appendix F**. For these reasons Option 4 should be considered the preferred option with Option 3 a fall-back/fail-safe option if further work establishes that Option 4 is not deliverable.
- 7.31 Fundamentally, further work needs to be carried out on the full business case justifying the relocation of the Library together with the funding shortfall being identified and reviewed. At this time, this is a necessary caveat to the support of the Colleges Option.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 As stated in paragraph 5.6 the Colleges Option will be one of the options considered by NBBC in the consultation for the Issues and Options stage of the AAP. Only if the consultation shows general support for the idea will this use be included in the next stage of the process – The Preferred Option stage.
- 8.2 The consultation for the Issues and Options Stage will be carried out from 22nd June to 3rd August and will involve consulting:-
 - (i) Statutory consultees.
 - (ii) Government Bodies.
 - (iii) Stakeholders (Town Centre Businesses).
 - (iv) Council Members.
 - (v) Others on the Council's Local Development Framework consultation database (which includes hard to reach groups, local organisations and members of the public).
- 8.3 The timetable for the AAP is:-
 - (i) Work on preferred options Aug - Dec 2007.

- (ii) Consultation on Preferred Options January-February 2008.
- (iii) Preparation of Submission Doc March-August 2008.
- (iv) Submission September 2008.
- (v) Adoption November 2009 as one part of the Local Development Framework for the Borough and will supersede the town centre policies in the recently adopted Nuneaton and Bedworth Local Plan 2006.

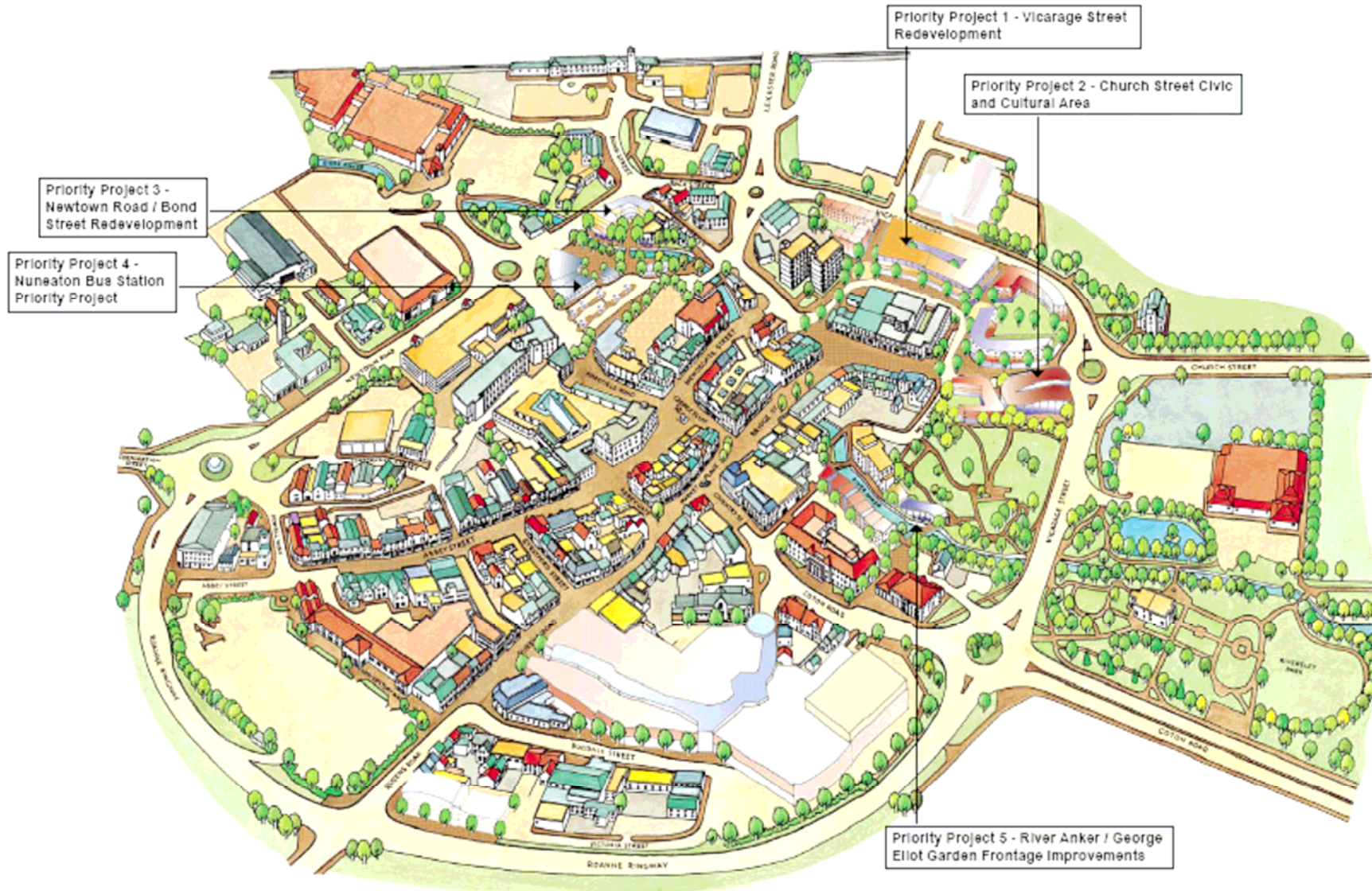
9. Conclusions

- 9.1 Both the original Masterplan and the Colleges Option for the Vicarage Street site would result in considerable benefits for Nuneaton town centre. Although both options would have an impact on the library, they provide a good opportunity to re-develop the existing library especially considering the fact that the existing library needs £3.6 million (NPV) maintenance.
- 9.2 It is concluded that the best option for the town is to allow the Colleges Option to be developed on the Vicarage Street site and move the original Masterplan proposals to other town centre sites. Although these proposals may be smaller in scale than originally envisaged, it is felt that on other sites they are more realistic in size and deliverable. This will be examined further with NBBC.
- 9.3 In conjunction with the Colleges Option the Library will be relocated. If the civic and cultural centre including a new library is commercially viable this will also bring considerable benefits to the town.
- 9.4 Both projects together provide a real opportunity to bring about transformational change to Nuneaton Town Centre. As well as a potential investment of over £100 million other benefits include developing the skills agenda and would contribute to the County's refocused vision of raising levels of educational attainment.

JOHN DEEGAN
Strategic Director for Environment and Economy
Shire Hall
Warwick

GRAEME BETTS
Strategic Director of Adult, Health and Community Services
Shire Hall
Warwick

4rd July 2007



Nuneaton and Bedworth Masterplan - Consideration of Colleges Relocation Option

Arial Picture of Vicarage Street site



Appendix C of Agenda No 2

Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Committee – 10th July 2007

Nuneaton and Bedworth Masterplan - Consideration of Colleges Relocation Option

Roger Tym's Executive Summary Economic Assessment of Colleges Relocation

Warwickshire County Council
***ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF COLLEGE
CO-LOCATION IN NUNEATON TOWN CENTRE***



TYM & PARTNERS
Planners and Development Economists

Executive Summary
December 2006

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1 Warwickshire County Council has commissioned Roger Tym and Partners to conduct an economic options appraisal of Nuneaton Town Centre. A Masterplan for Nuneaton Town Centre was published in 2005.
- 2 The report examines the economic and social impacts of the relocation of North Warwickshire and Hinckley College and King Edward College VI in Nuneaton town centre's Vicarage Street site. This proposal did not form part of the original Masterplan for Nuneaton Town Centre. Warwickshire County Council and Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council wish to assess the relative benefits to Nuneaton of the original Masterplan compared to the FE college proposals. The co-location of the Colleges at the Vicarage Street site implies that the Masterplan option for the site will be foregone or an alternative location will need to be sought.

