

Case Study : Mid - Design Stage

The British Library Centre for Conservation

This case study follows on from one undertaken at the briefing stage on the project. [Click here to read the more about the earlier work](#) .



Image courtesy of Long and Kentish Architects

The Centre for Conservation is the first capital project that the British Library has undertaken since it moved to St Pancras in the early 1990's. In September 2005, following a previous DQI assessment at Strategic Briefing stage, the winning design was tested using the Mid-Design version of the DQI. The decision to use the DQI was once again driven by Drivers Jonas, the Project Managers, who helped develop the initial brief with the British Library, supported by Davis Langdon.

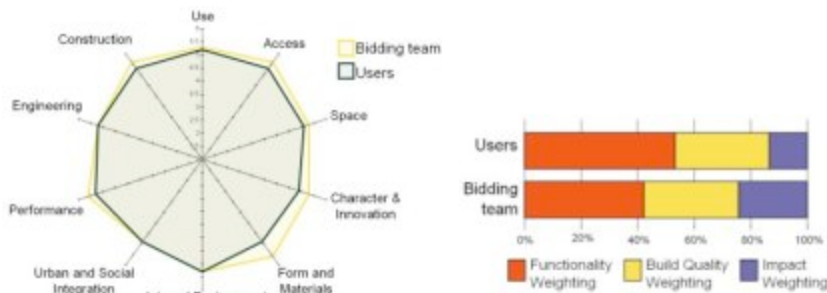
The Centre of Conservation is to be a centre of excellence reinforcing the reputation of the British Library as the world's leading institution for restoring and conserving books, manuscripts and sound recordings. The client wants it to be an acclaimed design, but also create a functional environment for the specialist working conditions required for conservation of books and sound, and also to establish a balanced relationship with the existing flagship building and its surroundings.

Following an initial collective DQI workshop prior to RIBA stage A of the two stage design and build contract, the same group of stakeholders reconvened to assess the winning design solution by Long and Kentish Architects. The group consisted of the project sponsor, head of conservation, head of sound, library project architect, project manager, architectural advisor, services and structural engineer and the design and build contractor.

Drivers Jonas initiated the Mid Design DQI by firstly talking to various specialist users and disseminating paper based questionnaires for completion a fortnight prior to a scheduled face to face workshop. To ensure maximum user representation, the workshop replaced a weekly user team meeting and various resources were made available for observation including models, plans, elevations and sample materials. Drivers Jonas took the data and provided a detailed report which was used to aid design decisions during value engineering to ensure that the user priority of design functionality was maintained.

Findings

The DQI was used to create a comparative assessment of the users and the design and build contractor with the purpose of establishing how well aligned the design and build team's attitudes and aspirations in delivering design quality were, compared to those of the future users of the building.



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Drivers Jonas developed some specific graphs for their report based using the data available from the DQI website, and the concepts behind the typical DQI outputs.

The results concluded that the chosen team (Sir Robert McAlpine) and users were generally aligned on their perceptions of how the building is delivering design quality and they are generally agreed on the level of design quality that is being delivered. Both teams also ranked the three quality dimensions in the same order of importance. Both teams placed equal weighting to build quality. It was concluded that everyone was heading in the right direction and that the spaces and design were suitable for the users.



Image courtesy of Long and Kentish Architects

The DQI will be revisited again in August 2007 when an In-Use DQI assessment of the finished building will be carried out.

[Click here to read the previous case study, written after the strategic briefing workshop.](#)