Cheshire Archives & Local Studies

Relocation Consultation 2014 – The results
Executive Summary

Introduction

Cheshire West and Chester and Cheshire East Councils, in partnership with Warrington and Halton Borough Councils, ran a consultation to gather views about the potential relocation of the Cheshire Archives and Local Studies service. The consultation was open for 12 weeks during April 2014 until June 2014. A total of 738 responses were returned (500 online, 238 postal).

Demographic Profile

Slightly more females answered the survey than males (58% to 42% respectively). Just over half of respondents (52%) were aged between 55-74.

A large majority (97%) classed themselves as White English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish or British. Around one in six (16%) said that they had a long-term illness, health issue or disability that limits their activities in some way.

Nearly three quarters (74%) of respondents were responding as current or potential customers.

60% of respondents (who left a valid postcode) lived in Cheshire, Halton or Warrington, 40% lived elsewhere. Map 1 in the appendices of this report shows a map of the respondents by postcode. The number of responses gained from Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester were similar. Of those who responded from Cheshire West and Chester 39% lived within the greater Chester area highlighted on the map to the right.

Far fewer responses were received from those who lived within Halton or Warrington.

Visiting the archives in person

79% of respondents had visited the archives in person. Of those who had not visited (158 respondents), the main reason given was that it was too far away (46%). Of those residing in Cheshire, Halton and Warrington who had not visited in person (107 respondents) 50% stated that it was too far too travel.

The majority (95%) spent up to a full day at the archives, (50% spending up to half a day there, the remaining 45% spending a full day there.
The journey times between how long respondents currently travel and how long they are prepared to travel are very similar. The majority of those who had visited the archives would only be prepared to travel the amount of time that they do currently and would not be willing to increase their journey time further.

47% of current visitors would usually travel to the archives by car, 39% would use public transport and the remaining 15% usually travelled on foot or stated that they used another method.

The five most important aspects for respondents if they were to visit a new archive facility were as follows:-

- Car parking within 2 miles of the archives, (75% either very important or important),
- Car parking within the immediate vicinity, (75%),
- A train station within 2 miles, (72%),
- A bus station within 2 miles, (66%),
- Cafe/coffee shop within 2 miles, (63%).

Maps 8 – 13 in the appendices show the areas covered by a drive time of up to 30 minutes and one hour, the majority of those living within Cheshire, Halton or Warrington would be able to get to all of the proposed locations within one hour if they drove and there was little traffic. However, travel by public transport would probably take longer for certain areas dependent on where the archives were located.

Table 2 within the main report indicates the proposed location which would capture the most potential customers within a half an hour drive time of Cheshire, Halton & Warrington would be Northwich (88%) followed by Winsford (75%). Crewe ranks last in terms of capturing population numbers within a 30 minute drive time drive time however, this location maybe easier to get to via public transport compared to Northwich as Crewe has a major rail link.

Your preferred location

68% of respondents overall would visit the archives as often as they do now if the building was to remain in Chester however, those who had never visited in person were more likely to state that they would not visit at all (28% compared to 7% overall).

36% of those who had never visited in person would visit the archives more often if they were to move to Crewe or Middlewich, however, those who were currently frequent visitors were more likely to state that they would not visit at all if the archives were to move to either of these locations.
Maps showing how often respondents were likely to visit each potential location based on their home postcode can be seen in the appendices at the end of this report. In Summary:-

- Potential location Chester (Map 2) – Those who stated that they would not visit at all if the archives were to be within Chester tended to be located towards the east of Cheshire, however, the majority of respondents would visit more often or the same as they do now if the archives remained in Chester.

- Potential location Crewe (Map 3) – Those located towards the west of the Cheshire boundary were more likely to state that they would not visit at all if the archives were to be located in Crewe whereas those whose home postcode was towards the east of the boundary were more likely to state that they would visit more often.

- Potential location Ellesmere Port (Map 4) – Those who lived around Ellesmere Port or Birkenhead were more likely to visit the archives more often if they were to be located within Ellesmere Port. The majority however would visit less often or not at all.

- Potential location Middlewich (Map 5) – Those located around Winsford and the east of Cheshire were more likely to state that they would visit more often or the same as they do now if the archives were located within Middlewich.

- Potential location Northwich (Map 6) – Those located around mid Cheshire were more likely to state that they would visit more often or the same as they do now if the archives were to be within Northwich.

- Potential location Winsford (Map 7) – Those located around Winsford and the east of Cheshire were more likely to state that they would visit more often or the same as they do now.

**Online services**

Three quarters (75%) of respondents had used the online services provided by the archives team. Of those who had not used the online services the main two reasons given were: not aware of the online services available (45%), would rather go in person (41%).