The Co-location Proposal

- 3 The project appraised proposes to co-locate the North Warwickshire and Hinckley College (NWHC) and the King Edward VI College (KEC) at the Vicarage Street site within the town centre boundary. In total, the gross internal floor space required for the College co-location at the Vicarage Street site is 25,390 square metres.
- 4 The proposal will release land at both existing college sites. The proposal is to retain the more space hungry uses of the Colleges at the NWHC's Hinckley Road Campus in two new buildings; the Sports and Wellness Centre and the Technology Centre together with new sports pitches and car parking. And to develop a surface level car park on part of the current KEC site.
- 5 The indicative project costs of the college co-location are estimated at £67.7 million over a three year period. Based on the indicative figures the total public sector requirement is for approximately £49.5 million for the entire development.
- 6 At the time of writing the following outline funding is being looked at to support the College co-location:
 - The Colleges have indicative figures of the amount of borrowings they can expect for the co-location, somewhere in the region of £11.3 million, the majority of the loan (£10 m) taken out by NWHC.
 - The Colleges are currently in the process of preparing an In Principle Funding Application to be submitted to the LSC. The investment anticipated from the LSC is in the region of two thirds of the total project costs.
 - As the major land owners of the Vicarage Street site, NBBC and WCC are currently in discussion regarding the release of the site and support for the Colleges relocation. The colleges have indicated that they wish to acquire the land at values applicable to educational use rather than mixed use, resulting in

a potential loss of income to NBBC and WCC. Should the proposals seem likely to proceed it will be for Councils in due course to consider whether the benefits of the scheme as a whole are sufficient to justify the loss of receipts.

- Discussions are underway with AWM although no funding agreements have been arrived at. If available funds for AWM will be used to fund the non-educational elements required for this project.

The Masterplan Proposal

- 7 The Masterplan proposes a business quarter on the Vicarage Street site with a mix use led by offices and studio/ workshops (4,210 sq m) supported by retail and cafes (3,320 sq m) with residential units on upper floors (63 Units) and a multi-storey car parking facility accommodating 340 parking spaces.
- 8 A financial appraisal for the Masterplan option for the mixed use development at the Vicarage Street site has been carried out by DTZ Pida. The total cost of such a development is estimated at £30.3 million with an estimated value of £36.1 million. The residual sum of £5.8 million represents the surplus at the end of the development, which can be seen as the indicative value of the Vicarage Street site post-development based on this financial assessment.

The Strategic Fit

- 9 The proposed co-location of the colleges at the Vicarage Street site supports the current national, regional and local policy by providing new and attractive buildings at a key town centre location as well as raising the level of economic activity in the town centre. The Colleges will also introduce a diverse student population from mixed age groups into the town centre thereby improving the vitality of the town centre. The Colleges co-location will encourage positive synergies and complementarities between the Colleges and Nuneaton Public Library.
- 10 There is also support for the office-led mixed use development, as proposed in the Masterplan, in national, regional and local policy documents. Office and residential uses in the town centre are particularly supported in PPS6 and RPG11.

Benefits – College Co-location

- 11 The college co-location is not expected to provide a significant level of additional direct employment since the Colleges will relocate existing staff and there are efficiency gains expected from the shared facilities

and resources. Nevertheless additional jobs are expected as a result of additional expenditure in the town centre from both staff and students.

- 12 In 2004/05 the Colleges injected a total expenditure of approximately £5.5 million into the local economy. Approximately £2.1 million of this expenditure was for the purchase of local goods and services and £3.4 million for local salaries. In addition student expenditure is estimated at approximately £7.2 million in the local economy. The indirect and induced impacts of the expenditure results in a total impact of approximately £15.5 million.
- 13 These income effects are translated into employment opportunities – this provides us with an estimate of 160 jobs supported in the local economy as a result of the Colleges expenditure in the local economy.
- 14 It is difficult, at the high level of examination undertaken for this study, to estimate the change in expenditure as a result of the college co-location at the Vicarage Street site. However we test the potential implications by making a number of assumptions: we assume that as a result of the proximity of the proposed development to the retail core and town centre leisure provisions, there will be greater expenditure from out-of district staff and students. The figures are illustrative of the potential impacts and the process by which positive gains can be made. On the assumptions used the increase will potentially generate an additional £5 million in the local area which is equivalent to support for 50 additional jobs.
- 15 The co-location of the Colleges is also expected to provide a number of non-quantifiable benefits through their impact on the skills and education of the local population:
 - Improving the visibility and profile of the Colleges and education will create incentives to education. This could be particularly beneficial in an area of low academic attainment as in Nuneaton and Bedworth.
 - Education institutions are powerful regenerative force in towns and cities throughout the UK
 - Education institutions provide the local area with a stream of highly trained graduates
 - Colleges can contribute to up-skilling a firm's existing workforce
 - Skills are also an important determinant (some studies place it as the most important determinant) of employers' willingness to invest in a location
 - An impact on the mood of the town both during the day and in the evening.
 - Provide a positive improvement to under used area of previously developed land.
 - For individuals who complete their college training, the acquisition of new skills and qualifications increases both their employability and their potential earnings.

- 16 King Edward College cannot develop on its existing site. Without an alternative town centre site the educational profile the college gives to Nuneaton will be lost and the economic activity deriving from the staff and students will be diminished.
- 17 Whilst no additional jobs may result from the co-location proposal it would have the effect of safeguarding the KEC (and multiplier jobs) to the town centre.

Benefits - Masterplan

- 18 The office led mixed use proposal could bring office jobs into Nuneaton and also help start up new business in the area. If the development is successful it could regenerate the area and bring more people into the town centre.
- 19 The office development is also likely to attract a higher level of human capital to the area and/ or retain individuals with high human capital in the local area. The socio-economic profile of Nuneaton and Bedworth shows that there is significant out-commuting from the district for jobs. Higher value added activity would also work as an incentive to acquire higher skills within the local population.
- 20 The Masterplan estimates the employment benefits of the mixed use development at the Vicarage Street site. The Masterplan calculates that this development will be associated with 286 additional jobs – 168 office jobs and 118 retail jobs. This would generate roughly £28m turnover for the town centre or an additional local GVA of £4.4m¹.
- 21 A significant increase in office rents above current levels will be required in order to make office development viable in the town centre². But, higher rents are unlikely with the current stock conditions, and furthermore given the availability of alternative high quality office space within easy access of the town centre. There are also significant office developments in the pipeline outside Nuneaton town centre.
- 22 However, the property market review of Nuneaton town centre notes that the lack of modern office stock within Nuneaton's town centre means that the rental market for quality stock has not been tested. In other words, it may be the case that the lack of office demand is the result of a lack of office supply in Nuneaton town centre. If this is the case, the Masterplan office-led mixed use development would be viable. However there is a large risk element associated with this. The risk can be ameliorated if office is integrated with residential then this could subsidise the office

¹ GVA (Gross Value Added) is a measure of the value of economic activity generated in an area. It is the additional value added to goods and services after accounting for bought in elements.

² Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council and Warwickshire County Council, January 2004, "Nuneaton & Bedworth Masterplan Property Market report"

rents. Securing a “big-win” in the form of a major letting would significantly help to kick start office development in Nuneaton.³

- 23 In conclusion, there is a need to promote and provide high quality office space in Nuneaton town centre, however current demand is low and there is competition from out of centre locations with lower rental, higher quality and easy accessibility. Therefore we do not expect office development to be viable in the short term of the Masterplan. The Masterplan does identify opportunity sites for office development in the medium and long term – a total of approximately 17,940 sq m is allocated in the town centre in the medium to long term.
- 24 Whilst bringing some additional footfall and expenditure to the town centre in the form of additional office workers, the Masterplan proposal would not deliver the same social impacts as college proposal.
- 25 In considering the Masterplan benefits it is important to note that there are alternative site opportunities in Nuneaton town centre where office or residential development could be delivered. The Masterplan may be one physical representation, but it is the Masterplan content which ultimately delivers the benefits to Nuneaton. Some proportion of the £28M turnover and 286 additional jobs that may potentially arise from successful delivery of the masterplan option could still be delivered via development on other priority sites.
- 26 The financial appraisal carried out by DTZ Peda identified the proposed development at Vicarage Street as generating a positive economic return. But again this will be primarily determined by the mix of uses proposed and a similar economic return is likely from alternative city centre sites. Therefore adoption of the colleges proposals should not be seen as necessarily negating other positive benefits identified in the masterplan option.

Car Parking

- 27 The College co-location proposal provides for 625 car parking spaces. 350 spaces are to be provided at KEC’s existing campus at King Edward Road, which is within the town centre boundaries. Additional car parking would be provided at the existing NWHC for the Sports and Wellness Centre and the Technology Centre. In addition the site will also accommodate a “park and ride” scheme to service the Town centre campus.
- 28 A demand assessment for the park and ride scheme will be required to judge the viability and potential take-up of this option. If unsuccessful the development is likely to exert additional pressures on car parking in and around the town centre. However it is also likely that as a result of the

³ Op cit

Vicarage Street site's close proximity to rail and bus stations, more sustainable means of transport will be used by college students.

