

Transforming Cornwall Museum and Art Gallery

Design Brief for Lead Consultant

Refurbishment of Royal Institution of Cornwall: Phase 4
RIBA Stages 2-3(subject to funding), 4-7 (subject to funding)



Project Ref: HZ-24-00163

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1. Introduction

Cornwall Museum & Art Gallery (formerly Royal Cornwall Museum) has an exciting opportunity to complete Phase 4 of its major transformation programme and is looking to commission a Lead Design Consultant. Initially we look to appoint to undertake RIBA Stages 2-3 (subject to funding) and to complete RIBA Stages 4-7 if further funding applications are successful.

Cornwall Museum & Art Gallery is Cornwall's largest museum of cultural history and stories about the life and people of Cornwall. It is home to over one million objects. The collections of treasures, artefacts, art and photography that we take care of help explain Cornwall, its language, Cornish identity and life in our region.

Over the past 5 years we have been carrying out a programme of transformation which has included organisational change, significant capital work to secure the Grade II heritage building, and major exhibition refurbishment. We have established a new Board along with a new team of staff and volunteers who have introduced ways of working that connect with and empower more people. We have been working to build sustainability to become more financially resilient and secure our future by transforming the organisation into an exciting multi-arts space for our communities.

Our ambition is to create a vibrant and well used community museum and arts centre that provides high quality cultural experiences for all. This will involve enhancing the existing galleries and the development of new spaces to support learning, performance and the study of creative arts.

The Museum is in Truro, Cornwall, and sits within a Grade II listed building that forms part of the significant 19th century granite townscape of Truro, an architectural style distinctive to Cornish towns. It was founded by The Royal Institution of Cornwall (RIC) in 1818 to promote excellence in science and art and to forward the world-leading industries that Cornwall was known for. Throughout more than 200 years the RIC has established the museum, Courtney Library, and a programme of exhibitions, events, and activities to further its original aim.

Transforming Cornwall Museum and Art Gallery is the final phase of our capital transformation and will secure the future of the Grade II listed Cornwall Museum and Art Gallery. It will see the creation of essential infrastructure to support long-term sustainability, protecting our unique and significant heritage. This project will enable us to:

- Upgrade spaces to provide a fully accessible and exciting heritage destination.
- Improve our visitor's journey and flow – having a one way route, exiting through the shop.
- Reduce our carbon footprint.
- Upgrade and make accessible our commercial areas (café and shop).
- Build revenue and enhance the local visitor economy.
- Explore new ways of managing heritage by creating a high-quality programme of activities.
- Create exhibitions and events which will be fun and inspiring, promoting thought and exploration of overlooked histories.
- Build strong partnerships with new and diverse audiences to display the 'World Cultures' collection sensitively and honestly.
- Build skills and develop capacity by encouraging new talent through work placements and new volunteering to develop a relevant and vibrant cultural offer.

The proposed design work will focus on the architectural elements – a separate brief is being issued for the exhibition design for our proposed Museum of the Museum project. The design will address our vision of creating a vibrant cultural hub that celebrates the heritage, art and contemporary culture of Cornwall that welcomes and attracts a diverse range of visitors.

This brief is for an architect-led design team ('the design team') to prepare and submit Planning and Listed Building Consent applications. There will be a contract break point at the end of the design development phase as continuation of the project beyond RIBA Stage 4 will be subject to delivery phase funding being secured.

This brief includes consideration of the following areas:

1. Visitor entrance and welcome space
2. Retail and café / café bar
3. Flexible gallery space for temporary exhibitions and digital presentations
4. Liaison with appointed specialists on the redesign of the 'Museum of the Museum' – a new permanent exhibition
5. Library and archive, including study area
6. Learning, events and activity spaces
7. Improved stores with an element of open access
8. Back of house provision for offices
9. Lift and stair access
10. Realignment of cloakroom and WCs

The Grade II listed building sits within a highly constrained site and within a conservation area of the town and is complex over different levels.

2. Background & Context

The RIC (a membership run charity) was founded in 1818 with an educational purpose to promote the study of history, literature, natural sciences, and more. The museum was founded as part of the RIC and originally had its base in Lemon Street, Truro but then moved to its present location in 1919.

