



T 01924 848806
F 01924 840694
www.ncm.org.uk

Date: 03/05/2018

Reference: PRO-TEN-008

EXHIBITION AND GALLERY REFURBISHMENT

WORKS INFORMATION DOCUMENT

CONTENTS

- 1. Purpose and Scope of Document**
- 2. Curatorial Brief**
- 3.**
- 4. Involved Parties**

Appendix A – Main Exhibition Gallery Floor Plan

Appendix B – Main Exhibition Gallery Detail

Appendix C – Home Life Gallery Floor Plan

Appendix D – Home Life Gallery Detail

1. Purpose and Scope of Document

The purpose of this document is to explain the scale and requirements of the Coalface Conversations Realisation project. Additionally it will introduce the principle actors involved in the project and those parties successful bidders will likely be required to liaise and interact with.

2. Curatorial Brief

Aims and Objectives of the Project

The National Coal Mining Museum for England was recently awarded a grant through the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for its Coalfield Conversations project. This will result in the redevelopment of the existing welcome area/visitor entranceway and improve wayfinding and signage across site; several tenders separate to this detail these desired works.

To complement this redevelopment, the Museum is taking the opportunity to rethink and refresh the Mining Lives Galleries, situated inside the visitor hub. This space currently takes a thematic approach and is one of the main above ground areas on site which showcases the Museum's historic collections. These galleries are intended to support the underground experience and develop in more detail some of the themes raised on the tour.

Since the installation of the Mining Lives galleries in 2001 the Museum's object collection has grown substantially. The collection's strengths include a growing collection of artwork, disaster and rescue items, commemorative material and industry clothing. There has however been a shift in visitor profile, with less visitors having first hand experience of the industry. In the near future we will be in a situation where deep mining is beyond living memory and we need to address this in our redevelopment of these spaces. Following on from recent observation studies which have been undertaken in these galleries, we are aware that visitors are struggling to engage with the collections in their current form. Particular areas of issue include the competing use of AV, the over reliance on graphic images and interactives which are easily missed.

The aim of this project is to create exciting and playful spaces which encourage powerful, meaningful and memorable learning experiences for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. By creating a new identity, which is sympathetic to the HLF work, we aim to encourage visitors to engage more fully with the new themes and objects on display and increase visitor dwell time in the space. We wish to create spaces which encourage curiosity, discovery and participation; that support STEM learning and are emotionally engaging. Our wish is for the galleries to become social spaces which stimulate memories and conversations for intergenerational audiences.

The National Coal Mining Museum for England requires a company who will work with us to offer creative solutions to these physical and psychological barriers. The successful company will be expected to create a concept, brand and high quality design and build which is inclusive and appealing to the Museum's 130,000+ annual visitors.

Responding to Changing Visitor Profile

The existing galleries were opened in 2002. At this time the coal mining industry was still operating, however in 2015 Britain's last deep mine closed. The intervening years have seen the Museum's visitor profile change as first-hand knowledge of mining is rapidly disappearing out of living memory. School groups remain a key audience however, we also need to ensure that we continue to be a major attraction for families from within and outside the region.

OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL

A major motivation for most visitors to the Museum is the underground tour. Recent visitor observation exercises which have taken place within the Mining Lives galleries have shown a low dwell time and that the spaces are largely being used as an area to 'kill time' before going underground. Our ambitions for this refurbishment are to ensure that these spaces become a destination which will enhance the quality of our visitors' overall experience on the surface. We would like the Museum's collections to be given the opportunity to shine and to open up new dialogues.

Provide creative solutions to the challenges of the existing space

The current displays offer limited flexibility for change. This has meant that the gallery spaces have had very few alterations made to them since first installed. We would like the new scheme to allow for graphics to be easily updated and for the cases to be refreshed more frequently.

The budget for this scheme will not allow for all of the existing display cases to be changed, so the majority of these will need to be refurbished and re-used. We would like to explore the possibility of integrating one of the other cases from a neighbouring gallery into the space. If practical, we would prefer to replace the smallest cases with one or two larger ones to increase our capacity to show more of the collections and to offer more flexibility with what is put on display. Parkinson's Yard as well as the under 5s Little Diggers area are to remain untouched.

Recent observation exercises have shown that our visitors are not responding to the existing volume of written text that exists within the galleries. The awarded partner will need to create and produce new graphical solutions which engage rather than overwhelm our audience.

Both gallery areas as well as the adjoining Special Exhibitions Gallery contain an open roof void, which causes problems with sound bleed from our existing AV. We would like the awarded partner to provide a more effective solution for how we can continue to integrate AV technology within these spaces to enhance the visitors' experience.

