

Public Document Pack



EXECUTIVE

Date: Wednesday, 2 February 2022

Time: 2.00pm

Location: Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete

Contact: Ian Gourlay (01438) 242703

committees@stevenage.gov.uk

Members: Councillors: S Taylor OBE CC (Chair), Mrs J Lloyd (Vice-Chair),
L Briscoe, R Broom, J Gardner, R Henry, J Hollywell and J Thomas.

AGENDA

PART I

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2. TOWNS FUND BUSINESS CASE - NEW TOWNS HERITAGE CENTRE

To consider and approve the Towns Fund Business Case for the New Towns Heritage Centre project.

Pages 3 – 144

3. TOWNS FUND BUSINESS CASE - STEVENAGE SPORT AND LEISURE HUB

To consider and approve the Towns Fund Business Case for the Stevenage Sport and Leisure Hub project.

[REPORT TO FOLLOW]

4. URGENT PART I BUSINESS

To consider any Part I business accepted by the Chair as urgent.

5. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To consider the following motions –

1. That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in Paragraphs 1 – 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.
2. That Members consider the reasons for the following reports being in Part II and determine whether or not maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

6. LEISURE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT - PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

To consider a Procurement Strategy in respect of the Leisure Management Contract.

Pages 145 - 186

7. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

To consider any Part II business accepted by the Chair as urgent.

NOTE: Links to Part 1 Background Documents are shown on the last page of the individual report, where this is not the case they may be viewed by using the following link to agendas for Executive meetings and then opening the agenda for Wednesday, 2 February 2022 – <http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/have-your-say/council-meetings/161153/>

Agenda Published 25 January 2022

Part I



Meeting Executive
Portfolio Area Regeneration
Date 2nd February 2022



TOWNS FUND BUSINESS CASES – NEW TOWN HERITAGE CENTRE & MUSEUM

KEY DECISION

Author – Chris Barnes Ext. 2292
Lead Officer – Chris Barnes Ext.2292

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 Stevenage was successfully awarded £37.5m of funding through the Government's Towns Fund programme. Full business cases must be developed and approved by 24th March 2022 for each of the projects that comprise the Stevenage Towns Fund programme. The Council, as Accountable Body, must provide final sign-off for each of the business cases, in accordance with the Towns Fund Stage 2 Guidance. Full Council has delegated approval of each of the business cases to the Council's Executive committee.
- 1.2 This report relates to the New Towns Heritage Centre & Museum project, which includes the provision of a new museum and cultural facility that celebrates the New Towns movement and the important history of the people of Stevenage. This will include modern exhibits that utilise technology, enriches people's understanding of the New Towns movement nationally, and creates an accessible and diverse facility that enriches cultural experiences for as many residents as possible. The facility will be delivered

as part of the public sector hub in the town centre, creating a real cultural and community hub with integration with a food and beverage offer, the library, and pop-up spaces and events.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

That Executive:

- 2.1 Note the feedback from the Stevenage Development Board.
- 2.2 Approve the New Towns Heritage Centre & Museum business case and delegate authority to Strategic Director (TP) to submit the project summary to the Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing Towns Fund team on behalf of the Council (acting as Accountable Body).
- 2.3 Endorse further engagement, building on the work of the Community Select Committee, stakeholder workshops and roundtable discussions as set out in 4.1.2, to support the development of the project.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In September 2019 the Government invited 101 towns to develop proposals and bid for funding for a Town Deal, as part of the £3.6 billion Towns Fund. Stevenage was identified as one of the 101 eligible towns. Background relating to this process, the development of the Stevenage Town Investment Plan (STIP), and the approval process for the business cases is contained within Appendix A. The breakdown of funding is identified below:

Project	Total (£)
Stevenage Enterprise Centre	4,000,000
Gunnels Wood Road Infrastructure Improvements	1,000,000
Station Gateway Enabling Works	6,500,000
Marshgate Biotech	1,750,000
Stevenage Innovation & Technology Centre	5,000,000
National New Towns Heritage Centre	2,000,000
Stevenage Sports & Leisure Hub	10,000,000
Cycling Connectivity and Arts & Heritage Trail	3,500,000
Town Centre Diversification & Garden Square	3,750,000
Total	37,500,000

- 3.2 All business cases relating to the Stevenage Town Investment Plan are required to be approved by the Accountable body before 24th March 2022. To recap, business cases must include:

- The evidence for the intervention using rigorous analysis of quality data and the application of best practice.

- An assessment of value for money, including showing how different types of projects will be compared and assessed.
- A clear economic rationale, justifying the use of public funds in addition to how a proposed project is expected to contribute to strategic objectives.
- Clearly defined inputs, activities, outputs and anticipated outcomes.
- Appropriate consideration of deliverability and risk along with appropriate mitigating action.
- Whilst there is no minimum value for money threshold set for Towns Fund projects, in order to follow best practice, all business cases must contain robust value for money assessments.
- Business cases should address, in a proportionate manner, the five cases set out in the HM Treasury Green Book.

New Towns Heritage Centre & Museum summary (£2,000,000)

- 3.3 Full information on the Heritage Centre project can be found in Appendices B & C. The project will involve the construction of an allocated space within the new civic Hub into a New Towns Heritage Centre with the opportunity for adjoining culture and leisure space. It will bring a combination of heritage interpretation, culture and education uses together onto one site, integrating with local public and community services within the new Hub. This facility will epitomise Stevenage's strategic aspirations to regain its status as a place for leisure, culture and heritage destination by taking current assets and celebrated heritage and positioning them within the heart of the regeneration and cultural story for the town. This forms one key component of the broader cultural strategy for the town, alongside the development of a new theatre and leisure developments.

The Stevenage National New Towns Heritage Centre project will comprise two key spaces:

- A modern cultural, arts, heritage and education centre
- Adjacent flexible space providing a key resource for events, performances, education and leisure activities.

- 3.4 The New Towns Heritage Centre will include the relocation of the current museum depicting the history of Stevenage's pioneering role in leading the New Town movement and its context in the postmodern era. The content of the museum will build on the existing collection with the aim to exhibit the story of Stevenage in a new and dynamic way by creating interactive, exciting activities that attract families and visitors. The new facility will provide the opportunity to present and interact with heritage in a modern innovative way, whilst continuing to provide learning spaces for handling collections to meet the demand for schools and education providers. The facility has the potential to become a destination for a wide variety of audiences (nationally and internationally), including students researching urban planning,

professionals and policy makers learning from the New Town impact, residents and visitors.

- 3.5 The flexible spaces available will be curated by Museum and Cultural teams to provide a key venue for the town's cultural activities which might for example include musical, film and other live performances, dancing classes, special interest talks and events, conferences, and meeting space to support the town's key public services and community support groups. Furthermore, with the library being co-located within the hub, this enhances the opportunity to continue and strengthen partnership working and broaden educational and community activity. This facility aims to widen the cultural opportunities for performance within the town and simultaneously provide an event space, in conjunction with the proposed café, that can provide revenue to sustain the business model and support economic spend by driving footfall within the town centre.
- 3.6 A key focus will be linking the old and new aspects of Stevenage, exploring and curating culture and art of the period when Stevenage was first conceived and developed, showcasing the New Town & modernist movements and linking this to current ideas and developments emanating from within the town, such as inventions of global significance like the Mars Rover.

Community Select Committee & Stakeholder Engagement – shaping the facility

- 3.7 The proposed facility has benefitted from a significant body of work carried out by the Council's Community Select Committee. This two site visits on 15 & 22 October 2021 to two comparable cultural centres in Milton Keynes and Colchester, an informal meeting of the Committee on 25 October 2021 and formal meetings of the Committee on 21 September, 3 November and 30 November 2021. The aim of this work was to give the cross-party representation of Members, who have a keen interest in cultural development in Stevenage, the opportunity to help shape the early thinking around the project.
- 3.8 The work has resulted in five main recommendations, which have been considered as part of the business case development. These include:
- (i) curation and arts programme linked to community engagement and governance;
 - (ii) virtual museums and digital technology linked to the concept of museums without walls;
 - (iii) the building design features linked to the use of technology in the building;
 - (iv) the commercial activity/funding/cost point for entry and
 - (v) developing a hub and spoke approach for arts & historical heritage across the town

A full summary of the recommendations is provided in Appendix D.

