

**V1 Scoping Document - Options Appraisal April 2024**  
**Culture Hub Development Selkirk Town Centre.**  
**Draft outline of requirements for operations and delivering activities**

Report: FMcD-C/JBC- Heritage & Arts/Culture Devt Groups- Selkirk

**Appraisal Focus-**

Operational needs and use for development of a Selkirk town-centre community cultural hub/tourist info space/heritage activities space & disabled access (key priorities) plus concepts and themes to showcase town history/heritage/artworks.

**Form/purpose/placemaking- what is required:**

**Creation of a one-stop cultural hub in Selkirk town centre with wow factor in its building design/presentation/great access/plus use of technology and visuals to create memorable experiences unique within the Borders**

- Location within a highly attractive ambient space
- Incorporate outdoor seating and chill/contemplation spaces
- Inspiring visuals/art/heritage and links to Sir Walter Scott, literature, commonriding, local history, archives, art, poetry, music, stories/legends.
- Friendly and welcoming orientation point for community and visitors to town
- Iconic flagship- inspiring high-end place for culture, learning, fun and experiential journeys
- Innovative, adaptive and accessible in approaches to presenting collocated services
- Sustainable and carbon neutral
- Cost effective to run as a single cultural hub on basis of partnership working for development and in line with community aspirations and funding.

**Ground floor**

- Double door vestibule entrance with level access: containment and environmental protection for collections
- Access and layout to enable opening to public and zoning /security access to support out of hours secure use
- On-site dementia/autism-friendly, water/energy efficient public toilets
- Community and family friendly ground floor activity space suitable for delivering welcome orientation, visitor information/tourism signposting
- Co-located library within ground floor of extension? (Or on upper floor?), plus space that can be used to deliver shared activities/workspace – e.g.: bookbug, school class visit education/adult learning and craft activities.
- Shared activity spaces also could host curatorial talks/show and tell sessions and workshops on collections and similar engagement activities. This space should be

separate from heritage displays/library/workspace and able to be accessed independently to support paid for group visits/activities and have its own zoned access and security for use in evenings without having to open whole building or where collections/gallery/work spaces are located.

#### **Activity spaces**

- All should be adjacent to public toilets. Separate to toilets should be a child feeding/baby-changing space with a place for securely parking a twin pram buggy outside/in.
- Lift access to all floors (lift to be of a size able to easily accommodate movement of display cases/paintings etc for handling and moving exhibitions and book stock from ground to upper floors)
- energy efficient building and utilities/services- heating, lighting, water
- Public WIFI access ICT cabling and network points

**ROOFTOP VIEWPOINT-** Scenic viewpoint could possibly incorporate a community franchise Retro tearoom? Glass enclosed space with views out over town centre rooftops to the Selkirk Hills/edges of the Valley possibly with parapet around for maintenance access/to simplify window cleaning of glass exterior.

#### **Co-located work teams requirements on site-connectivity:**

- Staff connectivity for work- ICT network, PC network points/telephony
- Zoning per floor with Intruder alarm systems/PIR/CCTV
- Alarm/Security systems
- Environmental monitoring & climate controls -to gallery/museum/GIS standards.

#### **Public and digital access**

**WIFI Access and network points in all gallery/display spaces**

**State of the art carbon net zero compliant innovative design building**

**A library/museum/volunteer workspace and online links to digital archive/genealogy resource including Clapperton photographic archive**

**Technology engaged- WIFI, Metaverse/Virtual reality features for placemaking/storytelling- blending collections with experiential interpretation/interactives to showcase rich heritage/art/stories of Selkirk and the valleys.**

#### **High end/GIS standard exhibition spaces**

- Gallery standard ceiling mounted lighting track and adjustable lamp units flood and spot
- Temporary Gallery with security to meet GIS, storage and workspace for collections care and access that does not impact on visitors when exhibition moves are underway

- Suite of modular, flow-through design and flexible display spaces- for presenting town heritage collections
- Contained store off each display space for equipment/tools/touring exhibition packaging storage
- Pop up gallery/display space
- In-gallery facility for presentation of digital interpretation
- Wall hanging rail system
- Floor sockets
- Reinforced doors/locks and wall/ceiling integrity to meet GIS standard (for loans, museum collections and artworks)

Options appraisal – Key Facilities required: town centre location/co-locate cultural and heritage assets in town within improved facilities for visitors, adjacent to parking/bus route, focus on developing a new state of art community cultural hub building with access for all.

Lead option- space next to Selkirk Town Hall/former Cross Keys space:  
Community cultural Hub – Heritage displays/interpretation, link through to Sir Walter Scott’s Courtroom to improve disabled access, Information point /tourist info signposting to attractions/businesses in locality, Incorporate new Library co-located with museum collections and tourist info, digital collections/genealogy, Visitor services meet & greet/hosting space for talks & events, and café/shop area for retail income.

Impacts/change:

Co-location model- One stop shop for culture/tourism/Heritage & Arts. Tourist attraction/signposting info point.

Co-locate public library, town museum, Scott’s Courtroom and digital archive links/Clapperton photographic archive. Create a Government Indemnity Scheme standard art gallery to take exhibitions of international quality/security to meet current ACE/GIS standards. Can also house selling shows to promote sales of work by high quality artists/crafters as part of art programme exhibitions. To improve standard of display facilities currently at Halliwells House where hanging arrangement is limited due to number of windows in Robson Gallery, condition of building upper floor of concern due to join to adjacent former Butcher’s building with evidence of water ingress between properties and lack of investment in environmental controls within Halliwells (last upgraded late 1990s) , which means inability to take important touring exhibitions in the gallery.

Efficiencies – Co-location maximises resources and save maintenance and utilities costs/staffing focused in one space, community engagement, upskilling & training, access after 5pm for activities/events/franchise opps around retail/rooftop café?

Current Annual Visits/ Footfall- cultural services in Selkirk (Live Borders operated):

**Scott's Courtroom – approx. 4500 visitors**

**Halliwell's House – Approx 4000 visitors**

**Selkirk Library – Approx 1500 members less using library direct and some lapsed members.**

**Total across all 3 facilities is approx. 10, 000 visits with 3 sets of running costs.**

**A single community hub could work to achieve target to increase audience by 20% and attract 12,000 under one roof with one set of running costs/efficiencies around having a one-stop shop in the Market Place, a higher profile in town centre as a new flagship attraction and offer much improved access for disabled visitors, events, ceremonial use and better facilities and activities for families with young children/young people.**

**A unique iconic building which would retain traditions/link to Scott, Common Riding and Town Hall Architecture with complimentary facilities, carbon neutral footprint and fit for purpose visitor facilities to give Selkirk a town centre showcase for Heritage/Culture and information on the locality of Selkirk and the Valleys.**

**Security- A Co-located cultural hub must have ability to zone activity spaces and lower floors for separation and to allow self-directed community access and public evening access/out of hours use while floors with collections, gallery spaces and library are zoned off.**

**In addition need for a good size cleaners cupboard with butler sink for filling mop bucket etc, and separate cleaning equipment/paper goods and cleaning chemicals secure cupboard.**

**Upper floor other workspaces- It is important to incorporate on upper floors a workspace for collocated team/volunteers. Ideally, Clapperton Archive a volunteers workspace and adjacent public desk research area for family history and accessing Peoples Network/Scotland's People genealogy p\c . Workspace for volunteers is to facilitate daytime access, working independently on community heritage and digitising skills projects. Needs to be separate from staff shared team office, for confidentiality/privacy etc.**

**Access to this volunteer work space/public research area should ideally be off the public library space, adjacent to Clapperton archive presentation space and able to accommodate self-study PC and table/seats area for afterschool club use, clubs and community group project work so needs table seating, PC workspace and cabling with network points.**

#### **Stores- St Marys Mill**

**A secure dexion shelving museum collection storage area with easy access/ground floor expansion within St Marys Mill would be important for housing off-display rotating Selkirk**

collections that will be absorbed with any co-location decant and the need to contain objects/artworks/documents and photographs from Halliwells House and Clapperton Archive & photographic collections. Collections would be displayed on a changing basis regularly in any newco-located facility and access to view always available by appointment for material not on display.

**Opening Hours: Options appraisal-**

A new collocated community Heritage/Cultural Hub should be open to public all year round, 7 days per week if audience demand fulfils this.

Facilities are currently either seasonal (museums/galleries) in Selkirk or only open a few days per week (library).

#### **INCOME GENERATION:**

**Donations/retail income.**

Core access to collections – free admission. Legal requirement for collections held in stewardship by Scottish Borders Council/managed by Live Borders. Collections/Heritage Assets are free admission as they are paid for as part of Council Tax. (Legislation on this – the Public Libraries Scotland Act/amendments refers regarding free admission.)

