ALLIED LONDON

LONDON ROAD FIRE STATION

CORONER'S COURT:

DESIGN PARAMETERS STRATEGY

JULY 2017



1.0 Introduction

The Coroners Court is one of the highlights of the London Road Fire Station due to its architectural merit and historical significance. The significance of the space has been assessed within the Heritage Statement (Part 1. Volume 1) prepared by Stephen Levrant Heritage Architecture and submitted as part of this application. The Court complex is located on ground and basement level and remains largely intact, despite having been unused since the closure of the Court in 1998. The re-use of the Coroners Court is required to avoid any further harm to its architectural character, or its significant fabric.

As part of the refurbishment proposals for the London Road Fire Station, Allied London plan to bring this significant Manchester building back into active use. The following document outlines the use strategy and design parameters for the re-activation of the Coroners Court. A detailed refurbishment strategy will be provided to the local authority for approval prior to any works commencing within the space.

2.0 Re-Use Strategy

Allied London proposes to revitalize the Coroners Court as a meeting space where communities can come together for social meeting, film and music events. The space will be used to encourage all forms of meetings, societies, talks, lectures, free speaking, learning, creative writing, poetry readings, book launches, film showings and daily news readings. The vision is to create an intimate performance environment to be enjoyed by the surrounding community and beyond. We will also encourage privately booked gatherings and events where the space can be made available on a national level through weddings, TV filming and corporate events, thereby promoting the space and increasing its exposure to a wide audience.

The design of the Coroners Court, gallery, and ancillary spaces will largely be retained in their original state and unique style. The spaces are to be enhanced with minimal interventions, including in-situ refurbishment of existing fittings and finishes, redecoration, installation of audio visual equipment to facilitate events proceedings, sympathetic lighting, and dressed with loose furniture placement to ensure that the interior design approach is developed in a way that will be complementary to the heritage of the building whilst also allowing it to function as an operational venue suitable for modern use.

The ancillary spaces are intended to serve the main Courtroom by offering opportunity for waiting and gathering space, quieter relief / breakout spaces during events proceedings, and the consumption of food & beverage during and after events within the main courtroom space.

The court complex was initially conceived as a stand-alone collection of spaces with no access between the complex and the wider building. The two existing building entrances are to be retained with the main double doors to be used as the primary access route for visitors. The insertion of a new entrance / exit route to the Court gallery from the internal Courtyard has

been proposed as a secondary utilitarian route providing two main functional enhancements to the complex;

Firstly to provide level and disabled access into the court complex which is currently unavailable from the street (without major and undesirable intervention works), a platform lift will be inserted into the central rectangular space within the existing staircase to provide disabled access to the basement floor;

Secondly to discretely link the court complex to the courtyard and make the wider building facilities available for use by the court complex event operators and event patrons. This is key to providing food and beverage from the surrounding restaurants and in the event of a wedding or similar event, to continue the event after the ceremonial aspects within the courtroom are concluded. Note that no cooking is proposed within the space, it will be brought in from elsewhere within the building.

For information concerning event management procedures, please refer to the London Road Fire Station Operational Management Plan which accompanies this application.

3.0 Overview of Existing Layout

The Court complex is accessed at street level via the two entrance doors off London Road. The ground floor facilities include a Courtroom gallery, waiting room, toilet, office and entrance hall. The stair core adjacent to the entrance hall provides access to the basement level which comprises a main waiting hall, Jury room and double height Courtroom. The existing spaces all interact and compliment the former use of the court complex; the intention through the redevelopment of the space is to recognise and understand this spatial interaction in a coherent manner, and maintain this connection through their re-use.

Understanding the spatial hierarchy is key to the understanding of the space; in brief, the processes whereby courtroom visitors enter the building through a designated entrance, into narrow spaces with high ceilings provide a feeling of procession, order and formality. The journey down the windowless staircase into the clearly below-ground waiting space provides an introspective and reflective moment to focus on the matters which will follow upon entering the main courtroom space. The judge's rooms located behind the courtroom and hidden from view remove the chance of interaction with visitors prior to formal proceedings commencing. This spatial hierarchy is deliberate and intelligently arranged to create a sense of solemnness appropriate to the former use. The reactivation of these spatial principles will be key to the success of the reuse of the space.

The courtroom itself consists of a Judges dais, main table, witness box, press box and a number of court benches. The court benches have been laid out in a 'U' shape directed towards the Judges dais. There are 2 benches for 6 persons to the left of the Coroner, 2 benches for 10 persons on the right side of the Coroner. In front of the Coroner, 5 rows of benches are laid between the table and the back wall, accommodating rows of: 4, 4, 9, 13 and 13 persons. Two benches are positioned adjacent to the Courtroom in the waiting hall. Certain items of furniture have been altered to a modest degree.

The Courtroom interior is largely finished in solid wood panelling and parquet flooring. The Courtroom has a decorative coffered plastered ceiling with plaster beam encasements. The windows facing the internal courtyard are leaded stained glass.

The supporting spaces have been modified over time and many original features have been lost. Please see figure 3 of the appendix for the photographic record displaying the existing condition of the Coroner's Court complex. However, there are a mixture of features remaining by way of timber panelling, stained glass windows and the like which will all be retained in-situ, repaired by specialists and re-used.

4.0 Refurbishment strategy

The following principles outline the refurbishment strategy to be adopted for the Coroners Court and ancillary spaces, the strategy will be further developed in conjunction with specialist craftsmen and submitted to the local authority for approval prior to any works commencing within the spaces:

- *Solid Wood Panelling* **-** Panelling to be retained and refurbished by a specialist carpenter / joiner. Panelling weakened by decay is to be strengthened and refurbished where possible. All wood panelling is to be cleaned and maintained on a regular basis to ensure good condition is retained. Repair method statement to be produced prior to works commencing.

- *Leaded Stained Glass* - Repairs to the stained leaded glass windows are to be made in situ wherever possible. Any replacement to glass panels will be made to match both the colour and texture of the original glass. Repair method statement to be produced prior to works commencing.