**Conclusions**

Can be seen as part of the main report – page 15.
**Introduction**

Cheshire West and Chester and Cheshire East Councils, in partnership with Warrington and Halton Borough Councils, ran a consultation to gather views about the potential relocation of the Cheshire Archives and Local Studies service as conditions in the current building had been deemed inadequate by a National Archives inspection. The current archives are located in the Cheshire Record Office at Duke Street, Chester.

After a feasibility study, six alternative locations were identified.

The consultation was open for 12 weeks during April 2014 until June 2014 – respondents were invited to answer either a postal or an online questionnaire. A total of 738 responses were returned (500 online, 238 postal). Four drop in sessions were also held, one in each local authority area, a summary of responses from these sessions can be seen in the appendices at the end of this report along with extra responses that were received by e-mail, phone or verbally.

**Demographic Profile of Respondents**

Figure 1 and 2 below show the gender and age profile of those who answered the survey. Slightly more females answered than males (58% to 42% respectively). Just over half of respondents (52%) were aged between 55-74.

![Figure 1 - Gender Profile](image1)

- **Gender**
  - Male: 42%
  - Female: 58%
  - Base for % = 619

![Figure 2 - Age Group Profile](image2)

- **Age Group**
  - Under 18: 1%
  - 18 - 34: 9%
  - 35 - 54: 23%
  - 55 - 74: 52%
  - 75+: 14%
  - Prefer not to state: 1%
  - Base for % = 627
A large majority (97%) classed themselves as White English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish or British. Around one in six (16%) said that they had a long-term illness, health issue or disability that limits their activities in some way.

Nearly three quarters (74%) of respondents were responding as current or potential customers. Respondents could tick all that applied to this question. A full list of responses can be seen in figure 3.

60% of respondents (who left a valid postcode) lived in Cheshire, Halton or Warrington, 40% lived elsewhere. Map 1 in the appendices of this report shows a map of the respondents by postcode. Table 1 below shows the percentage of respondent for each local authority area within Cheshire, Halton and Warrington. The number of responses gained from Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester were similar. Of those who responded from Cheshire West and Chester 39% lived within the greater Chester area highlighted to the map to the right (this equates to 11% of the total responses).

Far fewer responses were received from those who lived within Halton or Warrington.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Authority Area</th>
<th>Number of responses (with valid postcodes)</th>
<th>% of Cheshire, Halton and Warrington responses</th>
<th>% of Total responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cheshire East</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>44.9%</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheshire West and Chester</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>45.8%</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halton</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warrington</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base for %</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>443</td>
<td>738</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis of Results

Visiting the archives in person

Respondents were asked if they had ever visited the archives in person, 79% stated that they had. 17% of these described themselves as frequent visitors and 62% described themselves as infrequent visitors, the remaining 21% had never visited in person (see figure 4). For the purpose of this questionnaire a frequent visitor was defined as someone who had used the site once a month or more within the last 12 months. An infrequent visitor was defined as someone who had used the site less often than once a month within the last 12 months.

![Figure 4](image)

**Figure 4**

Have you ever visited the archives in person?

- Yes, frequent visitor: 62%
- Yes, infrequent visitor: 17%
- No: 21%

Base for % = 735

Those who had not visited the archives in person (158 respondents) were asked why they had not visited. Respondents were able to select as many reasons as applied. 46% stated that it was too far for them to travel (see figure 5). Of those residing in Cheshire, Halton and Warrington who had not visited in person (107 respondents) 50% stated that it was too far too travel.

![Figure 5](image)

**Figure 5**

Is there any particular reason(s) as to why you have not visited in person?

- Too far for me to travel: 46%
- Difficult to access: 16%
- No parking nearby: 12%
- Other: 47%

Base for % = 156
The top two ‘other’ reasons given were:- had no need to as yet/been able to get what is required online (68%) and lack of time/ work commitments/ not open enough at weekend (13%), (please note that these are grouped responses from open comment answers).

Those who had visited the archives were asked how long their visit to the archives would usually be. The majority (95%) spent up to a full day at the archives, (50% spending up to half a day there, the remaining 45% spending a full day there.

Visitors were also asked how long their current journey to the archives from their home is. One quarter of visitors (25%) currently have a journey time of up to 30 minutes. 39% travel up to one hour and around one third (35%) travel longer than one hour.

All respondents (current visitors and those who had not yet visited) were asked how long they would be prepared to travel to visit a new archives facility. Just over one quarter (27%) were prepared to travel up to 30 minutes to visit a new archives facility, 42% were prepared to travel up to one hour and just less than one third (32%) were prepared to travel longer than one hour (as shown in figure 6).

