



SIGNAL
FILM & MEDIA



**Lead
Architect**

Client:

Signal Film and Media

Project Reference:

Cooke's Studios,
102 - 104 Abbey Road
Redevelopment

Introduction

Cooke's Studios at 102-104 Abbey Road is in the heart of Barrow-in-Furness. It is a vibrant cultural centre, home to a range of high quality arts organisations which support people at the margins of our working-class community to reach their creative potential.

Since 2008 we have been working to breathe new life into these two adjoining Grade II Listed Victorian department store buildings, sensitively restoring them as inspiring spaces that nurture creativity. Our vision for Cooke's Studios is:

A Cultural Community, where Talent is Nurtured and People Thrive.

With a new £490,000 grant from Arts Council England we now have an exciting opportunity to transform Cooke's Studios into a flagship accessible public centre for participatory arts.

We are seeking a socially-engaged, collaborative Lead Architect whose vision, energy and experience will help us do justice to these inspiring buildings and the work its tenants do to transform the community they serve.

*"I look forward to coming here... it's not like anywhere else in Barrow -
I'm allowed to do creative things instead of rotting away."*

- Participant Sam, 15, not engaging in education or training.

*"I think it's marvellous to have this in Barrow, it gives the community
creative opportunities rarely available in the town."*

- Feedback from West Coast Photo Exhibition at Cooke's Studios.



Specification

To achieve our vision for Cooke's Studios, Signal Film and Media is seeking to appoint a Lead Architect for full Design Team Services and Project Management, including architectural, structural, mechanical & electrical, QS, Interior design, and Project Management services, to deliver a programme of works through The RIBA Plan of Work (2020) Stage 4, 5 and 6. With a review phase of stage 3 for:

Cooke's Studios, 102-104 Abbey Road, Barrow-in-Furness LA14 5QR.

To undertake the following roles for redevelopment / refurbishment of 102 -104 Cooke's Studios, Abbey Road, Barrow-in-Furness:

- Lead Architect - lead designer
- Project management, contract administrator, client adviser
- Structural Engineer
- Mechanical and Electrical Engineer
- Cost Consultant - Quantity Surveying Services
- CDM Principal Designer
- Fire Engineer

Secondary Consultants, may be needed but not included at this stage for the purposes of this tender:

- Wayfinding
- Exhibition/museums standard gallery consultant
- Interior Design

The organisation suggests a Stage 3 review at this phase will be required due to the current economic context. We suggest a 3 month review period to include scoping, survey and engagement, as well as reviewing funding opportunities to maximise the potential for our community.

Type

We assume that the contract works will be a traditional JCT Contract.

Contract Duration

Estimated: 18 - 24 months

Delivery

Estimated Start Date: February 2023

Estimated End Date: December 2024

Short Description

We are seeking to appoint a socially-engaged, collaborative architectural practice which shares our exciting vision for Cooke's Studios. Tenders are invited for the Appointment of Lead Architect – architectural services for the Technical Design and Refurbishment of 102-104 Abbey Rd, to deliver the RIBA Plan of Work (2020) Stages 4, 5 and 6.

The aim is to transform Cooke's Studios (two inter-joining, refurbished Grade II Listed Victorian department store buildings) into a cohesive, flagship, accessible public centre for cultural and creative participation.

Background - Signal Film & Media and Cooke's Studios

Signal Film and Media (the client) is an award-winning digital arts charity dedicated to providing inclusive, creative digital media experiences. Based in Cooke's Studios, Barrow-in-Furness, we offer an outstanding, year-round programme of inspirational digital arts and learning opportunities which support people at the margins of our community to reach their potential. Our offer ranges from county-wide arts festivals attracting internationally-renowned artists right through to holiday digital animation clubs for the under 10s (and everything in between).

Signal Film and Media is an ambitious organisation; we deliver excellence and are proud of our reputation and achievements. We have been BAFTA shortlisted, had films screened all over the world, are a selected provider of the British Film Institute's Film Academy and in 2014 our Directors were recognised by HM The Queen for their contribution to the film industry.

Signal Film and Media holds a head lease to 104 and 102 Abbey Road (Cooke's Studios) which are owned by Barrow Borough Council. The charity sublets areas of the buildings to five of the town's other key creative, cultural and community organisations. Since 2008 we have worked with Barrow Borough Council to refurbish the then derelict furniture warehouse building at 104 Abbey Road into a thriving centre for creativity, which opened its doors in 2011 following a £2 million investment. The refurbishment included major external remediation works and the sensitive restoration of the building's impressive external Victorian features. Also included within this phase of refurbishment were sufficient services (lift, toilets and space for access doorways) to support the future development and occupancy of the adjoining, at-the-time vacant 102 Abbey Road.

Nine years later in 2020, Signal Film and Media leased 102 Abbey Road and on a 'shoe-string' budget brought the building back into use to extend the cultural services available at Cooke's Studios.

Inevitably this fragmented sequence of development (due to piecemeal funding) impacted on the layout and cohesion of the two buildings and they currently do not work well as a unified, accessible public creative centre. Compromised spatial arrangements limit our offer and prevent us from providing truly public, year-round cultural opportunities.

In 2021 we seized the opportunity to apply for Arts Council Capital Investment funding which would enable us to resolve these critical issues of public accessibility and poor internal spatial arrangements.