- *Decorative Coffered Plastered Ceiling & Plaster Beam Encasement* – A section of the Courtroom ceiling has been significantly damaged and will require structural and decorative repair by a specialist. Moulding casts will be taken by a plaster cornice specialist and replacement mouldings will be installed. The existing cornice will be checked for soundness and a schedule of repair produced. Repair method statement to be produced prior to works commencing.

- *Decorative Wall Tiles* - Paint covering original decorative wall tiles to be removed by tile specialist. Damaged wall tiles to be replaced using tiles which match colour and texture.

- *Glass Pavement Lights* - Non-original concrete form Court pavement lights are to be replaced to achieve improved thermal performance. New pavement lights shall also form part of the fire strategy to smoke ventilate the basement.

- *Brass Signage* - Brass 'Coroners Court' entrance signage to be retained in situ.

- *Existing original light fittings* – to be retained in situ and refurbished where possible to modern standards for reuse

- *Existing parquet flooring* – to be retained in situ, pieced in where required, sanded and refurbished by a specialist contractor ready for reuse.

- *Existing walls & ceilings* – to be retained in situ, repaired where required, sanded and redecorated by a specialist contractor.

5.0 Furniture Strategy

The existing furniture within the Coroners Court is attached to the floor and in some cases surrounded by raised plinths. The furniture is laid out in such a manner as to prohibit any central aisle being created, which severely limits the quantum of uses the space could host.

Therefore, to support the re-use of the space, selected items of currently fixed furniture will be made movable by removing floor fixings and plinths, to render the furniture free-standing. This will aid the flexibility of uses intended to reactivate the space. Initial findings are that this can be achieved without any significant detriment to the existing furniture.

It is envisaged that the furniture will be retained within the Coroner's Court space for day-to-day use, however once freestanding it can be laid out to suit the events within the court room, or moved into the ante-rooms to facilitate specific events such as weddings, talks etc. which requires more of a high-quality comfortable padded chair.

There is no evidence to suggest that the fixtures and fittings are particularly significant in their own right, however we do have a preference to retain and re-use the furniture. We have investigated the feasibility of freeing up the furniture from the floor and removing the raised plinths and this appears to be entirely achievable without causing any significant damage to the furniture items. A detailed methodology for the removal of floor fixings and plinths will be produced by a specialist to ensure that the fabric of each item of furniture is protected. Once work to each item of furniture is complete, the existing parquet flooring will be sensitively repaired and supplemented as required.

The following outlines the furniture strategy to be adopted for the Coroners Court:

*Please read alongside Figure 1 & 2 of the appendix.

- *Press Box (under window)* - To be retained and refurbished in situ. The damaged vomitory on the front bench is to be removed to maximize the available floorspace and allow the front bench to become more accessible for use.

- *Judge's Dais and Bench* - To be retained and refurbished in situ. Non-original carpet flooring is to be cleaned or replaced as necessary. Original standard lamps are to be retained.

- *Witness Box and Benches* - Plinth surrounding furniture to be removed. Witness box and bench floor fixings to be unscrewed and furniture made moveable.

- *Rear Court Benches* - Floor fixings to be removed and benches to be made moveable.

- *Central Court Benches / Table* - Central plinth to be removed. Central Court benches to be unscrewed and made moveable.

- *Waiting Hall Benches* - Benches to be released from their floor mountings and re-used within the existing space or relocated within the Engine Hall at London Road Fire Station to allow for alternative operational use.

6.0 Detailed Design Strategy Outline

Post planning determination a detailed design strategy shall be produced. This document will include:

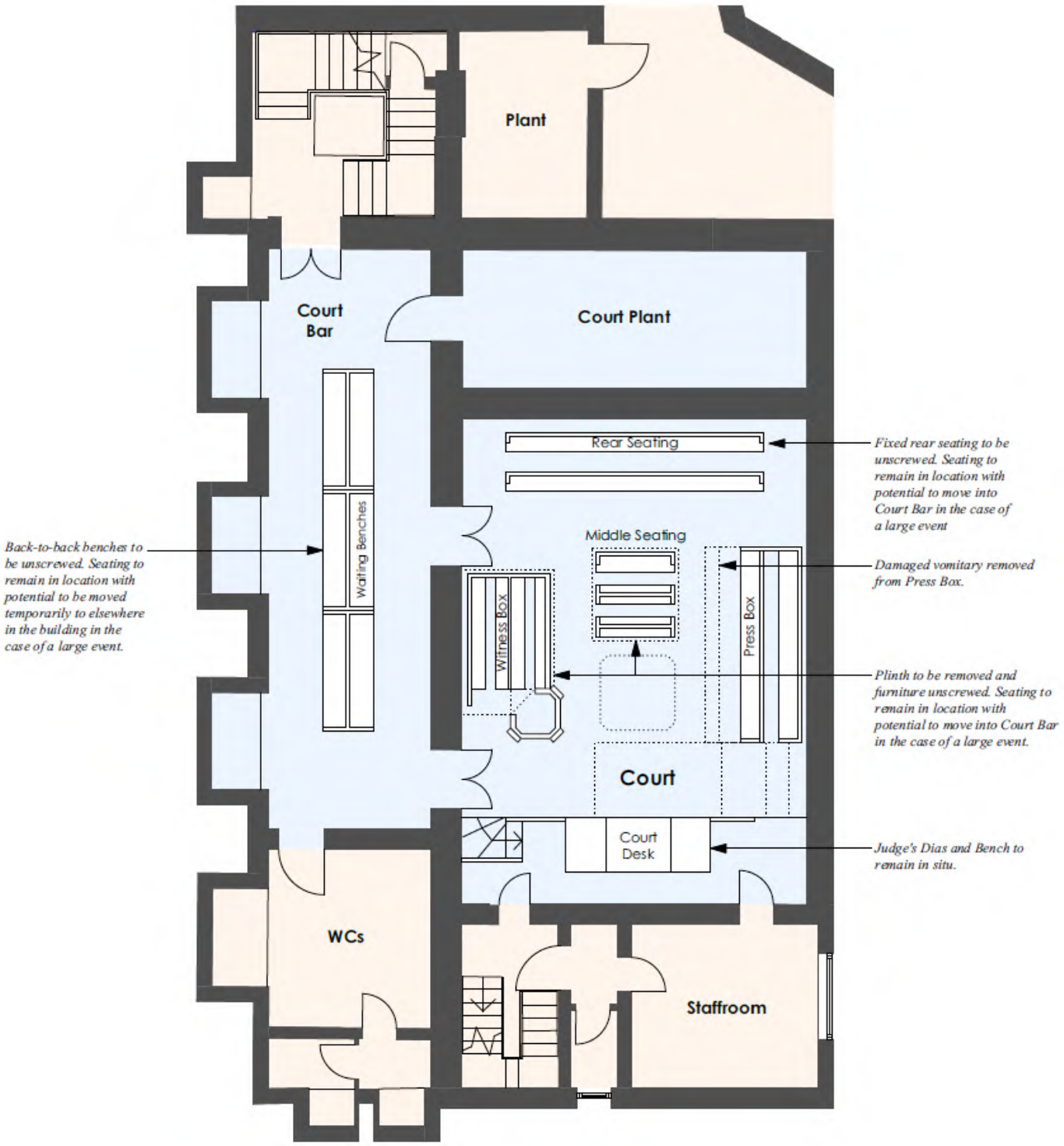
- Record of existing fabric (incl. materials and condition)
- Access information (incl. fire escape strategy)
- Confirmation of furniture strategy (incl. fabric repair specification)
- Method statement for removal of furniture floor fixings and plinths
- Storage location for moveable items of Courtroom furniture
- Detailed design specification and layout of ancillary areas
- Lighting, heating and audio-visual equipment specification