- 3.9 The recommendations have informed the business case, which has been developed in tandem with the engagement. Recommendation (i) has informed the importance placed on an exciting and diverse curation programme, which links with the wider town centre and cultural programme, and governance will be embedded as the project itself prepares to move forward. Recommendation (ii) has been captured as part of the outputs and operational plans, but specific designs will need to be prepared at a later stage in the process. Recommendation (iii) will be captured as part of the architectural design brief of the building, and work is underway to explore opportunities. Recommendation (iv) has been captured as part of a high-level operating plan to inform the business case, and the economic case has assumed no fee at point of entry to maximise accessibility. Recommendation (v) will require broader work and support from colleagues, but the business case recognises the opportunity to enhance cultural experiences for as many residents as possible.
- 3.10 In addition to the Member engagement, In preparation for the business case a series of engagement consultation sessions were held to understand what community stakeholders with a vested interest in Stevenage Museum, value about the current museum and the guiding principles that should be taken forward for the new facility. A wide range of stakeholders attended one of three focus groups in November 2021 including regular visitors, volunteers, public sector and community partners, business owners and other leading organisations. The focus groups discussed:
- Current and future audiences
 - Barriers to engagement
 - The current museum – what works and what does not
 - The new facility
 - Potential ways of working together
 - Physical infrastructure
 - The most important elements to take forward
- 3.11 The full findings of these meetings can be viewed in Appendix E, however the essence of the findings are that the new facilities should be:
- ”A community asset based on the ground floor of the new building, with additional staff and resources to tell the story of Stevenage contextualised by the story New Towns. The community stakeholders want the spaces to be interactive, co-created, developed and delivery in collaboration with the local community and embodying the pioneering spirit of Stevenage.’*
- 3.12 ‘The heart of a town lies in its people’ is the moto on Stevenage’s coat of arms; a phrase that was recounted a number of times in the consultation as the guiding principle for how Stevenage Museum is currently delivered and how it should be delivered in its new home in the centre of its town.
- 3.13 A roundtable discussion was also held with a number of stakeholder organisations, including Arts Council and Historic England. The

representatives were very supportive of the aims and ambitions of the project, and the recognition that a strong cultural offer was important to the regeneration ambitions for the Town. Further dialogue will be required to build on this, and explore opportunities for funding to support the National elements of the project. This can be linked to the design of the wider hub building, allowing more time to amend the size of the heritage centre as thinking and funding evolves.

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

4.1 This report recommends approval of this Stevenage Towns Fund business case, which sets out a case for:

- New Towns Heritage Centre (£2,000,000)

4.2 Both the summary version and full version of the business case have been included as appendices to this paper. The business case provides detailed assessment of the strategic, economic, financial, commercial and management elements of the business case, with detailed consideration of the benefits, risks, outputs and outcomes of the project.

4.3 The business case under consideration has been reviewed by the officer group and Assurance Panel, which includes the Chair of the Stevenage Development Board..

4.4 To date, the Assurance Panel, which is made up of representatives from the Board and supported by Stevenage Borough Council Officers, have provided support for the business case. Key comments from the assurance panel are summarised below:

- Ensure that the 'national' opportunities are suitably emphasised, with the potential for international visitors relating to the New Town movement
- Enhance the economic benefits of the operating/running cost savings relating to providing the new facility in a shared building; this supports both value for money and the operation of the building
- Need to promote the 'cultural package' that this intervention provides the platform for; new experience-focused garden square, evening economy/entertainment, events and pop-up activation, improve the overall offer of the museum aspects
- Future branding exercise required in conjunction with public and stakeholders to co-produce the facility's identity
- Need to recognise the work carried out to date to look at other examples as precedent projects, but also recognise that there is still much more to learn from existing facilities, especially those that have been delivered more recently.

4.5 The business case was presented to the Stevenage Development Board on 20th January 2022, incorporating feedback from the Assurance Panel. The

project attracted a wide range of stakeholders to comment, with strong support, enthusiasm and optimism for the project, which was unanimously endorsed by the Board. Some comments also provided scope for future work and focus, such as including educational provision within the space, the importance of the curation of events, and ensuring that the facility caters to a wide range of people, from local residents to academics.

4.6 The purpose of this project is to bring a combination of heritage interpretation, culture and education uses together onto one site, integrating with local public and community services within the new Civic Hub so that:

- Visitor numbers in the town centre will increase increasing patronage of and in the longer term more investment in good quality retail, food and beverage outlets and leisure amenities.
- Broader range of visitors utilising the space
- Increase in younger people engaged in learning activities, conducive to higher levels of motivation and aspirations.
- Major synergies and cost efficiencies will be achieved by co-locating these activities.

This is considered to be a significant benefit for the town, and will provide an opportunity to deliver many of the aims and ambitions of the cultural strategy, Stevenage Re-imagined. This strategy and action plan places an emphasis on linking the opportunities of regeneration to develop the environment for creative industries, leisure and cultural assets, and active community groups to thrive, resulting in a place of creation and activity.

4.7 There is an exciting opportunity to capitalise on the growing national and international recognition of the importance of the New Towns movement, and the influence that New Towns and Garden Cities still have over 'good practice' in the field of Town Planning today, from community cohesion and creating a successful social fabric within sustainable neighbourhoods, to the role of design, architecture and art in creating vibrant and engaging places. The project team will work with key stakeholders to explore these opportunities and maximise the wider appeal of the facility. The Council is ambitious in this area, and many stakeholders have commented on this opportunity, but support of external bodies will be required to match the ambition.

4.8 When the Heads of Terms were agreed with Government in 2021, this project did include a set of conditions attached to it; these stated that the business case and project must:

- Provide further analysis of costings, including more information about costs for each element of the project.
- Provide more evidence on the long-term financial sustainability of the project, including how running costs will be covered.
- Provide further detail of the impact of this project through inclusion of a broader range of outcomes and outputs.

4.9 The business case provides a thorough assessment of each of the above points, including the production of a high-level draft business plan, which will

be evolved as the project progresses. Overall, the Council as Accountable Body is in a position to advise Government that the conditions have been met in the business case, and will be continually monitored throughout the project.

- 4.10 The alternative options available to the Council are:
- Not to approve the business case, or
 - Defer approval of the business case until any issues are resolved or further information is provided.
- 4.11 Based on the information presented, Officers are satisfied that the business case can be suitably controlled through conditions relating to the drawdown of funding, and no further amendments are required. It is acknowledged that the business case is a living document, which will be updated as developments progress. The other options available would have a significant detrimental impact on the success of the Towns Fund and Transforming Your Town programme, with no tangible benefits.
- 4.12 The work completed so far, including the engagement with the Community Select Committee, provides a strong foundation to move the project forward. If the business case is approved, Officers will develop a detailed delivery programme for the project, embed the governance proposals, and develop an enhanced engagement programme to ensure that the facility capitalises on opportunities for co-production, building on the interest expressed to date. The design of the building itself will be carried out as part of the wider hub commission, but the design of the internal space, fit-out, events curation plan and operating model will be delivered as part of an individual project, to ensure the right balance of integration, whilst also recognising the scale and importance of the new culture and heritage asset.

5 IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 5.1 In relation to the Heritage Centre business case, the original submission to government sought £3m of grant funding. Following the award of funding in principle (offer letter), £37.5m on funding was awarded to Stevenage. This resulted in the total grant funding from government reduced for some projects. This project was reduced from £3m to £2m.

Detailed costing work has been carried out to estimate the total construction cost of the heritage centre/museum elements of the building, as shown in the table below:

Museum building size	550m ²
Museum shared space	200m ²
Total construction cost	£1,622,636

Total fit-out costs	£500,000
Total shared building costs	£535,000
Total professional fees #	£279,000
Total project cost	£2,936,636

- 5.2 The circa. £936k direct construction cost will be match funded by the Council, and forms part of a total of £3m of match funding, the remainder of which will be met from the overall Hub funding strategy including the SG1 land receipts invested in to the construction of the wider hub building. The costs shown deliver the museum space to benchmarked costs for multi-purpose space fit-out, however any further specialist fit out costs over and above that included in the assumptions above will require third party funding or an increase in SBC funding levels.
- 5.3 In considering the overall financial risks of match-funding cumulatively to those already approved. Across tranche 1 and 2, the Council is exposed to circa. £1.25m of capital that could revert to revenue if a capital scheme is not delivered across the Gunnels Wood Road and Station Gateway projects, and circa. £3m of direct match-funding to deliver the Station Gateway project.
- 5.4 To mitigate further financial risk through this business case, a full costed programme for the total building should be agreed prior to any Towns Fund monies being released for this project, and if monies are used for design, they should be ring-fenced in the construction funding plan, in the unlikely event that the project doesn't proceed, they can be repaid if necessary.