We would like to continue offering interactive spaces within our galleries. Anecdotal evidence has shown that our current handling draws largely remain unopened and do not provide enough flexibility for what is shown making the content quite repetitious. We would like the creation of interactive spaces which allow for more discussion and questioning, particularly with school groups; that enable connections to be made with contemporary life and which re-ignite a sense of discovery and fun.

The project works shall total no more than £72,000.

3. Gallery and Exhibition Space Overview

Both gallery areas are located within the main museum building, the Visitor Hub. The two spaces adjoin one another directly while the main gallery exhibition space sits between the reception and main entrance orientation space and on the other side the Pit Yard and exterior walk way and access to the underground tour.

A better understanding of how the space interacts with the rest of the site can be had by arranging a site visit or attending site in your own time.

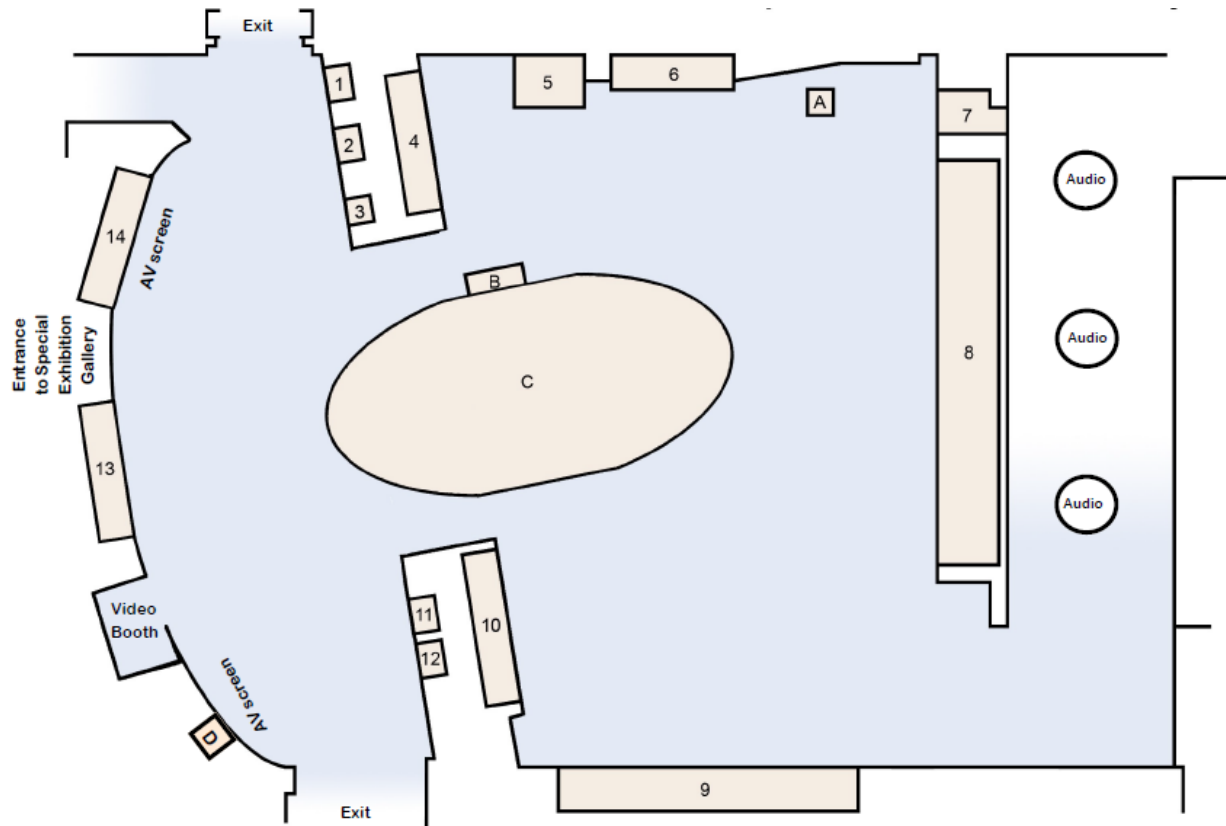
Appendices A through D describe the floor plans of each area along with supporting images documenting the current arrangement, look, tone and feel of each cabinet and the items presently displayed within.

4. Involved Parties

While principally only the National Coal Mining Museum for England and the awarded supplier will be involved in the design and realisation of the Exhibition and Gallery Refurbishment allowance must be made for the developments being conducted in the adjoining space which will have numerous players involved.

The awarded supplier will liaise directly with the National Coal Mining Museum for England and, while the spaces may abut, there is no intention for design briefs, ideas or involvement from one to affect the other.

