

## CONFIDENTIAL

### NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Bullet Points of Meeting for  
Hitchin Town Hall – Design Review**  
Held on: Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2012  
10.00am

Location: District Council Offices

#### Present

Name	Initials	Company	Initials
John Robinson	JR	North Hertfordshire District Council	NHDC
Vaughan Watson	VW	North Hertfordshire District Council	NHDC
Steve Crowley	SC	North Hertfordshire District Council	NHDC
Keith Gayner	KG	North Hertfordshire District Council	NHDC
Brent Smith	BS	Hitchin Town Hall Ltd	HTHL
David Leal-Bennett	DLB	Hitchin Town Hall Ltd	HTHL
Neal Charlton	NC	Buttress Fuller Alsop Williams	BFAW

#### Apologies

None

#### 1.0 Introductions

- 1.1 VW introduced Steve Crowley and Keith Gayner to the group with a brief explanation on how they intend to support the project.

#### 2.0 Scope of Works

- 2.1 NC summarised the scope of works to be undertaken and emphasised that only minor alterations to the design may be considered at this late stage with the Development Agreement deadline set for the 15<sup>th</sup> October 2012.

NC confirmed a design team meeting would be held in Manchester on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2012. VW requested that the project plan needs to clearly identify the critical path.

#### Ground Floor Plan

##### 2.1.1 Entrance

Existing entrance will be retained, new DDA entrance will be created from the left hand side of the building. Grand styling to be adopted for both entrances. The new design will facilitate easier and faster egress from the building.

### 2.1.2 Facilities - Different User Groups

Toilet and wash room facilities will be similar to leisure centre type fittings with higher quality tiling. The budget would not allow hotel type quality. BS liked the toilet/ washroom options.

JR from an operational point of view we need to make sure the fittings are robust with long term durability. NC referred to listed building consent for fittings.

BS would like to see more hand basins if possible in the ladies toilets. JR referred to cost calculations and the strain on resources. NC additional temporary toilets could be brought to site e.g. beer festival. DLB this would not be suitable for opera or similar type staged events.

VW the sight line into the ladies toilet as per current design will require a screen to be installed.

### 2.1.3 Foyer

Main entrance hall to be refurbished, existing toilets to be altered to accommodate a cloakroom / store.

DLB referred to the commercial half of the business and the need to generate a 'wow' factor. NC existing doors will reflect the style of door for the building with 'art deco' styling.

### 2.1.4 Stage

NC the intention is the stage remains at the same level but reduced in size to create a storage area for the museum collection.

BS desirable to have the stage as large as possible e.g. to accommodate musical events / orchestras.

NC referred to the Queen Mother Theatre and the staging of full theatre productions. Hitchin Town Hall (HTH) would be fine with regards to discos but would not compare to the acoustics of the QMT for theatre or similar events.

BS loss of stage is a very expensive way of providing storage.

NC a temporary stage would be possible. BS a demountable stage would not be the preference.

DLB would it be acceptable if storage was provided elsewhere. NC the museum collection must be on site and kept safe and secure.

### 2.15 Functionality of the Building

JR highlighted the functionality of the building and the need to maintain capacity. Appreciating acoustic issues with HTH we need to attract a wide

range of audiences e.g. school concerts. The creation of dual use would be advantageous. The cloakroom area on the left hand side at the front of the building could double up as a changing room with plumbing for a vanity unit. BS and DLB agreed to the dual use option.

JR challenged the functionality of the cold store which is large enough to hold 350 meals but not the means in the kitchen to keep them hot in readiness for serving.

Link area off kitchen to be used as a store room not cold store. NC to incorporate design in CAD drawing.

BS set time limit with Grette Bros to agree intended fit out.

BS requested steps off platform from store room.

JR need to consider 'binnage' for waste and separation of food waste; consideration where the bins will be stored.

NC consent for a number of parking bays at the rear of the building.

NC any changes to the plans will require an update to the planners for approval. JR may need approval from Secretary of State for the variation / planning consent requested by NHDC.

BS dual function of the café / bar serving area requires more design input. NC we cannot increase the area which is constrained to 4.5m x 3.75m.

JR café / bar area important that the extraction is linked through.

BS visually disappointing that the museum is just behind the door.

NC we would like the museum to encourage and attract visitors.

JR exhibition fit out – important we have a secure and controlled environment.

BS stated the grand staircase needs to express itself. NC will re-examine this area.

BS door required between the kitchen and café / bar serving area. NC to include.

BS requested a 900mm door width leading off the retail shop / entrance foyer, this approach will be used by administrative staff. NC agreed to re-examine this area.

DLB questioned the install / set up arrangements relating to IT and telephony. DLB requested the IT server to be wall mounted in the administrative office with fibre optic cables extending to other areas of the building.

NC stated NHDC may require a different form of connectivity ie connections from District Council Offices server room.

## **First Floor Plan**

### **2.1.6 Meeting Room / Second Office**

BS requested that the old lift shaft be blocked up leaving the opportunity to install a second lift.

JR the budget does not include a second lift.

JR asked would it be possible for a lift to be fitted retrospectively.

NC identified ancillary technical advice would be required.

### **2.1.7 Balcony**

NC the balcony will have the floor raised to be level with the entrance doors. Projector and sound control system will require a fire separation.

VW the route across the balcony will need to provide means of escape.

BS ancillary space used to facilitate coffee / tea to the balcony.

### **2.1.8 Windows 'Black Out'**

BS and DLB essential to have the flexibility of 'daylight' and black out' options in order to cater for different type of events.

VW blinds / curtains would be stage two part of the fit out specification.

JR need to consider what would be appropriate / affordable. On the museum side of the building a black out screen which can easily be pulled across may work.

DLB a permanent black out screen would not be acceptable.

NC agreed to examine further options.

### **2.1.9 Museum Store**

The group discussed the museum storage area and whether it would be possible to convert to two levels based on a suggestion from BS.

NC to discuss further with museum staff.

### **2.1.10 Roof Terrace**

JR in design terms integral part to the museum.

BS confirmed that he had designed the chemist shop and herb gardens displays.

DLB offered to produce a garden design if a CAD drawing could be made available.

JR keen to take this forward noting that it would generate additional cost.

VW time is of the essence and a design would need to be sent through to NC to calculate and check weightings / loadings etc.

NC new entrance needs to be reviewed from a planning perspective. The boundary wall relates to a planning condition and we need to consider a couple of options to discharge the planning condition.

At this point in the meeting BS asked the group to consider an option relating to an adjacent property number 15 Brand Street Hitchin.

**3.0 15 Brand Street Hitchin**

3.1 NC emphasised the design, specifications and scheme costs which had been discussed with BS do not take into account 15 Brand Street as an option.

3.2 BS circulated an alternative design showing how the entrance would look following the demolition of 15 Brand Street to create a wider entrance.

BS stated that HTHL would be picking up the cost of 15 Brand Street.

DLB concurred with BS stating HTHL would deliver the space with no cost to the Council and would include buying out the tenant and moving the tenant to another location.

DLB emphasised the larger area will help to draw people in, the café would be able to move forward. Clearly there may be other costs that would need to be taken into account, Hitchin Town Hall Ltd do not get a great deal from this, and we would have to achieve all this within the current time scale of tendering.

3.3 NC if its cost neutral keep the alternative design in play. NC to give BS CAD version to build up the design. NC/VW the detail design must stay with BFAW, consent must be reached before Christmas.

**Close of Meeting**

Minutes Taken By: Keith Gayner

Title: Parks and Open Spaces Officer – Contracts and Major Projects

Signed:

