

National Lottery Heritage Fund
Westmorland and Furness Council – draft answers

NOTE: The answers respond to the guidance:

<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/funding/national-lottery-heritage-grants-250k-10m/application-questions>

About the project: **The Coronation Hall – restoring and modernising it for the future**

Name of your organisation: **Westmorland and Furness Council**

Project reference number: **EOI-00005300**

Project title. **The Coronation Hall – restoring and modernising it for the future**

Is this your organisation's first application to the Heritage Fund? **No**

Describe what your organisation would like to achieve through your project.

We aim to transform Ulverston’s historic Coronation Hall into a bold, welcoming and future ready creative and community space that celebrates its heritage while supporting Ulverston’s cultural, social and economic future. Guided by our refreshed vision and five-year plan, the project will create an inclusive home for creativity, learning and connection, where people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds can participate, make memories and feel inspired.

The redevelopment will introduce flexible creative spaces, a visible and accessible library with a dedicated children’s area, improved facilities and a new café, enabling the Coro to host performances, festivals, exhibitions and community programmes. A strengthened heritage programme will bring local stories, archives and traditions to life with schools, volunteers, artists and community groups.

The legacy will be increased participation, more diverse audiences, stronger partnerships and long-term sustainability - ensuring the Coro remains a vibrant civic landmark for generations.

Tell us what you will do during your project.

We will deliver an integrated programme of capital works and heritage engagement to conserve, restore and redevelop The Coronation Hall (The Coro) and Ulverston Library. The project will safeguard this significant civic building while expanding opportunities for learning, participation, heritage, creativity and community connection. Activity will take place across two phases - Development and Delivery - with evaluation embedded throughout.

DEVELOPMENT PHASE

We will complete all preparatory work to progress to construction and heritage delivery. This includes specialist surveys and assessments (structural, asbestos, ecology, acoustic, paint analysis, carbon baseline, traffic and Equality Impact Assessment) to ensure designs are safe, accessible and environmentally sustainable. Architects will develop RIBA Stage 3 outline designs, spatially coordinated plans and Room Data Sheets for the library, community spaces, performance areas, café, and front/back of house facilities, alongside public realm proposals. We will prepare and submit the planning application, working closely with NLHF and internal Council teams.

Community voices will shape the design and programme through workshops, focus groups, school sessions and lived experience engagement led by the Community Power Programming Group. We will advance sustainability planning, develop heritage interpretation, and co-create a draft Out & About programme for the closure period.

We will deliver pilot heritage activities to test engagement methods: a co-created historical timeline of the Coro (1914–present) with 80 young people; heritage talks (e.g., with historian Graham Whalan); and interpretation prototypes. An evaluation framework will be established to track participation, outcomes, access, sustainability awareness and learning.

DELIVERY PHASE – CAPITAL WORKS (RIBA 4–5 AND CONSTRUCTION)

We will restore and conserve historic plasterwork, sculptural features, architectural detailing and original materials. The redevelopment will improve accessibility (step free access into and around the building, improved wayfinding and dementia friendly design), environmental performance (energy efficient systems, improved insulation and reduced carbon), and public areas (new café, family facilities, flexible community spaces and reconfigured front and back of house). Public realm improvements will create greener, safer, more welcoming outdoor space. Construction is expected to begin September 2028, lasting around one year.

During closure, an Out & About programme will deliver creative, library and heritage activity across Ulverston and rural communities, ensuring continuity of engagement.

DELIVERY PHASE – HERITAGE, LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME

Aligned with our Creative, Library and Heritage pillars, we will deliver a multi-year programme across four strands:

1. ARCHITECTURAL & ARTISTIC HERITAGE – Up to 12 volunteers and specialists will document and interpret architectural features through photography, sketching and 3D scanning, creating digital resources and a reopening exhibition.
2. LOCAL LIVES & HIDDEN STORIES – 24+ workshops with 100+ participants (schools, families, historians) exploring the Coro’s social history. Outputs include a co-created exhibition on construction hoardings, later digitised for long term use.
3. THEATRICAL TRADITIONS & CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE – 24 young people will research and reinterpret Ulverston’s theatrical heritage, cocreating site-specific performances, installations, and a visual artwork mapping historic touring routes.
4. ARCHIVES & COMMUNITY LIBRARY – At least 200 people will contribute to oral history and archive activities. Materials will form a permanent digital and physical collection in the redeveloped library, supporting lifelong learning and community pride.

SKILLS, TOURS AND CREATIVE OUTPUTS

We will recruit and train 12 Heritage Ambassadors; deliver 104 Hard Hat tours (c. 400 visitors) during construction; and create opportunities for skills development in heritage interpretation, creativity and media production. Outputs include a co-created heritage frieze (7 schools), illustrated learning resources, an online archive, teacher packs and site-specific performances.

EVALUATION AND LEGACY

Evaluation will run throughout, capturing participation, learning, heritage impact, community connection, environmental outcomes and accessibility improvements. The legacy will be restored heritage, strengthened partnerships, long term volunteering pathways, a new heritage informed public programme, and an inclusive, community powered cultural hub for Ulverston.

Where will your project take place?

- Project street [Text field – 255 characters]: County Road
- Project city [Text field – 255 characters]: Ulverston
- Project county [Text field – 255 characters]: Cumbria
- Project post code [Text field – 100 characters]: LA12 7LZ

For landscape projects, please provide an Ordnance Survey grid reference for your landscape.

[Enter reference]

Explain what need and opportunity your project will address.

NEED AND OPPORTUNITY

HERITAGE CONDITION AND MANAGEMENT

Need: The Coro is a significant civic landmark in poor and declining condition. The 2023 condition survey identifies deterioration to roofs, walls, floors, internal finishes and building services, limiting operations and the venue's ability to host high-quality events. Backlog maintenance, inefficiencies and lack of flexibility restrict its capacity to meet community, creative, heritage and learning needs.

Opportunity: Redevelopment will safeguard heritage features, restore civic presence and address longstanding layout and environmental issues. Investment will create accessible, flexible, multi-use spaces for creativity, learning, heritage and community activity, while improving sustainability, energy efficiency and stewardship.

Management opportunity: The project strengthens resilience through proactive asset management, modernised systems and improved processes. Rationalising and re-planning spaces increases capacity for events, courses, library activity and community use - improving performance and financial sustainability.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & PARTICIPATION

Need: Engagement with Ulverston's heritage is limited. The Coro has no dedicated heritage programme and relies heavily on a hyperlocal audience. Accessibility challenges (toilets, lifts, wayfinding, seating) create barriers for older residents, families, children, young people and rural communities. Transport constraints hinder participation from surrounding villages. A limited digital presence and inefficient use of space add further barriers. The Coro and Library currently plan and programme largely independently, reducing opportunities for joined-up activity and diminishing the visibility of the Library - especially the children's library - thereby restricting integrated creative, learning and heritage programmes. Youth engagement is inconsistent. Residents highlight the need for a clearer identity, stronger branding and a more coherent cultural offer.

Opportunities. A dedicated heritage strand will enable people of all ages to discover, interpret and celebrate the Coro's history. Improved accessibility and integrated spaces - including a more visible library and a dedicated children's area - will support talks, exhibitions, learning, family activity and youth-led cultural production. The Out & About programme will extend reach into rural communities, addressing transport barriers and increasing access. A 2026–2031 marketing strategy will guide a brand refresh, strengthen digital engagement and position the Coro as a creative and heritage destination. Consultation evidences strong demand for a more integrated library, separate children's library, café/bar, communal spaces, live music, theatre, spoken word and inclusive creative and heritage activity. A new Community Power Programming Group will involve residents and young people in shaping future direction.

FEASIBILITY AND OPTIONS APPRAISAL

The Council has ringfenced c.£2.033m and undertaken feasibility, options analysis and architectural studies. Without external funding, only a minimal scheme focused on essential works is deliverable - no extension and limited enhancements. This keeps the building safe and open but caps future growth, limits library integration (including the children's library) and restricts diversification of activity and earned income - constraining long-term sustainability.

In short, without NLHF we deliver a safe, smaller scheme. With NLHF, we unlock the full, future-ready transformation that grows audiences, integrates the library, strengthens heritage engagement and secures long-term sustainability. NLHF support enables the right-scale project - optimised space and flow, a step-change in accessibility, improved environmental performance and a co-created heritage and learning offer - maximising public value, deepening participation (including rural reach via Out & About) and building financial resilience.

HOW THE PROJECT ADDRESSES THESE NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

We will:

- Undertake essential repairs to protect significance and ensure compliance.
- Deliver a fully accessible, dementia and family-friendly building with modern library facilities (including a visible children's area).
- Provide flexible spaces for exhibitions, performances, workshops and learning, shaped with community and youth input.
- Take heritage beyond the building into schools, care settings, community groups and rural areas (via Out & About).

- Repurpose underused spaces and enhance the café/bar, with volunteer-led programmes to support financial resilience.
- Improve health, wellbeing and skills through creative and heritage activity.
- Enhance public realm and townscape, creating a welcoming cultural gateway.

The project aligns with Heritage 2033, ACE's Let's Create, the Ulverston Place Plan (2021–2031), the Westmorland & Furness Council Corporate Plan, Cumbria LEP priorities and the Cumbria Tourism Strategy—ensuring strategic fit and sustained public benefit.

Why does your project need to happen now?

RISK TO HERITAGE: The Coro is in urgent need of repair and improvement. The 2023 Building Condition Survey identifies deterioration to the roof, plasterwork, windows and internal finishes. Without intervention, these issues will worsen, threatening the building's fabric, its distinctive heritage features, and its wider civic, community and creative role in Ulverston. Poor accessibility, outdated facilities, sustainability challenges and inefficient use of space further restrict the Coro's potential. Spaces such as the Ante Room (currently used for storage) cannot function as flexible, income generating areas. These concerns have been consistently raised by staff and the community. Immediate investment is essential to safeguard heritage and ensure an inclusive, welcoming cultural hub.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LIBRARY: A core element of the project is the stronger integration of the library, including a dedicated children's library, within the Coro. Community engagement shows a desire for the library to be more visible, accessible and central to town life. The new sketches provide a prominent, flexible and welcoming space that supports literacy, wellbeing and lifelong learning. The library will play an active role in the heritage and engagement programme through storytelling, workshops, local history displays and intergenerational learning. Embedding the library at the heart of the Coro protects intangible heritage and supports wider community development.

PARTNERSHIP FUNDING AVAILABLE NOW: Westmorland & Furness Council has committed £2.033m, demonstrating strong political and community support. The Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal has allocated, within the Town investment plan, £500k - subject to a successful business case. Ulverston is benefitting from wider investment through GSK legacy funding and Borderlands projects (Connected Public Realm, the Roxy and Ulverston Station). Acting now ensures the Coro redevelopment aligns with these significant investments, maximising collective impact and reinforcing Ulverston's identity as a heritage and cultural destination.

RISK OF LOSING MATCH FUNDING: Without NLHF support, only a smaller scheme can proceed, which does not meet aspirations, or have as robust a financial model. The investment would not allow the building of an extension and resultant flexible space (ie. no extension, limited enhancements and no integrated heritage or engagement programme). This would restrict heritage restoration, reduce community activity and prevent delivery of the proposed multiyear heritage offer. Financial modelling confirms the NLHF supported option is the most financially sustainable, enabling greater income diversification, efficiency gains, long-term cost avoidance and a year-round programme.

Critically, once the Council's ringfenced funds are spent on a reduced scheme, there will be no future match funding to leverage a more ambitious transformation. This would cap future growth, constrain sustainability and diminish cultural, social and economic benefits for the community.

OPERATIONAL AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY: Delivering the capital works and heritage engagement programme in a single, coordinated phase ensures operational efficiency and business continuity. A single closure avoids repeated disruption to programming, staffing, audience development and volunteer activity, supporting a smooth transition to reopening. The redevelopment will enable the Coro to generate diversified income through hires, events and café/bar activity, strengthening long term financial resilience.

STRATEGIC AND POLICY ALIGNMENT: This is a uniquely timely opportunity aligned with national, regional and local priorities, including Heritage 2033, Arts Council England's Let's Create, the Westmorland & Furness Council Corporate Plan, and the Ulverston Place Plan (2021–2031), all of which emphasise heritage, creativity, environmental responsibility and placemaking. Proceeding now ensures the project builds on existing momentum and contributes meaningfully to wider town regeneration.

