



## **GLASS FEASIBILITY STUDY**

The Council's aspiration is to test the feasibility of amalgamating its celebration of glass onto one site within the Glass Quarter, at the Red House Glass Cone. The overarching aim would be to create an improved attraction that was of sufficient stature to do justice to the internationally renowned Glass and that attracted both established and new visitors alike. The study will be carried out in two stages. The timescale for Stage 1 is as below. The timescale for Stage 2 will be determined in due course

**Stage 1:** This will be a preliminary scoping exercise to test this aspiration by reviewing existing documentary information, carrying out consultation with key stakeholders and undertaking comparison with similar facilities. This should create a baseline position and a professional assessment of whether it would be possible to deliver an amalgamated facility of suitable quality and scale either within the existing leased buildings, or within a slightly larger area to include the buildings which are excluded from the current lease.

**Stage 1 Study Timescale:** A draft report will be presented to a meeting of the Council's Select Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> September. The final Stage 1 report will be presented to a meeting of the Council's Cabinet on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2009.

**The Consultation Process:** The work being undertaken by L&R involves a comprehensive analysis and consultation exercise. A number of channels of consultation are being used to listen to the views of differing groups representing local, regional and national concerns together as well as those of individuals who have interests or opinions related to the buildings, collections and staff:

- **Desk research** and **detailed site visits** are being undertaken in order to understand the collections, product, resources, buildings and users at both sites, and the collection in store.
- **An online questionnaire** will be developed by the L&R team and placed on the DMBC website. This will be available for all interested parties to complete. There will also be the option to download a copy and complete this by hand.

A range of organisations, groups and individuals with interests in the study are being consulted with during July and August including discussions with:

- Lead representatives of key stakeholder groups (Glass Association, Glass Circle, Save Our Glass Heritage etc)
- The general public through the mechanism of this public open meeting
- Staff of both Broadfield House Museum and Red House Glass Cone
- The President and Committee of the Friends of Broadfield House
- Leading individual glass collectors, dealers and makers
- Other organisations with interests in glass related matters

Consultations will also be undertaken with organisations such as **English Heritage, the Heritage Lottery Fund, Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery/West Midlands Hub, The V&A Museum, Museums Libraries and Archives (MLA) etc.**

**A second public open meeting for all interested groups and members of the public** will be held during late September. The consultants will present the options and issues arising from the work they have undertaken and, informed by feedback from the Council to the draft report, this



meeting will help to shape the final recommendations and provide a further opportunity for discussion and comment. Details of the format, date and time of this meeting will be advertised and posted on the Council's website in due course.

Through this approach to consultation, alongside detailed site observation and investigation, review of visitor markets to both sites, etc we aim to gather the evidence to inform our opinions.

### **Some Key Issues From Consultations to Date**

#### *Overall*

- Public demand not to see the collections disappear from view. A consensus that at least as much of the collection as is currently on display should be displayed in any new setting

#### *Museum and Collections*

- Significance of the collections
- Credibility – having a secure and appropriate future, continuing to garner donations and volunteer fund raising support
- National museums status, National and international comparators
- Ownership of the collections
- Inspiration and touchstone for contemporary glass artists
- Research facility – collection, library and archive
- Proportion on display in a new setting
- Approach to interpretation, Decorative art v heritage displays
- Digitisation to increase access
- Formal Designation of the collection and the opportunities this may bring

#### *Audiences*

- Visitor profiles at each site and scale of visitor appeal – now and in the future: local community, general visitors, tour groups, schools, collectors, researchers
- Importance of watching hot glass blowing and cold working
- Economic impact in area of glass purchasing and overnight visitors
- Interpretation of visitor recording data and categorisation

#### *Linkages, Synergies and Partnerships*

- The Glass Quarter, Other DMBC museums and sites
- Endorsement and linkage with surviving glass producing businesses
- Further and Higher/Specialist Education institutions
- Festivals and Events

#### *Capital Funding*

- DMBC capital contributions – including ring-fencing of property disposal receipts
- Other public sector and Lottery grant prospects
- Benefactor and Donor interests, requirements and implications
- Phased approach to the process of funding and development

### **Contact Details for L&R Consulting**

Should you wish to contact the consultants, please e-mail Peter Middleton, who is the L&R Consulting Director responsible for the study: [petermiddleton@lrconsulting.co.uk](mailto:petermiddleton@lrconsulting.co.uk)

Alternatively please write to: Peter Middleton, Director, L&R Consulting, Unit 252, 5-9 Slater Street, Liverpool L1 4BX. Or phone: 0151 707 2255