

## EXECUTIVE 16<sup>th</sup> November 2023

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Kettering Library Roof Replacement Capital Project</b>
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<b>Lead Member</b>	Cllr Helen Howell – Executive Member for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Tourism

<b>Key Decision</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Are there public sector equality duty implications?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Does the report contain confidential or exempt information (whether in appendices or not)?</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Applicable paragraph number/s for exemption from publication under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972</b>	Paragraph 3

### List of Appendices

#### **Appendix A: GSS Architects Estimated Cost Plan (EXEMPT)**

#### **1. Purpose of Report**

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- 1.1. This report details the work required and the rationale, the proposed methodology and estimated, high-level, worst-case scenario, costs to replace the 120-year-old Collyweston stone roof on Kettering library.
- 1.2. It seeks to add £6,807m to the Council's capital programme so that the work can be undertaken over the rest of this current year and the next two financial years.
- 1.3. It also seeks approval to enter into the required procurement activity to secure the installation of the scaffolding and canopy tent, the appointment of the professional team (Architects, Quantity Surveyors and Contract Administrators), ordering the Collyweston stone and then appointing the main contractors to complete the roof replacement.

## **2. Executive Summary**

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- 2.1. Kettering Library roof is in parts over 120 years old. The library and attached Art Gallery are Grade II listed buildings and as the owner NNC has a duty to maintain and repair them. The library roof is made of Collyweston stone slate.
  - 2.2. Both buildings are now connected to the new extension, and all make up Cornerstone, a £4.5m capital project inherited from the former Kettering Borough Council (KBC) and delivered by North Northamptonshire Council, utilising £3m of external funding from SEMLEP through the Government's Get Building Fund. There are funding outputs related to the SEMLEP investment which require Cornerstone to be open and functioning, for example related to the new Business and Intellectual Property Centre space located as part of the library.
  - 2.3. The library roof has been in need of repair for some time. However, a survey undertaken by the former County Council in 2019, prior to the Cornerstone construction beginning, stated that it would need replacing within 10 years.
  - 2.4. During the winter of 2022-23 the roof deteriorated rapidly, causing water ingress into the main library building and into some parts of the new Cornerstone extension, where the old roof meets the new.
  - 2.5. A new condition survey of the roof has been obtained through heritage architects, which provides evidence that the roof needs to be completely replaced. The Collyweston stone needs to be replaced like for like, and given the nature of how it is constructed, it is recommended to be undertaken during dry conditions. This requires the whole building to be made watertight through a tent canopy, which in turn necessitates a complex scaffold being erected and retained in place throughout the duration of the roof replacement.
  - 2.6. The proposed methodology for this project is both necessary, to balance our duties to keep a Listed Building in repair and to maintain a statutory library in Kettering town centre. It is a complex project and requires significant capital investment.
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### 3. Recommendations

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#### 3.1. It is recommended that the Executive:

- a) Recommend to Council the approval of the budget of £6,807,000 to be added to the Capital Programme to fulfil the Executive's longstanding commitment to replace the Kettering Library roof and to commit to repair the roof of the Art Gallery.
- b) Delegate authority to the Executive Member for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Tourism, in consultation with the Director of Public Health and the Director of Place and Economy, to procure the necessary works to replace the Kettering Library roof and undertake any actions required to deliver the project within the approved financial envelope

