

EXECUTIVE BOARD
DATE: 3RD FEBRUARY, 2020

SUBJECT:

REDEVELOPMENT OF ORIEL MYRDDIN GALLERY

RECOMMENDATIONS / KEY DECISIONS REQUIRED:

To consider options for the redevelopment of Oriel Myrddin Gallery and to allocate capital funding to enable the scheme to progress.

REASONS:

1. Four options have been considered for the redevelopment of Oriel Myrddin Gallery. Option 1 is the recommended option which re-develops the gallery as a cultural tourism destination in King Street making use of the acquired premises at 26/27 King Street greatly enhancing the Gallery's visibility there. Options 2 and 3 considered the co-location of the Hwb, however, space and cost considerations are prohibitive. Option 4 is the final "do nothing" option;
2. The Arts Council Wales (ACW) have awarded a £1m grant to support the scheme outlined as option 1. The funding is confirmed pending award of match funding from CCC;
3. In May 2018 the Welsh Government working in partnership with ACW and National Museum Wales, received a preliminary feasibility study considering the development of a National Contemporary Art Gallery for Wales. The preferred approach is the development of a dispersed model of connected regional galleries (around 9) supported with centralised resource and equipped to exhibit high value works from the national collection. Option 1 aligns the gallery, through the vision for its spaces and functions, with the vision for the National Contemporary Art Gallery for Wales. Inclusion within the network affords the potential to attract additional future operational support and funding and through developing option 1 Oriel Myrddin would be best placed to be considered as part of the collective;
4. If redevelopment options 2 or 3 are selected there would have to be further dialogue with the Trust and ACW to establish whether tripartite support could be achieved;
5. The capital allocation and timing of scheme delivery is dependent upon the option selected.

Exec Board Decision Required

YES – 3rd February, 2020

Council Decision Required

NO

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-
Cllr. Peter Hughes-Griffiths (Culture, Sport & Tourism Portfolio Holder)

Directorate:	Department for Communities	
Name of Head of Service: Ian Jones	Designations: Head of Leisure	Contact details: IJones@sirgar.gov.uk 01267 228309
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
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REDEVELOPMENT OF ORIEL MYRDDIN GALLERY

SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT.

1. Background

In July 2019 the Arts Council Wales (ACW) made a conditional offer of grant of £1m to support the redevelopment of OMG subject to a review of the business model. The business plan was refined and at its meeting in October 2019 ACW confirmed the grant funding subject to confirmation of match funding from CCC.

CCC is yet to agree to support the scheme and the level of priority for funding awarded to the scheme at the meeting of SASG in August 2019 was “could / would” but with no financial commitment.

Considering the assessment by SASG and the need to develop a sustainable plan for the Gallery four options have been considered with the intention of accommodating the Carmarthen Hwb into the design. The high-level benefit of this was primarily seen as being to increase footfall to both services and diversify audiences broadening access to hard to reach audiences in the arts.

During the development period it has become apparent that there are significant additional benefits aligned with the selection of option 1 – to develop the gallery as a standalone artistic and cultural hub. The gallery in this format would have the potential to apply to become part of the development of the National Contemporary Art Gallery Wales with the opportunity to attract curatorial support and exhibitions from the national collection.

The outcome of the design review has led to the following options for consideration:

- i. Progress with the existing RIBA stage 3 design proposals for the redevelopment of the Gallery, the preferred option;
- ii. Co-locate with the Carmarthen Hwb in the existing buildings;
- iii. Co-locate with the Carmarthen Hwb on King Street through the purchase / lease of adjacent buildings to provide the required space;
- iv. Maintain the status quo

2. The Options

The following table is a high-level overview of the options considered:

Oriel Myrddin Redevelopment Options

	Capital Requirement	Timescale	Added Value to Carmarthenshire
Option 1 RIBA Stage 3 Approved by ACW	£445k 2020-21	Dec-21	£1m external funding raised Aligns the gallery for inclusion as a potential venue for a dispersed "National Contemporary Art Gallery for Wales" Improving 1 listed building and 2 derelict buildings on King St. Developing the Cultural quarter / Cultural Tourism £ Opportunity for improved collaboration with ACGC on the impact of the arts on mental health and wellbeing
	£445k 2021-22		
	£890k Total		
Option 2 Co-locate with Hwb (Existing property)	£445k 2020-21	Mar-22	Possible £1m external funding raised Improving 1 listed building and 2 derelict buildings on King St.
	£445k 2021-22		
	£890k Total	(+3m)	Developing the Cultural quarter
Option 3 Co-locate with Hwb (Adjacent property)	890k as above	Sep-22	Possible £1m external funding raised Aligns the gallery for inclusion as a potential venue for a dispersed "National Contemporary Art Gallery for Wales" Improving 1 listed building and 2 derelict buildings on King St. Developing the Cultural quarter
	750k est no 25		
	1640k Total	(+9m)	
Option 4 Do nothing	£100k Est for essential maintenance	Immediate	None

a. Option 1 – The original scheme and preferred option

In May 2018 the Welsh Government working in partnership with ACW and National Museum Wales, received a preliminary feasibility study considering the development of a National Contemporary Art Gallery Wales. The current positioning within ACW on the development of the national gallery is that a dispersed model is the most likely way forward. That is a dispersed model of galleries across Wales, around 9 we understand, working collectively with a central hub and as the National Contemporary Art Gallery Wales.

