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**EGREMONT
CULTURAL
CENTRE**

**FEASIBILITY
STUDY**

FINAL REPORT

Prepared By

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AND
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ASSOCIATES**

*As part of Royal
Haskoning Consortium
on West Lakes
Renaissance
Framework*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

L&R Consulting and Headland Design Associates were appointed by Egremont Area Regeneration Partnership to look at the feasibility of establishing a cultural centre in Egremont, West Cumbria.

The starting point was to determine what the centre should be about, who it was for and then to consider whether the project was likely to be deliverable and sustainable including looking at a potential building in which to house it.

Egremont is undergoing a period of change and development; it is important to ensure that a cultural centre adds value to existing and planned facilities. So the focus is on arts and heritage related projects, on providing creative opportunities and on community participation, in particular focusing on encouraging young people who live in Egremont to become involved and to generate ownership in the centre. That ownership will be reflected in the way the centre is developed, what it contains and how it is managed.

What Is The Concept?

We have given the proposed culture centre for Egremont a working title of *Main Street*. This title reflects what the centre will be; distinctive, original and welcoming to all; young and old, resident and visitor. *Main Street* will be part of the community. It will add to the quality of life of people living in Egremont because it will be a meeting place, a place for informal and formal learning, a creative space, an active space and a fun place to be.

The concept for *Main Street* is not unique, though the way it will be developed, delivered and managed will be special and particular to Egremont; there will not be another centre exactly the same. Our vision for *Main Street* is based on the optimum mix of complementary activity for Egremont built up to reflect what research and consultation suggest people want and which will be sustainable. It brings together heritage, arts and creativity, resources, learning and activities. It looks forward as well as back, recognising that the place Egremont is now has been shaped by its past but that the people living in it today will shape its future.

Opportunity creates demand and that is demonstrated by the success of cultural centres in small towns around the UK. There is no cultural centre offering a similar experience in Cumbria, south of Carlisle. This project has the potential over time to draw on an audience wider than Egremont residents.

Other arts-based and cultural centres in the UK variously comprise different combinations of creative and cultural activity. The mix is determined by a combination of factors: strategic planning priorities, local need and interest, prevalent local skills, traditions and resources, and the primary interests of benefactors or active community members who have the commitment and enthusiasm to take such projects forward. Some of these centres are provided by local authorities but most are independent charitable organisations which benefit from a variety of grants, including support from the local authority and rely on volunteer support for their operational viability.

Several centres choose names that avoid badging them as 'arts centre' or 'cultural centre', but rather describe their character, location or sometimes the original use of the building they occupy, e.g. The Qube (Oswestry), The Cornerhouse (Manchester) and Farnham Maltings. Others reference arts activity in the name like: Under the Edge Arts (Wotton-under-Edge) and The Brewhouse Arts Centre (Burton-upon-Trent). The objective is to ensure the name of the place eliminates any sense of exclusivity and to avoid attaching very specific associations of the type of use you might expect to find inside. This allows the centre to evolve over time. These centres usually have excellent and informative websites, advertising the different types of activity which take place.

We propose the centre is located on the main street. The location is an essential part of its identity and to making it work. It needs to be visible and easily accessible. The town centre is the focus for where things happen, it is the heart of the community and it is important that *Main Street* is part of the heart.

What Will *Main Street* Be Like?

Ideally visitors will walk into a large, open, primary space that combines a **licensed café** and **retail area** with a **digital archive resource area**. The objective is to create a lively vibrant space that is welcoming, informal and inclusive. The layout of the building may determine how this space will look.

The digital archive resource area will use different types of information presented in a format that encourages visitors to explore and discover. It will include a colourful **children's play area**; a lively time-line made up of images, text and some 3-dimensional objects which would also incorporate touch-screen computers. There will be handling material, books and cabinets for browsing as well as models so that there are tactile elements and also visual and aural ones.

The computers will carry databases of easily accessible images, documents, film clips, oral history, music and performances telling the multi-layered story of Egremont. Resources will include the Crab Fair/Town History Archive, as well as material from the Cumbria Records Office and appropriate pieces borrowed from The Beacon Museum in Whitehaven. Future projects will enrich this archive which could include an accessible oral history archive related to mining history. The facility will enable research and learning activities, provide a resource for exhibitions and a range of creative activities including film making, art, photography, sculpture and creative writing. The area will include a display about the Crab Fair which could be updated with requests for ideas and comments from the community.

This space will lead to an **exhibition gallery** with a programme of changing events including community art produced on a project basis, the works of artists in residence and hired-in touring exhibitions. The gallery will be linked to a flexible **arts studio**, which will be used by artists in residence or volunteer facilitators to enable different kinds of activity to take place. This will include training in craftwork such as glassmaking or pottery, group arts projects for young people, assisted or therapeutic art opportunities for people with mental illness or disabilities and stand-alone arts projects on different themes linked to the resources available. In addition to this, there will be a **practice room** which could be divided into two smaller spaces for use by school groups, for related arts activity, for dance and keep fit or yoga and for musical or theatrical rehearsals. These spaces can also be used for

meetings and for other cultural and creative group events, e.g. creative writing workshops, oral history projects and life drawing. The centre will develop a close working relationship with the Faculty of Arts at the University of Cumbria. It will host a range of workshops and activities for the university including for the performing arts and creative writing.

There will be a **film projection and performance space** for an audience of 60 and adjacent to it a **digital film, photography and recording studio**. The latter will be used for training and facilitated project work for exhibition and performance and to augment the archives and resources. The film and projection space will be used for a variety of popular and special interest films including black and white movies with afternoon tea and a Saturday morning children's film club.

Visitor facilities will include fully accessible toilets and a baby change and feeding area. There would be an administration office which would include a desk space for volunteers working on preparations and publicity for the Crab Fair.

How Will It Be Run?

Ideally, the centre will be open seven days a week during the day and in the evenings several nights a week to meet demand. Practical management of the centre may require it to be closed one day a week or perhaps for parts of a day or on certain evenings. The centre is designed to appeal to a range of users and to accommodate a range of activities. These users will want to use it at different times of the day and on different days of the week for different activities.

Main Street is likely to be established as a charitable trust. A trust gives the project a status that reflects its ethos and objectives, opens up specific funding opportunities and provides reassurance to potential funding organisations and the community that that facility is there for public enjoyment and learning. Charitable status also carries certain tax benefits e.g. recoverable gift aid.

There are opportunities to extend the remit of the Board to embrace responsibility for the management of the Castle Pavilion including shared creative scheduling and joint marketing.

The Board of trustees will comprise a mix of people who bring together the different interests and skills of the centre and together reflect the needs and ethos of *Main Street*.

The centre will employ a full-time paid Centre Manager who will be involved at the detailed planning and development stage of the project to help shape it and build up a relationship with the community and key stakeholders. There would also be a full time Assistant to ensure that there is always a responsible paid member of staff on site. It is envisaged that additional fixed period posts might be funded for specific projects. A small team of part time volunteers would support the Centre Manager. Catering could be provided by a local company as a social enterprise or by volunteers.

So How Much Will it Cost and How Will it Be Funded?

The concept is at an early stage of its development and costs are presented as professional headline estimates. For the purpose of the feasibility study, we have used 4 Market Place as a possible building for *Main Street*. A different building might present different opportunities and challenges and this might change the capital costs.

At feasibility stage we estimate that the capital costs for *Main Street* will be c. £1.4 million.

The revenue costs for the centre are estimated to be in the region of £85,000. This assumes in kind support for some running costs. Some of these costs will be covered by project grants or offset by income from users e.g. practice room hire, but this is a community facility, the running costs will never be covered by commercial activity and the centre needs to be developed and managed on that basis. We have assumed that certain functions will be provided on a goodwill basis and by volunteers to help keep down running costs and encourage local ownership and involvement.

There is however a range of funding opportunities to help meet capital and revenue costs. Securing funding is a big challenge but we consider it may be an achievable one and requires further work as part of the next steps. Early research has identified sources to meet some capital costs and potential additional sources for further investigation as the project develops.

What Happens Next?

This feasibility study concludes that the *Main Street* has the potential to be a vibrant cultural centre for the community of Egremont. Potentially over time and as its reputation grows it will attract visitors from elsewhere in West Cumbria. The centre can help deliver some of the regional objectives in relation to sustainable communities. As such there is sufficient potential to warrant taking forward the concept to the next step of investigation. However, there is a long journey from feasibility to implementation. Identifying and securing significant capital and revenue funding is critical to success. This needs to be prioritised as an essential next step and the scale of the challenge should not be underestimated.

Main Street is a challenging and exciting project. It requires significant effort and time to achieve and to run. Local stakeholders need to get behind it to help make it work. The next few months will be critical in moving forward.