7.0 Summary

Allied London's proposals are in line with the vision to conserve the historical and architectural significance of the Coroners Court whilst also reactivating its use. The proposals allow for the existing items of Court furniture to remain as the visual centre piece to the Courtroom. The ancillary rooms will be sympathetically designed to complement the heritage of the building whilst also providing its operational facilities. A detailed design strategy will follow this document and further detail the procedures to be adopted for revitalising the Coroners Court and associated spaces. For further information concerning the proposed use of the Coroners Court, please see 'House of London Road' document included within the appendix.

8.0 Appendix

Figure 1:



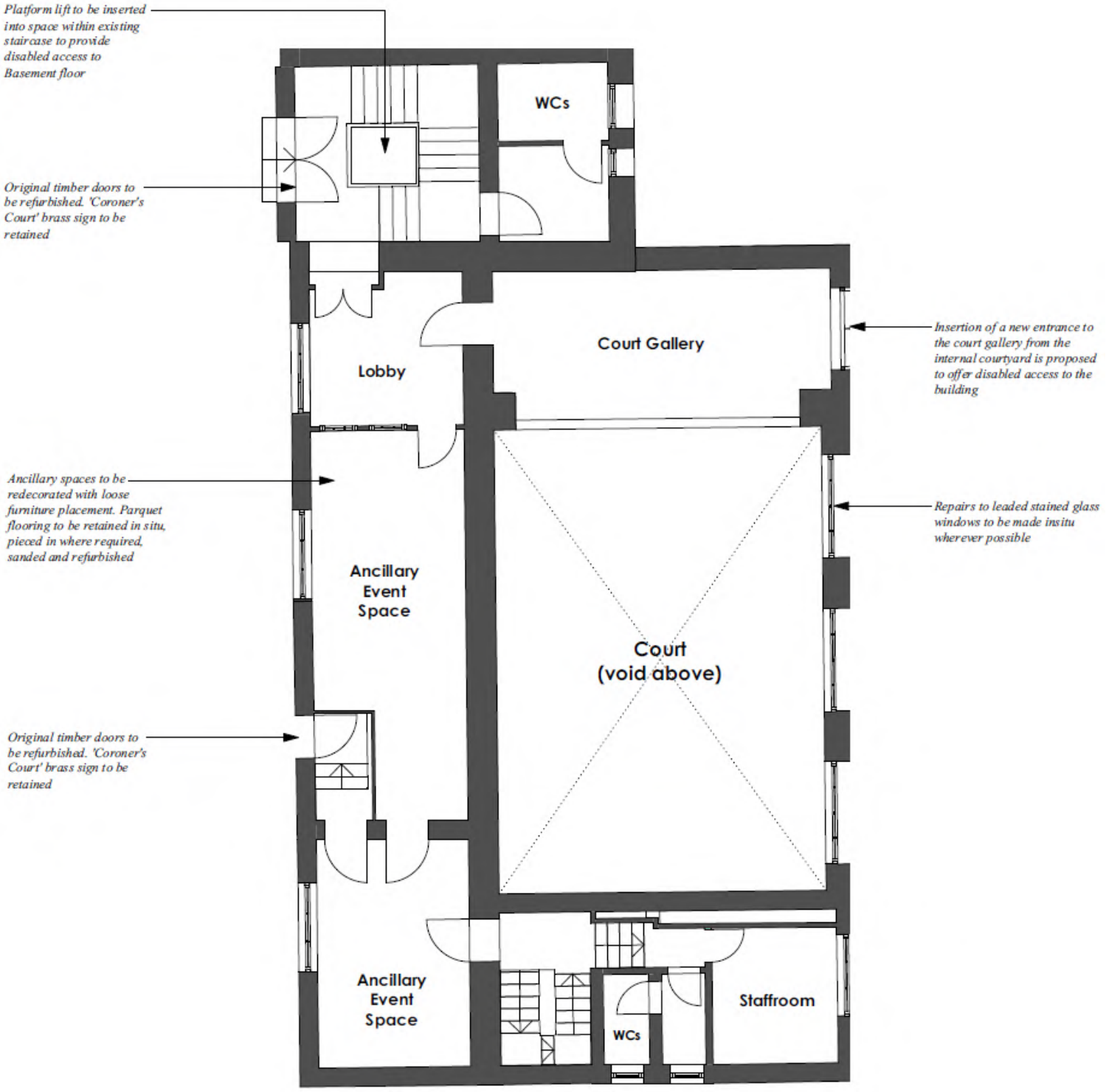
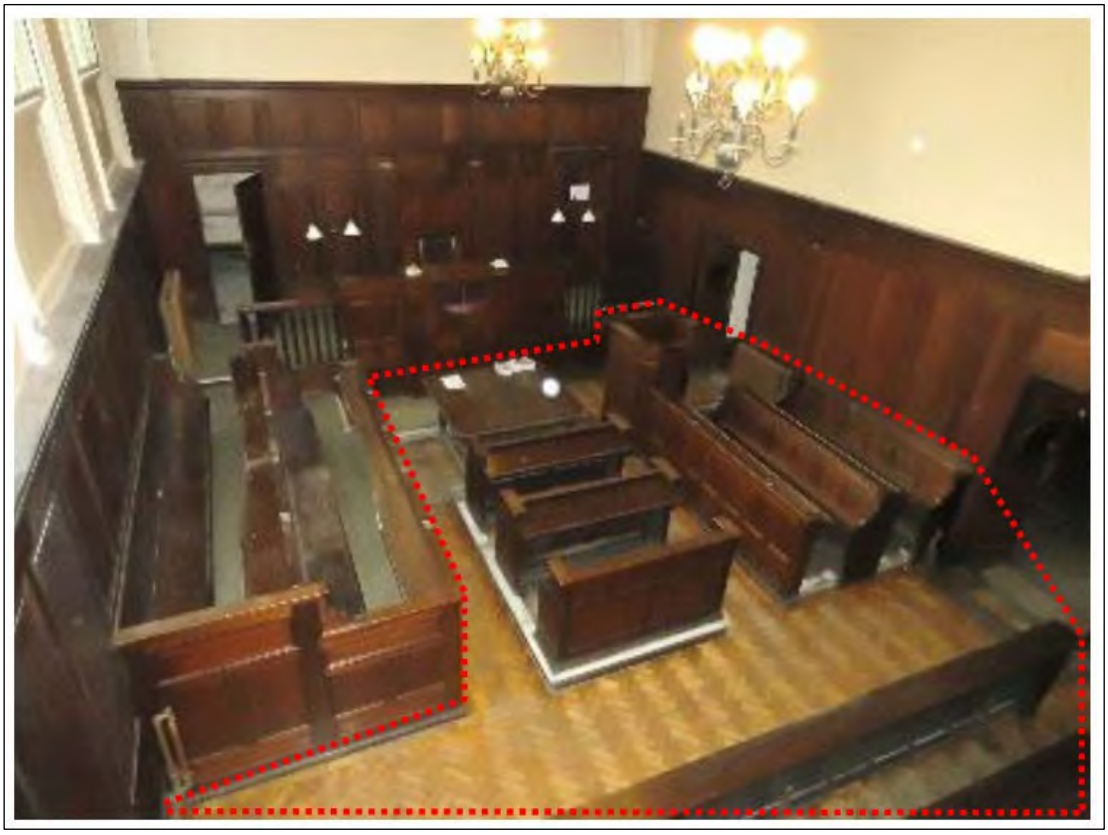