#### 3.2 Reasons for Recommendations

- The library building is Grade II listed and it is the responsibility of the Council as the owner to maintain it. Further, the Council has various statutory enforcement powers to require the owners of listed buildings to keep listed buildings in a good state of repair. It is therefore important that the Council demonstrates its preparedness to tackle the condition of listed buildings.
- If the building is not made watertight as soon as practicable there is a risk that further water ingress will compromise the structure of the building and cause damage to the internal fabric, library stock and equipment.
- To enable the Council to continue to deliver its full statutory library functions within Kettering town centre.
- Over the weekend 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> October 2023 further heavy rain caused the ceiling to collapse in a section to the right of the side doors of the library. This resulted in the library having to close whilst urgent remedial works and a clear up are undertaken and assessment is made as to the safety risks in re-opening the library to staff and the public. The frequency and likelihood of this re-occurring increases whilst the building remains exposed to the elements with the roof in the condition it is in. Options are now having to be considered to relocate the library until the building is watertight.
- Cornerstone cannot open in its entirety until the building is watertight, due to water ingress into the new space on the ground floor, where the old roof meets the new. Inability to fully open Cornerstone compromises the Council's ability to comply with the funding agreement in place with SEMLEP and exposes the Council to a risk that some of this funding will be clawed-back. The Council submits twice yearly monitoring reports to SEMLEP and so they are aware of the current challenges and have been supportive to date but want to see Cornerstone fully open as soon as practicable.
- The Gallery has a revenue cost to the Council and the intention, should Cornerstone be open, is for the new spaces to generate an income that will offset some of these costs.
- Whilst Cornerstone remains closed the Gallery Collection is not accessible to the public.

### 3.3. Alternative Options Considered:

- **Not undertaking the work to replace the library roof**

This would result in the permanent closure of the library building and the need to permanently relocate it to another town centre location. Even if such a location, with the right footprint, could be found the cost of the relocation would be increased due to the need to connect any new space with the former County Council IT network, on which the library management systems operate.

Even if the library could be relocated the Council would still be left with a Grade II Listed Building in need of repair and it could prevent the opening of Cornerstone as originally intended. This would risk SEMLEP clawing back some or all of the funding committed to the Cornerstone development.

- **Not using Collyweston Slate**

This has been discussed at length with the Conservation Officer on more than one occasion and advice has also been sought from Historic England, as listed building consent would be required, and using an alternative slate on this roof is not an option.

- **Not tenting the building while the roof is replaced.**

Despite the cost being higher for the option to tent the building, it is the preferred option for the following reasons:

- It is the much less risky option in terms of NNC's control over the programme of activity and ability to mitigate unknown risks. The timeline for replacement without tenting is much more weather dependent.
- It protects the internal fabric of the building including those renovations already complete and the new extension.
- It protects the internal contents of the buildings.
- Without the tent, once the slates and felting are removed, even in sections, the timbers will be exposed, there will be a risk of further damage through increased water
- If the Council were to open Cornerstone without a tent, there is a risk of further leaks, if water ingress from the library roof worsens.
- Tenting will allow for Cornerstone to fully open sooner, if deemed safe to do so, and to start to attract an income to offset the annual revenue cost to the Council.
- Once tented, if there are unforeseen delays to the roof replacement phase of the project, these will not compromise the operation of the Library and Cornerstone as they will be protected.

## 4. Report Background

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- 4.1. Kettering Library was constructed in 1904 using local materials in the original construction including red Sandstock bricks from Hemel Hempstead, Ketton stone from Edith Weston Quarries, and Collyweston stone slates to the pitched roofs.
- 4.2. The library building is connected to the Art Gallery and now the new extension, both of which make up Cornerstone, a £4.5m capital project

inherited from the former Kettering Borough Council (KBC) and delivered by North Northamptonshire Council, utilising £3m of external funding from SEMLEP through the Government's Get Building Fund.