The next steps are:

- To hold discussions with identified agencies and trusts about in-principle funding/funding opportunities – to help quantify more precisely the gap in capital and revenue funding and identify how it might be met
- To secure funding for a project manager to move forward the concept – it is anticipated this will be a part time post and might be combined with another role to create a full time job, initially the post would be on a fixed contract basis

- To research and compile a list of development study needs and costs and identify funding sources for these
- To research available buildings or sites for the centre that could deliver the floorspace and location needs for *Main Street* and which would also bring into good use a disused building
- To investigate in more detail partnering opportunities with the University of Cumbria and with the proposed new Sellafield Visitor Centre.
- To rationalise the collections and resources of the WCMRG to make them more compatible with *Main Street* and develop a common vision for the merged trusts
- To establish new links with heritage, dance, music and film establishments and initiatives where they do not already exist and to identify ways to strengthen existing relationships. The initial focus will be to define and confirm the relationship with the University of Cumbria, which presents a major opportunity for the Centre.

SECTION ONE : BACKGROUND AND APPROACH

101 The Brief

L&R Consulting and Headland Design Associates were appointed by Egremont Area Regeneration Partnership to undertake a Feasibility Study for a Cultural Centre in Egremont. Green Design Group Architects has provided the building review work. This study is let under the West Lakes Renaissance (WLR) framework agreement with Royal Haskoning.

The concept has evolved during the course of this study and now has a working title of *Main Street*, a concept that captures the ethos of the project. Once a building is secured, partners may wish to decide whether to adopt this title or give the project a new one.

102 About This Report

This feasibility study has focused on:

- Refining the concept in the context of the known needs, opportunities and potential for Egremont and its community
- Challenging concepts and ideas to help move towards a sustainable concept
- Scoping the physical requirements for the agreed concept and testing these out against a building available in the town centre
- Providing a high level outline business plan to test out the likely viability and economic sustainability of the project – recognising that at early concept stage there remain many points of detail for further refinement. The business plan looked at capital funding requirements, revenue funding needs, public funding sources and commercial revenue streams.

103 Objectives of the Study

The brief set out some of the thinking behind the project and some of the things stakeholders wanted to achieve from this project. Many of these aspirations relate to projects that appear variously in the key strategic documents for Egremont, in particular the Egremont Mini Masterplan and The Egremont Area Tourism Action Plan. Since the brief was written and the contract let there has been progress on several projects. Notably:

- Following the closure of the Florence Mine Heritage Centre, the collections owned by Copeland Museum have been returned to The Beacon and the research materials and mining related mineral collections and other material in the ownership of the West Cumbria Mines Research Group has been put into storage in Cleator Moor.

- An Academy School is proposed for the area and at October 2007, it is not yet determined where the school will be located. Several options are being considered including on the site of the current school in Egremont and also in a location between Egremont and Cleator. If this project comes to fruition it will create additional educational and community resources in Egremont or close by. If located within Egremont, it would become a new focus point within the town for social activities.
- There is a project to create an Egremont Community Resource Centre and partners have applied for funding. The project arises from a partnership between Age Concern Northwest Cumbria and Community Action for Egremont. It will provide good quality facilities for adults of all ages in Egremont and outlying rural communities to access a broad range of advice services and support addressing issues associated with deprivation, unemployment, health and independent living.

Our consultations have identified additional objectives and the following is a long list of these. The number and range of objectives highlights the need to prioritise and agree what the project should be. The objectives of the key stakeholders are:

- To bring a town centre building into productive use and for the benefit of the community
- To develop the artistic capacity of the community and to encourage participation in the arts and to make the arts accessible to more people
- To provide a celebration of the Crab Fair, its history and culture
- To use the history of the Crab Fair as artistic inspiration for guest artists and as a creative means of delivering changing exhibitions
- To create access to the Crab Fair Archive/Town History Archive and museum-type collections and/or to provide a digital archive and a heritage resource of items associated with the Fair
- To provide a place to communicate the history and stories of Florence Mine and possibly to display some of the collections now in storage
- To create a contemporary art gallery
- To provide arts facilities for the community e.g. local cinema and digital film suite
- To provide other community facilities not available elsewhere in Egremont, e.g. practice rooms
- To deliver a facility that would have the potential to retain visitors in Egremont
- To include a café and shop as commercial aspects of the building and provide a meeting point and encourage people to use the building
- To identify the need for additional meeting and activity spaces in Egremont and to determine whether the project can meet the need

- To provide a venue that appeals to all ages to breakdown age barriers. In particular to create a venue that will be respected, used and enjoyed by young people in Egremont.

Not all of these objectives are necessarily compatible with each other. Some are led by artistic imperatives, others by community needs and yet others by heritage considerations. It is not that these three dimensions cannot be contained within one project or that they might not work well together but it is important to be clear and precise about priorities and what will work together and why. This project must avoid being a receptacle for all 'homeless' initiatives or being led by the interests of only one set of views.

Our aim has been to create a sustainable project where the cultural (arts and heritage) and community objectives are brought together to create a dynamic centre with broad appeal to the community but which will also have appeal to visitors to the town. The project needs to be executed in such a way that it adds value to what is already available within Egremont without creating duplication in facilities and services.

104 Criteria to Determine what the Centre Should be

We have identified and considered a series of criteria to help prioritise what the Centre should be and which components from the long list of objectives should be incorporated and why. These criteria are:

- **The likely level of use by the community** – what is the likely demand, given existing facilities, known size and profile of the community and experience of what works well elsewhere? Meeting the needs of the community is a driving factor.
- **The degree to which it adds value to existing activities and/or opens up other opportunities**, e.g. provides practice room space, creates more meeting space for community activities, grows capacity and offers more flexibility of venues or enhances other facilities such as the Castle Pavilion by providing planning, rehearsal and marketing space and support
- **The scale of management required for the concept and the likelihood of that being met** from within the community and from the likely level of resources that can be made available including taking into account the needs and opportunities presented by potential collaboration with University of Cumbria
- **Commercial viability** – can the component operate at breakeven or contribute to the costs of the Centre?

105 Responding to the Needs of the Community must Drive the Concept for the Centre

The socio-economic profile for the community within a 30 minute travel time to Egremont indicates an older population of over 80,000 with higher than average

numbers of people on low income, of larger families on low income and of single parents. Although it also indicated a higher than average number of 'affluent greys'.

This profile reinforces the need for a centre that helps respond to the skills, wider educational and social needs of this community.

In particular the project needs to respond to some of the issues in relation to young people, including anti-social behaviour, and the migration of younger people from Egremont. Migration is about jobs, opportunities and quality of life. This project should be part of creating a better quality of life, raising aspirations and offering more choices and skills to the community of Egremont. Therefore the centre must appeal to a younger age group, be welcoming and cater for people with babies and young children.

There is a special opportunity to provide a creative space that is truly welcoming to the community and which can help raise aspirations, self-worth and help build local pride.

The 30 minute catchment is wider than people living in Egremont. The Centre needs to create a facility not available anywhere else in West Cumbria south of Carlisle, so it has the propensity to draw on a wider audience, subject to public transport routes.

106 Demand Comes When You Have Opportunity

Centres that combine an arts and heritage role together and also create a lively social space are difficult concepts for people to grasp unless they have visited such a centre somewhere else in the country. Therefore going out into the wider community at early concept stage and asking people whether they want such a centre rarely generates responses that can inform the way forward.

There has to be a leap in faith which accepts that demand comes with opportunity. The relative isolation of the location of Egremont and its economic history means that the community has not benefited from choice in the past. This centre should contribute to changing that and help create a more opportunity-led Egremont for the future.

We have looked in depth at two very contrasting arts centres in towns of a similar size and profile to Egremont although very different communities in many other ways. These centres are located in Oswestry and Newtown. Each has grown from very different beginnings. The former has been developed by a charity originally established to support people in a rural community who were isolated by age, poor health or mental illness, who are now supported through arts activity as well. The other arose from an amalgamation of a private arts and crafts gallery and a traditional art gallery bequeathed to the town by the daughters of a wealthy

industrialist on their death. In neither instance did there appear to be a community demand for such a facility nor a perceived propensity to participate in arts and culture. Yet both are well developed, well-used and actively engaged with their communities.

107 Status and Ownership of the Crab Fair and Town Archives

Many stakeholders identify communicating the history of Egremont as an important part of the role of the Centre. Currently there is no public access to the Crab Fair/Town History Archive. Nor is there currently access to the stories that were formerly told at Florence Mine. This heritage is potentially an important educational and creative resource. Access to it is an asset to the community and its visitors.

Within this context it is important to be clear about the status of collections that exist now and which may be collected in the future. There are many positive outcomes to creating archives and collections but there are also complex issues surrounding their establishment and strict requirements for formal registration as an archive or a museum.