Platform lift to be inserted into space within existing staircase to provide disabled access to Basement floor
Original timber doors to be refurbished. 'Coroner's Court' brass sign to be retained
WCs
Court Gallery
Lobby
Insertion of a new entrance to the court gallery from the internal courtyard is proposed to offer disabled access to the building
Ancillary spaces to be redecorated with loose furniture placement. Parquet flooring to be retained in situ, pieced in where required, sanded and refurbished
Repairs to leaded stained glass windows to be made insitu wherever possible
Ancillary Event Space
Court (void above)
Original timber doors to be refurbished. 'Coroner's Court' brass sign to be retained
Ancillary Event Space
WCs
Staffroom

Figure 2:



: Furniture within red line to be made portable.

Figure 3: Photographic record of existing condition

Existing view of proposed Ancillary Event space (former public waiting area).	
Existing entrance to Coroner's staff office.	

Existing Ancillary Event Space (former Coroner's Staff offices).	
Existing view of Ancillary Event Space (former public entrance) looking toward main entrance.	

Existing view of public and staff entrances to the Coroner's Court.	
Internal view of existing public entrance.	

Existing view of stairs from public entrance.	
Existing view of proposed area for Court Bar with back-to-back benches.	

Details of over-painted decorative tiling to be revealed and restored.	 

Existing views of the balcony and new entry to the building to enable disabled access.





Existing view of main court space from the Court Desk.	
Existing view of the main court space from the rear (public) setaing.	