- 4.3. The Library, Art Gallery and the nearby Kettering Museum are all Grade II listed, and the site is in a Conservation Area, so this will be taken into account with any alterations to the buildings.
- 4.4. The Cornerstone project aimed to revitalise and extend the physical assets and offer, to a creative and cultural anchor for North Northamptonshire; unifying the facilities, providing a blend of cultural amenity, community space and teaching facilities.
- 4.5. It is important to note that the library roof replacement was not in scope for the Cornerstone project at the outset when it was set up by Kettering Borough Council, as it did not meet the funding criteria. Although a condition survey of the library was undertaken by the former County Council in August 2019, prior to the Cornerstone project being progressed, at that time the survey reported that the requirement to replace the roof covering can be expected within the next 10 years.
- 4.6. Construction on Cornerstone was completed in autumn 2022 and was due to open to the public in February 2023. However, the condition of the library roof worsened over the winter of 2022-23. Water ingress, where the old roof meets the new, has caused internal damage to some of the new ground floor spaces meaning they cannot be used currently, and for a time, water ingress also affected the ability to connect electricals in the roof spaces, which impacted fire alarm systems.
- 4.7. A decision was taken in January 2023 to delay opening Cornerstone and to progress work on a design for scaffolding and tenting of the whole building, and for the remaining snagging issues to be resolved.
- 4.8. The snagging issues are largely resolved now, with the exception of the failure of the dehumidification unit in the Art store. The retainer is yet to be paid to the contractor, but it is anticipated the defects certification will be issued in the next few weeks.
- 4.9. The designs for the scaffolding and tent are complete, along with an indicative cost for them to be in place for a 2-year period.
- 4.10. GSS Architecture was appointed by the Council earlier in 2023 to conduct a refreshed condition survey of the roofs and associated building fabric of Kettering Library. The library roof is in poor condition and is suffering from several leaks, with the roof in many areas being almost 120 years old. There are several slipped slates and a number of intermediary repairs that have been conducted over the years have now failed. Scaffolding has also been installed to prevent slipping tiles falling onto the main library entrance.

- 4.11. The roofs of the original library buildings are covered in Collyweston stone slate, with asphalt flat roofs infilling in between. There were originally many roof lights lighting the interiors below, most of which have been either filled in or have suspended ceilings beneath, therefore they are not performing their original function of letting daylight into the building. The sloping verges are generally formed as Collyweston swept verges. The roof is of a complex design.
- 4.12. The west elevation of the library and Art Gallery are covered in Virginia Creeper that is covering the walls and windows and is now getting into the roof structure causing further damage. The recommendation of the architects is that the creeper is removed. In addition, there are a number of trees that are in close proximity to the library and require their branches to be removed to prevent damage to the existing roof. It is hoped that during detailed design that no further works to trees are required, but it cannot be guaranteed.

## **5. Issues and Choices**

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- 5.1. Not replacing the roof would result in the permanent closure of the library building and the need to permanently relocate it to another town centre location. Even if such a location, with the right footprint and accessibility could be found, the cost of the relocation would be increased due to the need to connect any new space with the former County Council IT network, on which the Library Management Systems operate.
- 5.2. Even if the library could be relocated the Council would still be left with a Grade II Listed Building in need of repair. The leaking roof must be repaired as the Council is bound by legal requirements such as Listed Building legislation and, it is understood, that the original Carnegie funding agreement with the then Council for the initial construction of the library requires the Council to operate a library from it.
- 5.3. In addition, it could prevent the opening of Cornerstone as originally intended. Despite the current positive relationships with SEMLEP on this matter, it would risk SEMLEP clawing back some or all of the £3m funding committed to the Cornerstone development.
- 5.4. Like for like re-roofing does not technically require Planning consent. However, any alterations to the exterior of the building will require both Planning and Listed Building Consents. It is likely that some changes will be proposed, such as the recommended removal of the rooflights and the added insulation to flat roofs, and so consents will be needed. The change of roof covering of asphalt flat roofs, even without added insulation, may also require consents subject to discussion with the Conservation Officer and Historic England.
- 5.5. One option that has been considered on other similar projects is the use of replica/reproduction Collyweston slates or Cotswold stone slate. However, the local Conservation Officer has been resistant to this proposal, and it has not

been a viable option on recent projects in the area such as the Hind Hotel in Wellingborough.