SUMMARY: The Coro is a vital civic landmark with heritage at risk. NLHF investment is essential to secure its fabric, unlock co-investment, deliver an ambitious community led heritage programme, and improve accessibility and sustainability. Delay would lead to escalating repair costs, loss of match funding and missed opportunities to align with wider investment and regeneration in Ulverston.

Who else have you approached about funding your project?

Westmorland and Furness Council has committed £2.033m towards the redevelopment of the Coro, demonstrating strong political and community support. In addition, the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal has indicated potential investment of £500,000, subject to a successful business case and delivery plan. This provides a solid foundation of partnership funding and reflects clear regional commitment to the project.

PLANNED APPLICATIONS: The total project budget (including activity planning and evaluation) is estimated at c. £6m. As a local authority without charitable status, we are ineligible for many trusts and foundations, which limits the range of external funders we can approach.

However, in the longer term, to enhance the cultural, library and heritage programmes, we plan to explore opportunities through Arts Council England (ACE), particularly for complementary activity such as library programming, digital engagement, and work with children and young people. Any additional funding, such as ACE, secured will support separate, scalable elements of the programme. These aspects will only proceed if funding is approved - ensuring no financial risk to the NLHF supported project.

FUNDRAISING OR CROWDSOURCING: Given the scale and statutory nature of the capital works, conventional community crowdfunding is not an appropriate or viable contribution mechanism for the main build. Instead, community energy will be channelled into volunteering, co-creation and skills development. Should opportunities arise for small scale fundraising linked to specific outputs (e.g. community exhibitions or resources), these will be explored during delivery, however, they are not required to balance the project budget.

NON-CASH CONTRIBUTIONS: The project will benefit from significant internal staff input, including expertise from cultural services, library staff, and heritage specialists. Although local authorities cannot count these contributions as eligible match funding, they represent substantial organisational support and capacity.

Additionally, approximately 840 volunteer hours, valued at £16,832, will contribute to delivery of the heritage and engagement programme. Volunteers will support research, oral history collection, hard hat tours, community workshops and cocreated outputs. These non cash contributions strengthen community ownership while supporting the delivery of a high-quality programme.

SUMMARY: In summary, the project brings together substantial local authority investment, potential strategic regional funding, and meaningful non cash contributions. NLHF support is essential to unlock the full scope, quality and long-term impact of the redevelopment, ensuring the Coro becomes a sustainable, accessible and community powered cultural and heritage asset for Ulverston.

Tell us what advice you have received in planning your project and from whom.

NATIONAL LOTTERY HERITAGE FUND ADVICE

We received extensive guidance from Kate Kendall, Senior Engagement Manager (North), through regular online meetings and a site visit. Her advice shaped the project significantly. She guided us to:

- Align the project clearly with NLHF Investment Principles;
- Maintain a clear separation between Development and Delivery phases;
- Pilot engagement activities to evidence need and test ideas;
- Strengthen the case for future sustainability;
- Demonstrate the benefits of the proposed extension;
- Ensure our application was supported by robust budgets, procurement plans, surveys, evaluation briefs and a credible risk approach.

FINANCIAL MODEL, OPTIONS & SUSTAINABILITY: Following NLHF advice, we refreshed our five-year financial model; modelled options with and without the extension, confirming the extension route is most financially sustainable; separated inflation assumptions from the Council's contingency; built realistic cashflow projections for grants paid in arrears; and commissioned cost consultants to produce a credible scenario underpinning the funding ask.

CAPITAL SCOPE, DESIGN QUALITY & FEASIBILITY: On advice, we refreshed RIBA Stage 1 work to ensure effective costings and used this opportunity to further engage communities. We commissioned architects to prepare illustrative design sketches and updated the cost plan (working with external consultants) to ensure design feasibility and affordability. Advice informed our approach to building layout, accessibility, and environmental performance.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, PILOTS & CO-CREATION: NLHF encouraged deeper engagement, especially with young people. During the submission pause, we expanded our programme of workshops, focus groups and pilot activities, including a manga workshop that feeds into the Activity Plan. This strengthened our evidence base and ensured a meaningful "You Said, We Did" approach.

GOVERNANCE, ROLES & DOCUMENTATION: We received guidance on the need for clear governance, which is now fully set out in the Business Plan. Key specifications and briefs have been prepared, and we have committed to rigorous procurement best practice. This ensures strong oversight during both phases.

EVIDENCE BASE, SURVEYS & RISK: NLHF confirmed the 2023 Condition Survey was acceptable for submission. This formed a core part of our evidence base. Their advice strengthened our approach to risk, clarity of ownership, and readiness for the Development Phase Review.

STRATEGIC FIT & THE CASE FOR “WHY NOW”: With NLHF guidance, we strengthened the argument for timing and strategic alignment - demonstrating clear fit with Heritage 2033, ACE’s Let’s Create, the Ulverston Place Plan, the Westmorland & Furness Council Corporate Plan, and wider Borderlands and town investment. Out & About was highlighted as a key mechanism to address rural access and inclusion.

APPLICATION QUALITY & SUPPORTING MATERIALS: Based on NLHF advice, we assembled targeted letters of support from strategic and delivery partners. The draft Activity Plan, Evaluation Framework and cost breakdowns were developed to a level that reduces perceived risk, demonstrating readiness.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION & CO-CREATION

Extensive engagement underpins the project: 348 surveys, 15 engagement events, 3 workshops, 2 focus groups, plus a creative engagement programme in community settings.

Themes included accessibility, inclusion, youth voice, the Coro’s role as a civic hub, a new heritage and the need for a refreshed cultural offer. We worked closely with schools, amateur cultural groups, artists, festivals and the Ulverston Local History Society. A co-creative approach informed the draft vision, mission and values.

SPECIALIST & TECHNICAL ADVICE

We drew on a wide range of specialist expertise:

- Ekosgen – early-stage research into community needs and cultural priorities;-stage research into community needs and cultural
- K2 Architects – feasibility, accessibility and redevelopment options;
- Lambert Smith Hampton – full Building Condition Survey (Nov 2023);
- The Audience Agency – market analysis;
- Freelance consultants – marketing strategy, audience development, cultural visioning and heritage statement
- University of Cumbria – evaluation costing guidance.
- Local stakeholders - including the Town Council, elected members and regional partners - provided insight to ensure alignment with broader regeneration.

SUMMARY: This combined specialist, community and NLHF advice has shaped a well-evidenced, feasible and community led project, strengthening its strategic case, sustainability and readiness. The outcome is a robust proposal integrating heritage, creativity and inclusion, ensuring the Coro remains a vibrant cultural and heritage landmark for the future.

Will your project be delivered by a partnership? **No**

Will any of your project take place in Wales?

- No, none of our project will take place in Wales [Tick box] **X**
- Yes, all or some of our project will take place in Wales [Tick box]

[Text field – 500 words] **Not applicable**

About the heritage

Tell us about the heritage in your project and why it is important to your organisation and community.

ABOUT THE HERITAGE: Our project centres on the heritage of The Coronation Hall (“the Coro”) in Ulverston, opened in 1914, and the rich intangible culture it has hosted for over a century. The redevelopment will interpret both the physical heritage of the building and its social, theatrical and community histories, structured across four strands.

- **ARCHITECTURAL & ARTISTIC HERITAGE:** The Coro’s main hall features a domed ceiling, proscenium arch, and English Renaissance decorative scheme, including patriotic motifs such as Britannia. The architectural design is locally attributed to D.J. Brundit, with interior and sculptural work linked to Alec Miller. The building reflects early-20th-century civic ambition in a rural market town. While much original fabric survives, plasterwork, finishes and decorative elements show wear and require conservation.
- **LOCAL LIVES & HIDDEN STORIES:** The Coro reflects Ulverston’s social history, from wartime gatherings and post-war recovery to civic ceremonies, pantomimes, community dances and festivals. This intangible heritage spans memories, traditions and lived experiences that remain locally significant but are at risk of being lost without active collection and interpretation.
- **THEATRICAL TRADITIONS:** The Hall stands within a broader northern theatrical lineage associated with Samuel Butler’s theatre circuit, including six regional

venues. It connects to traditions of strolling players, pantomime and tontine investment models. These traditions evolved through the rise of radio, cinema and television, and now digital culture. The project will explore these shifts through contemporary commissions and participation.

- **ARCHIVES BROUGHT TO LIFE:** We will work with the Cumbria Archive Centre and other regional collections (including playbills, photographs and related materials) to digitise, interpret and present archival resources. This will create long term public access to historical materials, enabling learning and research across generations.

OFFICIAL RECOGNITION: Although the Coro is not listed and is not on the Heritage at Risk Register, it is widely recognised as a locally significant civic landmark. Its architectural quality, theatrical heritage and continuous public use make it highly valued by residents, heritage professionals and visitors. The absence of statutory protection places greater emphasis on local stewardship to secure its future.

WHY THIS HERITAGE IS IMPORTANT: The Coro is a strong example of early 20th-century civic architecture and a living record of regional theatrical and community traditions. It underpins local identity, offering a focal point for learning (including local history in school curricula), intergenerational participation and volunteering. The project will safeguard fragile intangible heritage - memories, practices and stories that may otherwise disappear.

WHO THE HERITAGE MATTERS TO

The heritage matters to:

- Local residents (children, young people, families, older adults and rural communities) who recognise their stories in the building;
- Heritage professionals, archivists and historians researching regional culture;
- Schools and colleges seeking high quality local curriculum content;
- Visitors and tourists engaging with the town's story;
- Volunteers and community groups contributing to interpretation, research and events.

WHAT MAKES IT DISTINCT OR UNIQUE: Few rural venues in Cumbria combine architectural quality, civic purpose, theatrical lineage and continuous community use at this scale. The Coro mirrors wider national shifts - such as the impact of television and contemporary digital culture - while maintaining a strong local voice through festivals, communal events and civic ceremonies. Its ongoing use for public services (e.g., blood donation) alongside cultural activity reflects its enduring civic role.

RELATION TO OTHER HERITAGE: The Coro's story connects to northern theatre circuits historically linked with Samuel Butler (including the Georgian Theatre Royal and venues in Harrogate, Kendal, Northallerton, Ripon and Whitby). It also relates to Alec Miller's wider sculptural and artistic work, including at the Guild of Handicraft in Chipping Campden and in Great Urswick. Archival connections extend regionally and nationally, offering opportunities for collaboration, loans, residencies and touring interpretation.

CURRENT CONDITION (SUMMARY): The building remains in active use, but roofing, plasterwork, windows and internal finishes show clear wear and deterioration. Several decorative features require careful conservation. The redevelopment will address fabric repair, accessibility, environmental performance, and interpretation, ensuring the Coro's heritage is protected, understood and shared more widely.

Is the heritage considered to be at risk?

Tick if yes.

[Tick box] X

Explain why and how you consider the heritage to be at risk.

HERITAGE AT RISK – WHY & HOW

WHY: The Coro is at risk from a combination of physical deterioration, environmental vulnerability, financial pressure and the imminent loss of intangible heritage. The 2023 Building Condition Survey identifies water ingress, damp, failing finishes, window deterioration and inadequate environmental controls, all of which are accelerating the degradation of historic plasterwork, decorative features and original materials. Without intervention, repair costs will increase and damage may become irreversible. Climatic pressures (increasing rainfall and humidity) further heighten risk to the building's fabric.

At the same time, unrecorded memories, stories, theatrical traditions and community practices - many held by older residents - face permanent loss without structured collection, digitisation and interpretation. As a non-listed building, the Coro receives no statutory protection, making timely local action essential.

CURRENT CONDITION OF HERITAGE: The building remains operational but several elements are in declining condition, including parts of the roof, rainwater goods, plasterwork, windows and internal finishes. Decorative features require specialist conservation. Environmental controls are outdated, exacerbating damp and heat loss. Intangible heritage is fragmented, spread across personal collections, local societies and scattered archives without coordinated preservation or access.

HOW IT'S MANAGED, and BY WHOM: Westmorland & Furness Council owns and manages the Coro. Daily operations are led by the General Manager, with strategic

oversight from the Cultural Venues & Programmes Manager. The Capital & Assets team undertakes compliance and planned maintenance, while the Library & Customer Services Manager oversees the onsite library. The Finance and Business Partner provides regular budget monitoring and forecasting.