- 29 The provision of parking at the King Edward site and NWHC site should provide adequate parking for the Colleges students. The co-location will nevertheless imply a loss of parking in the town centre relative to current provision as there are 110 spaces at the site (Justice Walk Car Park) currently. There is no recent evidence on the level of need for car parking in Nuneaton town centre. We are therefore unable to comment in detail on the implications of the loss of current car parking at Vicarage Street and loss of the car parking option of the Masterplan. A town centre car parking assessment is required to provide factual advice on the car parking requirement in the town centre.
- 30 It is notable that there is a clear difference between the transport aims set in the national planning policy guidance and those stated in the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Local Plan. The national guidance states that more sustainable transport choices should be sought, reliance of car travel should be reduced and that parking policies should be used to promote this. On the other hand the local plan says that it will maintain the existing level of public car parking arguing that the town centre requires sufficient and convenient car parking in order to ensure its vitality and viability. The car parking assessment will need to consider the policy perspectives.
- 31 Anecdotal evidence shows that it is unlikely that students will compete for parking in the town centre due to the costs of short term parking in the centre versus parking in the provided college space. Students are unlikely to consistently afford the short term car parking in the town centre reserved for shoppers. The car parking assessment should examine whether the requirement of shoppers and College attendees falls at the same time – it is likely that the peak hours of car parking are different for students and shoppers. For example the peak times for shopper are weekends and holidays during which the Colleges are closed.

Summary

- 32 The comparative benefits of the Masterplan and College Relocation options are summarised in the table below.
- 33 It is important to note the existing contribution of the colleges to the economy of Nuneaton. They currently support over 800 direct jobs with a further 160 being supported through the expenditure of the colleges, staff and students.
- 34 The co-location of the colleges would not bring any additional direct jobs to Nuneaton, but are likely to result in safeguarding of jobs in total. It would also specifically safeguard the KEC jobs at the town centre. KEC

accounts for around 100 jobs in total in Nuneaton town centre and though these would not be lost to the district as a whole they would be displaced from the town centre. There would also be some loss of economic activity due to reduction of spending of college staff and students if KEC were to relocate away from the town centre.

- 35 The College Relocation will bring positive economic, planning and social impacts to the town centre. It will make an important contribution to developing the skills agenda which is recognised as being of national as well as local importance. It would also contribute to the vibrancy and vitality of the town centre.
- 36 The Masterplan proposal would bring an additional 286 jobs contributing £4.4m to local GVA. In employment and output terms it would have a larger benefit for the town centre. But as it stands it is a paper scheme only and is not backed by real demand. Whilst Nuneaton town centre needs new office jobs there is a high risk of nothing happening.
- 37 The two options should not be seen as mutually exclusive for the town centre – although clearly they are for the Vicarage Street site. Although there does not seem a strong prospect of new office development coming though in the short term, the Colleges proposal could have a catalytic effect on the town centre hence enhancing the prospects of office development in the medium term. The greatest economic benefit to the town centre is likely to come from accommodating both college and office/ residential development and this should be a realistic option.

conomic Appraisal of College Re-location in Nuneaton Town Centre
Executive Summary

Proposal	Costs	Quantifiable Outputs	Wider Socio-Economic Impacts	Strategic Fit	Risk	Deliverability
College co-location at Vicarage Street.	£67.7 million	<p>The Colleges are a major employer in Nuneaton employing over 830 staff – equivalent to ca 670 FTEs.</p> <p>It is calculated that the College currently supports over 160 jobs in the local economy.</p> <p>The co-location at the Vicarage Street site could create in the region of 50 additional jobs supported in the local economy. (This is an illustrative figure based on assumption of spending patterns. Detailed survey work needs to be carried out to provide a more precise picture).</p> <p>Some proportion of the outputs from the masterplan could be generated by re-distributing the proposed uses to other masterplan sites</p>	<p>Contribute to the skills agenda by improving the visibility and profile of education.</p> <p>This in turn can raise skills profile of local workforce with positive impact on productivity and investment and lead to higher take-up of higher education.</p> <p>Positive impacts on life and vibrancy of town centre.</p>	Fits with national, regional and local policies. However there is some contention with the Local Plans car parking policies.	The key risks of the development are delivering the project on time and to specified costings. This is a risk facing all major projects that can be ameliorated with appropriate planning and design.	<p>At the time of this report there is no agreed funding for this option. Negotiations with key partners are underway however no agreements have been reached.</p> <p>There is a high public funding requirement as a result of this development, somewhere in the region of £49.5 million according to the indicative financial appraisals.</p>

Proposal	Costs	Quantifiable Outputs	Wider Socio-Economic Impacts	Strategic Fit	Risk	Deliverability
Office led mixed use development at Vicarage Street	£30.3 million	<p>The calculated net additional direct jobs from this option are for 286 jobs based on additional floorspace.</p> <p>This would generate around £28m annual turnover for the town centre or an addition of £4.4m to local GVA.</p> <p>63 residential units</p>	<p>Positive impact on image of town centre for future investment.</p> <p>Provision of higher skilled jobs.</p>	Mixed use developments with office, residential and retail uses are particularly promoted in the national, regional and local policy documents. The Masterplan proposal is closely aligned with the policies of PPS6, RPG11 and the Local Plan for Nuneaton and Bedworth.	Aside from delivering the project on time and within budget, this option also has a major risk of lack of office demand in the short term. A property market review indicates that there is high competition from lower cost, high quality and easily accessible office locations.	The financial appraisal of the Masterplan option indicates that there is a residual surplus value of £5.8 million at the completed development.

Appendix D of Agenda No 2

Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Committee – 10th July 2007

Nuneaton and Bedworth Masterplan - Consideration of Colleges Relocation Option

Turner Townsend's Executive Summary Library Option Assessment

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Masterplan for Nuneaton and Bedworth town centres was published in November 2004. One of the priority projects was to construct a Library and Cultural Centre on the Church Street Car park site as well as a 40-50 bed hotel.

Since the Masterplan was published, North Warwickshire and Hinckley Colleges(NWHC) and King Edward VI Colleges(KEC) have brought forward a proposal to create a unified colleges campus on the Vicarage Street site. If successful this would require for the existing library site to be vacated. An Economic Appraisal of the Colleges Relocation in Nuneaton Town Centre by Roger Tym and Partners was published in December 2006 supporting the proposal.

In light of the colleges proposals, Warwickshire County Council wish to explore the feasibility of the new Library and Cultural Centre and have identified four options. Two of these are on the existing site, the third is on the Church Street car park and a fourth is on the site currently occupied by the Post Office and Wilkinsons.

Library Options Appraisal

The development of the Vicarage Road site presents four options for the existing library.

Option 1 shows that refurbishment of the existing building would be costly (up to £3.7m to extend its life by 25 years) as it is in poor repair and rebuilding on the Church Street site would cost around a further £1.6m. A benefit of rebuilding would be to make the building accessible to all , it could provide some additional space for improvement of services and would be a new building constructed to 21st Century Standards.

While the local authority does not have a dedicated fund for renovating or replacing the existing library, its relocation to the Post Office site would give this important public facility a much more central position within the town, with the potential to greatly enhance visitor numbers. It also offers the opportunity to combine with other community uses to form a one-stop cultural focus at the head of Bridge Street. Potential links with the new colleges and a shared goal of creating an additional public events space would further enhance its attractions.

The advantages, disadvantages and benefits for each option are briefly summarised in the tables below.

Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
1 – Existing Building	Cheapest and Quickest option	Fails to address location issues and Masterplan objectives. High maintenance cost
2 – Existing Site Rebuild	Land in WCC ownership Improves library orientation Fully Accessible building	Prevents full scale redevelopment of Vicarage Street site Limited increase in visitor numbers Second Most Expensive
3 – Church Street Site	Meets Master plan Objectives Allows full scale redevelopment of Vicarage Street site Cheapest New Build Option Fully Accessible building	Limited links with other developments. No greater connection with the town centre
4 – Post Office Site	Meets Masterplan objectives Allows full scale redevelopment of Vicarage Street site Excellent links with other sites and the town centre Greatest impact on visitor numbers Increase in library space and other community services	Most expensive option

Summary of the benefits	Library Option 1	Library Option 2	Library Option 3	Library Option 4
To strengthen the town centre's role as the Borough's urban hub.			✓	✓
To establish an accessible and well connected centre.			✓	✓
To ensure a high quality and safe town centre environment			✓	✓
Release of Library Site to facilitate Colleges proposals or other development			✓	✓
Increased residential / hotel development in town centre			✓	✓
Maximum potential to increase use of library				✓
Provide space for other Community functions				✓
Provide Performance Space				✓
Provide Health and Fitness facilities				✓
Provide Hotel & Conference Facilities				✓
Additional Retail and Restaurants				✓
Enhanced Night Time Economy				✓
Increased investment in town centre				✓

Impact on other Nuneaton sites

Post Office Site

Relocating the library to the Post Office site would undoubtedly bring major community benefits. This would, in turn, require the Post Office, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) office, the Wilkinson's store and Bilberries pub to relocate. As the Post Office counter function no longer operates from the Post Office site, the distribution/sorting office function could be located out of town, Bilberries could be included as part of the commercial element in the implementation and the HMRC office could be relocated into a new development possibly on the Bus Station site. Wilkinson's is a popular store and could be incorporated into the next phase of the Ropewalk shopping centre if this is taken forward.

Negotiations would have to be undertaken with all the existing occupiers on the timing, relocation and disturbance costs.

Whilst undertaking the work required for this report it has been recognised that in tandem with the library development on the Post Office site, a number of complementary uses to the library and colleges could offer new leisure, retail and the potential of an enhanced central night-time economy for the town all of which go towards achieving the vision of the masterplan.

Bus Station Site

The potential of the bus station site as the focus of new office development for both the local authority (around 2,000m²) and HMRC (around 500m²) would serve as the focus of office-based regeneration and while the market for a speculative office element is yet to be tested a new facility totalling around 3,000 m², plus the upgrading of the vacated 2,000m² of office space offer the potential of bringing significant economic growth.

Church Street Site

If the library and other facilities were to redevelop the important Post Office site, this would release the Church Street site for alternative development.

One option would be to use the site for residential as it would overlook George Eliot Gardens. Another possibility would be a multi-storey car park that could be utilised by the college, the general public and associated new hotel or residential developments. Thus if the library is rebuilt on the Post Office site, residential development could take place on the KEC site instead of car parking as envisaged under the colleges' proposal. This would in turn fund the multi-storey car park at Church Street.

Links With Further Education Initiatives

The colleges have brought forward an innovative proposal to create a unified campus on the Vicarage Street site. While this area was previously zoned for mixed use, incorporating offices, workshops, retail, residential and a multi-storey car park, the colleges' proposal would bring wider social benefits.

Recommendations

It is recommended that WCC release the existing library site to facilitate the full development of the Vicarage Street site, in particular the co-location of the colleges in the town centre.

Whilst Option 3 is a failsafe option for the library, it is only a relatively small step in delivering the masterplan. If the colleges' scheme gets approval then pursuing Option 4 would show a stronger commitment to delivering the masterplan by not only strengthening the cultural, education, retail and leisure offer it would also help to unlock other sites within the town.