HOUSE OF LONDON ROAD

SOCIAL | MEETINGS | MUSIC | SCREENINGS



WELCOME TO THE HOUSE OF LONDON ROAD

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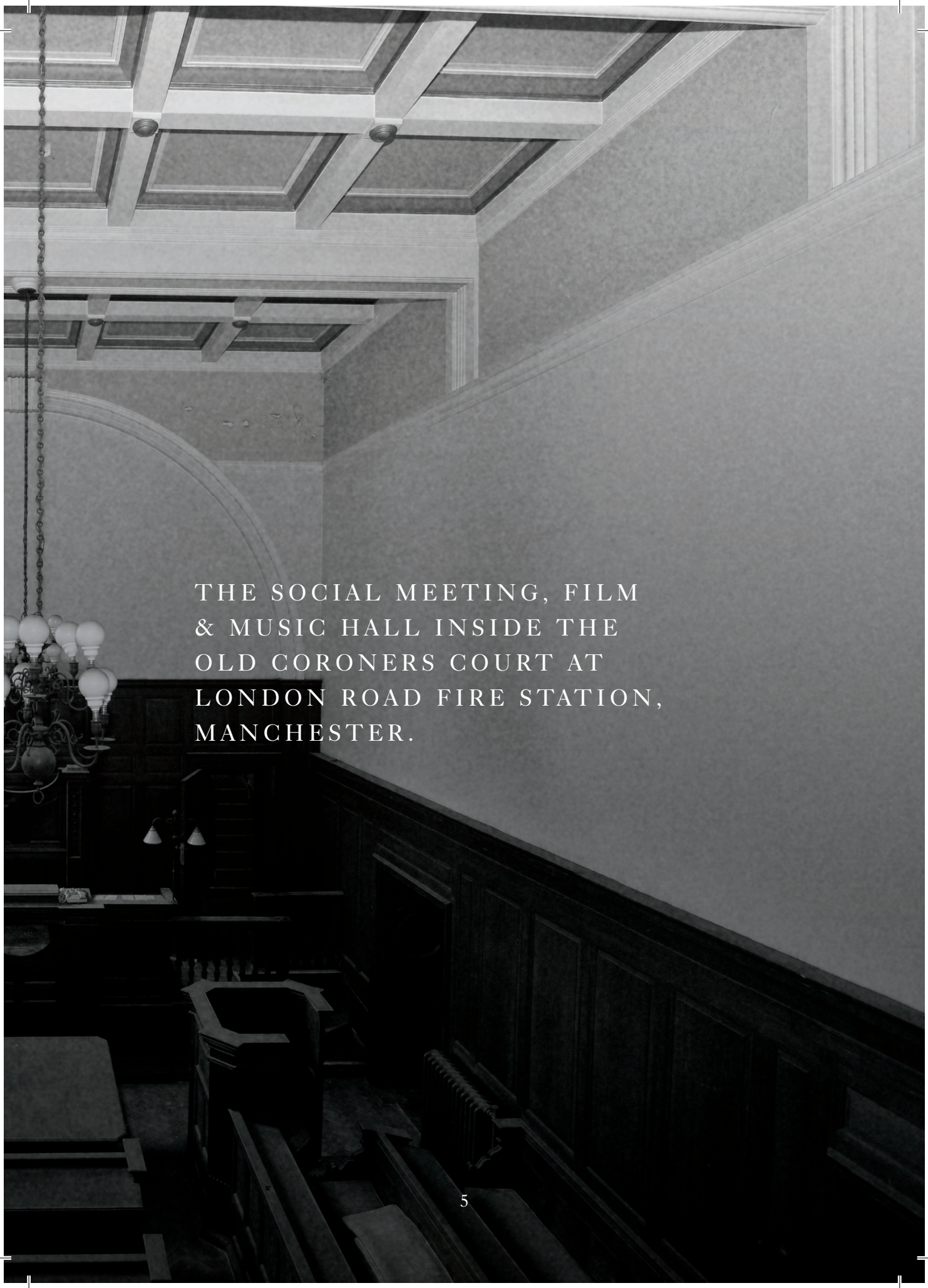
THIS IS THE BIRTH OF A NEW INSTITUTION FOR MANCHESTER WHERE PEOPLE COME TOGETHER TO CREATE MUSIC, LITERATURE, ART & FILM.

THIS IS A PLACE WHICH COMBINES A SERIES OF MEETING ROOMS, SOCIAL SPACES, A BAR AND A KITCHEN.

WE VALUE YOUR THOUGHTS AND INVITE YOU TO TELL US WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE AT THE HOUSE OF LONDON ROAD.

house@londonroadmcr.co.uk





THE SOCIAL MEETING, FILM & MUSIC HALL INSIDE THE OLD CORONERS COURT AT LONDON ROAD FIRE STATION, MANCHESTER.



THE HOUSE OF LONDON ROAD WILL BE A SOCIAL MEETING, FILM AND MUSIC HALL WHERE PEOPLE FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE CAN COME TOGETHER TO TALK, MEET, PLAY, LEARN AND ENTERTAIN. IT IS A PLACE FOR THE SIMPLE ENJOYMENT OF SPEECH, MOTION AND MUSIC.

DESIGN FOR FUNCTION

LONDON ROAD

NOT FASHION

INSPIRATION

THE SHAKER MOVEMENT

THE ORIGIN AND DESIGN OF THE SPACE AT THE HOUSE OF LONDON ROAD IS INFLUENCED BY THE SHAKER MOVEMENT WHICH FIRST ORIGINATED IN MANCHESTER IN 1747.

THE SHAKER LIFESTYLE WAS WELL KNOWN FOR ITS SIMPLICITY, WHETHER IN DESIGN, ARCHITECTURE OR PRACTICES.

LIFE AS A SHAKER ALSO FEATURED AN EMPHASIS ON MUSICAL PERFORMANCES AND DANCES.









THE HOUSE OF LONDON ROAD HAS INITIALLY BEEN UTILISED AS A SHAKER INSPIRED SHOWCASE OF WORKING AND LIVING BY WALLPAPER*. THEIR TEAM OF INTERNATIONAL DESIGNERS HAS DEVELOPED AN INTERIOR APPROACH THAT IS COMPLEMENTARY TO THE HERITAGE OF THE BUILDING WHILE ALSO FITTING THE NEEDS OF MODERN LIFESTYLE.

THE HOUSE OF LONDON ROAD SHOWCASES THE WALLPAPER* DESIGN APPROACH FOR TWO KEY ASPECTS OF THE FIRE STATION - ‘WORKING’ AND ‘LIVING’. SIGNALLING A RETURN TO SIMPLE, STYLISH ENVIRONMENTS.

MUSIC

THE MUSIC HALL AT THE HOUSE OF LONDON ROAD WILL BE A BREATHTAKING VENUE UNLIKE ANY OTHER IN THE CITY.

