

**INFORMATION NOTE: NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE MUSEUM AND COMMUNITY FACILITY AT HITCHIN TOWN HALL**

## REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER SERVICES

This note provides a further update for Members on the North Hertfordshire Museum and Town Hall Project following the last update published in Members Information Services in September 2014. At the request of the Leader of the Council and with the agreement of the relevant Area Committee Chairmen, this report will be presented to all Area Committees in the current cycle.

**Project Update**

The table below provides an overview of the key tasks that have been undertaken as part of the construction of the facility from December 2013 to October 2014.

<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Date Complete</b>
<b>Construction Contract</b>	
<b>Former Gym</b>	
Strip out internal items	17 <sup>th</sup> December 2013
Remove roof/gable end wall	14 <sup>th</sup> February 2014
Excavations for underground drainage	21 <sup>st</sup> March 2014
Reinforcement / concrete works	21 <sup>st</sup> March 2014
Erect Structural Steelwork	2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2014
Infill Slab Around Steelwork	28 <sup>th</sup> April 2014
Pre Cast Concrete Roof Slab	8 <sup>th</sup> April 2014
Cladding Rails	23 <sup>rd</sup> April 2014
Mechanical and Electrical Screen to Roof	16 <sup>th</sup> May 2014
Mechanical carcass 1st fix	4 <sup>th</sup> July 2014
Electrical carcass 1st fix	4 <sup>th</sup> July 2014
BWIC M & E Installation	30 <sup>th</sup> May 2014
Carpentry 1 <sup>st</sup> Fix	13 <sup>th</sup> June 2014
Internal Metsec boarding to ground 1 <sup>st</sup> floor	4 <sup>th</sup> July 2014
Ceiling Installation	25 <sup>th</sup> July 2014
Cupboards Fitted Furniture	31 <sup>st</sup> October 2014
<b>New Building Section (Central Core)</b>	
Excavate Ground Beams/Cut Down Piles	11 <sup>th</sup> March 2014
Demolition works 14/15 Brand Street	31 <sup>st</sup> January 2014
Infill basement / form piling mat	7 <sup>th</sup> February 2014
Piling works new structure	21 <sup>st</sup> February 2014
Integrity testing – piling works	12 <sup>th</sup> March 2014
Fwk/Reinforcement/Concrete Ground Beams/Pads	4 <sup>th</sup> April 2014
Excavate/Lay Underground Drainage/Manholes	25 <sup>th</sup> April 2014
Form Lift Pit/Walls/Infill Around Pit	4 <sup>th</sup> April 2014
Install Structural Steelwork to New Structure	27 <sup>th</sup> May 2014
Stone Formation/Insulation/Membrane	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2014
Form work / reinforcement / pump in-situ grd floor slab	27 <sup>th</sup> June 2014
Carpentry to stairwell roof	25 <sup>th</sup> July 2014
Roof Balustrade	8 <sup>th</sup> August 2014
BWIC M & E Installation	19 <sup>th</sup> September 2014
Screed to Ground and First Floors	22 <sup>nd</sup> August 2014

Mechanical Carcass 1 <sup>st</sup> Fix	26 <sup>th</sup> September 2014
Mechanical Installation to Plant Deck	12 <sup>th</sup> September 2014
<b>Town Hall Refurbishment</b>	
Strip out	24 <sup>th</sup> January 2014
Basement block work walls	14 <sup>th</sup> February 2014
Brick up redundant windows / doors	14 <sup>th</sup> March 2014
Steelwork to upper floor for museum store/plant	21 <sup>st</sup> March 2014
Form structural openings (Storerooms & office)	21 <sup>st</sup> March 2014
Carpentry to upper floor for museum store/plant	11 <sup>th</sup> April 2014
Adapt Stage to comply with ventilation requirements	25 <sup>th</sup> April 2014
Internal Fabric Repairs to plaster up redundant doors	2 <sup>nd</sup> May 2014
Basement Plantroom Mechanical Installations	30 <sup>th</sup> May 2014
Electrician Carcass/1 <sup>st</sup> Fix	30 <sup>th</sup> May 2014
Mechanical Carcass/1 <sup>st</sup> Fix (Majority of work complete)	27 <sup>th</sup> June 2014
Carpentry to Mezzanine / Level Floor	July 2014
Internal Fabric Repairs (Majority of work complete)	August 2014
BWIC M & E Installations	May 2014
Electrical 1 <sup>st</sup> Fix	June 2014
Plantroom Mechanical Installations	October 2014
Mechanical 2 <sup>nd</sup> Fix (Majority of work complete)	October 2014