Legal Implications

- 5.5 In relation to the Heritage Centre business case, the approval process previously set out at Executive and Council ("Transforming our Town Centre progress update and Towns Fund decision making") has been followed, and the documents have been prepared in accordance with the Towns Fund Stage 2 Guidance referenced in the decision-making report. There will be further decision-making gateways required, including separate consideration of the planning application, and consideration of the funding plan for the match funding, as this is a project that will be delivered by Stevenage Borough Council.
- 5.6 The Development Management services have been procured and are governed by the SG1 Development Agreement between Mace and Stevenage Borough Council.

Risk Implications

- 5.7 Full details of risks relating to each of the business cases can be found within the full business case.
- 5.8 The Towns Fund programme provides a significant opportunity to draw in substantial levels of funding to support the regeneration of the town. Across a range of projects, there are elements of risk, as some projects will require

match funding (as set out in the business case), or require capital investment and to proceed into delivery to avoid project costs generating revenue impacts. A number of strategic risks have already been identified for this project. The key risks include:

Stevenage National New Town's Heritage Centre: Project Risk Register

Risk Register L: Likelihood; I: Impact; T: Total

Ref.	Risk	Triggers	Consequences	Controls	Risk Score			Contingency	Responsible Person	Date: Added/ Updated
					L	I	T			
001	Covid-19 Outbreak and possible introduction of lockdown measures	Negative changes to working practices through social distancing. Uneconomical for construction supply train to operate. Added delays due to drop in output levels through covid	Shortfalls in manufacturing capacity causing price inflation. Project delay by significant social distancing measures. Negative Change in payment practices.	The need to implement practices to ensure safety. Client, consultants, and contractors work together to agree common solutions. Innovative approaches to procurement are in place. Allow for time extension in contracts. Monitor financial resilience of supply chains.	4	4	16 R	Scenario planning to assess the impact of the closedown and reduced output levels and advise clients accordingly to ensure timely completion. Bring in additional temporary labour. Review planning conditions and seek changes where possible to enable sites to operate in shifts over longer working hours. Manage cash flow.		

002	Construction labour shortages create delays	Conclusion of contracts with building contractors for public realm and site redevelopment EU restrictions (Brexit) on contractors and independent consultants	Delays to completion of both due to recruitment difficulties for contractors and consultants, Cost overruns	Appropriate and timely contractual arrangements	4	5	20 R	In development agreement commitment to bring in additional temporary labour to ensure projects are completed on time.		
003	Labour shortages in freight transport and supply industries delay construction progress	Construction progress reports noting failure to progress on schedule. National shortfall in haulage capacity	Delays to completion of project due to shortages of materials and components. Cost overruns	Contractual arrangements	5	5	25 R	In development agreement incorporates commitment to build up advanced stocks of materials. Build in sufficient contingency time in delivery programme to address possible delays.		
004	Development of the Heritage Centre constrained by unknown site conditions.	Physical obstructions. Physical conditions. Asbestos removal issues.	Need to change working methods. Revision of the design. Delays in delivering the development. Cost escalation.	Clear and appropriate description of works in technical documents. Clearly defined scope of works e.g. contractor's design obligations and buildability obligations	2	4	8 Y	Contractual provisions to manage unforeseen site conditions e.g. physical obstructions or physical conditions.		

005	Climate changes and weather conditions	Unusually harsh weather conditions. Impact of unusually harsh weather conditions on aspects of project	Bad weather retards progress of the construction programme or parts of the construction programme	Regular progress reviews. Timely communication	3	4	12 O	Build in sufficient slack in the programme to cover for unforeseen eventualities such as weather		
006	The construction cost exceeds the limit for the project or other issues arising during the design & development phase	Capital & revenue overspends. Inadequate project management. Failure to resolve conflicting priorities. Robust financial systems are not established.	Impact on capital programme. Revenue overspends. Requirements to make compensatory savings to balance budget. Increased legal fees. Reputational damage.	Client management relationship. Rigorous and well-informed project monitoring reports. Effective communication. Appointment of key personnel.	3	4	12 O	Appointment of a B&D contractor in a two-stage process with a caveat to end the contract after the first stage should the Council wish to make that decision (PCSA - Pre-Construction Service Agreement). A cost consultant will be involved from an early stage of the project to ensure contractor's proposals are realistic and within budget.		
007	Failure to achieve planning approval	Notification of Council decision	Major delay to completion. and project interdependencies.	Planning approval has been expedited and is well advanced. Through consultation, scope of objections well understood.	1	5	5 Y	Close cooperation with Planning.		

008	Constrained nature of the site limits the volume of building which can be accommodated, the range of uses and how the buildings are organised on site.	Funding restricted / stopped. Poor management decisions. Failures in contractor / partnership working. Poor project management. Poor planning	Project delays/overruns. Reputational damage. Cost overruns. Public dissatisfaction. Discouragement of future partnerships. Delay, impact on service delivery.	Regular meetings with designers / contractors. Effective procurement strategy. Post contract reviews. Regular and timely meetings with planning. Robust project management.	3	3	9 Y	Close cooperation with Planning.		
010	Dissatisfaction of local residents with proposed content and/or design of the new heritage centre	Publication of outline and detailed designs	Likely delays to construction if design changes are needed	Comprehensive consultation programme to be maintained particularly at early stage to capture preferences from local residents.	2	5	10 Y	Market Research and focus groups to provide ample evidence of what the public expect from the new Heritage Centre and leisure space. Extend process to enable preliminary designs to be market tested with the public.		

5.9 The key risks and mitigation at a programme level can be summarised as follows:

Key Risks	Mitigation
Business cases and summary sheets are not signed-off / submitted in time and funding is lost	Programme and resources have been established with a dedicated programme manager and oversight from Assistant Director (Regeneration) and Strategic Director (TP) to ensure products are commissioned and programme is on track
Business cases are rejected by Accountable Body/Development Board	Early engagement with both organisations to ensure they are involved and have oversight of business case development, to ensure they are supportive of the direction of travel
Sign-off process and/or decision routes are challenged	Developed sign-off process and governance as set out in this paper in accordance with guidance and best practice
The cumulative risk of Towns Fund projects has a material impact on the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy	Each project will highlight the potential areas of risk (in this case, related to the approach to avoid any risks of capital claw back), and previous Towns Fund project. At this point in time the previous Towns Fund project (Gyratory) also highlighted risks of capital clawback, which also has mitigations in place
Money spent at risk not recovered and resulting in a General Fund pressure if projects don't proceed	Careful diligence of spending in early stages of the projects; not progressing to business case stage unless we are confident the project is deliverable; review of risk in entirety across the programme
Funding not sufficiently secured by accountable body, including match-funding	Towns Fund spend profile to be reflected in the Council's capital strategy, with individual projects returning to Council for future sign-off when at a suitably advanced stage to give Members the full information necessary for final budgetary sign-off
Third-parties do not deliver to timeframe or budget, and/or don't follow relevant procurement guidelines	All projects being delivered by a third-party to have a funding agreement in place with the Accountable Body
Business cases called-in and potentially challenged by	Utilising business case template provided through the Town's Fund resource;

BEIS/DLUHC	representative from BEIS to attend Development Board meetings and have sight of business cases at an early stage.
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Policy Implications

- 5.10 The development will contribute to the delivery of regeneration within the town centre and will help to deliver key objectives of the Council's Sustainable Transport strategy, Future "Town, Future Transport" (adopted 2019) and will also help to deliver on the Council's commitment to reducing carbon emissions as stated in the Climate Change Strategy (adopted 2020) through low-carbon developments. The project will also fulfil many of the Cultural Strategy ambitions.

Planning Implications

- 5.11 Outline planning permission has a resolution to grant as part of SG1; no specific planning permission in place for the heritage centre.

Environmental Implications

- 5.12 A core value of embedded within the framework for appraising these projects is focussed on ensuring due consideration to Environment, and where possible support the reduction of impact of Regeneration on the Environment.
- 5.13 There is a significant focus on utilising brownfield sites and spaces to their maximum potential through the Stevenage Town Investment Plan, and a clear drive to focus on sustainable travel options, through both public and active transport initiatives.
- 5.14 Better land use planning is a key concept for mitigating emissions and allowing people to make the behavioural changes required to reduce their carbon footprints in the long run. New buildings will improve the environment, not detract from it.

Climate Change Implications

- 5.15 The project presents an opportunity to make a positive contribution to the Town's climate emergency and net zero ambitions, but utilising space in a multi-purpose building which is designed to limit the use of new resources through both the construction and operation phases. Stevenage has a recognised legacy as a green and diverse environment, and the new asset has an opportunity to promote this through its displays.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 5.16 No specific equalities and diversity implications for this tranche of business cases.