![Figure 6](image)

**How long is your current journey (one way)/ how long a journey would you be prepared to make?**

- Up to 30 minutes: 25% current, 27% prepared
- Up to 1 hour: 39% current, 42% prepared
- Up to 1.5 hours: 17% current, 17% prepared
- Up to 2 hours: 11% current, 10% prepared
- More than 2 hours: 8% current, 5% prepared

Base for % = 577 (current) & 724 (prepared)

The journey times between how long respondents currently travel and how long they are prepared to travel are very similar. Further investigation shows that the majority of those who had visited the archives would only be prepared to travel the amount of time that they do currently and would not be willing to increase their journey time further. For example, 62% of those who currently travel 30
minutes to the archives would be prepared to travel 30 minutes to a new archive facility, 52% who travel up to an hour now would be prepared to travel up to an hour to a new archive facility.

47% of current visitors would usually travel to the archives by car, 39% would use public transport and the remaining 15% usually travelled on foot or stated that they used an other method (see figure 7).

![Figure 7](image)

**Figure 7**

How would you normally travel to the archives?

For those who chose ‘other’, the responses are as follows: - park and ride (65%) mixture of bus & train, car & train (22%), bicycle (14%), *(please note that these are grouped responses from open comment answers).*

Maps 8 – 13 in the appendices show the areas covered by a drive time of up to 30 minutes and one hour, the majority of those living within Cheshire, Halton or Warrington would be able to get to all of the locations within one hour if they drove and there was little traffic. However, travel by public transport would probably take longer for certain areas dependent on where the archives were located.

Table 2 on the following page indicates the proposed location which would capture the most potential customers within a half an hour drive time of Cheshire, Halton & Warrington would be Northwich (88%) followed by Winsford (75%), both are central Cheshire locations. If we were to look at serving people outside of Cheshire, Halton & Warrington however, the site that captures the most potential customers would be Ellesmere Port as it includes residents in the urban areas of Birkenhead and parts of Liverpool, Northwich by comparison ranks as second. Crewe ranks last in terms of capturing population numbers within a 30 minute drive time drive time however, this location maybe easier to get to via public transport compared to Northwich as Crewe has a major rail link.
Table 2 (In the below table Cheshire, Halton and Warrington = C,H&W)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential site location</th>
<th>Total pop within 30 min drive</th>
<th>Total Pop, C,H&amp;W within 30 min drive</th>
<th>% - C,H&amp;W within 30 min drive</th>
<th>Rank of total Pop</th>
<th>Rank of total C,H&amp;W pop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chester</td>
<td>1,147,000</td>
<td>414,000</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crewe</td>
<td>808,000</td>
<td>390,000</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellesmere Port</td>
<td>1,709,000</td>
<td>453,000</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwich</td>
<td>1,484,000</td>
<td>909,000</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlewich</td>
<td>981,000</td>
<td>705,000</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winsford</td>
<td>923,000</td>
<td>768,000</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: figures are estimates calculated by including output areas whose population weighted centroid is within the respective drive time. Population centroids and estimates are based on the 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics, Crown Copyright.

The five most important aspects for respondents if they were to visit a new archive facility were as follows (see figure 8 on the following page):

1. Car parking within 2 miles of the archives, (75% either very important or important)
2. Car parking within the immediate vicinity, (75%)
3. A train station within 2 miles, (72%)
4. A bus station within 2 miles, (66%)
5. Cafe/coffee shop within 2 miles, (63%).

Figure 8

If you were to visit the new archives facility, how important to you would the following be?

- Car Parking
- Car Parking (immediate vicinity)
- Train station
- Bus station
- Cafe/coffee shop
- Restaurant/pub
- Shop
- Hotel/ B&B

Base for % = 551-706  
*Within 2 miles unless otherwise stated
The importance of a train station increased for those who currently travel in by train (99% very important or important compared to 73% overall). The same goes for the importance of a bus station for those who currently travel in by bus, (89% compared to 66% overall) and the importance of car parking for those who currently travelled by car, (90% compared to 75% immediate vicinity) (87 compared to 75% within two miles).

Respondents were asked if there were any other key services that they would like to see near to a new archive facility, 147 chose to answer this question, the top four responses were as follows, (please note that these are grouped responses from open comment answers):-

1. Bus stop nearby/ adjacent/ within 500 metres (as opposed to station), (15%)
2. Library/ community hub/ history club, (11%)
3. Cafe/ coffee shop/ refreshment within building or very near to, (9%)
4. Accessibility by any means of transport/ easy access for all, (8%).
Your preferred location*

Unsurprisingly 68% of respondents overall would visit the archives as often as they do now if the building was to remain in Chester, (see figure 9).