The commitments are not just long-term but 'in perpetuity' and the demands for adequate collections management, conservation, cataloguing, provision of public access and provision of visitor services are onerous and expensive. The Crab Fair/Town History Archive is largely in a digital format. This is ideal for research, easy access and for use as 'inspirational' material for art work, creative writing or other creative activity. As a digital facility, it need only own images and not original objects.

Collecting objects which would be better cared for in a museum or archive should be avoided, though this principle does not apply to a private collector. So the Centre needs to be clear exactly what the status of the archive is, what is included in it and who has copyright to its contents. As the project proceeds towards implementation these issues will become critical to its ability to raise heritage funds and to the ways in which the archive can be used.

We recommend that the concept of *Main Street* is based on digital collections and on a handling collection that is disposable. Part of the vision is to make the centre vibrant and accessible. The focus is on activity rather than static objects. This is part of creating the atmosphere for a creative cultural and heritage venue. It is important that mining heritage is recorded and celebrated as a vital part of the Egremont story. There may be limited space for permanent display in the buildings available, it will be important to focus on a small quality collection of artefacts that bring to life the important story of mining heritage. We recommend partnership working with The Beacon in Whitehaven to advise on collections acquisition, storage and management.

The custodians of Crab Fair/Town Archive and the West Cumbria Mines Research Group (WCMRG) intend to merge their trusts for practical operational reasons. WCMRG does not intend to retain museum standard but would like to operate to museological standards. Clearly this is a matter for WCMRG to decide but their collection will be a private one. It will be important that this status is clear to the public. It is not a museum collection and consequently no donations can be

accepted from people or institutions who believe the collection to have museum status. Similarly no purchases should be made of material that would be more appropriately housed and better cared for in a museum or archive collection.

The most appropriate course of action in regard to the collections would be to record digitally those documents and objects which are of most relevance; to decide which material is suitable to be designated as handling material and to offer any other material which is of local, regional or national importance to registered or accredited repositories for safe keeping.

SECTION TWO : CRITICAL FACTORS FOR SUCCESS

201 Factors for Success

The Centre must deliver the following factors in order to be successful in terms of funding, economic and social sustainability and to win acceptance and support from the community:

- Meet demand for activity practice space and ensure this space fulfils the types of demand not met by the current supply, e.g. size, facilities, lighting, heating etc.
- Create public access to the heritage resources that have been established, i.e. The Crab Fair/Town History Archive and those held by the West Cumbria Mines Research Group
- Provide an opportunity to showcase the unique culture of Egremont and for the community to help define and shape the way in which it is celebrated and presented
- Put into good use a redundant building and provide/retain public access to it
- Further enhance the focus on skills sharing and promoting creative skills
- Create a centre that appeals to people of all ages including young people and provide them with leisure and learning opportunities in a safe and supportive environment
- Provide rehearsal space for the Castle Pavilion (proposed performance space for Egremont) – enabling the facility to maximise its potential
- Support and nurture the lively amateur music scene of Egremont and provides further facilities for musical activity
- Provide opportunities to access arts and heritage funds for Egremont and its community in a way that has broad appeal, including to visitors
- Help achieve Market Towns Initiative (MTI) objectives to develop the cultural offer of Egremont, improve community safety and wellbeing and to improve services for young people.

SECTION THREE : STRATEGIC CONTEXT

301 Introduction

The primary aim of the arts centre is to meet the needs of the local community socially, economically and culturally; so it is important to demonstrate how the project will help achieve local, sub-regional and regional objectives in these areas.

302 Action Plan for the Market Towns Initiative (MTI) in Egremont

The MTI Action Plan provides the framework for delivering the potential of Egremont and *Main Street* must contribute to achieving the vision and objectives of the MTI Action Plan. The MTI vision is:

to make Egremont a safe and positive town that makes the most of its many assets and provides valuable services to local people and visitors of all ages.

This vision is supported by the following five objectives:

- To improve the management of the town centre, its services and environment
- To improve the development and promotion of activities and events for local people and visitors
- To improve services for young people and increase their involvement in the work of the Partnership
- To improve levels of community safety and well being
- To improve opportunities for industrial and commercial investment.

The MTI Action Plan clearly recognises that the cultural offer of Egremont has significant potential for development. It also raises the issue of local attitudes to tourism and cultural events, stating that the local community tends to be ambiguous towards perceiving Egremont as a 'tourism town'.

The MTI Health Check undertaken to inform the Action Plan highlights the prominence in the local community of issues relating to young people. During weekdays the town centre is a focal point for school children at lunchtime, with the evenings being associated with vandalism and acts of nuisance, and progressively drugs and alcohol, leading to fear of crime and an undermining of community safety. *Main Street* needs to deliver a venue that helps tackle these issues by providing a safe place to be during the day and in the evening but which is fun to be in too and delivers a leisure and learning experience that has appeal and relevance to the community. It must have appeal to young people while welcoming people of all ages and social status.

303 The Egremont Area Tourism Action Plan

Produced in July 2006, the Tourism Action Plan builds on the MTI Action Plan by identifying tourism specific challenges, opportunities and actions. The tourism vision for Egremont is:

The historic town of Egremont is an attractive place to live and visit. Local services meet the needs of residents and visitors are attracted to its attractions and events.

The vision is underpinned by six guiding principles and 19 tourism actions. These actions are divided between three categories: Improving the Existing Product, Product Developments and Marketing. The action plan sets out specifics against each of these categories. The arts centre has the potential to contribute to:

- *Implement Key Tourism Product Development Proposals* – by delivering the objective to interpret the Folk and Crab Fair Archive and by delivering space to enable art workshops
- *Creating and promoting a strong identity for the Egremont area* – by creating a facility unique to this part of the West Lakes and specifically by creating a space for groups to prepare and rehearse for events
- *Support Key Product Improvements* – by enabling the story of mining in Egremont to find a new home and for it to be better interpreted than has hitherto been the case

304 Mini Masterplan, Egremont

The Mini Masterplan for Egremont was produced in August 2004. It provides the physical regeneration actions to realise the vision of the Market Towns Initiative. It is strongly based around projects to tackle:

- the management of the town centre, its services and environment
- the development and promotion of activities and events for local people and visitors
- improving services for young people and increasing their involvement in the work of the market towns partnership
- improving levels of community safety and well being
- developing opportunities for industrial and commercial investment.

This project contributes towards meeting the second and third of these points.

The Masterplan includes two projects listed within a list of 22 that are relevant here. Since the production of the Mini Masterplan the vision and realisation for these projects has evolved.

Project 15: CAFÉ (Community Action for Egremont) Community Resource Centre

This project entails undertaking a detailed feasibility study to investigate the potential for co locating a number of projects and initiatives in one building in the town centre, with a focus on community support and dealing with barriers to employment. This will provide space and support for projects whose scale might mean they would not be independently viable.

Project 16: Community Facilities – Youth Trax

The old Orgill Infants School was demolished some seven years ago and the site, based in the heart of the Smithfield Estate, has been left undeveloped. Cumbria County Council, the owners of the land, has had the site up for sale but has had no approaches since the demolition of the school. A group of local residents concerned about the general deterioration of the site have now formed a group, Skool Trax, to look at ways of raising funds to develop the site. A questionnaire has been completed by over 100 local residents and two public meetings have been held to ascertain what exactly local people would like to see happen on the site.

The masterplan notes that:

It is clear that many people feel that there is a lack of facilities for young people in the area.

305 West Lakes Renaissance (WLR)

West Lakes Renaissance, the Urban Regeneration Company for Furness and West Cumbria, is attempting to turn around the economy of the sub region which stretches from Morecambe Bay to the Solway Firth. This has and still is suffering from industrial decline, resulting in out-migration (particularly of young people), unemployment and a worn out infrastructure. The WLR recognise that the area has many assets, which need to be used and nurtured to tackle these challenges.

The Vision and supporting Business Plan to 2011 is built around seven key points. This project is particularly relevant to three of these:

Communities That Work – by helping to release the latent enterprise resources of the local community through inspiration and access to cultural and creative resources

Lifestyle Choices – by helping to develop the West Cumbria tourism and cultural offer

Advantage through Knowledge – by contributing to the provision of the social, cultural and recreational environment that will encourage school leavers to 30's to remain in the area.

West Lakes Renaissance focuses on nine areas of activity. This project seeks to address the objectives of two of these. It will do this by embracing the ethos of each. These two areas of activity are Culture and Creativity, the objective of which is:

Fostering, promoting and celebrating culture and creativity in Furness and West Cumbria by: developing the tourism and cultural offer; supporting new cultural industries and festivals; boosting the profile of the area and its tourism appeal.

and Sustainable Communities, the objective of which is:

Meeting the diverse needs of existing and future communities in ways that: contribute to a high quality of life, but are sensitive to environmental requirements; are safe and inclusive; are well planned, built and run; and offer equality of opportunity.

