

Austin-Smith:Lord

Assembly Hall, Melksham - Feasibility Study

Methodology and Outline Fee Proposal
Melksham Town Council

May 2017



INTRODUCTION

It is with great pleasure that we submit our methodology statement and indicative fee proposal for carrying out a formal Feasibility Study for Melksham Town Council for the exciting project to enhance facilities for audiences and performers at the Assembly Hall (and Town Hall).

Melksham Town Council is looking to improve the much-loved Assembly Hall and establish a cultural hub combining facilities in the Assembly Hall with the adjacent Town Hall rooted at the heart of the community. We believe that this development has the potential to provide the desired change that will give the Assembly Hall another 50 year life serving the town, transforming it into a sustainable and successful 21st century venue.

Should we be appointed by the Town Council, our team will bring significant experience of such Studies and a broad understanding of the local and wider regional economy to the Study from our base in Bristol.

Austin-Smith:Lord LLP May 2017

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BACKGROUND

Melksham Town Council has decided to invest in the future of the Assembly Hall and adjacent listed Town Hall with a view to providing enhanced facilities serving existing and potential other community user groups as well as ensuring the town features on the circuit of touring live music and comedy it currently presents at the core of its programming.

The venue was originally constructed as a Drill Hall and has been developed into a live performance venue in several stages throughout the 20th century, including the addition of a permanent raised stage with limited backstage facilities into the main hall and an expanded frontage providing audience facilities that support events in the main hall.

The venue is much loved by the citizens of Melksham and the surrounding audience catchment area and events regularly sell out. Indeed, its retention was reinforced by the outcome of a community referendum in 2001 and the current elected members of the Council are keen to act on the decision of the electorate and to enhance and/or redevelop the Assembly Hall in parallel with Wiltshire County Council's development of a Community Campus planned for construction around the nearby Melksham House.

An Outline Design Brief has been prepared by the Town Council that will form the foundation and starting point of the proposed Feasibility Study.



THE PROJECT TEAM

Based on the statement of intent provided by Melksham Town Council with its initial approach to us, Austin-Smith:Lord would assemble an excellent team of individuals and Practices with extensive relevant experience of working on similar projects and with similar buildings to assist us in delivering a Feasibility Study for the proposed Assembly Hall project.

The people and organisations we would invite to join our team have collaborated with us many times on previous projects and the individuals are particularly skilled in working with this kind of building and delivering the highest quality outcome. Whilst we have suggested other consultants here we would be happy to discuss others the Council may wish us to consider, and we have separated our outline fee proposal into the constituent components of the team we would expect in case the Council already has a Business Plan for the building or has separate arrangements for Cost advice and simply wants to appoint an Architect to lead the study.

Austin-Smith:Lord can appoint the consultants as sub-consultants providing Melksham Town Council with a single appointment and point of contact for the duration of this study. If separate appointments for each consultant are preferred then we can obviously facilitate this too.

Individual CVs of the team members from Austin-Smith:Lord are included as an appendix to this proposal.

Service	Organisation	Key Individual(s)
Architecture, Interior Design & Project Team Leader	Austin-Smith:Lord	Rob Firman, Murtaza Rizvi, Tom Barker
Business Plan Development	Peter Bellingham Arts Consulting Ltd	Peter Bellingham
Cost Consultant	Gleeds	Lee Priddle

At this stage we do not believe it is necessary to consider the appointment of a Structural Engineer, Mechanical and Electrical Services Engineer, Acoustician or technical Theatre Consultant, all of which will be essential for any further design development beyond the initial Feasibility Study. We would be happy to recommend appropriately experienced individuals and organisations to provide these services if that might be helpful.



Theatr Hafren, Newtown, proposed new entrance and studio

Our Team will be led by Rob Firman a Director of the Practice and a specialist in designing buildings for theatre and musical performance and recording. His portfolio of completed projects is extensive and he has been instrumental in the successful delivery of some of the most significant performance buildings of the last 25 years, including Symphony Hall in Birmingham and the Wales Millennium Centre and Hoddinott Hall, Cardiff. Rob is an acknowledged expert on the theatres of Wales and is a published author ('The Theatres and Performance Buildings of South Wales' was published in 2012) and Special Advisor to The Theatres Trust on issues affecting the estate of theatre buildings in Wales. He is also an Honorary Member of the Institute of Theatre Research.

He led a team Feasibility Study for the redevelopment of the Great Central Hall, Newport for Sinfonia Cymru and Newport City Council in 2015, for Theatr Hafren, Newton and for the expansion of The Castle Theatre, Wellingborough in 2014.

He is currently Project Director for the radical rooftop extension to be constructed over Birmingham Royal Ballet's Headquarters in Birmingham. This project follows the highly acclaimed design and delivery of the full refurbishment of the BRB building in 2013-14 also led by Rob and illustrates his ability to secure the trust and confidence of his clients as a result of his passion, ability and experience.

Rob will be supported for the duration of the Study by Murtaza Rizvi and Tom Barker who will bring fresh and innovative architectural design thinking to the project.

Throughout the Study period, if a Business Planning Consultant is considered necessary, the ASL team will work alongside Peter Bellingham in a fully integrated and coordinated approach to developing an Architectural Vision that is viable, affordable and sustainable in the long term and with Gleeds to develop a robust cost plan for the potential capital project.

Peter Bellingham Arts Consulting Ltd

Peter has had a distinguished career in arts management, spanning nearly 40 years. He has worked for producing companies across theatre, opera and dance and for presenting venues. In the early part of his career he specialised in marketing and audience development, later combining this with programming prior to moving to a senior executive role. He has extensive knowledge of the UK arts scene, gained through many years of UK-wide touring; he also has experience of taking work abroad - in recent years to Hong Kong, Oman, Dubai and Finland.

In 1994, Peter moved to Wales to join Welsh National Opera as Director of Marketing, a position he held until 2002 when he was appointed as the company's first Executive Director, later retitled Managing Director. This is one of the highest level arts management roles in the UK. In this position, the emphasis of Peter's work was focused on long-term strategy and business planning, financial modelling, staff structure development, change management, and stakeholder relationships, as well as having responsibility for day to day operational management.

In 2015, building on his highly successful term at WNO, Peter established his own consultancy and project management practice.

Gleeds

Gleeds has an international reputation for cost planning and management in the Performing Arts Sector. Gleeds approach will be focused on the preparation of a robust feasibility cost plan in order to inform the key decisions for the developing project, working closely with Austin-Smith:Lord in defining the detailed brief for the scheme via option appraisals in order to prioritise the project's aims.

We will input into the feasibility study by cost checking the developing design and by constantly reviewing allowances in any estimates.

The final cost plan will be measured against the New Rules of Measurement (NRM) and will include rates and prices obtained by market testing locally, in addition to cost benchmarking.

Our approach as outlined above has enabled us to successfully deliver recent projects for Sinfonia Cymru, Birmingham Royal Ballet, Sadler's Wells Theatre, Theatre Royal Bath, LG Arena and the National Indoor Arena, Birmingham.



Summary

Both the organisations and the individual team members we are proposing have wide ranging experience across the world in the arts and culture sector in particular auditoria for live music, comedy and theatre performance. The team is both capable of understanding the complex technical minutiae of the auditorium design, back stage and front of house environments and being highly creative in many other ways.

We are passionate about creating physical and community regeneration opportunities through our projects and know how to lead and direct consultations with stakeholders, users, potential users and the wider community served by our buildings.

We fully understand the aims and objectives of this project. Collectively and individually we have extensive and relevant experience of working with Local Authorities, the Arts Council of England and Performing Arts Companies and Organisations on a range of projects and we understand their requirements, ambitions (and constraints) and how to meet them.

Our constant and ongoing engagement in projects for the performing arts ensures we keep abreast of developments in audience, performer and building operator/management expectations and requirements and are able to see how they might change and evolve further still as we get feedback from our completed work.

In summary our team will bring energy, enthusiasm and passion to the project, underpinned with the necessary specialist disciplines.

Our diverse skills offer design flair, technical excellence and academic research to deliver exciting, innovative and practical solutions that exceed expectations.

Our projects are always fundable, deliverable and to an agreed budget.



Great Central Hall, Newport, Auditorium concept

FEASIBILITY STUDY METHODOLOGY

There will be 4 primary outputs from the study that will be prepared as a basis for Melksham Town Council to take informed decisions about the viability of pursuing the project to capital funding and execution:

- 1. Strategic Client Brief**
- 2. Concept Design**
- 3. Cost Estimate**
- 4. Business Plan**

1. Strategic Client Brief

The Strategic Client Brief will evolve from discussions with representatives of Melksham Town Council (elected members and officers), existing Assembly Hall management and staff and other potential project stakeholders (Wiltshire County Council, other as yet unidentified funding bodies, local arts organisations and promoters who use the venue) and will record the aims and objectives of the project.

Gathering of the Brief will take place in formal meetings and workshops as well as informal one-to-one sessions with key individuals and will be recorded in a formal report document.

During the Brief gathering process, surveys of the existing building may be carried out along with searches through utility companies to establish the nature, capacity and condition of existing services supplies into the site. which will inform the cost plan and future design decisions.

Throughout the period of the study the Brief may evolve and adapt to changes in ambition or availability of space within the existing building and should be regarded as a working tool rather than a final 'frozen' statement of intent. Indeed it will probably not become finalised until after a Concept Design and Cost and Business Plan have been developed.

2. Concept Design

The Strategic Client Brief will become useful early in the study period and in its earliest form will enable the Design Team to develop option studies for potential space utilisation within the Assembly Hall site.

During the first part of this period we would develop a number of options (typically 3) to illustrate different ways of meeting the aspirations of the Brief and to identify the range of capital project budgets that might transpire.

Initially, it might be expected that the options could be loosely defined as:

1. Carry out minimal repairs and upgrades to sustain the venue
2. Remove elements of the building that don't currently work and replace with new elements
3. Demolish the existing Assembly Hall and create an entirely new building.

We would anticipate a formal review of the Option Studies towards the end of month 2 at which a Preferred Option will be selected and developed into the final Concept Design through to the conclusion of the Study at the end of month 3.



Merthyr Tydfil Arts Centre, Cafeteria

The Preferred Option may evolve into a hybrid of the base options reviewed and there could be a need for an additional review meeting/workshop once that hybrid layout/design has been developed to ensure all parties are aligned and understanding of what constitutes the preferred solution is consistent.

Selection of the Preferred Option enables the entire Project Team to finalise ideas and proposals that the Cost Consultant can build into the Cost Estimate for the capital project.

The Concept Design will be presented in a formal report at the end of the study period and will include Architectural Plans and Sections through the building and 3-d visualisations of the key spaces, along with an assessment outlining the condition of the existing building structure and fabric and any repairs identified as necessary.

Whilst the initial Feasibility Study will not include proposals for enhancing existing or introducing new mechanical and electrical services (heating, cooling, ventilation, lighting, data, telecoms and power) or an assessment of changes to the building that might be necessary to create a suitable acoustic environment for the activities that are proposed to take place within the building demise, our Cost planning will make broad allowances based on our team's experience to ensure there are no nasty surprises later in the process.

3. Cost Estimate

Following completion of the Concept Design a Cost Estimate will be prepared to identify the predicted capital cost of executing the Concept Design as a formal building project.

The nature and accuracy of the Cost Estimate will be commensurate with the stage of development of the Concept Design and will be published as a formal document at the end of the study.

4. Business Plan

The Business Plan will consider the viability of the proposed project in the long term and will consider how the scheme will be funded initially and then paid for from revenue income.

The business plan will develop in tandem with the consultation process with the client group and the development of the concept design. It will set-out cost requirements and funding options for the re-development and fit-out phase, as well as considering and if necessary, developing the governance, management and funding model(s) for the building's onward operation.

We will undertake the following strands of work in order to create a robust business plan for the project:

Understanding client group needs and aspirations

- detailed consultation with Melksham Town Council and other members of the client group to understand individual and shared vision and aspirations for the Assembly Hall.

Consultation with other potential users / partners

- identify and consult with other organisations in the town and surrounding communities;

Consideration of potential uses

- understand existing and potential future particular requirements for the Hall and its public and outreach programme aspirations;



MacMillan Theatre, Bridgwater

- discuss and consult around possible ancillary uses for the space;
- desk research to understand the Town and surrounding area's current total arts 'offer';
- research to support recommendations for the commercial offer for the development;
- consideration of any relevant influences from Melksham Town or Wiltshire County Council and central Government's key policy initiatives (e.g. Tackling Poverty, Community Well-Being);
- develop an 'outline' programme for the Hall.

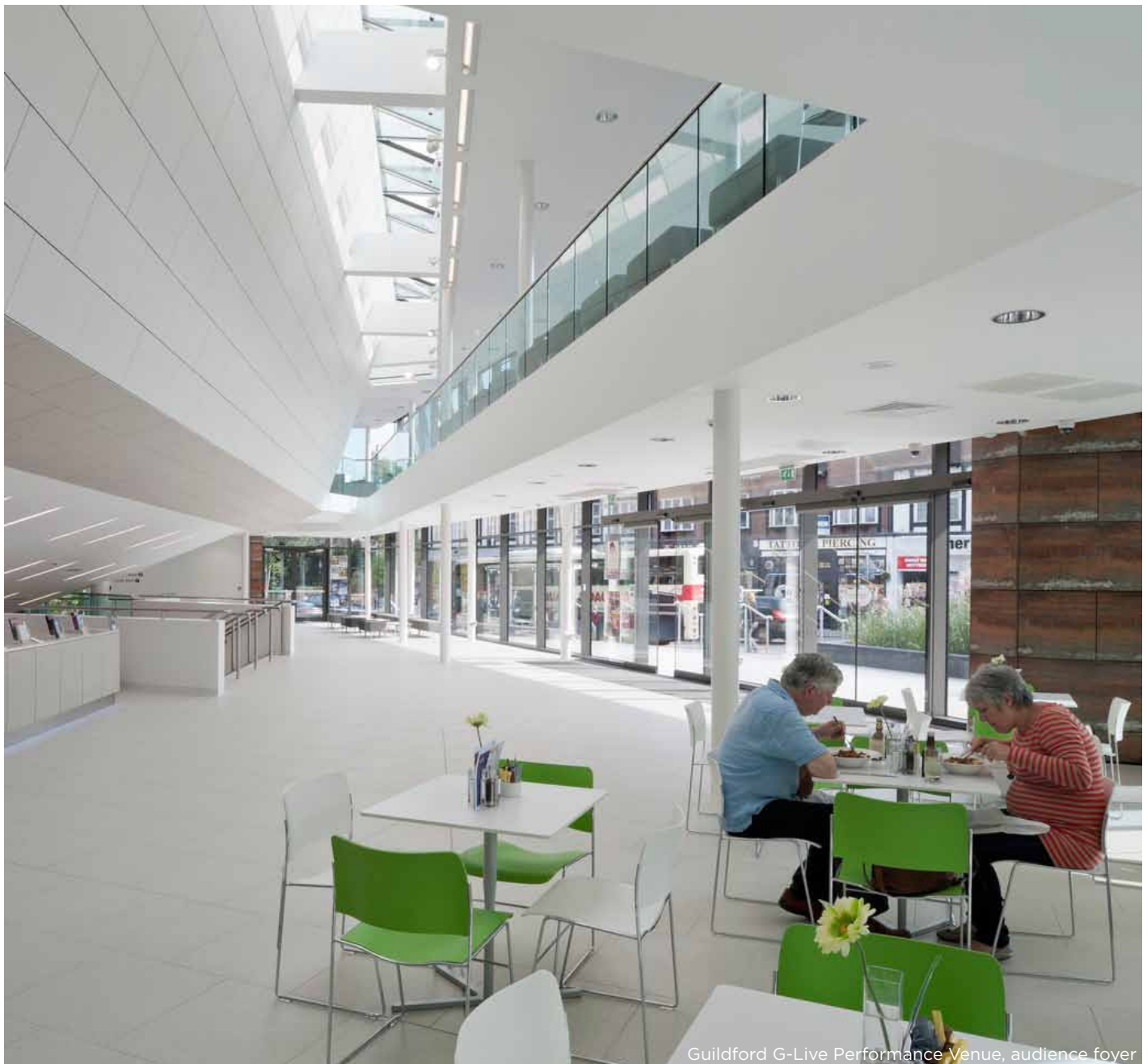
Assessment of development funding

- from the Cost Estimate and Concept design, identify funding requirements for the capital development phase;
- identify possible sources of funding for the capital development.

Identify running costs and governance / management / organisational structure

- Assess the governance (and any potential partnership) model for running the building;
- Assess the operational staff structure requirements;
- Consider the cost / income element of the events programme including self-promoted, outsider-promoted, rental elements;
- Consider income generation capacity of the ancillary spaces;
- Consider income generation capacity for the commercial areas of the space.

The Business Plan will be suited to both the Cost Estimate and Concept Design such that the three components form a solid basis for further discussion with stakeholders and potential funders.



Guildford G-Live Performance Venue, audience foyer

ACTIVITIES AND DELIVERABLES

Scope of Design Team Services and deliverables by discipline

Austin-Smith:Lord (Architect, Interior Design, Project Team Leader)

1. Facilitate Initial Project Start-Up Meeting on site at the Assembly Hall and all other meetings for Strategic Brief and Business Plan Development; Chair and record meetings
2. Carry out check measurements of the existing building to establish a set of appropriately accurate base drawings for the team to work with (this is not a full measured survey)
3. Undertake a visual inspection of the physical condition of the existing building exterior and interior fabric and propose remedial work if and where required
4. Facilitate consultations and workshops with Melksham Town Council, Venue Management and other project stakeholders to develop the Strategic Client Brief for the project, record the outcomes and prepare a formal Strategic Client Brief document
5. Prepare Option Studies that might achieve the aims and objectives of the Brief, present to the Project Committee and other stakeholders and facilitate selection of a Preferred Option
6. Develop the Preferred Option to Concept Design Stage
7. Lead coordination of design outputs from all other consultants and provide information to assist the development of the project Business and Cost Plans
8. Prepare a final Concept Design Report containing all outputs from the team and present final proposals to Melksham Town Council and other stakeholders

Peter Bellingham Arts Consulting Ltd (Business Planning)

1. Attendance at an initial meeting with Melksham Town Council to identify potential sources of revenue income and outgoing costs as a result of running the Assembly Hall (please note that further dialogue will be essential on a regular basis throughout the study period and will be facilitated using Skype and telephone and email correspondence wherever possible)
2. Preparation of a Business Plan to demonstrate the viability of the Assembly Hall project produced to match the aspiration of the Concept Design and detail of the Cost Estimate.