Figure 9

Based on the following locations, please indicate whether you are likely to visit more or less often than you do currently, if at all?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>More often</th>
<th>Same as do now</th>
<th>Less often</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chester</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crewe</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwich</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlewich</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winsford</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellesmere Port</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base for % = 666-693

Further investigation shows that those who had never visited in person were more likely to state that they would not visit at all if the archives were to remain in Chester (28% compared to 7% overall).

36% of those who had never visited in person would visit the archives more often if they were to move to Crewe or Middlewich, however, those who were currently frequent visitors were more likely to state that they would not visit at all if the archives were to move to either of these location:-

- 40% of frequent visitors stated that they would not visit at all if they where to move to Crewe compared to 29% of all respondents
- 57% of frequent visitors would not visit if it where to move to Middlewich compared to 38%of all respondents.

There were no big differences in views in terms of frequency of visits if the archives were to move to Northwich, Winsford or Ellesmere Port.

Maps showing how often respondents were likely to visit each potential location based on their home postcode can be seen in the appendices at the end of this report.
In summary:

- Potential location Chester (Map 2) – Those who stated that they would not visit at all if the archives were to be within Chester tended to be located towards the east of Cheshire, however, the majority of respondents would visit more often or the same as they do now.

- Potential location Crewe (Map 3) – Those located towards the west of the Cheshire boundary were more likely to state that they would not visit at all if the archives were to be located in Crewe whereas those whose home postcode was towards the east of the boundary were more likely to state that they would visit more often.

- Potential location Ellesmere Port (Map 4) – Those who lived around Ellesmere Port or Birkenhead were more likely to visit the archives more often if they were to be located within Ellesmere Port. The majority however would visit less often or not at all.

- Potential location Middlewich (Map 5) – Those located around Winsford and the east of Cheshire were more likely to state that they would visit more often or the same as they do now if the archives were located within Middlewich.

- Potential location Northwich (Map 6) – Those located around mid Cheshire were more likely to state that they would visit more often or the same as they do now if the archives were to be within Northwich.

- Potential location Winsford (Map 7) – Those located around Winsford and the east of Cheshire were more likely to state that they would visit more often or the same as they do now.

Respondents were able to comment on the specific locations if they so wished. 257 chose to answer this question. The top five responses were as follows, *(please note that these are grouped responses from open comment answers)*:-

1. Should remain in the County Town/ Chester, (21%)
2. Access by public transport is essential, (15%)
3. Chester – has good public transport links, (11%)
4. Crewe – Has good public transport links/ excellent rail links, (11%)
5. Should be in a central/ mid-Cheshire location/ accessible to all in the County, (8%).

*Caution has to be taken when looking at the responses to this question. Some respondents who had never visited the archives, for some locations stated that they would visit the same as they do now - which we would assume to mean that they would still not visit (as they had not visited previously) - however we are unable to assume this as for other locations they stated that they would not visit at all. Therefore, some respondents may have answered the question based on their preferred location for example stated not at all for Middlewich and the same as they do now for Chester.*
Online services

Three quarters (75%) of respondents had used the online services provided by the archives team. Of these 34% described themselves as frequent visitors, 41% described themselves as infrequent visitors with the remaining 24% having not used the online services at all (see figure 10).

Figure 10

Have you ever used the online services provided by the archives team?

- 34% Yes, frequent user
- 41% Yes, infrequent user
- 25% No

Base for % = 720

Those who had not used the online services were asked why they had not. Respondents were able to select as many reasons as applied. 45% stated that they were not aware of the online services available, 41% would rather go in person (see figure 11).

Figure 11

Is there any reason as to why you have not used the online services?

- Not aware of the online services available: 46%
- Would rather go in person: 41%
- Other: 22%

Base for % = 180

The top two ‘other’ reasons given were: - not IT literate/have no internet/ not online (59%) and had no need to as yet (30%), (please note that these are grouped responses from open comment answers).
Finally, respondents were able to add any additional comments regarding the relocation. The figure below shows the top ten grouped responses from open comment answers.

**Figure 12**

Do you have any other comments to make regarding the re-location?

- Should remain in the County Town/ Chester: 19%
- Access by public transport/major road networks essential: 16%
- Should be in central/mid-Cheshire location/accessible to all in the County: 12%
- Adequate free/cheap car parking nearby: 10%
- New building needs to be fit for purpose/modern facilities/big enough/adequate for 20+ years: 10%
- Chester - has good public transport links: 8%
- Crewe - has good public transport links/excellent national rail links: 5%
- Chester - has history/heritage to explore: 5%
- Renovate current building: 5%
- More records should be scanned and available online: 3%

Base for % = 356
Conclusions

Potential implications for visitors with a change in location

As the archives are currently located in Chester, it was no surprise that a large majority of respondents stated that they would visit the same as they do now if the building was to be re-located within Chester.