Appendix A – Main Exhibition Gallery Floor Plan



Appendix B – Main Exhibition Gallery Detail

Caphouse Main Gallery Cases & Current Themes

1., 2., & 3. Unions



7. Coal Carvings



11. & 12. Celebrations



4. Rescue



8. Companies, Management, Staffing the Pit



13. Welfare



5. Oaks Disaster



9. Lamp case



14. Allotments



6. Disasters



10. Training



Caphouse Main Gallery— Other Displays & AV

A. Surveying display



D. Welfare display



Video Booth



B. Coal Transport



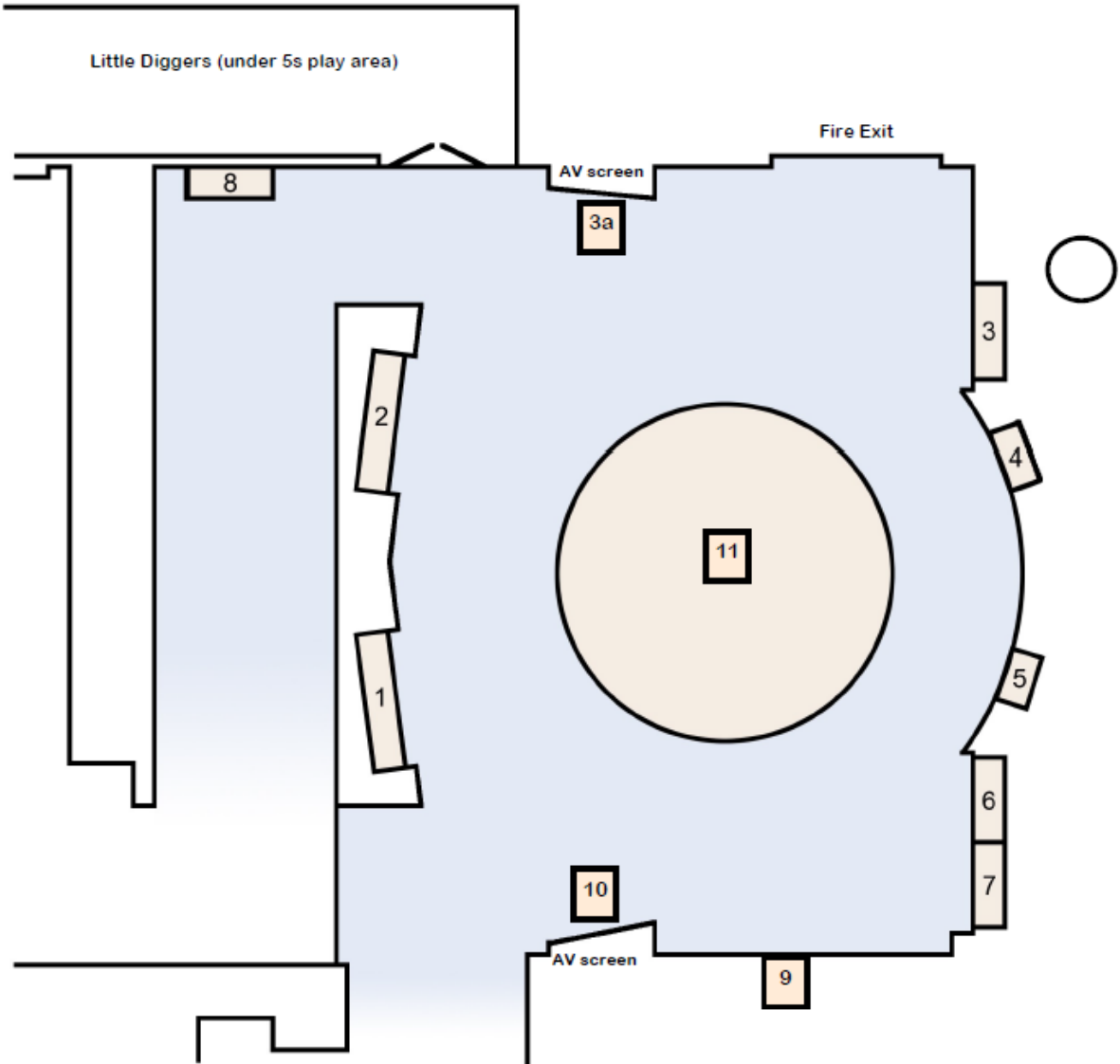
Large Overhead Projector



C. Coal Transport



Appendix C – Home Life Gallery Floor Plan



Appendix D – Home Life Gallery Detail

Home Life Gallery Cases & Current Themes

1. Art



2. War



3. Conflict



3a. Conflict



4. Health



5. Health



6. & 7. Daughters of the Industry



8. Temporary wall mounted case



9. Art of Industry display



10. House and Home display



11. Parkinson's Yard

