

Feedback received on the Archives Options Appraisal report

	Date received	Response by	Comments
1	27/07/2017	Individual	<p>Thank you for forwarding this to me. I would like to congratulate the Lambeth Team on such a detailed and well-reasoned report. As the Lambeth Archives are of both national and metropolitan importance can I suggest that you forward a copy to Dr Mark Merry who is the acting head of the Centre for Metropolitan History at the Institute for Historical Research at Senate House?</p> <p>I have done so informally but a formal approach would probably be sensible as he will have an overview on the state of London and other archives.</p> <p>Although an expensive option I would have thought that the best location is the OvalHouse as it make the Archives easily accessible in the centre of Brixton. Not only are they then close to the BCA and Brixton Library (and it might then be possible to consider some resource sharing with them even if only in terms of training costs etc) but they are easily accessible by Tube to those researching in archives of London and national importance such as the LMA and Lambeth Palace. It is likely that if the HLF were to offer funding to a Lambeth Archive proposal the Brixton location would meet with favour for this reason.</p> <p>Oval House is also likely to be the most easily accessible location for LBL residents given both the centrality and the transport links to the area. The proximity of the Ritzy with the ability to offer screening/conferences and other sizeable events and the opportunity for temporary public art in Windrush square is also likely to be appealing to the HLF. Collaborations with BCA would be much easier to manage and might well free up Lambeth Archives to focus on some of the other major history of Lambeth including Chartism and Vauxhall Gardens as an eighteenth century equivalent to the lively nightlife now centred in Brixton. (Or even the Female Friendly Society as a feminist icon.)</p>
2	02/08/2017	Friends of Brockwell Park	<p>This is the view of the Friends of Brockwell Park:</p> <p>Friends of Brockwell Park (FOBP) welcomes the thorough report from Creative Cultures Consultants on the future of Lambeth Archives. Lambeth Archives is a jewel in the crown of Lambeth and we believe it should be made fit for the 21st century by being rehoused, with as little delay as possible, in a central, accessible, single-site location, designed according to the best modern archival standards. Such a site can help the Archives broaden its appeal to all the communities of Lambeth and enhance its ability to generate income. We urge Lambeth Council to take this unique opportunity to preserve a great institution for generations to come.</p>
3	07/08/2017	Individual	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the consultants' report (although I note that the report was clearly completed some months ago and your deadline for responses, in a holiday period, is absurdly short).</p> <p>The report rightly recognises the importance of the archives ('a hidden treasure') and the need to conserve, access and display them properly. For this purpose, the Minet site has drawbacks in terms both of public transport access and the current archival facilities. But all of the alternative sites have drawbacks, will be costly to develop, and would take several years to bring to fruition.</p> <p>It is therefore highly relevant that the report also recognises the importance of developing a hub for the local community in the area of the Minet Estate, a hub lost by the closure of the local library. The need has been increased by the new local housing and school development (eg Oval Quarter and St Gabriel's College). Personal observation of all the other libraries within a 2 mile radius (Camberwell, Peckham, Brixton, Durning and South Lambeth) underlines the very high demand for study facilities for young people, including internet access - the loss of the Minet is a severe deprivation on that score.</p> <p>I hope that Lambeth will recognise both the need for proper conservation, display of and access to its archive, and for a local hub library at Minet to be managed (as before) alongside the archive for the period of several years whilst a new site is developed. This dual use of the site would help to keep costs down relative to the cost of running either function independently of the other. It would also allow time for any further proposals for the Minet site, to include a local library, to be developed.</p>
4	08/08/2017	Individual	<p>Thanks for sending me the Archives options report- it is a good read.</p> <p>I do use Archives from time to time so do have some comments. It's usually very dry work so some kind of refreshments and place to wash hands are helpful!</p> <p>Generally more and more archive research is done online thanks to digitisation – whether free or paid for access. I would like to see more on plans for digitisation – as these clearly have an impact on the number of visitors and therefore the building options.</p> <p>I am told drainage records are a frequent reason for visits to Lambeth Archives. Have you thought about digitising these large sheets, perhaps with financial help from Thames Water, and then charging for a digital down load – offering a visit to see paper records at no charge.</p>

			<p>As Ancestry and Find My Past have and continue to digitise a huge amount of records- how many microfilms & microfiche can be scrapped eg index to 1851 census? Family History has overtaken Angling as the UK's favourite hobby!</p> <p>The lack of any information strategy for the council is very worrying – particularly as we are undergoing a massive down size.</p> <p>Any venue must have a better location than the Minet. Getting a timely distance from the stores is important. Many people can only visit once or twice and being organised enough to order everything in advance is a real skill. As much of Lambeth's history was when we were in Surrey a partnership with other "old Surrey" boroughs make sense. The John Harvard refurb was a missed opportunity. A partnership with LMA and the Guildhall Library also makes sense.</p> <p>Do you know what has happened to the small but perfect local history collection at Upper Norwood library? It would be helpful to see a note on reasons for discounting the Carnegie near Herne Hill.</p> <p>People resources are key to any archives. What information archivists hold in their heads is the most invaluable resource – and not possible to simply turn into a comprehensive set of research guides. Volunteer scan also play a key role- advising visitors on basic steps for house/estate or family history researchand of course creating indexes.</p>
5	08/08/2017	Norwood Society	<p>Response of Norwood Society:</p> <p>The Norwood Society welcomes the thorough report and broadly supports the conclusions of the consultants - 'Creative Consultants'. Lambeth Archives, in common with other London boroughs, contains a diverse collection including 'out of borough' material. For example, it includes a Crystal Palace Collection, although the post 1864 site was in what is now Bromley and that borough has its own collection, as does Croydon and the LMA. This presents challenges for researchers, and should the consultants' recommendations on digital cataloguing and overall digitisation be followed this would be a major improvement.</p> <p>Appendix 2 addresses the suggestion of a community archive movement for Lambeth. 2.3 focusses on the intentions of the Friends of West Norwood Cemetery and mentions the relationship with the Norwood Society. The consultants may not have been aware that the Upper Norwood Library, managed by an independent trust, has a significant collection of local history material that encompasses the five boroughs that cover the local area. The Society's priority is to explore how this could be made more readily available to the local residents with perhaps the library having a role as a local history centre for Crystal Palace and Norwood.</p> <p>The Norwood Society's concern as an organisation covering the south east of Lambeth Borough, as well as parts of the adjacent boroughs, is for an archive to be easily accessible for its residents and members. The Minet site has limitations for travel and any alternative must be an improvement. From Section 4.1 of the report the greatest category of users is the 28% from the small geographical area of SW9 & SE5. Any future siting of the archive should enable it to attract a more widespread usage. The nature of London archives is such that users from neighbouring boroughs and further afield can make a valuable contribution to the development of the knowledge of the heritage of Lambeth. In Section 7.1.2 the report draws attention to the open shelf local history collection at the Minet. It is vital that this is retained. It is common that, while awaiting ordered documents, researchers browse the open shelf collection and discover useful material of which they are unaware. Furthermore, if items such as street directories are readily available it can save staff time in constantly retrieving them from a closed store. In-house facilities are also important, particularly toilets, but a common room area for visitors is an imperative. It is not enough to suppose, as in section 7.1.2, that nearby cafes are sufficient as researchers commonly welcome short breaks and need somewhere to consume a drink and sandwiches.</p> <p>In contention is the interim use of 2-8 Gracefield Gardens. Our opinion is that any interim move for the archives is wholly inappropriate, a waste of resources and presents the danger of ending as an unsatisfactory permanent home. We understand this to be the view of the Lambeth Local History Forum.</p> <p>The report's summary presents two clear alternatives - the Redfearn Centre, 329 Kennington Lane and the Ovalhouse/Summerleyton Road development:</p> <p>The Kennington Lane/Redfearn Centre has much to commend it, although the option of a split site with documents being transported across Oval Way is unsatisfactory. Therefore should this site be chosen then 'option C/3' is the preferred outcome. It is feared that this option would be financially prohibitive. Redfearn Centre has good transport links, but being close to Vauxhall Station/transport interchange, it suffers from the disadvantage of not being attractive to the casual user and may deter the present users from SW9/SE5. On the other hand, it would attract those from further afield, especially those from 'out of borough'.</p> <p>Ovalhouse is the firm preference for the Norwood Society as it is located in Brixton with numerous transport links and in an area that potential users can combine with shopping etc. This is important if a wider cohort of users is sought. Someone who is not familiar with archives are more likely to visit 'to see what is there' if a special journey is not required. Also, Brixton is served by bus routes that cover the whole of Lambeth Borough and are a cheaper form of transport than rail. If the issues of revenue costs can be overcome Option A is the more attractive.</p>

