



Old River Lane Delivery Board

East Herts Council
Tuesday 14th July 2020 | via Zoom | 3pm

MINUTES

Present

Cllr Linda Haysey	LH (Chair)
Cllr Eric Buckmaster	EB
Cllr George Williamson	GW
Richard Cassidy	RC
Helen Standen	HS
Tamara Jarvis	TJ
Rob Mayo	RM
Bob Palmer	BP
James Ellis	JE
Geoff Hayden	GH
Lorraine Kirk	LK
Kate Collins	KC (Minutes)

Apologies

Cllr Terence Beckett	TB
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References

East Herts Council	EHC
Hertfordshire County Council	HCC

LH opened the meeting and apologies were noted.

1. Declaration of any conflicts of interest

- 1.1 Cllr Eric Buckmaster: Has a relative who works in the Library and for other responsibilities including Highways
- 1.2 Cllr Terence Beckett: Consultant for BREEAM for openness and transparency
- 1.3 Cllr Graham McAndrew: Deputy Executive Member, Children, Young People & Families – HCC

2. Minutes of the previous ORL Meeting

- 2.1. Minutes of the meetings on 12th and 28th May were approved.

3. Northgate End Development



3.1 Rydon Construction has put up hoardings, signage and some welfare facilities. Excavation machinery arrived on site 13th July and the piling rig will arrive on 27th July. The concrete frame erection will take place between November and March 2021. The residential/commercial block will take place concurrently, with completion and snagging programmed for February 2022.

All agreed it was good to see building activity start on site, and RM talked through the programme for the development. A photocall will take place with the LEP on 27th July.

4. ORL Highlight Report

4.1 ORL Core Site

Cityheart: Development Agreement and Commercial Agreement

A number of meetings have now taken place with Cityheart, Montagu Evans and Weightmans (legal advisors) to agree the details of the procurement and legal documentation. Four separate documents are being drafted for agreement:

1. Development Agreement
2. Heads of Terms
3. Commercial Agreement
4. 200 year lease (which will be issued on build completion but will dissolve on the execution of the commercial agreement)

On completion/agreement of documentation a revised business plan will be commissioned for the proposed approach and for presentation/approval at full council. It is expected that drafting and agreement of these documents could take between three and six months.

4.2 **Masterplan**

Cityheart and their architects Glen Howells have given presentation to the Arts Centre Steering Group. A great deal of detailed preparatory work has already been done which will form the basis of the Masterplan and SPD. Further work will be carried out to:

1. Review the shape and size of the offices to make it a more efficient building.
2. Assess the residential layout to reflect the move to PRS scheme (EHDC will engage the services of a specialist residential advisor to ensure best layout and mix of units).
3. Finalise details of the proposed 4-way junction. Caneparo Associates have already carried out a survey and modelling work for Cityheart although further traffic survey work is required at a cost of £8,500. The junction will (i) minimise traffic movement through ORL, allowing the route to become pedestrianised, (ii) enable an additional 20 car parking



spaces for Waitrose, (iii) provides the best solution for the quickest and safest access to the main ORL site from the Northgate End car park.

APPROVED: The Delivery Board agreed to approve the traffic survey work for the proposed 4-way junction and additional capital provision is made in a subsequent review of the capital programme – cost £8,500.

4. Review the Waitrose car park layouts based on 4-way junction approval and sewer diversion – currently this provides 160 of the 170 spaces required and discussions are to be held with Waitrose to agree final allocations.
5. The main sewer diversion was presented and considered by Delivery Board last year, although work was put on hold because of the judicial review and then COVID-19. Work has now picked up on this and we have updated costs and a better understanding of the requirements. The diversion is proposed along the north/south Old River Lane axis and east/west towards the castle. The diversion has been priced at £1,027,000 and is required both to maximise the financial return to the council, and also to give the best street form and aesthetic for the town centre. The work will take 12 weeks and will be carried out when the MSCP is functioning and the site buildings have been demolished.

