Stability (which determines future appearance) has been weighted almost as important: weight 2 (plus it has a minimum). Speed is considered least important. Perhaps these are the weightings of a major museum rather than a private client! The decision now shifts to Treatment B.

The overall lesson from these switches in decision from Treatment C to A to B is not that one can 'play' the matrix to get what one wants, but rather that the matrix can capture the reasons that a decision might shift between plausible options. In this case, setting a minimum stability means that an otherwise excellent treatment is rejected, and deciding that speed (cost) is much less important will shift the decision yet again. In other words, the tool documents the individual judgements that have been considered, documents the judgement about the relative significance of those judgements, and then points to the decision consistent with those judgements.

The decision matrix of the case study of SCD 2008

Figure 1 presents a screen capture of the decision matrix compiled by participants of the SCD 2008 course for their case study. A spreadsheet as shown can easily be created for a decision matrix by anyone familiar with basic formulae in Excel™. The case study was a religious site with multiple buildings. The municipality wanted a long-term plan that satisfied many different users – religious pilgrims, tourists, locals – as well as its economic realities as the custodian. (Unlike the previous example in Table 2, the scores in Figure 1 have not been modified for didactic purposes.)

After much discussion, the course participants decided on the criteria shown, and votes were taken to establish the weightings (group averages). A scale of 1 to 9, rather than 1 to 5, was used for both weightings and scoring, as recommended by various authors to allow smaller differences to emerge. The weightings voted by the group are entered in column W1.

The four options in Figure 1 were contained in detailed reports developed by four working groups over many days. The scores were voted on by the course participants who were not in the design

	Options:	1		2		3		4		W: weights			select weight group
	Criteria	score	x W	score	x W	score	x W	score	x W	W 1	W 2	W 3	
#1	Low impact on material and visual integrity in 5 years	7.4	46	6.8	42	7.6	46.9	7.3	45.2	6.2	6.2	6.2	1
#2	Low impact on material and visual integrity in 30 years	6.8	44	6.2	40	6.0	39.0	5.9	38.1	6.5	6.5	6.5	
#3	Low impact on current religious use of site	4.9	32	4.8	32	7.7	50.9	6.1	40.5	6.6	9.0	5.8	
#4	Benefits to community in 5 years	7.1	41	6.8	39	6.4	37.3	6.6	38.1	5.8	5.8	5.8	
#5	Expected increase in cultural tourism	6.6	43	6.9	45	6.6	42.7	7.7	50.1	6.5	6.5	6.5	
#6	Sustainability of the managing institution	6.8	41	6.0	37	5.4	33.1	5.4	33.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	
	Totals without weights	39.6		37.4		39.7		39.0					
	Totals with weights		248		235		250		245				
	Percent of maximum score		99%		94%		100%		98%				

Figure 1. A decision matrix made in Excel™ as used for the case study of SCD 2008. It highlights the best scores in each criterion in green, and allows three different sets of weightings to be entered and compared easily.