306 Cumbria Tourism Strategy

The tourism strategy is due to be updated during 2007. The most up-to-date and relevant document is the Destination Management Plan (DMP) for 2007-8. This identifies specific annual actions within a three year timeframe. It refers to the Tourism Strategy and is closely related to it. Cumbria's tourism vision is:

Cumbria - The Lake District will have an unrivalled reputation for its high-quality landscape, accommodation, attractions, public realm, heritage and cultural offer, excellent customer care, and a year-round programme of activities and events centred on the area's unique culture and natural environment. The benefits of tourism generated by the Lake District brand will have cascaded out to embrace other parts of the County. Hadrian's Wall will have attained the status of "attack brand", and there will be effective targeted promotional campaigns bringing new visitors to Cumbria.

Cumbria Tourism has five aims. Those of particular relevance to *Main Street* are:

- To provide an environment in which the tourism industry can flourish
- To develop new opportunities for market and product development in the outlying areas of the County
- To act as a catalyst to stimulate the physical regeneration of the area and the development of existing and new businesses
- To contribute to sustaining local communities.

Cultural Tourism is one of five priority areas in the DMP. *Main Street* can add to the critical mass of arts and cultural facilities within the sub-region.

In addition, the purpose of the *Main Street* and the proposed approach to its development reflects the five priorities of the **Regional Economic Strategy (RES) for the North West**, namely: Business, Skills & Education, People and Jobs, Infrastructure, Quality of Life. It also reflects five of the seven key areas in the action plan for **Culture Northwest**. These are: building citizenship through culture, encouraging and enhancing partnerships across the region, driving awareness of regional distinctiveness, maximising cultural contributions to life-long learning and, building capacity within the cultural sector.

SECTION FOUR : CURRENT COMMUNITY FACILITIES IN EGREMONT

401 Introduction

We have built up a picture of arts, heritage and related activity in and around Egremont including consulting with people who are engaged in activities with some similarities to those proposed. The following summarises some of the key projects.

402 The Crab Fair Archive

The Crab Fair Archive was established in 2004 and has amassed a collection of largely digitised 2-dimensional material related to the 750 year old Crab Fair held every September in Egremont, some of which has been donated or purchased, and some of which has been loaned for copying to the project. A number of 3 dimensional objects have also been acquired although it is recognised by the group that the most appropriate course of action might be to photograph these object 'in the round' and add them to the database. More recently a parallel archive has been created to record the broader history of the town.

403 Florence Mines Closure

This study follows an earlier feasibility study into the development of the museum facility at Florence Mine, which would have involved an application to HLF. The study supported the project, the strength of which was underpinned by the historic structures on the site; rare survivors of a once huge industry in the area and as such the most important exhibits there. Since the study was completed, the West Cumbria Mines Research Group who ran the museum have left the site and the museum has closed. Museum collections which were borrowed from the Beacon Museum in Whitehaven have been returned and the group's own collections have been put into store. What seemed like a potentially strong project has disappeared from the heritage scene and a gap is left in terms of the important industrial history of the area.

The collections which would have had relevance and which could have been displayed meaningfully in the context of a mining site, however, will not necessarily have the same significance displayed in the town centre alongside displays of community or contemporary art. So a careful review is needed to identify the priority collections for the centre.

404 The Academy School

Egremont's local secondary school: the Wyndam School has a number of good quality facilities including a swimming pool and an auditorium which are available out of school time for use by the community. One proposal is that the school will effectively merge with another nearby school in Cleater Moor to form an Academy School, which will serve both communities. It is not yet clear what would happen to

the existing facilities in the school if the preferred option is to build a new school elsewhere. If Egremont is successful in attracting the Academy School to the town centre, it will represent a £32 million investment and is likely to continue to share some of its improved facilities with the community.

405 Lowes Court Gallery

Lowes Court Gallery incorporates the town's TIC and exhibits and sells a variety of art and craft works and some food items, which are all produced by people in Cumbria. The gallery has a strong volunteer group, an enthusiastic membership and is well used. It is housed in a small and very well preserved historic building which was originally converted by volunteers 30 years ago to become a gallery. The building is owned by Copeland Borough Council and is rented to the gallery on a full-repairing lease at a modest rent. Whilst the building is charming it is not an ideal space for exhibiting art and craft pieces and the upper floor has no disabled access.

406 The Castle Pavilion

A pavilion for the Castle grounds to provide a venue for events, festivals, band concerts and plays is soon to be the subject of an RIBA competition. The project has secured funding for its development and will provide an additional quality structure and venue in the town. It will also create additional demand for practice and rehearsal space. Halls and community spaces in Egremont are already struggling to meet existing demand.

407 The Beacon Developments

The Beacon Museum in Whitehaven collects and interprets heritage for all of Copeland Borough. When the Beacon first opened around 10 years ago, its focus was more on the town of Whitehaven than the wider borough. A complete redevelopment of the museum is currently taking place following a successful application to the Heritage Lottery Fund. The new displays will cover much more of the borough's wider history and there will be significant inclusion of material for the Egremont Crab Fair, including a 'Gurning Interactive' and replay of film of the event shot in the late 1960s.

408 The Crab Fair Committee

The Crab Fair is organised every year by a voluntary group that raises the funding needed to cover insurance and all of the other facilities needed for the Fair to take place. This committee has no relationship with the committee which is creating the Crab Fair Archive. They have no office or permanent face in the town as all of the Crab Fair's business is conducted from private homes. A permanent and visible home for the Crab Fair would raise its profile, make organisation easier and might help it to attract sponsorship and other funding support.

409 Egremont Youth Centre and Youth Works

There are two active youth charities working in the town and attracting young people. One focuses on music and sound recording and the other on sport. There is potential for both of these groups to become involved in the proposed project and to participate in facilitated arts activities. If the centre is to be used by young people it must be owned by them. That means involving them in the project during its development stage.

SECTION FIVE : FACILITY AND BUILDING REQUIREMENTS FOR THE NEW CENTRE

501 List of Key Facilities

Main Street will be a combined facility with a number of complementary elements. It will offer facilitated creative activity, art & photographic exhibitions, film showings and projects which include artists in residence and youth-based community arts. It will ideally include the following:

- Reception and information point with retail area and café
- Administration office
- Fully accessible toilets, baby change and feeding area
- A permanent information point, and display related to the Crab Fair with associated small office facility
- A flexible and accessible digital archive space telling the story of Egremont's heritage and unique culture – including a digital resource, interactive timeline and a small exhibition of artefacts.
- Community cinema and small-scale performance space
- A digital film, photographic suite and recording studio
- A display gallery for community art produced on a project basis, for the works of artists in residence and for hired in exhibitions. Subject to space the artist may live on site
- An art studio for artists in residence and for creative work
- Practice and meeting rooms which could also be used for small groups participating in facilitated arts activity open up to make one space suitable for dance or exercise

502 How Will this Mix of Facilities Serve the Whole Community?

Many people in the Egremont community are actively engaged in group activities. Equally many people lack knowledge or interest in what else is happening in the town, outside of their own interest group. The independence of the Egremont community is one of its defining features. However the Crab Fair is a melting pot for the community, bringing people together to take part or watch a riotous range of festivities. That means it is possible to achieve a facility that appeals to a wide cross-section of the Egremont but it needs to be designed and executed to deliver that. For *Main Street* to flourish it will need to have the ownership of the whole community and will suffer if it is perceived not to have achieved that. So the management structure has to be designed to be inclusive, open and part of the

community and the activities have to represent the interests of a wide cross section of the community, with a particular focus on young people.

The following table of potential activities provides a flavour of what the centre would offer. Activities are selected to reflect what consultations with local groups and organisations have told us they want and what works well in centres in communities of a similar size.