The Grade II building was built in 1845 as the Truro Savings Bank and subsequently became Henderson's Mining School. In 1986 the RIC acquired the adjacent Truro Baptist Chapel which was built in 1848. Both the buildings were designed by the local architect Philip Sambell, whose life was extraordinary not only because of the impact he created on the townscape of Truro, but also because he achieved so much at a time when being deaf and non-verbal must have been even more challenging. In 1998 the RIC commissioned Poynton Bradbury architects to unite the two buildings, creating the Link Gallery and an extended café and shop.

In January 2020 the museum closed to the public for eight months to start a process of radical change and to carry out emergency maintenance work. The museum leadership team changed, with new Board members, a new co-leadership model with the Executive and Artistic directors bringing in a new vision, operating model, and five-year plan.

The museum hit further challenges in 2022 when a sudden halt in grant funding meant an uncertain future for the museum. This moment has passed, and our focus is on transforming our museum: its sustainability, the physical spaces, the visitor experience, and audience engagement. We started a phased transformation project:

- Phase 1 was funded through the Truro Town Deal and in July 2024 we opened the new Mineral Gallery and digital lab. We also undertook improvements to M&E with new distribution boards and installation of LED lighting, funded through Cornwall Council's Devolution Deal.
- Phase 2 comprised two further permanent exhibition spaces on the ground floor: Heart of Cornwall and Nature Galleries. Phase 2 also included landscaping work of the front garden.
- Phase 3, underway now, is a Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Arts Council England Museum Estates and Development Fund (MEND) project to undertake urgent roof and building fabric repairs that are critical to stop water ingress that at times threatens to damage our collections and at times, the safety of visitors.

This masterplan encompasses the final phase 4 of the capital transformation of the museum. Upon completion, Cornwall Museum and Art Gallery will have become a compelling visitor destination, a vibrant community centre and thriving arts hub. It will attract over 60,000 visitors a year and all its activities will be underpinned by a robust, agile, and sustainable operating model.

The role of museums is changing, and our vision and values reflect this change while recognising that the founding principles that were established back in 1818 still hold true today. The RIC's activities, approach and decision-making will always be driven by its charitable objectives, vision, and values.

Cornwall is unique. The seas and the landscapes, its language and its minerals, as well as countless generations of Cornish people who have lived and worked across this land, have all combined across the generations to make Cornwall a place like no other. At the very heart of Cornwall and its cultural life, the Cornwall Museum and Art Gallery is a centre of exploration and learning. Using the eclectic collections of Cornish culture, art, antiquities, archaeology, science, and natural history we take people on a journey from deep underground, up into the sky, around the world and way back in time. In doing this, we use our collections to help our communities look forward together.

Our current strategic priorities are:

1. Achieve financial sustainability
2. Build audiences & engagement
3. Secure capital Investment to repair and improve our buildings and our visitor offer
4. Improve care and management of our collections
5. Develop our capacity
6. Environmental sustainability towards zero carbon

Our plan will transform the museum into an exciting multi-arts community space, where people come together to share and enjoy creative activities, where they can be inspired to take part and enjoy life-enriching cultural activities.

3. Masterplanning

Masterplan Vision

An outline masterplan has been developed that unites the recent phased capital work and builds our vision and ambitions towards sustainability.

The wider transition project sets out the journey we are on to make the museum a valued community cultural centre and thriving visitor attraction in the heart of Cornwall. It is our aim to grow visitors from 30,000 in 2022 to 60,000 visitors by 2027 and engage with more diverse people. This project is a key part of achieving this ambition, alongside our programme of exhibitions and events. We want the spaces to be appealing to local people, families, school groups and tourists who already visit the museum, but we want to ensure that in addition, the museum attracts new visitors from further afield. Underpinning the Masterplan are the following elements of our vision:

1. **Create inspiring spaces** where the collections are shared and celebrated in a way that engages many audiences. The building will inspire creative thinking, help build connections and promote curiosity and learning.
2. **Achieving environmental responsibility** is important to us. We want the design to consider and reflect sustainability in approach, materials and delivery. We will retain and enhance the historic features within the buildings.
3. **Sensitivity** - Due to the listed nature of the building all changes must be done very sensitively.
4. **Audience Engagement** - Create a space that evokes museums of the past and creates a sense of awe and wonder. Every object will be accompanied by a physical label, and digital interpretation will be used in an unintrusive way to enhance our understanding by providing storytelling elements that will engage wider audiences along with layered interpretation for specialist audiences.
5. **Collaboration** - The project will be realised through a collaborative process with the Cornwall Museum team, stakeholders and consultants working on parallel projects in interpretation planning and brand development. The design of the space will align with our emerging brand and support our interpretation strategy.

Masterplan Objectives

The masterplan sets out the transformation of physical spaces and will enable the museum and library to create:

- an engaging and immersive visitor journey that highlights collections and provides space for creative activities.
- a space at the heart of Cornwall that can engage a diverse range of people.
- innovative, digital and interactive interpretation to create enriching and inspiring experiences for all.
- a place for positive change that provides the resource for sharing knowledge, learning, creativity, and ambition where ideas can be discussed and challenged.
- the environment for to support people to do things differently for themselves and the world around them.
- inviting community spaces where people can come together during their recreation time and when they want to socialise, that is valued by residents of Truro, Cornwall and our visitors.
- a building that supports income generation through hospitality, retail and commercial hire to secure long term financial sustainability.

Masterplan Design approach

The Masterplan should reflect the values of the Royal Institution of Cornwall. We are looking for a conscious, sustainable design approach. Designers will need to take a collaborative approach, working with the RIC team in response to stakeholder consultation, the interpretation strategy and brand review.

Accessibility and inclusion are at the heart of everything we do. The museum entrance and building needs to be well-lit, with clear and legible text, fully wheelchair accessible, have multi-sensory elements, support neuro-diverse visitors and have seating points with arm rests.

4. Scope of Work

The Outline Masterplan has been designed to RIBA 1.5. We will not be sharing this document at this stage to protect the designers' IP.

This work now needs to be fully developed to RIBA Stage 4, and then, if the subsequent Delivery Phase application is successful (we are planning to submit around February 2027) this commission will then be extended to complete the works to RIBA Stage 6.

The initial project cost plan for the entire project (including all the additional NLHF and Client costs) is around £5.5m (ex VAT) with the construction and design element at around £4.4m.

We require a full design team approach which has a proven track record of working with historic buildings to develop architectural and engineering technical design.

A highly experienced Architectural Lead Consultant is needed to progress with the RIBA Stages 2 to 7 including discharging any planning conditions from any planning and listed building consent.

It is envisaged that this will be a well-managed multi-disciplinary team led by a qualified conservation Architect (RIBA) who has exhibition design experience, who will appoint and manage the team including but not limited to:

- Conservation Architect
- Mechanical and Electrical Consultant
- Energy assessor (Simplified Building Energy Model calculations)
- Structural Engineer
- Acoustic Consultant
- Principal Designer
- Building Surveyor
- Quantity Surveyor
- Fire Consultant
- Contract administrator

Designers will be expected to take on the role of CDM /Principal Designer for the project, should be able to demonstrate their capability to dispense that responsibility and should cost for the time it will take.

We require the team to follow the typical RIBA stage activities and outputs. All documents and drawings prepared by the consultants for the purpose of the Cornwall Museum and Art Gallery Project will be the intellectual property of the Royal Institution of Cornwall.

RIBA STAGES 1.5 TO 4

RIBA 2 Services to include:

Updating work to date to Stage 2 completion including:

- Reviewing the initial Masterplanning work and design approach
- Finalising initial design concepts and ideas based on the project brief and budget, including visualisations and drawings. Key tasks include conducting design reviews with clients and stakeholders, developing architectural drawings and concept designs, and refining the project brief.
- Reviewing cost plan
- Contributing to the project's overall ongoing risk register.
- Assessing the potential environmental impact of the design, including energy consumption, resource efficiency, and overall environmental footprint.
- Incorporating sustainable design features and technologies to minimize the project's environmental impact.