### **Hitchin Town Hall Ltd**

Councillors may be aware that Hitchin Town Hall Ltd and others have made a number of statements reproduced in the local media and elsewhere that the Council has breached the Development Agreement.

The Development Agreement itself provides for circumstances where the respective parties fail to agree on particular aspects of its implementation and sets out arrangements for the resolution of these. The Development Agreement also requires both parties to it to use their reasonable endeavours to resolve such disputes.

This has created a difficult position for the Council to deal with as it seeks to work within the terms of the Development Agreement to resolve problems in dialogue with Hitchin Town Hall Ltd. There is a risk to the Council that if it were to provide a detailed public rebuttal of the statements made by Hitchin Town Hall Ltd it could face a further claim of a breach of the Development Agreement. Therefore the Council's public response thus far has been limited to a broad statement provided by the Leader the Council, in response to a media enquiry generated by a press release from Hitchin Town Hall Ltd, as follows:

*"We are of course hugely disappointed by this latest turn of events and feel that HTH have misrepresented many of the facts but we remain steadfast in our commitment to delivering a fantastic museum and town hall for the community. We feel the allegations made by HTH regarding breaches of contract by the council are completely unfounded, not least because the alleged acts of vandalism cited by HTH have since been granted Listed Building Consent. The ramifications of this mean that ultimately council tax payers could be forced to foot the extra bill, and we will be doing everything we can to protect their interests in the coming months."*

Officers, in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holder, are therefore continuing in their efforts to seek a resolution to the allegation of breaches made by Hitchin Town Hall Ltd in accordance with the provisions of the Development Agreement until such point as these are resolved or circumstances otherwise change.

In order to provide Councillors with more detailed background, it is intended to hold a further confidential briefing on the project in a similar manner to that held in May 2014. I anticipate this will be in mid January 2014 and further details of this will be circulated in the next few weeks.

### **General Update**

- Work on the design and content of the North Hertfordshire Museum is progressing on target. The Cultural Services Manager has given a number of presentations on the new museum to community groups, and the reception has been extremely positive. A meeting of the Arts, Museums & Heritage Forum took place on the 25<sup>th</sup> November 2014 to keep interested parties up to date.
- The designers, Mather & Co. have undertaken the tender for the Fit Out and separate Audio Visual Software contract. The return date for the tender submissions was the 21<sup>st</sup> November 2014 and the submissions are currently being evaluated with an estimated award of both Contracts scheduled for the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2014.
- Museum staff and the Mather designers have now almost completed the task of agreeing the final object selection, and staff are checking the Mather showcase layouts to ensure that the many hundreds of chosen items have all been included. Members of the museum team are still cleaning and photographing objects for the new museum, and the curators have begun the task of label writing. The volunteer conservator has almost completed work on the Perks & Llewellyn stained-glass chemist's shop door, and other items for the new displays are being conserved at no cost to NHDC by conservation students at the University of Lincoln.
- As previously reported in September 2014 additional unforeseeable costs during the construction phase have already resulted in an increase in the project contingency budget being earmarked. Since that time, as a result of the delay in securing Listed Building Consent because of the need to report back to Planning Control Committee on conditions, it is anticipated additional costs will be incurred and project completion will be c. 7-12 weeks behind schedule. The Council's Quantity Surveyor is currently in negotiation with our construction contractor and any additional costs will be reported as part of the capital monitoring report to Cabinet.

### **Project Plan**

The project plan provides an overview of the entire project and the key tasks that have or need to be undertaken. There are no changes to the project plan that was reported in September 2014. However, as explained previously there is likely to be an extension of time agreed for the build part of the project, which will impact on the completion of this project. Officers will update the programme once the extension has been agreed. Based on a five week delay the new opening date would be 27<sup>th</sup> July 2015.