Facility	Activities	Audience
Reception, information – including Crab Fair, retail, café and fully-accessible toilets baby change	Sunday brunch with music and organised children's activities	People with children under 5
Digital archive space	Interactive presentation of Egremont heritage and culture	Local community Visitors to Egremont
	Schools activities related to local history and Citizenship	Organised school groups
	Project based activity creating arts outputs inspired by heritage	10 to 16 year olds 16 to 21 year olds
	Story-telling, role play and fun activities for weekends and holidays	5 to 10 year olds People with children under 5
Community cinema and small-scale performance space	Popular and current films	People with special needs or lacking transport
	Art film club	Local community Visitors to Egremont
	Saturday and Sunday morning film club	People with children under 5 5 to 10 year olds 10 to 16 year olds
	Afternoon oldies with tea and scones	Retired people Older community
	Contemporary music concerts, recitals comedy	16 to 21 year olds Local affinity groups Mixed groups

Digital film, photographic and recording suite	Project-based activity creating photographic records, oral history records, exhibitions, web-sites, musical recordings and short films	10 to 16 year olds 16 to 21 year olds
	Training in digital skills to expand the archives	16 to 21 year olds Retired people
Practice, meeting or arts and crafts rooms opening up to make a dance studio	Practicing amateur music or drama	10 to 16 year olds 16 to 21 year olds
	Dance, yoga and keep fit	All women groups 16 to 21 year olds
	Craft work, creative writing	Local affinity groups
	Facilitated therapeutic art working	People with special needs or mental health issues
Arts studio	Project-based activity creating art work, based on heritage and culture or other themes	10 to 16 year olds 16 to 21 year olds
	Project-based facilitated group activity creating artwork	People with children under 5
Exhibition gallery	Themed exhibition of work created in <i>Main Street</i>	Local community Visitors to Egremont
	Touring art exhibitions	
	Curated exhibitions on Egremont themes	
Cafe	Food prep courses	School groups
	Cooking activities using produce from the community orchard	Catering students Local amenity groups

There is also a wide range of formal learning opportunities that could be developed with the Arts Faculty of the University of Cumbria. Initial discussions with the university suggest:

- Book readings
- Creative writing courses
- Developing links with Newton Rigg Horticultural School including for garden design
- A science cafe

503 The Cinema

Research of independent cinemas throws up a number of considerations on how this aspect of the centre should be developed and managed. There are three options that are in part each related to the type of equipment used. These are:

- 35 mm equipment
- DVD
- Digital projector

35 mm Equipment

New release films are currently only made available in 35mm format, though this is likely to change over the next five years. 35mm equipment is expensive to buy and requires a trained technician to operate. New releases are hired to cinemas for a fee. Various other conditions apply in relation to how the film is marketed to audiences and the number of consecutive weeks the film is shown. It is in the financial interests of the mainstream film companies to make their films available to large cinemas with strong marketing budgets, central locations and with a high turnover of users. Large city arts centres such as The Cornerhouse, Manchester and FACT, Liverpool often struggle to get the rights to show new releases because they cannot compete with larger mainstream suppliers such as UCI located elsewhere in the city. Some smaller cinemas are favoured by larger film companies because their location gives them a captive audience but these venues struggle to breakeven because of the costs of film licences, carriage and ticket sales commission, e.g. the cinema in Knutsford, Cheshire (run and managed by Macclesfield Borough Council).

This model is not one for *Main Street*.

DVD

At the other end of the scale many smaller operations and film clubs use a DVD system. This requires no trained technicians, though it does require a professional quality projector and it is advisable to invest in a good surround sound system. A 3 chip DLP projector is recommended and costs around £10,000. A less expensive alternative is to purchase a LCD projector for £2,000-£5,000. The difference in price and technology reflects the quality of the picture but the choice will also be determined by the projection throw requirements, the size of the screen and the size of the room. If it is decided that a DVD is an interim stage prior to moving into a digital system, it may be worth researching whether any local companies would donate a DLP projector to the centre, perhaps an older model they are intending to update. There is also the opportunity to buy a second hand projector.

All DVDs need to be hired from Film Bank (a subsidiary of Warner Brothers). It costs £120 per film per showing or 35% of ticket sales, whichever is the higher figure. There is also a cost of carriage at £15.00. To breakeven on direct hire costs requires 30 adults at £4.50 per head per film. Film Bank does not have rights to new releases, though some films become available a minimum of 3-4 months after release in DVD format.

The BFI (British Film Institute) holds an old film catalogue. Films are hired out at £80-£90 per film + £15 carriage, with unlimited showing.

This is the least expensive option to set up but it restricts film suppliers and therefore choice and types of film it can show. This would constrain creative scheduling. This option has relatively expensive revenue costs attached to it. For example, all cartoons would need to be hired from Film Bank at a relatively high per unit cost.

Digital Projector Format

Digital is the equipment of the future and eventually all commercial films for hire will be in this format but this time is somewhat off. It would be prudent to allow £80,000-£100,000 for projector and system support including sound. It may be possible to get a grant towards costs of equipment, particularly if moving into digital from DVD. In this scenario the centre would be in a position to demonstrate a track record of demand and a clear case can be made about the opportunities provided by investing in more modern equipment.

Digital systems also open up the opportunity to deal with a range of film suppliers, to get more modern films and to get an excellent picture.

Way Forward for Main Street

Specialist film clubs such as Shoreline Films in Barrow appeal to niche markets and their audience numbers are relatively small. They use a DVD format but typically use the projection facilities available at the venues they visit. While *Main Street* could offer an additional venue for them subject to demand, this would be an additional facility, not the main purpose of the cinema facility within the centre.

The proposal is for a Cinema Club with mainstream appeal. It would specialise in cartoons, classic and black and white movies. The appeal would not be just seeing the film – many might be available on satellite channels – but the ambience and sense of occasion associated with going to the cinema. It is an opportunity to meet with friends, the focus of a Saturday morning or an afternoon out and to see the film on the big screen. Pitched at this level, the facility becomes more cost effective and provides the opportunity longer term to contribute revenue to the centre.

We recommend starting with a DVD system but with an objective to move into digital over time, when the facility is better established and research of potential demand for more and different types of film becomes better established.

504 The Café

The café is an essential part of the centre. It creates a welcoming, non-threatening and non-elitist first impression and encourages people to walk in and explore. It will also create a space with buzz, a place to meet and to socialise. There may be opportunities to develop cookery activities perhaps using produce from the community orchard. Egremont is a Fairtrade town and the café should ideally operate as a Fairtrade establishment.

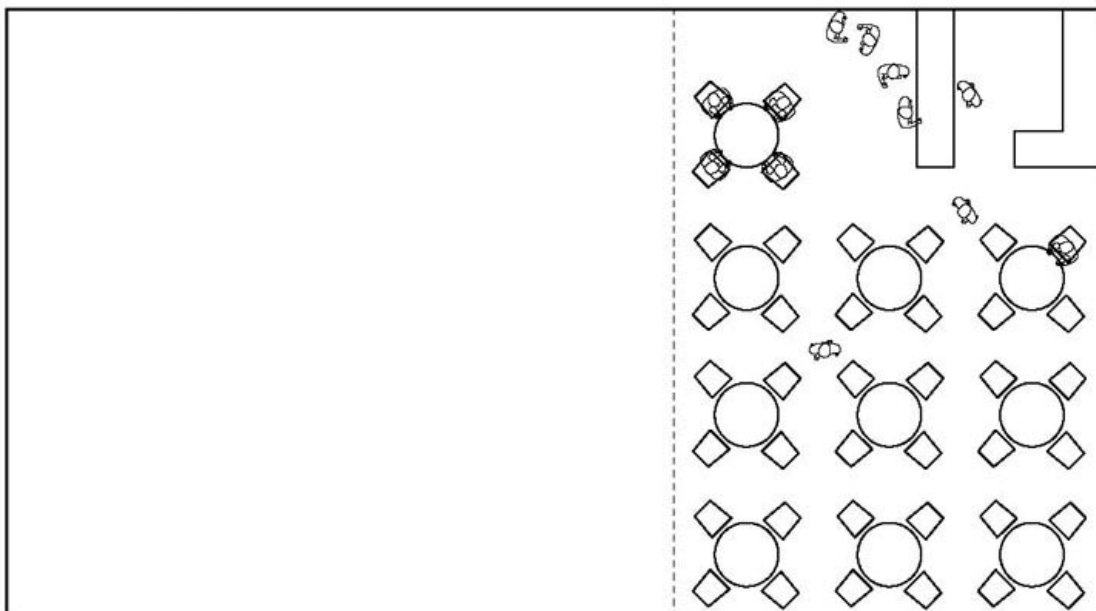
505 Retail

A shop area will provide visitors the opportunity to purchase small arts related items. Assuming Lowes Gallery remains in its current location, the shop at *Main Street* will focus on smaller quality arts inspired gift items, specialist books and greetings cards. The shop is not viable as a self-contained entity. It is possible because of *Main Street* and will bring additional choice and variety to the shopping offer in Egremont. The retail area provides another window onto the street that encourages people to come inside and explore.