Access to events/special exhibitions such as touring exhibitions generated externally can, however, be charged for.

Donations – cash/card donations income would contribute to cost of maintaining collections, services and education/learning activities under charitable purposes/as at present where Live Borders Trust is a charity.

Other income: Currently from management fee contribution (SBC) plus Trust income, grants, benefactions, sponsorship, income from events/tickets/bookings/group private tours etc.

#### **Digital/image sales**

A seating area with large screen presentation wall facility would be good for a high tech visual digital and sound presentation around places, people and genealogy/Border family names. Good focus for local heritage engagement and worldwide market for images of places/people. Clapperton photographer dynasty can be incorporated as a heritage digital project presentation and opportunity for showcasing local studies collections of photographs and driving income through image /talks/walks/tours resale opportunities.

Climate control and wall sockets for plugging of cleaning equipment electrics etc and same in storage areas.

Balance needs for UV/lux controls for textiles/paper and low light levels with design innovation around presentation and staging of heritage objects (akin to textiles, photographs, Common riding objects, banners and works on paper of historic importance - literary heritage and Sir Walter Scott connection/links to writing for health inspired by collections particularly important.

Digital experiences and visually engaging display surroundings to showcase archives/collections and research content is required and network points will be required in offices, work areas and stores to allow use of laptops etc.

flexible activities space including adjacent sink/water/kitchenette/hydroboil and storage cupboards for equipment

wall shelving and mobile shelving units for library stock

storage for resources/loans

secure storage for reserve collections and loans

Other possibilities to consider:

Develop a secret urban garden space at back of property -suitable for presenting literature/art/heritage experiences, hosting summer outdoor poetry/music performances and use as a small gathering space for private lets /outdoor events/receptions. Would be good if private access to secret garden was created as an extension space so it opens out from sliding glass exit wall from an interior ground floor function/activity space?

Align to Ground floor meet and greet reception/orientation welcome and sales point?

Other considerations for income generation

Retail- craft/gift retail displays, bookshop, café with food counter and food prep area and indoor/outdoor Café - (currently a bookshop franchise has closed so one vacant shop and Tibby's has other retail lease spaces located under Scott's Courtroom. Lease is currently on a SBC tenancy basis. Scope to work in partnership with two businesses -discuss with SBC/Common Good on development and joint ambitions, refreshing and improving access for public within community cultural hub and satisfying community perspectives for franchised business opportunities.

(A separate small darkroom for studio hire- photography interpretation/display/practical photography. Could explore shared use by Selkirk camera Club even? Colocation opportunities/share resources and other creative practitioners may have interest in learning activities around photography/digital archive etc.)

**THEMES FOR INTERPRETATION:**

Placemaking and Personalities – promote as Story Selkirk/Borders Booktown? Selkirk promotes its personality through town heritage, commonriding, hill shepherding, fair trade,

reuse and recycle sustainability, creativity, music and has strong literary/poetry/ballad and song connections.

A major USP is the building – iconic period Courtroom and law/order links to Sir Walter Scott. Additional key names include Mungo Park, Andrew Laing of stories fame, James Hogg, ballads, J.B. Selkirk, and many contemporary writers/poets e.g., Rhona Munro, Allan Massie etc

**Other colocation scope for community hub:** Contact Centre and Registrars services in town now very limited with close of Municipal Buildings. A new build community cultural hub could offer SBC space to develop bookable client meeting room on upper floor which could support a shared client services space to accommodate- Council contact centre/citizen Selkirk space on shared occupancy basis with ad hoc registrar of births deaths marriages services as required, if demand is there. Could also align SBC Registrar's office space to a digital genealogy and archive point and Clapperton archive display feature.

Include discovery space to showcase digital access to the Clapperton photographic archive/heritage studio collection. Provide volunteer workspace and community engagement through volunteering to support digital access to family history, connected collections, research resource desk, library access to Scotland's people genealogy etc. Incorporating local businesses and community support network agencies into a new culture hub co-located new build and change use of the currently franchised old properties (Common Good ownership and Council leased).

#### **PLACEMAKING:**

Celebrate the landscape/setting of Selkirk and the valleys- iconic views would make a fabulous top floor roof level viewing point/retro café, even a holiday let flat – high end income generating, self-contained soundproofed facility with its own keypad entry system and own external/rear access?

