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# Museums, Arts & Heritage Forum

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2010  
Sun Hotel, Hitchin



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# Agenda

- **Welcome & Introduction**  
**John Robinson,**  
Strategic Director Customer Services
- **Background & Overview**  
**Councillor Tricia Cowley**  
Portfolio Holder for Community &  
Rural Affairs
- **Proposals for Hitchin Town Hall**  
**Neil Charlton**  
Buttress Fuller Alsop Williams Architects
- **Hall Retained – Hitchin Initiative**  
**John Creswell,** John Creswell Associates  
**Keith Hoskins,** Hitchin Initiative
- **Gym Retained – NHDC**  
**Lynn Saville,**  
Head of Community & Cultural Services



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# Background & Overview

**Councillor Tricia Cowley**  
**Portfolio Holder for Community & Rural**  
**Affairs**



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# Background & Overview

- Financial pressure on NHDC to control costs - discretionary spend particularly.
- Hitchin Town Hall, Hitchin and Letchworth Museums - ageing buildings, requiring significant re-investment not considered affordable.
- Feasibility of reinvesting in HTH to bring together Community usage and museums to provide a higher quality and more sustainable community facility is now being explored.



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# Background & Overview

- Need to establish if the benefits arising from investment in either scheme balance:
  - the level of investment required
  - the loss in terms of community benefits
  - generates the required running cost savings
- A report setting out this detail and feedback from this evening will be considered by full Council in approx September 2010. This will not be a straightforward either/or decision.



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# **Proposals for Hitchin Town Hall – the Plans**

**Neil Charlton - Buttress Fuller Alsop  
Williams Architects**



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# Proposals for Hitchin Town Hall – the Plans

- Two proposals to use HTH as a community venue and museum are achievable
- Schemes differ in terms of the
  - The usage/potential usage of the rooms
  - Costs of conversion and on going operation
  - Timescales
  - Impact on current/potential users



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# Hitchin Town Hall Museum Feasibility Study

Presentation to Council  
11th February 2010



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# Hitchin Town Hall Museum Feasibility Study

The building is a good size and location for a museum to be developed. The building is generally sound in condition and able to be adapted for this use.

Two appropriate arrangements have been identified, both schemes also maintain a valued community provision.

An overall construction cost of £2,408,465 and £2,896,729 respectively and for a fit out budget of £1,003,373 for both schemes giving an overall outturn cost of £3,441,838 and £3,930,102 respectively excl. VAT.

This shows that the overall concept of a museum on the Hitchin Town Hall site is both physically and economically feasible.

The project could be delivered as early as July 2012, but the scheme to retain the Main Hall could take significantly longer.



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# Gym Retained Scheme



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# External Concept Sketch - Gym Retained Scheme



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# **Gym Retained - NHDC**

**Lynn Saville**  
**Head of Community & Cultural Services**



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# Gym Retained - NHDC

- Allow Museums and community usage within existing building boundaries -making the building DDA compliant and modern.
- The Gymnasium and Lucas room regular users can be accommodated into the new building
- Plans include improving the attractiveness and usage of the Gym by opening up skylights, adding sprung floor improving fire exits to increase capacity and acoustics works, which can accommodate some users of the main hall.



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# Gym Retained - NHDC

- The museums service can be accommodated at this town centre site with more space than they currently have plus visitors will have access to toilets, café and education room.
- Investment will allow Museums displays to be modernised and provide the service with efficiencies of having the staffing team all on one site
- Estimated running cost savings of £160,000 per year.

