

CONFIDENTIAL

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Bullet Points of Meeting for North Hertfordshire Museum/ Hitchin Town Hall – Design Review

Held on: Tuesday 7th May 2013

10:00am

Location: John Robinson's Office - District Council Offices

Present

Name	Initials	Company	Initails
John Robinson	JR	North Hertfordshire District Council	NHDC
Cllr Tricia Cowley	Cllr C	North Hertfordshire District Council	NHDC
Steve Crowley	SC	North Hertfordshire District Council	NHDC
Ros Allwood	RA	North Hertfordshire District Council	NHDC
Ian Davis	ID	North Hertfordshire District Council	NHDC
Keith Gayner	KG	North Hertfordshire District Council	NHDC
Brent Smith	BS	Hitchin Town Hall Ltd	HTHL
Rosemary Read	RR	Hitchin Town Hall Ltd	HTHL
Neal Charlton	NC	Buttress Fuller Alsop Williams	BFAW

Apologies

Vaughan Watson

1.0 Communication / Confirmation from ACF

- 1.1 JR asked BS if he had received any word/confirmation or otherwise from ACF with regards to their agreement to the extension and conditions? BS confirmed he had not. JR stated the agreed timescale was a response within a week of the Council having made a decision ie. by the 30th April. JR confirmed he was unable to commission any further work until ACF have provided an answer one way or another. [Subsequent note: ACF confirmation received on 07.5.13]

2.0 Agreed Timescales

- 2.1 JR stated subject to confirmation from ACF agreement, the agreed timescales will advance by approximately one week to those illustrated on page 1 of the briefing paper circulated by JR.
- 2.2 JR stated he would defer Project Board on Thursday 9th May 2013 unless he receives a formal communication from ACF in the meantime. SC confirmed that he had drafted a Highlight Report for Project Board but unable to complete the report until the outcome from ACF is known.
- 2.3 NC requested that from a design perspective any further changes need to

be agreed and completed by 21st May 2013.

- 2.4 JR significant changes to the layout already agreed will only be considered if there is significant benefit to the museum, with no significant costs or delay to the project.

3.0 Cost

- 3.1 JR ran through the project cost identified on page two of the briefing paper which outlines the funding source for both NHDC and HTHL. Total estimated project cost equates to £4.8 million

4.0 Design – Internal Arrangement of the Building

- 4.1 NC gave a brief update since the last meeting and confirmed that the details relating to the internal arrangement of the building are now held on one set of plans.
- 4.2 NC stated the layout plan relating to the kitchen fit out needs to be agreed and completed by HTHL and submitted to NC by the 21st May 2013.
- BS to action.**
- 4.3 In response to a request from NHDC, HTHL have set out their preferences and aspirations relating to the internal layout of the building for the Design Team to consider. These are detailed under the following headings.

- **1. Reception Desk** – BS revised HTHL entrance design shows the reception desk facing the foyer in contrast to its current position placed on the left hand side of the foyer. BS stated the advantages would be covering reception, visual control of the foyer and offers the best layout for the café and shop plus maximises the floor space for visitors.

JR asked if it was practical to share physical space ie. half the entrance space will be taken up by the reception.

BS acknowledged that the reception will be operated primarily by museum staff and therefore linked to the museum opening hours, but felt the new location would offer a better alternative and a direct link to HTHL admin. office in providing reception cover. RA advised receptionist would need to interact with visitors and manage shop sales and the enclosed reception proposed would detract from this.

JR and SC disagreed with the proposed location for the reception desk and felt that it would not offer any additional advantages.

It was agreed to suspend further discussion on this issue and come back to it at a later stage once the design consultants are engaged.

- **2. Café Additional Covers** – BS requested 8 or 10 additional covers for the café in the foyer and to have tables on the pavement area outside during the summer. JR stated he was not going to consider this issue as this had previously been considered. Operational requests for such changes would be considered once the building is open.

- **3. First Floor Changing Room** – BS stated how important the first floor changing was to HTHL in order to have two changing rooms for use. JR and NC stated the first floor changing room is NHDC's and not HTHL and will be used for museum storage as stated on the lease plan. BS stated the room was originally allocated to HTHL but subsequently the colour changed on the floor plan. BS stated he reported this issue on each and every drawing update that followed but the drawings were never amended. JR stated as things stand the room belongs to NHDC, however if it is proved that this is an error JR would be happy to go back to this item.

NC to check drawing issue register

- **4. Local Studies Area** – BS stated the Hitchin Historical Society require a room attached to the archive store for the laying out and study of documents rather than an interactive computer area allocated on the first floor above the foyer. BS requested that the additional space on the first floor becomes a community interactive information/learning area. JR acknowledged the important relationship between storage / archive and study area. JR stated there would be useable space throughout the building, first floor, foyer etc would offer information and learning areas via wi-fi access and some PCs for casual historians up to specialists.
- **5. Provision of Services to Mountford Hall Balcony** – BS requested services to the flattened balcony to allow HTHL to serve drinks and snacks. NC confirmed the Ante room provides facilities as previously requested, but the balcony only has power no drainage. BS stated all HTHL would require is a capped off waste pipe which would allow a temporary service on wheels. NC stated he would examine the request and cost further and provide a response.

NC to action

- **6. Stage** – BS made reference to the community groups who wished to see the stage maintained at its present size and not reduced in size to provide museum storage. JR asked the question where does the museum storage go? BS first thoughts were museum storage may be accommodated in the area designated for local studies, but this does not meet the requirements of HHS. RA stated that the current location was best suited for the storage of fine art, costumes and sensitive artefacts. NC the area in question also provides better security and environmental conditions for the items held in storage. Cllr C said the whole purpose of the exercise was to provide better conditions and storage space for the museum service.

BS made reference to an adjacent property which he suggested three years ago could offer additional storage space. JR stated this option was dismissed on the grounds of cost and it would not be practical to consider a change of such magnitude at this late stage.

Acknowledging the limited scope of suitable alternative storage space in the building the design team focused on the possibility of adding a temporary extension to the stage. The first suggestion centred on the hiring of a temporary stage as and when events required a bigger stage. The second approach focused on the installation of a roll-out stage which would sit beneath the main stage and pulled out as and when required. It was agreed that NC would examine the possibilities of these suggestions further.

NC to action

Close of Meeting.

Minutes Taken By: Keith Gayner

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

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'kgayner', is written over a faint, light blue circular watermark or background mark.