While this provides a stable organisational foundation, capacity for specialist conservation, systematic archiving, interpretation planning and heritage-focused engagement is limited. Without additional investment, physical deterioration will outpace routine maintenance and intangible heritage will continue to disperse or disappear.

HOW PEOPLE CURRENTLY ENGAGE WITH THE HERITAGE: The Coro is a busy civic venue hosting performances, festivals, workshops, school events and community use. However, heritage specific engagement is limited with no consistent oral history programme; no permanent interpretation; limited on-site access to archives; and inconsistent engagement with young people and rural residents

Accessibility challenges including wayfinding, step free access, seating, toilets, sensory considerations - also restrict equitable participation and limit people's ability to engage with heritage meaningfully.

ACTIONS ALREADY TAKEN TO MINIMISE RISK: The Council has implemented regular inspections, targeted equipment upgrades and made incremental improvements to front and back of house areas. Monthly forecasting supports financial stability. Community engagement has deepened to ensure we're meeting the needs of the wider community.

HOW THE PROJECT REDUCES RISK

The project will:

- Conserve historic fabric, addressing roofs, drainage, plasterwork, windows and environmental performance.
- Improve accessibility, removing barriers to heritage engagement through step free routes, Changing Places, dementia friendly design and improved wayfinding.
- Safeguard intangible heritage via oral history recording, digitisation, archive development and co-created interpretation, ensuring long term public access.
- Build skills and local custodianship, training volunteers, young people and staff in oral history, digitisation, interpretation and community engagement.
- Extend access through the Out & About programme, bringing heritage activities to rural communities during the closure period.

- Strengthen organisational resilience, creating a more efficient building, diversified income streams and a sustainable business model for ongoing heritage care.

WHY INTERVENTION IS URGENT NOW

- Physical deterioration will continue to escalate without timely repair.
- Intangible heritage is at risk of being lost forever as knowledge holders age.
- Current access barriers limit participation - addressing these now ensures immediate and long term public benefit.
- Delay would reduce viability, increase costs and limit the organisation's ability to protect heritage for future generations.

SUMMARY: The Coro's heritage - architectural, artistic, theatrical and community - is genuinely at risk of decline and loss – both physically, the loss of unrecorded memory and history. This project is the only viable route to protect, record, interpret and sustain this heritage, ensuring it remains valued, accessible and meaningful for generations to come.

Has a condition survey been undertaken for the heritage asset in the last five years?

Tick if yes.

If your project involves the conservation of heritage, you must provide a condition survey or another appropriate document (for example, a draft or outline conservation plan). This document should tell us the current condition of the heritage and the works that are needed to return the heritage to a good condition.

For example, if you plan to conserve a local place of worship, you will need to know the current condition and what repair works are needed. The survey or report should also indicate the relative priority of the proposed works so you know which are the most critical and need to be tackled most urgently.

There are other types of survey which could take place, including a building performance and energy efficiency survey, or a site survey which assesses the services and use of the site. An archive might also need a condition survey or audit, which is usually done by an archivist.

If you have had any kind of condition survey done, you can upload it later in the application.

Will you be undertaking any capital work as part of your project?

Tick if yes.

[Tick box] X

If yes: please provide details.

Capital works are defined as works that create or improve an asset. These can include physical works to landscapes, nature and buildings, repair, conservation, new build, digitisation, or work to stabilise the condition of objects.

Examples of capital work:

- conservation of a heathland
- repairs to a historic building
- digitisation of a photographic archive

Tell us if any capital works will be part of your project, even if this is a small part of your overall project. Give us an initial breakdown of the work you intend to carry out.

CAPITAL WORKS: Capital works form a major component of this project. They focus on the redevelopment and refurbishment of The Coronation Hall (The Coro), improvements to public facing community and library facilities, and the digitisation and preservation of heritage resources, ensuring archives - both historic and newly created - are accessible for future generations.

Below is an initial breakdown of planned capital works:

REDEVELOPMENT AND REFURBISHMENT OF THE CORO

- Essential refurbishment works addressing priority issues identified in the 2023 Building Condition Survey, including repairs to roofs, internal finishes, windows and building systems.
- Conservation of key architectural and artistic features, including plasterwork and decorative details.
- Environmental and efficiency upgrades and interventions such as:
 - LED lighting, improved production lighting, motorised blackout blinds, energy efficient systems and improved environmental controls.
 - Energy Use and Carbon emission standards incorporating new electric systems, low and zero carbon technologies, including district heating networks (where applicable), and renewables.
 - Implement energy hierarchy - prioritise passive measures and on-site energy generation and storage.
 - Work towards meeting the WFC corporate target to reduce CO2 emissions by at least 15% over current Building Regulations Part L.

- Sustainability outputs during the construction stage to consider materials, resource use and supply chain standards and Construction waste.
- Designs will consider water use, climate resilience & adaption standards and Biodiversity
- Wellbeing Standards – which are particularly relevant to this scheme:
 - Facilitation of Natural light – based on climate-based daylight modelling adopting requirements of EN17037 for daylighting
 - Active stairwells to be designed that are aesthetically pleasing to encourage active movement within the buildings.
 - Indoor Air Quality Management Plan (IAQMP) to identify requirements for improvements.
 - Shower and changing room provision to be in line with best practice requirements.
- Enhancements to technical and production infrastructure to support performances and community use.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES, PUBLIC REALM & EXTENSION

- Creation of a new café and kitchen facilities to provide a fully accessible food and beverage offer.
- Delivery of a new extension (funded separately by the Council) allowing NLHF investment to focus on conservation and refurbishment.
- Major accessibility improvements, including Changing Places provision, new lifts, wheelchair access (including the balcony), induction loops, dementia friendly design and improved wayfinding.
- Improved storage capacity to support community use and income generating activity.
- Backstage upgrades to support professional and community performance needs.
- Enhancements to the public realm - creating safer, greener and more welcoming outdoor space.
- Improved service delivery routes for get ins and get outs, ensuring safe and efficient operations.

LIBRARY ENGAGEMENT & RELOCATION

- Relocation of the library and children’s library to the ground floor to ensure it is visible, fully accessible, and welcoming, strengthening its role in literacy, learning and heritage interpretation.
- Creation of flexible library spaces to support reading, digital access, family activity and local history engagement.

DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT & ARCHIVE DEVELOPMENT

- Development of updated web and digital platforms as part of the brand refresh, ensuring public access to heritage content.
- Digitisation of archives, including playbills, photographs and exhibition material, as well as “archives of the future” generated through the project’s engagement activities.
- Creation of long-term digital storage and access systems, ensuring compliance with NLHF Digital Good Practice Guidance.

CONSERVATION & HERITAGE PRESERVATION

- Restoration of significant theatrical, architectural and artistic heritage features, preserving the building’s identity and historical value.
- Stabilisation and enhancement of fragile decorative elements, ensuring their long term protection and interpretive use.

DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION, CONTRACT DELIVERY AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT;

- Procurement of contractors and specialists required for capital delivery, including professional fees, NEC compliant project management, design development and technical supervision.
- Ensuring all capital works adhere to high standards of heritage appropriate design and craftsmanship.

If you are undertaking any capital work (including repair or refurbishment) to land, buildings or heritage items, tell us who owns it.

- your organisation
- project partner

- neither
- N/A

Please provide details about your capital works owner.

If capital works are part of your project, you will need to tell us who owns the heritage. If you have them, we need to see any ownership documents. You can upload these later on in the application.

If your organisation owns the heritage, tell us:

- if your organisation has the freehold of the building or land, or own outright the heritage items
- if your organisation has the lease of the building or land and how many years are left to run on the lease
- If your organisation has, or is planning to take out, a mortgage or other loans secured on the building or land, or heritage item. If so, give us details of the lender and the amount of the mortgage or loan.

If a partner organisation owns the heritage, tell us:

- the name of the partner organisation
- if the project partner has the freehold of the building or land, or own outright the heritage items
- if the project partner has the lease of the building or land and how many years are left to run on the lease
- if the project partner has, or is planning to take out, a mortgage or other loans secured on the building or land, or heritage item
- if so, give us details of the lender and the amount of the mortgage or loan

If you do not currently meet our ownership requirements, tell us the date when you expect to do so. If you have any ownership documents, you can upload them later in the application.

OWNERSHIP OF CAPITAL WORKS

Owner of the Heritage: Westmorland & Furness Council owns the freehold of The Coronation Hall and its associated land. The Council therefore has full legal ownership of the building and all heritage assets within it.

Freehold Details: Proprietorship Register: *Westmorland & Furness Council, South Lakeland House, Lowther Street, Kendal, LA9 4DQ.*

Leases: There is one historic lease recorded on the title:

- Public Conveniences, Brogden Street – 99-year lease beginning 23/11/2016 and ending 22/11/2115. This lease does not affect the areas subject to capital works and imposes no restrictions on refurbishment or redevelopment of the Coro.

Mortgages or Loans: There are no mortgages, charges or loans secured against the building or land. The Council intends to fund its capital contribution (approx. £2.033m) through prudential borrowing, which has already been incorporated into the Council's / Coro's five-year business plan and financial modelling. This borrowing is not secured against the Coro.

Authority to Undertake Works: As freehold owner with no restrictive covenants affecting the capital works area, Westmorland & Furness Council has full authority to undertake refurbishment, redevelopment, conservation and associated heritage preservation works.

Project Partner Ownership: This is not a partnership-owned asset. No partner organisation owns any part of the Coro or related land.

Supporting Documentation: Land Registry title documents and ownership evidence will be uploaded with the application.

Are there are legal conditions, restrictions or covenants associated with the heritage asset which may affect your project?

[Tick box] N/A

Please provide details.

Tell us if the register of title or other ownership documents contain any restrictions or limitation on its use or ownership, or if it requires any consents for any dealings. If so, you will need to give us the full details and evidence that these are satisfied.

This could include:

- a Restrictive Covenant limiting the type of use for the land or property
- a restriction giving another party a right to be notified of any dealing or state conditions that would need to be resolved before the property is sold

Restriction: no transfer or lease of the part of the registered estate shown within report on title tinted blue on the title plan is to be registered without a certificate signed by a conveyancer that the transfer or lease did not contravene section 95 (1) of the Localism Act 2011.

(11.07.2005) The shared driveways, passageways and accessways included in the title are subject to rights of way and user.

2 (11.07.2005) A Conveyance dated 14 June 1876 made between (1) John Poole (Vendor) and (2) Agnes Case and Others (Purchasers) contains the following covenants:-

COVENANT by the Purchasers for themselves their heirs executors administrators and assignors with the said John Poole his heirs executors administrators and assignors that they the said purchasers their heirs or assignors should not use or suffer to be used any house or building for the time being standing upon the said land for the exercise or carrying on of any offensive trade or business whatsoever.

3 (05.01.2017) The parts of the land affected thereby are subject to the leases set out in the schedule of leases hereto. The leases grant and reserve easements as therein mentioned.

PROJECT ACQUISITION: This project does not involve any acquisition of land, buildings or heritage items. Westmorland & Furness Council already holds full freehold ownership of the Coronation Hall and all associated land.

Does your project involve the acquisition of a building, land or heritage items?

Select one of:

- yes
- **no**
- N/A

Managing your project

Has your organisation taken on a project of this scale in the last five years?

[Tick if yes]

If yes: please provide details.

Tell us why this is the most appropriate project for your organisation to take on at this time.

What other strategies have been considered? What will you do if the project does not go ahead?

WHY THIS IS THE MOST APPROPRIATE PROJECT FOR OUR ORGANISATION AT THIS TIME: Westmorland & Furness Council is uniquely placed to deliver this project. We own and steward the Coro, have established governance and delivery capacity, and can invest for the long term. The 2023 Building Condition Survey identifies urgent repair needs; at the same time, poor accessibility, outdated facilities and inefficient use of space limit the Coro's potential as a civic, cultural and creative hub and constrain long term sustainability. Acting now prevents further deterioration, safeguards heritage and keeps the community at the heart of stewardship. The project is part of the Council's priority programme for key buildings and benefits from strong political and community support.

ACTIVITY PLAN AND COMMUNITY NEED: The draft Activity Plan has been developed and shaped through early engagement with the community, including pilot activity with young people. These conversations have ensured that the plan already reflects community priorities such as more visible heritage, family-friendly engagement, stronger youth voice and a more integrated library offer. However, we recognise that further, deeper and more authentic co-creation is essential. This will form a core part of the Development Phase, during which we will work closely with residents, partners and under-represented groups to refine, test and strengthen the Activity Plan so that it is genuinely community-led.

RURAL REACH AND CONTINUITY OF ENGAGEMENT: To address transport barriers and sustain participation during construction, the Out & About programme will take library, heritage and creative activity into surrounding villages and community spaces. This maintains relationships through closure, reaches those less able to travel and builds new audiences who can transition back on reopening.

ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITY AND READINESS: Governance is in place with clear roles (Sponsor, SRO, Programme and Service Leads). We will procure via a Design & Build route to manage risk and programme, and the Council can cash flow against grants paid in arrears. A single, coordinated delivery minimises disruption and supports a smooth relaunch, while Out & About sustains engagement - particularly in rural areas.

OTHER STRATEGIES CONSIDERED: We have modelled a reduced scheme within the Council's £2.033m envelope. This would address essential works, basic improvements and ensure the building remains safe and operational. However, it would not deliver the full heritage engagement plan, the integrated library and visible children's area, or the flexible spaces needed to diversify audiences and income. It also risks higher long-term costs by deferring key improvements. Delivering the comprehensive scheme now helps

prevent incurring future costs, reduces patch and mend expenditure and is therefore the more sustainable approach.

WHY THE NLHF SUPPORTED OPTION IS MORE SUSTAINABLE: Our options appraisal compared delivery with and without the extension. The NLHF supported route is more sustainable in the current economic climate because it enables stronger income diversification through additional hireable and programmed spaces and improved secondary spend; delivers efficiency gains from better layouts, systems and staffing; and achieves long term cost avoidance by doing the right works once rather than revisiting them later. Together, these factors reduce lifecycle costs and strengthen financial resilience over time, ensuring the Coro is protected into the future.

IF THE PROJECT DOES NOT GO AHEAD: If NLHF funding is unsuccessful, the Council will proceed with a minimal scheme within £2.033m - no extension and limited enhancements. This keeps the Coro safe and open but caps future growth, limits full library integration and restricts diversification of activity and earned income, thereby constraining long term sustainability. Without additional funding, the heritage engagement programme would not be delivered – preventing rural reach and the scale of planned skills pathways. It may also lead to higher costs in future as significant improvements would need to be revisited, as well as increased revenue costs in the future – due to reduced income generating potential.

WHY THIS APPROACH, NOW: Proceeding with the full programme delivers the project at the right scale: optimised space and visitor flow, a step change in accessibility, improved environmental performance and a co-created heritage and learning offer that directly reflects community priorities. It sustains participation through a single closure, aligns with strategic frameworks and wider town investment, and is more sustainable because it prevents avoidable future expenditure while unlocking the conditions for long term resilience.

Our funding is subject to the Subsidy Control Act 2022. Tell us whether you consider the funding applied for to be a Subsidy within the Act and any advice you may have taken.

If your application is successful, it is important to remember our grant comes from public funds and may be subject to the Subsidy Control Act 2022.

Find out more about subsidy control in the Legal and policy requirements section of the [programme guidance](#).

The redevelopment of the Coronation Hall is being undertaken by Westmorland & Furness Council as a publicly funded capital and heritage project delivered entirely for public benefit. The grant sought from the National Lottery Heritage Fund will support the conservation of a significant civic building, improved public access, stronger

community and heritage engagement, and wider cultural, social and educational outcomes for residents and visitors.

We have concluded that the grant does not meet all four of the limbs required to be met for financial assistance to be a subsidy and is therefore not a subsidy for the purposes of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 (the “Act”).

We consider the most robust ground to rely upon is that the grant does not satisfy section 2(1)(d) of the Act and paragraph 15.111 of the Statutory Guidance that accompanies the Act in that it does not have and is incapable of having any relevant adverse effects on competition or investment within the UK or international trade or investment. This is on the basis that the development and operation of the Coro cultural and heritage activities are not substitutable even where they are economic activities (for example) and therefore exclude the existence of competition.

We also consider that section 2(1)(b) of the Act is not satisfied in that the Funding does not confer any economic advantage on one or more enterprises. This is on the basis that the Council is not acting as an “enterprise” by offering goods or services on a market, falling within the ambit of cultural activities, As the Statutory Guidance says (see paragraphs 15.38 to 15.41), this is a broad category which includes, among others, museums, libraries, galleries, theatres, historical sites, archives as well as cultural and artistic education activities. Financing of the construction, development, maintenance and operation of infrastructure and sites used for activities related to culture, heritage and nature conservation (cultural and heritage infrastructure) will generally not fall within the scope of the Act if it is not intended to be commercially exploited. Financial assistance for amenities for traditional non-economic cultural infrastructure sites (such as a café, gift shop or parking at a national museum) are also unlikely to be caught under the subsidy control regime since those customary amenities are unlikely, in themselves, to attract customers from other parts of the UK or internationally unless they are visiting the facility to which the amenities are attached.

For these reasons, the Council considers that the proposed grant does not constitute a Subsidy under the Subsidy Control Act 2022. The project is wholly aligned with the delivery of public benefit cultural, library and heritage outcomes and does not provide an economic advantage to a commercial enterprise.

Does your organisation need to undertake any capacity building activity to better deliver your project?

GOVERNANCE

Westmorland & Furness Council operates within a robust local authority governance framework, incorporating Council Members, Cabinet, statutory committees, and the

Council's Budget and Policy Framework. Governance arrangements for this project are already well established and described in Section 3.1 of the Business Plan.

The project also sits within the Council's Priority Programmes, providing strengthened oversight, cross-departmental collaboration and additional scrutiny.

The governance structure for this project includes:

- Sponsor – Director, Thriving Communities - providing strategic ownership;
- Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) – Assistant Director, chairing the Programme Board, overseeing risk, approvals and major decisions;
- Programme Lead – supporting scoping, planning, delivery, benefit tracking and reporting;
- Service Leads – chairing working groups, providing specialist expertise and ensuring operational integration;

This framework ensures clear accountability, timely decision-making, and alignment with wider Council priorities. A separate governance review is not required, as the structure has been developed with support from Legal and Assurance teams and is fully fit for purpose.

CAPACITY BUILDING

As a local authority, the Council already benefits from extensive in-house expertise across commercial operations, business planning, capital delivery, HR, legal, venue management, communications and cultural/heritage development. However, the scale and complexity of the Coro redevelopment requires additional specialist capacity to ensure excellence in both capital and activity delivery.

To strengthen skills and ensure high-quality delivery, the project will engage a range of external specialists, including:

- Architects and surveyors to support design development and technical assurance;
- External project management and NEC contract specialists to strengthen capital delivery capacity;
- Heritage experts, historians and conservators to guide interpretation, conservation decisions and heritage-led engagement;
- Creative practitioners and community engagement specialists to support co-creation, youth-focused activity and inclusive practice;
- Digital, evaluation and learning specialists to support digital engagement, monitoring and assessment in line with NLHF guidance.

This targeted capacity building complements existing Council expertise and ensures the project is delivered to the highest heritage, community and design standards.

GOVERNANCE REVIEW

A formal governance review is not required, as the Council's existing arrangements already provide strong assurance, decision-making clarity and compliance with statutory responsibilities. The governance model has been tested through other capital and cultural projects and is proportionate, resilient and fully aligned with NLHF expectations. Should additional governance support be required during delivery, professional advice can be commissioned as needed.

Tell us about any jobs or apprenticeships that you will create to deliver your project.

Provide an estimate of any jobs and/or apprenticeships that will be created and will be directly involved in delivering your project. Tell us what their main roles will be and whether they are full-time or part-time positions.

If you are moving an existing member of staff into a post created by this project or extending the hours of an existing member of staff, tell us how they are qualified for the role created by the project.

Describe how you will choose the staff.

You will need to provide a job description for each role created for the development phase of your project as a supporting document to your application.

JOBS AND APPRENTICESHIPS CREATED THROUGH THE PROJECT

The project will create one new fixed-term, full time post essential to delivering the heritage, learning and engagement elements of the redevelopment:

HERITAGE ENGAGEMENT PRODUCER (18-month fixed term contract)

This new role will lead heritage engagement across the Delivery Phase – focusing on the Out & About Programme, as well as the re-opening. The post is central to uncovering, caring for and sharing stories, memories and lived experience, ensuring communities remain actively connected to the Coro throughout redevelopment and beyond. Working across the Coro's Creative, Library and Heritage strands, the postholder will design and deliver a coherent, inclusive and community-led heritage offer.

PURPOSE OF THE POST: Keep communities at the heart of the project; Lead pre-redevelopment engagement and pilot heritage activity; Deliver the Out & About programme during closure; Coordinate heritage elements of the re-opening and launch; Embed a sustainable, long-term community-powered heritage programme; Build

partnerships with schools, volunteers, historians, artists, teachers and community organisations.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Lead co-created heritage engagement, enabling residents to explore and shape local heritage in line with the NLHF Activity Plan;
- Deliver activity on-site and off-site (including libraries, schools, rural venues and public spaces);
- Develop inclusive outputs such as exhibitions, displays, digital content and learning resources;
- Monitor participation, evaluate outcomes and produce insight reports; Work closely with marketing colleagues to develop case studies and audience insight;
- Manage programme budgets, track expenditure and ensure NLHF compliance; Coordinate with internal Council teams to ensure health and safety, safeguarding and legal compliance;
- Recruit and manage specialist freelancers (e.g., historians, creative practitioners, digital specialists) to deliver the Activity Plan;
- Train and supervise volunteers, helping develop a future heritage custodian workforce.

REPORTING LINE, BUDGET and PEOPLE: The post will report to the Exhibitions & Collections Manager (or equivalent manager). It has no direct staff management responsibilities but will: recruit/manage freelancers; train and support volunteers; and contribute to the development of a new volunteering and skills pathway.

APPROACH TO CHOOSING STAFF: The role will be recruited for in line with Council HR policy, ensuring inclusive and fair access.

- Shortlisting will reflect criteria in the job description/person specification.
- Assessment will include a structured interview, task-based exercise (e.g., developing an engagement workshop), and values-based questions focused on co-creation, inclusion and safeguarding.
- If an internal candidate is redeployed or seconded, suitability will be evidenced through their track record in heritage/community engagement, co-creation and partnership working. Backfill arrangements will be managed within existing teams.

Applicants will be measured against knowledge, experience and skills – eg.

- Experience in heritage, creative or community engagement; Strong understanding of co-design and co-creation;
- Knowledge of safeguarding, health & safety and inclusive practice;

- Experience delivering participatory activity in community and outreach settings;
- Ability to manage budgets and monitor/evaluate impact;
- Strong communication, facilitation and relationship-building skills.

What work will you do during the development phase of your project?

During the Development Phase we will complete all activities required to progress the project to a fully costed and permissions-ready Delivery Phase application, fully meeting NLHF processes and compliance requirements. This begins with reviewing all core NLHF documents, attending the Development Phase start-up meeting, agreeing expectations and governance, and submitting all Permission to Start requirements by August 2026.

CAPITAL WORKSTREAMS

We will procure a technical support consultant through an NEC4 PSC contract (Sept 2026–Jan 2027). This includes developing the PSC scope, legal review, authorisation to procure, EOI, ITT, evaluation, approvals and contract award on 4 January 2027. This establishes specialist project management and NEC supervision capacity.

From January to May 2027 we will run the two-stage NEC4 ECC procurement for the Design & Build contractor. Activities include preparing ECC documentation, parallel legal review, procurement approvals, publishing EOI and ITT, evaluation and Officer Key Decision, and awarding the Stage 1 Pre-Construction Services Agreement, with the contract commencing on 31 May 2027.

RIBA Stage 3 development (June–Nov 2027) will deliver a fully coordinated design. Key tasks include mobilisation, specialist surveys, refining the engagement strategy, updating outline designs, developing the elemental cost plan, pre-planning consultation, submitting the planning application, and completing spatial coordination and Room Data Sheets. By late autumn the team will finalise designs and costs, secure stakeholder agreement and prepare all material required for the Development Phase Review and Delivery Phase application.

NON-CAPITAL WORKSTREAMS

Community and stakeholder engagement will run throughout, adopting a Community Power approach. Activity includes workshops, focus groups, lived-experience sessions, schools work and ongoing involvement of the Community Power Programming Group. We will deliver a structured set of pilot heritage activities to test what works and build evidence for the Delivery Phase. These include recruitment of a Heritage Engagement post; Local Lives & Hidden Stories pilots (e.g. co-creating a Coro timeline, heritage talks, interpretation prototypes); early strands from the four heritage themes such as theatrical heritage tasters with the Georgian Theatre Royal, architectural and sculptural discovery workshops, and archive-scoping to inform future digitisation; and

volunteer-focused pilots to build skills in oral history, digitisation, interpretation and Heritage Ambassador roles.

These pilots will underpin the development of delivery-phase programmes including co-created exhibitions, performances, digital outputs, family learning, rural outreach and touring heritage activity. All learning will feed directly into the Activity Plan, Interpretation Plan, Evaluation Framework and wider programme model.

We will produce all NLHF-required supporting documents for submission with the Delivery Phase application, including: a fully developed Activity Plan; Interpretation Plan; Evaluation Framework with baseline measures; a refreshed Five-Year Business Plan and Financial Model; a draft Management & Maintenance Plan; updated development, delivery and post-completion risk registers; detailed cost breakdowns aligned with NLHF headings; and ownership documentation.

We will follow the NLHF-agreed reporting structure, submitting project updates at scheduled intervals to support the Development Phase Review. NLHF will use this to assess alignment with Approved Purposes, progression of costs and fundraising, risk management, ownership requirements and subsidy-control compliance. Any significant changes will be reported promptly.

Volunteer development will be further scoped, particularly for heritage research, oral history, digitisation, outreach and ambassador roles. Specialist consultants will be procured transparently in line with Permission to Start procurement requirements.

We will also implement targeted marketing and audience-development activity to broaden reach and gather insight. This includes communications with schools, families, rural communities, young people and older adults; refreshed digital content and newsletters; on-site promotional materials; and press and partner networks to support pilot engagement. Audience data gathered during pilots will inform targeting, accessibility, and the final Activity Plan, Interpretation Strategy and reopening communications.

The Development Phase will conclude with submission of the full Delivery Phase Application (Nov 2027), followed by a Completion Report and Development Phase Evaluation within three months, ensuring full compliance and a robust foundation for the Delivery Phase.

Who are the main people responsible for the work during the development phase of your project?

The redevelopment of The Coro and Library sits within Westmorland & Furness Council's Priority Programmes, providing enhanced rigour, clear accountability and strengthened decision-making. This framework ensures the project is overseen at the highest level and aligned with wider organisational priorities.

OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY: for the Development Phase sits with the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) – the Assistant Director for Capital / Corporate Assets, Fleet and Capital Programme. The SRO is accountable for the programme, approves key decisions, oversees risk, ensures compliance and alignment with the Council’s capital governance, and is the ultimate decision-maker for project changes.

The Project Lead is the Senior Manager – Community Services (Area Manager, South Lakeland), responsible for day-to-day coordination, programme delivery, progress monitoring and ensuring NLHF compliance throughout the Development Phase.

STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT: The Sponsor, the Director of Thriving Communities, holds overall strategic ownership and ensures the project aligns with wider Council priorities. The Portfolio Holder (Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance) provides elected-member oversight.

To ensure additional scrutiny, the Assistant Director for Community Infrastructure chairs fortnightly Priority Programme Board meetings, where The Coro is a standing agenda item. These meetings create a structured forum to monitor progress, escalate risks, agree changes, resolve issues, and secure cross-departmental support.

OPERATIONAL LEADERSHIP: Operational delivery during the Development Phase is led by the Senior Manager – Cultural Services, supported by:

- Capital Programmes Manager - lead on the day-to-day capital delivery aspects of the Development Phase - responsibilities include: managing capital project scheduling and coordination; overseeing interfaces between architects, surveyors and the NEC Technical Support Consultant; ensuring timely progression of RIBA Stage 3 design, surveys and planning documentation; monitoring capital risks, dependencies and gateways; and ensuring compliance with NEC processes and Council capital procedures.
- Cultural Venues & Programmes Manager – ensuring programming, operational considerations, staffing implications and business plan requirements are embedded in design and planning.
- General Manager (The Coro) – providing detailed Front of House, Back of House, technical and operational expertise.
- Libraries & Customer Services Manager – ensuring integration of the new library layout, staffing model, customer service needs and meanwhile provision.
- Strategic Lead – Culture – supporting strategic development, business planning and fundraising.

- Exhibitions & Collections Manager – line-managing the Heritage Engagement Producer, who will be recruited to lead co-design, community engagement and heritage activity planning.
- Finance Business Partner – financial oversight, and responsible for budgeting, cashflow planning and monitoring against the five-year financial model.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE & MEETING CYCLE:

- Fortnightly Priority Programme Board – chaired by Assistant Director (Community Infrastructure)
- Monthly Project Board – Sponsor, SRO, Project Lead, Senior Manager – Cultural Services, Finance Business Partner
- Weekly internal working meetings – operational managers, project officers and the Heritage Engagement Producer

Operational decisions are taken by the Project Lead; decisions affecting scope, cost, risk or NLHF compliance are approved by the SRO and escalated to the Sponsor where required.

PROCUREMENT:

Procurement of all services and goods will follow the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules and NLHF requirements. This includes procurement of:

- Technical Support Consultant (NEC4 PSC)
- Design & Build Contractor (Stage 1 NEC4 ECC)
- Heritage, engagement and interpretation specialists
- Evaluators
- Other specialist consultants as required

All specialists will be procured through transparent EO/ITT processes, evaluated against published criteria for quality, experience and value for money. Consultant briefs will be uploaded with the application.

RECRUITMENT: The Heritage Engagement Producer will be recruited through an open, competitive HR-compliant process, ensuring demonstrable expertise in heritage, co-creation and community engagement.

Who are the main people responsible for the work during the delivery phase of your project?

MAIN PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE DURING THE DELIVERY PHASE

Overall responsibility and strategic oversight:

- Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) – *Assistant Director for Capital / Corporate Assets, Fleet & Capital Programme*: overall accountability for the programme; approves key decisions; manages risk; ensures compliance with NLHF and Council capital governance; ultimate authority for changes to scope, cost, risk, programme or compliance.
- Sponsor – Director of Thriving Communities: strategic ownership; and ensures alignment with wider Council priorities.
- Portfolio Holder – *Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance*: elected-member oversight and assurance.
- Project Lead – *Senior Manager – Community Services (Area Manager, South Lakeland)*: day-to-day coordination, programme delivery and contract management; NLHF compliance and reporting.

Programme scrutiny

- Assistant Director, Community Infrastructure chairs the fortnightly Priority Programme Board, where The Coro is a standing item, to monitor progress, escalate risks/issues and coordinate cross-departmental support through RIBA 4, RIBA 5, handover and reopening.

OPERATIONAL AND CULTURAL LEADERSHIP (delivery phase team)

- Capital Programme Manager (*sits alongside Senior Manager – Cultural Services*): leads day-to-day capital delivery; manages interfaces with the Design & Build Contractor (NEC4 ECC, Stage 2), NEC Supervisor/technical support, architects and surveyors; coordinates RIBA 4–5 workflows; tracks gateways/dependencies; ensures NEC and Council capital procedure compliance.
- Senior Manager – Cultural Services (*line-manages operational managers*): leads operational, cultural, library and heritage functions.
 - Cultural Venues & Programmes Manager – programming; FOH/BOH operational planning; staffing; reopening preparation.
 - General Manager (The Coro) – operational readiness; building logistics; closure/decant planning; H&S liaison during construction.
 - Libraries & Customer Services Manager – integration of the new ground-floor library; customer service model; meanwhile delivery.

- Strategic Lead – Culture – business planning; fundraising; income development; alignment with wider cultural strategy.
- Exhibitions & Collections Manager – interpretation/heritage content oversight; line-manager for the Heritage Engagement Producer.
- Heritage Engagement Producer – delivers the NLHF Activity Plan; volunteer coordination; commissions/manages specialist freelancers (historians, conservators, creative practitioners, digital experts) and ensures inclusive, community-led engagement across delivery.
- Finance Business Partner – financial oversight; cashflow/forecasting; NLHF claims and audit trail.

DECISION MAKING

- Weekly Delivery Meeting (Project Lead; Capital Programme Manager; General Manager; Cultural Venues & Programmes Manager; Libraries leadership; Activity/Heritage teams; Capital Officers): resolves operational issues; tracks programme/risks; and prepares escalations.
- Monthly Project Board (Sponsor, SRO, Project Lead, Senior Manager – Cultural Services, Capital Programme Manager, Finance Business Partner): reviews cost, risk, programme, benefits; agrees change requests.
- Fortnightly Priority Programme Board: cross-programme scrutiny and decision gateway.
- Approvals:
 - Operational decisions – Project Lead.
 - Any change impacting scope, cost, risk, programme, subsidy control or NLHF compliance – SRO (with escalation to Sponsor/Cabinet Member as required).

CONSULTANTS / ADDITIONAL SUPPORT REQUIRED

- Stage 2 Design & Build Contractor (NEC4 ECC) and NEC Supervisor/technical support for capital delivery.
- Specialist heritage, conservation, creative and digital practitioners for interpretation and engagement.
- Evaluator for delivery-phase and summative evaluation.
- Suppliers for interpretation fit-out, digital content, collections care, decant and reopening.

MANAGEMENT OF CONSULTANTS / FREELANCERS: capital specialists managed by the Capital Programme Manager; activity/engagement specialists managed by the Heritage Engagement Producer (with the Exhibitions & Collections Manager).

PROCUREMENT OF SERVICE AND GOODS: All procurement will follow the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and NLHF requirements, using transparent EOI/ITT processes. Selection will be based on published criteria for quality, relevant experience, price/value for money, social value and environmental responsibility. All consultant briefs and the project management structure will be uploaded as supporting documents.

BUSINESS PLAN REFERENCE: Further detail on governance, roles, reporting and decision-making is set out in the Business Plan, Section 3 (p.9).

What work will you do during the delivery phase of your project?

During the Delivery Phase, we will deliver the full programme of capital works, heritage, library and creative activity, alongside our out and about programme and reopening preparation, transforming the Coro and Library into an accessible, inclusive and future-ready cultural hub. This phase runs April 2028 to October 2029, concluding with the reopening of the redeveloped building and launch of the new programme.

CAPITAL WORKS (RIBA 4–5 and Construction): From April 2028 we will complete RIBA Stage 4 detailed design, building control approval, discharge of planning conditions, final cost planning and acceptance of contractor proposals.

Following Cabinet approval, the Stage 2 Design & Build Contract will be awarded, enabling RIBA Stage 5 construction (Sept 2028–Sept 2029).

Capital works include restoration of historic plasterwork, decorative features and architectural details; major accessibility improvements, including lifts, Changing Places, step-free circulation and dementia-friendly design; environmental upgrades (insulation, energy-efficient systems, improved lighting); reconfigured community spaces, café, improved backstage facilities and a fully integrated, visible ground-floor library with a dedicated children's area; enhanced public realm and improved arrival experience.

After handover (Sept 2029), we will complete decant, fit-out and IT installation ready for reopening.

OUT AND ABOUT PROGRAMME: During the building's closure, we will deliver a wide-ranging programme across Ulverston and rural communities. This includes creative workshops, early-years sessions, family learning, heritage talks, touring performances and pop-up library and reading activities in community venues, schools

and family hubs. This ensures continuity of cultural and library access, reduces barriers and builds new audiences.

HERITAGE AND LIBRARY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME: The Delivery Phase activates all four heritage strands, with strong links to the new community-led library:

LOCAL LIVES AND HIDDEN STORIES: Co-created Coro timeline exhibition with 80 children and young people; multi-group intergenerational exhibition (100 participants) including special schools and community groups; and local changemakers project delivered in rural and family hub settings.

THEATRICAL TRADITIONS AND CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE: Co-produced project with 12–15 residents exploring historic touring routes, producing a visual artwork and 2–3 site-specific performances.

