



Cabinet
17 April 2023

**Report from the Corporate Director
of Resident Services**

Kilburn Library Development and Refurbishment

Wards Affected:	Queens Park, Kilburn
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
No. of Appendices:	Appendix A - Drawings and plans Appendix B - Kilburn Library Accessibility Audit 2022 Appendix C - Kilburn Library Enhancement and Improvement Works 2023 - RIBA 4 – 5 Appendix D - Kilburn Library 2023 Risk Register Appendix E - Concept Cost Plan - RIBS Stage 3 Appendix F - Photographs of Kilburn Library
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Thomas Cattermole Director of Customer Access 020 8937 5446 Thomas.Cattermole@brent.gov.uk Peter Baxter Libraries, Arts and Heritage Manager 0208 937 1722 Peter.baxter@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report presents a business case for investment to upgrade the premises and facilities at Kilburn Library and the library garden.
- 1.2 The project to upgrade Kilburn Library responds to the Brent London Borough of Culture 2020 legacy, the Arts Council England's (ACE) 'Let's Create' strategy and their 'Library Improvement Fund' initiative, Brent's Borough Plan 2023-27, Brent Black Community Action Plan, Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022, Asset Management Strategy, and the library service action plan across each of the national strategic themes. (See section 3.6 Alignment with Strategic Objectives).
- 1.3 This is the second round of ACE's 'Library Improvement Fund', which supports library services in England by helping them upgrade their buildings. In the first round, Harlesden Library was successful and is near completion and reopening. In the second round, Kilburn Library was successful and was awarded 231K in February 2023. From March 2023, ACE begun to publicising this nationally. The third round will open in quarter 1 2023. Harlesden Library and Kilburn Library will demonstrate an alignment of Brent's intent with ACE's commitment. There is currently no funding beyond round 3.
- 1.4 The building and garden at Kilburn Library are in a poor state. If no investment is put into the current facilities the condition will decline further and become unsafe. The building itself may need partial closure if structural problems are not addressed quickly.
- 1.5 The investment outlined in this report is required. This will support income generation initiatives to hire space by extending the library footprint, creating a new community event space, implementing a flexible design to accommodate a better resource for all of residents in the locality with more uses. The total project costs are forecast at £765k.
- 1.6 The investment outlined in this paper aligns with the Council's asset management strategy and is key to bringing another asset back into line with service delivery expectations whilst ensuring the building is fit for purpose and maintained correctly.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to:
 - 2.1.1 Note the proposals to redevelop the library for reasons detailed in section 3.1.
 - 2.1.2 Approve the project budget of £765k which will be funded by £231k from Arts Council England Grant and £534k from SCIL as outlined in section 4.0 Financial Implications.
 - 2.1.3 Note that temporary facilities will be identified in the immediate locality while works are underway.

3.0 Detail

3.1 The Library Building

- 3.1.1 Kilburn Library and garden are in a poor state. (See 'Appendix G - Photographs of Kilburn Library' for an illustration). Further 'wear and tear' to the building will mean it will become increasingly unsafe and costly. If the Library Service doesn't act now with the support from the ACE grant, then the long-term future of Kilburn Library may be jeopardised and potential funding from external funders for other libraries may be too. For example, Arts Council England (ACE) 'Libraries Improvement Fund' Round 3 in 2023-2024.
- 3.1.2 Development will prevent inevitable full or partial closure in the future and ensure the library building and garden are safe to use. It will alleviate some of the pressures of cyclical maintenance required to maintain its current condition.
- 3.1.3 In November 2019, Brent's Library Service Action Plan was agreed which identified a need for long term investment through a Libraries Premises Development Plan. Though delayed by the pandemic, an outline of this premises development plan was reported in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan in October 2021. The first project within this plan commenced at Harlesden library in 2022 and is due to be completed imminently.
- 3.1.4 The last refurbishment undertaken at Kilburn Library took place in 2009/10. Structurally, the building is in a poor state. There are large cracks forming in the structure of the building and there is concern that debris may fall. Furnishings are mostly fixed and offer limited flexibility to develop the library offer or adapt the space for different audiences and uses. There is no dedicated event space despite the strong demand for cultural programmes in the area. Local consultation for the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 also identified community priorities of food growing and access to green space. Kilburn Library has an underutilised garden and will meet this need, but it requires investment to make it fully accessible and be used more extensively by the community.
- 3.1.5 The works would entail building an extension to the existing building and reconfiguring the layout to create a larger more flexible space. The driver for this is a need to increase engagement with residents in the South Kilburn area and to meet an increased demand and need for services, with a particular focus on digital, learning, culture and health, following the large amount of growth that is currently taking place and expected to take place. The new spaces and design would enable us to increase our programming in these areas and work more with local partners to expand our reach and library usage in the area.
- 3.1.6 This project further strengthens the case for investment in the current site to realise the investment to improve the energy efficiency of the site through the Public Sector Decarbonisation Programme in 2022.

