

APPENDIX A

Invitation to bid evaluation

1. The council had several criteria that the proposals were tested against to ensure the buildings will be removed from the heritage at risk register through a deliverable and viable project and bring diverse activity and uses to the Walworth Road. An arts and culture focus was sought and it was important to create opportunities for genuine community access while respecting and enhancing the heritage listing.
2. The evaluation process was undertaken by internal officers, external consultants and statutory consultees. A community consultation was also carried out with the results helping to inform decision-making.

Criteria and analysis

3. **Criteria 1** *Experience and project outline – the extent to which the team has relevant experience and the proposal meets council objectives for the project including a genuine community offer.*
4. Both bidders have established strong project teams to develop their bids with architects, heritage consultants and other specialists. There is confidence in the teams to design and deliver a successful quality scheme appropriate for the listed status, proposed uses, operational requirements and gain the required permissions throughout the process.

Castleforge	General Projects
Is predominantly a commercial co-office, co-working space with restaurant. The atrium space is open to the public for free during building opening hours. The public offer is extended by the availability of spaces for programmed events and workshops outside key office times and private hire.	Has a variety of uses and spaces for inherently a co-working offer with café and restaurant. The inclusion of workshops, maker spaces and large studios allows for diversity among the potential users and focuses on arts and creative industries. There is a genuine community offer of free programmable space in the ground floor of the former adults and children's library with a suggested management structure. The public offer extends with programmable events and activities in other spaces for hire outside of core co-working hours.
It appears much of the access outside the atrium will be through memberships, hire, ticketing or purchases. The design uses existing entrances which limits the sense of open access and circulation. It does not enhance the connection with the new Walworth Square.	The proposal for a mix of co-working uses, an arts hub, a café and unfettered public access into sections of the building meets the council's aspirations for a vibrant and inclusive destination. Discussions with the current tenant the Art Academy could result in a local arts education facility on site and enhance the arts and

Castleforge	General Projects
	culture component of the bid. As security any lease agreement would state covenants outlining the requirements of the community offer. It is clear that the bidders have taken on board and adapted their proposal from discussions with local stakeholders during their bid development.
The project outline shows how the town hall could be brought back into use becoming a vibrant co-working space, create opportunities for small businesses and start ups and contribute to the economy of the Walworth Road. However, at this stage the genuine community access is limited as is the inclusion of arts and culture uses.	

5. **Criteria 2** *Financial Proposals, project and business planning – realism of investment and funding proposals, their viability, deliverability and sustainability* Through the council's own project there is a great deal of knowledge regarding the buildings condition and complexity and what it will take to deliver the project and be sustainable in operation. We want to be confident that the applicants have the financial means to adequately invest, that they have considered and have a solid understanding of the risks and level of involvement required to deliver the scheme and meet council objectives.
7. Both teams provided very strong responses to criteria 2 showing adequate resources, understanding of the process, risk and requirements to fund and deliver the project. Business models at this early stage give confidence that the schemes will be sustainable. WTH is on the Heritage at Risk register and is an important heritage asset characterised by high quality architecture in both its exterior and its interior. This is documented by the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for the Town Hall which underscores the significance of the buildings inside and out. The council accept the principle that the future of this important building will rely on it being able to accommodate a new use, but it is necessary that we find the optimum balance between benefit and any impact on the listing.

Castleforge	General Projects
The main intervention into the building fabric from the Castleforge proposal is the additional floors that would alter the roof line of the east wing (1902 addition) and library. This design needs to be tested through the planning process but impacts on a significant heritage feature.	The design establishes a new entrance onto Walworth Square which creates a high degree of connectivity to a public open space and the opportunity to draw activity into the town hall and new atrium. While this needs to be tested through the planning process it is an aspiration aligned with the councils own proposals.
	Contributes to the vibrancy of the town

Castleforge	General Projects
	centre and defines local character, providing a sense of place and enriching the townscape