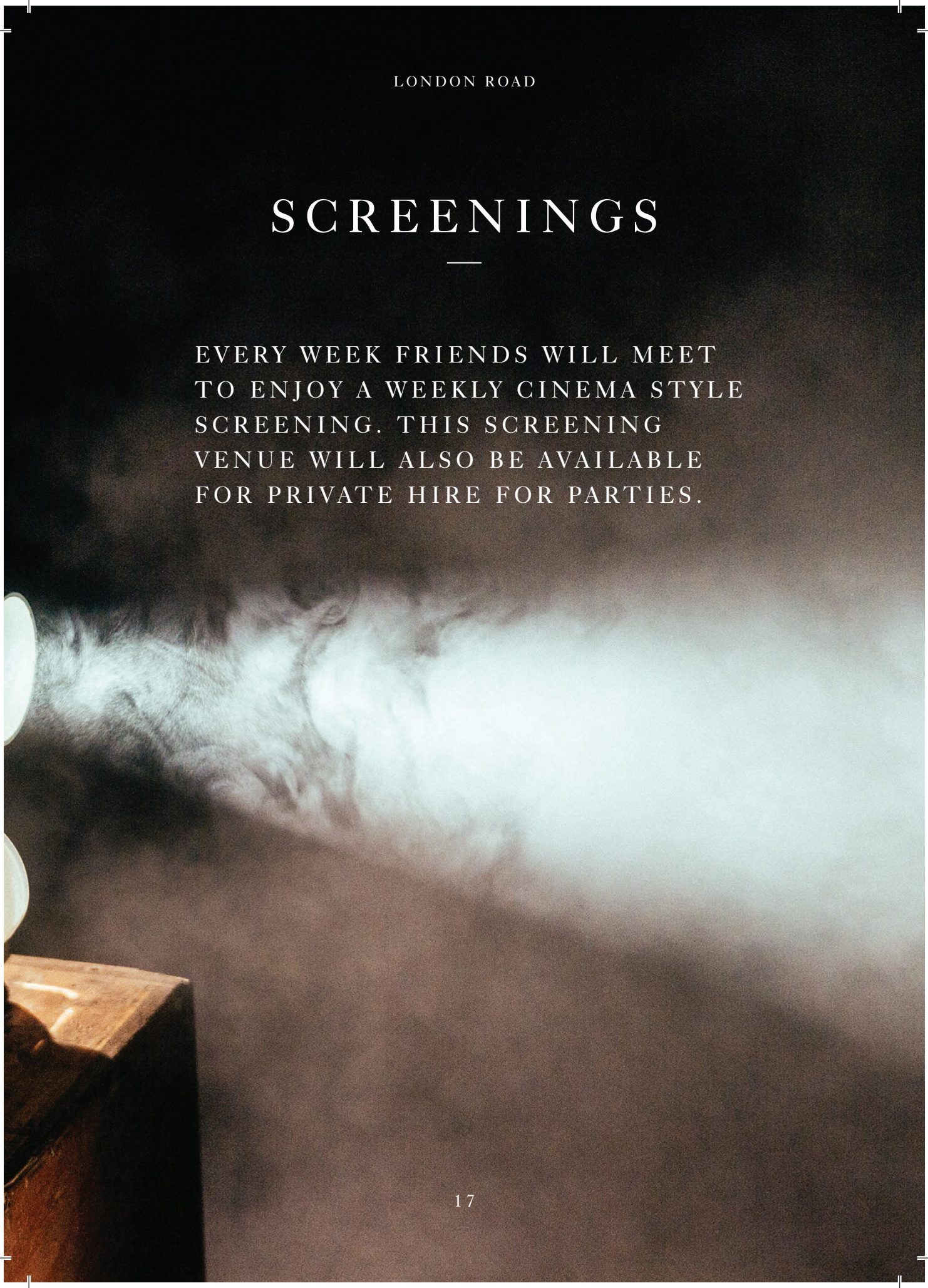
THE VISION IS FOR AN INTIMATE ENVIORNMENT FOR STRIPPED BACK PERFORMANCES, NO WIRES, NO SPEAKERS.