			This response has been prepared on behalf of the executive committee of the Norwood Society.
6	11/08/2017	Individual	<p>As requested by Cllr Winifred in her email of 25 July, I am sending you my comments on this report. Please note that while I am a member of more than one of the stakeholder societies which are being consulted, these are my personal views being put forward in my individual capacity.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am a local historian and writer. I make use of Lambeth Archives, and also a number of national and regional archive collections including those of other boroughs. I have also deposited in Lambeth Archives the records of a campaigning group with which I was once associated. 2. The Lambeth Archives collection has a scope well beyond what is found in many London boroughs. One reason for this is the willingness of record holders to donate or deposit their material. That willingness does of course depend on the Archives being well cared for in suitable facilities. Lambeth is very fortunate, despite cuts, in having a knowledgeable and capable Archives team. 3. The Archives has great potential, both as a resource to the citizens of Lambeth and as an advertisement for the Borough. It could be a flagship service, second to none in London. However it cannot realise that potential in its present location. It is inaccessible, the storage facilities are not such as to inspire confidence, and the arrangements for the visiting public a disgrace (e.g. no public toilet!). 4. I therefore strongly support the policy of relocation to a more central site, and agree with the three optimum relocation options identified by the consultants. Any of the three would appear satisfactory, so perhaps ease of implementation should be a determining factor. 5. I would be strongly opposed to an option of rebuilding on the Minet site. It would involve a double move of the Archives, to somewhere temporary and then back again, with attendant costs and risks. And there would still be the problem of a difficult to reach location. 6. I hope Cabinet will take an early decision to adopt one of the optimum relocation options.
7	14/08/2017	Friends of Stockwell War Memorial and Gardens	<p>We are writing on behalf of the committee of Friends of Stockwell War Memorial and Gardens, a member society of Lambeth Local History Forum (LLHF).</p> <p>FoSWMG is submitting the following comments on the Options Appraisal Report on the future of Lambeth Archives.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lambeth Archives' unique collections are is among the finest in the country and of interest to people across the world. It almost goes without saying that they deserve to be kept in the most appropriate environment. 2. Our specific comments on the proposals are these: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A split site (with documents kept off site, even if nearby) would be logistically nightmarish and introduce physical risks to the collection. 2. Likewise, a temporary solution must be rejected as it brings additional expenditure and will increase overall costs with no perceivable benefit. The Archives should be given adequate space to grow and acquire (unfortunately, digitising the collection — which is of course essential — will not reduce the requirement for storage). 3. The best solution would be to use or acquire a freehold site and to develop a bespoke building (the obvious benefits being the use of capital rather than budget and state-of-the-art technology and design to reduce operational and energy costs). 4. We hope and trust that the consultation process will allow the continued involvement of LLHF in the development of the Archives.
8	14/08/2017	Individual	<p>As a resident of Lambeth, I would like to register my concerns about the future of the Lambeth Archives in relation to a document I haven't been able to access. I would like to see them to stay exactly where they are at the moment – in the Minet Library. I would also like to see the library re-opened – as A LIBRARY! I don't understand why the library was closed last year, presumably leaving people unable to access the archives.</p> <p>Please take my comments as part of the consultation process.</p>
9	14/08/2017	Individual	<p>This is my comment on proposed plans for the future of the Lambeth Archives, currently located at the Minet Library.</p> <p>I am concerned that the Council is not giving proper consideration to maintaining and more appropriately enhancing this important resource. The 2 proposed 'short-listed' sites are not adequate. Apart from obvious short-fallings with respect to access and accommodation, they lack stature and ambition.</p> <p>The Council should consider 3 other options instead:</p>

			<p>1) A location to be determined in Waterloo, near the Southbank. This would have the great advantage of general access for the benefit of non-Lambeth researchers, with the potential to use the Archives to put Lambeth 'on the map'. This would require a new-build, with an exciting architectural aspect to meet the expectations of its premier location.</p> <p>2) Keep the Archive at Minet, but with an enhanced architecturally significant extension. This would have the benefit of continuity, combined with the potential to feed into a regeneration of the Loughborough Junction / Myatt Fields district.</p> <p>3) Put the archives in Carnegie Library - the obvious choice. There are adequate transport links, at least as good as those which have served Minet, and potential for expansion into the first floor and/or into the basement. Adding the archives to a fully functioning library would mutually enhance both services. This would be better than splitting use between a gym and a poorly defined community centre with a much reduced library service removed from its original centrality to a peripheral position.</p>
10	16/08/2017	Vauxhall Society	<p>The Vauxhall Society - Response to Lambeth Archives Option Appraisal Report</p> <p>There is huge public support for Lambeth Archives, whose importance is global. David Coke's book on Vauxhall Gardens, Vauxhall Gardens: A History (Yale University Press, 2011), which drives interest in and visitors to Lambeth from all over the world, would have been impossible without Lambeth Archives.</p> <p>A well-situated, accessible, purpose-built and properly resourced Lambeth Archives that embodies a positive commercial as well as social purpose is essential. It will continue to pay Lambeth a dividend that is financial as well as social and cultural and will stimulate local, business and international usage/ revenue, enhance the identity, image and visibility of Lambeth, and so boost regeneration.</p> <p>Of the two options that scored most highly in the report (301 Kennington Lane and Ovalhouse Brixton), our preference is 301 Kennington Lane as it will allow the build of a bespoke environment, which we consider essential. Any split-site or temporary solution should be discarded as too difficult logistically and too expensive. We support the inclusion of plans to include museum / exhibition space.</p>
11	16/08/2017	Individual	<p>I am a Lambeth resident and a member of several community groups concerned about the future of Lambeth Archives, including Friends of Carnegie Library.</p> <p>I have recently come across your options report for Lambeth archives approximately at the same time as the new planning approval for Lambeth Place Road Library and Archives. Have you seen this planning approval submission from the Church Commissioners ?</p> <p>https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/planning-applications-and-decisions/planning-application-search/lambeth-palace</p> <p>An idea one of our members had is for LBL to settle on a site near to Waterloo Station, Lambeth's only national transport hub. The added attraction of being near to the Lambeth Palace and it could even have been actually adjoining.</p> <p>It must have been forgotten that the Archbishop gifted the adjoining Park to the people of Lambeth; they, through their Council, might have been willing to return a small piece of it back to him to build his Archive Library on. If it's too late for that, surely the best place for our Archives is a new-build in the Park alongside his, so providing a symbiotic relationship from which both would prosper!</p> <p>Hope you would consider this new option in your final report alongside the Oval Gas Works option.</p>
12	16/08/2017	Individual	<p>Thank you for sending me the above report. I have read part of its 84 pages - it would have been helpful if a report completed in February had been available for comment for rather longer than the 4 weeks allowed.</p> <p>It is apparent that the current location of the Archives is unsatisfactory - it is inaccessible and lacking in facilities and room for expansion. Of the alternatives examined only Ovalhouse and the OAKDA development at the Oval have long term viability combining suitable storage conditions, which could gain accreditation, with room for expansion and good transport access.</p> <p>Ovalhouse, with or without Carlton mansions, is clearly the best site since it is close to Brixton town centre and convenient for regular users and more likely to attract "passing trade". Obviously it would be better if storage and public and staff facilities were in the same building and, given sufficient will, this should be achievable.</p>
13	16/08/2017	Lambeth Local History Forum	<p>COMMENTS OF THE LAMBETH LOCAL HISTORY FORUM</p> <p>The Forum, as a collective body, does not wish to endorse any particular site option for the future location of Lambeth archives. However, it does wish to emphasise a number of the most important considerations which need to be taken into account in deciding the future of the archives.</p>