APPENDICES

- A Background to the Town Investment Plan development and business case requirements
- B Heritage Centre business case summary
- C Heritage Centre full business case
- D Community Select Committee recommendations
- E Stakeholder engagement report

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1 APPENDIX A - BACKGROUND TO TOWNS FUND

- 1.1 In September 2019 the Government invited 101 towns to develop proposals and bid for funding for a Town Deal, as part of the £3.6 billion Towns Fund. Stevenage was identified as one of the 101 eligible towns.
- 1.2 As part of the Towns Fund, each eligible town was required to put in place cross-organisational leadership via a Towns Fund Board, to ensure broad representation from businesses, skills and education providers, investors, community representation and cross-public sector support.
- 1.3 In Stevenage, this saw the formation of a new, independent Stevenage Development Board. Following a recruitment process managed by Hertfordshire County Council and approved by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, an independent Chair was appointed (Adrian Hawkins OBE), and the new Development Board (the Board) was formed in March 2020, working to shape a Town Investment Plan to help develop proposals to provide local opportunity and reinvigorate the town.
- 1.4 After extensive work and wide engagement by the Board, including working groups on Skills and Enterprise, Connectivity, Heritage and Culture, and Regeneration, the Stevenage Town Investment Plan (STIP) was submitted in October 2020. This built on extensive engagement with local stakeholders, residents and businesses to help shape a plan to reinvigorate Stevenage to meet the aspirations of its people.
- 1.5 This plan set out proposals to create an exemplar 21st century New Town, maximising the opportunities within local economy (including capitalising on the Life Sciences opportunity) to meet the needs of local people, attracting visitors and investment and revitalising the town. The Towns Fund programme had set out an expectation that bids would be for up to £25m, largely capital funding, but with the potential for towns to bid for up to £50m if they could demonstrate exceptional circumstances and subject to a deeper review process to be conducted by Government officials. Stevenage Development Board set out a bid with 'exceptional circumstances, articulating a proposal for £50m funding to help address challenges and opportunities facing the town.
- 1.6 As part of the national Budget announcements in March 2021, funding was allocated to 45 Towns. Stevenage achieved the joint highest allocation in this funding round, with an award of £37.5m. In making this award, the Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government, indicated that this higher funding offer 'is in recognition of the case that Stevenage made for the national significance of the proposals to develop its life sciences sector' and that this presents 'an exciting opportunity to come together to drive long-term economic and productivity growth in Stevenage, particularly as we meet the challenges presented by Covid-19'.
- 1.7 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) (now the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)) set out proposed Heads of Terms for the £37.5m award for the Town

Investment Plan). As set out by the Towns Fund programme, the Council and Chair of Stevenage Development Board proposed a funding profile. On 15 July 2021, DLUHC provided Grant Confirmation, allocating funding over a five year period – subject to approval of business cases by the Accountable Body and DLUHC conditions. This was allocated as follows:

- 1.8 This process also sets out a clear role for Stevenage Borough Council as the Accountable Body for the allocation of funding for Towns Fund projects, and requires the Council to undertake assurance assessments, review and approval of business cases to draw down funding for projects within the Town Investment Plan.
- 1.9 To secure the allocated Towns Fund package, all business cases must be complete and signed-off by the Accountable Body, with the accompanying project summary sheets submitted to DLUHC by 24 March 2022.
- 1.10 It is recognised that the funding and range of projects included within Stevenage's Town's Fund programme means that it is one of the largest programmes within the nationwide Towns Fund programme, the Council needs a clear and achievable plan for producing and signing-off the business cases. The Council does have significant experience in developing complex business cases for approval and government review, such as through the Local Enterprise Partnership Growth Deal Funding, in addition to the strategic outline case submitted to government in the form of the Stevenage Town Investment Plan. Preparation work has been undertaken for many of the projects, to enable development of the business cases in a timely way. In October 2021, at a meeting of the full Council, powers were delegated to the Council's Executive Committee to consider each of the business cases for approval.

Business case requirements

- 1.11 The requirements for business case development and assurance are set out by DLUHC as part of their Stage 2 guidance of the Towns Fund. Stage 2 of the Town's Fund process focusses on the development of business cases for each of the projects, and is required to be complete before 24th March 2022.
- 1.12 This stage of activity is to ensure local partners work with government to demonstrate the feasibility, viability and value for money of their projects. This includes:
 - Developing and submitting the Town Deal Summary Document
 - Business Case development for all approved projects
 - A full list of projects
 - Detail of the processes used for business case assurance and approval followed for each project
 - Confirmation of actions taken in response to any conditions applied in the agreed Heads of Terms between DLUHC and local partners

- A Delivery Plan (including details of the team, working arrangements and agreements with stakeholders)
 - A Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
 - Confirmation of funding arrangements and financial profiles for each project
 - Undertaking Public Sector Equalities Duty analysis
 - Approval from the Town Deal Board and Lead Council
- 1.13 Stevenage Borough Council and Stevenage Development Board are required to conduct project assurance for each individual project.
- 1.14 Each business case is expected to meet agreed criteria. DLUHC expect business cases to include:
- The evidence for the intervention using rigorous analysis of quality data and the application of best practice.
 - An assessment of value for money, including showing how different types of projects will be compared and assessed.
 - A clear economic rationale, justifying the use of public funds in addition to how a proposed project is expected to contribute to strategic objectives.
 - Clearly defined inputs, activities, outputs and anticipated outcomes.
 - Appropriate consideration of deliverability and risk along with appropriate mitigating action.
 - Whilst there is no minimum value for money threshold set for Towns Fund projects, in order to follow best practice, all business cases must contain robust value for money assessments.
 - Business cases should address, in a proportionate manner, the five cases set out in the HM Treasury Green Book.
- 1.15 Each business case should be assured by the Accountable Body (in this case, Stevenage Borough Council), prior to submitting summary documents to DLUHC.

Developing and reviewing business cases

- 1.16 Stevenage Development Board will continue to have a vital role through the development of business cases, with partners engaged in working groups to support the development and finalisation of business cases. The Board includes a wide range of key stakeholders, who will need to endorse the businesses cases and play a key role in engaging with the projects across a range of themes, including Culture, Skills, Sustainable Transport, and Town Centre Regeneration. This will ensure the experience and expertise across a range of sectors will be harnessed to support the development of robust and deliverable business cases, for projects that will have a significant positive impact for the town.

1.17 To support the assurance process, and ensure appropriate separation of interests when the Council is acting as Accountable Body, an Officer Panel ('Chair's Panel') consisting of senior Stevenage Borough Council and partner Officers (a Director, Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer, Hertfordshire LEP and, Hertfordshire County Council Officers) has been established to ensure business cases meet requirements before being recommended to the Development Board for approval. The following approval route will now be followed for the submission of business cases to DLUHC:

- Business case developed by Officers and Stevenage Development Board partners
- Review of business cases by a 'Assurance Panel' including key Council Officers to ensure strategic alignment, deliverability, value for money and the ability to implement the Town Investment Plan, as part of the assurance process
- Approval of the business case by Stevenage Development Board
- Business case to be approved by Stevenage Borough Council Executive Committee as the 'Accountable Body'
- Summary of the business case to be submitted to DLUHC to access funding.

Executive Summary: New Town's Heritage Centre

*Prepared for the Stevenage Development Board
Full Business Cases are available on request*



Contents

Executive Summary from Business Case Assurance Panel	3
Overview	4
Strategic Case	8
Economic Case	11
Financial Case	16
Commercial Case	17
Management Case	18

Executive Summary from Business Case Assurance Panel

Project Title
New Town's Heritage Centre
Assurance Panel Feedback
<p>Assurance Panel discussion was held on the 13th January 2022 and a summary of comments is provided below.</p> <p>Overall the panel discussion was very positive and supportive of the business case.</p> <p>The Panel unanimously supported the business case, with the following minor amendments to be incorporated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ensure that the 'national' opportunities are suitably emphasised, with the potential for international visitors relating to the New Town movement- Enhance the economic benefits of the operating/running cost savings relating to providing the new facility in a shared building; this supports both value for money and the operation of the building- Need to promote the 'cultural package' that this intervention provides the platform for; new experience-focused garden square, evening economy/entertainment, events and pop-up activation, improve the overall offer of the museum aspects- Future branding exercise required in conjunction with public and stakeholders to co-produce the facility's identity- Need to recognise the work carried out to date to look at other examples as precedent projects, but also recognise that there is still much more to learn from existing facilities, especially those that have been delivered more recently.
Recommendations for Stevenage Development Board
<p>To acknowledge and endorse the progression of this business case to Accountable Body processes.</p> <p>To endorse recommendations set out in the business case to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Progress commercial exploration activities- Progress scoping and ultimate creation of audience development plan within the next 12-18 months- Progress and update the business plan within the next 12 months

Overview

Project Title
New Town's Heritage Centre
Project Location
Stevenage Town Centre (Civic Hub Building)
Partner/Co-Funding Organisations
TBC
Total Project Costs (£)
£2,936,636
Total Town's Fund Allocation (£)
£2,000,000
Other Public Sector Investment (£)
£936,636 directly to the project (Stevenage Borough Council) A further £3 million of match funding will be provided from Stevenage Borough Council with the construction of the whole building.
Total Third Sector Investment (£)
N/A
Total Private Sector Investment (£)
N/A

Project Description

The scheme being supported by the Towns Fund will involve the construction of an allocated space within the new Civic Hub into a New Town's Heritage Centre with the opportunity for adjoining culture and leisure space. It will deliver a combination of heritage interpretation, culture and education uses together at site, integrating with local public and community services within the new hub. This facility will epitomise Stevenage's strategic aspirations to regain its status as a place destination for leisure, culture and heritage by taking current assets and celebrated heritage and positioning them within the heart of the regeneration and cultural story for the town, in a vibrant, accessible facility. This forms one key component of the broader cultural strategy for the town, alongside the development of an improved theatre and leisure offer.

