# Facilities for stand

**Feasibility Study**

**Document**

# down time

## To complete a feasibility study of each WT station

**To: All employees working the wholetime 24hr shift system, staff networks and Trade Union Representatives.**

This document captures the findings of six feasibility studies at the following Fire Stations, as detailed in the *facilities for stand down time* statement of change document:

1. Barrow
2. Carlisle East
3. Workington
4. Carlisle West
5. Kendal
6. Whitehaven

## Summary Proposal

To improve the health, safety and welfare of staff, the Service is reviewing the provision of folding resting platforms as an alternative arrangement to the reclining chairs. The Service is also reviewing the provision of individual private study spaces, utilising our existing station facilities.

Not all Fire Stations offer the room to support private study areas, and improvements in the estate to meet any further roll-out recommendations may incur additional capital costs. This document will be used to capture the findings from the six feasibilities studies to inform the wider review into resting facilities and any associated costs and benefits.

## Barrow Fire Station

A feasibility study was completed on 30 May 2024. This included the following stakeholders:

* Project Sponsor
* LCU Manager
* White Watch
* One dual Watch Manager
* One day duty CM
* Health and Safety
* FBU H&S rep

Six areas were identified as study rooms on the first floor. This included:

* The Watch Manager existing study room
* The first aid storeroom
* 4 offices used by the station leadership team and Community Fire Safety staff.

An additional area included the TV room, next to the first aid room, if one of the above identified spaces was not deemed suitable.

The activities needed to bring the rooms up to the maximum potential based on the existing station facilities including size, space, and design included:

1. Relocate the first aid storeroom shelving and contents to another store area in the building.
2. Provide roller blinds to the windows in each room (the existing blinds are damaged through fair wear and tear).
3. Reconfigure desks and chairs so that each study area has one desk, chair and room for a fold up platform (and sufficient floor space when the platform is in use).
4. Provide six study desk lights.
5. Staff to consider if 4 personal lockers could be stored in each study room i.e. one for each watch, where this could alleviate restricted space in other locker room areas i.e. the female locker room on the ground floor.

Areas of significant impact.

There were no areas identified. All changes can be completed with minimal expenditure and by the 30 June ahead of the trial starting in July 24.

At the mid-point review on 2 September, staff raised the issue of fitting roller blinds to the vision panels in the study room doors to support privacy requirements. This was supported, and staff were instructed to source the required materials that meet the needs. Any materials must not compromise the integrity of the fire door.

## Carlisle East Fire Station

A feasibility study was completed on 2 August 2024. This included the following stakeholders:

* Project Sponsor
* White Watch
* One day duty CM
* Health and Safety
* Steve Mattinson (FBU)

Six areas were identified as study rooms. This included:

* Quiet Room
* Multi-functional room
* Locality Management Room
* Community Room
* Conference Room
* Supervisory Manager Room

An additional area included the Group Manager Office, if one of the above identified spaces was not deemed suitable.

The activities needed to bring the rooms up to the maximum potential based on the existing station facilities including size, space and design:

1. Multi-function room. An existing fold down platform is installed in the room. The options available to staff include: removing the fold down platform and replace it with a mobile fold away for consistency or keep the fold down and replace just the mattress with the wipeable option.
2. Locality Management Room. Remove an empty tambur unit from the wall to provide a storage area for the platform.
3. Provide study lights where needed in the 6 rooms.

Areas of significant impact.

No areas identified during the inspection. Fire Safety staff were not present during the inspection and will need further engagement to agree the proposal.

PFI will need to be briefed on the findings.

## Workington Fire Station

A feasibility study was completed on 9 August 2024. This included the following stakeholders:

* Project Sponsor
* Red Watch WM Phil Reay
* Red Watch CM Phil Sharples
* Luke Russell Health and Safety
* Ade Kevern (FBU)
* Phil Robinson (Estates)

Six areas were identified as study rooms. This included:

* Quiet Room
* Multi-functional room
* Locality Management Room
* Community Room
* Conference Room
* Group Manager Office

The activities needed to bring the rooms up to the maximum potential based on the existing station facilities including size, space and design:

1. Multi-function room. An existing fold down platform should be installed in the room as a PFI fixture but has been defected and removed. The options available to staff include: not replacing the fold down platform and replace it with a mobile fold away for consistency or replace the fold down (via PFI) and replace just the mattress with the wipeable option. Staff preferred re-instating the fold down platform option.
2. Locality Management Room. Remove an empty tambur unit from the wall to provide a storage area for the platform. Ask for a blind to be reinstated on the fire door in line with all of the other doors.
3. Provide study lights where needed in the 6 rooms.

Areas of significant impact.

The building is also used by On-call staff and the use of their office was identified as unsuitable due to 24hr unhindered access being needed. Fire Safety staff were not present during the inspection and will need further engagement to agree the proposal.

PFI will need to be briefed on the findings and also asked to provide options for replacing the fold down platform.

A plan to use the locality management room as a potential archive store was being considered by another project team. Engagement with this team will be needed to understand the direction and long-term position (Ian Seel to follow up). Note added on 14 Oct – This is no longer being considered so the room can be used for a study room.

## Carlisle West Fire Station

A feasibility study was completed on 2 August 2024. This included the following stakeholders:

* Project Sponsor
* White Watch
* One day duty CM
* Luke Russell Health and Safety
* Steve Mattinson (FBU)

Six areas were identified as study rooms. This included:

* Quiet Room
* Multi-functional room
* Community Room
* Administration room (off the reception office)
* Watch Manager Office
* Watch Room / Office

The activities needed to bring the rooms up to the maximum potential based on the existing station facilities including size, space and design:

1. Multi-function room. A desk and chair would need to be placed into the rear corner wall.
2. Relocate the printer from the admin room to the reception office. This will ensure that the printer can be accessed 24hrs.
3. Provide study lights where needed in the 6 rooms.