Gleeds (Cost Consultant)

1. Attendance at an initial site visit to familiarise ourselves with the existing building scale and general condition.
2. Provision of an initial budget estimate for the proposed works and assistance to the Architect throughout the feasibility stage.



Great Central Hall, Newport, Live Lounge

INDICATIVE FEE PROPOSAL

Based on an anticipated programme for delivery of the study of 3 months, our total indicative fee for preparing the study (assuming the commission included provision of a Business Plan and a Cost Plan) would be **£24,500** excluding VAT but inclusive of all reasonable expenses and disbursements.

Our indicative proposed fee will be allocated to the design team consultants as follows:

Organisation	Role	Total
A-S:L	Architect	£15,000
PBAC Ltd.	Business Planner	£6,000
Gleeds	QS	£3500
		£24,500

We would anticipate the fee being reimbursed in 3 installments at the end of each month of the Study period and our appointment being the RIBA Standard Form of Architects Appointment 2013.

Exclusions

The fee proposed does not include for a full measured survey of the existing building, fees associated with Planning advice from the Local Planning Authority (Pre-Application submission), any invasive testing or investigations to establish the integrity or condition of the existing building structure, and provision of suitable safe access equipment (scaffold towers and the like) to afford access to inspect the external roof or internal ceiling void space above the auditorium.

We can provide additional fees/quotations for these items if requested but any such costs incurred would be payable by the Client rather than through our appointment.

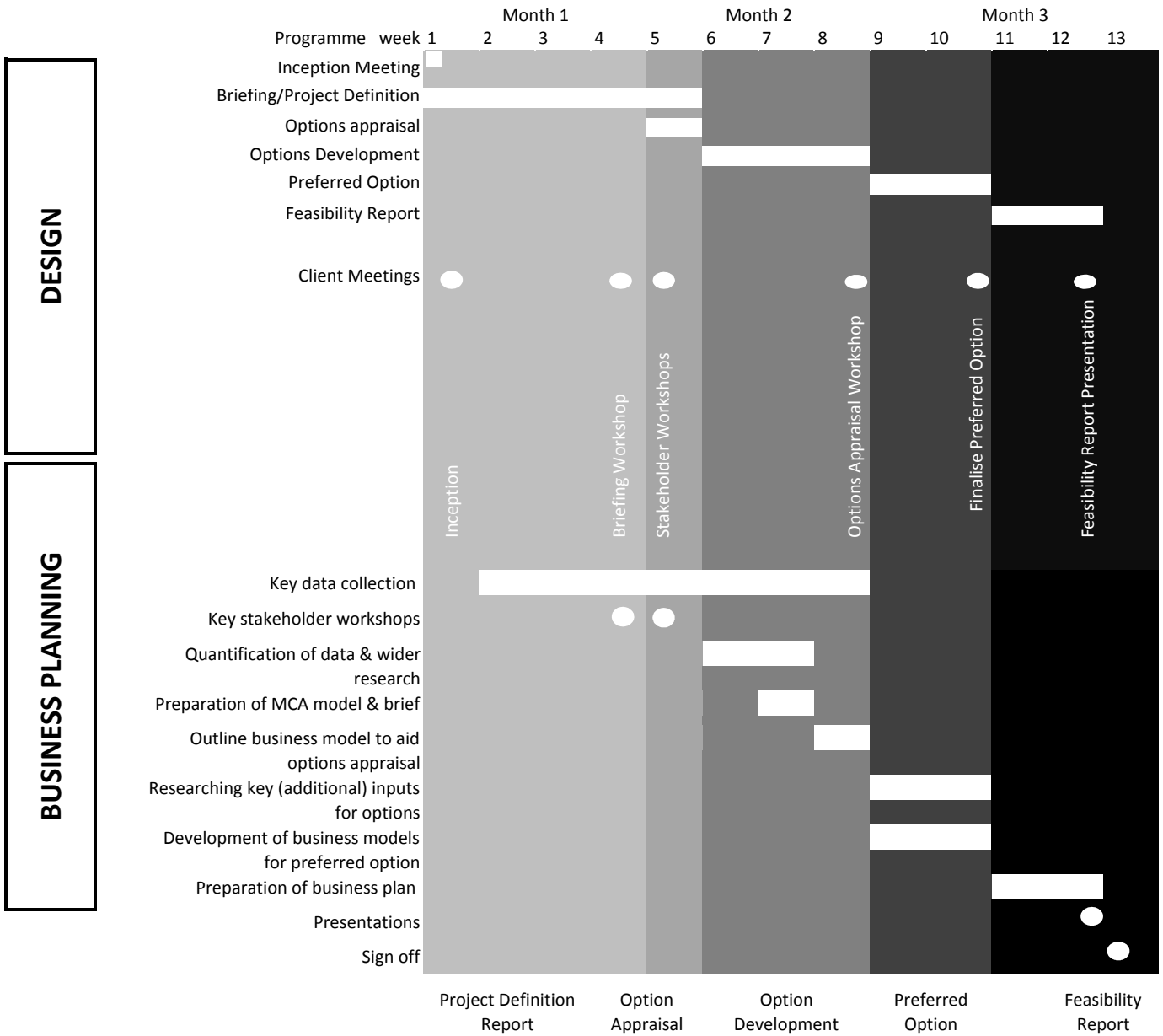
Whilst the likelihood is that only a Feasibility Study for a potential project will be commissioned in the first instance, we are obliged to remind the Client of their duties and obligations under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 and we advise that the client familiarises themselves with this legislation.

Whilst we would create a 3-dimensional CAD model of the project site as a matter of course we have not included for provision of any Building Information Modelling (BIM) data at this stage. This may be a requirement of the later delivery stages of the project, particularly if any funding is sourced from central and local government.



Melksham Assembly Hall, existing auditorium

OUTLINE STUDY PERIOD PROGRAMME









APPENDIX A
PROJECT TEAM
CVS



Rob Firman
BA (Hons), BArch (dist), RIBA
Director

With more than 25 years experience in Arts and Culture projects, and having worked both domestically and internationally, Rob reinforces the Practice's position as a market leader in this field.

He is highly skilled in the design and delivery of large scale, high profile projects and to this end his experience is varied and striking. Rob believes passionately that buildings serving the arts should engage directly with the local community and, as such, economic development and regeneration have been paramount in all of his work.

Rob is a published author and acknowledged expert on the performing arts infrastructure and buildings of Wales.

Rob undertook the role of Project Director for the following projects:

Palace Theatre, Swansea

Author of Strategic Client Brief for adaptive re-use of derelict Grade II listed Victorian theatre into a mixed use development.

Birmingham Royal Ballet Dance Hub

£2.5m community dance studio and company offices in dramatic new rooftop extension

Great Central Hall, Newport

Feasibility Study for the creation of a new live music venue for Newport and headquarters for Sinfonia Cymru within rediscovered derelict 1906 concert hall volume.

Castle Theatre, Wellingborough

Detailed Feasibility Study for the significant expansion of an existing theatre to provide additional performance, rehearsal and creation space.

Hafren Theatre, Neath Port Talbot College

Detailed feasibility study for a new suite of arts facilities including a high quality studio, a second dance studio and music recording and rehearsal suite.

Birmingham Royal Ballet Headquarters

£2.2m refurbishment and upgrade of the existing Birmingham Royal Ballet Headquarters.

Inspection of all performing arts venues in South Wales

Supported by The Theatres Trust, carried out a major piece of research to establish the condition and success of every arts venue in South Wales, leading to publication of his first book 'The Theatre and Performance Buildings of South Wales' in 2012.

Middle East Cultural Development

Development of concept designs through to stage D of the theatrical component of this major project.

Shrewsbury Museum

£8m redevelopment of an existing Grade II* Listed Music Hall complex, which includes a collection of buildings from the 13th to the 19th Century, to provide Shrewsbury and Shropshire with world class new county museum provision.

Relevant projects prior to joining Austin-Smith:Lord:

BBC National Orchestra and Chorus of Wales Rehearsal and Administration Facilities, Cardiff

Project Director and Concept Designer for a new 350-seat concert hall, recording and broadcast studio as the second phase of development at Wales Millennium Centre site, now known as Hoddinutt Hall.

Blaenau Gwent Theatre, Ebbw Vale

Project Director for a study establishing commercial and architectural viability of new 500 seat regional theatre as part of the regeneration of an old British Steel site.

Yi Chen International Theatre, Chongqing City, Chongqing, China

Project Director and Auditorium Designer for the feasibility study and subsequent concept design of proposed 1500 seat international standard lyric theatre.

New Abbey Theatre, Dublin

Architectural Advisor to the Theatre Consultant for the feasibility of site on O'Connell Street to accommodate the new National Theatre of Ireland development

Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts, London

Project Director for the preparation of feasibility studies for the creation of a new Academy campus facilities and two new theatres in existing Listed buildings in Wood Green, Hornsey, Tottenham and Woolwich Arsenal.

Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff

Project Director and Executive Architect for the overall development, providing accommodation for seven of Wales' leading Arts organisations on one site.

Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Concept Designer for the concert hall auditorium and Project Architect for all orchestral facilities and support accommodation.



Murtaza Rizvi
BSc(Hons), MArch, DipArch RIBA
Architect

Murtaza's ability to communicate ideas effectively and work creatively within guidelines has greatly assisted our clients in achieving project goals.