			<p>Overall, we consider the report was well researched and presented by experienced, independent professionals.</p> <p>The following key points stand out to us:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Lambeth archive is the memory of the borough. It is one of the best local archives in London. It is an extremely important resource, not only for users from within the borough, but also from far afield. It deserves a state-of-the-art facility of which the borough can be proud. 2. A split site is not an acceptable option. Moving archive material between sites exposes it to unnecessary risk. It is very inconvenient for users and staff. It adds to the running costs of the archives. 3. A temporary location is also not acceptable. Moving an archive is a complicated, very time consuming and expensive process. Doing it twice presents an unnecessary risk to the archive material and is a considerable waste of resources. 4. Digitisation, while entirely desirable in itself, will not reduce the size of the archive. <p>Achieving the above objectives would be best supported by being prepared to spend capital upfront to reduce running costs, repairs and upgrades in the future. It is also desirable to utilise a site for which Lambeth owns the freehold. This will reduce running costs by avoiding rents and give greater long-term security to the archive.</p>
14	17/08/2017	Individual	<p>Thank you for sending me a copy of the options appraisal report. It is very interesting to read.</p> <p>I'd like to address the notion that the existing Archives are in the 'the wrong location in Lambeth and that access is bad'</p> <p>We need to keep something of value in our community. We also need public buildings in the neighbourhood, places where people can go outside of their homes, since so many other non residential buildings in the area have been converted to housing.</p> <p>The immediate area is now more densely residential than it has ever been. The report suggests that the Archives are inaccessible and the location is 'poor', but that does not stop residents in the area accessing their homes from their places of work, study, leisure and shopping centres.</p> <p>If accessibility from within London is the most important element of any assessment of location, there is little difference in journey times between the alternative sites proposed and the existing location on public transport. The bus stop in Akerman road a 3 minute walk from the existing archives. Since the stop on the other side of the road was closed several years ago and then completely removed, an additional bus stop near the Archives building on Knatchbull road on the existing P5 bus route, would increase the public transport option.</p> <p>The current revenue budget for the archives service may not be sufficient to enable it to operate in a new location. Might it therefore be more economical to stay in the same location?</p> <p>If the problem is that people don't visit, and the building is felt to be a 'secret' then it needs to be publicized and this would apply wherever it is situated. More education work and partnership work are not dependent on its location The survey conducted showed that extending opening hours was the top reason to make people more likely to use the archives,</p> <p>I understand that challenges exist in improving the storage and facilities at the existing site but suggest that these options could be explored further to benefit the community</p>
15	17/08/2017	Longfield Hall Trust	<p>Longfield Hall Trust wishes to take up the opportunity to respond to the consultation on the options for a future home for Lambeth Archives.</p> <p>Our first point is that the consultants seemed unaware of both Longfield Hall, which is immediately opposite the Archives, and more importantly, of the longstanding relationship between Longfield Hall and Lambeth Archives. The most recent manifestation of this relationship was a Heritage Lottery Funded oral history project this summer. This project, Showcasing our History, introduced young people to the Archives and encouraged them to use the Archives to research the local history of the area, particularly its relationship with performance and performers. The project resulted in a well attended (70 people) performance based on what the young people discovered. More than 15 young people visited and used the Archives in the research phase of the project. That is a statistically significant number of visitors, given the number of users the Archives generally attracts.</p> <p>Longfield Hall Trust is at the start of what it hopes will be a long-term involvement with HLF. Historically, Longfield Hall is important because it was home to the first publicly funded Black Theatre company, Dark & Light. We expect our next HLF project to delve more deeply into the history of Black Theatre, so the current location of the Archives is actually advantageous and may well increase usage of the Archives, particularly by young people.</p> <p>Our second point is a more general one. The consultants view the Minet site as inaccessible because of its distance from public transport. One alternative, which the consultants appeared not to consider, is that Lambeth should lobby to improve public transport to and around the Minet site. LHT has already started to do this and has secured the support of local councillors for the siting a docking station for 'Boris' bikes either at Longfield Hall or at the Archives and for introducing a bus stop for the P5 close to Longfield Hall and the</p>

			<p>Archives/library. As you know TfL is extending the reach of Boris Bikes to Brixton. Furthermore, the substantial developments at Loughborough Junction may well mean that there is more public demand for North/South public transport along Loughborough Road, perhaps even a tram which could join either Brixton Road or Camberwell New Road. One spin-off of such a development would be that the Minet site would become more readily accessible. As the council already owns the Minet site, a redevelopment there, focused around the Archives, would look increasingly practical. Finally, as the area around Lambeth Archives and Longfield Hall is becoming a Controlled Parking Zone, it should become easier for Archive users to find a (paid for) parking space close by. Most of the proposed alternative sites lie on red routes where parking is impossible.</p> <p>Our final point is that the consultants downplay the fact that the Minet family endowed Lambeth Archives with some of the items that make the Archives' collection of more than local interest. The Minet family was a huge benefactor to Vassall ward and built the original home for the Archives. The clear expectation of William Minet and his descendants was that his archive would remain at the place he had chosen. So there are strong arguments, moral and historical, that at least his portion of the archive should remain at the Minet site. A secondary point is that William Minet envisaged his estate a whole, with community assets, such as the library, Longfield Hall and Myatt's Fields Park, buttressing and complementing each other. The removal of the Archives potentially weakens what remains.</p> <p>LHT would also like to draw your attention to the fact that it is preparing to install a disabled WC on its ground floor, accessible from Burton Road. This facility would of course be accessible to users of the Archives, should they remain at Minet.</p>
16	17/08/2017	Green Party	<p>The report refers to a "prevailing uncertainty and lack of leadership or vision" and "The council's lack of a clear records management policy". The absence of a direction means it is hard to be sure that the siting of Lambeth Archives won't be a recurrent issue in ten years' time.</p> <p>An informed choice cannot properly be determined because the costs and any associated details have been redacted from the assessment of each site. Unless there is no financial constraint, it borders on fantasy to nominate a preference.</p> <p>However this submission draws on the expertise of about a dozen people with professional knowledge of libraries, archives, outreach and research and the comments arise from community involvement.</p> <p>It is agreed that a single site is ideal. Lambeth Archives' site will house future material as well as historic and even if digitised, the original material will be kept. The site needs to have capacity for this. It is preferable that the collection not be split and this too is a challenge which even the bespoke Black Cultural Archives in Windrush Square does not meet - part of its collection is in Othello Close, Kennington.</p> <p>Of the suggested single site options - 301 Kennington Lane, Ovalhouse and Keybridge, Kennington Lane has the advantage of being convenient to reach from the wider Greater London area, close to the Imperial War Museum for outreach and research purposes and within the borough.</p> <p>Lambeth Council could of course, take an 'invest to save' approach and create one suitable venue now, in order to incur lower running costs and fewer moves or splits in the future. A new-build site could be considered in Kennington Lane.</p> <p>The connected site archive in Ovalhouse and Carlton Mansions would be attractive only if this were an integral part of Deborah Bestwick's vision for its new home on Somerleyton Road. Its business model assumed management of the spare floor-space plus Carlton Mansions to generate income to support the theatre. It is not known whether installing an archive in the space is compatible with this. If depositing the material here was later shifted or separation, it risks damage and loss. One move is a high priority.</p> <p>The report does not reflect the potential of Minet and Carnegie Libraries as sites or connected sites. They are both ruled out, yet for a full exploration of options, each have features worth noting.</p> <p>Minet Library is not prominently situated; however the use of an archive is not so much a spontaneous visit but more of a planned booking where the route is anticipated. The Minet's site affords potential when appraising the use of the entire site for archives or expanding the building.</p> <p>Carnegie Library is a short walk or bus journey from four rail stations - Herne Hill, Denmark Hill, Loughborough Junction and North Dulwich and on numerous bus routes. It has accommodated a diverse range of clubs and activities and has good potential in size with rooms for public research and exhibition space. If the Council were to fit the basement out for archive storage rather than a gym, it has merits.</p> <p>This is an opportunity to build on much that is positive about Lambeth's heritage. Notwithstanding the fact that Lambeth Archives has been increasingly underfunded, it attracts researchers, community groups, school visits, Lambeth Local History festival, Black history month and local history walks and talks. There is scope to develop an Outreach programme and learn from London Metropolitan Archives and the National Archives and to form alliances with partners for exhibitions - the new Postal Museum is an example of how material can</p>