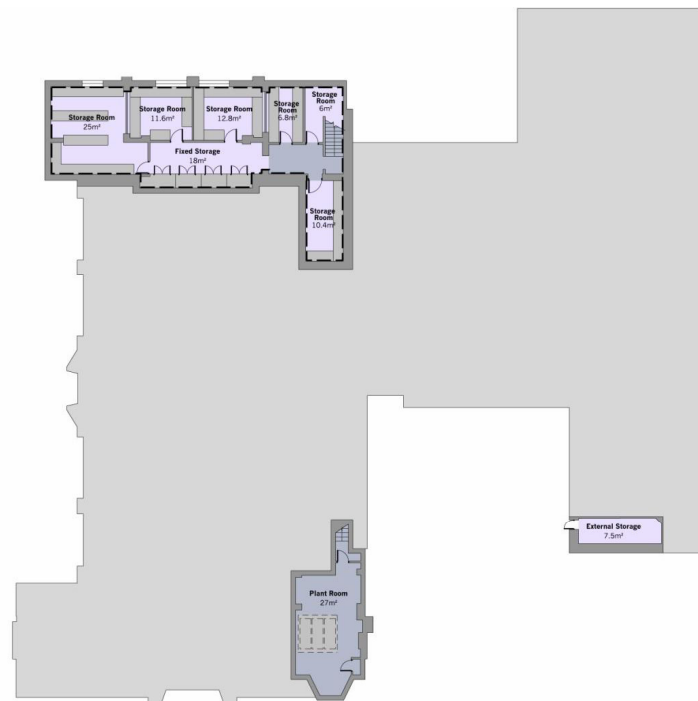


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# Basement Floor Plan –Gym Retained Scheme



	Total Floor Areas
RETAIL	146m²
EXHIBITION / GALLERY	577m²
FLEXIBLE USE	51m²
COMMUNITY USE	395m²
OFFICES	148m²
STORAGE	147m²
TOILETS	44m²
CIRCULATION	306m²
ROOF TERRACE / GARDEN	128m²
	<b>1942m² TOTAL</b>

## Community use retained:

- Lucas Room
- Stage Lowered
- Gymnasium used as Community Hall, Ancillary Storage & Showers,
- Local History Archive and Study Centre located on mezzanine



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# Ground Floor Plan –Gym Retained Scheme



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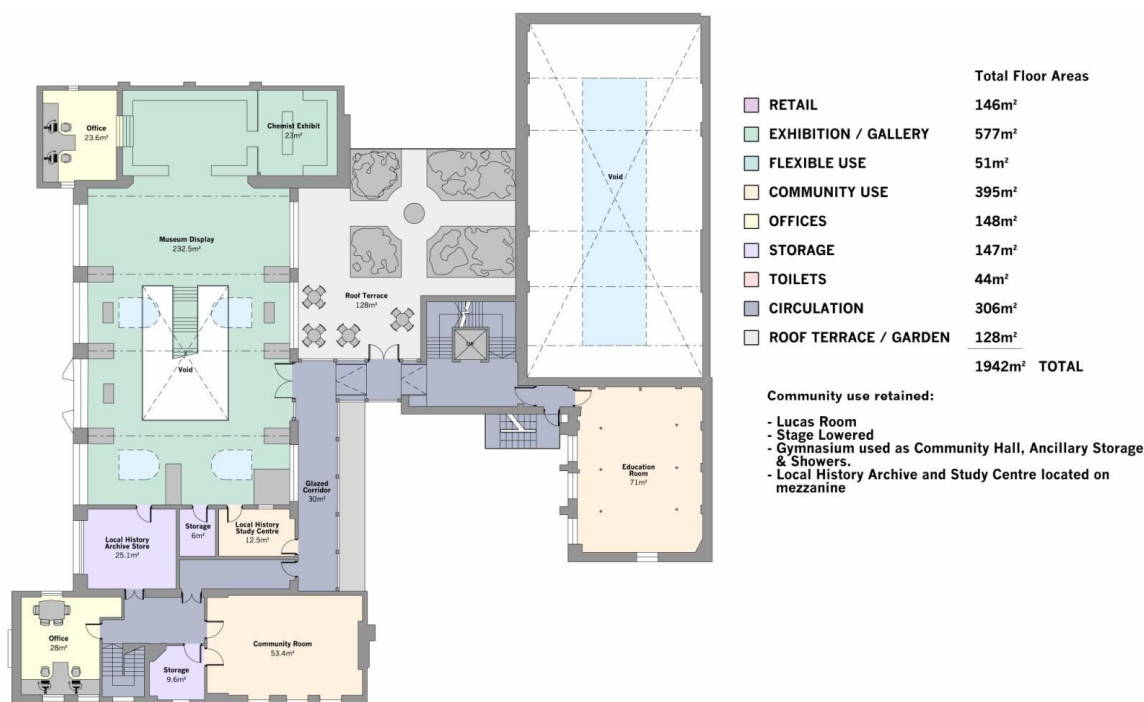
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# First Floor Plan – Gym Retained Scheme