If the archives were to move to another location the service could potentially lose some current visitors, especially those who currently class themselves as frequent visitors. Certain Chester based societies/organisations and university students also expressed concern with a move of the archives, appendix 3: shows a response from the Chester Archaeological Society. However, the results show that those who had not visited at all were more likely to state that they would visit the archives more often if they were located in for example Crewe or Middlewich, therefore a move away from Chester would potentially gain some new users who had not visited before.

What is important?

Nearly half of current visitors (47%) travelled to the archives by car, 39% used public transport. Car parking within the immediate vicinity/ within two miles was seen as one of the most important aspects (75%) followed by train station within 2 miles (72%) and bus station/stop nearby (66%) importance increased dependent on the methods in which respondents travelled currently. A cafe/coffee shop within 2 miles (63%) was also seen as important.

42% of respondents would be prepared to travel up to an hour to visit a new archives facility. Maps 8-13 shows that the areas included within a one hour drive time for each potential location covered the majority of Cheshire, Halton and Warrington. Drive times would be slightly more for those located far north east of the boundary around Disley and Sutton if the archives were to be located within Chester or Ellesmere Port.

A mid Cheshire Location may be seen as the fairest location, those who drive will be able to get to the archives within one hour if they are located within Cheshire, Halton and Warrington. Northwich is one of the locations that captures more potential customers within a 30 minute hour drive time. However, we also need to take into account the ease of travel via public transport methods. The potential locations around mid Cheshire may not be easy to travel to via public transport as say bigger towns such as Chester and Crewe have main rail links for various locations in Cheshire and other areas of the UK.
**Recommendations**

It is difficult to make a firm recommendation as to which location is most preferred from the results to this consultation alone; however, it seems that an Ellesmere Port location was the least preferred option. This report will be used in conjunction with other studies to choose the most suitable site.

As the archives service covers a vast area the potential location will not suit all. Three quarters of respondents had used the online services provided by the archives team. Although one of the main reasons of not using the online services was that they would rather go in person, the archives team could look at the feasibility of placing more of the documents online so that they are accessible to more users in that way. They could also look at extending the services currently provided in certain libraries across Cheshire.
### Appendix 1: Drop in session feedback – summary of results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Have you used Cheshire Archives</th>
<th>Factors to consider when looking at location</th>
<th>Comments about proposed locations</th>
<th>Any other comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Warrington - 11th June 2014 – 17 people spoken to</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes for family and local history</td>
<td>Public transport very important</td>
<td>Only Chester, Crewe and Northwich are suitable because of public transport links</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Transport links/accessibility important</td>
<td>Winsford very difficult to get to</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Should stay in Chester</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, for planning WW1 event</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Chester most convenient but concerned about past fires at Enterprise Centre site</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have used records on microfilm at library</td>
<td>Should be central to area covered by service</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Chester historic therefore good base for service</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Winsford best as central</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Macclesfield – 21st June 2014 - 71 people spoken to, 21 forms completed on the day** |
| Never | Should be at Macc Town Hall | - | - |
| Yes | Needs to be accessible by public transport | - | - |
| Yes | OK where it is | - | - |
| Yes | Chester is convenient | - | - |
| Yes | I visit Chester twice a year | - | - |