			<p>be on permanent loan, thereby transferring maintenance and storage elsewhere.</p> <p>The question of accommodating the borough's archives is not just about the storage of documents or the interest in artefacts and footage, it is about valuing those who formed Lambeth's identity. A clear vision and the right venue will reflect that.</p>
17	17/08/2017	Lambeth Archives Staff	<p>Comments from Lambeth Archives team on archives appraisal report by Creative Cultures, published July 2017.</p> <p>This is an impressive piece of work that deserves to be influential.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report sets out its methodology and is thorough, systematic, clear, evidence-based and objective • The report properly draws attention to a number of areas of context and archival best practice that are worth repeating here: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That split site archive services are undesirable on the grounds of cost, security and user convenience ○ That a temporary move of an archive is highly undesirable on the grounds of cost, disruption and possibility that temporary becomes permanent ○ That digitisation, while a useful access tool is a strategy that is unlikely to substantially reduce the physical volume of a collection, due to the scale and cost of the undertaking and uncertainty of providing long-term digital access. • The report makes a number of comments about online access to catalogues and collections. In general it has overplayed deficiencies (eg there is an online catalogue but hosted by the National Archives and Lambeth, after the City of London has the largest image website in London) but it is reasonable to say that there is no integrated online catalogue. • The two new sites that the consultants identify, at Somerleyton Road and a new build at 301 Kennington Lane are both acceptable and have differing merits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Somerleyton Road of location near other cultural institutions, but with higher costs and complexities of conversion and shared use. ○ Kennington Lane offers the exciting possibility of a new build of a self-contained service meeting current standards and designed in a way to reduce revenue costs in future years. • It is written by a group of consultants who have extensive experience of managing archives and library services in inner-London; who have current knowledge of archival best-practice and who are influential in the profession generally. • The report makes perceptive and positive suggestions as to ways the service more generally could develop • It is hoped that the professional archives staff and members of the Lambeth Local History Forum will continue to be involved in this important process
18	17/08/2017	The Clapham Society	<p>Response to Lambeth Archives Option Appraisal Report from The Clapham Society</p> <p>We welcome this well-researched, comprehensive report and hope that it will result in a speedy relocation of Lambeth's world class archive. It is vital that this valuable resource is carefully maintained and housed in the best possible conditions.</p> <p>We would urge that the entire archive should be on one site, which is easily accessible by public transport. A split site is not acceptable. We also feel that there should be no temporary interim move, which would risk damage to the material and cause inconvenience to users, as well as additional expense.</p> <p>In order to comply with national criteria, to enable digitisation and to avoid possible later costs for extension, maintenance and upgrade, a new build would clearly be the best option.</p> <p>It is unfortunate that the report does not give any detail of costs nor state whether Lambeth already owns the recommended sites. These are clearly important factors to take into account when making a decision. On the basis that the council does own 301 Kennington a custom built Archive on that site would appear to be the best option, and would avoid any possible conflict with sharing a building with Oval House.</p> <p>A state-of-the-art, custom-built Archive could be an advertisement for Lambeth, and could generate income for the council by sale of research services, and further development of the excellent Landmark image website. This is an exciting opportunity which we hope the council will embrace wholeheartedly and speedily.</p>
19	17/08/2017	Individual	<p>I hope this will continue at Minet library or the library will close. The more accessible option is central Brixton but no suitable site has been proposed</p>
20	17/08/2017	Brixton Society	<p>Following the presentation to the Stakeholder Group on 24 July, I am writing to set out the comments of the Brixton Society on the above report, before it is submitted to the Council's Cabinet for decision.</p> <p>The Brixton Society is the amenity society covering the central part of the borough. It is active in promoting good practice in architecture and planning, and in protecting and enhancing local amenities. It also encourages and publishes local history research, for which Lambeth Archives has been a valuable resource.</p>

			<p>It's tempting to criticise the missed opportunities due to delays and competing interests within the Council hierarchy, but we have tried to focus on the "front-runner" sites and what they will require to be practical solutions for housing Lambeth's Archives.</p> <p>Somerleyton Road/ Coldharbour Lane sites: (para 8.23) This is an attractive site because of its central position within the borough, and good public transport access. The critical consideration will be whether all the Archives functions can be fitted within the building envelope without omitting or compromising any core elements. The consultants were concerned at relatively high capital and revenue costs, but these may be similar for any new building with specialised services.</p> <p>Our main concern about sharing the site with the Oval Theatre is the risk of the Theatre plans being delayed, or their business plans being weakened, by adding the Archives functions within the building, when the Theatre project is already well advanced in its planning.</p> <p>To minimise the risks, we recommend that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The feasibility of fitting the required Archives floorspace into the building should be investigated urgently, to confirm if this site is practical and offers enough floorspace. • Discussions should start immediately with Oval Theatre, to identify scope for any shared facilities (e.g. reception, education space and visitor toilets) and how these would be managed. • Archives functions should be confined to the new Theatre block (option A), rather than attempt to overflow into Carlton Mansions with its different floor levels. The consultants have already indicated (para 7.1) that small cellular spaces (such as Carlton Mansions) are less efficient for most archives functions, and more difficult to supervise. <p>Kennington Lane sites: (para 8.25) This location is still reasonably good for public transport access and within the borough context. The distance from Underground stations is only slightly more than the Brixton option. If provided solely within the 301-7 Kennington Lane site, development can proceed without the complications of phasing-in with other uses or services.</p> <p>The Redfearn Centre was provided through a PFI deal and therefore comes with inherently high revenue costs attached, so should be avoided because archives do not attract any government subsidies to offset these. Perhaps more important in practical terms, regular movement of archival documents across the road between two different buildings increases the risk of damage in transit, and increases demands on limited staff time. We therefore conclude that, among the 6 sub-options discussed, the Archives should best be provided in a single-site new development at 301-7 Kennington Lane, i.e. Option C or 3(ideal).</p> <p>Other sites: After a quarter-century of Council property sales, options for building on the remaining Council-owned sites have sharply diminished, but privately-owned sites such as Oval Gasworks or Keybridge House involve high capital cost to acquire the land, in competition with private housing development. We regret that other promising sites are now probably missed opportunities, partly due to a lack of overview within the Council at the outset, and partly due to inertia among Council officers after the consultants delivered their report 6 months ago. This has prevented fuller investigation of both the "New" Town Hall and a joint venture with Lambeth Palace Library. Despite less public transport accessibility, Carnegie Library would be suitable in size, particularly if it included the proposed basement excavation, instead of using it for a speculative gymnasium.</p> <p>Conclusions: Although the Brixton location is attractive, the 301-7 Kennington Lane site is preferred because there are less risks attached to the development.</p>
21	18/08/2017	Friends of Minet Library and Archive	<p>I am writing on behalf of Friends of Minet Library and Archives in response to the Options Appraisal Report made public by Lambeth this month.</p> <p>Friends of Minet Library and Archives submitted a business plan for the redevelopment of the archive in its current site in 2015. Our vision is for a new building on the current site, forming a cultural hub and visitor attraction along with its original partners Longfield Hall and Myatt's Fields Park. We believe that improving the transport links would benefit the archive as well as people living in the area.</p> <p>As it is, the plan to remove the archive to a centralised location represents yet another loss for this community - already one of the neighbourhoods with the highest levels of inequality in Lambeth.</p> <p>Thanks to poor quality, short sighted development since 1950s, the neighbourhood has seen the removal of most of its valuable heritage assets (including extensive Victorian housing) to be replaced with a very high level of dense, poor quality housing. It desperately needs to preserve and develop its remaining heritage assets as a springboard to create economic</p>