The Stevenage National New Town's Heritage Centre project will comprise two key spaces:

- A modern cultural, arts, heritage and education centre
- Adjacent flexible space providing a key resource for events, performances, education and leisure activities.

The New Town's Heritage Centre will include the relocation of the current museum depicting the history of Stevenage's pioneering role in leading the New Town movement and its context in the postmodern era. The content of the museum will build on the existing collection with the aim of exhibiting the story of Stevenage in a new and dynamic way by creating interactive, exciting activities that attract families and visitors. The new facility will provide the opportunity to present and interact with heritage in a modern innovative way, whilst continuing to provide learning spaces for handling collections to meet the demand for schools and education providers. The facility has the potential to become a destination for a wide variety of audiences (nationally and internationally), including students researching urban planning, professionals and policy makers learning from the New Town impact plus residents and visitors.

The flexible spaces available will be curated by Museum and Cultural teams to provide a key venue for the town's cultural activities which might for example include musical, film and other live performances, dancing classes, special interest talks and events, conferences, and meeting space to support the town's key public services and community support groups. Furthermore, with the library being co-located within the Hub, this enhances the opportunity to continue and strengthen partnership working and broaden educational and community activity. This facility aims to widen the cultural opportunities for performance within the town and simultaneously provide an event space, in conjunction with the proposed café, that can provide revenue to sustain the business model and support economic spend by driving footfall within the town centre.

There is an exciting opportunity to capitalise on the growing national and international recognition of the importance of the New Towns movement, and the influence that New Towns and Garden Cities still have over 'good practice' in the field of Town Planning today,

from community cohesion and creating a successful social fabric within sustainable neighbourhoods, to the role of design, architecture and art in creating vibrant and engaging places. The project team will work with key stakeholders to explore these opportunities and maximise the wider appeal of the facility.

A key focus will be linking the old and new aspects of Stevenage, exploring and curating culture and art of the period when Stevenage was first conceived and developed, showcasing the New Town and Modernist movements and linking this to current ideas and developments emanating from within the town, such as inventions of global significance like the Mars Rover.

In addition, the project is included in a phase of SG1, a £350 million development scheme which covers two of the Major Opportunity Areas in the town (see Strategic Case for more detail). Accompanying the Hub is a new public space, Garden Square, which supports the development of 200 new homes on Plots F & G which lie to the rear of the Hub, the site of the facility.

Key Purposes of the Project

The purpose of this project is to bring a combination of heritage interpretation, culture and education uses together onto one site, integrating with local public and community services within the new Civic Hub so that:

- Visitor numbers in the town centre will grow thereby increasing patronage of and in the longer term more investment in good quality retail, food and beverage outlets and leisure amenities.
- An increase in younger people engaged in learning activities is conducive to higher levels of motivation and aspiration; a more accessible asset that has a broader appeal, especially for hard to reach groups
- Major synergies and cost efficiencies will be achieved by co-locating these activities; this supports providing value for money for the capital build of the project, as well as providing a more sustainable operational business model
- Stevenage can become more attractive to a broader range of people considering moving to and working in Stevenage due to the creation of a stronger culture offer.
- A broader range of visitors will utilise the multi-purpose space
- Part of an enhanced, integrated cultural offer within the town centre, including a new experience-based 'Garden Square', pop-up event space, and more diverse town centre events spaces

Configuration of the Project

By creating a high-quality heritage and dedicated culture and leisure space, the project would significantly enhance the cultural offer of the town centre leading to higher visitor numbers, levels of participation in learning, cultural activities and events. Learning opportunities, particularly for young people would be enhanced, helping to raise aspirations.

Higher visitor numbers would increase footfall and spending in the town conducive to higher levels of investment in retail, food and beverage and level and leisure amenities. An enhanced cultural offer and higher quality outlets in the town centre would attract people to live in Stevenage and in so doing would accelerate the sales and buildout of planned residential developments.

Key activities will involve:

- Scoping series of engagement and consultation events to inform audience development plan
- Creation of audience development plan for the new facility
- Market engagement with commercial and cultural opportunities
- Design (RIBA 1-4) and appraisal of space size as part of the Hub design workstream
- Construction of a museum and cultural centre with a total minimum size of 750sqm.
- Relocation of the existing museum collection and the development of modern interactive and experiential displays for depicting the town's history.
- Development of 200 new mews style homes on Plots F & G as part of the SG1 scheme

Strategic Case

Indicate how this project meets the Town Investment Plan Vision (<i>tick</i>)		
	Reflecting and Re-Interpreting our New Town Heritage for future generations	✓
	Embracing Sustainable Travel to maximise the benefits of our strategic location and link our communities with jobs and leisure	
	Transforming our Town Centre as a key place of opportunity and integration for business, residents and visitors	✓
	Upskilling and providing opportunities for all our people to benefit from innovation & growth	
	Supercharging the growth of National and International Business Base	
Indicate which <i>challenge(s)</i> this project intends to meet (<i>tick</i>)		
	Challenge 1: Ageing Infrastructure – Urban Disconnections and a Brake on Growth	✓
	Challenge 2: Bridging the Skills Gap and Raising Aspirations	✓
	Challenge 3: Town Centre Transformation	✓
	Challenge 4: A Resident Population Being Left Behind	✓
	Challenge 5: Lack of Suitable Modern Space for Growth	
Indicate which <i>opportunity(ies)</i> this project supports (<i>tick</i>)		
	Opportunity 1: National and International Gateway for UK PLC	
	Opportunity 2: Innovation Hub, High Growth Potential and STEM City	
	Opportunity 3: The Untapped Potential of Stevenage People	✓
	Opportunity 4: Building Wealth and Reclaiming Expenditure	✓
	Opportunity 5: Reviving Stevenage’s Sustainable Travel Network	

Policy Alignment (List only, 2.3)

National Policy	Local Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arts Council England Strategy 2020-30 Heritage Fund Strategic Funding Framework 2019-24 Town Centre Initiatives (Grimsey Reviews) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stevenage’s Arts & Heritage (Cultural Strategy, Stevenage Re-Imagined) Hertfordshire Covid Recovery Plan Hertfordshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan Local Industrial Strategy Grand Challenges Stevenage Local Plan 2019-2031 Stevenage Central Framework

Expected Outputs/Outcomes (2.5.11)

Jobs Created	3
Museum, Arts, Cultural, Education Floorspace Developed sqm	550
Flexible Leisure Floorspace Developed sqm	200
Total New Floorspace	750
Net Increase in Heritage museum and flexible leisure space sqm	200
Additional homes brought forward	200
Additional GVA Generated per Annum	£1,269,914
Number of public facilities collocated	3

Wider Outcomes and Benefits (2.5.12)

Economic

- High quality culture and leisure facilities will attract a wider range of new residents to the area, providing a good choice of high-quality workers to the advanced high value industries Stevenage is seeking to attract.
- This should increase demand for high quality commercial space in the town centre.
- Expanded demand will help assure long term commercial viability of the centre.
- More people will visit the town centre increasing demand for retail and food and beverage facilities and thereby investment in these facilities.
- Higher profile generated by the new museum and cultural centre
- Acceleration of the redevelopment of key housing sites in the town centre.
- Improved town centre environment.
- Stronger perception of Stevenage as a place to invest.

Environmental

- Enhanced scope for living and working in the town centre, thereby reducing the need to travel.
- Cleaner air and healthier lifestyles.

Social

- Meets anticipated demand from population growth.
- Broadens scope for engaging more people in cultural activities and for raising aspirations.

Economic Case

Economic Benefits (3.3.1)

See table of outputs/outcomes above.