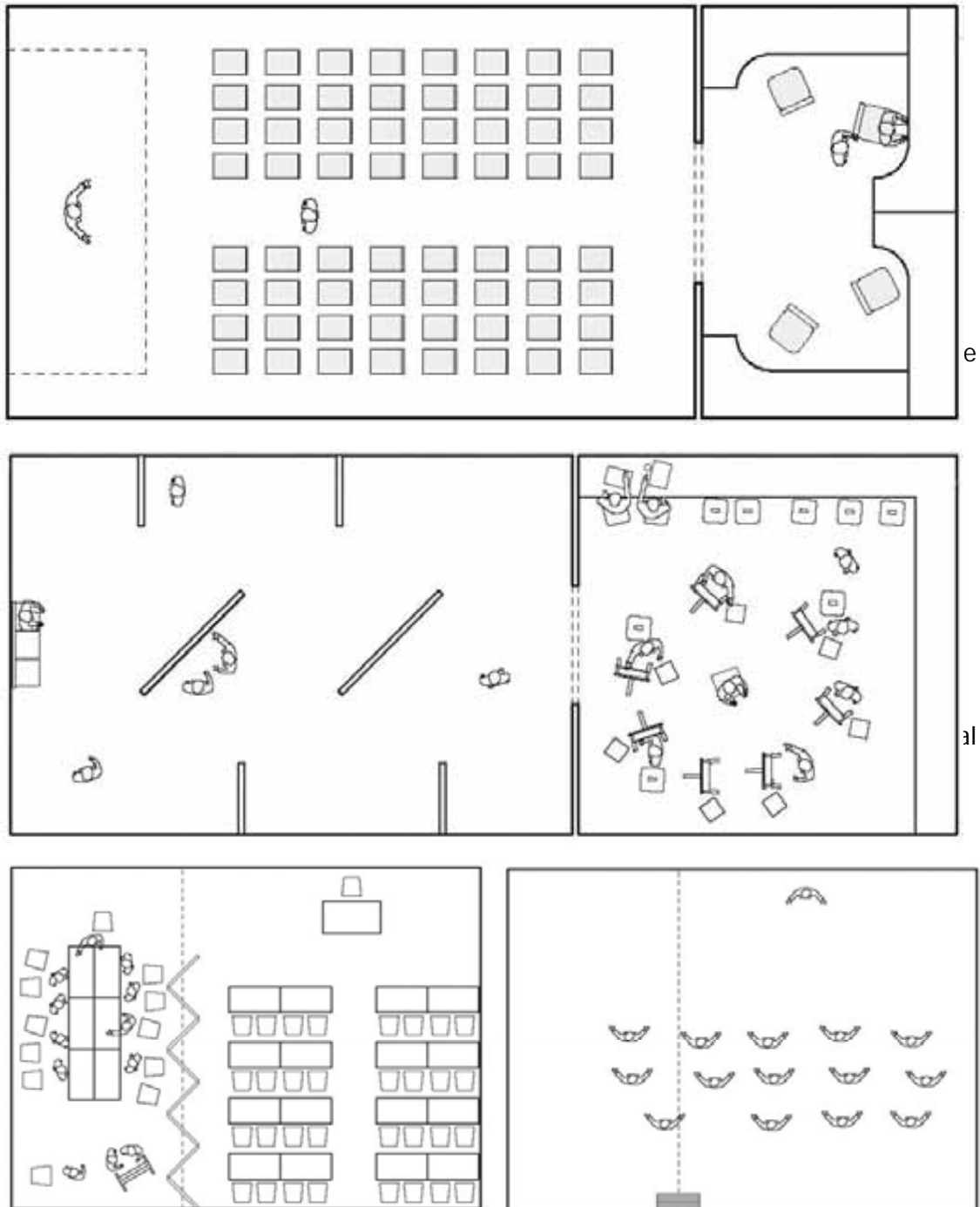
506 Spatial Requirements

The following indicative sketches illustrate how some of the spaces would ideally relate to each other and have a range of uses, with some rooms subdividing for use by smaller groups. They are sketched to scale and indicate the sort of space provision that would be required for each function. Whilst this is a starting point for reviewing potential locations and assessing cost, it is unlikely that any existing building will provide appropriate space for all of the elements described. A key objective is to bring a disused town centre building back into use for the benefit of the community, therefore the mix of provision and overlap of different uses may need to be modified to reflect what is achievable in a particular building.

Area 1: a combined reception, information, retail, café and resource area preferably open plan or a series on open and interconnected spaces. Total area approximately 180 square meters allowing for up to 40 covers in the café



Area 2: community cinema and small-scale performance space linked to digital film and photographic suite. Total area approximately 80 square meters allowing 64 people to be seated theatre style



507 Location for the Centre

The Centre should be located in the town centre, so it is embedded in the area where the community come to work, take part in leisure and other everyday activities such as shopping, visiting the health centre, library etc.

A key objective is to site the facilities in a building that is currently not in use. We have undertaken a visit to 4 Market Place, one of two buildings identified by the client group. The other potential location is within the previous KwikSave supermarket. However, it is uncertain whether this building remains on the market.

Each building is very different to the other and offers different opportunities and challenges. The KwikSave building has a large open plan internal space that provides greater flexibility to accommodate different and flexible uses. Conversely, 4 Market Place is an 18th century building with character, though in a poor state of repair. Both buildings benefit from a good accessible central location and are highly visible on arrival in the town. 4 Market Place has two 'fronts' one to the street and one to the new car park.

SECTION SIX : STAKEHOLDERS AND GOVERNANCE

601 Stakeholders for the Project

A stakeholder is a term to describe any organisation or individual that has a direct interest in the actions or decisions of a project. Their interest may be because they will have a role in implementing the project, or because they will be affected by it.

Main Street has a large body of stakeholders:

- local groups and associations in Egremont who might use the facilities on a regular or occasional basis – e.g. Wyndam School, the town's youth groups, the Friends of the Castle
- organisations that will be involved in providing heritage materials for the centre or have an interest/involvement in the heritage aspect of the project - including the Crab Fair committee and the custodians of Crab Fair/Town Archive and WCMRG, The Beacon Museum, Copeland Archive and the Cumbria Records Office
- organisations that will provide arts funding to the project and/or have an interest and involvement in its arts/creative activities – the Arts Council, Heritage Lottery, Arts Lottery, Griededale Arts, University of Cumbria
- public sector organisations and partnerships with responsibility and a remit for delivering community facilities and services and for economic and regeneration functions - Egremont Area Regeneration Partnership, Copeland Borough Council, Cumbria County Council, West Lakes Renaissance
- other funding organisations not identified above – this might include Charitable Trusts for capital and revenue funding.

602 Partnering Opportunities

Main Street has a strong identity and clear objectives. It is important to conserve and communicate these to potential future partners. Potential funding organisations in particular will want to be confident that the project knows what it wants to achieve and why, to help assess the benefits of their involvement. At an operational level partners are important in order to achieve the local community ownership that is part of the identity of the centre.

Equally, *Main Street* should not rule out wider partnering opportunities. The model for the University of Cumbria is multi-centred and with a strong arts/design component. Initial discussions with the University are promising and suggest considerable opportunities for collaboration. Future plans for the redesigned and relocated Sellafeld Visitor Centre assume a partnership with another project – new or existing. There may be potential for collaboration with one or both of these. Either of these partnership opportunities would change the dynamics of the project. Critically they might alter space requirements and potential funding sources. They might help deliver revenue sustainability, which is a major challenge for a project of this kind.

603 University of Cumbria

The University of Cumbria is being developed around a distributed learning model. This means there will not be a single physical campus location for the university but rather several physical and virtual ways of engaging with the University. They are currently looking for a partner to work with south and to the west of Workington. *Main Street* may have the potential to deliver partnership which would could potentially also involve the Castle Pavilion and developing links to the horticultural school at Newton Rigg.

604 Governance

We recommend that *Main Street* is established as a new charitable trust and a separate company is established as the trading arm for the centre. This Trust would require a Board to steer the project from now to implementation and operation.

We recommend that the partners apply the Nolan principles in the recruitment and management of the Board for the centre. The Nolan Principles are regarded as best practice in standards for public life and corporate governance. This code of conduct is increasingly being adopted by public/private sector partnerships. In 1995, the Committee on Standards in Public Life (the Nolan Committee) identified seven principles of public life for the 'benefit of those who serve the public in any way'.

In particular, to uphold these principles, it is recommended that a call for Board member (s) should be advertised so that selection to the Board is open and objective and members selected on merit.

The Board should also seek to reflect the skills needs of the project in the Board membership.

We recommend that a Board should comprise no more than 12 in number and be appointed on a fixed three year term. The term would be staggered to avoid all Board members coming up for re-election at the same time. Ideally, the Board should include an accountant, a lawyer (or someone with relevant legal experience), a representative from a youth organisation and representatives from the heritage, arts and sports sectors. Griesdale Arts is likely to represent the arts sector. The Arts Faculty of the University of Cumbria will represent the learning sector. Egremont Area Regeneration Partnership, Copeland Borough Council and West Lakes Renaissance should all be represented. It will be important that the Board member from these organisations is selected not only because of the organisation he/she represents but also the particular skill they bring to the Board.

The Centre Manager will report to the Board. All other staff (paid and volunteer) will report to the Centre Manager.

Over time the Board and the Centre Manager may decide to establish one or more working groups to help progress particular functions, e.g. arts programme.