ARCHITECTURAL AND ARTISTIC HERITAGE: Rediscovery and digital capture of Brundit & Miller’s architectural and sculptural features; large co-created frieze with 100 participants from seven groups.

ARCHIVES BROUGHT TO LIFE: Intergenerational project with 200 participants, including oral histories, archive trips, digitisation and the creation of a new community-led archive housed within the redeveloped library.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, VOLUNTEERING and COMMUNITY CAPACITY: We will train Heritage Ambassadors to support tours, engagement and interpretation; deliver hard hat & heritage Tours for 400 visitors during construction; build volunteer roles linked to the library, heritage and creative programmes; provide training in oral history, digital skills, interpretation and participatory practice; and support community ownership through co-creation and volunteering.

ACCESS, INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION INITIATIVES: work includes installation of major physical access improvements; inclusive programming across schools, rural communities, families, older adults and diverse groups; library-led participation, including reading activity, digital inclusion, family learning and intergenerational projects; co-design of wayfinding, signage and visitor information; and targeted pre-opening campaigns for families, young people, older adults and lapsed library users.

REOPENING PREPARATION includes finalisation of the creative, heritage and library reopening programme; installation of exhibitions, interpretation and digital resources; implementation of the marketing and audience development plan – including new refreshed brand and programme (incorporating more family friendly aspects); front of house / back of house operational readiness, systems testing and volunteer mobilisation; staff training (including dementia awareness, access training,

safeguarding); and community preview events prior to the formal reopening in October 2029.

EVALUATION AND LEGACY: will run throughout, assessing participation, heritage and library impact, environmental performance, access, volunteer development and organisational sustainability. Findings will shape the post-project plan, ensuring new facilities and programmes are embedded and future-proofed.

How do you plan to cash flow the delivery phase of your project?

Grant payments are made in arrears. You therefore need to ensure you are able to successfully cash flow the expenditure of your project in order to avoid experiencing financial difficulties. The exception to this is a development grant of less than £250,000.

You will need to provide a cash flow with your delivery phase application.

Tell us about any financial reserves, income from your organisation or other sources of funding you will access to cash flow the delivery phase of your project.

Our 24-25 Draft Accounts ([Statement of accounts | Westmorland and Furness Council](#)) show that the Council held £42,874,000 in cash or cash equivalents as at 31 March 2025.

We also had £19,969,000 in general fund balance reserve.

We have modelled our costs and cashflow on the assumption that we will need to borrow £2.033m for our match funding. We may not need to borrow the full amount, however we felt it prudent to include the full costs just in case. If required, we would anticipate drawing down on the loan as required during the delivery phase to bridge the delay in NLHF funding and to cover our own proportion. It is anticipated that any borrowing would be done through Prudential borrowing rules.

The repayment costs have been included in our modelling and will be funded through operations once the Coronation Hall is up and running again. The repayment costs during the delivery phase will be funded through our full council finances including reserves if required. We have modelled the finances on an expected closure of 12 months, however we are hoping to look at ways to reduce this time. Assuming a 12 month closure then the additional pressure needed to be funded by the council would be c£340k, also assuming that staff cannot be redeployed to other funded positions.

Detailed cashflows for project, activity and revenue stages has been provided. There is also a summary cashflow combining these elements.

Delivery start date.

This can be an estimate.

[1 September 2026]

Delivery end date.

This can be an estimate.

[30 November 2029]

Are there any fixed deadlines or key milestones that will restrict your project's timetable?

Please tell us about any immovable dates that will affect your project and are beyond your control.

For example:

- dates when partnership funding offers may expire or when secured funds must be spent by
- anniversaries that your project is designed to celebrate
- external events that are key to your project's success

Not applicable – Borderlands funding is required to be spent, beyond the date of the proposed works, which works well for this proposed programme.

Our investment principles

Our four investment principles will guide all our grant decision making under our 10-year strategy, Heritage 2033.

Our investment principles are:

- saving heritage
- protecting the environment
- inclusion, access and participation
- organisational sustainability

You must take all four investment principles into account in your project. You may focus more on some investment principles than others.

For example:

- if your project is focused on restoring natural landscapes, you might want to emphasise both saving heritage and protecting the environment in your application
- if your project is focused on recording and sharing oral histories and skills development, you might concentrate more on inclusion, access and participation and organisational sustainability

The strength of focus and emphasis on each principle is for you to decide and demonstrate.

Explain how your project will save heritage.

This project saves, celebrates and sustains the heritage of the Coronation Hall and Ulverston by protecting historic fabric, preserving cultural memory and creating enduring ways for people to access and shape their heritage. It combines conservation, interpretation and a five-year programme of creative, heritage and library activity so that both tangible and intangible heritage are protected, understood and shared.

The Coro's physical heritage will be safeguarded through repair and conservation of significant features including the domed main hall, proscenium arch and English Renaissance decorative scheme, alongside works to address deterioration to roof, plasterwork, windows and internal finishes. Environmental and access improvements - ventilation, insulation, lighting, lifts and wayfinding - will stabilise conditions, reduce damage and ensure safe access. Re-planning and improved technical infrastructure will protect significance, reduce pressure on vulnerable fabric and lower future maintenance liabilities.

Intangible heritage will be saved by recording and interpreting the stories, practices and creative traditions that give the Coro its meaning. Four strands structure this work. Local Lives and Hidden Stories will uncover social memory through a co-created exhibition displayed on hoardings and then digitised, preserving stories of wartime experience, social change and local identity. Intergenerational oral-history workshops will record lived experience, with stories reimagined as comics and illustrated books for younger audiences. A Local Changemakers initiative will capture living heritage through photography, digital storytelling and / or a travelling exhibition.

The Theatrical Traditions and Contemporary Relevance strand preserves performance heritage linked with Samuel Butler's theatre circuit, strolling players, pantomime and touring companies. Pilot workshops with Richmond's Georgian Theatre Royal will explore historic practice; co-created performances and exhibitions will blend historical and contemporary themes and tour to venues, schools and rural areas. Mapping

historic touring routes will reconnect the Coro to the region's performance history while engaging artists and volunteers.

Architectural and Artistic Heritage focuses on rediscovering and caring for the Coro's design and craft. Volunteers and specialists will document architectural and sculptural features associated locally with Brundit and Alec Miller through photography, sketching and 3D scanning, creating a permanent digital record and new interpretation resources. The project will also explain elements lost or altered over time. A major participatory artwork - a co-created frieze opposite the "Britannia and Empire" sculpture - will invite reflection on identity and inclusion, showing how meanings around civic symbolism shifted from pre-war celebration to post-war remembrance.

Archives Brought to Life will strengthen collections care and access. With Cumbria Archives and partners, playbills, photographs and related materials will be digitised and interpreted, while an intergenerational programme builds robust digital and physical collections. A community-led library will function as a living archive where people contribute memories, explore digitised materials, co-create interpretation and access learning resources in a visible, family-friendly setting with a dedicated children's area.

Saving heritage also depends on people and skills. The project will train Heritage Ambassadors, volunteers and young people in oral history, digitisation, research, interpretation and public engagement. hard-hat and heritage tours will reveal conservation in action and inspire creative responses. A QR-code Heritage Trail will link the Coro with town landmarks and makers, encouraging discovery and repeat visits.

Access to heritage will be protected during closure and expanded in rural areas through the Out & About programme, taking talks, exhibitions, workshops and performances to villages, schools, libraries and community venues to sustain engagement and build new audiences.

Finally, the project saves heritage by making it better managed and more resilient. A refreshed five-year business plan, stronger governance and diversified income from hires, courses, programmes and the café/bar improve financial stability. Design and Build procurement, clear risk management and realistic allowances for inflation and contingency safeguard conservation outcomes. Post-project, maintenance schedules, environmental monitoring, collections-care procedures and inclusive access policies will be embedded so that the building and its stories are protected and shared.

The net result is heritage in better condition, better managed, better interpreted and recorded; more people with the skills to care for it; and broader, more diverse engagement on site, online and across rural communities.

Explain how your project will protect the environment.

This project protects the environment by embedding sustainability into every aspect of the Coro's redevelopment, operations (including café) and public programme. The capital works will significantly reduce the building's environmental impact. Upgrades to heating, lighting and ventilation systems, improved insulation and environmental controls, and the use of sustainable, durable materials will lower energy consumption, stabilise internal conditions and reduce long-term maintenance requirements. The modernisation of the building and careful re-planning of key spaces will create a more efficient, future-ready asset that is resilient to climate impacts and requires fewer resources to operate.

The project encourages low-impact participation by taking activity directly into communities. The Out & About programme uses existing venues across Ulverston and surrounding rural areas, reducing the need for people to travel into town, lowering carbon emissions and widening access. Hybrid delivery methods and digital-first approaches, such as online content, remote participation tools and interactive interpretation, will reduce unnecessary travel and minimise printed materials. Engagement activity, from heritage workshops to performances and learning programmes, will use sustainable materials and low-waste approaches wherever possible, with exhibitions designed to be modular, reusable or repurposed.

The refreshed library and community spaces will promote environmental responsibility through inclusive design that maximises natural light, improves wayfinding and encourages sustainable transport choices. Improvements to signage, information and the visitor welcome will enable people to navigate the building efficiently, reducing reliance on energy-intensive systems. Family-friendly facilities and clearer circulation will also support more sustainable day-to-day use.

Environmental awareness is embedded in the programme itself. A wide range of creative and heritage activities will explore local environmental themes, helping residents understand their relationship with the landscape, climate resilience and sustainable living. Work with schools, young people and community groups will promote environmental literacy through hands-on projects, storytelling and co-created content. The development of digital tools, such as an interactive heritage trail, supports responsible access to heritage and local green spaces without additional material waste.

Staff, volunteers and participants will be supported to adopt more environmentally responsible behaviours. Training for employees, ambassadors and volunteers will include environmental awareness, green operational practices and approaches that minimise waste, support recycling and reduce energy use. Volunteers involved in

heritage and creative programmes will also play a role in sharing environmental messages with the wider community.

Sustainability is further embedded through governance and programme management. An environmental baseline assessment informs decision-making, and engagement with national organisations supporting climate action helps ensure good practice. Procurement processes will prioritise low-carbon materials, energy-efficient products and suppliers with strong environmental commitments. The Coro will collect and monitor data on energy use, waste and water consumption to inform future adjustments and improvements.

The wider programme protects the environment by strengthening local partnerships, reducing duplication of activity and making better shared use of spaces, resources and materials. By collaborating with local cultural organisations, community venues and rural partners, the project reduces the environmental burden associated with venue hire, transport, logistics and production.

The redevelopment also contributes to a greener townscape. Public realm improvements around the Coro will enhance biodiversity, encourage sustainable travel and create more welcoming, climate-resilient outdoor spaces. The project's long-term financial model, with its balanced approach to programming, hires and operations, supports sustainable running costs and reduces avoidable future expenditure on emergency repairs - an environmentally and economically responsible approach.

Overall, the project reduces carbon emissions, uses resources more efficiently, supports climate-aware decision-making and widens access to creative and heritage activity without increasing environmental impact. It strengthens community understanding of environmental issues through creative engagement and long-term stewardship, ensuring the Coro's role as a sustainable, resilient and environmentally responsible cultural hub for generations.

Explain how your project will increase inclusion, access and participation.

This project transforms the Coro into a more inclusive, welcoming and accessible home for creativity, culture, learning and heritage. Inclusion is embedded throughout the redevelopment, activity programme and organisational approach, ensuring people of all ages, backgrounds, abilities & locations can participate in the life of the Coro.

A central driver of increased inclusion is the integration of the library into the heart of the building. A more visible, accessible and family-friendly library, with a dedicated

children's area and flexible learning spaces, will make reading, creativity and local heritage accessible to a far wider range of people. New signage, wayfinding, visitor information and customer-focused design will ensure that people feel confident navigating the building, while new community spaces, improved circulation and step-free routes will remove physical barriers that currently limit participation.

The programme is rooted in co-creation and Community Power. A new Community Power programming group brings together residents, teachers, young people, disabled people, health professionals, community organisers and creatives to shape themes, priorities and activity. Their insight informs programming, ensuring it reflects local voices and needs rather than being imposed from above. Participation pathways for schools, families and underserved communities are built from this foundation, including co-design sessions, local history work with 80 children and young people, teacher CPD and partnerships with special schools, PRUs, multicultural groups and community networks.