			<p>prosperity. The Minet family had the foresight to build the archive, library, Longfield Hall and Myatt's Fields Park as complementary assets that draw people together and meet local needs. Our plan would build on the valuable assets that remain as well as the heritage of the diverse communities that live in this neighbourhood. We believe that with the passion and commitment of local people and the high quality assets in the immediate location of the archive, we could support the council to create a really special visitor attraction and a cultural hub.</p> <p>In all circumstances, the Friends look forward to working with Lambeth towards a solution that meets our communities' urgent need for economic renewal, prosperity and connectedness and addresses the high levels of inequality in our neighbourhood.</p> <p>Friends of Minet Library and Archives asks that:</p> <p>a) the advantages of the current site (heritage location alongside assets Longfield Hall and Myatt's Fields Park; a large site; existing underground storage; a committed Friends group with experience of large scale HLF funding; low cost as the site is owned by Lambeth) will be taken into account as plans for the future of the archive are developed;</p> <p>b) a local library at Minet to be managed (as before) alongside the archive for a period of several years while a new site is developed. This dual use of the site would help to keep costs down relative to the cost of running either function independently of the other. It would also allow time for any further proposals for the Minet site, to include a local library, to be developed and would provide desperately needed amenities for local people</p> <p>c) digital information from the archive to be freely accessible to everyone without charge</p> <p>d) a community/statutory steering group is set up to cooperatively develop plans for the Minet site</p>
22	18/08/2017	Individual	<p>The indispensable requirements for the archives in future seem to me to be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Archives must only move once. Moving them twice, with all the attendant disruption and expense, should be unthinkable. 2. All facilities should be brought up to the best modern standards from the outset at the new location. 3. All existing material must be stored on site and there needs to be spare storage to allow for future expansion. 4. The location should be accessible to everyone. In particular, it should be borne in mind that many users are elderly people with limited mobility, so good bus services stopping nearby and connecting to train, Overground and Tube stations with disabled access will be essential. <p>Carnegie Library would fulfil all of the above requirements if the proposed excavation of the basement goes ahead.</p>
23	18/08/2017	Individual	<p>Thank you for sending this very readable and comprehensive report. I think that a new purpose built archive building is the best and most sensible solution, and the site identified as possible for that is 301 Kennington Lane.</p>
24	18/08/2017	Individual	<p>Supplementary to the team response sent to you by Len yesterday, which I entirely support, I wanted to put forward a short additional comment from me.</p> <p>Aside from the recommendations on the possible location of the archives, I was pleased to see that the report recommended the creation of a development strategy for the archive, with a particular focus on developing education, outreach, further improving access to our catalogue online, and consolidating these developments through accreditation.</p> <p>I was also pleased to see that the report highlights that Lambeth Archives should be a vital component in the wider information governance framework of Lambeth Council, and that it should be given capacity and support to enable it to contribute to the framework in a meaningful way.</p>
25	18/08/2017	Friends of Carnegie Library	<p>Firstly, I congratulate the consultants for their comprehensive report, which I believe was delayed and made difficult by lack of full information. It is disappointing that some of their findings were deleted or redacted.</p> <p>In particular, the absence of financial details makes it more difficult to assess and compare the various sites investigated. I also regret that consideration of Carnegie Library as a possible site was hampered, and the report on that venue removed by Lambeth. This is all the more puzzling as such obviously inappropriate venues, such as Gracefield Gardens, were included. Having seen the deleted Carnegie Library report, I wonder whether the consultants had a full site visit, unimpeded by inaccurate, skewed or misleading information. The library would have garnered more points if the following had been taken into consideration:</p>

			<p>The building's location and transport links are not "poor"; it is in the centre of the borough and within 10-12 minutes' walk from four rail stations: Loughborough Junction, Herne Hill, North Dulwich and Denmark Hill, which is also an Overground station. There are four bus routes within a 3 minute walk, and numerous others within 10-12 minutes.</p> <p>Lambeth have committed £1.25 million to excavating the basement for a gym which no one wants or needs and may not ever be installed. The basement could provide Archive storage; and the former Home Delivery room (which does have windows) could house staff and other archive material.</p> <p>There is a lift, refurbished recently. The ground floor right-hand front room, until recently the dispatch centre, Joint Fiction Reserve and office, could hold archive books, study desks etc, as the public reference & research room. The library also had a Gallery which could be used for exhibitions & displays. The main library room hosted winter fairs for 17 years and could easily have hosted Archive Open Days. Altogether, the Archives would be a perfect fit with a public library and community event & activity building. Even if it might not have been the first choice as the future home of the Archives, it should have scored more highly.</p> <p>Having said that, the overall essentials for the future of the Archives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One site which can serve for storage, with room for a growing collection, for public access, exhibition space and staff accommodation – not a split site or main site with offsite storage. • One move into a fully fitted out building which fulfils all the requirements of a modern archive, including temperature control. A temporary move before a new venue becomes available would be damaging and unacceptable. • As pointed out by Lambeth Local History Forum, digitisation is a useful addition, but cannot attempt to replace originals and would not make for reduction in space requirements. • The Woolley Collection, given to Lambeth over 100 years ago as the basis for a Lambeth Museum and added to by further acquisitions of artifacts, has never been able to be displayed. A new home for the Archives should also be taken as an opportunity to establish such a museum, which, together with the research facilities, would make the venue a real destination and celebration of Lambeth's heritage.
26	18/08/2017	Friends of Lambeth Libraries	<p>LBL's archives service is - despite a somewhat indifferent attitude from LBL - among the best in London, providing not just an excellent basic service (including the outstanding Landmark digitisation project) but a programme of walks, talks & exhibitions, crowned by the unique (we think) Heritage Festival. The latter shows the huge benefit to LBL when staff and service users collaborate.</p> <p>LBL should be proud of all this.</p> <p>Its building should accordingly be a landmark. It is of deep interest to everyone in the borough and could do much to build community pride and sense of place.</p> <p>It is thus astonishing that a basically very sound piece of work - the options appraisal - has been treated by officers in such a cavalier fashion.</p> <p>The project was begun on a sound and agreed footing in December 2014. It was then blown out of the water by the ill-informed suggestions in the culture2020 consultation in January 2015, & took months to get back on course.</p> <p>Eventually a report has been produced by consultants agreed by all to be expert and well qualified for the task. It was not publicised or placed on the LBL website.</p> <p>It was only a last-ditch effort by LLHF and cllr Winifred that enabled a hasty consultation - about 3 weeks in the middle of the summer holiday season - with LLHF members and those who had filled in an original consultation form. The intention had been not to consult anyone, although this had been clearly laid out as a core part of the process.</p> <p>It has also been apparent throughout that the expert archives & library managers have been kept in the dark.</p> <p>We now see that a whole section (re Carnegie) has been excised from the report, and there are redactions throughout. As far as we can see the missing material would not materially alter the report's conclusions, so the only effect has been to emphasise the climate of distrust created by the reluctance to consult.</p> <p>We gather that one major redaction was the removal of much of the financial content. With LBL the first to argue that money is tight, it is illogical for 'the co-operative council' to take such a not-in-front-of-the-children attitude.</p> <p>We also gather there has been little, or possibly no, discussion with Ovalhouse, one of the 2 final options.</p> <p>All that said, it is difficult to make an informed choice on what has been offered.</p> <p>However, there are firm principles that must at all costs be adhered to:</p>