RIBA 3 Services to include:

Focusing on developing the design further, ensuring it aligns with the client's needs and meets planning requirements. This stage involves detailed design studies, costing exercises, and coordination of architectural and engineering information. The goal is to prepare a complete and coordinated design for planning applications and further project development. Key Services during RIBA Stage 3:

- **Detailed Design Refinement:** refine the design, addressing spatial requirements and ensuring all elements are integrated.
- **Planning Application Preparation:** preparing detailed plans and submitting them to the relevant planning authority.
- **Design Coordination:** ensuring all design disciplines, including architecture, structural, and MEP, are coordinated to avoid clashes and optimize spatial utilization.
- **Costing and Feasibility Studies:** evaluating the project budget and feasibility of the design, and making necessary adjustments.
- **Risk:** Contributing to the project's overall ongoing risk register.
- Services in connection with **value engineering** (if necessary)
- **Technical Detail Development:** developing the design to a level of detail suitable for tendering and construction.
- **Project Strategies:** reviewing and updating project strategies related to cost, fire safety, sustainability, and other relevant areas.
- **Client Brief Refinement:** ensuring the brief still aligns with the client's objectives and incorporating any changes or feedback.
- **Appointment of Consultants:** appointing specialised consultants (e.g., structural engineers, MEP engineers) to contribute to the design process.
- **Updating the Construction Strategy:** refining the construction strategy to align with the updated design.
- **Reviewing the Construction Programme:** ensuring the construction programme is still realistic and achievable.
- **Planning Policy Compliance:** ensuring the design complies with relevant planning policies and regulations.

RIBA 4 Services to include:

Focusing on preparing all the necessary information for construction. This stage involves creating precise plans, specifications, and construction-ready documents, as well as addressing building regulations, sustainability, and accessibility. It's a crucial stage where designs are refined, and details are finalized before construction begins. Services include:

Design Refinement and Technical Detail:

- **Technical Design:** Develop and prepare technical design to include all architectural, structural and building services information, M&E details, specialist subcontractor design and specifications, in accordance with the design programme.
- **Detailed drawings:** creation of construction drawings, including architectural, structural, and MEP (mechanical, electrical, and plumbing) drawings.
- **Specifications:** preparation of detailed technical specifications, outlining materials, finishes, and construction methods.
- **Building Regulations:** preparation of Building regulations plans, and applications are submitted.
- **Sustainability and Accessibility:** development of design solutions that meet sustainability and accessibility requirements.
- **Cost Planning:** Provide information to others for the revision of cost estimate. Refine and update cost plans, taking into account the final design and construction details. Review final construction cost information, programme, and Health & Safety strategy.

Procurement and Tendering:

- **Tender Documents:** compilation of Drawings, specifications, and other necessary documents for the tender process. Co-ordinate, assemble and take responsibility for the production of tender documents in their entirety.
- **Specialist Subcontractors:** integrate the services of relevant specialist subcontractors into the design.
- **Pre-Construction Information Pack (PCI):** Prepare a pack containing all relevant project details and duty holders.
- **List of tenderers:** advise on and obtain the Client's approval of a list of tenderers for the building contract and ensure the relevant checks are completed.

Coordination and Collaboration:

- **Team Coordination:** co-ordinate and integrate any work by consultants, specialists, and suppliers to ensure a coordinated and buildable design.
- **Design Reviews:** carry out design reviews to ensure that the design meets project requirements and standards.
- **Information Management:** establish a system for managing and distributing design information.

Other Important Services:

- **Project Work Plan:** prepare detailed co-ordinated programme of works with key milestones for reviews and cost checks.
- **Building Systems Information:** Information on various building systems is prepared and coordinated.

- **Project Execution Plan:** Develop a plan outlining how the project will be executed.
- **Change Control Procedures:** establish procedures for managing changes during the design phase.

RIBA STAGES 5 TO 7

RIBA 5 Construction – Services to include:

- Advise the Client on the appointment of a Contractor and on the responsibilities of the parties and Architect under the building contract.
- Monitor the progress of the works against the contractor's programme and specification, review progress with the Contractor and report to the client.
- Prepare and administer the terms of the building contract, including visiting the site on a periodic basis.
- Respond to site queries as they arise.
- Prepare and certify valuations of work carried out or completed.
- Prepare financial reports for review.
- Take responsibility for leading the process of identifying and resolving defects, and action appropriately.