**Chester – 18 people spoken to, 2 forms completed on the day, others had already responded to consultation**

| - | - | - | - |

| **Widnes – 25th June 2014 - 9 people spoken to, 5 forms given out on the day** |
| Yes for local and family history | Chester - can be an overnight stay/ a trip | Chester preferred | Widnes records should be at Lancashire RO |
| Yes for local history | Needs to be central | Ellesmere Port (good for Halton) or Winsford preferred | - |
| No but interested in local history | Place with strong history | Chester preferred | Archive service important for preserving but recording and giving access too |
| No but used Liverpool RO for family history | Easy access | “got to be Chester” - only place easily accessible from Widnes by car | Is access free? |
| Yes for family history | Accessibility key - by car and with parking nearby | Chester (as county capital) or Ellesmere Port (access from Widnes) | - |
### Appendix 2: Extra comments received by Phone/E-mail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date 2014</th>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-Apr</td>
<td>Having the Cheshire Archives and Local Studies located in Chester is ideal for people like me who travel from overseas, or even from around Britain.</td>
<td>E-mail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-Apr</td>
<td>Why is there no mention of the suitability of the vacant and empty former Quicks Car Showroom and Garage site at the junction of Duke Street and Lower Bridge Street in Chester?</td>
<td>E-mail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08-Apr</td>
<td>I will get the message forwarded to students. I can imagine that the vast majority would be aghast at the thought of losing this facility from Chester. (Chester University lecturer)</td>
<td>E-mail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29-Apr</td>
<td>If Northwich is selected as the future permanent base for Cheshire's archives, I will offer my extensive collection of books and material on Lewis Carroll for permanent viewing there.</td>
<td>E-mail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-May</td>
<td>Assessing CRO to see if it can be brought up to standard is preferred option</td>
<td>Verbal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04-Jun</td>
<td>I am a member of the Westminster Park and Lache local history group and I have seen the consultation announcement. As regards the various sites that may be available. I think that it is sensible for the new location to be central in the combined and historic Cheshire area as far as possible. That seems to be either Middlewich or Northwich. Which is best I am not qualified to judge, but easy access is very important, including public transport if possible, and convenient parking for those travelling by car.</td>
<td>E-mail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-Jun</td>
<td>Whilst the current Records Office has physical difficulties, I do feel that if these cannot be overcome the Records Office should remain in Chester. Users may well want to combine a visit to the Office with a visit to our historic city centre, especially if they come as a family/friends group. It is also easier for people relying on public transport to get to Chester. I also feel that the County Records Office should be retained within the former County Town-it is where one would expect to find it. (Cllr Hilarie McNae)</td>
<td>E-mail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-Jun</td>
<td>Response from Chester Archaeological Society (Appendix 3)</td>
<td>E-mail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-Jun</td>
<td>Coopers Company: strongly object to archives being anywhere other than Chester. Archives are part of the companies and belong in their historic home. Guilds use them for events, ceremonies, etc and if the archives were anywhere other than Chester this use would stop.</td>
<td>Phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-Jun</td>
<td>I have been carrying out some research over the past two years and have been a frequent visitor to the Records Office and I cannot speak too highly of the facilities and the friendliness and efficiency of the staff. The current facilities seem to be very well used and we can understand that they may be need to be expanded and updated to meet modern environmental standards to help preserve the precious historical documents. However, we feel that relocating the Records Office to another part of Cheshire to be illogical and may lead to a lessening of the demand for the Record Office services. Chester is a transport centre and is easily reached by public transport from all parts of the County and Country. I live in Birmingham and I do not have detailed knowledge of suitable alternative sites for the Records Office in Chester, but I am sure that there are quite a few alternatives, possibly already owned by CWaC. (Freemen and Guilds)</td>
<td>E-mail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3: Response from Chester Archaeological Society

The Chester Archaeological Society is of the firm opinion that the Cheshire Record Office should remain in Chester, as the seat of former city and county governments to which many of the collections will relate; as a major historical centre that has given birth to a number of historical societies; and as the home of a university with a thriving History department. Continued location in Chester would facilitate synergy with other local government historical services (Historic Environment Service, Archaeological Planning Advisory Service). For users from afar, the city is well connected by road and rail. Should the present Duke Street buildings not prove to be appropriate for the future, the former Enterprise Centre site offers space and is particularly well placed in terms of communications. However, we consider that the Record Office collections constitute an under-exploited resource that should be more publicly accessible in order to enhance the city's cultural offer. We therefore urge that nos 49-51 and Folliott House on Northgate Street, adjacent to the new Chester library-cum-theatre should also be considered. The opportunity should also be taken to reconsider the function of Chester History and Heritage.

General location

- Chester is the ‘intuitive’ location for the County Record Office: as the former ‘county town’ it is where people would expect to find it.

- Given its former status as a county borough, seat of the county palatine and of county government, a significant proportion of the documents in the collections surely relate to Chester or were composed there – witness the fact that until recently the city had its own record office.

- As one of the major historical settlements of north-west England, occupied for over 2000 years, Chester’s past is the focus of a considerable amount of interest and research, which may involve standing buildings, portable archaeological artefacts and documentary records. It is obviously desirable for as much of this inter-related material to be accessible ‘on site’ as possible.

- In support of 1.3, witness the existence of the Chester Archaeological Society, the Chester Civic Trust, the Chester Historic Buildings Trust, the Chester Canal Heritage Trust and the Chester Society for Landscape History. Although the interests of these societies may extend across the county (and indeed into north-east Wales), Chester is their focus. In addition, Chester University has a thriving History department.