Murtaza has a broad minded approach to architectural design, and is able to handle demanding situations calmly, working within a team with meticulous attention given to producing high quality design. Murtaza has worked on a range of projects in the education and healthcare sectors.

Most recently, he has performed the role of Project Architect for a £16m new build development for the Creative Industries at UWE, including a Digital Media Centre and Academic Resource Building, following a similar role for the RIBA Award-winning Cardiff School of Art and Design. Previously, he was a core member of our team for a £23m school for St Teilo's High School in Cardiff and a £10m new School of Art and Design for Cardiff Metropolitan University.

Murtaza is highly skilled across a range of CAD platforms including Revit and is proficient in delivering projects through BIM to maturity Level 2.

Murtaza has responsibility for leading our Bristol Studio and is Joint Chair of the RIBA South West branch.

Murtaza undertook the role of Architect for the following projects:

Faculty of Arts, Creative Industries and Education, UWE

£16M redevelopment of the University's Bower Ashton campus to provide new build Cinematics Building and Academic Resource Building, together with the adaptation of refurbishment of existing facilities. Challenges include complex phasing and decant arrangements within a constrained live campus adjoining Grade I Listed Ashton Court Estate. BIM Level 2 and BSRIA Soft Landings adopted.

Cardiff School of Art and Design,

Cardiff Metropolitan University
£13m new build Cardiff School of Art and Design which provides a fresh identity and reinforce the University's international reputation. Delivered collaboratively through Framework using NEC. BIM approach using Revit.

New Aberdare Campus, Coleg Y Cymoedd

New £20m, 800 pupil college campus. The new campus will strengthen the College's presence in the heart of Aberdare, providing a strong identity on a former railway sidings site which also includes the refurbishment of its former railway station building as a catering facility.

Agricultural Teaching Block, Cannington

Bridgwater College
£2.1m new build teaching facility which provides flexible and efficient teaching, laboratory accommodation and social and welfare spaces. The project is set to achieve a BREEAM Excellent rating.

Ysgol Ffwrnes, Llanelli

Carmarthenshire County Borough Council
BREEAM Outstanding, new build, £10m 472 pupil combined nursery and primary Welsh medium school in Llanelli. As the first BREEAM Outstanding primary school in Wales, sustainability has been a key consideration in the design development with the aim of achieving a highly sustainable development.

St Teilos High School, Cardiff

Cardiff Council
New build state of the art secondary school. This £20m BREEAM Excellent scheme was procured through the Buying Solution Framework.

Glynneath Primary Care Centre

New primary care centre which will provide new health care facilities, including GP consulting and training rooms, and health care trust facilities, to BREEAM Very Good standard, as a minimum.

Pontypool Market,

Torfaen County Borough Council
£1.3m conservation and extensive refurbishment of the Grade II Listed Pontypool Market Hall. This multi phase project aims to put the Market back at the heart of the community.

Projects prior to Austin-Smith:Lord:

Gateway to the Valleys School, Bridgend

Architectural Assistant for a new build community school funded by the Welsh Government.

Chilton Trinity Technical College

Architectural Assistant for a new build technical and foundation College with national skills academy, community centre and swimming pool.

Cowbridge Comprehensive School

Architectural Assistant for a School masterplan consisting of 7,000m² new build and 4,000m² refurbished retained buildings across the site for a total of 1550 pupils.



Tom Barker
BSc(Hons)(Architecture) M.Arch
Part II Architectural Assistant

Tom joined Austin-Smith:Lord as a Part II Graduate. He is hard working and enjoys engaging with clients and stake-holders. Tom is confident in new situations and relishes the opportunity to grow and develop his understanding of the profession. He takes pride in the projects he works on, striving to maintain concept and design reasoning throughout all aspects of the project.

Tom is an outgoing person, enjoying keeping as active as possible when not at work. He is keenly interested in social aspects of architectural design and the effects architecture has on the wider community, alongside conservation stemming from a passion for Sustainable Design. In the time that Tom has been with us, he has focused projects for the University of the West of England, developing their Bower Ashton campus with a physical making hub and a digital making hub.

Project experience

Faculty of Arts, Creative Industries and Education, UWE

£16m redevelopment of the University's Bower Ashton campus to provide new build Digital Making Building and Physical Making Building together with the adaptation of existing facilities.

Building 1 - Digital Media and Academic Resource Buildings - UWE

£6m New-build within the Ashton Court conservation area, accommodating Production studios computer rooms, sound recording rooms etc. Designed to be sensitive to the surrounding landscape and provide the campus with a new smart face.

Building 2 - Physical Making Hub - UWE

£5m New-build for UWE; The new facility will provide the campus with metal, wood and ceramics workshops, and studio spaces with a view to improving student performance in these areas.

Before Austin-Smith:Lord

2013-2014

Part I Architectural Assistant

Baily Garner - Project Leading, 3D and 2D digital modelling, sketching, computer visualisations and planning drawings for a theatre extension, housing, schools and a hospital refurbishment.



Peter Bellingham
Owner/Director

Peter Bellingham Arts Consulting

Peter has had a distinguished career in arts management, spanning nearly 40 years, working for producing companies across theatre, opera and dance and for presenting venues. He has extensive knowledge of the UK arts scene, gained through many years of UK-wide touring; he also has experience of taking work abroad.

In 1994, Peter moved to Wales to join Welsh National Opera as Director of Marketing, until 2002 when he was appointed as the company's first Executive Director, later re-titled Managing Director. This is one of the highest level arts management roles in the UK. The emphasis of Peter's work focused on long-term strategy and business planning, financial modelling, staff structure development, change management, and stakeholder relationships, as well as responsibility for day to day operational management.

He led the company through a stabilisation project, that resulted in £4.25m of additional funding from Arts Council England and the Arts Council of Wales and included a new deal with the Arts Councils for the company's production and touring output. Included in this was the company's move to the Wales Millennium Centre; Peter was WNO's project lead, representing the organisation's needs in the design, delivery and business management elements of the project, as well as preparing for the move through internal contractual change. The management of the stabilisation programme was considered to be one of the most successful at that time.

In the latter years at WNO, focus was on managing the organisation through a period of funding cuts whilst retaining artistic quality and integrity. He analysed four new business model options, each benchmarked against the status quo model. The outcome was a new model with an eight year planning horizon, approved as the basis for artistic and strategic planning, with implementation from 2017.

Prior to WNO, Peter held posts with the following organisations:

- Fulcrum Entertainment Centre, Slough
- Cheltenham International Festival of Music
- Torch Theatre, Milford Haven
- Northern Ballet Theatre
- Bradford Council, Music Department
- Bradford Theatres - Alhambra Theatre, St. George's Concert Hall, Alhambra Studio
- Competencies summary

From his wide and varied career, Peter has developed extensive experience of business management in an arts context, in particular the following core competencies:

- strategic, business & financial planning
- business model options' development and assessment
- organisational design and development
- transition planning and change management
- high level HR management
- stakeholder management including Arts Councils
- operational management review
- governance assessment and review
- venue management experience, including programming
- marketing and audience development

Consultancy and project management - In 2015

Peter established his own consultancy and project management practice. In the short period since launch, he has worked on the following projects:

Ty Elis - completed a business management review, resulting in an 'issues paper' and set of recommendations for the Trustees of Ty Elis, a small mental health charity based in Porthcawl;

Rondo Media / WNO / S4C - commissioned to project manage a new opera film, with WNO Youth Opera, for broadcast on S4C and for worldwide streaming in 2017;

Musical Theatre Company - developed the business model for a new company to stage musical theatre productions in Wales;

National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain - developing a business and strategic review for National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain to assess the opportunities for expanding their output capacity and to look at potential new ways of working.

Peter has held Board appointments with:

- Cardiff Arts Marketing
- Arts Marketing Association
- Cardiff Theatrical Services
- Sinfonia Cymru



LEE PRIDDLE



POSITION

Associate Director

DISCIPLINE

Cost Management

QUALIFICATIONS

BSc (Hons) Construction Management

(Quantity Surveying)

MRICS

SPECIALISMS/SKILLS

- Broad experience of providing cost management and procurement services
- Strategic cost planning and management of major projects and programme
- Strategic procurement for major roll out, multi-site programmes.
- Providing principles of cost management to projects outside the construction industry