LH asked why Cityheart didn't design around the sewer. TJ commented that although the sewer was known about Cityheart have designed the development layout to meet clear requirements in the brief, notably to include the diagonal vista from the castle towards St Michael's Church spire. RM noted that this development will create a street layout for hundreds of years, and that the £1m diversion will allow the generation of additional value in residential and commercial floorspace.

APPROVED: The Delivery Board agree to approve the proposed sewer diversion based on the benefits as outlined in Appendix C, and additional capital provision is made in a subsequent review of the capital programme.

4.3 Planning

A planning meeting took place on 29th June where a 'broad-brush' timetable was proposed for the development of the SPD and Masterplan – the SPD is expected to be submitted for Council approval in early 2021. Cityheart will contribute to the development of the SPD and the planning application will follow the SPD.

4.4 Arts Centre Design

The Arts Centre Steering Group met on 25th June. This was the first meeting since last November and the opportunity was taken to update the group on progress to date with a detailed presentation by Glen Howells Architects and Cityheart. It was clear that considerable detailed material has already been produced by Cityheart which will inform the SPD and Masterplan.



The following approach was agreed for the next meeting, to be held in early September, where three papers will be delivered (i) respective roles for the Rhodes Centre and ORL Arts Centre and the governance to support the delivery of these roles, (ii) an updated design brief reflecting these roles, (iii) updated business plan reflecting the design brief. These papers will be shared at the Delivery Board meeting on 8th September before being distributed to the ACSG for the meeting the following week.

Discussion took place around the design of the Arts Centre. TJ and RM discussed work which has recently taken place with Rhys Thomas, TheatrePlan and Glen Howells Architects to consider the optimum configuration for the building, taking into account the stage size relative to the BS catchment area and likely demand, the auditorium size, and the role for a library in the complex. RM noted that he has been unable to make contact with representatives from HCC Libraries.

4.5 Governance Update

On appointment, new Programme Manager (RM), has reviewed and revised the existing governance structures for the ORL programme. Monthly meetings will take place which will consider the core site and the Arts Centre with participation from Cityheart. Outputs from these meetings will be posted on the website, and will include minutes and a short overview paper every month. It is proposed that quarterly meetings are set up which will allow public access, which will significantly improve engagement with the public. Finally, additional working groups will be set up for the MSCP and an assets working group, to meet monthly.

LH asked for additional information to be provided relating to the public meetings, how these will be managed - remotely by Zoom or other means, or in attendance. RC confirmed that more detail is required to give clarity to this proposal.

ACTION: RM to send out an updated paper via email to outline terms of reference for the quarterly public meeting as well as additional information on the membership of new working groups. The Delivery Board members will review the paper on circulation and approval of the recommendation is delayed until this review has taken place.

4.6 BREEAM

There has been some discussion about which BREEAM level the project should aim to achieve for the Arts Centre. Early work by Kier suggested that pursuit of BREEAM Outstanding would add an additional 6% or more to the cost of the programme with BREEAM Excellent adding around 1%. Research carried out by the Buildings Research Establishment in 2016 suggests that an Outstanding award adds approximately 10% to the capital cost of retail and office uses, whereas an Excellent award adds between 0.8% and 1.1% to development costs for the same building types.



EHDC has a clear ambition to achieve the best possible sustainability levels both for its operational estate as well as the wider District. However, it is clear that an Outstanding award for the Arts Centre would increase the development cost considerably, and the development team recommends we seek to achieve an Excellent award. Furthermore, both Hartham and Hertford theatres are pursuing BREEAM Excellent, so it would be a consistent approach to pursue Excellent for ORL AC.

In addition to the pursuit of BREEAM excellent, the project will continue to explore and pursue opportunities for the reduction of the ORL carbon footprint across the programme.

APPROVED: The Delivery Board approve pursuit of BREEAM excellent.

5. Comms

5.1 None

6. AOB

6.1 None

Next Meeting

It was agreed that the August meetings would be postponed to allow for annual leave commitments and to provide the time for the ongoing work to make the required progress before the next round of reporting.

Tuesday 8th September
via Zoom
12:00-14:00