605 Friends of *Main Street*

We recommend setting up a friends group that encourages people to develop a strong ownership in the centre. We suggest a £25 annual membership fee which would include a quarterly newsletter (paper and web) and an invitation to two 'members only' events each year. Friends are more likely to become volunteers and act as important ambassadors for the centre.

SECTION SEVEN : OUTLINE BUSINESS PLAN

701 Introduction

We have set out indicative capital costs for the building repair and fit out based on industry norms.

We also set out revenue costs and income based on our experience of similar size facilities with similar public access.

We recommend staff levels and requirements. We identify potential capital and funding resources.

702 Capital Costs

Building Costs – Purchase and Refurbishment

We have used 4 Market Place as a model for the potential building purchase and refurbishment costs. The building has a floor space of 827m². An alternative building is the old KwikSave building on the Main Street. This building is of a similar size with a floorspace of 762m². Both deliver adequate space to accommodate the requirements of *Main Street* but are unlikely to be suitable for any partnering project. We understand that the relocated and renewed Sellafield Visitor Centre, for example, is looking for 1,350m², a far larger floorspace than either of the buildings have with limited potential to expand.

In the last two years 4 Market Place has been considered as the location for a relocated library. At that time the purchase value was considered to be between £65,000-£110,000. However since that estimate the fabric of the building has deteriorated further but the availability of buildings of that size in the town centre has decreased. We have taken a view that the building is worth £150,000 but recommend a professional opinion is sought to confirm or amend this. As a comparison the KwikSave building was estimated to have a sales value between £200,000-£300,000. Without a detailed investigation of the building it is not possible to estimate the building costs.

The building and refurbishment costs assumes that 4 Market Place will provide all of the facilities for the centre by retaining the existing street building and outrigger but demolishing the newer rear extension to create a new building.

Direct building costs have been calculated at £1,100 per m². This is towards the high end of the cost spectrum but reflects the need to gut and rebuild a significant part of the building. Professional fees are typically calculated at between 15-18% of building costs. Professional fees include architects, quantity surveyors, structural fees, M and E, building regulations and planning. Again, we have taken a view and charged towards the upper end. This higher end cost reflects the condition of the building. The KwikSave building might allow for cost savings in this area because of a large central open plan space. However, it is not possible to offer a professional opinion on this without examination of the building.

Fit out costs have been estimated at square metre costs area by area and are assumed to be inclusive of any interpretive or interior design fees

External and internal signage	£5,000
Welcome and resource area	£45,000
Digital film editing suite	£20,000
Cinema space	£20,000
Exhibition Gallery	£10,000
Café and retail area	£30,000
Art studio	£7,000
Practice rooms and studio	£5,000
Allowance for office furnishings, telecommunications equipment etc	£8,000
Projector and sound equipment for cinema	£30,000
Total	£180,000

The following is a summary of the capital costs

Building Purchase	£150,000
Direct Building Costs	£909,700
Professional Fees @ 18% of total	£163,750
Fit Out	£180,000
Total Capital Costs	£1,403,450

It is important to remember that these costs are at 2007 prices. Inflation is running at 3-4% per annum but it is around 6-7% per annum in the building industry because of a shortage of skilled professionals and of building materials. Therefore, these costs will rise between now and commencement of the work and during it.

The building work needs to be undertaken by qualified professionals to ensure the quality of finish is commensurate with the aspirations of the project and to meet the standards that will be expected by funding partners. However, this does not preclude some work being undertaken on a volunteer basis and under supervision. As the project progresses, it would be valuable to explore the potential for some of the building work to form part of a skills and learning programme and to involve young people in the project. The youth of Egremont will value and respect a building they have helped to create and it will engender local pride.

703 Development Costs

In addition to the capital costs for the building, there will be development costs to move forward the project. It is not possible at feasibility stage to provide a detailed cost of these but if the project is to be the subject of funding applications to agencies such as Big Lottery or HLF, there will be a requirement to provide detailed proposal documents and financial certainty on capital and revenue costs. Arts Council England North West have indicated that they may be able to assist with grants towards this development work.

704 Revenue Costs

The table below shows the revenue costs and income for the centre for the first three years of operation. It shows an annual shortfall of c.£35,000 frontloaded to Year One which will need to be met by a funding source that will commit ongoing revenue to a project. We have allowed for project funding (typically made for three years) within our profit and loss account.

At this stage we assume the project will not have any bank or other loans.

The Café

Experience elsewhere shows that small cafés attached to heritage and arts centres are not economically sustainable and as such are not of interest to commercial operators. We recommend that the café is operated as a social enterprise. This will increase its viability and underline the community profile and ethos of the centre.

Retail

A shop area will provide visitors the opportunity to purchase small arts related items. We assume modest sales but depending on footfall, there may be potential to grow this aspect of the centre. Any such growth should be distinct from the Lowes Gallery experience. The objective is to create a critical mass of choice.

Cinema

We have assumed the cinema will screen an average of 2 cinema shows a week, 35 weeks of the year plus an occasional 'spectacular' or special interest film. We assume an average audience of 30 people per film and an admission fee of £4.50 per adult, £2.00 children/concession with a 60:40 audience split between the two admission prices. We also assume that the majority of films will be on hire from Film Bank (and shown once) or from BFI.

Staff

The centre will employ a full-time paid Centre Manager who will be involved at the detailed planning and development stage of the project to help shape it and build up a relationship with the community and key stakeholders. There would also be a full time Assistant to ensure that there is always a responsible paid member of staff on site. It is envisaged that additional fixed period posts might be funded for specific projects. A small team of part time volunteers would support the Centre Manager.

We have assumed that the creative scheduling for the centre and Castle Pavilion could be undertaken by the artist in residence working along side the Manager. Further consideration is needed as to how the management of the digital archive might be undertaken. One opportunity is for this to be provided by the Beacon as in-kind professional support but this requires further investigation.

The centre will be a busy space with a range of different activities. These activities need to be planned, managed and critically developing relationships with a very large number of organisers and users. The level of activity could increase significantly if the University of Cumbria used it as a place from which to hold courses and host

activities. This would increase the staff level requirements. Discussions with University of Cumbria might usefully include the potential for their involvement to include supporting an additional staff member. For the purposes of the Business Plan this has not been included in the figures but may need to be once a clearer picture emerges.

It is envisaged that the Centre Manager post will be part time during the project development period and become full time on opening.

We recognise and have provided costs for volunteer expenses and training.

Room Hire

We have assumed that the Centre Manager will have the discretion to hire out the rooms to particular users and for particular purposes free of charge or to offer a discount for a term of regular bookings. A hire fee would be charged to people using a room for an activity or regular class. We suggest an average per hour charge of £10. We have assumed building up to 720 bookings each year. An average exercise class is 1 to 1.5 hours, a play or musical rehearsal may be 2 hours or longer (the Centre Manager may choose to discount these longer bookings). We assume regular and occasional bookings.

It is not possible to estimate potential income from use of the space by University of Cumbria. Much depends on how the partnership with them is structured. In kind professional support from the University may prove to have a greater financial value to the centre than income for room hire.

Digital Archive Resource

The digital archive resource centre is an evolutionary project that will grow and evolve over time. The centre will explore project funding opportunities to enable this growth to be achieved at minimal cost to the centre and this is reflected in the income and expenditure figures.

705 Potential Sources of Capital and Revenue Funds

Main Street is a major project for Egremont, will deliver on several key targets and therefore should be a focus for regeneration funding within the town. West Lakes Renaissance is a potential capital funding partner including for the purchase of the building.

WCMRG has a fund from BNG to 'assist in the creation of a tourism attraction' and have expressed interest in this being invested in the centre, subject to the story of mining Egremont forming part of it. Our understanding is that the funds can be used for capital or revenue purposes and we have chosen to include them under capital at this stage.

The table below illustrates that - assuming the financial contributions for identified partners are broadly correct - then there is a shortfall of c. 55% of capital funds. While the shortfall sum is not insignificant, the ratio for a potential funding agency or foundation may be acceptable, assuming the shortfall is met through grants from

several sources. The current picture illustrates strong local commitment and provides a strong starting point for fund raising. There is a range of trusts that could be approached for support, some of which make contributions towards capital funding costs.