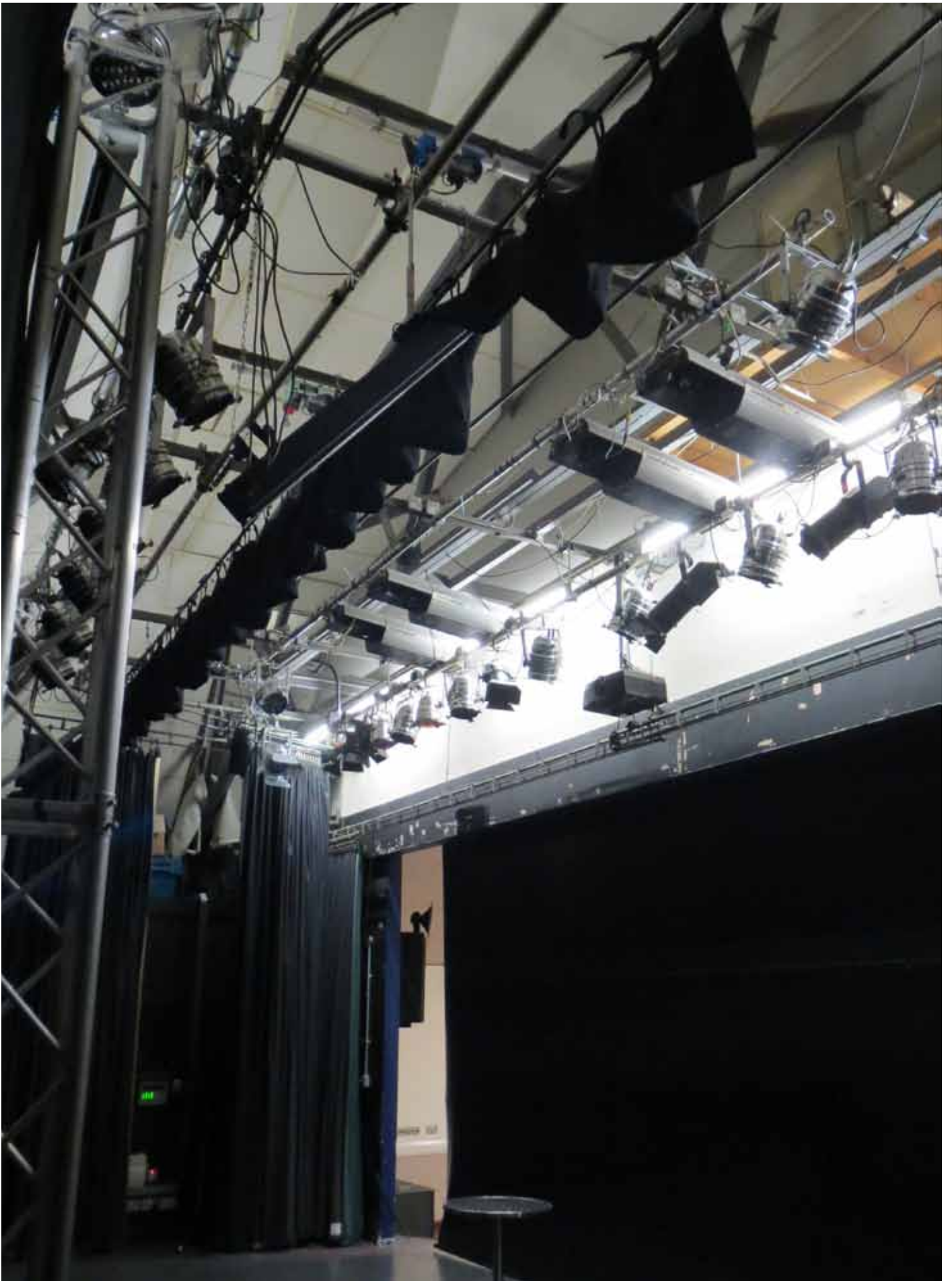
Lee has 18 years' experience of cost and commercial management in the consultancy and contracting fields.

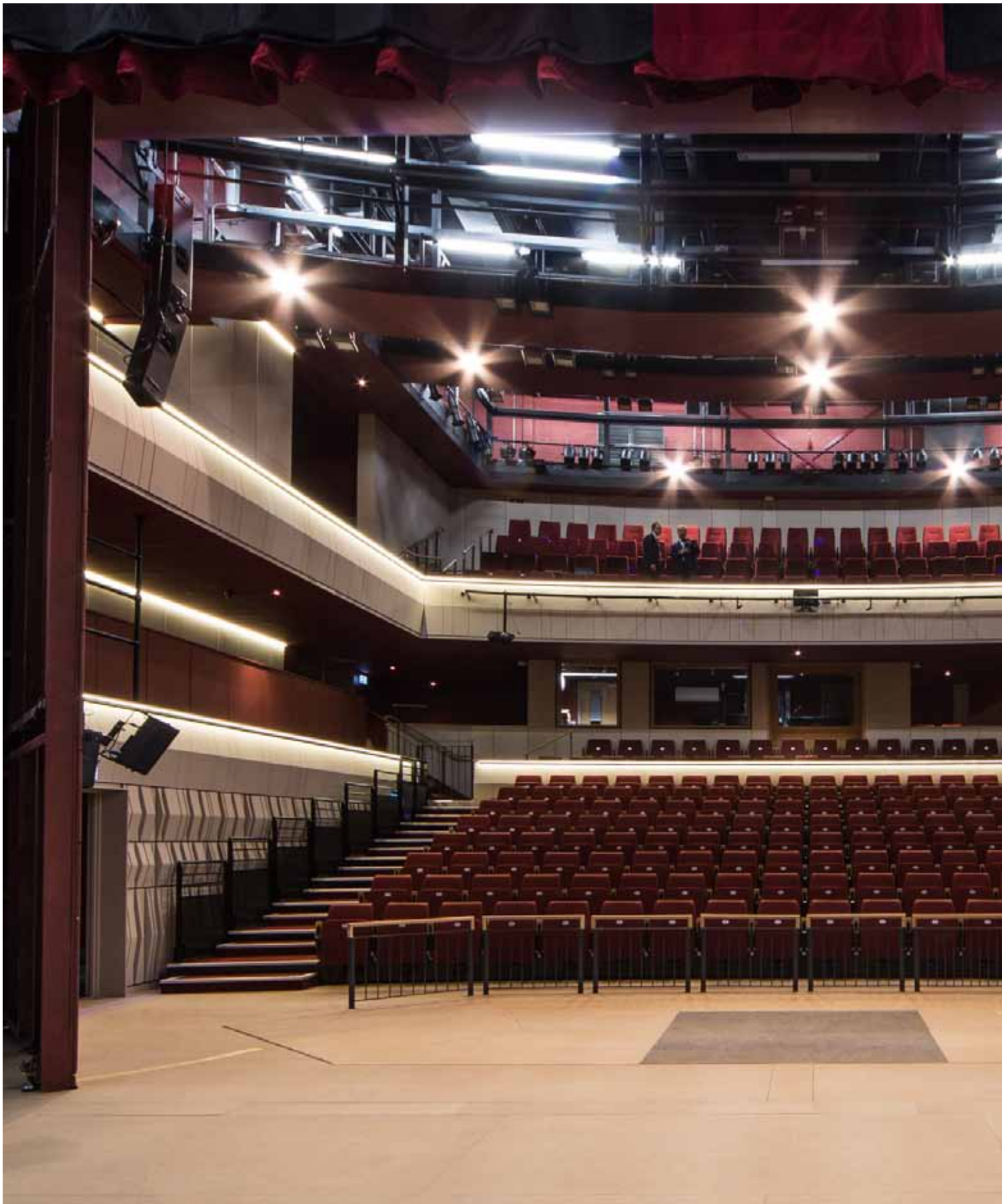
His skills and experiences of providing cost management and procurement services have been gained in a wide variety of sectors, including commercial, retail, residential, mixed use, infrastructure, rail and broadcast. The project application for these skills includes new build, fit out and refurbishment to both stand alone and multiple site schemes.

Lee has adapted to the variety of projects, providing a service to fulfil client targets by recognising the importance of the underlying principles of cost management. These principals have also been utilised on projects outside the construction industry, such as the procurement of commodity items for a major UK retailer.

Experience

- **Birmingham Royal Ballet, Birmingham**
Associate Director with responsibility for the Quantity Surveying and Cost Management service for the £2.5m redevelopment of the Birmingham Royal Ballet scheme to provide new rehearsal rooms, associated changing areas and refurbished office accommodation.
- **Sadler's Wells Foundation – Sadler's Wells Theatre**
Associate Director with responsibility for the Quantity Surveying and Cost Management service for the £8m refurbishment of the existing theatre to be procured through a Management Contracting route
- **Hippodrome Theatre Redevelopment, Birmingham**
Quantity Surveyor role for the high profile redevelopment of the Hippodrome Theatre in Birmingham.
- **Hot School Meals Project, Northampton Schools PFI** – Project and cost management of role out of kitchen re-heat pods to primary schools – Value £1m
- **Store Development, Marks & Spencer Plc – Value £30m**
Associate Director and principle Quantity Surveyor role for the new Store Development programme, including cost estimate, cost planning, procurement, cost management and reporting







APPENDIX B

RELEVANT PROJECT EXPERIENCE

GREAT CENTRAL HALL, NEWPORT



LOCATION: NEWPORT

CLIENT: SINFONIA CYMRU

COMPLETION: 2016

VALUE: £5M

SIZE: 2492M²

SERVICE: ARCHITECTURE

SECTOR: ARTS AND CULTURE

STRUCTURES: MANN WILLIAMS

SERVICES: HOLLOWAY PARTNERSHIP

COST CONSULTANT: GLEEDS

ARTS BUSINESS CONSULTANT: PETER BELLINGHAM
ARTS CONSULTING

In late 2014, Sinfonia Cymru identified the Great Central Hall in Newport as a potential permanent home from which its rehearsal, performance, community and education engagement programmes could be significantly enhanced.

Austin-Smith:Lord carried out a Feasibility Study for the creation of a new home for the orchestra within the building. Early assessments suggested it would be an excellent venue to suit Sinfonia Cymru's ambitions to both expand its range of performance types and outreach activities. It was clear from an early stage that the building had the capacity to accommodate commercial activities that will generate revenue and enable the venue to be self-sustaining and less reliant on external funding in the future.