Benefits have been monetised by projecting:

- the GVA per head for each of the new jobs to be created
- income generated from space for hire in the new leisure space
- income from shared gate takings from events
- income from catering services to service meetings, conferences and social events taking place within the new space
- Additional spending in the town centre that would be generated as a result of visits to the museum and flexible leisure space.

Projected annual revenue streams from the above are summarised as follows.

Increase in GVA from new jobs		£177,317
Income from Space for Hire		£161,000
Income from Events Gate Proceeds		£282,500
Income from Local Catering		£311,800
Increase in Town Centre Spending		£337,297
Total		£1,269,914

These have been discounted over 30 years to arrive at the Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR)

Value for Money Assessment	Present Value	Undiscounted
	30 Years	30 Years
Cost	£2,612,775	£2,936,636
Benefits	£17,622,599	£17,622,599
Net Present Value: Benefits Less Cost	£15,009,825	£14,685,963
BCR Calculation	6.74	6.00

Non-quantified impacts and benefits are summarised below:

Project	Impact	Assessment of Benefits
Museum	Upgraded accommodation	Museum's collection, archives, and

		assets are better protected
	Larger audience reach	Enhances heritage learning and appreciation
	Opportunity to engage and co-create with marginalised communities and youth	Improved learning, creativity, confidence, skills development, and community cohesiveness
	Increased opportunities for partnership working; initiatives to inspire higher levels of learning, creativity and critical thinking can be leveraged	Will help reach more people to build knowledge and skills
Flexible Leisure Space	Creates a more innovative, collaborative, and attractive offer	
	Enables cultural services that can work across local government, public, and VCSE services/agendas	Enables greater outcomes, such as improved social cohesion, wellbeing, and a boost to the local economy
	Enhanced capacity for daytime and night time culture and leisure activity	Increased footfall boosting prospects for revived retail, leisure and hospitality sector
	Will help reprofile Stevenage as a cultural destination	Enhances the appeal of living in the town centre, accelerating sales and development of new homes
Development of 200 new homes	Increased demand for town centre retail and leisure, cleaning, maintenance, security and delivery services	Generation of indirect employment

Place Based Analysis (3.6.1)

Target Area	Central Core, Stevenage Town Centre, SG1
External Dependencies	<p>The main dependencies are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of the new Civic Hub as this project forms an integral part of the Hub's structure and operational arrangements and • Continued house building in the town centre to assure demand for the facilities is maintained.
Benefits to the Target Area: Quantified	As above
Benefits to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhances heritage learning and appreciation

<p>the Target Area: Qualitative</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased scope for engaging marginalised groups • Improved learning, creativity, confidence, skills development, and community cohesiveness • Will help reach more people to build knowledge and skills • Enables greater outcomes, such as improved social cohesion, wellbeing, and a boost to the local economy • Increased footfall boosting prospects for revived retail, leisure and hospitality sector • Enhances the appeal of living in the town centre, accelerating sales and development of new homes
<p>Possible collateral effects in the target area or wider spatial area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher level of engagement of local residents in cultural and education activities • Raising of aspirations of more local residents • Will help reprofile Stevenage as a cultural destination • Will help generate greater footfall for Stevenage • Stronger attraction of well qualified home buyers to live and work in Stevenage • Increased investor confidence • Acceleration of sales of new homes and transformation • Generation of indirect employment
<p>Adverse effects on protected groups</p>	<p>None identified</p>
<p>Different impacts by income group</p>	<p>Enhanced museum and leisure space will widen the audience reach and enable more of those who are marginalised on low incomes and in high areas of deprivation to become engaged in cultural and education activities and to raise their aspirations.</p>
<p>Views of local stakeholders</p>	<p>Desire to create aspiring communities and opportunities that create a lasting legacy.</p> <p>Please see view stakeholder report from heritage consultant Claire Alder.</p>
<p>Alignment with wider public policy in the relevant area/s and the UK as a whole/s</p>	<p><u>Arts Council England Strategy 2020-30: Key Outcomes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative People: an opportunity co-create with marginalised communities and youth in particular to nurture skills, confidence, creativity, and critical thinking to ensure that everyone has access to creativity and cultural sector career paths. • Cultural Communities: greater outcomes through a higher-quality, accessible facility that enables a more innovative, collaborative, and attractive offer. • A Creative & Cultural Country: museum’s strong track-record of working with and nurturing artists, flexible spaces within the Hub will also provide opportunities for collaborations with creative industries to

	<p>realise creative and business innovations, which will boost local skills and economies.</p> <p><u>Heritage Fund Strategic Funding Framework 2019-24:</u></p> <p><u>Strategic Objectives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to bring heritage into better condition: a new facility with high building specifications, including environmental controls, will ensure the Museum’s collection, archives, and assets are protected. • Inspire people to value heritage more: a purpose-built facility will support a more engaging, accessible, inclusive, and relevant offer that enhances heritage learning and appreciation. • Ensure that heritage is inclusive: working with marginalised communities, new exhibitions and programmes will be co-created with communities to ensure that communities are better included and represented by the museum’s collections/stories. More people will therefore be involved in heritage. • Support the organisations we fund to be more robust: will enable increased partnership working and audience reach for greater outcomes and will generate increased opportunities to leverage funding. • Demonstrate how heritage helps people and places to thrive: a more accessible, attractive, and engaging museum will enable greater audience reach and help to reprofile Stevenage, which unfairly suffers from negative perceptions. • Grow the contribution that heritage makes to the UK economy: a redeveloped museum within will help reprofile Stevenage as a cultural destination, reach more people to build knowledge and skills and generate greater footfall for Stevenage. <p><u>Grimsey Reviews</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project will help drive footfall and create experiential shopping and spaces within the town.
<p>Dependency on the successful delivery of other proposals</p>	<p>Continued house building in the town centre to assure demand for the facilities is maintained.</p>

<p>Link of Benefits Estimated Link to Theory of Change and Strategic Case</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scheme will make Stevenage more attractive to well qualified workers. • Increased footfall boosting prospects for revived retail, leisure and hospitality sector. • More high quality and high value businesses will be attracted to Stevenage. • Recognition of Stevenage Town Centre as a high prestige business location. • Increased investor confidence. • Acceleration of transformation of other SG1 major opportunity areas and sites.
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Financial Case

Funding Profile (4.2.6)					
		Funding Profile	Total		
		SBC	£936,636		
		Town's Fund	£2,000,000		
		Total	£2,936,636		
Funding Schedule (4.2.7)					
Source	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	Total
SBC	£23,925	£38,464	£354,458	£519,789	£936,636
Towns Fund	£92,070	£86,490	£790,470	£1,030,970	£2,000,000
Total	£115,995	£124,954	£1,144,928	£1,550,759	£2,936,636

Commercial Case

Delivery Model (5.2.4-6)

The proposed delivery model is for the Council to take the lead as the developer, working with a construction partner Mace to develop the scheme as part of SG1 scheme.

The delivery approach for the SG1 area (14.2acres / 5.75ha) was agreed by decisions taken through four previous Executive committee meetings (2016-2019). An OJEU compliant Competitive Dialogue tender process appointed “Mace” as developer with a contractual partnership governed by a Development Agreement (DA), signed in March 2019. The SG1 proposals will deliver the regeneration of a significant proportion of the town centre, across multiple development sites, and include circa 1800 homes, public spaces including a new Garden Square adjoining the Town Square, Public Services Hub, school, and new boulevard route connecting the rail station and new Bus Interchange with the Town Square.

The partnership commits the Council and Mace to four broad sequential Phases of work, comprising ten development plots in total. The baseline Programme to deliver all four Phases is over ten years, assuming a successful hybrid planning permission in summer 2020.

These arrangements have a number of advantages. The Council needs to be the initiator and owner of the project because of the need to:

- a) widen participation in heritage appreciation, culture and education active pursuits conducive to increasing the quality of life and aspirations of the population
- b) achieve this by offering an improved facilities offered to maximise patronage and make the facilities accessible to those on low incomes and in high areas of deprivation
- c) provide an important building block for the regeneration of the town centre
- d) utilise expertise and funding need to be deployed to stimulate leveraged investment and transformation.
- e) engage and consult with the Stevenage community to co-design programme of events, exhibitions and activities which will enhance community vibrancy within the town centre and continue to uphold the strong pride in Stevenage, its unique history as well as its bright and innovative future.

For these reasons, the Council is best placed to initiate and deliver the scheme, utilising the expertise of construction and development management from Development Partner Mace.