3.2 Arts Council England's 'Libraries Improvement Fund'

3.2.1 By 2030, Arts Council England (ACE) is committed, through investment, to ensuring England is a country in which the creativity of everyone is valued and given the chance to flourish. To achieve this, ACE identified Brent as one of 54 'Priority Places' across England in which the investment and engagement is too low, but demand for cultural activities and quality venues is high. ACE's commitment to Brent is to increase investment and engagement in Brent to help the Council achieve this by 2024.

3.2.2 In June 2021, Arts Council England (ACE) launched its 'Libraries Improvement Fund' (LIF) for capital projects to improve library premises in England. Brent Council was successful in bidding for £285k towards a major refurbishment at Harlesden Library. The second round of the fund opened in June 2022, and Brent Council submitted a bid of £231k to develop the facilities at Kilburn Library. This bid was also successful and is now being publicised by ACE.

3.3 Queens Park and Kilburn Localities

3.3.1 Queens Park and Kilburn has a growing, high-density population with areas in South Kilburn with significant deprivation, high rates of unemployment and many residents with long term health conditions.

3.3.2 South Kilburn area is a significant area of population density and need. It is in the highest 20% for deprivation in England and local spaces are limited. With 16 early years and education settings in the area, there is a huge young population. It is a designated Growth Area in Brent's Local Plan and is a priority for investment and regeneration in the borough. This project will help futureproof the library building through investment in modern design, flexible furniture, and sustainable building management. With an attractive, functional building, new community space, and an accessible and substantial garden and food growing space the Library will be able to expand our offer and develop the library as a key community hub for residents.

3.3.3 This development will enable us to expand our current offer and deliver more activities to support employability and digital and language skills, such as ESOL classes. Collaborative internal and external partnerships, for example, activities delivered with Brent Start or Public Health, will enable health improvement through exercise classes and health information sessions, and skills through our English Conversation and digital skills classes,

3.3.4 This project also reflects its designation as one of the first Green Neighbourhoods in the borough as part of our response to the climate emergency, providing additional resource and support for residents locally to adapt.

3.4 Improved Community Partnership

3.4.1 Brent 2020 galvanised demand for local cultural and creative activity. The Kilburn Library Development project intends to build on this in three ways:

- Reconfigure the library design, creating an exhibition space;
- Extend the library through construction of an event space that connects the library to its garden;
- Co-designed cultural programming with the community.

3.4.2 The project will support outreach to more people with a quality library venue, supported by creative and cultural partnerships and programming. To achieve this, a library is needed to reflect a renewed space that will allow us to improve access, offer a broader range of events connected with the natural garden environment and enable partnerships with other arts organisations and the Local Cultural Education Partnership (LCEP). It will help create better opportunities for local artists and a platform to share the stories of our area. The library will become a local cultural centre attracting a more diverse audience with a broader creative offer.

3.4.3 The project will improve the accessibility of the building through improved design and signage, extend the footprint of the building to create a dedicated event and learning space which could also be used for community hires – including outside of core hours.

3.4.4 In conclusion, this investment will:

- Upgrade the library facilities and building, including the substantial but underused garden;
- Implement a flexible design to expand the use of the library and enable hires outside of core opening hours;
- Improve the accessibility of the building through improved design and signage;
- Extend the footprint of the building to create a dedicated event and learning space which could also be used for community hire.

3.4.5 By developing this offer, the Library Service can deliver wraparound support alongside the specialist Kilburn Community Hub advice services, realising long lasting improved outcomes for residents. Delivery of this offer is currently hampered by a fixed design with no clear welcome point and no dedicated space for classes and courses.

3.4.6 The redesign will also enable the community to hire space in the library for classes, events and exhibitions, a popular offer at Willesden Green which supports local SME's, creatives and community groups and can generate income for the service.

3.4.7 The garden has huge potential and has been identified by Brent's public health partners as having benefits for mental health outcomes, especially for those residents who do not have access to their own garden.

3.4.8 The library service will engage with the local community to ensure barriers to access are addressed and the new library space and programme offer is inclusive and responsive to local need. The Library, Arts and Heritage service

has partnership agreements in place to work with the Kilburn Hub and South Kilburn Trust to support this engagement with a particular focus on the South Kilburn Community but residents across Kilburn, Queens Park and beyond would benefit from the project.

3.4.9 The project objectives will re-establish the library as an attractive, engaging and safe place to visit for Kilburn residents, and in particular engage with residents in South Kilburn where provision and participation in cultural, learning and skills activity is lower.