The Great Central Hall Redevelopment Project Feasibility Study was a comprehensive assessment and analysis of the aims and objectives of the project as defined in the Brief issued at the outset. It was subsequently enhanced and developed through the consultations with Sinfonia Cymru and other potential project stakeholders.

It has ultimately delivered fully costed and coordinated design proposals commensurate with RIBA Stage 2 that meet (or exceed) all of the stated aims and objectives of Sinfonia Cymru and other project/venue stakeholders.

The Concept Design Proposals developed are supported by a full elemental Cost Plan that is fully coordinated with the Architecture, acoustic and engineering interventions and repairs to the existing building and a Business Plan. New facilities will be provided that will create a unique live music venue and enable the Great Central Hall to present a wide range of events and productions and open up new opportunities for the creation of new work.

A state of the art performance and rehearsal hall will attract performing groups of national stature to visit, to create and develop, and ultimately perform new work. A new Community Space will engage local individuals and groups with the venue and its wider programming.

The Great Central Hall Redevelopment Project, as defined at the end of the Feasibility Study, is well placed to deliver a beautiful new headquarters base for Sinfonia Cymru. From which, it can develop and sustain its musical programme and organisational development, in an environment and venue that will forge a reputation for live music across the entire South Wales region and beyond.

THE CASTLE THEATRE, WELLINGBOROUGH



LOCATION: WELLINGBOROUGH

CLIENT: THE CASTLE THEATRE

COMPLETION: 2016

VALUE: £12M

SIZE: 6669M²

SERVICE: ARCHITECTURE, MASTERPLANNING

SECTOR: ARTS AND CULTURE

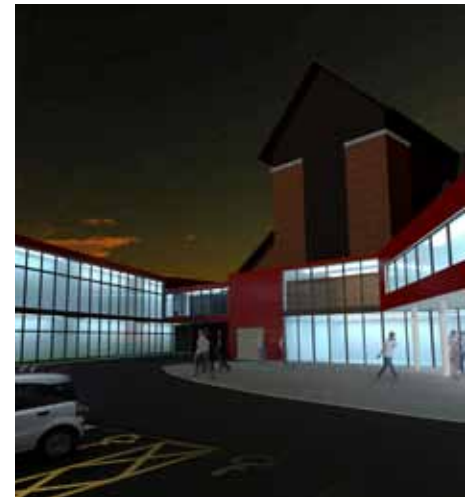
COST CONSULTANT: GLEEDS

ARTS BUSINESS CONSULTANT: HOSTA LTD.

Austin-Smith:Lord was commissioned to lead the preparation of a Feasibility Study, Cost Plan and Business Plan to support the planned expansion of existing facilities at The Castle Theatre, Wellingborough.

Constructed in the late 20th Century, The Castle Theatre has relied mostly on revenue funding from the public sector. It now has ambitions to both expand its capability to grow its audience – by widening the range of performance types – and to accommodate commercial activities that will generate revenue. This would enable the venue to be significantly less reliant on external funding in the future.





The Castle Theatre Redevelopment Project Feasibility Study was a comprehensive assessment and analysis of the aims and objectives of the project, as defined in the Brief issued at the outset of the commission by The Castle Theatre. Austin-Smith:Lord delivered fully costed and coordinated design proposals commensurate with RIBA Stage 2, that meet (or exceed) all of the stated aims and objectives of The Castle Theatre and other project/venue stakeholders.

The Study followed a rigorous process that first established and defined the needs of the project, and then collected together information that would subsequently inform the design response. A series of

options were then devised that could resolve the requirements of the brief for the accommodation needed to secure the future of The Castle.

The final Concept Design developed by Austin-Smith:Lord suggests a distinctive new identity for The Castle, and has created a complimentary, yet contemporary, extension to the facilities currently provided on the site. The new facilities will increase the ability of the theatre to attract and present a wide range of events and productions on two stages, and open up new opportunities for the creation of new work in the facilities provided.

A state of the art Creation Space will attract performing groups of national stature to become resident on the site. They will be able to create and develop and ultimately perform new work there, and the new Community Spaces will engage local individuals and groups with the venue and its wider programming.

The Castle will possess a suite of facilities unrivalled in the region, providing the venue with a firm platform for growth and continuing enhancement of its reputation as a centre of excellence for the arts.

THEATR HAFREN, NEWTOWN



LOCATION: NEWTOWN, POWYS

CLIENT: THEATR HAFREN/NPTC GROUP

VALUE: £60K

COMPLETION: FEASIBILITY STUDY - 2014, CAPITAL PROJECT - 2016

SERVICE: ARCHITECTURE

SECTOR: ARTS AND CULTURE

BUSINESS PLANNER: HOSTA LIMITED

COST CONSULTANT: GLEEDS

Austin-Smith:Lord was appointed by Theatr Hafren in conjunction with Neath Port Talbot College Group, to undertake a detailed Feasibility Study for the redevelopment of the existing theatre. The Study looks at introducing a new suite of arts facilities including a high quality performance studio, a second dance studio and a music recording and rehearsal suite to extend the range of performances available in conjunction with the existing 600 seat main auditorium.

We have also been tasked with rationalising some of the other internal spaces, including the audience front of house facilities, and improving building accessibility and identity, supplemented by a rigorously researched and developed Business Plan.



OCTAGON THEATRE, BOLTON



LOCATION: BOLTON

CLIENT: OCTAGON THEATRE

VALUE: N/A

SIZE: N/A

COMPLETION: 2015

SERVICE: ARCHITECTURE

SECTOR: ARTS AND CULTURE

Austin-Smith:Lord was commissioned by the Octagon Theatre in Bolton to undertake a feasibility study for the redevelopment of its iconic theatre. Bolton Octagon Theatre is a unique and ground breaking theatre approaching its 50th year since opening in 1967. It was the first fully flexible theatre in the UK, capable of transforming from end stage to thrust stage and “theatre in the round”.

The aim of the feasibility study was to develop both existing and new areas of the theatre including a studio theatre, youth and community theatre space, teaching spaces, improved back of house facilities and greater office and meeting spaces, to ensure the theatres needs are met for the next 50 years.



BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET, BIRMINGHAM



LOCATION: BIRMINGHAM

CLIENT: BIRMINGHAM BALLET

VALUE: £2.7M

SIZE: 2375M²

COMPLETION: 2014

SERVICE: ARCHITECTURE, INTERIOR DESIGN

SECTOR: ARTS AND CULTURE

STRUCTURES: ARUP

SERVICES: ARUP

COST CONSULTANT: GLEEDS

With aspirations of creating a world-class centre of excellence as a dance rehearsal facility and also to support the wide range of additional activities expected of a modern arts organisation; Austin-Smith:Lord was appointed by Birmingham Royal Ballet as Architect, Interior Designer and Design Team Leader for the refurbishment of the Birmingham Royal Ballet building.

The refurbishment included the upgrade of two existing ballet rehearsal studios, the creation of an informal performance venue for audiences of up to 100 people within the existing footprint of the two other rehearsal rooms, the replacement of current facilities for dancers' changing, welfare and rest areas and existing administration offices. The existing reception and main access into the building were also addressed and improved.

"A-S:L produced a fine design for the studio and administration home of Birmingham Royal Ballet. The building required a major overhaul after 25 years of busy use and needed to be brought into the 21st Century. For the sum of £2.7M A-S:L created state of the art dance facilities within the existing building resolving historic 'navigation' issues and making the building accessible and open to external users. Significantly, the design was created with sustainability high on the agenda, both in terms of environment and future business needs. The design involved a major technical upgrade to provide the most efficient use of digital equipment to aid teaching and archiving. The net result is a beautiful and inspiring studio building that will set the standard for decades to come."

Christopher Barron,
Chief Executive – Birmingham Royal Ballet



BRB has been based in Birmingham since 1990 when it moved from London into its purpose built home beside the Birmingham Hippodrome Theatre. The BRB building, which included four ballet studios, changing rooms, shower and toilet facilities for the dancers, offices for the executive, music, production and technical staff and extensive costume workshops and storage; was showing its age. It was clear that while it continued to deliver its primary role as a dance rehearsal facility, it struggled to support the wide range of additional activities expected of a modern arts organisation.

In addition to the Royal Ballet School, the building is also utilised by community groups, a number of which are considered disadvantaged, to hold a range of community based classes and rehearsals. They are supported by the Friends of BRB.

The facilities, though catering for this to a certain extent, needed changing to ensure the building was more suitable for the needs of the community groups.

The works undertaken by us and our team addressed all of the existing building's shortfalls and involved major refurbishment of all three floors of the building.

The major priorities that were achieved from the refurbishment project include the improvement of the working environment for dancers and admin staff, eradication of existing accessibility difficulties inherent in the existing building, significant upgrade and replacement of existing heating, ventilation and lighting systems to meet 21st Century performance and energy use standards, and enhancement of corporate branding, and signage on the exterior of the building.