Areas of significant impact.

No areas identified during the inspection. Fire Safety staff were not present during the inspection and will need further engagement to agree the proposal, particularly regarding the use of the admin room.

PFI will need to be briefed on the findings.

If only five rooms are identified on this station, it would be reasonable to identify 7 rooms at Carlisle East so the dual WM / Firefighter could be located at Carlisle East for the night shift. This would be exceptional due to foreseeable crewing levels normally operating at 4 or 5, but could remain as a sensible solution.

## Kendal Fire Station

A feasibility study was completed on 15 August 2024. This included the following stakeholders:

* Project sponsor
* Duncan Taylor Health and Safety
* Shane Parkinson
* WM Meg Harris
* WM Karl Read (part meeting)

13 potential areas were identified as study rooms. The options for this station were extensive and achievable with moderate investment. However, the options will need to be discussed with the Head of Estates so potential improvement can be aligned with other capital investment programmes at Kendal.

The activities needed to bring the rooms up to the maximum potential based on the existing station facilities including size, space and design:

1. The turn out system is quiet in many areas of the station due to stud partition walls being installed to create smaller office spaces. This will need to be reviewed to see if the volume or disposition of speakers could be improved.
2. Lights do not turn on with the turn out system in certain rooms. This could influence which rooms are used.
3. The temperature of the rooms at Kendal is a challenge. Remedial work is underway to try and improve this situation. It is noted that Air Conditioning is only available in two rooms. The station can get very hot in the summer months.
4. A number of rooms identified on the ground floor would be inappropriate as staff would currently need to pass through the male locker room when responding to incidents.
5. Only a limited number of windows have black out blinds attached. This will need to be taken into account.
6. The blocking or restriction of vision panels in doors would need to be explored in line with Fire Safety advice.

Areas of significant impact.

The building is also used by On-call staff and the use of their office was identified as unsuitable due to 24hr unhindered access being needed. Fire Safety staff were not present during the inspection and will need further engagement to agree the proposal.

A pull-down platform was available in the Occupational Health Room on the 1st floor. Due to the condition of the facility it would be appropriate to replace this with a folding platform and new mattress.

The station has a basement and further dialogue would be needed to liaise with staff and Fire Safety about discounting this floor as a credible option due to its current use as a storeroom.

Fire Safety employees work from a large open plan office on the first floor. The impact for this team should be minimal as it is foreseeable that we can avoid the use of this room at this stage.

## Whitehaven Fire Station

A feasibility study was completed on 9 August 2024. This included the following stakeholders:

* Project Sponsor
* Red Watch WM Phil Reay
* Red Watch duty shift
* Luke Russell Health and Safety
* Ade Kevern (FBU)
* Phil Robinson (Estates) part meeting

Three areas were identified as study rooms. This included:

* The female locker room on the ground floor
* The Occupational Health Office on the ground floor
* The hot desk office on the first floor.

The activities needed to bring the rooms up to the maximum potential based on the existing station facilities including size, space and design:

1. The 3 rooms identified above could be converted with minimal change to meet the needs of a study room facility.

Areas of significant impact.

The options for this station were limited but achievable with significant investment. Potential investment will need to be explored with the Head of Estates so building improvement can be aligned with an existing scheme of work to address on-going fire safety matters on the station.

Investment in the first floor office could potentially open up 4 study/hot desk areas. Along with the Occupational Health Office and Female locker room, would result in 6 study rooms.

The building is also used by On-call staff and the use of the watch office was identified as unsuitable due to 24hr unhindered access being needed.

Fire safety staff were not present during the inspection and will need further engagement to agree any future proposals.

Note added on 14 October – Outline plans have been prepared to invest in improved shower, toilets and locker rooms for staff at Whitehaven. This also include remedial work to ensure the building continues to meet the needs of the Fire Regulatory Reform Order. This work will take priority over the study rooms at this time. It is likely that the building work will be completed in 2025 when further assessments for study facilities can be made at that time.

## Summary findings of the feasibility studies

All 6 Fire Stations have been assessed for the provision of study facilities.

Workington, Carlisle East and Carlisle West require only small changes to facilitate the provision of rest rooms. PFI providers are satisfied with the proposed rooms.

Barrow Fire Station has met the minimum standard required but residual issues remain with the turn out and alerting system being too quiet, and the room lights being automated for movement but not linked to the turn-out system. Further investigation work is underway to identify cost effective options for improvement.

Kendal Fire Station does have several options to improve the facilities. The most significant issue however is the behavioural change needed at Kendal to ensure that 6 rooms can be identified and then used by staff without exception. Six rooms will need to be confirmed with further staff engagement and provided with some moderate expenditure to meet the requirements. This will include window blinds and improvements to the turn out system sounders as a minimum. Further capital investment to improve the welfare arrangements at Kendal is in scope and is likely to precede the introduction of resting facilities at this station. Work to meet the welfare of staff will take priority over the resting facilities.

Whitehaven Fire Station is not fit for purpose for the welfare of staff in a modern fire and rescue service. There are also areas to improve in terms of CFRS duty under the RRO. Whitehaven is earmarked for significant capital investment to improve the facilities for the workforce, and this will be completed in 2025. A review of the facilities for resting areas will be completed once work is finished. Work to meet the welfare of staff and the RRO will take priority over the resting facilities.

I hope that I have covered as much as I can as part of this document, however if there are any queries, please contact ian.seel@cumbriafire.gov.uk

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