The project significantly widens access for rural communities. The Out & About programme takes activity into villages, community halls, family hubs, parks and partner venues, reducing travel barriers, enabling people with limited mobility or transport access to take part, and maintaining continuity during closure. Touring performances, talks, workshops, oral-history sessions and library activities will be delivered locally, building confidence and connection among people who may feel distant from Ulverston's cultural offer.

The project strengthens inclusion for children, young people and underrepresented groups. Partnerships with organisations (eg. the Georgian Theatre Royal and local schools) provide progression routes for young people to explore arts, heritage and performance, while co-created exhibitions and productions ensure that youth perspectives are visible. Work with care homes, food hubs, community cafés, veterans' groups and early-years providers will broaden participation for people who are often excluded from cultural spaces. Family-friendly programming, informal activities, daytime talks and creative sessions will ensure there is something for all ages and ability.

Digital engagement will further extend access. New tools including newsletters, podcasts, interpretation screens and interactive tours will reach people unable to attend in person, providing alternative ways to explore heritage, creativity and learning. Hybrid models will reduce barriers for disabled people, carers, busy families and rural residents.

The project embeds inclusive design and equality practice. An access audit, specialist advice and lived-experience input will inform the capital works and programme development. Changes include accessible lifts, Changing Places provision,

dementia-friendly design, an accessible stage, and improved sensory, visual and digital access. Staff and volunteers will receive training, such as dementia friendly or disability awareness, ensuring the Coro provides a safe and equitable welcome.

Volunteering and skills development will strengthen long-term participation. A structured plan will support people of different ages and backgrounds to take part as ambassadors, tour guides, oral-history collectors, stewards and creative collaborators. Training will equip volunteers the skills and confidence to participate fully, helping build long-term community custodianship of the Coro's heritage and programmes.

The reopening period will mark a new era of inclusion. A refreshed brand, community celebrations, targeted outreach to lapsed and new audiences, and activity tailored to segment needs will ensure a wide cross-section of the community feels represented. Fair pricing, a transparent hires model and reduced rates for community groups and charities will support equitable access. New courses, classes and family-led sessions will offer year-round opportunities for creative learning.

Through co-creation, outreach, inclusive design, targeted engagement, deepened partnerships and sustained community involvement, this project will broaden who participates, diversify how people take part and remove structural barriers to ensure the Coro is genuinely open to everyone. The result is a more connected, confident and inclusive community with meaningful access to creativity, culture, learning and heritage across Ulverston and surrounding rural areas.

Explain how your project will improve your organisational sustainability.

This redevelopment project will significantly enhance organisational sustainability by modernising the Coro and Library, diversifying income, reducing long-term maintenance and running costs, increasing footfall, strengthening governance, and building capacity across staff, volunteers and communities. These improvements will ensure the Coro operates as a resilient, efficient and community-powered cultural and library hub long after the funded period ends.

MORE EFFICIENT, AFFORDABLE AND FUTURE-READY BUILDING: The redevelopment resolves longstanding condition issues and operational inefficiencies. Environmental upgrades - improved insulation, ventilation, LED lighting, modern plant and energy-efficient systems - will reduce utility costs and stabilise budgets. Repairs to the roof, plasterwork and internal finishes will cut reactive maintenance. These reductions are built into long-term financial models, improving sustainability and reducing risk for the Council.

STRONGER, MORE DIVERSE AND RESILIENT INCOME MODEL: The improved layout enables income not possible in the current building. Flexible spaces, the café/bar, hireable rooms, workshops and foyer areas support year-round income from hires, classes, events, conferences, weddings, corporate bookings and community activity.

The new commercial model increases pre-show and interval sales. Currently, the bar sits within the theatre, limiting opening during technical set-ups or turnarounds during the interval. Relocating and redesigning the bar ensures consistent pre-performance trading, maximising throughput and secondary spend.

A rebalanced hires model supports community groups while increasing commercial income. Expanded programming and improved audience experience will increase net cash contribution. Increased footfall (driven by the new ground-floor library, family-friendly spaces, visibility and higher-quality programming) will further improve resilience, and these projections are reflected in the new business plan.

AN INTEGRATED AND VISIBLE LIBRARY: Relocating and redesigning the library, with a dedicated children's area and improved accessibility, will increase daily footfall and encourage cross-participation with creative and heritage programmes. This boosts literacy, wellbeing and digital inclusion outcomes. As a high-traffic service, the library anchors the sustainability model by driving repeat visits and supporting adjacent commercial spend.

COMMUNITY POWER AND EXPANDED VOLUNTEER CAPACITY: Long-term sustainability is strengthened through deep community involvement. The Community Power Programming Group ensures the programme remains relevant and reflects local priorities. Volunteers – e.g. heritage ambassadors, oral-history collectors, digitisation assistants, stewards and community researchers, will increase organisational capacity and embed stewardship of heritage activity.

STRONGER GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT: The project embeds robust governance through the Council's Priority Programme framework - strengthening financial oversight, risk management and decision-making. Staff and volunteers will receive training in inclusive practice, digital engagement, interpretation, evaluation, community co-design and environmental sustainability, building capability and resilience across the organisation.

STRENGTHENED PARTNERSHIPS AND A GROWING CULTURAL ECOSYSTEM: The project consolidates partnerships with schools, rural networks, creative organisations, archives, promoters, community groups and regional cultural partners. These relationships broaden reach, share resources and reduce delivery risk. Importantly, the project aligns with wider cultural development, including the parallel redevelopment of Penrith Town Hall into a creative and community hub. This strengthens sustainability

across the cultural portfolio, enabling shared programming, touring, creative exchange, infrastructure and costs.

IMPROVED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT AND OPERATIONAL SAVINGS: Environmental improvements reduce carbon emissions and stabilise running costs. Sustainable procurement, reduced waste, hybrid engagement and digital access contribute to long-term savings. A new maintenance plan ensures predictable costs built into forward budgets, reducing long-term liabilities.

DATA-DRIVEN EVALUATION: A new Evaluation Framework will gather data on audiences, footfall, income, participation and operational efficiency. Insights will inform future planning, pricing and programming, ensuring the venue continues to evolve sustainably.

In summary, the project creates a more efficient building, stronger finances, deeper community ownership, a more capable workforce and a wider cultural ecosystem (including the new Penrith Town Hall redevelopment) ensuring long-term sustainability, resilience and relevance for generations to come.

After the project ends

How will you maintain the benefits of your project and meet any related costs?

ROBUST GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT: will sustain benefits through robust governance (see Business Plan, Section 3, p.9) and a flexible, scalable operating model that can scale up or down by season and programme mix (received work, hires, courses/classes, library-led activity, café/bar), ensuring financial resilience while keeping community participation central. This approach directly supports NLHF's Heritage 2033 Strategy.

STEWARDSHIP OF HERITAGE OUTPUTS: Co-created exhibitions, the Local Lives & Hidden Stories timeline, oral histories, comics and architectural/3D records will remain accessible via the community-led library and on the Coro website. Digital assets will comply with NLHF's availability (20 years), accessibility and licensing standards, with proportionate hosting and rights-management budgets included to ensure long-term discoverability and reuse.

MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY CUSTODIANSHIP: Day-to-day heritage care will be overseen by the General Manager (The Coro) and Libraries & Customer Services Manager, supported by the Exhibitions & Collections Manager. A trained Heritage Ambassadors cohort and volunteers will continue tours, interpretation and archive activity, embedding local ownership and skills beyond the funded period - advancing Heritage 2033 outcomes on saving heritage and participation.

10-YEAR FINANCIAL MODEL AND COST CONTROL: we have modelled 10 years of operating, maintenance and utilities to stabilise costs and plan lifecycle works. Capital improvements (insulation, efficient plant, lighting and ventilation) reduce reactive maintenance and emissions, improving affordability and environmental performance in line with Heritage 2033's protecting the environment principle.

INCOME GROWTH AND OPTIMISING COMMERCIAL INCOME: reconfigured public areas (including a relocated bar and extension) enable consistent pre-show and interval sales even during technical set-ups, growing secondary spend; a clearer hires model and expanded courses/classes and café/bar trade diversify revenue. The integrated, visible library drives daily footfall and repeat visits, increasing cross-participation and secondary income over time, ensuring long-term resilience.

AUDIENCES AND PIPELINE. Out & About programming will continue to bring new and rural audiences into contact with the Coro and Library, converting participation at reopening. A family-friendly and youth-focused offer builds the next generation of heritage and cultural users, delivering Heritage 2033's inclusion, access and participation aims.

DIGITAL GOOD PRACTICE (long-term): we will maintain open, accessible digital resources (licensing, metadata, accessibility checks, analytics) in line with NLHF's Digital Good Practice Guidance and draw on sector resources such as the Digital Heritage Hub to maintain skills and compliance as standards evolve. Support will be provided by the Council's digital team.

TALENT PIPELINE AND CAPACITY: longer-term, the Council will work with colleges and the University to co-design pathways in creative, heritage, technical and conservation skills, linking volunteering, placements and entry roles to live programmes - strengthening local capacity and aligning to Heritage 2033 commitments on skills, leadership and sector sustainability.

FUNDING AND PARTNERSHIPS: to complement core budgets and earned income, we will develop targeted bids to Arts Council England National Lottery Project Grants (arts/museums/libraries, £1k–£100k) for residencies, touring, family and community engagement.

In summary: A scalable business model, 10-year financial planning, reduced maintenance liabilities, diversified income, compliant open digital heritage, strengthened skills pipelines with education partners, and sustained audience development (including via the library and Out & About routes) ensure the Coro and Library remain valued, cared for and sustained for everyone, now and in the future.

How will you evaluate the success of your project and share the learning?

At the start of the project, we commission an external evaluator to work (see attached Evaluation brief) with us to create a comprehensive Evaluation Plan, setting out:

WHAT WILL BE MEASURED

- Participation and inclusion: reach, diversity, rural access, conversion of Out & About participants into users.
- Heritage outcomes: changes in knowledge, skills, confidence and care; effectiveness of interpretation; the condition of heritage.
- Health and wellbeing: confidence, social connection and sense of belonging, using validated tools and qualitative case studies.
- Social and economic value: volunteer hours, progression routes, local supplier spend, skills development, secondary spend and increased footfall.
- Environmental outcomes: carbon and energy improvements following capital works; sustainable behaviour change.
- Organisational sustainability: effectiveness of the flexible, scalable business model; income diversification; workforce and volunteer capacity.

COLLECTING AND ANALYSING DATA

The evaluation plan will outline sources and methods, including:

- Surveys, interviews, focus groups and community feedback
- Creative and accessible evaluation methods with young people and adults
- Digital analytics and website accessibility checks
- Footfall, ticketing (spetrix) and library management data
- Volunteer logs and training records
- Wellbeing and social value assessment tools

Digital evaluation outputs will comply with NLHF's Digital Good Practice Guidance on availability, accessibility and open licensing.

SHARING LEARNING

- Case studies on the Coro website
- Workshops with schools, community groups, volunteers and partners
- Presentations to Council boards and stakeholder – including the Town Council, locality board and other engaged groups
- Contributions to regional and national networks

The ambition is to measure the impact of the work of the Cultural Services Team. This project will also align with any new developments relating to impact and evaluation across the unitary authority, us to build up a more detailed picture across the unitary authority.

WHO WILL CARRY OUT THE EVALUATION

Evaluation will be led by an independent external evaluator, appointed at the start of the Delivery Phase through an open procurement process. They will act as a “critical friend” and work alongside an internal evaluation group comprising:

- Strategic Lead – Culture
- Heritage Engagement Producer
- Development & Impact Manager – Culture
- General Manager (The Coro)
- Libraries & Customer Services Manager
- Finance Business Partner (for data and monitoring)

A budget of £45,000 is allocated against the evaluation costs – this includes evaluator fees, data collection tools, accessible formats, digital hosting and staff time.

Project costs and income

Tell us about the costs and income for your project.

This includes both your development phase and your potential delivery phase.

	Total Costs	Total Contribution	Grant Request	Grant Percentage
Development	298,821	141,131	157,450	53%
Delivery	5,705,872	2,411,301	3,294,571	58%
Both Phases	6,004,693	2,552,672	3,452,021	57%

You should include all costs and income relating to your project.