BRIDGWATER COLLEGE PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE



LOCATION: BRIDGWATER, SOMERSET

CLIENT: BRIDGWATER COLLEGE

SIZE: 2,100M²

COMPLETION: 2015

VALUE: £6.1M

SERVICE: ARCHITECTURE, LANDSCAPE, INTERIORS

SECTOR: EDUCATION

CONTRACTOR: BAM

LANDSCAPE: AUSTIN-SMITH:LORD

STRUCTURES: CURTINS CONSULTING

SERVICES: MENDICK WARING

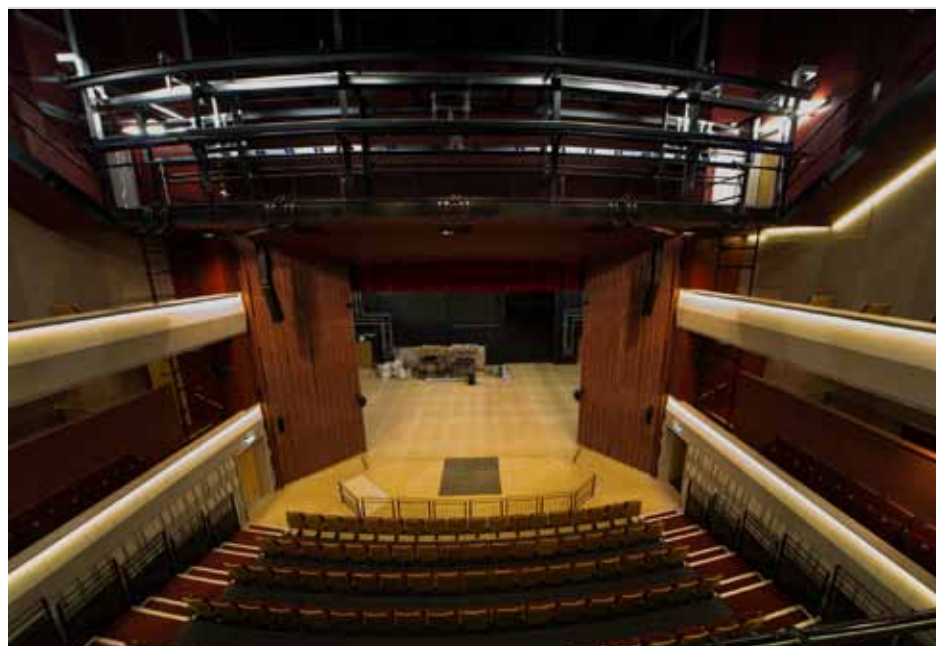
COST CONSULTANT: HILLS

Undertaking the role of Lead Consultant and Lead Designer, we provided full architectural, interior design, and landscape design services for Bridgwater College for this new build facility.

The scheme expands and enhances Bridgwater College's existing Drama and Dance facilities, with a view to offering an enhanced level of performance-related training for the College.



Site plan





"The team from Austin-Smith:Lord (ASL) that have been involved with the development of our new 350-seater Performing Arts Centre, including training rooms, changing and public areas, have been a pleasure to work with. They have been very enthusiastic and obviously have a genuine interest in this project. They have produced a building design that meets our training requirements and the needs of the local community in a building that acts as a contemporary focal point at the entrance to the College. They quickly understood the brief and developed initial plans that we have subsequently worked closely with their design team to finalise to meet the wide ranging future uses for the building, as well as the challenging BREEAM rating. I would have no hesitation in recommending ASL based on the College's experiences with this project."

David Harper, Estates and Accommodation Manager



The brief called for a 350-seat auditorium with fly loft and facilities for scenic suspension, a performance/dance studio, a foyer, café/bar and all the requisite technical and administrative facilities. The auditorium is highly flexible for use by both the College and the Community.

It caters for proscenium end-stage theatre, as well as a myriad of other configurations, including thrust stage and in-the-round, as well as rock and pop concerts, fashion shows, dinners, banquets, conferences, lectures and exhibitions. It is also a teaching theatre for the students.

The new Performing Arts Centre is located on a triangular plot of land near the junction of College Way with Bath Road and is a dramatic new arts building shared with Bridgwater's wider community.

The building will act as an advert for Bridgwater College which is currently less visible to the outside world at the end of College Way.

REDHOUSE ARTS CENTRE, MERTHYR TYDFIL



LOCATION: MERTHYR TYDFIL

CLIENT: MERTHYR TYDFIL HOUSING ASSOCIATION

VALUE: £7M

SIZE: 2750M²

COMPLETION: 2013

SERVICE: ARCHITECTURE, INTERIORS

SECTOR: CULTURE

CONTRACTOR: GRAHAM CONSTRUCTION

LANDSCAPE: AUSTIN-SMITH: LORD

STRUCTURES: MANN WILLIAMS

SERVICES: TROUP BYWATERS AND ANDERS

COST CONSULTANT: BOWEN AND PARTNERS

LISTING: GRADE II*

Austin-Smith:Lord was commissioned by Merthyr Tydfil Housing Association for the restoration of a Grade II* listed derelict Town Hall in Merthyr Tydfil. The scheme involved carefully bringing this important late Victorian courtyard building back to life and providing a much-needed cultural focus for the town and the region.

The Old Town Hall was repaired, restored and adapted as an Arts Centre, the heart of its community and the base for Merthyr College's Arts, Music and Media courses, with flexible performance spaces, a dance studio, a gallery, creative industries studios, a café, teaching spaces and the forming of a new multi-purpose top-lit space from the once dark and grimy internal courtyard.



Merthyr Tydfil's Old Town Hall was constructed in 1898 when the town was the largest in Wales and its economic significance as a producer of coal, iron and steel was global. The Grade II* Listed Town Hall was an important symbol of civic pride, an important seat of the Industrial Revolution and the seat of the first independent labour Member of Parliament, however has been derelict for 20 years. The colourful late Victorian architecture, mainly in the French Renaissance style, was ambitious and reflected the aspirations of the age.

Areas of particular conservation interest included repair work to the terracotta, and reinstatement of all but one of the terracotta finials; repair work to the mosaic tiling, quarry tiling, terrazzo and faience wall tiling; repair work to the ornate plaster and lincrusta ceilings; repair work and replacement of stained leaded glass windows; replacement of timber sash and cast iron windows; the specification of lime-based plasters and mortars; and the repair of the original clock tower.

RIVERFRONT THEATRE AND ARTS CENTRE, NEWPORT



LOCATION: NEWPORT, WALES

COMPLETION: 2004

VALUE: £13.5M

SIZE: 5,500M²

SERVICE: ARCHITECTURE, INTERIORS, LANDSCAPE

SECTOR: ARTS & CULTURE

CLIENT: NEWPORT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CONTRACTOR: WILLMOTT DIXON

STRUCTURES: CLARKE BOND PARTNERSHIP

SERVICES: HOARE LEA & PARTNERS

COST CONSULTANT: GLEEDS

SPECIALIST CONSULTANTS: THEATRE
CONSULTANT: CARR & ANGIER

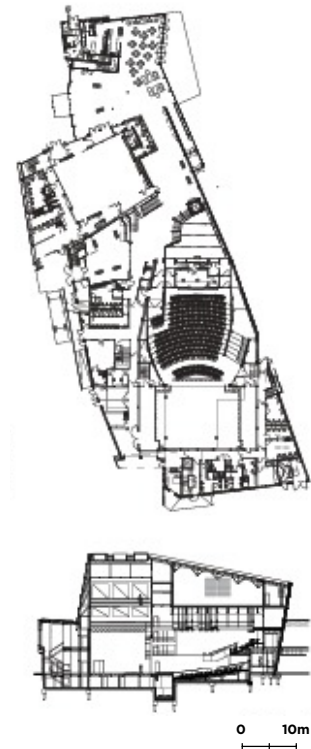
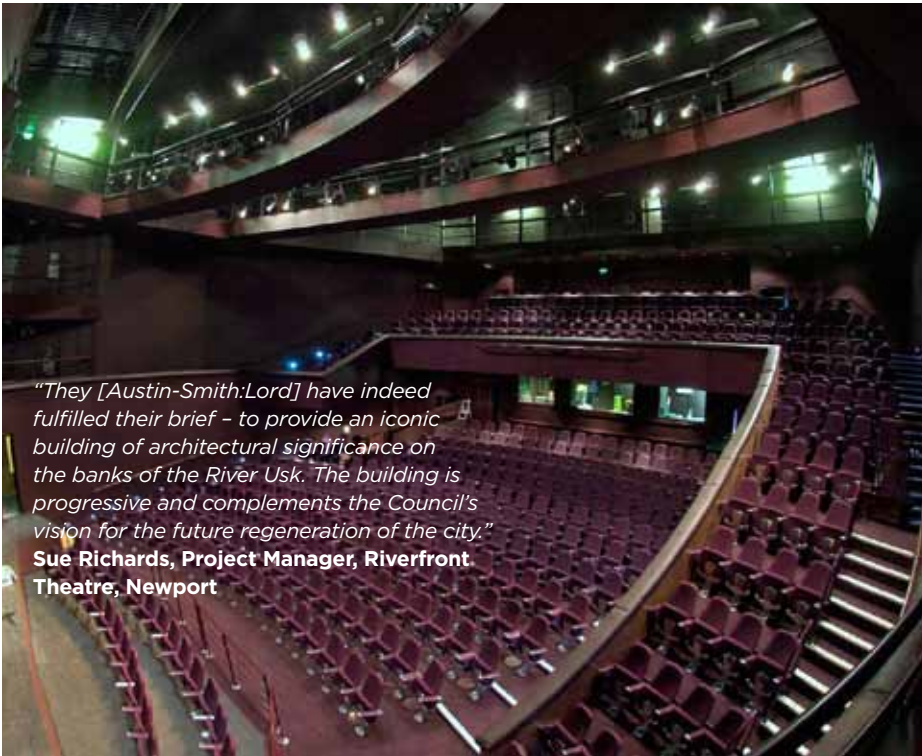
The Riverfront Theatre and Arts Centre in Newport was conceived to help 'kick-start' the regeneration of the city centre and build upon the city's cultural and artistic provision. Austin-Smith:Lord's brief called for a 'landmark' building to provide a catalyst for further development along the riverside. The building comprises two large volumes, one housing the main 500-seat auditorium with proscenium arch and fly tower and the other a studio seating 150 in a flexible form. The remaining facilities – a dance studio, recording studio, art gallery, function room, workshop spaces, crèche, shop, café, bar and ancillary spaces – wrap around these volumes.