#### **Options Appraisal – Asset Review.**

##### **Potential Functions to consider bringing on-site, using co-location approaches:**

#### **Selkirk Library**

The library is currently located in the Old Jail in Ettrick Terrace, a five-minute walk from Market Place and the centre of town.

#### **Halliwell's House Museum and Robson Art Gallery**

The museum is situated in Halliwell's Close, adjacent to Market Place, in a former dwelling. It tells the story of life in Halliwell's Close as well as the wider story of Selkirk's history through a permanent exhibition over two floors. It has one temporary exhibition space, the Robson Gallery, on the second floor. The museum does not have a separate activity room. Events and

programmes at the museum take place within the permanent exhibition space. The museum is open daily from March to October, closing at 4pm Monday to Saturday, and 3pm on Sunday.

### **Sir Walter Scott's Court Room/former Town Hall**

The courthouse is not accessible and requires to be joined up to any proposed new build. The courtroom itself is interpreted with banners and a focus on Sir Walter Scott. A court room scene during Sir Walter Scott's time is recreated using mannequins. There are also display cases displaying items from the Museum Service's collection. There is no separate activity room. The courtroom furniture can be moved to create space.

### **Museums Selkirk collection Halliwells/Commonriding reserve Collections/ Stores**

spaces for collections storage. However, these are not open to the public. Education spaces to be available spaces for delivering activities.

### **Clapperton Studio**

Collection/Archive reserve collection – currently stored at Heritage Hub Archive in Hawick. Although the actual studio is now closed and no longer accessible to the public, the Clapperton collection transferred to the SBC Archive and SBC Museum Permanent Collection and could be available for display at a new collocated facility in Selkirk. Previously, the activities of the Clapperton Studio were limited to opening for the annual Scott's Selkirk Festival.

### **Aims/opportunities**

- develop and provide visitor services and collocated workspace for staff in a magnificent centre of town cultural hub. Maximise digital skills and collections/data access with volunteering, research, creative writing, literary heritage, books and resources for families/bookbug, readers groups and educational and training opportunities to enhance community learning, appreciation and participation in the local environment, culture and heritage
- increase awareness and understanding of the history and heritage of the town and Selkirkshire for residents, businesses and visitors.

### **Storytelling and exhibitions/digital themes**

- Origins of Selkirk (Pre-historic, Early Medieval) & Royal Burgh
- Literary & Creative Selkirk including the greats- Sir Walter Scott, James Hogg and Andrew Laing to current day authors and community writing linked to creativity health and well being
- Industrial and textile Heritage of Selkirk linked to valleys, wool products, tweed and hill shepherding traditions, the landscape, oral traditions of song, memories of life in town and country, local music and ballads, James Hogg links and music.
- Selkirk's riding the marches, horse culture and Royal connections/Burgh traditions/ceremonials



- Celebrating Selkirk young people and their creativity/diversity and sense of belonging/identity as the next generation to shape future of Selkirk and The Valleys.
- Temporary/touring exhibitions of fine art, craft and selling exhibitions by contemporary artists/makers adds variety and change to a programme of activities, talks and learning to complement the permanent collections on display which might change less frequently.
- A temporary gallery can also host events/private launches/talks etc and generate income through commission art sales.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Further work to refresh floor plans/costings to estimate new build/interior fit out to meet Accreditation/Government Indemnity Scheme (sector good practice) standards will now be required.

This would create basis of costings around options to seek funding for a phased delivery programme of development on period 2025-2030.

A 5-6 year delivery plan is minimum timescale for a high project value development of the scale anticipated for this proposal for a town centre co-located community heritage/arts/culture development in Selkirk.

A consultant will be required to work up feasibility plan with costings/delivery plan/to scope this into a funding proposal to take under application to major funding bodies.

Selkirk and Valleys Development Group will review scope to progress priority projects across all the working groups recommendations /and seek resource to progress recommendations, obtain a suitably experienced consultant/fund raiser and apply for funding as appropriate to achieve appropriate stages required to deliver priority development proposals.

***V1 Draft Report/Proposal collated by Heritage & Arts/Culture Working Groups - FMcD-C/JBC***

***This review of options/detail of scoping around proposed development concept has been prepared for Selkirk & The Valleys Development Group consideration.***

***Further consultation with community will take place and refining at next stage of review will incorporate consultees feedback regarding thoughts on Heritage/Arts/Culture development proposals for Selkirk/The Valleys***

***FMcD-C/JBC May 2024.***