- Again, Chester is the base of CWaC’s Historic Environment Team and of the Archaeological Planning Advisory Service (one of the Cheshire Shared Services). We have argued previously that these teams should have a greater public-facing role and that there is an unrealised potential for synergy between them and the Record Office, which would obviously be much more easily realised if they continued to be co-located in the same city, if not in the same buildings (see, for example, our comments on the One City Plan, paras 4.0 and 9.0 http://www.chesterarchaeolsoc.org.uk/CAS_PlanConsult11_ChesterOneCityPlan_RC&PC_comments_V04_00-09-11.pdf and on the CWaC Local Plan Part Two, para 2.9 http://www.chesterarchaeolsoc.org.uk/CAS_PlanConsult14_CWaC_LocalPlan_Part2_PC_comments_V02_28-05-14.pdf).

- In terms of communications, Chester is as well connected as any of the other potential locations by road and better than some by rail.

- It would therefore seem bizarre to consider locating the Record Office anywhere but Chester.
Specific location

- We do not have strong views on this. Clearly the present location has its attractions as a city-centre site. However, the former Enterprise Centre is also attractive, offering room for expansion and some parking. It would also be immediately adjacent to Chester railway station (a connection that would be enhanced if the proposed Hoole Road footbridge were to be constructed). It is admittedly an ‘edge of centre’ site, but is nevertheless only 1.1 km ‘as the crow flies’ from the Cross, and connectivity with the city centre would be improved if suggestions of a shuttle bus service around the Inner Ring Road and taking in the station were to be implemented.

Operational matters

- We consider that the collections in the Record Office constitute an under-used resource that should be more publicly accessible to enhance the city’s cultural offer. There is therefore an argument for co-locating it with the new Chester library, as has been done at the ‘Hive’ at Worcester; there is likely to be far greater synergy between a library and a record office than between a library and a theatre. We would therefore suggest that nos 49–51 and Folliott House in Northgate Street should at least be considered as locations.

- 3As part of the consideration of any relocation relationships with the local history collection in Chester library and especially with Chester History and Heritage should therefore be reconsidered. At present the latter in particular seems to be a missed opportunity that is in need of reinvigoration.

P Carrington, For Chester Archaeological Society

29 June 2014
Appendix 4:- Questionnaire

Cheshire Archives and Local Studies Relocation Questionnaire

Cheshire West and Chester and Cheshire East Councils are running this consultation, in partnership with Warrington and Halton Borough Councils, to gather views about the relocating of the Cheshire Archives and Local Studies service as conditions in the current building have been deemed inadequate by a National Archives inspection. The results of the consultation will be used to support decisions about any future home for the service.

Sites within 5 km have been identified as potentially suitable for the Archives and Local Studies service. These potential sites were identified by elected members of Cheshire West and Chester and Cheshire East Councils, supported by officers and external consultants who were appointed to review a longer list of sites late in 2013. For further information please visit http://archives.cheshire.gov.uk. Paper copies of this information can be obtained by contacting the Archives and Local Studies team on 01254 972559.

This consultation will run from 8 April 2014 until 30 June 2014. Results will then be analysed and reported following the end of the consultation.

Q1. Please provide us with your full UK postcode, if you do not reside in the UK please state the Country that you reside in. We will only use this information to help us understand if views vary in different areas and not to identify individuals.

Q2. I am responding as an:- (Please select all that apply)
   - Depositor/archive owner
   - Current/potential customer
   - Teacher/lecturer/student
   - Professional/business customer
   - Member of staff/volunteer at the Cheshire Archives
   - Employee at Cheshire East or Cheshire West and Chester Council
   - Elected member of Cheshire East, Cheshire West, Warrington or Halton Council
   - Representative of a community group, organisation or club (please specify in the box provided below)
   - Other (please specify in the box provided below)

   Please state - community group, organisation or club
   Please state - Other

Q3. Have you ever visited the archives in person? (Please select one box only)
   - A frequent visitor: someone who has visited once a month or more within the last 12 months
   - An infrequent visitor: someone who has visited less often than once a month within the last 12 months
   - Yes, I would consider myself a frequent visitor
   - Yes, however I would consider myself an infrequent visitor
   - No, never visited the archives in person

   Go to Q5

Q4. If you answered no to the previous question, is there any particular reason(s) as to why you have not visited in person? (Please select all that apply)
   - Too far for me to travel
   - Difficult to access
   - No parking nearby
   - Other (please specify in the box provided below)

   Go to Q8

Q5. If you answered yes to Q3, how long would your visit to the archives usually be? (Please select one box only)
   - Up to half a day
   - A full day

   Go to Q8

Q6. How long is your current journey to the archives from your home? (Please select one box only)
   - Up to 30 minutes
   - Up to 1 hour
   - Up to 1.5 hours