Risks (5.2.11)

Risks	Likelihood	Mitigation
Renewed risk of Covid-19 Outbreak and possible introduction of lockdown measures	High	Scenario planning to assess the impact of the close-down and reduced output levels and advise clients accordingly to ensure timely completion. Bring in additional temporary labour. Review planning conditions and seek changes where possible to enable sites to operate in shifts over longer working hours. Manage cash flow.

Failure to achieve planning approval	Medium	Outline planning permission has been granted for the totality of SG1, which includes the Hub. Project is moving into design stage where appropriate engagement with planning will support the progress of the project. This will be accompanied by public consultation.
Labour shortages in construction, freight transport and supply industries delay construction progress	High	In development agreement with Reef and with public realm contractors, incorporate commitment to bring in additional temporary labour and stocks of materials to ensure projects are completed on time.
The construction cost exceeds the limit for the project or other issues arising during the design and development phase	Low	A cost consultant will be involved from an early stage of the project to ensure contractor's proposals are realistic and within budget.
Commercial opportunities cannot be achieved through this model	Medium	Initial benchmarking work has been undertaken by reviewing potential venue hire rates to ascertain what similar facilities achieve. Outline business plan to be robustly updated and tested over the next 12 months with commercial and cultural experts to support.

Management Case

Next steps and project organisation

Subject to Stevenage Development Board endorsement of the project, there will be a number of activities that will form the next steps of the project's development.

These include:

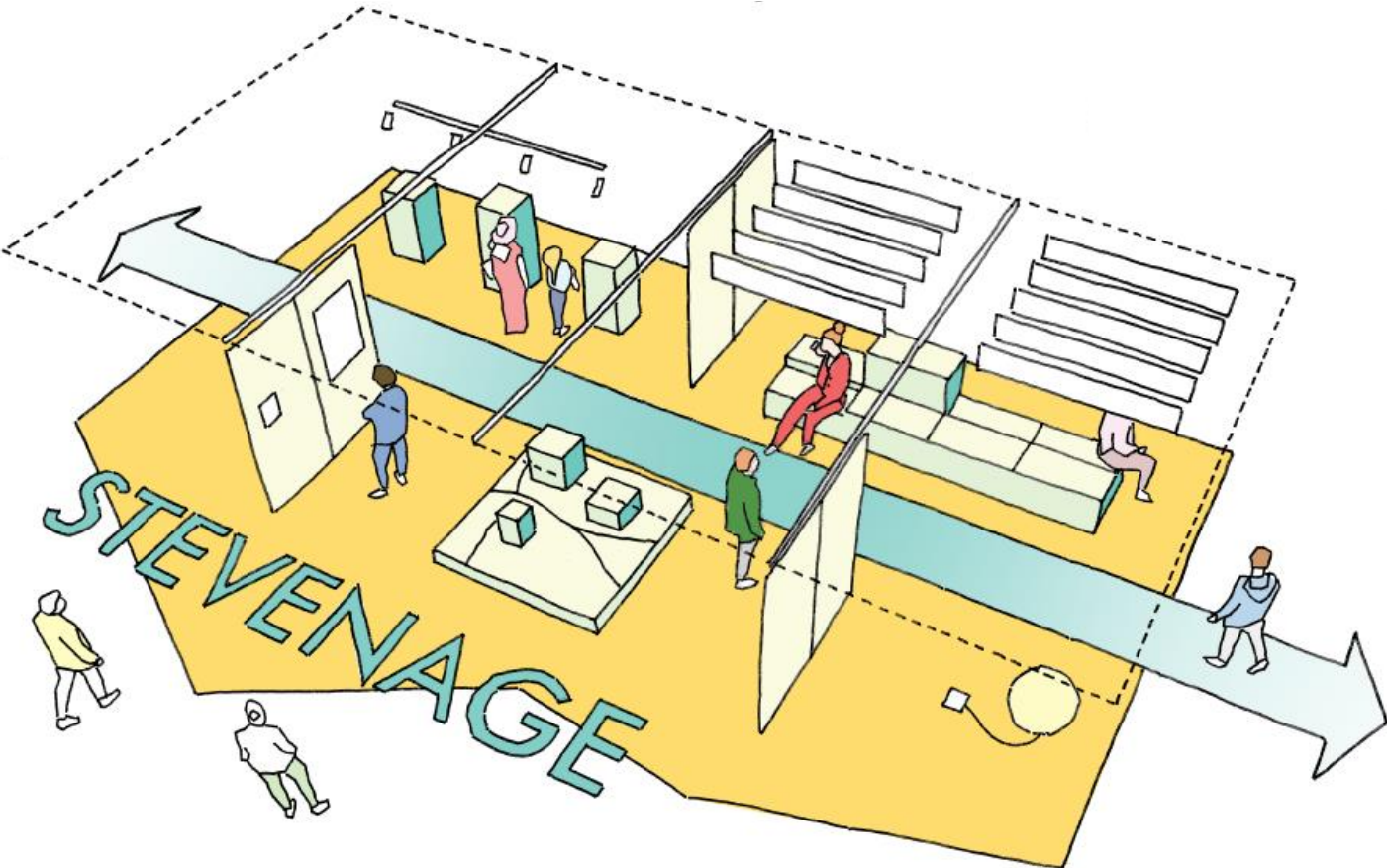
- Scoping a series of engagement and consultation events with stakeholders and residents to form an audience development plan and design of the space
- Creation of audience development plan for the new facility
- Market engagement with commercial and cultural opportunities
- Progress and update outline business plan
- Design appraisal of space size as part of the Hub design work streams

Organisation	Functions	Key Roles	Capability	Competences and Resourcing
Stevenage Borough Council	Orchestration of regeneration strategy and projects	Stakeholder consultation Project scoping Sourcing of funding Initiation of delivery partnerships Formalising approvals	Well-developed stakeholder engagement strategy, organisation and processes Devising high impact regeneration solutions Delivery through partnership and contract	Expert and experienced regeneration team Town Fund award and match funding for key projects Delivery partnerships
Mace	Contractor and Development Partner for the construction of the Hub as part of the SG1 scheme	Main contractor responsible for the design and the construction of the Hub Coordinating and sub-contracting Ensuring Health and Safety onsite	Well-developed company Track record of delivering complex and high quality schemes	
Stevenage Borough Council	To act as the Accountable Body ensuring robust processes are followed for the delivery of the project	Monitoring and evaluation Assurance Financial security	Well-developed Council processes to be adhered following the endorsement from the Development Board Capital Programme experience	Expert Finance Team with knowledge of capital schemes Shared learning with LEP

Image below shows The Hub where the new facilities will be placed, adjacent to the new Garden Square



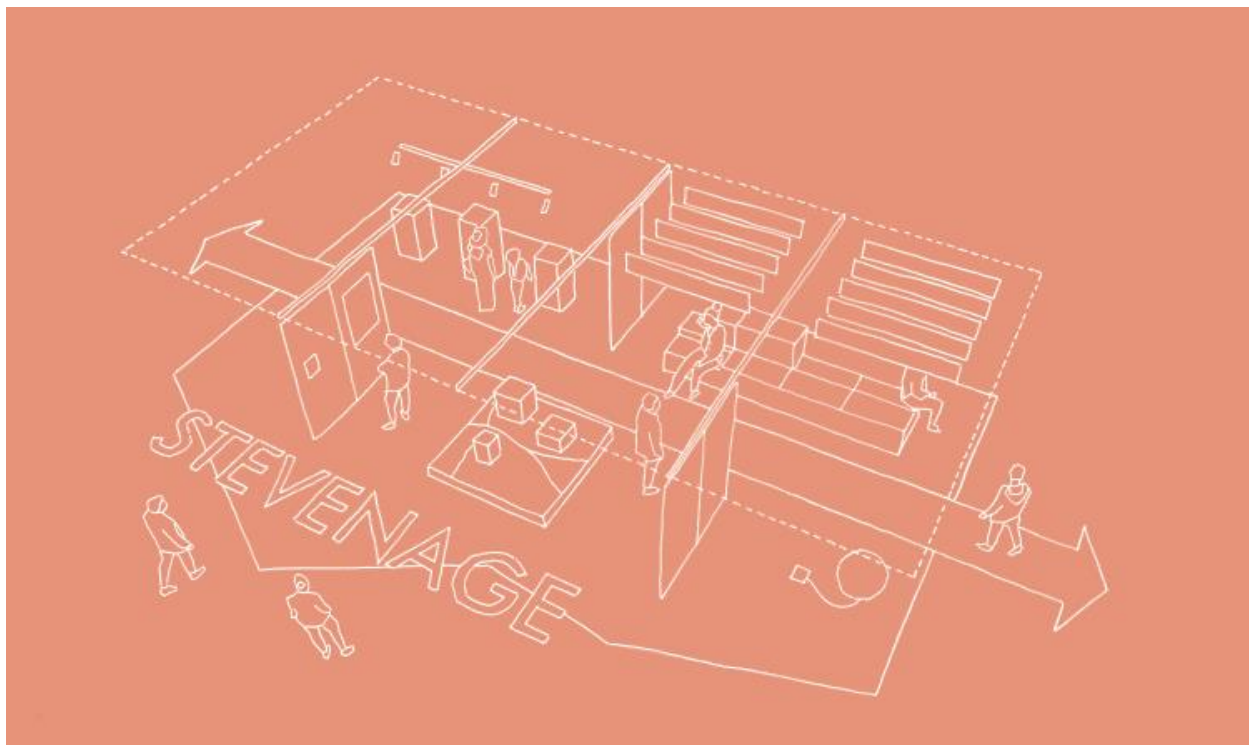
Image below shows artist impression of the new facility