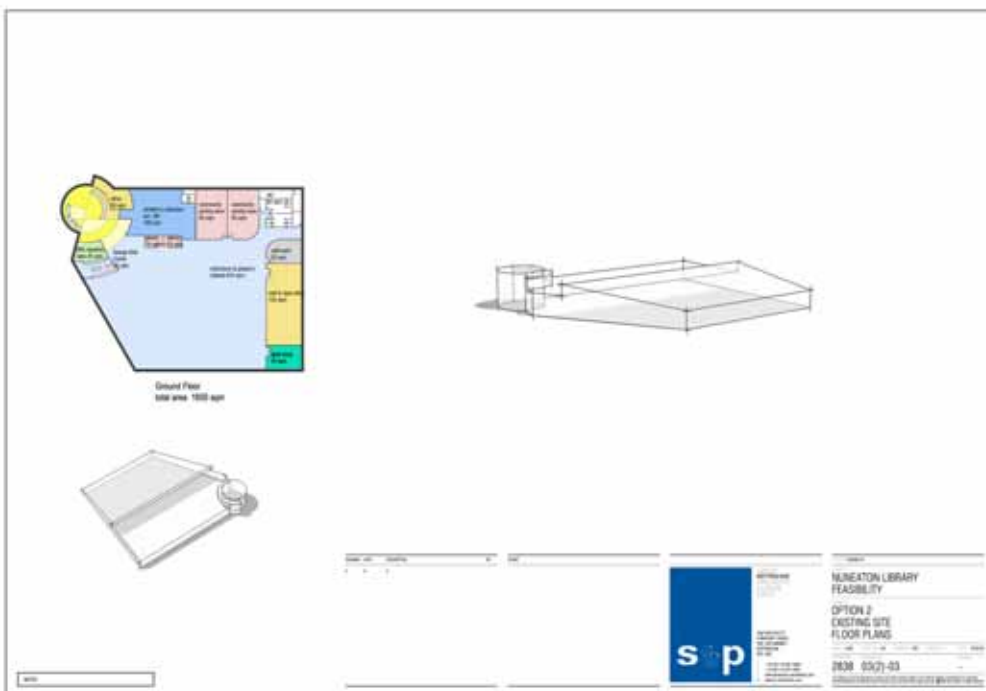
Appendix E of Agenda No 2

Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Committee – 10th July 2007

Nuneaton and Bedworth Masterplan - Consideration of Colleges Relocation Option

Library Feasibility Option Plans

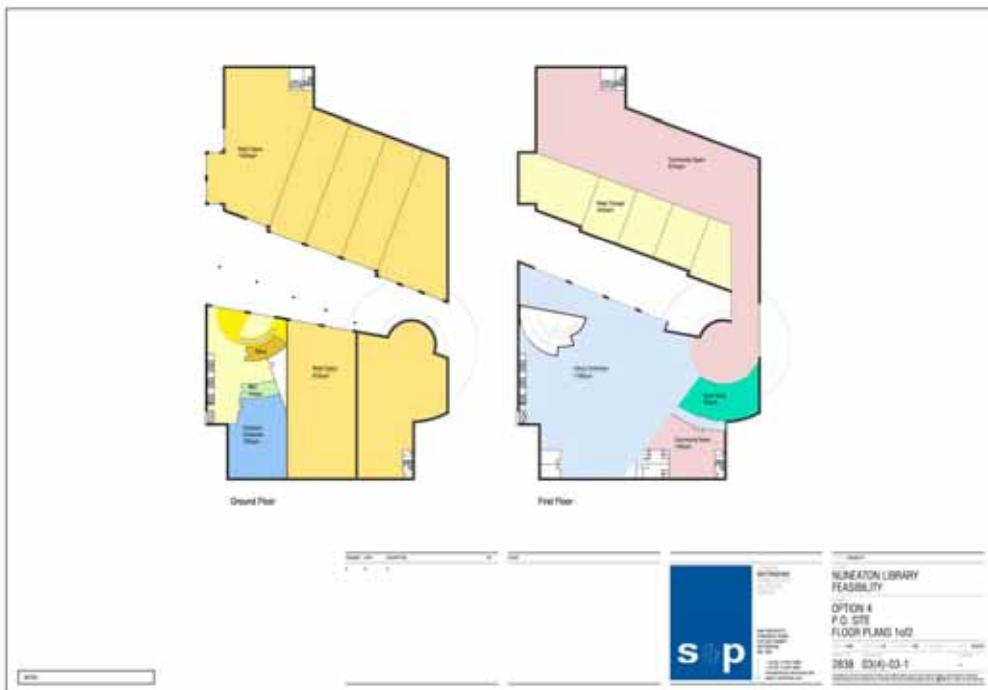
Option 2

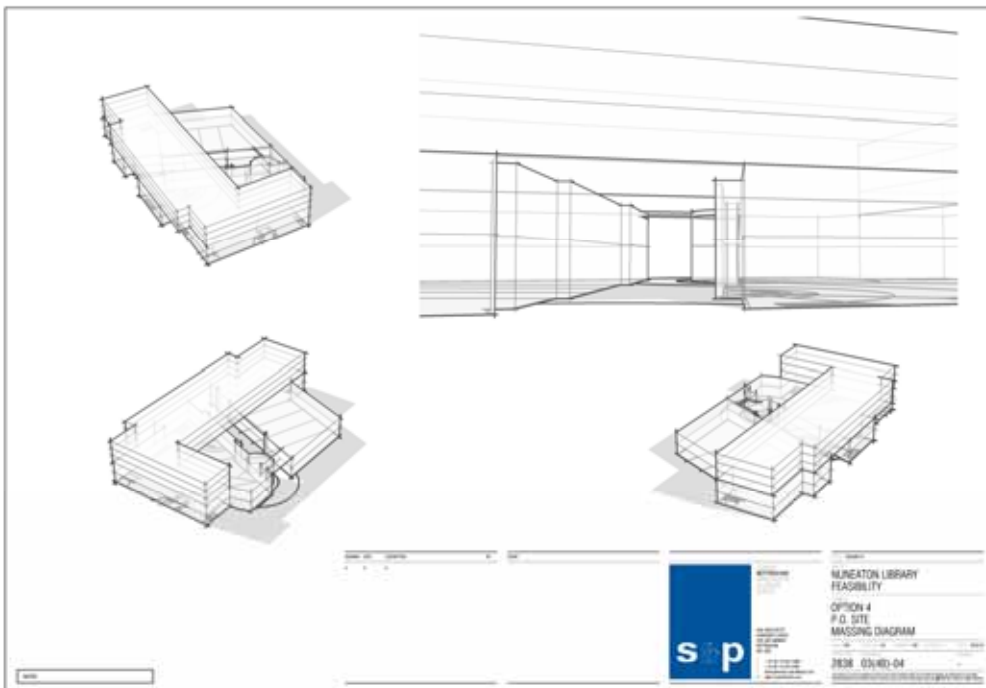


Option 3



Option 4





Appendix F of Agenda No

**Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Committee –
10th July 2007**

**Nuneaton and Bedworth Masterplan – Consideration
of Colleges Relocation Option**

Outline Business Case for New Library in Nuneaton

Outline Business Case for a New Library in Nuneaton

Summary

The Masterplan for Nuneaton proposes a complete redevelopment of the Vicarage Street site, including the relocation of the present Library. Warwickshire County Council has yet to consider the replacement of the Library, and this paper sets out the business factors that should be taken into account in doing so. These factors apply equally whichever option is adopted for the implementation of the Masterplan.

The present Library is obsolete and sub-standard. If it is to be retained for the foreseeable future (Option 1) it requires extensive up grading and on-going maintenance, estimated by Turner and Townsend at around £3.6M over 25 years. Doing so will improve the fabric and environment within the current shell, but will not address its inherent disadvantages of size and location. This represents the minimum cost to the Council of the 'do-nothing' option for the Library, with consequences for the Masterplan.

The Masterplan process has given rise to a far more visionary proposal, namely to acquire the Wilkinsons / Post Office block at the Head of Bridge Street as a multi-service Community Hub incorporating the Library (Option 4). This would permit a larger Library, and also space for a range of complementary services by Warwickshire County Council and others. The full costs of this need further investigation, but the Library construction element is broadly estimated at £8m, some of which might be available from other sources.

That approach will take further time to explore with potential partners and funders. In the meantime the Council needs to know the cost of a replacement Library on a like-for-like basis, in order to facilitate its discussions about the Masterplan. Turner and Townsend have estimated this as about £6m if the present site is redeveloped (Option 2), slightly less if the Library relocates to the Church Street car park, releasing surplus land for development (Option 3).

Whichever option is chosen there is likely to be a need to relocate the Library in temporary accommodation for a significant period, maintaining the service that attracts over 300,000 visits each year. The costs for Options 1 and 2 include an element for relocation. This cost may be recoverable if a deal is available with an external developer (Options 3 and 4) and so they are currently omitted there. In any case it will be important to find the right location in the town centre if service to the public is not to be severely restricted during this phase.

Introduction

The Library world is changing. Technological developments and evolving social patterns have transformed the context in which the service operates over the last 10 – 15 years. After a time when many Library Services appeared fusty and irrelevant, they are once more at the front line of civic life, this time in the 'Information Age'.

This is a worldwide trend, as well as a national one. Warwickshire County Council has played its part, investing considerably in publicly accessible ICT, dramatically refurbishing a number of its libraries and investing in new building developments where strategically justified, as well as the new Mobile fleet.

Naturally such a task is rarely if ever completed. A number of the Council's outlets remain in need of substantial improvement if they are to meet rising public expectations and ambitious government targets. One of these is Nuneaton.

This report sets out the principal business considerations for Warwickshire County Council in resolving how this is to be achieved, given the unique, once-in-a-generation opportunity presented by the Masterplan.

Masterplan Context

The Masterplan emerged sets out an approach to regenerate Nuneaton and Bedworth town centres and secure their viability in the face of growing competition. Substantial investment and redevelopment is needed to equip each town for the challenges of the next twenty years. Vitality of town centres is not simply a question of retail activity, important as this is. ARUP's proposals (November 2004) stressed that cultural opportunities, tourism and the strength of the evening economy will also be key success factors.

ARUP identified the replacement of the current Library as a Priority Project for the delivery of the Masterplan in Nuneaton. It proposed a development on the Church Street car park, combining this with a 'boutique' hotel. Subsequent officer discussions identified the Wilkinsons / Post Office site at the head of Bridge Street as having greater potential, both for the Library and Information Service itself and for a highly visible multi-service centre directly engaging with the retail heart of the town.

The Colleges' proposals have not diminished this view. Indeed the prospect of a 'learning quarter' takes the concept to a further level, with scope for the joint promotion of informal and formal learning. However the main opportunities for and benefits in renewing the Library remain whichever direction is taken for the Masterplan as a whole.

Statutory Responsibility for Library and Information Service

The Masterplan rests on the unusual volume of land in public ownership in Nuneaton town centre and potentially available for development. The Vicarage Street site is the largest site of all, and the Library comprises about 25% of this site. If the Library site is not to be included then the site could be significantly less attractive to developers.

However for the County Council to release that site it needs to be absolutely sure on two fronts: that the future permanent Library is secure and funded, and that arrangements are in place for a temporary Library service of acceptable quality to users of the service in the town centre. This should also be for a definite and acceptable period, say a maximum of two years, which would compare with the experience at Rugby. Otherwise the Council could be held in breach of its responsibilities for the Library and Information Service.

The 1964 Local Government Act lays down the requirement for Library and Information Services to be 'comprehensive and efficient.' Ten years later local government reorganisation consolidated that responsibility with County Councils. This is when the County Council acquired Nuneaton Library from Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council.

In 2002 the government introduced statutory Public Library standards for the first time. Warwickshire County Council was assessed against these standards as a three star, top quartile authority, being 'Very good with excellent prospects of improvement.' The standards were revised in 2005 and incorporated in the CPA. At its last assessment the Council was awarded three stars for cultural services including the Library service.

Local Area Agreements also have implications for the County Council and its stewardship of the Library and Information Service. Both countywide and in Nuneaton and Bedworth, it is clear that the Council faces considerable expectations in areas where the Library and Information Service can make a real difference, such as improving educational attainment and employability, and promoting health improvement.

Nuneaton Library

Performance and business trends

Nuneaton Library is Warwickshire's second busiest Library after Rugby, and on par with Leamington. Over five years its footfall has grown from 300,186 to 318,183, while Internet sessions have increased from 10,668 to 71,934. The Library recruits increasing numbers of new members, with 3,347 joining in 2006 – 07 compared to 2,012 in 2002 – 03. These figures contribute substantially to the Council's three star rating for the Service.