3.5 Benefits of the project

3.5.1 The benefits to the Borough, both financial and non-financial, are numerous. Table 1 below summarises the estimated benefit amount and realisation.

Description of Benefit	Financial/non-financial benefit?	Estimated benefit amount?	When will the benefit be realised?	One-off or recurring?
Increased use of library facilities at Kilburn	Non-/financial	Queens Park & Kilburn population circa 23k	March 2024	Recurring
New space used for community activity	Non-/financial	85% of groups responding to engagement survey would be interested in using space at the library	March 2024	Recurring
New space used for commercial hire	Financial	Currently no provision / hire. Estimated there will be an interest in commercial bookings	From March 2024	Recurring
Higher user satisfaction ratings for the library and increased usage amongst residents in South Kilburn	Non-/financial	10% increase in active users	March 2024	Recurring

3.6 Alignment with Strategic Objectives

3.6.1 Asset Management Strategy:

- With the closure of Brondesbury Road and Challenge House to Brent Staff/Services in 2021, the Council's operational estate is now concentrated in 24 assets across Brent, down from circa 40 in 2013
- Of the remaining buildings, the six libraries are vital community resources, which along with their traditional reading, learning, cultural and information services, include locality-based working for social workers, and Community Hubs.
- This proposal will support delivery of the strategy through maximising the space available for community benefit, broadening the library offer and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the building

3.6.2 Borough Plan 2023-27:

- Prosperity, Pride and Belonging in Brent
- Greater availability and uptake of skills development and training initiatives
- Increasing footfall and animation to the high streets
- A Cleaner, Greener future
- Increase in resident engagement and influence in decision making
- The Best Start in Life
- Encouraging young people to be active in their communities, working with existing youth forums and working to widen and diversify their reach
- Improved opportunities for people in Black African, Somalian and Caribbean communities

3.6.3 Brent Black Community Action Plan:

- *Early Intervention, Children & Young People*; improved facilities and attractive venues to platform black history and black excellence
- *Supporting the Black Community and Voluntary Sector*; provision of community space and programme of workshops and skills development for capacity building
- Residents of black ethnic groups represent around 40% of the South Kilburn population so this project would present a significant opportunity to engage with these communities and deliver material improvements to local services with them

3.6.4 Brent Local Plan 2019-2041

- Libraries are key cultural and community facilities, which support participation through their general use, culture and learning provision

- Local Plan Objective - Strong & Inclusive Communities: ensure the delivery of a wide range of essential social infrastructure in Growth Areas and across the borough to support the delivery of sustainable communities

3.6.5 Digital Strategy:

- The plans will create dedicated digital workspace areas to improve the capacity and reach of the digital support offer delivered between the Hubs, libraries and Brent Start

3.6.6 Climate & Ecological Emergency Strategy:

- The plans will improve energy efficiency at the library; sustainable practices and materials will be followed in the development

3.7 Timescales

3.7.1 Table 2 below summarises an indicative timeline of milestones.

Milestone	Start	Finish
Decision on ACE funding (publicised from the 20 th March)	21/02/23	21/02/23
Community engagement	01/05/23	29/06/23
Submit planning application	14/05/23	14/05/23
Tender period	19/07/23	21/08/23
Receive planning decision	23/07/23	23/07/23
Award tender; notification of contract	18/10/23	23/10/23
Close library, open pop up & decant into storage	16/11/23	27/11/23
Construction period	30/11/23	21/03/24
Installation of furniture & relocation of items from storage	26/03/24	08/04/24
Soft launch reopening	11/04/24	11/04/24

3.8 Risks

3.8.1 Table 3 below summarises the main risks and mitigations of the development.

Risk/issue description (incl. impact)	Planned mitigation or resolution	Owner
No library provision during development and refurbishment	Partnership agreements are being explored to provide temporary library facilities at The Granville in South Kilburn whilst works are undertaken on the main library building.	Libraries Operations Manager

Delays in procurement and contracting process hold up project timeline	Early and ongoing engagement with Brent procurement and legal teams with close monitoring of timeline and action plan	Project Manager / Properties Team
Further building faults identified causing cost inflation at RIBA Stage 4	Confirmation given from properties team that no further works outside of this scope are anticipated	Project Manager / Properties Team
Works delayed due to supply chain / labour shortages	Orders to be placed in good time to ensure supply; Successful bidder to be interviewed and undertaking to commit resources given before contract award	Project Manager / Properties Team
Excessive price inflation on materials and construction costs	Estimating this project in the current financial climate is a difficult job for this project. However, with hindsight of the Harlesden development a generous contingency of 19% (approx.) of total spend (inclusive of contingency) has been factored into the budget; orders to be placed early in the project where possible and close contact maintained with suppliers to track any anticipated major fluctuations	Project Manager / Library Operations Manager

