Durham History Centre

Have your say on our exciting plans for Mount Oswald Manor House

A new local history and registration service for County Durham

Learn about the lives of local people and their stories at Mount Oswald and through touring exhibitions and activities across the county

Exhibitions bringing to life the fascinating history of County Durham

Exciting education programme

Explore our historic collections and objects

Celebrate life events in enhanced facilities
The consultation builds on previous consultations in 2015, 2016 and 2018 which found overwhelming support for a new history centre. We have developed these proposals based on your feedback, and now want your help to take them further.

**You said**
- Bring services together
- Include DLI/ military collections
- Location with public transport links
- Include exhibitions, talks and activities
- Take history around the county
- Good café offer
- Good digital access
- Dedicated volunteer space
- Modern research facilities

**We did**
- Five local history collections and Durham Register Office will be based in Mount Oswald
- The DLI collection objects, written records and photographs will be reunited in a single location for the first time since 1998
- Mount Oswald includes good bus links as it is on a major bus route into and out of the city, and is opposite the Howlands Park and Ride site
- We are developing a dedicated exhibition area as part of the design, including permanent and temporary exhibition spaces as well as space for activities and events
- We are already delivering activities and exhibitions around the county and will build on this with an enhanced programme for local communities, including children and schools
- A high quality café which will provide facilities for visitors and local residents alike will be included in the design
- This consultation asks you for your views on online information and digital displays and access at the new centre
- A dedicated room for volunteers is built into the design
- Proposed research facilities include space to view original historic documents and objects, both physically and digitally
Current approach view and proposed approach view
Current entrance and proposed entrance
Location and service model

- Local studies reference collection from Durham Clayport Library
- Durham County Record Office archive including DLI written record and Historic Environment Record from County Hall
- Durham Register Office from Aykley Heads House
- Durham History Centre and County of Durham Register Office
- Historic registration records and ceremony facility from Bishop Auckland Register Office
- DLI objects from Sevenhills, Spennymoor

Existing housing and university development

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Public transport and parking

New build
Back of house

- Collections storage
- Conservation studio
- Digitisation studio
New build
Front of house

- Free entry to explore our permanent and temporary exhibitions about the history of County Durham
- There will be physical, digital and interactive exhibitions suitable for all audiences
- Space for activities and events
- An attractive destination café
- Space to view original historic documents and objects both physically and digitally
- Room for volunteers

Access to
- Archive
- Historic Environment Record
- Local studies collection
- DLI collection
- Historic registration records

Including
- Lift
- Reception
- Toilets
- Accessible toilets

Listed building

Register Office
- Ceremony rooms
- Ceremonial staircase
- Bridal entrance
- Bridal change area
- Registration appointment rooms
- Catering for events

Durham History Centre
- Dedicated classroom for schools and adult learning
Proposed floor plans

Proposed ground floor plan

Cream zone
- Reception
- Attractive destination café
- Exhibition space

Pink zone
- Ceremony rooms
- Catering offer
- Accessible toilet

Blue zone
- Collections storage
- Lift
- Toilets

Proposed first floor plan

Cream zone
- Search room, including digital search room
- Volunteer room

Pink zone
- Registration appointment rooms

Blue zone
- Collections storage
- Digitisation studio
- Conservation studio
- Staff area

The proposed classroom for schools and adult learning will be on the second floor