Conservation Architects John Coward Architects (JCA) were commissioned in October 2021 (RIBA Stage 1-3) to develop designs to support the Arts Council England Capital Investment application. In April 2022 Arts Council England awarded £490,000 towards the overall budget of £545,000. JCA subsequently supported applications for listed building consent and planning permission.

The organisation suggests a Stage 3 review at this phase to include scoping, survey and engagement. We anticipate a period to re-embed and re-engage the team.

Design Aim

We are keen to develop inspiring creative spaces which sensitively celebrate the heritage of the buildings as they elevate, unify and future proof their usability. Signal Film and Media is committed to delivering a building which contributes considerable social value to Barrow-in-Furness through the provision of high quality cultural services. We strive for excellence and seek a lead architect who can bring vision, energy and quality to the project.

To date the scheme has planning permission and listed building consent (approved on 25 October 2022) which establishes the main structural changes and addresses current design weaknesses, including:

- Cooke's Studios has a difficult internal arrangement which adversely affects flow through it.
- The entrance to Cooke's Studios is through a single door via an intercom into a small lobby with no reception. The entrance is unwelcoming and confusing which can act as a physical barrier to visitors and potential users.
- Limited physical links between the two buildings are not used effectively to improve flow and unify the two buildings.
- The current ground floor is underutilised with low permeability to the public and a confusing layout.

We now require a design-conscious-led team who can bring an overarching, coherent concept and strong design elements to the plans as they are further developed with a confident, creative and innovative approach to upgrading this unique cultural space.

Amount, Scale and Layout

The proposed works comprise:

- Alterations to internal arrangement of the ground floor to form a new reception area and café, museum standard gallery space and creative practitioner studios, allowing the building to operate as a single entity.
- Alterations to the front façade to make this more welcoming and accessible. Radically improving the accessibility and visibility of the entrance to Cooke's Studios by creating a new entrance.
- Alterations to the rear façade to allow this to be used as a secondary entrance, and to provide light into the building.
- Alterations to existing sanitary facilities.
- Improvements to the multi-use 1,615 square foot ground floor space for community classes and workshops, exhibitions, and events with additional facilities including climate control, acoustic absorption and black out functions.
- Renovation of the attic for artists in residence/tenants. Including installation of a WC and shower and kitchenette.



Value of Works

- Estimated total budget construction costs (excluding VAT): £430,000
- The Capital Project is generously supported by Arts Council England to the above value; however there is potential by our dedicated fundraising team to raise further funds for additional developments to maximise the benefit of the scheme.

Further background information: Please see document:

Design Access Heritage Statement

Site Context

102 – 104 Abbey Road are Grade 2 Listed buildings, also known as Oxford Chambers (102) and The Cooke's Building (104).

Proposals

Existing Proposed Plans (planning approved) – Supplied by John Coward Architects Drawing Register.

Note

Proposed plans indicate development to the basement areas. The schedule of works within this phase of capital development has omitted the basement development plans.

Note

All JCA information has been prepared for the purposes of a funding bid and Planning and Listed Building Consent Application only, based on information available at the time. All documents prepared by JCA are shared in good faith to identify the scope of the project and design intent. All information is to be reviewed by prospective tendering teams for compliance with Statutory Regulations and constructability, including setting out and condition of existing fabric. Prospective bidders will need to include design time in their bid to progress the designs for Building Regulations approval and construction status.

Scope of Works

To provide lead Design/Architect and lead consultant services including Design, Planning and Execution through RIBA stages 4,5,6. Including contract administration during the construction works and the role of Principle Designer.

A full schedule of Architectural services forming the architect's appointment will be discussed and agreed.

The Services shall be in accordance with Signal Film and Media's Conditions of Contract for Services, a copy of which is available on request.

Anticipated Scope

- Project review
- Design fees, MEP
- Measured Survey - Scope and obtain prices (separate budget)
- Architecture fees
- Structural engineer fees
- QS fees
- Damp and Timber Survey - Scope and obtain prices (separate budget)
- CCTV survey basement drains - Scope and obtain prices (separate budget)
- Access Consultant - Scope of consultants to build on the work already done in the access audit
- Fire Consultant - Scope and obtain prices (separate budget)
- Asbestos Survey if none existing - Scope and obtain prices (separate budget)



Additional Information

Conditions of Contract

The conditions of contract are the Professional Services Short Contract.

Expenses and Disbursements

Expenses may be payable separately under the Contract outside of the Consultant's tendered lump sum prices.

Site Visit

Full site visits can be arranged. Please contact pippa@signalfilmandmedia.co.uk

Site Data Available

- 21129 (Design and Access Statement inc Heritage Statement v3)
- 21129 12 (Location Map)
- 21129 01C (Existing Floor Plans and External Front Elevation)
- 21129 07D (Proposed Floor Plans Ground Floor and Basement)
- 21129 08A (Proposed Floor Plans First Second Third Floors)
- 21129 09C (External Front Elevation (existing/proposed) Proposed Section
- Access Audit and Plan Appraisal Cooke's Studios.12.21
- Appendix B - 102 - 104 Abbey Road_sbem
- Cookes Studio - M&E Feasibility Report
- Sustainability Report 01

Reading Information

<https://www.cookesstudios.co.uk/>

<https://signalfilmandmedia.com/>

For more information, please contact:

pippa@signalfilmandmedia.co.uk

Application documents and site data can be downloaded from:

signalfilmandmedia.com/about/work-with-us/