However they do not adequately convey the expanding range of users. Over recent years Nuneaton Library specifically has successfully:

- Supported Bookstart, engaging increasing numbers of newborns, their parents and carers in shared reading and word play, equipping the rising generation to engage more positively with education and improve their life-chances
- Actively supported the Borough's Healthy Living Network, reaching out to families in disadvantaged communities and promoting family literacy
- Engaged very positively with Silver Surfers, providing accessible and non-threatening learning opportunities for many older and disabled people for whom access to ICT has become a virtual gateway to life-enhancing information, opportunities and experiences
- Hosted and delivered 'Working Lives', a much-needed initiative to gather and preserve vital evidence of the Borough's former industries through the voices of those who worked in them
- Improved relationships with minority ethnic communities in Nuneaton, encouraging significantly more use of the library by people from those communities. These now comprise one eighth of library members compared to one tenth previously (Public Library User Surveys 2003, 2006).
- Played a full part in the Council's innovative relationship with the BBC, including the 'Virtual Open Lounge', a national 'first' that is becoming widely recognised as a successful way to engage with people over matters of concern to them

Recent improvements to the Library

Nuneaton Urban District Council built the present Library in 1962 to an innovative design by Gibberd, who was mainly known for his large-scale housing developments. Its fabric has aged considerably, however, and by the 1990s had begun to look tired and out-moded, even more so by comparison with the Council's large new Libraries at Rugby (1996) and Leamington (1998). Furthermore English Heritage confirmed this year that the building is of insufficient architectural merit to qualify for listing.

In 2002 the Council provided £300,000 for improvements to libraries, of which £70,000 was allocated for Nuneaton. This was used to remove partitions, reconfigure service points from three to two, and provide a simple air circulation system. New furniture helped to make the public area more flexible, and European funding enabled the creation of a new Travel and Tourism section in a former storage area. Routine maintenance at the same time comprised a rebuild of the entry vestibule, removal of asbestos in the roof, and redecoration of the ground floor.

This gave the Library some fresh impetus with the public and probably helped towards the positive performance trends of the last five years. However, much remained to be done.

Structural problems and deficiencies

In particular the sum available was insufficient to address some serious structural and service problems, and so the Library still has a number of major deficiencies. These are:

- a) Deteriorating structure and services require over £400,000 to correct (ref. WCC Asset Management Plan), such as re-roofing, replacing the unserviceable under-floor heating system, re-lighting and re-wiring.
- b) Very poor environmental control, leading to acute discomfort in extreme weather.
- c) No amenities for the public: - w.c.s, baby-changing, buggy park, refreshments, informal areas for relaxation, etc.
- d) No accessible meeting space for public or community activities. The whole first floor is inaccessible.
- e) Insufficient numbers of public computers, giving frequent rise to public complaints. No possibility of allocating blocks of computers for training or other group activities during public opening hours.
- f) Insufficient space for public computers affording little privacy, especially difficult for users requiring assistance or an enabler.
- g) Open plan public floor area means inadequate accommodation for target groups.
- h) No space for confidential advice or consultation.
- i) Poor accommodation and facilities for staff – cramped working areas, too few w.c.s, cramped kitchen, no rest room, shower, etc.
- j) Poor disabled parking arrangements, loading facilities for deliveries.
- k) Pedestrian access from town centre across busy un-controlled road.
- l) People feel unsafe after dark and reluctant to use / work in the evenings.
- m) Electricity sub-station located within the building

If the present Library were to be retained for any length of time it would have to be substantially up-graded. Consultants Turner and Townsend compute the cost to Warwickshire County Council of retaining the present Library for 25 years as being £3.8m including capital investment and maintenance. In view of its responsibility for the service and the building the Council is unlikely to receive any help from outside sources towards these costs. This therefore indicates the likely direct cost to the Council of the 'do-nothing option' in relation to both the Library and the Masterplan.

Innovation and Wider Ambitions

Benefits of optimum location

The aim of the Masterplan is to re-invigorate Nuneaton town centre as means to benefit the whole community over a timescale of 15 – 20 years. Nuneaton is the largest settlement in Warwickshire as well as one of the most disadvantaged, and only the most steadfast and sustained regeneration programme is likely to make a real difference in the medium term. A point in favour of the Masterplan is the timely number of publicly owned development opportunities in the town centre, following on from the Justice Centre and Rope Walk.

The best hope of success lies in the most imaginative and ambitious approach to exploiting all these opportunities. For example the impact of developing the Vicarage Street site will be largely made or marred by the inclusion or omission of the Wilkinsons / Post Office block

(including the Tax Office, Post Office Depot and Bilberries). As it is, this obsolete, unattractive block will continue to mask the new development from the town centre and act as a physical barrier between the shopping centre and the new buildings.

The acquisition of this site would allow the development of a significant new Community Hub, including the Library. At the head of Bridge Street a new landmark building would contribute hugely to the feel of the town centre, while bringing the Library and other facilities closer to the people the Council needs to engage (Appendix 1). It could be well worth facing all the inherent difficulties to achieve a genuine multi-service Hub offering

- State-of-the-art Library and Information Services with excellent complementary facilities, (catering, meeting rooms, advice rooms, learning suite etc), appealing to all of the community including current non-users of the service, and enabling the service to focus more closely on those with the greater need
- Flexible shared public spaces and facilities so that WCC and its partners may operate more effectively in Nuneaton town centre, such as:
- Wider cultural opportunities, for example bringing 'Warwick-based' services (Museums, Arts, Archives) to Nuneaton
- Social Care and Health, giving service users and carers easy town centre access to professional guidance, short-term activities, a drop-in and meeting point
- A consistent programme of health and healthy-living activities and promotions
- A 'centre of excellence' for people with disabilities of all kinds including intellectual access as well as exceeding the DDA minimum standards for physical amenities
- Integrated support for independent and informal learning to improve progression in learning and training in partnership with learning providers
- Complementary activities for children, young people and adults – a family destination
- A high quality town centre 'shop window' for WCC as a whole perhaps including other service departments, Area Committee etc.

Complementary developments also being explored with other agencies include:

- Flexible multi-use performance space for music, drama and dance productions by local groups, schools, colleges and professionals, as well as awards evenings, civic events and commercial uses, enhancing the evening economy
- George Eliot interpretive centre, using the Council's internationally recognised George Eliot Collection to bring 'Warwickshire's *other* world class writer' alive for local people and visitors
- A possible location for the George Eliot Hospital Historic Healthcare collection
- A new town centre youth facility to engage with young people from across the area in new ways
- Healthy living activities for children as well as adults, in partnership with other providers

Benefits of a larger library

The fulfilment of this ambitious approach requires a larger Library, currently envisaged as 2,400 sq. m., with virtually all the additional space being in the public areas. This compares with the present Library footprint of 1460 sq. m., of which approximately 980 sq. m. is public. A table detailing these proposals is attached. (See Appendix 2). This would enable a more comfortable experience for users of the general collections and ICT, also allowing

space to be tailored to the needs of priority groups. Service innovations could be accommodated without detriment to other aspects of the service. Some additional spaces would be used for some of the other services and activities mentioned above (para. 5.1).

Specifically an expanded library would not only deliver substantially higher levels of use (as demonstrated particularly at Rugby). It would provide attractive facilities for a wide range of community and public activities, and have well-managed reciprocal arrangements with other organisations especially those providing town centre services. It would not seek to offer every service in house. This is the real sense of the term Community Hub.

Such an innovation would make a strong statement about the value afforded to public-facing services by the County Council, and show its commitment to the town centre and its regeneration. Private sector experts believe it would stimulate the greatest external investment in the town centre, and also help to fulfil the Council's aim of having high quality and comprehensive flagship Libraries in the main centres of population.

The costs of this scale of provision would be greater than for a replacement library on a 'new-for-old' basis. Initial estimates suggest it could be in the order of £8m - £10m. However the expanded range of services and activities could open the door to external funding and partnership arrangements with other agencies. Design innovations would minimise energy consumption and environmental impact, while other costs could be contained through the further utilisation of technology. It may be attractive for a developer to build the Hub and lease it back to the Council and its partners, while some costs could be offset through residential or hotel development above.

Improving performance in the cultural sector

The evening economy of Nuneaton is recognised as limited, with most of the offer being specifically around pubs and clubs. There are few leisure alternatives in the town centre, and public transport reflects this. After 6.00pm Library usage too is low, and with the cinema located at Bermuda the cultural sector as a whole contributes little at present to the evening economy of the town.

The main opportunity for addressing this is in relation to the live arts and entertainment. The activities at the Abbey Theatre attract good levels of participation but are enjoyed by smaller audiences than they deserve – total annual attendances are estimated at 25,000. The location and facilities of the Abbey Theatre (capacity 220 seats) are significant factors in this situation, which has been recognised for some time.

Relocation to a town centre location would undoubtedly bring greater rewards for those taking part, but a new facility could be designed to meet a wider range of needs. Amateur and professional organisations, school and college presentations, large-scale meetings and conferences would all add considerably to the range of town centre visitors, mainly in the evenings and at weekends. Such a development could also benefit restaurants and other businesses.

