

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**COMMUNITY INFORMATION & PROTECTION
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

TUESDAY 29 OCTOBER 2002 AT 10.30 A.M.

**HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHIVES & LOCAL STUDIES (HALS)
ACCOMMODATION - PROGRESS REPORT**

Report of the Director of Community Information

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Executive Member: Derrick Ashley

1. Purpose of the Report

To update the Community Information & Protection Scrutiny Committee on action taken to address Hertfordshire Archives & Local Studies (HALS)' accommodation problems since the meeting in June 2002.

2. Summary

The Committee has requested an update on this issue at each meeting for the foreseeable future. At the last meeting Members were informed of work to be carried out preparing draft plans and costings for a new building adjacent to the Register Office Block, in preparation for bids to the Capital Panel and to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

3. Actions since last meeting

- 3.1 Following earlier options studies, further work has been carried out to prepare plans and detailed costings for the two principal options to build onto the Register Office Block. These options had been identified as the best balance of cost and value from the earlier studies. In both these options, HALS staff offices would remain in the original building.
- 3.2 Option 1 would provide a two-storey repository block for HALS' current archive holdings plus adequate space for future acquisitions. This would enable HALS to move documents out of the Undercroft area (beneath the canteen kitchens) and old strongrooms in the Register Office Block, into purpose built repositories built to national standards. This option, whilst it would address the needs of the documents, would not improve the public service, which would continue to be delivered from the existing two reading rooms, and there would continue to be difficulties in retrieving large documents for the public to use.
- 3.3 Option 2 would provide a three-storey building, including two floors of repositories as in option 1, with the addition of a new, combined reading room and improved facilities for the public, to include a larger education/conference room, exhibition space, toilets, cloakroom and light refreshment facilities. This option would enable HALS to run the public service more efficiently and HALS would release some of the office space currently occupied in the Register Office Block.
- 3.4 A bid has been submitted to the Capital Panel for the cost of Option 1. A bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the additional money needed to build Option 2 is in preparation. A visit from the Regional team of the Heritage Lottery Fund to discuss the proposals is anticipated during October.
- 3.5 Any successful capital bid would see the bulk of expenditure in 2005/6 and 2006/7 when building work would be undertaken. However there would be a need for development funds in 2003/4 as well as expenditure on detailed plans and fees. These costs will depend on which option is pursued.

Background papers used by the author when compiling this report

None.