In due course ACW and its partners will be looking to explore future potential investment in the network of galleries, with investment to ensure that they are equipped to exhibit high value works from the National collection. Those galleries will also be considered in terms of the operational support they require. Having considered the detail of the model in the feasibility study the principles upon which the development of the gallery is based in option 1 are highly compatible with the vision for the model in Wales and we believe that this option aligns with those development plans in the current configuration. As such we can be aspirational about the possibility of inclusion, by way of expression of interest to become part of the National Gallery.

The business model for the gallery has focussed on broadening access to the arts and Carmarthenshire as a tourism destination. The opening hours are geared towards the night-time social economy with late evening and weekend opening and arts and craft workshops working in partnership with local hospitality businesses that would be marketed as a cultural tourism opportunity. With the added possibility of national collections within our grasp, Oriel Myrddin is established as a real cultural destination.

A public, schools and artists consultation on the redevelopment of the gallery in June 2017 concluded that 98% of respondents to the public survey believed that the redevelopment of the gallery would benefit Carmarthen town.

This option requires an investment of £445k per year for two years, 2020-21 and 2021-22 however early discussions with ACW have suggested that their funding can be applied flexibly, and timescales could be managed to deliver the most appropriate fit for the capital program albeit requiring early progress on the project.

b. Options 2 and 3 – Co-locate with Hwb

One of the key challenges is the width of the frontage at 26/27 King Street. Both facilities have an obvious need for street presence, one of the fundamental principles of the gallery development is to improve access, both visual and disability, and create an inviting entrance to do this. The Hwb has an equal requirement for visibility and as a customer service point requires its own branding and access arrangements.

The outcome of the design review was that the space appears too limited to deliver meaningful benefits from the co-location of the Hwb and gallery which then presents the risk that both Trustees and ACW would not support the scheme.

Option 3 therefore considers additional space on either side of 26/27 King Street and the narrative on this is contained within the table above. This would result in an additional funding requirement roughly estimated at £750k for the purchase and development of an adjacent property – both of which are listed. It would also add a minimum of 9 months onto the program for delivery.

c. Option 4 – Status Quo

The status quo is not without its challenges as a maintenance liability (est. at £100k) will have to be covered together with the likely negative impact on the sustainability of the gallery in its current format and especially without the opportunity to align with national developments.

3. Next Steps

Four options have been presented for consideration with the capital requirement, timescale and added value noted above and the strengths and weaknesses explored in the detailed report attached.

Unfortunately, the existing space appears too limited to accommodate the Hwb and gallery with meaningful benefits for each however option 1 aligns with national developments in contemporary art and could attract additional support as a result thereof. Option 1 is therefore the recommended option.

The decision is therefore whether CCC are in a position to invest £890k, over two years, to deliver this scheme which aligns with aspirations to become part of a dispersed National gallery, to develop the cultural quarter at the end of King Street, drive the night time social economy, create Oriel Myrddin as a real cultural tourism destination in the County and draw down a minimum of £1m match funding from ACW into Carmarthenshire.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: Ian Jones

Head of Leisure

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES

Legal

Executive Board considered the governance of the Trust at it's meeting of 23rd September and confirmed the appointment of independent Trustees. The recommendations of the Governance Roadmap produced by VWV and the transitional arrangements will be further considered and implemented as the project progresses. This will extend to claw back arrangements, leases, operational agreements and so forth.

S P Murphy

Finance

The project requires funding of £890k from the CCC capital programme in order to progress. County Council considers and endorses the Five Year Capital Programme on an annual basis as part of Budget setting procedures (2020/21 to 2024/25 in March 2020).

The Authority is required to approve a rolling capital programme each year as part of the budget process. This facilitates forward planning, is consistent with the requirements of the Prudential Code in terms of financial planning and funding, and assists officers in bidding for external funding.

A sustainability review has been undertaken by ACW as part of its due diligence.

R Hemingway

Physical Assets

If the scheme does not progress alternative options for 26/27 King Street will have to be considered.

H Humphrys

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Ian Jones

Head of Leisure

1. Scrutiny Committee

Not at this stage.

2. Local Member(s)

Those members who are trustees of the existing scheme are party to the proposals

3. Community / Town Council

Carmarthen Town Council are represented through member involvement on the Board of OMT.

4. Relevant Partners

ACW are regularly consulted as key stakeholders in the project and attend project steering group meetings.

The Oriel Myrddin Trust is fully briefed through its regular Trust meetings, the last one of which took place on 1st November.

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

HR and unions are aware of the potential for the development.

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Feasibility study and public consultation		Oriel Myrddin Gallery
Minutes of Oriel Myrddin Trust Meetings		Oriel Myrddin Gallery
CCC Arts Strategy 2018 - 2022		Oriel Myrddin Gallery
CCC Strategic Regeneration Plan 2015 - 2030		Transformations - Strategic regeneration Plan for Carmarthenshire
Carmarthen Town Regeneration Masterplan 2014 - 2030		Carmarthen Town Council