			<p>- no archives collection should ever be split, in any way, for any reason - the eventual move must be once and for all, in a single stage, with no temporary housing of any part of the collection</p> <p>As LBL seems to be capital-rich, revenue-poor, it would be unforgiveable if it did other than invest capital in a high quality new-build or conversion that would be adequate to current AND FUTURE requirements AND low in revenue costs - in perpetuity.</p> <p>We strongly urge that properly qualified professionals - most especially the current archives and library management - be the ultimate decision makers, with all relevant information supplied to them.</p>
27	18/08/2017	Individual	<p>Covering email:</p> <p>I attach my response to the Option Appraisal Report on the future of Lambeth Archives, as prepared by Creative Cultures and presented to the Lambeth Local History Forum at the meeting in July 2017.</p> <p>I believe that the Lambeth Archives were never more important than they are today.</p> <p>I am writing to you today in a personal capacity. I have been a member of the Lambeth Local History Forum since 1991, and I am currently the Vice-Chairperson. For eight years I worked as a part-time researcher at Lambeth Archives, where I carried out research in response to requests from members of the public. For the past eight years I have been the Honorary Assistant Archivist at my old school, Alleyn's School in Dulwich, and I am a member of the School Archivists Group.</p> <p>My only criticism of the report is the use of the term revenue costs. The report is mercifully free of jargon, but the term revenue costs makes no sense. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, revenue is income and cost is expenditure, so revenue costs is a total contradiction. The information set out at 10.2.1 on page 73 is no help at all.</p> <p>Response:</p> <p>I congratulate Lambeth Council on having the good sense to appoint independent and highly competent consultants to consider the future of Lambeth Archives. I further congratulate the team at Creative Cultures on the detail, clarity and comprehensiveness of their report. It behoves the Council and all those who have a stake in Lambeth Archives to take cognizance of the consultants' thoughts, findings and recommendations.</p> <p>FACTS THAT NEED TO BE NOTED</p> <p>I understand that the report was submitted to the Council last February, but was not shared with us until July. I ask why that was. At the meeting in July 2017 we were presented with an 84 page report as we entered the hall, and we were expected to discuss it 10 minutes later. How realistic is that? Then we were given 18 days to consult our members, and to respond. At the behest of our Chairperson, this was later extended to 25 days. As the so-called co-operative Council, Lambeth should allow adequate time for the stakeholders to consult colleagues and the members of their societies, and to then submit their carefully considered responses.</p> <p>QUESTIONS THAT NEED TO BE ASKED – AND ANSWERED</p> <p>We now know that the report was redacted by the Council before it was shared with us. Why was the report redacted? Who ordered the redaction? As well as the consideration of the Carnegie Library as a potential location, what else has been redacted? Will we ever see the complete report? To what extent does this sort of behaviour compromise the independence of the consultants?</p> <p>IMPORTANT NOTE</p> <p>As I pointed out at the meeting in July, the Archives have been in the Minet Library since 1890, so we need time, thought and considerable care before we, ie. the Council and the community, reach a decision about the future of Lambeth Archives. We and our descendants are going to have to live with the result for at least 25, 50, maybe 100 years: we owe it to future generations to proceed with caution and to make the right decision.</p> <p>MY RESPONSE</p> <p>The purpose of an archive is to collect, store and preserve documentary material for current and future generations, and to make that material easily accessible to those who wish to use it or need to use it (Page 34). Lambeth Archives is the custodian of certain records provided by Lambeth Council, and Lambeth Archives shortly expects to receive a large number of Council records from the Town Hall as a result of the redevelopment there (Page 36). The Council and therefore the Archives are legally responsible for the storage and security of those records, so their preservation is of paramount importance: it cannot be emphasised enough the Council is under a statutory obligation to keep these records in a safe and secure place.</p> <p>The importance and value of all the Archives' holdings cannot be overstated, and we must provide the best possible location for these holdings. I have read the report in full, and I</p>

			<p>reject all the proposed locations bar one. In particular I reject the idea of a split site, and I reject the idea of a temporary home while a permanent home is being sought. It is vital that the Archives are left where they are until the best solution is found.</p> <p>BEST SOLUTION There is now an overwhelming case for a purpose-built and therefore architect-designed building to accommodate the Archives for the next 100 years. I understand that Lambeth Council is considering acquiring the freehold of 301 Kennington Lane, demolishing the current building and replacing it (Page 62). In the new building there would be space to locate the entire archives and to arrange related activities, as described in the report. It is unlikely that there would be space available in the building for any other function than Lambeth Archives – and that is as it should be (Page 62). The cost of acquisition of 301 Kennington Lane, the demolition of the existing buildings and the cost of the new building will all have to be taken into account. I am well aware of the fact that Lambeth Council is working in an environment of financial restrictions, and that this situation shows no sign of changing in the near future. However, I believe that the statutory obligation that the Council is under to preserve the Council’s own records (as well as everything else that the Archives holds) means that a fundamental solution is called for.</p> <p>Therefore I advocate a new building for Lambeth Archives, presumably at 301 Kennington Lane, though it would be sensible to consider whether another site in the Borough might be suitable and available. In advocating a new building, I am endorsing the first recommendation of the consultants, as set out in paragraph 11.5 on page 75. I commend this suggestion to Lambeth Council.</p> <p>FINANCING A NEW BUILDING FOR LAMBETH ARCHIVES I have read the consultants’ suggestions for funding opportunities set out on page 72, and they seem too me to be eminently sensible. Again, it behoves the Council to follow up these suggestions. There are good precedents for HLF funding for projects in Lambeth: Brockwell Park and the South Metropolitan Cemetery at West Norwood; this means that there are officers in the Council who are familiar with the process.</p> <p>I am aware that the Council holds considerable capital reserves, and so it should. I appreciate that these reserves cannot be used to finance current activities. However, a new building for the Archives is a capital investment, and I believe that it will be an appropriate and necessary use of those capital reserves, for the reasons set out above.</p>
28	18/08/2017	The National Archives	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the recent options appraisal report on a future home for Lambeth Archives. We are really pleased that this work is progressing and believe that we have insight you may find useful, gained through our oversight of many similar developments. As well as the following comments, we would be very happy to meet with yourselves to discuss the various options and to help you find the most suitable outcome that balances immediate needs with long-term sustainability.</p> <p>The National Archives is a government department and an executive agency under the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. We have a regulatory role of the Public Records System under the Public Records Act (1958) which includes the appointment and inspection of Places of Deposit for public records, as appointed under the Keeper of The National Archives. We are the Archives Service Accreditation Standard assessing body within England and have a wider leadership role for the archive sector, informing policy development and supporting archives to deliver effective services that meet the needs and expectations of their users. We also have considerable experience in advising archives on the necessary standards for the storage and preservation of archival material.</p> <p>We recognise the many challenges that local authorities face in terms of meeting the needs of their residents in an environment of increased financial pressures, and are pleased that a public consultation around the future location and development of Lambeth Archives is being undertaken, giving users and stakeholders the chance to express their views.</p> <p>We were impressed by the detailed consultation work carried out by Creative Cultures on behalf of Lambeth Council. The report provides a comprehensive picture of the service as it is currently, as well as sensible and carefully considered and evidenced conclusions and recommendations for its future. We would like to take this opportunity to further underline certain aspects of the report which we believe will be particularly important to bear in mind for the decision-making process to ensure a sustainable and cost-effective service is achieved.</p> <p>Potential sites Of the two sites identified in the report as the most suitable options (section 11 - Recommendations and implementation) - Kennington Lane and Somerleyton Road - we agree that both have clear benefits and would be likely to bring improvements over the current location, in terms of increased access from across the borough, space for development and growth, and opportunities for partnership working. It may be worth noting here that, if done correctly, a new build archive can reduce ongoing revenue costs considerably. The National Archives has been able to provide advice and guidance on a large number of modern archive buildings in recent years, and would be happy to do so again should Lambeth Council opt to invest in a capital project of this kind. Similarly, we would be happy to provide advice should a conversion be chosen. We understand that for these two and any other options there are a number of issues that will need to be carefully considered in order to achieve the most sustainable outcome for the archive service and the Council, including in terms of ongoing revenue costs. These key issues are addressed below.</p>