A flexible auditorium seating 300 – 400 people would increase the income-generating capacity of the voluntary sector arts groups without replicating the provision at Bedworth Civic Hall. A 400 seat venue operating all year with an average of four shows per week could be expected to generate at least 50,000 visits per year.

The improved visibility of a town centre venue and the attraction of good new facilities would provide a stimulus for participants and audiences that could have benefits across the Borough. If the Wilkinson's / Post Office option is pursued, discussions with the Borough Council (owners of the Abbey Theatre), Nuneaton Arts Centre and other parties should be prioritised to identify the most suitable model for this development and its operation.

Two other possible cultural initiatives should also be considered in connection with the development on this site. A George Eliot Interpretive Centre aimed at the general public would bring into play the Council's important but under-exposed George Eliot collection.

Unlike many great authors, George Eliot has no historic home that acts as her memorial or heritage centre. However this year's 'Scenes Revisited' festival may provide evidence of potential for a longer-term development. Several bodies are committed to promoting Eliot's reputation, achievements and importance as a Nuneatonian, of which the Library and Information Service is one.

The collection comprises over 2000 texts, some unique, many 100 years old and in need of conservation. This was recently estimated at around £70,000. External assistance towards this sum would be more likely on the demonstration of a full and sustainable access strategy to make the collection more widely appreciated. It would therefore be pragmatic for the Council to pursue this idea as a means both to provide for the conservation of its collection and to maximise its value for local people and visitors.

The other initiative concerns the need to find accommodation for the Historic Health Care collection formerly curated by the George Eliot Hospital Trust and now in store. If the suggested focus on health improvement and social care could be developed in the Hub it would make excellent sense to display this collection here.

Each of these initiatives is capable of attracting visitors as well as residents, providing a further strand of cultural activity that contributes to the vitality of the town centre as a whole.

In addition the Library's Tourism Information Centre could be re-modelled to offer new services and levels of information, such as housing high quality displays about local heritage and cultural attractions. The 'Working Lives' initiative could provide audio-visual material to celebrate the industrial heritage of the town and bring this alive to visitors.

Health improvement and social care

Health inequalities indicate some of Nuneaton and Bedworth's most ingrained problems, and therefore it is important for a development such as this to help address these in new ways. The Library and Information Service has an established role in disseminating health information but the limitations of the present library mean this is restricted in Nuneaton.

Many of the proposed spatial additions for the new Library would directly benefit the promotion of healthy living. They would allow a substantial Healthy Living Zone to be created in the Library, and enable outside professionals to provide group or one-to-one advice. There would be more capacity for externally produced information exhibitions, and greater privacy for Internet users engaged on sensitive health matters.

Even more possibilities exist if space can be developed to accommodate partner agencies on a continuing basis. For example, the Leisure Trust could offer physical and healthy living activities to people visiting the Library, and vice-versa. The Hub could promote an ethos of 'healthy mind, healthy body' with an impact far greater than the sum of its parts.

The Borough also has a high proportion of people with long-term limiting health conditions and people providing unpaid care. Adult Social Care is anxious to modernise its services to these priority groups, and sees a unique possibility in the Community Hub. A friendly and accessible point of contact in the Hub could provide many new services and forms of support, such as:

- An easy point of informal contact between service users, carers and professionals
- A drop-off or pick-up point for service users on day-to-day activity programmes

- A place where service users and carers have easy access to mainstream public services including the Library and Information Service
- A place to offer drop-in activities for service users, allowing carers periods of free time
- A place to model high standards of provision for people with single and multiple impairments, such as the 'Changing Places' initiative

There may be opportunities within Adult Social Care to review its property portfolio in order to fund this development.

In all, by aligning healthy living and social care initiatives alongside a new Library and Information Centre the County Council will be underlining its commitment to work with partners on this vital range of issues.

Minimum Replacement of the Library – the fail-safe option

It is clear that the possibilities surrounding the Community Hub are considerable and will require time and resources to explore more fully. They may not all be achievable, and agreement will be needed on priorities once more feasibility work has been done.

Meanwhile the Council needs to clarify some basic questions. Is it prepared to invest in a new Library in Nuneaton at all, and if so what is the minimum commitment likely to be? It is estimated that the 'do-nothing' option will cost a minimum of £3.6m over 25 years. Would this be the best use of the Council's resources, especially considering its effect on delivery of the Masterplan?

Turner and Townsend have estimated the cost of a new Library, comprising the floor area of the current Library plus about 10% to accommodate essential amenities such as public w.c.s, improving access, and so on. This would take the footprint to approximately 1650 sq. m, compared to the 2400 sq. m. proposed for the most ambitious approach.

If this were to remain on the present site (Option 2), the overall cost after 25 years is put at £5.7m. Building on the Church Street car park (Option 3) would cost an estimated £5.3m on the same basis. The reduction is attributable to the fact that the present WCC holding on the Vicarage Street site is larger than the footprint needed for the new Library, so the Council could make a little money through relocating to the Church Street car park site.

Naturally a building on this footprint would have little additional space for new facilities. The operational efficiency of the building would be improved, it would be accessible throughout, and some services could be presented more attractively. However it would miss a number of significant opportunities and advantages compared to the best-case proposal above. The list is not exhaustive, but includes:

- It would remain a stand-alone service, located out of the main shopping area and pedestrian through-flow
- It would continue to struggle for internal space to accommodate new service initiatives or present existing services to best advantage
- It would be difficult to designate space to address the needs of priority groups without a negative impact on the wider range of users
- It would not provide the additional cultural or health and social care benefits envisaged in association with the Community Hub

It appears from these figures that the County Council faces an immediate choice between retaining the present Library at a cost of some £3.6m to make it serviceable, (with its consequences for its services and for the Masterplan), or spending an additional £2m to

procure a new Library. This is not yet the preferred option for the service or for the Masterplan, but it offers a fail-safe measure to secure the future of the Library and Information Service in the town centre while also progressing the Masterplan.

If this can be absolutely guaranteed then the Council will be able to dispose of the plot occupied by the Library in good faith, helping to maximise the development of the Vicarage Street site, a major component in the delivery of the Masterplan. The Council will also be justified in committing to further exploration of the Wilkinsons / Post Office site should it wish to do so.

Appendices:

1. Aspirations for the Community Hub – AHCMT March 1st 2007
2. Provisional requirements for Libraries Learning and Culture – AHCMT January 11th 2007
3. Nuneaton Library: Guarantee required to vacate current premises

Appendix 1

Adult Health and Community Management Team March 1st 2007

Flagship Development for Warwickshire County Council in Nuneaton

Aspirations for Proposed Community Hub including New Library

1. The Nuneaton and Bedworth Masterplan (ARUP 2004) stresses the importance of enhancing cultural and civic amenities and services in the town centre to complement retail growth. Within this the procurement of a new landmark building for the Library and Information Service in Nuneaton is the crucial 'big idea' (Priority Project 2).

The present Library is well used and has many positive aspects. Footfall is growing, with a broad range of users. However after 45 years its design and construction are seriously outmoded and no longer fulfil 20th Century needs, let alone 21st Century expectations. It is also vital to focus more closely on helping disadvantaged communities to achieve improvements in educational attainment and health.

The Masterplan presents WCC with a once-in-decades opportunity to provide something for Nuneaton people that is at least as visionary in the 21st Century as the present Library was for the mid-20th. Only the highest aspirations for the new development will fully deliver the Masterplan, secure the long-term vitality of Nuneaton town centre and assist the regeneration of the wider community.