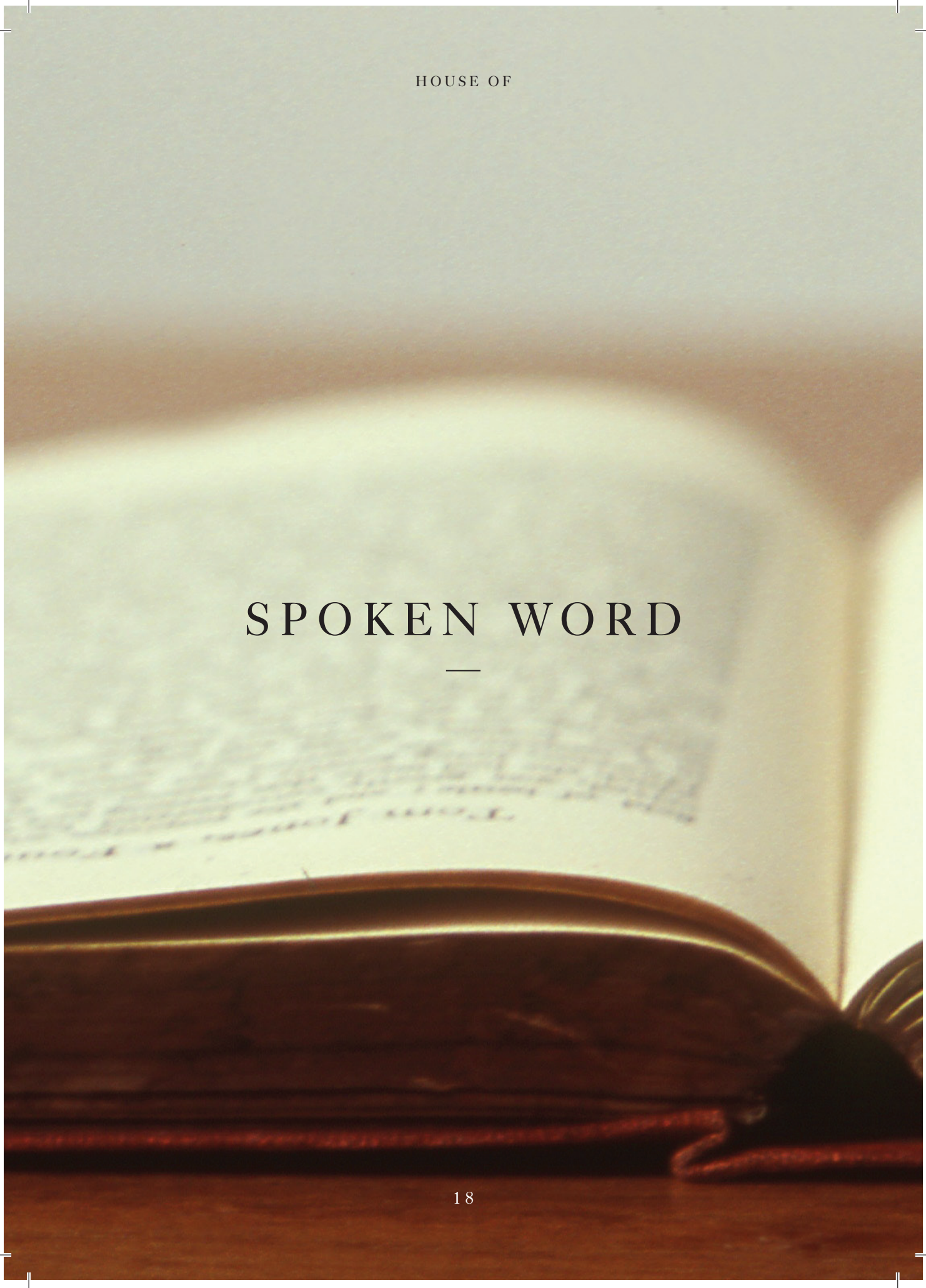

ARGENT


DUKANE
FOCUS
ADVANCE
FRAME
DUKANE

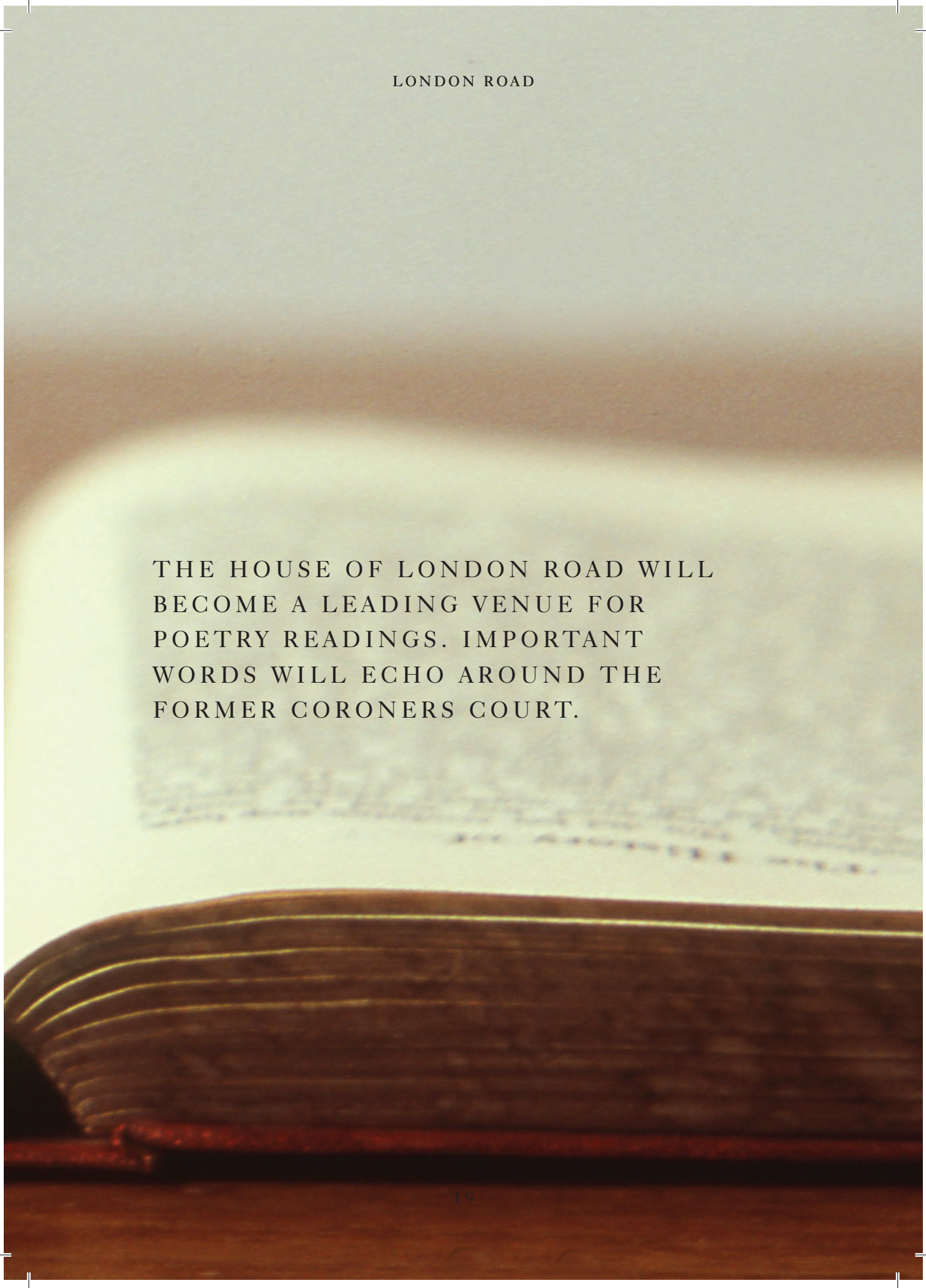
SCREENINGS

EVERY WEEK FRIENDS WILL MEET TO ENJOY A WEEKLY CINEMA STYLE SCREENING. THIS SCREENING VENUE WILL ALSO BE AVAILABLE FOR PRIVATE HIRE FOR PARTIES.