Capital Costs	£1,403,000
West Lakes Renaissance	£500,000
WCMRG	£136,000
Total	£635,000
Shortfall	£768,000

Main Street Financial Model				
				Notes
Income	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	
Café	0	0	0	Assume run as social enterprise at breakeven/not-for-profit
Retail Sales	10,000	15,000	20,000	Based on £2.00 per head spend by users of retail area, building up to 10,000 spending customers.
Cinema	2,750	5,000	7,700	Build up to 2,500 audience. 60:40 split adults/children and concessions
Rents from Tenants	0	3,692	3,692	Based on £7 per sq ft and assuming no rental in Yr 1
Room Hire	3,000	5,500	7,200	Build up to 725 bookings @ av. £10.00
Friends Subs	1,000	2,500	3,750	Build up to 150 members @ £25.00 each
Activities, Events and Basic Resources	5,000	5,000	5,000	Investment in Resources will be grant dependent
Project Grants	25,000	25,000	25,000	e.g. Arts Lottery, Big Lottery etc
Total Gross Income	46750	61692	72342	
Cinema Film Hire/Carriage	3,500	6,000	8,850	Building up to 2 films a week x 35 weeks
Retail Costs of Sales	5,500	8,250	11,000	55% of Gross sales, ex VAT
Total Costs of Sales	5500	8250	11000	
Net Income	41250	53442	61342	
Expenditure				
<i>Staff Costs</i>				
Salaries	45,000	45,000	45,000	F/t Manager + f/t Assistant supported by volunteers
National Insurance	4,480	4,480	4,480	Assumed at 12.8% NIC on cost
Volunteer Expenses	250	500	1000	L&R estimate
Payroll Management	0	0	0	Assumed provided on a goodwill basis by local authority or other partner
Training	300	500	750	L&R estimate - Staff, Trustees and Volunteers
<i>Building Related Costs</i>				
Lift Maintenance	1500	1500	1500	Assumes one lift
Security System & fire extinguishers	1500	1500	1500	L&R estimate
M&E Systems	0	0	0	L&R estimate
Uniform Business Rates	0	0	0	80% mandatory and CBC give 20% discretionary
Insurance - building and contents	1,000	1,000	1,000	Excludes tenanted areas. L&R Estimate

Insurance - public liability/employers Indem	500	500	500	L&R estimate
Insurance - manager and assistant	150	150	150	L&R estimate
Electricity + Gas	12,405	12405	12405	Assumed to be c. £15 per sq m - L&R estimate
Water & Sewage Charges	2000	2000	2000	L&R estimate
Telecoms Line Rental & Call Charges	500	500	500	L&R estimate
Sanitary Supplies & Cleaning Materials	500	500	500	L&R estimate
Repairs and Redecorations	0	500	1000	L&R estimate
Activities , Events, basic Resources	5,000	5,000	5,000	L&R estimate.
<i>Office Costs</i>				
Office Stationary + Postage	300	300	300	L&R estimate
Office Equipment - maintenance	250	250	250	L&R estimate
General Printing	250	250	250	L&R estimate
Subscriptions	100	125	150	L&R estimate
Sundry Costs	250	250	250	L&R estimate
Marketing Costs	5,000	5,000	5,000	includes web design and management
<i>Business Management Costs</i>				
Professional Fees	0	0	0	Donated services
Trustee Costs	0	0	0	Borne by Trustees
Audit & Accountancy Fees	300	300	300	Assumes goodwill in provision of service
Bank Charges	250	250	250	L&R estimate
Friends Management	500	500	500	L&R estimate.
Total Expenditure (before contingency)	82225	83260	84535	
Contingency	3,400	3,500	3500	Calculated at 5% of non staff costs. It may be prudent to increase this
Total Expenditure (after contingency)	85685	86760	88035	
Surplus/(Loss) (ex VAT)	-44435	-33318	-26693	
Total Funds B/F (from prev yr)	-44435	-44435	-77753	
Total Funds C/F (to next yr)	-44435	-77753	-104446	

We have consulted with Arts Council England North West who have confirmed that they support the project concept and that the proposal sits within one of three priority areas for arts development in the north west of England for the period 2006 to 2008. The Arts Council England is the national development agency for the arts in England, distributing public money from Government and the National Lottery. The north west regional office receives its funding on a three year basis and cannot predict in advance what its allocation will be. All applications are assessed against the organisations priorities and *Main Street* is likely to be a strong potential contender for project based Open Access funding.

The project is very unlikely in the current climate and amongst many other demands on funds to receive any capital contribution although development funding might be available and this is a potentially important contribution to moving forward the project. An early task is to get the Arts Council more actively involved with the project.

A review of a range of potential trusts suggest that the funding criteria and interests of a small number of trusts are likely to have the strongest fit with *Main Street*.

Many public sector agencies provide fixed term revenue funding grants. Typically these are for three years and are linked to a specific project. Staff costs are sometimes allowable. All culture centres similar to *Main Street* tend to be reliant to some degree on successfully securing such project grants for specific activities. They are an important source of revenue to enable projects to evolve and develop over time.

However, operational sustainability cannot be achieved through project grants alone and it does not represent good business practice to attempt to operate in this way. There is the additional concern that if there is insufficient core funding, staff spend a significant amount of time and energy chasing project funding. Energy that would be better placed running the centre and providing creative input. Therefore, it is critical that the centre secures ongoing revenue to underpin its activity. Several foundations do revenue fund projects. A priority is to explore the potential.

We note that public funding agencies increasingly want to see commitment to the project from the local authority. This commitment can take many forms but needs to include support that has a quantifiable financial value, e.g. providing particular services free of charge, waiving the 20% business tax payable by charitable trusts, waiving rent, paying for staff or providing legal services at no cost. It will be important to explore with Copeland Borough Council the type and level of support that might be forthcoming.

SECTION EIGHT : CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

801 Conclusions

Main Street has the potential to be a vibrant cultural centre for the community of Egremont, potentially drawing on visitors from elsewhere in West Cumbria. The centre can help deliver some of the regional objectives in relation to achieving sustainable communities.

As such there is sufficient potential to warrant taking forward the concept to the next step of investigation. However, there is a long journey from feasibility to implementation. Identifying and securing significant capital and revenue funding is critical to success. There is significant work to be done to identify and secure this funding and the level of funding to be secured is not insignificant. This needs to be prioritised as an essential next step and the scale of the challenge should not be underestimated.

The unique blend of activities and a truly community-arts and culture led project gives *Main Street* an edge and individuality. It is a challenging project and requires significant effort and time to achieve and to run. Local stakeholders need to get behind it to help make it work. The next few months will be critical in moving it forward.

802 Next Steps

We recommend that stakeholders undertake further work. The next steps are:

- To hold discussions with identified agencies and foundations about in-principle funding/funding opportunities – to help quantify more precisely the gap in capital and revenue funding and identify how it might be met
- To secure funding for a project manager to move forward the concept – it is anticipated this will be a part time post and might be combined with another role to create a full time job, initially the post would be on a fixed contract basis
- To research available buildings or sites for the centre that could deliver the floorspace and location needs for *Main Street* and which would also bring into good use a disused building
- To investigate in more detail partnering opportunities with the University of Cumbria and with the proposed new Sellafield Visitor Centre and to consider the relative merits and challenges of collaboration.
- To research and compile a list of development study needs and costs and identify funding sources for these
- To investigate social enterprise opportunities for the café.

- To rationalise the collections and resources of the WCMRG to make them more compatible with the *Main Street* and develop common vision for the merged trusts
- To establish links with other heritage, dance, music and film establishments or initiatives where they do not already exist. These might include Soundwave (Cumbria Youth Music Action Zone) www.sound-wave.info; Rosehill Theatre www.rosehilltheatre.co.uk; Egremont Youth Works www.youth-works.com and West Cumbria and Barrow Sports Action Zone www.copelandbc.gov.uk/ms/www/saz who recently undertook a dance project called Sustainable Energy with Cumbria Arts in Education

APPENDIX : CONSULTATIONS

Alex Alliston-Greiner, Wotton Electric Picture House, Wotton-under-Edge

Dave Banks, Director, Egremont Youth Works

Glenys Braithwaite, Development Worker, Spinning Yarns

Kathrin Boehn, Public Works Group

Glenys Braithwaite, Development Worker Prism Arts

Cath Cook, Trustee, Lowes Court Gallery

Becky Cooper, Manager, Wells Film Centre, Wells

Amanda Farr, Director, Oriel Davies Gallery, Newtown

Lena Hogg, Member of the Crab Fair Committee

Alistair Hudson, Deputy Director, Grizedale Arts

David Malkinson, Member of the Crab Fair Committee

Ralph Merrett, Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership/Crab Fair Archive

Rob Merrett, Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership/Crab Fair Archive

Charles Mitchell, Dean of the Arts Faculty , University of Cumbria

Graham Nicholson, Board Member, The Cornerhouse, Manchester

Sue Palmer, Beacon Museum

Laurel Roberts, Administrative Officer, the Qube, Oswestry

Rob Scott, BNG/Florence Mine Board

Ann Snape, Egremont Marketing and Tourism Officer

Derek Shutt, Secretary Crab Fair Committee

Wendy Thomas, Youth Work Coordinator, Young Cumbria

Simon Walker, Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership

Helen Wewiora, Visual Arts Officer, Arts Council England North West

Cllr Elaine Woodburn

Margaret Woodburn, Egremont Town Clerk

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