5.2.3 RIBA 6 Handover and Close Out – Services to include:

- Handover of building and conclusion of building contract
- Certify Practical Completion of the works.
- Provide drawings showing the building and main lines of drainage and give general advice on maintenance.
- Administer the terms of the building contract and make final inspections.
- Provide information required by others for settling final account.
- Undertake tasks listed in handover strategy.
- Update 'As Constructed' information in accordance with the Design Responsibility Matrix

RIBA 7 In Use – Services to include:

- Undertake post project evaluation, to review project performance and outcomes.
- Procedures to be agreed for monitoring and reporting on defects during Defects Liability Period
- Complete capital projects administration to record and archive contract documents and all project filing.
- Conclude activities listed in the handover strategy.
- Update project information in response to ongoing client feedback

5. Design Considerations

From the masterplanning carried out to date we have identified the following design considerations:

Visitor experience (visitor welcome, route & facilities)

Essential

- Fully accessible entrance
- A substantially larger shop area, bespoke museum lines and products, additional staff resource and a transformed retail presence on high street.
- Having an improved visitor, one way route, exiting through the shop.
- Design and layout which ensures that the retail offer becomes a more integral part of the whole museum experience
- Flexible storage for buggies
- Improved circulation and access throughout the building, including a new lift. Useful to define here any minimum requirements/aspiration for size and capacity of lift e.g. motorised wheelchair accessible, bearing in mind any constraints of the building's fabric.
- Improved WCs for visitors, including accessible WC

Desirable

To be defined. Could include lockers for visitors etc.

Galleries and displays

Essential

To be defined e.g. improved seating, improved accessibility (hearing loop), better lighting conditions and controls, better environmental conditions and controls, improved hanging system.

Desirable

To be defined

Café and events venue(s)

Essential

- Seating and tables for covers, including highchairs (numbers to be confirmed)
- Power and data for AV for events
- Lighting controls to support events
- Hearing loop to support events
- Opportunities to display items from the collection in a secure but accessible way e.g. vitrines, display cases, wall and/or ceiling mounted
- Conveniently located storage for chairs and tables, AV equipment etc when not in use
- Easy, open access to the high street to encourage non-museum visitors to make purchases, and to improve the visibility and permeability of the museum.
- Indoor and outdoor seating, as at present.
- Kitchen facilities to support catering offer which is "appropriate and distinctive, and our plan is to focus on a good quality, mid-upper-market-price offer, with a strong emphasis on environmentally friendly, locally sourced items and a relatively simple menu".

Desirable

- Reading area/opportunities for visitors to look at books associated with the mineral collection
- Aspiration to work towards the [Kids in Museums Family Café Standard](https://kidsinmuseums.org.uk/what-we-do/family-cafe-standard/)¹ if this is still running at the time of Phase 4 (there is a cost for accreditation). If not, use the checklist as a guide <https://kidsinmuseums.org.uk/what-we-do/family-cafe-standard/>
- Food and beverage offer e.g. draught beer or bottles. Gas or electric fuel sources for cooking?

Education and community spaces

Essential

- A fully accessible room or rooms, each capable of accommodating two classes of 30 children plus accompanying teachers. If not on the ground floor, then accessible by lift.
- Dedicated entrance
- Storage for coats, lunch boxes and teachers' bags
- Access to water for handwashing after messy activities
- Access to drinking water for school groups and community use
- Separate art sink with drainer
- Storage for art materials, learning resources including loan boxes and memory boxes (add numbers and dimensions)
- Power and data
- Furniture, fittings and equipment - Tables and chairs to accommodate flexible use e.g. for school groups, community groups etc.
- Continued provision of a good range of spaces, suitable for a variety of functions. These include some spaces which are bookable during museum opening hours as well as a much wider variety of spaces available for out of hours bookings.