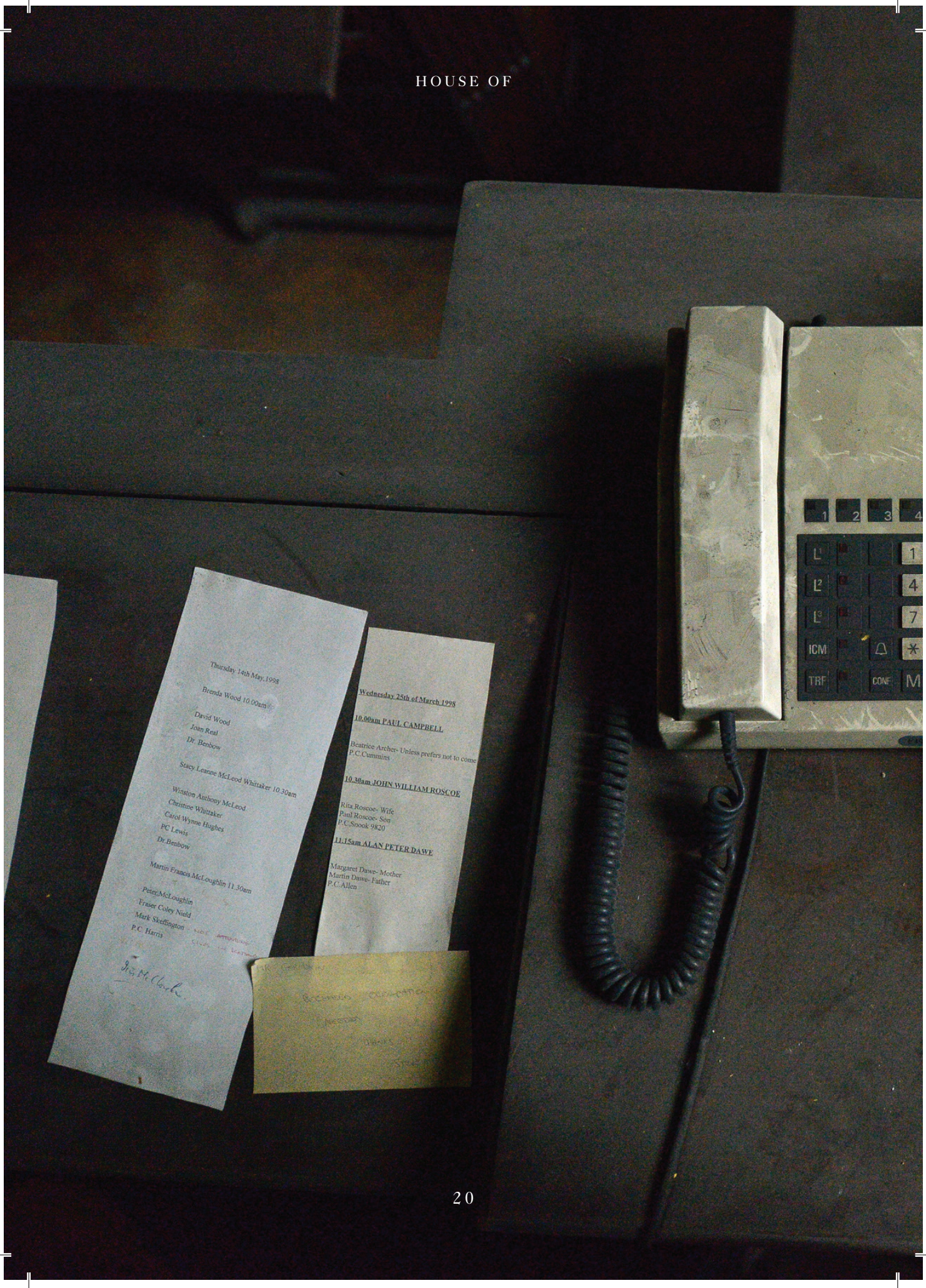




SPOKEN WORD



THE HOUSE OF LONDON ROAD WILL BECOME A LEADING VENUE FOR POETRY READINGS. IMPORTANT WORDS WILL ECHO AROUND THE FORMER CORONERS COURT.


Thursday 14th May 1998
Brenda Wood 10.00am
David Wood
Joan Real
Dr. Benbow
Stacy Leanne McLeod Whittaker 10.30am
Winston Anthony McLeod
Christine Whittaker
Carol Wynne Hughes
PC Lewis
Dr Benbow
Martin Francis McLoughlin 11.30am
Peter McLoughlin
Fraser Coley Nield
Mark Skeffington
P.C. Harris
Wednesday 25th of March 1998
10.00am PAUL CAMPBELL
Beatrice Archer- Unless prefers not to come
P.C.Cummins
10.30am JOHN WILLIAM ROSCOE
Rita Roscoe- Wife
Paul Roscoe- Son
P.C.Snook 9820
11.15am ALAN PETER DAWE
Margaret Dawe- Mother
Martin Dawe- Father
P.C.Allen


THURSDAY 2ND APRIL 1998
10.00A.M. PAUL EVANS
Wednesday 29 April
Geoffrey Taylor - 10am
Ursula Taylor (ex-wife)
Anthony Bergin
PC Allen 7367
Dr Reid
Inform - Leslie Taylor (brother)
Francisco Ortiz - 10.45am
Sandra Ortiz (ex-wife)
Christina Ortiz (niece)
P C Chaudry 8797
Dr Reid
Inform - Sara Ortiz (mother)
Lily Harrop - 11.45am
David Harrop (son)
Joan Real
Dr Bombek
Inform - Linda Murray (daughter)
11.30am MARY ANNE O'NEILL
Mary Noone- Daughter
James O'Neill- Son
Joan Real
10.00am STEPHE
Dr R.F.T.McMahon
10.45am STEVEN SCHOLE
Jose Scholes- Mother
Dr R.F.T.McMahon