- 5.6. However, because the Kettering Library roof does have a number of internal pitches which face onto a flat roof, consideration can be given to the potential acceptability of using any alternative materials to these pitches. If approved this could significantly reduce the amount of new slates required, with associated possible time and cost savings to the project. For all visible pitches the architect's recommendation is to strip and consolidate all the good original stone slate, make up new stone slates where needed, and re-lay. Any use of replica slate will be subject to Conservation Officer and Listed Building approval and following discussions with the Conservation Officer the most likely outcome will be for all Collyweston roofs to remain as such.
- 5.7. Along with GSS, possible suppliers who are able to supply Collyweston stone slates for a project of this size and who could also carry out these type of roof works, have been consulted.
- 5.8. As part of the recent Cornerstone project, bat presence was detected and is therefore likely to remain. As the previous survey was over two years old it has recently been repeated as it has to be conducted during the summer months of 2023. Evidence of common pipistrelles was found, and wildlife protection recommendations have been made with a Bat licence being required ahead of works commencing.
- 5.9. There is only one source of Collyweston slate, due to the number of slates required for this project, and this has a significant impact on timescales for the project as there is an estimated 11-month lead in time for the mining and delivery of all the slate. 20% of the required slate will need to be ordered up front in order to secure the excavation of the rest of the slate.
- 5.10. There has been discussion regarding whether a full scaffold and tent is needed for these works and the Council has already obtained a design for a full tent canopy option. The benefits of a canopy will be to reduce the water ingress and further damage this would do during the construction phase and accelerate the speed of installation of the new mortar bedded slates. The canopy option is more expensive, estimated at £500,000 to erect. The scaffolding would be required regardless of whether a tent is fitted or not. However, there would not be an automatic saving if a tent is not erected, as not using the canopy exposes the project to risks that will result in more costs.
- 5.11. This project will also involve installing a waterproof membrane which will sit under the re-laid slates. This membrane can be installed quickly as the roof is stripped in a phased manner and once installed the roof should be watertight. Regarding speed of installation of the stone slates, as the slates are laid on a mortar bed, this work cannot be conducted during inclement weather unless under a canopy, therefore the time on site will likely be extended from approximately eight months with the canopy to twelve months without. The time of year should also be considered, and winter avoided as low temperatures are not conducive to working with mortar. This will negatively impact the timescales if the decision is to progress without a canopy.

- 5.12. With a tent the risks related to inclement weather are mitigated. In addition, once the building is watertight, full operations within the building will be started or resumed, so long as it safe to do so.
- 5.13. It is expected that approximately 50% of existing slate will be salvaged.
- 5.14. The life of a Collyweston slate cannot be guaranteed but a well slated Collyweston roof will give a minimum of one hundred years life maybe close to two hundred if well maintained. New Collyweston slate will have a much longer life than reclaimed Collyweston slate, but the exact timescales cannot be known.
- 5.15. The project does not allow for the full replacement of the timber frame of the roof. The Roof Repair Report by GSS Architecture notes the existing timber structure is likely to require localised repairs, but the extent of this is unknown until the roof covering is removed. An allowance for repairs has been included within the cost estimate, but this is subject to change pending further surveys. If a full frame replacement was required, this would require a significant increase in the project cost.
- 5.16. To mitigate the risks a 20% contingency has been added into the £6.807m estimated costs.
- 5.17. It is recommended the project be undertaken in 2 phases:
- Phase 1: procure the slate, procure and install scaffolding and tent; appoint design team, undertake a measured survey to inform the design, progress design to RIBA Stage 4.
  - Phase 2: procurement of contractor and delivery of full roof replacement.
- 5.18. Phase 1 will also include any internal remedial redecoration required in any of the new Cornerstone spaces which has been affected by water damage. The cost of this work has been factored into the overall budget.
- 5.19. There are also some repairs required to the Art Gallery roof and these will be undertaken as part of this project.
- 5.20. The project is estimated to take 2 years in total once funding approval is secured. The installation of the scaffolding and tent is estimated at 6-9 months. The roof replacement is estimated at 8-12 months. The lead in time for the slate is 11 months.
- 5.21. A site compound is likely to be required as a large crane will need to be in situ throughout the installation of the tent. It is anticipated this will be situated at the front of the library building on the paved area on Sheep Street, although it is likely that road closures and or restrictions will be required.