There are different headings for each cost type you can choose from, and for each type of income you might receive to support your project.

Choose the income type which best suits each source of income you will be receiving.

More information about the delivery phase project costs and income can be found in the delivery phase application questions below.

You will be shown a summary of your total project costs and income.

Development phase project costs:

Capacity building activity

- This includes anything you may need to do to increase your organisation's capacity to deliver the project. This might include a review of your human resources or finances, bringing in extra skills or expertise, or making changes to the governance of your organisation.

Opening-up works/surveys

- This can include any initial surveys or reports you may need to have done on a site, building, landscape or resource.

Professional fees

- Include costs for any services you will need to pay for during your project. For example, a building surveyor, landscape architect or a conservator.
- Fees should be in line with professional guidelines and based on quotes from the professional or professional body you are paying.

Recruitment

- This can include the cost of advertising and any travel expenses for interviews. We expect your organisation to keep to good human-resource practice and follow all relevant laws.

Full cost recovery

- Full cost recovery is a cost type used to cover indirect costs of a project. Indirect costs include overheads, or costs which are not directly related to the project your organisation is delivering, but which are essential for the running of your organisation.

- If you are an organisation in the voluntary sector, we can cover a proportion of your organisation's overheads, which must be appropriate to the time or resources used for your project. By voluntary sector we mean organisations that are independent of government and whose governance, finance and resources have a voluntary focus. For example, a voluntary sector organisation might:
 - have a Board of Trustees
 - be funded by grants and donations
 - rely upon volunteers to carry out their aims

Other costs (development phase)

- Include development phase costs that do not fit within any of the other cost headings. Please make sure you give a clear description of what these costs are.
- You might include costs here for any scoping or planning work you will do to address the investment principles during your project.
- If your project is taking place in Wales, make sure you include sufficient costs for translation into the Welsh language.
- You may also wish to include costs for reasonable adjustments here.

Volunteer time

- This is the time that volunteers give to support the delivery of your project. This could include administrative work, clearing a site or working as a steward at an event.
- You should not include costs for the time of people who will take part in your activities (for example, people who attend a workshop or go on a guided tour).
- We use a standard rate of £20 per hour to calculate volunteer time.
- Volunteer time must be included in both the cost and income section of your application. This is because we recognise the value of this contribution.

Non-cash contributions

- This is anything you need for your project that you do not have to pay for (for example, room hire or equipment). We can only accept non-cash contributions if they are direct project costs that could have been part of your project budget.
- Non-cash contributions must be included in both the cost and income section of your application. This is because we recognise the value of this contribution.

New staff

- Include costs for staff who will be working on your project. Make sure to also include any applicable on-costs.
- This could include new fixed-term contracts, secondments, apprenticeships and the costs of freelance staff to help deliver your project. Do not include the costs of paying trainees here.
- In some circumstances it may be appropriate to include costs for maternity leave and/or redundancy payments. We expect your organisation to keep to good human-resource practice and follow all relevant laws, including paying at least the National Living Wage to all project staff members.

Contingency

- This cost heading is mandatory. Contingency is used to pay for unexpected costs required to deliver your project.
- We would expect the amount of contingency included to help manage your identified challenges or risks. It should also reflect the scale of your project.
- Make sure that you only include your required contingency here and not within the other cost headings in your application.

Development phase project income:

- local authority
- other public sector
- central government
- private donation – individual
- private donation – trusts/charities/foundations
- private donations – corporate
- commercial/business
- own reserves
- other fundraising
- loan/finance
- non-cash contributions
- volunteer time

Supporting documents required during the development phase

Before we assess your application, we need to see your supporting documents.

Some supporting documents are mandatory – these are documents which every project must provide for their development phase application. Other supporting documents are only mandatory if they apply to your project: for example, if you are commissioning any work, we will need to see briefs for that work.

Choose a clear, descriptive file name for each supporting document so we can easily identify each one.

Supported file types: .jpg, .doc, .docx, .pdf, .xls, .xlsx, .ppt, .pptx, .zip, .kml, .csv, .bmp, .tiff, .rtf, .png, .txt, .msg, .mp4, .eml, .ods, .odt, .webp

[Upload files]

List of supporting documents for the development phase:

Timetable for the development phase

This should be a detailed timetable for the development phase of your project. This is a **mandatory** document for all development phase projects.

Risks for the development phase

This is a document, known as a risk register, which tells us about any risks to the development phase of your project and how they will be managed. This is a **mandatory** document for all development phase projects.

Timetable for delivery phase

This should be a summary timetable for the delivery phase of your project. This is a **mandatory** document for all development phase projects.

Risks for the delivery phase

This is a document, known as a risk register, which tells us the risks to the delivery phase of your project and how they will be managed. This is a **mandatory** document for all development phase projects.

Main risks document for after the project is completed

This is a document to tell us about the main risks facing the project after it has been completed and how they will be managed. This is a **mandatory** document for all development phase projects.

Accounts

You must provide your most recently audited or accountant verified accounts for the last three years and your management accounts for the current year. Accounts need to be:

- in the **legal name** of your organisation

- **dated**
- signed with a **handwritten signature**; this does not include digital signatures
- Include the **title** of the person who is signing them. This person must be a director, trustee, accountant, or other senior figure in your organisation.

If your organisation's accounts are older than 18 months, you must also provide three months of your most recent bank statements. This should be the three months before the date you submit your application.

If your organisation was set up less than 14 months ago and does not have a set of audited accounts, you must provide your last three bank statements or a signed letter from your bank confirming that your organisation has opened a bank account.

We do not need to see your accounts if you are a public organisation, for example a local authority or university.

This is a **mandatory** document for all development phase projects unless your organisation is exempt from providing them.

Detailed cost breakdown

You must provide a spreadsheet detailing the costs you outlined when completing the project costs section of your application.

We require a detailed spreadsheet of project expenditure and income, with reference to the budget headings used in your application, itemising each aspect.

This is a **mandatory** document for all development phase projects.

Partnership agreements

If you plan to work with a partner to carry out your project, you will need to provide a partnership agreement. This document should outline both partner's roles and responsibilities and should be signed by all parties. This document should reflect the needs of your project and you may need to seek independent advice on how to best write an agreement.

A partner is another organisation or third-party body that is integral to the delivery of your project, for example the owner of an item, building, land or collection that is involved in your project. Partners are not subcontractors. They will take on an active role in the project and will be involved in the project. They will help to report on progress, attend regular partnership meetings and support project evaluation.

Job descriptions

If you plan to recruit new staff or apprentices to help you deliver your project, you need to provide a job description for each new post. Each job description should include the proposed salary and working hours.

Briefs for commissioned work

Briefs describe any work you plan to commission during the development phase of your project. If you are commissioning work, for example, from an artist or an architect, then you should upload a brief.

The brief should describe the works, how long they will take, and how much they will cost.

For fees over £10,000 you should get three competitive tenders or quotes. For fees over £50,000 we will expect you to provide proof of the competitive tendering process.

Images

You should provide up to six images that help illustrate your project. For example, an image of a map of the area showing the locations involved in your project, if it is taking place across more than one place or across a large area.

Please make sure you have all the permissions required to share these with us, as we may use these to tell people about your project, including our decision makers. If your project is successful, we may use any images to promote your project.

Evidence of support

You should provide up to six pieces of evidence of support from other organisations or individuals who are committed to helping deliver your project or are key to your project's success. This could include:

- permission from landowners to access sites
- confirmation from a local museum that they will host your exhibition
- confirmation from a local community group that their members will take part in your planned activities
- offers of support from other funding organisations
- independent valuations for land, buildings or heritage items you intend to buy

We do not need to see general statements in support of your project.

Calculations of full cost recovery included in your development phase costs

If you have included full cost recovery as a cost heading in your project costs, you must provide a document that shows how you have calculated this. Costs should be proportionate to the time or resources used for your project. We can also cover a

proportion of the cost of an existing member of staff, as long as they are not working exclusively on the funded project in a new post.

We cannot accept applications that include full cost recovery from public sector organisations (for example, government-funded museums, local authorities or universities).

Business plan

You must submit your organisation's current business plan. A business plan is not the same as a project plan. It focuses on the overall organisation and not specific project activities.

If you do not have a business plan, please upload the document you work with to manage your heritage. If you are an organisation which manages multiple sites or are, for example, a Local Authority, upload the documents most relevant to the heritage. This is a **mandatory** document for all development phase projects.

Condition survey

If your project involves the conservation of heritage, you must provide a condition survey or another appropriate document to tell us the current condition of the heritage and the works that are needed to return the heritage to a good condition.

The survey or report should also indicate the relative priority of the proposed works so you know which are the most critical and need to be tackled most urgently. There are other types of survey which could take place, such as a building performance and energy efficiency survey.

Ownership documents

If you are planning any capital works, or intending to purchase land, buildings or collections, please provide copies of any relevant ownership documents. For example, Land Registry ownership documents or a lease or heads of terms.

Heritage Enterprise supporting documents

If you are making a Heritage Enterprise application, you should also upload:

- a viability appraisal that provides a reasonable indication of the conservation deficit
- design specification for any capital works to be undertaken during the development phase
- Two or three of the most recent and relevant documents that describe the vision and strategy for the area, if applicable. For example, documents from the local

development framework, area action plan, master plan, regeneration strategy or tourism strategy.

Declaration

Confirm declaration

We run qualitative user research to help us to develop our products and services. This could be from a 20-minute survey to a two-hour interview.

Tick this box if you would like to be involved in our research, or find out more. [Tick box]

I have read and agreed with the declaration. [Tick box]

a) Data Protection

We are committed to being as open and transparent as possible. This includes being clear about how we assess and make decisions on our grants and how we will use your application form and other documents you give us. We follow all data protection laws and regulations that are applicable and in force from time to time (the 'Data Protection legislation'). As defined by the Data Protection legislation the Trustees of the National Heritage Memorial Fund (who administer the National Lottery Heritage Fund) is a data controller. Our Privacy Policy contains additional information including contact information for our Data Protection Officer. It can be found on the National Lottery Heritage Fund website.

As part of the application process we will collect your name, contact information and position at the organisation you represent as well as any additional personal information you supply about others involved in your project. We may share this information with one of the consultants on our Register of Support Services if they are appointed to help support you on your project. We do not transfer your data to any third parties based outside of the EU.

We may use your application form and other documents you give us, and the data contained within:

- To decide whether to give you a grant.
- To provide copies to other individuals or organisations who are helping us to assess, monitor and evaluate grants.
- To share information with organisations and individuals working with us with a legitimate interest in National Lottery applications and grants or specific funding programmes.
- To hold in a database and use for statistical purposes.

- If we offer you a grant, we will publish information about you relating to the activity we have funded, including the amount of the grant and the activity it was for. This information may appear in our press releases, in our print and online publications, and in the publications or websites of relevant Government departments and any partner organisations who have funded the activity with us.
- If we offer you a grant, you will support our work to demonstrate the value of heritage by contributing (when asked) to publicity activities during the period we provide funding for and participating in activities to share learning, for which we may put other grantees in contact with you. This may include sharing your information and any subsequent publicity with third party partner distributors.

b) Freedom of Information

As a public organisation we are subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 which give the public a right of access to the information that we hold, unless any exemptions apply. This includes any recorded information provided to us by our applicants and grantees.

When you complete the Declaration at the end of the application form, you are confirming that you have no objection to us releasing the application form and any other information you provide to us to anyone who asks to see them once your application has completed the assessment process. If there is any information that you don't want made publicly available, please explain your reasons below:

[Text box]

If we receive a request for information we will always consult you first and will take your comments into account and will apply the exemptions in the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004. However, the decision to release or withhold your information is our decision and we will not be responsible for any loss or damage you suffer as a result of our meeting these responsibilities.

We may contact you from time to time to keep you informed about the work of The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

[Tick box if you would like to be kept informed of our work]

- I confirm that the organisation named on this application has given me the authority to complete this application on its behalf.
- I confirm that the activity in the application falls within the purposes and legal powers of the organisation.
- I confirm that the organisation has the power, if awarded a grant, to accept and pay back the grant.

- I confirm that, as far as I know, the information in this application is true and correct.
- I consent to my personal data being used as described and understand that should the requirement change from that described I will be informed at the earliest convenience.