Site plan

0 50m





Unusually the main auditorium is asymmetrical in plan; there are few asymmetrical auditoria in the world. It has a raked seating arm extending to the stage on audience left which adds an intimacy to the auditorium and renders the venue highly flexible for lyric theatre, conferencing or stage shows. In addition the overall form of the building is asymmetrical, with several roofs, and a transparent, double-height foyer unifying the varying elements. The foyer space opens to the light and river setting and acts as a beacon particularly when lit up at night.

The remains of a fifteenth century ship were discovered on the site whilst excavating for the orchestra pit. Twenty five metres long and dating from 1465 the find's importance was equated to that of the Mary Rose. During its 6 month excavation a vast new exhibition space was designed and built beneath the foyer to house and display the discoveries; presenting the ship's unearthing, its history and finally the fully conserved ship itself.

When conceived by the City Council, the idea of a Theatre and Arts Centre in Newport was deemed irrelevant. In a city with no notable modern architecture, the Riverfront has succeeded in winning the client's pride, the public's hearts and

the press' approval. It was voted 2005 Consortium for Local Authorities in Wales Building of the Year, won the Built-in Quality Regional Award and was shortlisted for, amongst others, an RIBA Award for Architecture. The building has twice been awarded the title of most popular new building in Wales by the Local Government Authority. It is featured in a book entitled 'Building Wales', which focuses on Wales' most notable modern architecture from the last seventy years and has recently featured on 'Doctor Who'.

THEATRE SEVERN, SHREWSBURY



LOCATION: SHREWSBURY, ENGLAND

COMPLETION: 2009

VALUE: £20M

SIZE: 7,000M²

SERVICE: ARCHITECTURE, INTERIORS, LANDSCAPE

SECTOR: ARTS & CULTURE

CLIENT: SHREWSBURY AND ATCHAM COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CONTRACTOR: WILLMOTT DIXON

STRUCTURES: CURTINS CONSULTING

SERVICES: SMITH GROUP

COST CONSULTANT: WILLMOTT DIXON

SPECIALIST CONSULTANTS: THEATRE CONSULTANT: CARR AND ANGIER

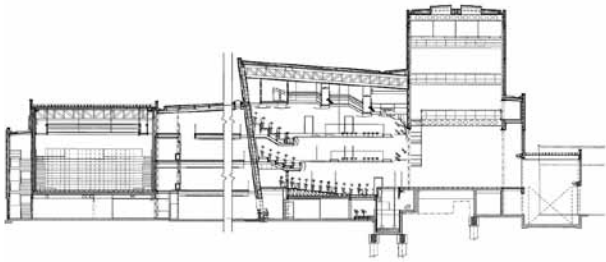
AWARDS: 2009 ACE NATIONAL AWARD FOR ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE, HIGHLY RECOMMENDED



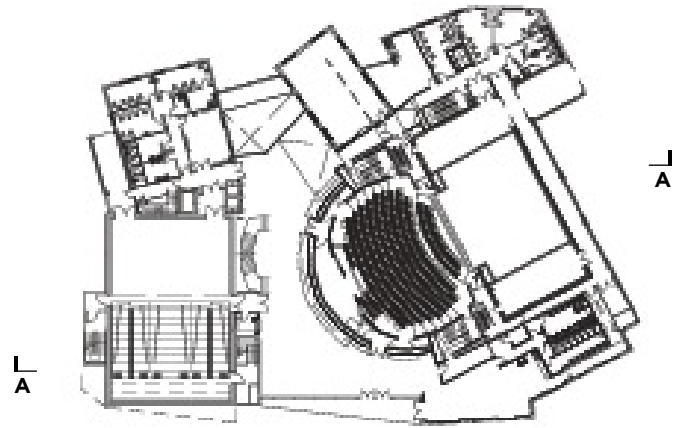
Site plan

The Theatre Severn is situated on a picturesque site in Shrewsbury on the banks of the River Severn. The project involved the adaptation and improvement of an existing concept scheme that had failed a CABE review. Austin-Smith:Lord led the design team and provided architectural, landscaping and interiors services. They improved the scheme whilst retaining the main elements of the original design, re-submitted a planning application and built the project, all within a very tight timescale. The building incorporates a 650-seat auditorium, a 250-seat flexible studio theatre, a dance studio, a multi-purpose space, ancillary areas, a bar and a cafeteria.





Section A-A



First floor plan



The theatre site is located below the river's flood plain level and significant archaeology in the ground required protection and preservation. As a result the theatre stage and main audience foyer spaces were raised a storey above ground. Our design resolves challenges such as transporting large scenery from articulated vehicles at ground level up to a first floor stage and clever elevational treatment and articulation reduces the apparent height and mass of the building, especially of the fly tower.

The Theatre Severn's external appearance is broken down into its constituent parts, with both main and studio theatres and the dance studio treated as independent entities and the ancillary and foyer spaces forming a solid-void-solid rhythm around them. This approach reduces the scale of the building, relates it to the neighbouring urban grain and makes it legible to visitors, creating three smaller buildings within the one venue.

The main auditorium, with fly tower and orchestra pit, is surprisingly intimate. The two upper tiers continue along the side walls to the proscenium arch and envelope the forestage. The studio theatre is highly flexible, with flying facilities and retractable seating. The dance studio is a dramatic and inspirational space. The foyers are bright and airy and the retention of the old chapel on the site for use as the main bar has proved an extremely popular space. Since opening Shrewsbury Theatre Severn has received considerable praise from the client and theatre users and critical acclaim from within the performing arts industry.

"The Severn deserves comparison with both the Lowry and the Sage in Gateshead, and, to my mind, just pips both of them..... [it] is the most ravishing and most successful venue I have visited."
Dillie Keane, writing in *The Stage*

GUILDFORD CIVIC CONCERT HALL



LOCATION: GUILDFORD, ENGLAND

COMPLETION: 2011

VALUE: £21.5M

SIZE: 5,900M²

SERVICE: ARCHITECTURE, INTERIORS, LANDSCAPE

SECTOR: ARTS & CULTURE

CLIENT: GUILDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

CONTRACTOR: WILLMOTT DIXON

STRUCTURES: URS/SCOTT WILSON

SERVICES: ROGER PRESTON & PARTNERS

COST CONSULTANT: MDA CONSULTING LTD

SPECIALIST CONSULTANTS: ACOUSTICS: SOUND RESEARCH LABORATORIES LTD

AWARDS: RIBA AWARD 2012



Site plan



Austin-Smith:Lord's masterplan for a new Cultural Quarter in Guildford town centre includes the design of the RIBA Award winning G-Live Concert Hall and entertainment venue. In addition, part of the development is a new 4*, 185-bedroom Guildford Radisson Edwardian Hotel for which Austin-Smith:Lord was the concept design architect.

The G-Live venue opened to the public in September 2011. It comprises a flexible multi-purpose auditorium, flexible studio rehearsal space, conference and seminar rooms, a café, bars and foyer space. The venue provides a focus for cultural events in the evening and is an important social hub and meeting place during the day.



Section



The new G-Live venue lies in a prominent location at the top of the steep medieval high street, marking the transition to wider, leafier parkland and residential areas beyond. By wrapping the main auditorium box in a smaller scaled glass façade containing foyer and ancillary spaces, the building retains an indeterminate scale; part civic landmark, part garden building.

A major consideration of the Cultural Quarter masterplan was to deliver an effective and integrated public realm. The design incorporates public squares which flow directly into the public foyers, linking high street and parkland and transforming the multiple levels of interior foyer into an extension of the public domain. The studio rehearsal space opens directly to the parkland with grassland tiers for ‘al-fresco’ performances.

Due to constant pressure on commercial viability of large venues the main auditorium needed maximum flexibility. It accommodates 1,000 seated, but retractable seating enables a flat floor configuration increasing the capacity to 1,700. The latest electro-acoustic enhancement technology, adjustable over-stage reflectors and faceted diffusers on the flank walls offer added flexibility, providing near perfect acoustic conditions for a variety of uses including rock, classical, musicals, theatre and comedy. The 100-seat studio is designed as a self-contained performance space, but can be transformed into a conference suite, function room or foyer overspill with integral bar.

G-Live achieved an ‘Excellent’ BREEAM rating due to the successful integration of a number of elements at an early stage. These include a self-contained biomass boiler system and naturally ventilated foyer areas linked to a building management system. Both reduce the building’s energy consumption and generate considerable energy savings. External materials were selected from sustainable sources with the external rain-screen cladding formed of recycled porcelain tiles. An acoustically-isolated double wall and roof system enhances the auditorium’s thermal and sound insulation, significantly limiting noise breakout to neighbouring residential properties.

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