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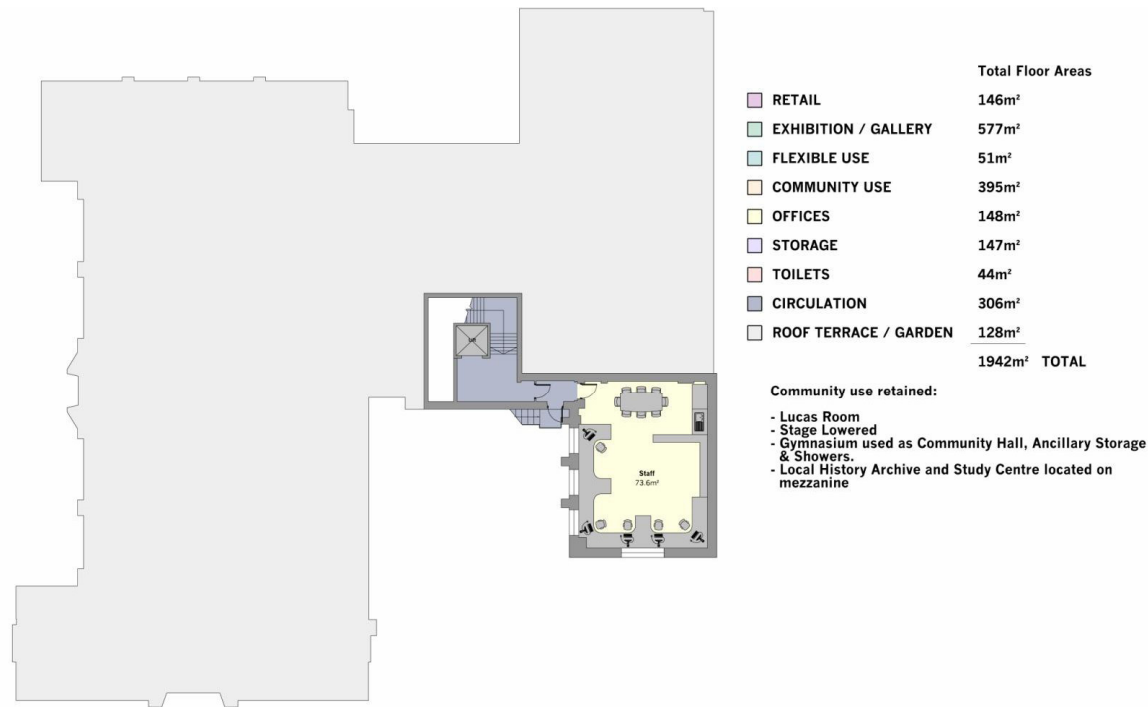
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# Second Floor Plan –Gym Retained Scheme



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# Internal Concept Sketch - Gym Retained Scheme



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# Gym as Community Hall - Recreation Concept Sketch