Tasks	Duration	Start	Finish
Council & Trust to agree 15 Brand Street	14 days	Thu 04/04/13	Tue 23/04/13
Negotiate new DA and legal approval	14 days	Thu 04/04/13	Tue 23/04/13
ACF to agree to extension and conditions	1 wk	Wed 24/04/13	Tue 30/04/13
BFAW lead in time	3 wks	Wed 01/05/13	Tue 21/05/13
2 weeks contingency	2 wks	Wed 22/05/13	Tue 04/06/13
Design	38 days	Wed 05/06/13	Fri 26/07/13
Review existing scheme for statutory compliance	0.5 wks	Wed 05/06/13	Fri 07/06/13
Develop revised areas to stage E	4.5 wks	Fri 07/06/13	Tue 09/07/13
Redevelop affected adjoining areas to stage E	0.5 wks	Fri 21/06/13	Tue 25/06/13
Develop revised areas to stage F	2 wks	Mon 15/07/13	Fri 26/07/13
Redevelop affected adjoining areas to stage F	0.5 wks	Wed 10/07/13	Fri 12/07/13
Revise Bills of Quantities	2 wks	Mon 29/07/13	Fri 09/08/13
Negotiate with preferred contractor	3 wks	Mon 12/08/13	Fri 30/08/13
Project Board	1 day	Wed 04/09/13	Wed 04/09/13
Award Contract	1 day	Thu 05/09/13	Thu 05/09/13
Sign DA & OA	1 day	Mon 09/09/13	Mon 09/09/13
10 working days for purchase of 14 & 15 Brand Street	10 days	Tue 10/09/13	Mon 23/09/13
Asbestos removal	12 days	Thu 14/11/13	Fri 29/11/13
Contractor Mobilisation	10 days	Mon 18/11/13	Fri 29/11/13
Start on site	0 days	Mon 02/12/13	Mon 02/12/13
Construction period (includes 2 wks closure during x-mas)	59 wks	Mon 02/12/13	Fri 16/01/15
fit out works (community)	4 wks	Mon 19/01/15	Fri 13/02/15
Museum fit out on site	41 days	Mon 16/02/15	Mon 13/04/15
object installation and testing	40 days	Tue 14/04/15	Mon 08/06/15
2 weeks contingency	2 wks	Tue 09/06/15	Mon 22/06/15
Public opening	0 days	Mon 22/06/15	Mon 22/06/15
<b>Procurement of Architect for fit out</b>	691 days	Mon 29/10/12	Mon 22/06/15
Develop brief for exhibition design	10 days	Mon 29/10/12	Fri 09/11/12
OJEU Notice for Exhibition Design	0 days	Thu 15/11/12	Thu 15/11/12
Response Period - PQQ returns (30 calendar days)	22 days	Thu 15/11/12	Fri 14/12/12
Closing Date for PQQ responses	0 days	Fri 14/12/12	Fri 14/12/12
Evaluate expressions of interest	20 days	Mon 17/12/12	Fri 11/01/13
Moderation meeting for PQQ's	1 day	Tue 08/01/13	Tue 08/01/13
Confirm tender list	0 days	Fri 11/01/13	Fri 11/01/13
Prepare Tender Documents	10 days	Mon 14/01/13	Fri 25/01/13
Dispatch Tender Documents	0 days	Wed 30/01/13	Wed 30/01/13
Tender Period for designer (40 calendar days)	29 days	Wed 30/01/13	Mon 11/03/13
Evaluation/Review tenders	10 days	Tue 12/03/13	Mon 25/03/13
Moderation meeting for tender documents	1 day	Tue 26/03/13	Tue 26/03/13
Amalgamating all the evaluation sheets	3 days	Wed 27/03/13	Fri 29/03/13
Project Executive sign off	5 days	Mon 01/04/13	Fri 05/04/13