			<p>Physical space Whichever site is finally chosen for the future location of Lambeth Archives, it is vital that sufficient physical space be made available, both to house the collections themselves and to provide adequate space for staff and users. As the consultants' report points out, a lack of space for facilities and expansion space for the continually growing collections has been a serious obstacle to the development of the service at its current location within the Minet Library, so we welcome the sensible recognition that additional space is required. The report makes a useful case for this in terms of both the current service (section 3.5 - Storage) and the requirements for a new or converted site (section 7.1 - Physical requirements). By building in space for future growth of the collections, a temporary income can potentially also be gained through renting spare space to other archive services until that space is needed for Lambeth's own collections. Conversely, if Lambeth Archives were to itself rely on offsite storage (e.g. at another established archive service), this would involve additional revenue costs (for both storage and access), whilst also limiting access to material for both staff and users. For these reasons it is important to carefully weigh up the benefits and costs of this option and make use of it very selectively (as explained in section 7.1.3 - Options for reducing the floor area).</p> <p>Split sites On a related point, the report helpfully explains the considerable challenges and additional costs inherent in establishing and running a 'split-site' archive service, whereby all or a large proportion of collections are held in a separate location from where they are accessed by the public. As the report highlights (section 7.1.4 - Locating the archives in more than one building), a split site arrangement for Lambeth Archives would likely involve additional costs (both upfront and especially revenue costs), would impact on staffing requirements and accessibility of the collections, and could even put collections at additional risk of damage or loss. The report draws upon detailed guidance on the risks and impacts of split-site archive services as published by The National Archives. Should you be interested in reading the complete document, it is available here: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/split-site-services.pdf</p> <p>Temporary locations For similar reasons, any option that required moving the archive collections to a temporary location followed by an additional move to the final site (as described in section 7.3.2 - Moving an archive) would inevitably bring additional costs (both in terms of the move and the necessary temporary storage), a prolonged period of reduced or no access to the collections, and further risks to the collections. These costs and risks need to be considered when deciding on which option is most appropriate.</p> <p>Digitisation The report also describes the potential for Lambeth Archives to increase access to its collections through selective digitisation, the further development of its online resources, and exploration of possible commercial licensing opportunities (section 6.5 - Online access). While we can agree that these are all positive areas for the service to explore, we need to emphasize that digitisation of original archive material does not solve the problem of storage space, and in fact adds the additional burden and ongoing costs of digital storage, access and in particular long-term digital preservation, along with a relatively high upfront cost in terms of staff time, equipment and expertise. As such, digitisation should be seen as an investment in broader access rather than a replacement for physical storage.</p> <p>Information governance Lastly, we wholeheartedly agree with the report's recommendation (section 6.4 - Managing council records) that Lambeth Archives play a role within the Council's Information Governance Framework, to draw upon the service's existing expertise and experience in managing council records, and to ensure that the Council's responsibilities to permanently preserve and provide access to records relevant to e.g. the Local Government Acts, Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act continue to be met, for both paper and digital records. In short, the recommendations outlined in the report would contribute greatly to the service's ability to develop, attract wider and more diverse audiences, and position itself more favourably for partnership working and exploring external funding opportunities. For each of the two identified sites there remain key issues that will need to be planned for to ensure you invest in a sustainable and cost-effective solution. As such, I would like to emphasise The National Archives' willingness to engage with yourselves and colleagues should you wish to discuss these issues further.</p> <p>We would be very pleased to meet with yourselves in person, at your convenience, to help ensure the best possible outcome is achieved.</p>
29	18/08/2017	Support Lambeth Archives	<p>Support Lambeth Archives Response to Lambeth Archives Option Appraisal Report</p> <p>Support Lambeth Archives (SLA) are a group of users and depositors of Lambeth Borough Archives, who believe it's vital to champion the archives of our borough and her people.</p> <p>We broadly support the Options Appraisal Report relating to the future needs of Lambeth Archives. We support the statement that: 'Lambeth Archives is a hidden treasure which ought to play a central role in Lambeth's community identity. Lambeth Council aspires to develop a permanent home for a modern archive service in the borough, to celebrate Lambeth's culture and history and to fulfil the industry standards to archiving services.'</p> <p>There are a number of sections/points made in the report we wish to address and some important issues not raised in the report which Lambeth Council needs to seriously consider.</p>

In relation to 'increased revenue from the specialist services provided': the report has carefully outlined the ways in which revenue might be obtained but that it is likely to be small, which we agree with. In addition, we would ask Lambeth Council to be especially aware of the recent Northamptonshire Archives service controversy concerning charging for usage, and to make sure that any increased revenue plans do not involve charging service users for access to the archival holdings.

<http://www.northants-fhs.org/pdf/PR172004.pdf>
<https://blog.history.ac.uk/2017/07/access-to-archives>

In the Recommendations section, we would argue that the statement of 'A split site archive should be avoided if at all possible' should be changed to 'A split site archive must be avoided' due to the various reasons outlined by the authors of the report.

In relation to online access, we would agree that an online catalogue is a priority. The archival holdings should be catalogued at item or piece level and we would advise HLF, Foyle Foundation, AHRC or other funding applications to catalogue, digitise and research the collections.

We agree that funding for assessing Lambeth Council records is needed and argue that Lambeth Council must make this a priority. Preserving and making available the official borough records is Lambeth Archives' key duty of responsibility and we are deeply concerned at the backlog of Council records transfers and the lack of a records management system in place for the regular assessing and transfer of records.

Lambeth Archives' budget must be increased to meet future costs and aspirations, as outlined in the appraisal report. We would recommend this budget to also include funding for new staff recruitment, including conservation, records management (an individual who can dedicate their work to Freedom of Information and Council records) and education and outreach positions.

The report data is extremely interesting and useful in highlighting the under-investment of Lambeth Archives – for example, the report states, 'The investment per capita – that is the net expenditure on archives divided by the population of the borough – in Lambeth was 81 pence compared with an average of 91 pence' and 'Lambeth's investment in its archives service is not producing the performance seen in other authorities, except in staff productivity and the preservation of material.'

In relation to staff hires, the report does not reference staff diversity and equality. It must be a priority for Lambeth Council to diversify both staff and audiences and implement equality policies to achieve BAME, LGBTQ, gender, D/deaf and disability diversity.

We commend Lambeth Archives' openness in working with Lambeth Libraries and schools, heritage and community organisations in the borough - especially recently, with their capacity severely restricted by the closure of Minet Library. We support initiatives like the suggested community archive project outlined in Appendix 2 of the report.

In regards to Education, community and research Lambeth Archives should be provided with dedicated funding for education and outreach positions in order to create educational resources, research guides, exhibitions, undertake funding applications with university research projects, embed formal and informal education, community engagement, collaborative projects and events programming including events for Black History Month, LGBT History Month, and International Women's Day. Please see the work carried out by Tower Hamlets and Hackney Archives for good practice in this area.

In Managing council records, whilst the report recognises 'the Archives service has an important role in managing the records of the council', the reference to Lambeth Council's records and the current 'lack of systematic transfers' and or 'lack of a clear records management policy' and that the Council 'has had no formal records management to date' is a concern.

We recognise Lambeth Council's commitment to Open Data principles in their 'Open Data at Lambeth - guide' that states 'Lambeth will be open and transparent with all data by default'. <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/open-data/open-data-at-lambeth-guide>

We hope that Lambeth Council will extend this principle to be 'open and transparent' to all records and data produced by the council and its officers. In addition that the council will, through further education, begin to understand and value 'the expertise the Council's professional archivists can bring' to the wider Lambeth borough provision. We would like to see a commitment from the council to improve and uphold the statutory requirement and understand the key role Lambeth Archives plays in keeping council records and how this relates to accountability, transparency and social justice. We would like to suggest that more consideration is placed on how the service measures the impact of collections and we would like to recommend that commitment is shown through the development of a records management policy - please see Lincolnshire Council's as an example <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/local-democracy/information-governance/records-management>

We would like to take this opportunity to commend the consultants, archives team and Councillor Sonia Winifred for what we feel is a high quality, thoroughly considered report.

30	18/08/2017	Minet Conservation	<p>Thank you for giving me, as Chair of the Minet Conservation Association, the opportunity to respond to the Options Appraisal report on Minet Archives. First and foremost, I should like to underline our support for the responses provided by both the Friends of Minet Library and Archives as well as those of Longfield Hall Trust.</p> <p>Like other groups in the area, the Minet Conservation Association strongly believes that we should do all we can to preserve the Estate in line with the vision of the Minet family. Integral to that vision was the belief that a strong community needs to have a mix of residential and public spaces so that there are many and different opportunities for people living in the area to meet and build shared experiences. Sadly, over recent decades, we have seen our public spaces subject to steady erosion which, we believe, is detrimental to all those who live in and around this area.</p> <p>As you know, there are many active and committed residents who have engaged with the Council and others to come up with, and implement, projects that not only prevent neglect but actively enhance public assets in this area. Myatt's Fields Park and Longfield Hall are just two examples of the achievements possible; and the Minet Library and Archives could be another similar success. Having been involved in developing the business plan for the building submitted by the Minet Hub in 2015, the MCA strongly requests that the Council takes into consideration the proposals made to transform the Archives and surrounding buildings into a cultural hub; once again providing a dynamic and strong focal point for the community here.</p> <p>Finally, as an organisation set up to help protect the heritage of the Minet Estate, the MCA believes that the Surrey Archive, created by William Minet and left as part of the legacy for the Minet Estate should remain on the Estate. To that end, we urge the Council to consider options to maintain the Archives in their current location.</p> <p>I hope that you will welcome these comments and look forward to hearing more.</p>
31	18/08/2017	Friends of Windmill Gardens	<p>This options appraisal is thoughtful and thorough and explains clearly the importance of Lambeth's archive to borough residents and researchers from outside Lambeth. Having used the archive over many years, and more frequently since the restoration of Brixton Windmill in 2010, I have always been able to get information quickly and easily. This is mainly due to the open access area at the current archive site and the very helpful staff. I endorse the key points made in the report about the quality of Lambeth's Archive and the threat to its future if a state of the art facility is not provided very soon.</p> <p>I agree that digitisation is necessary and helpful to researchers but it will not reduce the size of the archive.</p> <p>Whichever site is finally chosen to house the archive it must have capacity for future acquisitions. It should also include display/education facilities – essential if a greater number of residents are to explore and engage with the archive – the guardian of Lambeth's collective memory.</p> <p>While a site in the centre of Lambeth that has good transport links for both residents and researchers from outside the borough is desirable, much more important is that the archive is properly housed and kept together in one place within the borough.</p> <p>On the options proposed my comments are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The best option is a new build single site option with state of the art archive storage facilities and space to house future additions and with dedicated space for display and education activities • A split site is not acceptable. If important documents/artefacts are to be regularly moved between sites they are put in danger. A split site is also inconvenient for users who have to wait longer for material to be accessible. It is also an additional burden for staff and will increase staff costs. • A temporary location during refurbishment or new build is not acceptable particularly if it involves splitting the collection and placing a substantial part in off-site storage. • Moving an archive is a complex and difficult process so moving it twice presents an extra risk to the archive and considerable extra expense to the borough. • One option proposed requires sharing a site with another organisation. In such a situation Lambeth must be totally confident that sharing the site will not create a future threat to the security of Lambeth's archive. <p>Capital investment into a new build, single site option, on land where Lambeth holds the freehold is the best solution. It will create a state of the art home for the archive, reduce future revenue costs and provide long-term security for this precious borough resource.</p>
Late response			
32	27/08/2017	Myatt's Fields Park Project Group	<p>I apologise for writing to you over the deadline for comments on your document on the future of the Minet Library and Archives. If it's not too late, I'd like to comment on this.</p> <p>I have observed the use of the Library over the past thirty years or so that I have lived nearby. The reason the building is presently unsuitable and unuseable is that it has suffered death by a thousand cuts and cutbacks during this time, until you finally closed it last year. The Council knows this well enough because it has been responsible for reducing opening</p>

			<p>hours and staff over and over again over the years. It's not surprising that the building is underused - rather than supporting this much needed community facility, the Council has done all it can to discourage its use. It's no longer a pleasant place to visit or for staff to work in.</p> <p>Without any concrete plans for the future of the library and archives, you've done it again: reopened the library temporarily and reduced opening hours, useable space and staff to a trickle. Whilst many local people are grateful for small mercies, it's clear to me that this has been done cynically because you have council elections coming up and also because the reality is that you don't have the funds either to relocate the archives or build a whole new building and probably won't have for some years to come.</p> <p>The building badly needs modernisation, more storage space, public toilets, exhibition space, space for local kids to do their homework and perhaps even a cafe and meeting room/s. Much of this might be available if use was made of Library House next door. To my knowledge, this building belongs to the Library Service and should be used for it. Have you considered this?</p> <p>The building is not in the most accessible of situations. And yet a bus service runs past the library every day between the Camberwell New Road and Brixton. Attempts to ask for a bus stop near the library have been ignored. Why is that?</p> <p>An option is to renovate and improve the Minet Library building, expanding into Library House, and improve public transport to the area. Another is to listen to local residents and their ideas, particularly the Minet Hub with their considerable experience of funding for successfully delivering community projects. This part of Lambeth is expanding rapidly, with more and more people coming to live here and needing community facilities. I hope you're listening.</p>
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