Desirable

To be defined

Courtney Library

Essential

- Facilities and equipment e.g. photocopier to support research
- To be further defined in response to Library Review, audience needs, storage needs etc.
- IT and office infrastructure to ensure the team have the tools to work effectively and efficiently

Desirable

To be defined

Back of house operations and facilities

Office accommodation

- Office accommodation for 14.5 FTE by 2032/33.
 - o number of hot desks vs number of permanently allocated desks?
 - o Space to accommodate three supported placements a year (for individuals with complex needs) and work experience (for around 10 students per year).
 - o Separate office(s) or space(s) for finance manager (number FTE tbc), executive director (1FTE) artistic director (1FTE) if needed.
- Meeting room capable of accommodating (number FTE tbc) people

¹ <https://kidsinmuseums.org.uk/what-we-do/family-cafe-standard/>

- IT and office infrastructure to ensure the team have the tools to work effectively and efficiently

Staff and volunteer welfare

- Staff shower
- Staff cycle parking
- Electric car charging point
- Staff kitchen with microwave, fridge etc
- Dedicated space for volunteers with secure storage for coats and bags. Currently 42 volunteer numbers undertaking Front of House and Learning and Engagement roles. Business Plan states that this will increase during and following the delivery of the NLHF Activity Plan in Phase 4.

Collections care and management

- Improved collections and archive storage. Suitable and sufficient storage for archaeology collections; library and archive; object collections.
- Potential improvements to back of house/art lift?

Retail and catering

- Secure storage for retail stock to support a substantially larger shop area, bespoke museum lines and products. This could be a mixture of storage away from the shop and storage built into shop furniture.
- Suitable space for packing online orders. This will be essential in order to support the aspiration outlined in the Business Plan to operate an online retail offer from 2026-27.
- Safe? Cash handling for shop and café.
- Suitably fitted out and equipped kitchen and bar to support food and beverage offer e.g. draught beer or bottles. Gas or electric fuel sources for cooking?
- Kitchen storage e.g. dry store, cold room etc.
- Office space for catering staff (within café BOH?)
- Welfare facilities for catering staff – WC, lockers, staff changing etc)

Mechanical, electrical and plant

- Define the requirements for maintenance of mechanical and electrical plant. Storage for spares (lightbulbs, filters etc), tools ladders, cleaning materials? Plant room, servers etc.

6. Project Management

Cornwall Museum and Art Gallery will be the direct client / commissioning agent for this work. The Project Director will be Bryony Robins, Director of the museum.

A client-side Project Manager will be appointed who will act as Contract Manager to oversee the contract on behalf of the client. All communications must be copied to the Project Manager and this person must sign off the Stage Reports in writing. The consultants must not commence work on a Work Stage until written authorisation has been received from the Project Manager. No variation to cost or programme can be undertaken without specific confirmation in writing from the Project Manager.

The Project Director and Project Manager will attend a series of monthly Design Team meetings organised by the architect, to review, in detail, the progress of the work and to identify any issues arising.

A Project Board will be set up with meetings taking place monthly, the architect will be expected to attend these meetings. Further attendance may be required from consultants and specific presentations. Separate fortnightly Design Team meetings will be held and facilitated by the Architect / Design team (or as otherwise dictated by nature of current activity).

A monthly Checkpoint Report should be provided, to an agreed timetable, to the Project Manager to detail the progress of the entire design team, enabling the Project Manager to report to the Client identifying amongst others:

- The progress of the Consultant's design.
- The progress of all other Consultants' designs.
- Updated design risks and programme status.
- Assessment of the current cost of the project against the agreed budget.
- Comments in relation to quality of the Project on and off site.
- Progress of the documentation to be provided on completion of the Project.

The purpose of the monthly report is not to catalogue past achievements but to set future objectives and to assess potential problems.

7. Contract Information

Report Formats

We will require editable versions of each report and drawing produced i.e. Word, Excel or an agreed format for drawings, plus PDF versions of the same. In addition to this, we require 3 full colour paper copies of each final stage report and drawings (full size).

Cost estimates should be presented preferably in Excel or a PDF format if agreed with the client.

Every report must include stakeholder and funder logos which will be provided by the Project Manager.

8. Contacts

Your main contact with Cornwall Museum and Art Gallery will be Bryony Robins; Director
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9. Thank you to our supporters:



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