## **6. Next Steps**

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- 6.1. If the Executive approve the recommendations in this report, the report will be taken to the Council to approve the funding allocation.
- 6.2. If and when Council approval is obtained procurement will be progressed for Phase one as soon as practicable.

## **7. Implications (including financial implications)**

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### **7.1. Resources, Financial and Transformation**

- 7.1.1. The project is to replace Kettering Library roof with like for like Collyweston stone slate.
- 7.1.2. An Initial Cost Estimate report has been undertaken by GSS Architecture which estimates the total value of this capital project at £6.807m this includes fees and 20% contingency.
- 7.1.3. Whilst external funding sources will be sought to support the cost of this project, the costs will be underwritten by borrowing.
- 7.1.4. The project will be managed by the Council's Capital Projects team who have a proven track record of delivering projects on budget and on time. An external client-side professional team, to include architects and quantity surveyors, will also be appointed.
- 7.1.5. The construction market is experiencing considerable volatility currently, and we are recommending mitigating the impact of this volatility on tender prices by including 20% client-side contingency on all of this Capital Project.
- 7.1.6. A new condition survey and technical report have been commissioned from specialist architects which demonstrate that this project is necessary to ensure that the library roof is replaced in accordance with listed building and Conservation requirements in the most efficient and timely manner to allow the library to remain on its existing site and for Cornerstone to fully open.

### **7.2. Legal and Governance**

- 7.2.1. The contracts will be procured and awarded in accordance with all legal requirements, including relevant legislation and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- 7.2.2. A member of the Council's in-house Legal team will be an advisor throughout the process and up to execution of any resulting contracts.

7.2.3. All reports relating to a procurement which require legal review and/or comment to be provided to the Legal officer with conduct of the matter to which the report relates.

7.2.4. Any monies received from s106 agreements above will be utilised in accordance with the restrictions named within the respective agreements.

### 7.3. **Relevant Policies and Plans**

7.3.1. The North Northamptonshire Council's Corporate plan adopted in 2021 has key commitments which are key to this project. These include:

- **Active, fulfilled lives:** - supporting people to live healthier more active lives. Libraries proactively contribute to the health and wellbeing of communities.
- **Connected Communities:** - respect, empower and engage our Communities which libraries do as a critical touch point of our residents in local communities.

[Corporate plan | North Northamptonshire Council  
\(northnorthants.gov.uk\)](https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/corporate-plan)

### 7.4. **Risk**

7.4.1. **Collyweston Stone Slate.** The area of re-slating (due to outside possibility of using replicas to some pitches) and percentage of slate that will be able to be kept is unknown. There is an approximate but not definitive guide on the long lead-in period for this material.

7.4.2. **Listed Building Consent.** Planning determination periods are an unknown factor and although we do not expect this to be contentious, timescales for determination are often subject to prolongation.

7.4.3. **Cost.** The project costs are currently unknown and the potential variation in the timescales involved means that inflation could have a significant impact. It should be noted therefore that the cost estimate report from GSS, subject to this business case, applies several assumptions and exclusions, as without a full RIBA 4 design, a detailed and robust cost report cannot be produced at this stage.

7.4.4. To mitigate these risks a 20% contingency has been added into the costs, alongside an additional period of 52 weeks for scaffolding and tent hire. This is because these are required to be erected at the earliest opportunity to make the building watertight (a 6–9-month installation) and the roof replacement cannot actually start until the slate has been delivered, with an estimated 11-month delivery timeframe. The roof replacement, once underway, is estimated to take 12 months.