   Go to Q8

Q7. How would you usually travel to the archives? (Please select one box only)
   - By foot
   - By bus
   - By car
   - Other (please specify in the box provided below)

   Go to Q8

Q8. How long a journey (one-way) would you be prepared to make to visit a new archives facility? (Please select one box only)
   - Up to 30 minutes
   - Up to 1 hour
   - Up to 1.5 hours
   - More than 2 hours

   Go to Q8
Q9. If you were to visit the new archives facility, how important to you would the following be? 
(Please select one box per row)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Not very important</th>
<th>Not at all important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Car parking within the immediate vicinity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car parking within 2 miles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus station within 2 miles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train station within 2 miles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cafe/ coffee shop within 2 miles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel/ B&amp;B within 2 miles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant/ pub within 2 miles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shops within 2 miles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Are there any other key services that you would really like to see near to a new archives facility? (Please detail in the box provided)

Q10. The following is a list of towns in which the archives could be located. Thinking about each in turn, please indicate whether you are likely to visit more or less often than you do currently, if at all. (Please select one box per row)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>More often</th>
<th>Same as now</th>
<th>Less often</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chester</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crewe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellesmere Port</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlewich</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwich</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winsford</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you have any comments to make regarding the above locations please provide them in the box below:

Q11. Have you ever used the online services provided by the archives team? (Please select one box only)

- A frequent visitor: someone who has used the site once a month or more within the last 12 months
- An infrequent visitor: someone who has used the site less often than once a month within the last 12 months

Yes, I would consider myself a frequent visitor... [Box] Go to Q13
Yes, however I would consider myself an infrequent visitor... [Box] Go to Q13
No, I have never used the online services... [Box] Go to Q12

Q12. If you answered no to Q11, is there any reason as to why you have not used the online services? (Please select all that apply)

- Would rather go in person...
- Not aware of the online services available...
- Other (please specify in the box provided below)...

Q13. Do you have any other comments to make regarding the re-location of the Archives and Local Studies service? (Please detail in the box provided)

Any Other Comments

About you

Cheshire West and Chester Council, Cheshire East Council, Warrington Council and Halton Borough Council are committed to providing fairness and equality.

To enable us to do this, we would be grateful if you could complete the following optional questions.

Please note: you do not need to answer these questions if you are answering on behalf of a community group, organisation or club.

Q14. What is your gender? (Please select one box only)

- Male...
- Female...

Research and Consultation Team, Cheshire East Council
Q15. What age group are you in? (Please select one box only)

- Under 18
- 18 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 to 74
- 74 and above
- Prefer not to state

Q16. What is your ethnic origin? (Please select one box only)

- White English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British
- Mixed: White and Black Caribbean/ African/ Asian
- Any other Mixed/ Multiple background
- Asian/ Asian British
- Any other Asian background
- Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British
- Any other Black/ African/ Caribbean background
- Any other ethnic group

Q17. Do you have a long-term illness, health issue or disability that limits your daily activities in any way? (Please select one box only)

- Yes
- No

Thank you for taking the time to answer our questionnaire.
Map 1:- All respondent postcodes
Map 2: Potential visits by home postcode - Location Chester
Map 3: Potential visits by home postcode: Location Crewe
Map 4: Potential visits by home postcode: Location Ellesmere Port
Map 5: Potential visits by home postcode: Location Middlewich
Map 7:- Potential visits by home postcode: - Location Winsford
Map 9: 30 & 60 minute drive times: Location Crewe

Legend
- Potential Location: Crewe
- All Respondent Postcodes

30 minute drive time
- Crewe: 0 - 30

60 minute drive time
- Crewe: 0 - 60

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Map 10: 30 & 60 minute drive times - Location Ellesmere Port

Legend
- Potential Location: Ellesmere Port
- All Respondent Postcodes

30 minute drive time
- Ellesmere Port: 0 - 30

60 Minute drive time
- Ellesmere Port: 0 - 60
Map 11: 30 & 60 minute drive times: - Location Middlewich

Legend
- Potential Location: Middlewich
- All Respondent Postcodes

30 minute drive time
- Middlewich: 0 - 30

60 Minute drive time
- Middlewich: 0 - 60
Map 12: 30 & 60 minute drive times: Location Northwich

Legend
- Potential Location: Northwich
- All Respondent Postcodes

30 minute drive time
- Northwich: 0 - 30

60 minute drive time
- Northwich: 0 - 60

Cheshire East Council

Map 13: 30 & 60 minute drive times - Location Winsford

Legend:
- Potential Location: Winsford
- All Respondent Postcodes

- 30 minute drive time
  - Winsford: 0 - 30

- 60 minute drive time
  - Winsford: 0 - 60