2. If this great opportunity becomes reality it could comprise:
 - State-of-the-art Library and Information Service nested within excellent complementary services and facilities, appealing to all sections of the community including current non-users of the service
 - Flexible shared public spaces and facilities so that WCC and partners may operate more effectively in Nuneaton town centre, such as:
 - Social Care and Health, giving service users and carers easy town centre access to professional guidance, short-term activities, a drop-in and meeting point
 - A consistent programme of health and healthy-living activities and promotions
 - A 'centre of excellence' for people with disabilities of all kinds including intellectual access as well as exceeding the DDA minimum standards for physical amenities
 - Integrated support for independent and informal learning to improve progression in learning and training in partnership with learning providers
 - Cultural activities, bringing 'Warwick-based' services (Museums, Archives) to Nuneaton
 - Complementary activities for children and young people – a family destination
 - A high quality town centre 'shop window' for WCC as a whole including other service departments, Area Committee etc.
3. Complementary developments also being explored include:
 - George Eliot interpretive centre, using the Council's internationally recognised George Eliot Collection to bring 'Warwickshire's *other* world class writer' alive for local people and visitors
 - Flexible multi-use performance space for music, drama and dance productions by local societies, schools, colleges and professional performers, as well as awards evenings, civic events and commercial uses, enhancing the evening economy
 - A possible location for the George Eliot Hospital Historic Healthcare collection

4. In order to achieve this it is important to recognise the scope and limitations of the present Nuneaton Library.

Aspiration	Current Library
1. Landmark building to raise aspirations and inspire confidence	Refused historic building listing because of insufficient architectural merit
2. Well located and highly visible to encourage maximum use 3. Co-located with complementary services and facilities to broaden appeal among non-users. The new building will also need an imaginative name to convey this.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located at margin of town centre. • Busy uncontrolled road separates from shopping area • Location deemed unsafe after dark, discourages evening use • Stand-alone presence limits 'cross-selling'
4. Well designed and fit for purpose	Fabric and services obsolete and in need of substantial investment. Building very uncomfortable in extreme heat, cold
5. Attractive and welcoming, meeting high 21 st Century public expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No public toilets, baby changing, baby feeding, buggy-park etc. • No refreshments service • No informal area for relaxation, social contact
6. Fully accessible to all members of the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First floor inaccessible, does not meet DDA for public or staff • Too little space for differentiated services to priority target groups • Disabled parking arrangements poor
7. Hub of community activities and engagement	No accessible public meeting space, no discrete area for activities during public open hours
8. Access to computers sufficient to meet individual needs, support group learning activities and fulfil government agendas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too few public pcs to meet demand • Too little space for users' comfort, especially where enabler is needed, no privacy • No discrete learning suite, so group learning sessions not possible during opening hours
9. Public are comfortable to seek information and advice, including on sensitive or confidential matters	No discrete area, confidential advice room etc.
10. Staff have good standard of facilities and feel valued	Staff facilities outmoded and inadequate – too few wcs, no restroom, shower (people cycling to work etc.) Work- space is cramped and antiquated.

Appendix 2

Adult Health and Community Management Team January 11th 2007

Libraries Learning and Culture -

Provisional requirements and specification for new Nuneaton

1. Environment and facilities

- a. Easy access from car parks and by pedestrians
- b. Convenient point for coaches to drop-off / pick-up
- c. Lively and safe environment which people are happy to visit or work in, day or night
- d. Co-located with compatible services to expand range of users
- e. Attractive, welcoming and inclusive public aspect
- f. Accessible and safe public toilets, baby changing, buggy-park etc.
- g. Refreshments – franchise delivering a quality cafe service, perhaps evening restaurant
- h. Retail offers – both library and commercial (for example newspapers, books, stationery)
- i. Crèche facility (franchise)
- j. Removal of the electricity sub-station from within the building

2. Library services and resources

- a. More space to display and promote lending collections, reference materials
- b. Additional public IT with scope to use for groups / training
- c. Additional private study facilities
- d. A children's library suitable for children of different ages and their families / carers
- e. Spaces to cater for the needs of target groups, e.g. young people, BME communities
- f. Visual display and exhibition space for community information, temporary exhibits
- g. Informal seating / reading areas around the library
- h. Meeting / community rooms, including confidential advice

And, subject to further exploration

- i. Other ICT including security, RFID, LCD screens
- j. Fully automated 24-hour lobby / express service
- k. Appropriate space / display for the nationally important George Eliot collection
- l. Replace obsolete furniture and equipment
- m. Additional injection of new stock

- n. Improved tourism information function
- o. Future requirements of the BBC

3. Library staff work areas

- a. Accessible working space and amenities appropriate for number of staff
- b. Suitable delivery / loading arrangements
- c. Staff meeting and training room, also for use by other organisations

4. Other Libraries Learning and Culture requirements

- a. Large space for wet / dry activities to accommodate school class groups, with storage
- b. Lunch space for groups visiting all day
- c. Access to display space and facilities in the new Centre
- d. Facilities to 'meet the public' within the new Centre
- e. Hot desk facilities for staff while facilitating activities in the new Centre / local area

5. Provisional spatial estimate

Based on the above, we provisionally estimate the space required to be in the region of 2,400 sq. m., excluding circulation, wcs, other services and utilities.

This is currently made up as follows:

- a. Library collections on public display including browsing areas: 1215 sq. m.
- b. Other public facilities and activity spaces including customer service, IT, study, meetings, group activities, exhibitions, BBC: 580 sq. m.
- c. Staff work areas and back office functions: 600 sq. m.

The detailed breakdown is attached.

Activity / requirement	Present space (sq. m.)	Space needed	Reason	Addn % / sq. m.	Comment
Public library collections incl:	850	1795	Principal additions:		
Adult Fiction	150	210	Additional stock, circulation	140%	
Adult nonfiction	170	310	Create zones, browsing areas	182%	
Large Print / Spoken Word	20	95	Cater for aging population	475%	
Children	140	200	Homework support, activities	143%	
Teenage section	20	40	Ambience	200%	
Multimedia	20	55	Presentation, additional stock	275%	
Multicultural	10	40	New languages, migrant communities	400%	
Express	0	40	Quick choice, self-service, out-of-hours	New	
Hot-spots and retail	0	50	Promotions, local products, book sale	New	
Reference	30	30	Increased use of on-line sources	100%	
Local Studies	85	85	Family history, local studies	100%	Currently includes George Eliot
Magazines	10	20	New lending line	200%	
Skills for Life	10	40	Adult literacy	400%	
Subtotal	665	1215		183%	
Other Public Services					
People's Network	40	95	Add 10 pcs for class tuition, groups	238%	Cramped, poor environment
Tourism Information	50	65	Books to non-fiction zone	130%	Cramped, out of sight
Quiet study	0	100	10 Carrels, 20 study tables, wifi	New	6 tables in Local Studies
George Eliot 'centre'	0	80	Exhibition and learning centre	New	Poorly displayed in Local Studies
2 Community activity rooms	0	100	Library as community focus	New	Societies, LLC activities, events
2 confidential advice rooms	0	20	IGA, Credit Union, Counselling	New	Nowhere at present
Customer service	30	40		133%	
'Storygarden' external area	0	50	Summer use, children's space	New	
BBC Reporter base	15	30	Add for Virtual Centre pilot 2007	100%	Will need negotiation
Subtotal	135	580		430%	

Foyer, other	50	tbc	tbc	<i>Property Services to advise</i>
Total Public area LIS	850	1795	211%	

Staff and back office	450	600	County standard, other facilities, visiting staff	33%	Very poor environment for staff
Services	135	tbc		tbc	<i>Property Services to advise</i>
Total area LLC	1435	2395			

Appendix 3

Nuneaton Library: Guarantee required in order to vacate current premises

The Library site is required to enable a substantial redevelopment of the town centre, identified in the Masterplan as Priority Sites 1 & 2.

The Library and Information Service is keen to support and participate in the regeneration of Nuneaton town centre, and is prepared to relocate in order to facilitate this provided that its service to the public is not compromised.

The County Council has statutory responsibility for the Library and Information Service. It therefore needs to guarantee that the following conditions are fully met, if it is to discharge that responsibility for the service in connection with the Masterplan.

1. That the County Council guarantees the provision of a new landmark building to house the town centre Library for Nuneaton so as to meet 21st Century expectations, which:
 - a. takes account of the Library and Information Service requirements already identified, and
 - b. maximises the potential for mutual collaboration with the other services being accommodated nearby through the redevelopment of the town centre
2. That funding for the costs of developing and equipping the new library is fully guaranteed by the County Council, or under-written in association with any partner organisations
3. That any net additional revenue or sustainability cost to the Library and Information Service resulting from the development is fully funded by the County Council
4. That suitable temporary accommodation will be provided, with the costs of acquiring, adapting, equipping and removing to and from, with this being at no additional cost to the Library and Information Service.
 - a. The temporary accommodation to be convenient for the public coming in to the town centre
 - b. The accommodation to be fully accessible and large enough to house the current service
 - c. The accommodation to be ready to open before the present Library closes