Stand still period (10 days)	8 days	Mon 08/04/13	Wed 17/04/13
Partial ward	0 days	Fri 07/06/13	Fri 07/06/13
<b>Content Development</b>	52 days	Fri 07/06/13	Mon 19/08/13
Collections Meeting (1)	0 days	Tue 11/06/13	Tue 11/06/13
Review Collections	52 days	Fri 07/06/13	Mon 19/08/13
Theming and narrative development	52 days	Fri 07/06/13	Mon 19/08/13
Collections Meeting (2)	0 days	Tue 16/07/13	Tue 16/07/13
<b>Stage C - Design</b>	48 days	Thu 27/06/13	Mon 02/09/13
Concept Design work	38 days	Thu 27/06/13	Mon 19/08/13
Interface with architect development	38 days	Thu 27/06/13	Mon 19/08/13
Compile Stage C Report	6 days	Mon 12/08/13	Mon 19/08/13
Design Award of Contract	0 days	Mon 19/08/13	Mon 19/08/13
Stage C - Internal Review and Approvals	10 days	Tue 20/08/13	Mon 02/09/13
HLF Presentation - Stage C	0 days	Wed 28/08/13	Wed 28/08/13
Evaluation and Audience Consultation	10 days	Tue 03/09/13	Mon 16/09/13
<b>Stage D - Design</b>	30 days	Tue 03/09/13	Mon 14/10/13
Detailed Design	30 days	Tue 03/09/13	Mon 14/10/13
Content Development work	30 days	Tue 03/09/13	Mon 14/10/13
Mid-Stage Presentation	0 days	Mon 23/09/13	Mon 23/09/13
<b>Stage D - Internal Review and Approvals</b>	14 days	Tue 15/10/13	Fri 01/11/13
HLF Presentation - Stage D	0 days	Wed 23/10/13	Wed 23/10/13
Final revisions to Stage D submission	5 days	Mon 04/11/13	Fri 08/11/13
<b>HLF Stage 2 Submission</b>	0 days	Mon 11/11/13	Mon 11/11/13
HLF Response and Grant Award	91 days	Mon 11/11/13	Mon 17/03/14
HLF Mobilisation	20 days	Tue 18/03/14	Tues/20/05/14
<b>Procurement and Fit-out</b>	177 days	Fri 17/10/14	Mon 22/06/15
OJEU Tender Period	3 days	Fri 17/10/14	Tue 16/12/14
Fit-out off site	65 days	Wed 17/12/14	Tue 17/03/15
Fit-out on site	41 days	Mon 16/02/15	Mon 13/04/15
Object Installation and Testing	40 days	Tue 14/04/15	Mon 08/06/15
Contingency and soft opening	10 days	Tue 09/06/15	Mon 22/06/15
Public Opening	0 days	Mon 22/06/15	Mon 22/06/15

## **Arts, Museum & Heritage Forum**

A meeting of the Arts, Museum & Heritage Forum to review progress on the project and, in particular, the development of the exhibition fit out has been arranged for 25<sup>th</sup> November at 6.00 pm at the Council Offices. Copies of the Arts, Museum & Heritage Forum newsletters are available on the Council's website [http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/index/leisure\\_and\\_culture/museums/art\\_museums\\_and\\_heritage\\_forum/art\\_museums\\_and\\_heritage\\_forum\\_documents.htm](http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/index/leisure_and_culture/museums/art_museums_and_heritage_forum/art_museums_and_heritage_forum_documents.htm)

## **Conclusion**

Regular updates will continue to be provided via MIS and to stakeholders more generally via the Council's website, social media accounts, media releases and mailings to the Arts, Museums & Heritage Forum. Following requests from Members and with the agreement of the Chairmen of NHDC's Area Committees, a regular information report will now be provided to each of the Council's Area Committees until the launch of the new facility.

## **Further Information**

The Council's website provides information on the background and progress on this project at [http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/index/leisure\\_and\\_culture/museums.htm](http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/index/leisure_and_culture/museums.htm)

A dedicated Museum Service Blog is available at <http://www.northhertsmuseum.org/>

Updates on the significant events in the project are provided on the Council's Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/northhertsmuseums> Twitter feed <https://twitter.com/NorthHertsDC> and Flickr pages <http://www.flickr.com/photos/northhertfordshire/sets/>

John Robinson  
**Strategic Director Customer Services**

[John.robinson@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:John.robinson@north-herts.gov.uk)

Tel: 01462 474655

20<sup>th</sup> November 2014