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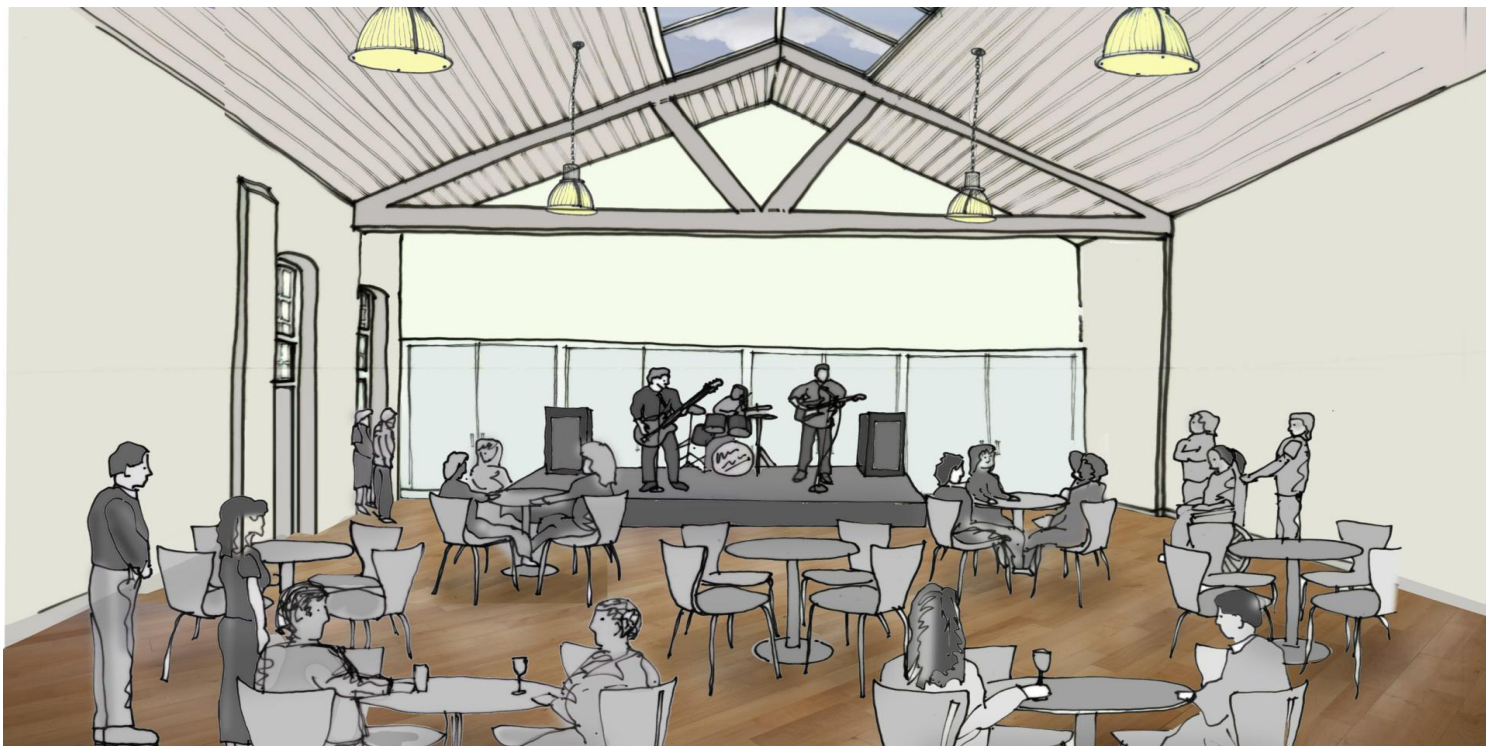
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# Gym as Community Hall - Event Concept Sketch



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# Main Hall Retained Scheme



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# Main Hall Retained Scheme



View to Brand Street  
Main Hall Retained Scheme

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# **Hall Retained – Hitchin Initiative**

**John Creswell  
John Creswell Associates  
&  
Keith Hoskins, Hitchin Initiative**



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# Hall Retained – Hitchin Initiative

- Mountford Hall 'saved' for continued community use, whilst still facilitating the development of the Museum in partnership with NHDC
- Much improved frontage to Museum & Town Hall together with better access & use of space
- Your support is needed re our application to raise funding, and to convince NHDC to choose this alternative to their plan.
- HI will operate the community space lettings programme in collaboration with NHDC, and operate the catering and a cafe on site to cover operating costs & help repay the loan element of funding.



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# Hall Retained – Hitchin Initiative

- We need to further consult with existing user groups as to 'protecting' their ability to use the facilities of the Town Hall whilst establishing appropriate rent levels for new users.
- Our input to the plans have also enabled more thought to be given to the internal layout in order to facilitate use by local groups
- The Cafe and indeed the wider complex will help secure local employment/employment training
- Initiatives such as use of the Hall as a venue for digital film presentations are already under consideration, and we are open to hearing your ideas? (Email address)

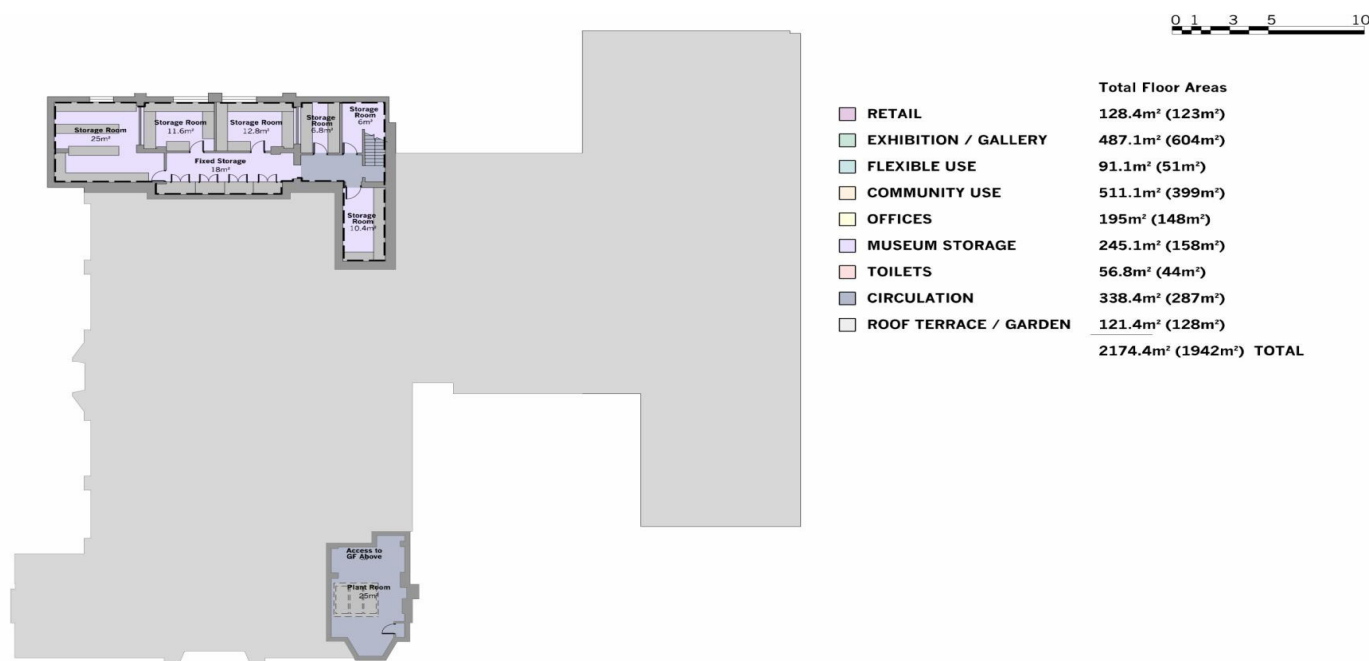


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# Floor Plan –Main Hall Retained Scheme



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# Ground Floor Plan –Main Hall Retained Scheme



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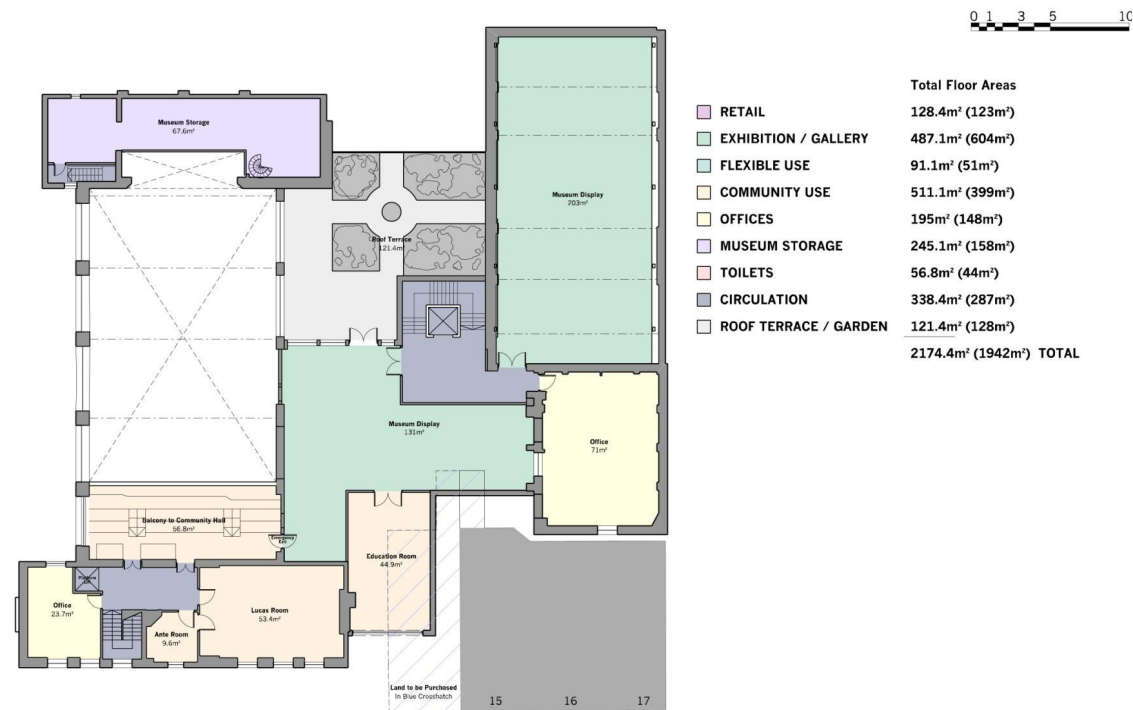
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# First Floor Plan –Main Hall Retained Scheme



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# Comparison of Schemes

## Gymnasium Retained Scheme

### Pros

- Meets the original brief – consolidating the museum on the town hall site
- Within the budget identified by NHDC
- Procured within the established timescale
- Generally refurbishment and is simple in planning terms
- Retains community usage of the Gym – most likely to be acceptable to the Trust

### Cons

- Loses the community usage of the main hall
- Entrance is via a covered street with shared access with adjoining shops
- Interventions in to the main hall have been criticised as unnecessary
- There is an application to list the building- but is not considered a major problem

## Hall Retained Scheme

### Pros

- Provides a new street frontage and public presence for the museum
- Retention of the main hall increases the opportunities for existing public services within the overall scheme
- Can accommodate larger numbers of people

### Cons

- The scheme is reliant on both the acquisition of an adjoining property, and the financing via third party loans/grants secured by the community
- Lease arrangements and financial liability must be established through a robust feasibility study and business plan prior to application for external funding
- Income is needed to pay back loans for the additional capital required



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# Comparison of Areas

	Existing Museums	Gymnasium Retained Scheme	Hall Retained	Difference Between Gym Scheme and Hall Scheme
USE	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )
Retail	32	123	128.4	5.4
Exhibition / Gallery	430	605	487.1	-117.9
Flexible Use	128	51	91.1	40.1
Community Use	78	399	511.1	112.1
Offices	60	148	195	47
Museum Storage	60	158	245	87
Toilets	20	44	56.8	12.8
Circulation	n/a	287	338.4	51
Roof Terrace & Garden	n/a	128	121.4	-2.6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>808</b>	<b>1943</b>	<b>2174.4</b>	<b>231.4</b>



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# Comparison of Costs

	Gym Retained	Hall Retained
Construction Cost	2,220,602	2,670,781
Inflation / Deflation (-1.4%)	-31,088	-37,391
Anticipated Construction Cost	2,189,513	2,633,390
Fees and Surveys (10%)	218,951	263,339
<b>Construction Sub-total</b>	<b>2,408,465</b>	<b>2,896,729</b>
Exhibition Fit-Out (inc. Fees)	983,373	983,373
General Fit-Out	50,000	50,000
<b>Fit-Out Sub-total</b>	<b>1,033,373</b>	<b>1,033,373</b>
<b>Outturn Cost (Excl VAT)*</b>	<b>3,441,838</b>	<b>3,930,102</b>

Costs were developed in association with Quantity Surveyors Appleyard and Trew.

Through the team's experience of museum design we are confident that these costs are robust.

Collectively we have a proven track record of museum project delivery on time and on budget.



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# Example Projects:

Stockwood Discovery Centre, Luton Borough Council Winner –Best  
Permanent Exhibition -Museum & Heritage : Awards for Excellence 2009



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# Example Projects:

Clitheroe Castle Museum, Ribble Valley Borough Council



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# Example Projects:

## The Rotunda Museum, Scarborough Borough Council



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# Example Projects:

The Rotunda Museum, Scarborough Borough Council



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# Milestones to Successful Project Delivery

The delivery of this project in a timely manner is reliant on key dates being achieved. In order for a new museum to open to the public by July 2012, the following dates must be met.

	2010											2011											2012										
	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul				
Decision to proceed																																	
Appointment of Design Team																																	
Design development and planning application																																	
Working drawings completed																																	
Tender documents produced																																	
OJEU notice for main contract works																																	
Evaluation of expressions of interest																																	
Tender main contract																																	
Main contract works																																	
Exhibition fit-out																																	
Final fit-out and object installation																																	
Public Opening																																	

The Main Hall retained scheme could be expected to take significantly longer to deliver due to complexities of financing and acquisition of property.



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# Questions & Discussion



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