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The project will futureproof the library facilities and enabling more flexible use, building in capacity for the service offer to adapt to changing community needs. Opportunities for limited income generation will also be created through the community room and redesign to enable the library to be hired outside of normal operating hours, however, this is yet to be quantified.
- 4.2 The total cost of the project is anticipated to be £765k. The Council has secured £231k from the ACE Libraries Improvement Fund. The remaining £534k will be funded through SCIL.
- 4.3 The project was reviewed by the Infrastructure Officer Working Group (IOWG) on 13 April 2023. It was considered that the project meets the regulations for spending SCIL in accordance with Section 216(2) of the Planning Act 2008 (As amended). The IOWG also advised that they considered that the project would be a good use of SCIL as it would support development and growth within the Kilburn area as outlined in the Brent Local Plan and Infrastructure Delivery Plan

where this project has been specifically identified to support the level of growth and development.

- 4.4 The proportion of the funding included in the bid to ACE LIF was determined in consultation with them and focussed on the elements of the project most aligned to the objectives of the grant fund. Whilst no minimum matched funding was required, bids with higher rates of additional funding are rated more highly in the competitive assessment process.
- 4.5 The expected costs for the scheme are based on estimates submitted by OCR Surveying, commissioned by the Council to produce a method statement, designs and access report and FG Library, a design company who advised on the library fit out.
- 4.6 The estimates were issued in Dec 2022 and include a forecast uplift in prices for fixtures and fittings by the estimated purchase date in Q2 2023. However, all suppliers have cautioned that due to the unpredictable nature of the current inflationary and supply chain challenges facing the construction sector there may be further variation in prices. A programme contingency of 23% has been included on the project costs and will be managed through the Capital Programme governance arrangements.
- 4.7 Breakdown of cost are shown below in Table 4.

Item	Cost
Construction and refurbishment to the premises (including the accessible toilet)	£453,629
Project management, surveying & professional fees	£66,871
Furniture, fittings, and equipment	£100,000
Contingency	£144,500
Total Estimated Project Cost	£765,099
Total value of ACE funding application	£231,500
Total SCIL funding	£534,000

5.0 Procurement

- 5.1 The figures quoted for the works and supplies detailed in this report would likely amount to a medium value contract and be advertised for open tender with a quality/price scoring ratio of 60/40.
- 5.2 Successful bidders will be required to demonstrate they have the appropriate skills and experience of working on similar projects and a high emphasis will also be placed on social value contributions in the bidding stage. The contractor will be given a list of possible options regarding their social value contribution and will

submit their proposal alongside the tender. This may include apprenticeships, community activities, CV clinics, purchasing materials locally and other similar activities.

5.3 Our contracted surveyor will review and assess the tenders to ensure they are equal and consistent and will work with the project management team and Brent's procurement team to ensure legal compliance and best value. At all times the process will be carried out transparently and ethically and in line with the internal procurement guidelines.

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 The Council has a statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 (the Act) 'to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons' for all those who live, work or study in the area (section 7). This proposal will support the Council's delivery of this duty by improving and investing in library facilities, enhancing the library offer for residents and improving access for residents with additional needs.

6.2 The Guidance for Libraries as a Statutory Service 2021 states

Every council in England is required to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient' library service under the Act. It must do so in a way which meets the needs of local library users taking into account the resources available. What a comprehensive and efficient service means will differ between councils and will depend on the needs of each area. It is therefore the role of councillors and officials at a local level to determine how much they spend on libraries and how they manage and deliver their service. This must be done:

- in consultation with their communities
- through analysis of evidence around local needs
- in accordance with their statutory duties

6.3 The project originates from the CMT recommendation in November 2019 that a review of the library property portfolio be conducted, and a plan developed to improve the estate.

6.4 The building is fully owned by the Council and, though unlisted, the proposals will support the retention of a heritage site and ensure the new design compliments the existing historic elements from the original 1894 building.

6.5 In awarding the contract the Council is required to comply with the procurement principles of equal treatment, transparency, and non-discrimination.

7.0 Equality Implications

7.1 The project outlined in this paper has positive diversity implications by helping to make the Kilburn Library site and service offer accessible for a wider age

range of users and particularly enhancing the offer for children, young people and students.

- 7.2 The project also supports the Black Community Action Plan through the opportunities to bring particular improvements and resources for those residents who represent a significant proportion of the South Kilburn community.

8.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

- 8.1 The Lead Member with responsibility for the work of this service area has and will continue to be kept informed about this development, plan and its delivery.

9.0 Human Resources/Property Implications (if appropriate)

- 9.1 There are no implications arising from this paper.

Report sign off:

***Peter Gadson
Corporate Director of Resident Services***