- 7.4.5. **Water Ingress.** The continued water ingress presents a risk to the condition of the internal building fabric and the books, etc., stored in the library. The risks associated with this increase at all times the building is not watertight.
- 7.4.6. **Conducting the work without a scaffold canopy / tent.** Although the tent would be a more expensive option, it will help mitigate the risk of water ingress and programme slippage during the re-roofing works.
- 7.4.7. **Reputational risk.** The recent temporary closure of the library and the inability to open Cornerstone have provoked negative media interest and a series of complaints to the Council from customers. Positive steps towards delivering the replacement roof will mitigate the reputational risk to the Council.
- 7.4.8. **SEMLEP funding.** If the roof is not replaced, the Council would be left with a Grade II Listed Building in need of repair, and it could prevent the opening of Cornerstone as originally intended. This would risk SEMLEP clawing back some or all of the funding committed to the Cornerstone development. The Council submits twice yearly monitoring reports to SEMLEP and are aware of the current challenges and have been supportive to date but want to see Cornerstone fully open as soon as practicable.
- 7.4.9. **Trees:** It is hoped that during detailed design no further works to trees are required but it cannot be guaranteed,

## 7.5. **Consultation**

- 7.5.1. Heritage construction architects, NNC's Conservation Officer and Collyweston roof experts have been consulted to inform this report.

## 7.6. **Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel**

- 7.6.1. This report has not been considered by an EAP as is not policy or strategy related.

## 7.7. **Consideration by Scrutiny**

- 7.7.1. Place and Economy Scrutiny Panel considered the Cornerstone project in August where the library roof was also discussed. The panel were very keen to see the roof replacement progressed. This item is eligible to be reviewed by the Place and Environment Scrutiny Committee as part of their work plan.

## 7.8. **Equality Implications**

- 7.8.1. An equality impact assessment is to be undertaken as part of the procurement process.

## 7.9. **Climate and Environment Impact**

7.9.1. The Council, having declared a climate change emergency in June 2021, is committed to reducing its climate impact both within its own Council buildings and in working with businesses and the wider community to achieve net zero energy emissions.

7.9.2. By virtue of the contract arrangements the Council can monitor the impacts of managing the contract to ensure that it is ethically and environmentally managed and aligns with the Council's strategy in terms of Climate Change.

## 7.10. **Community Impact**

7.10.1. The Public Services (Social Value) Act (2013) transformed the way public bodies buy services and the 2021 National Procurement Policy Statement identify social value as being a key Government priority. Councils are required to consider how the services they procure might improve the social and environmental wellbeing of their local area. This has been included as a requirement of the Frameworks e.g., the PBO requirement to securing funding from the supplier for social value projects.

7.10.2. The Library Service is able to provide the council's statutory duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient public library service in accordance with the Public Libraries and Museums Act of 1964, through well maintained buildings

- Libraries Connected and has developed a set of Universal Libraries Offers, which we follow, giving guidance as to how public libraries can:
  - connect communities
  - improve prosperity and wellbeing
  - promote equality through learning
  - enable digital access and improve digital literacy
  - enable everyone to reach their full potential through literacy and cultural activity
- The Library service offers opportunities and support at every stage of life and is a trusted source of information, providing learning and skills, essential digital resources, a place to meet and socialise and volunteering opportunities.
- The Library Service work with local partners and volunteers in Kettering to enable us to fulfil these objectives.
- Replacing the roof in the proposed way will allow the library service to continue in Kettering, enabling Cornerstone to open
- There has long been ongoing support and recognition of the need to effectively invest capital to enhance, protect and future proof the prime heritage assets for existing and future generations of North Northamptonshire. The investment has wider benefits of promoting social inclusion by improving connectivity and offering improved

community access to a wider cultural, heritage and learning offer, which the public may not have previously engaged with.

- Providing a comprehensive and efficient Library Service, accessible to all residents, as listed above
- Health and wellbeing benefits from provision of an accessible community spaces enabling meetings and activities to take place.
- Securing the library space will also enable the use of the space as a community hub.

## 7.11. **Crime and Disorder Impact**

7.11.1 None identified

## **8. Background Papers**

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8.1 None