Stage 2 – Business Case

Stevenage National New Towns Heritage Centre

Business Case template (optional) to be used by Towns as guidance for structuring their business cases



VERSION CONTROL

Document version	Publication date	Description of changes	Modified by
1			
2			
3			

CONTENTS

Introduction

Strategic Case

Economic Case

Financial Case

Commercial Case

Management Case

Appendices

- I. Feasibility Study for facility placement within the Hub
- II. Outline business plan for the new facility
- III. Stakeholder Engagement report – Clare Alder
- IV. Community Select Committee report

INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Purpose of the Business Case

- 1.1.1 This business case sets out the proposal and rationale for a project titled Stevenage National New Towns Heritage Centre. This will comprise a 550 sqm museum and cultural centre and 200 sqm events and leisure space.
- 1.1.2 This will form an integral element of the new public sector Hub; a new purpose built 9,000 sqm building that will house a new library, the town’s public services and major voluntary sector services, acting as the key connector between community groups, education providers, businesses and cultural operators.

Image below shows the Hub where the new facility will be placed adjacent to the new Garden Square.



Background to Towns Fund and Stage 2 process

- 1.1.3 In November 2019, Stevenage was included in the 101 places eligible to develop and submit a Town Investment Plan. This presented an opportunity for Stevenage to bid for up to £25 million of capital funding to support and address key challenges facing the town. Towns were also invited to bid for over £25m if exceptional circumstances could be demonstrated.
- 1.1.4 Working closely with key public, private and third sector partners the Stevenage Development Board was established and a Stevenage Town Investment Plan was created and submitted to MHCLG (now renamed DLUHC) in October 2020; In March 2021, the partnership was notified of its award of £37.5m of funding.

- 1.1.5 The investment plan was predicated on maximising the success of our businesses in the science and engineering sectors, regenerating the town centre, and delivering opportunities for local people including enhanced skills & training. Ten projects were submitted as part of the ask to central government, ranging across Transport and Active Travel infrastructure, Skills and Enterprise, Arts, Heritage and Cultural and Town Centre Regeneration.
- 1.1.6 Building on the Town Investment Plan, this document sets the strategic, economic and financial case for the Stevenage National New Towns Heritage Centre project, the commercial arrangements for procuring its delivery and the processes and arrangements for the governance and management of the project.

Scheme Promoter and Accountable Body for the Project

- 1.1.7 The scheme promoter and the landowner is Stevenage Borough Council.

1.2 Summary of the Scheme

- 1.2.1 The scheme being supported by the Town Fund will involve the construction of an allocated space within the new civic Hub into a New Towns Heritage Centre with the opportunity for adjoining culture and leisure space. It will bring a combination of heritage interpretation, culture and education uses together onto one site, integrating with local public and community services within the new Hub. This facility will epitomise Stevenage's strategic aspirations to regain its status as a place for leisure, culture and heritage destination by taking current assets and celebrated heritage and positioning them within the heart of the regeneration and cultural story for the town. This forms one key component of the broader cultural strategy for the town, alongside the development of a new theatre and leisure developments.
- 1.2.2 The Stevenage National New Towns Heritage Centre project will comprise two key spaces:
- A modern cultural, arts, museum and education centre
 - Adjacent or integrated flexible space providing a key resource for events, performances, education and leisure activities as a cultural centre within the Hub and the town.
- 1.2.3 The New Towns Heritage Centre will include the relocation of the current museum depicting the history of Stevenage's pioneering role in leading the New Town movement and its context in the postmodern era. The content of the museum will build on the existing collection with the aim to exhibit the story of Stevenage in a new and dynamic way by creating interactive, exciting activities that attract families and visitors. The new facility will provide the opportunity to present and interact with heritage in a modern innovative way, whilst continuing to provide learning spaces for handling collections to meet the demand for schools and education providers. The facility has the potential to become a destination for a wide variety of audiences (nationally and internationally), including students researching urban planning, professionals and policy makers learning from the New Town impact, residents and visitors.

The flexible spaces available will be curated by Museum and Cultural teams to provide a key venue for the town's cultural activities which might for example include musical, film and other live performances, dancing classes, special interest talks and events, conferences, and meeting space to support the town's key public services and community support groups. Furthermore, with the library being co-located within the Hub, this enhances the opportunity to continue and

strengthen partnership working and broaden educational and community activity This facility aims to widen the cultural opportunities for performance within the town and simultaneously provide an event space, in conjunction with the proposed café, that can provide revenue to sustain the business model and support economic spend by driving footfall within the town centre. There is an exciting opportunity to capitalise on the growing national and international recognition of the importance of the New Towns movement, and the influence that New Towns and Garden Cities still have over 'good practice' in the field of Town Planning today, from community cohesion and creating a successful social fabric within sustainable neighbourhoods, to the role of design, architecture and art in creating vibrant and engaging places. The project team will work with key stakeholders to explore these opportunities and maximise the wider appeal of the facility.

1.2.4 A key focus will be linking the old and new aspects of Stevenage, exploring and curating culture and art of the period when Stevenage was first conceived and developed, showcasing the New Town & modernist movements and linking this to current ideas and developments emanating from within the town, such as inventions of global significance like the Mars Rover.

1.2.5 In addition, the project is included in a phase of SG1, a £350 million development scheme which covers two of the Major Opportunity Areas in the town (see Strategic Case for more detail). Accompanying the Hub is a new public space, Garden Square, which supports the development of 200 new homes on Plots F & G which lie to the rear of the Hub, the site of the facility.

1.2.7 Key activities will involve:

- Scoping series of engagement and consultation events to inform audience development plan
- Creation of audience development plan for the new facility
- Market engagement with commercial and cultural opportunities
- Design (RIBA 1-4) and appraisal of space size as part of the Hub design workstream
- Construction of a museum and cultural centre with a total minimum size of 750sqm.
- Relocation of the existing museum collection and the development of modern interactive and experiential displays for depicting the town's history.
- Development of 200 new mews style homes on Plots F & G as part of the SG1 scheme

1.3 Business Case Structure and Content

1.3.1 The full rationale for the project, covering the context, challenges to be address objectives and approach to delivery, are set out below under the following headings.

- Strategic Case
- Economic Case
- Financial Case
- Commercial Case
- Management Case

STRATEGIC CASE

2. STRATEGIC CASE

2.1 Introduction to the Strategic Case

2.1.1 This strategic case defines the scope of the project. It explains how the project will create the conditions for the development of the new facility and demonstrate the evidence of need in relation to the case for change.

2.2 Case for Change

Current Context, Challenges and Arrangements

Stevenage Central Framework

2.2.1 The Stevenage Central Framework published in 2015 identified the need for significant amounts of new employment space and residential development to make investment in upgraded retailing, food and beverage and other key town centre amenities viable and fit for the 21st century. The Stevenage Central Framework has defined the following major opportunity areas.

- Southgate Park
- Central West (Leisure Park)
- Park Place and Town Centre Gardens
- Stevenage Central Core
- Station Gateway
- Northgate
- Marshgate

The framework's core concepts are around connecting and developing the town centre to meet the needs of an ever growing population and creating opportunities for change whilst preserving and enhancing its unique features. The Stevenage Framework further stated our ambitions are to "create a vibrant town centre where people want to live, work and play".

In relation this project, the framework aspires to revive the cultural activity of the town centre by once again creating Stevenage as a destination town, utilising its unique heritage, green spaces and highly convenient and accessible transport links to harness leisure and cultural opportunity. Following the creation for the Stevenage Central Framework, these aspirations for Stevenage to be a cultural leader within Hertfordshire is captured within the cultural strategy, Stevenage Re-imagined. This strategy and action plan places an emphasis on linking the opportunities of regeneration to develop the environment for creative industries, leisure and cultural assets, and active community groups to thrive, resulting in a place creation and activity.

Regeneration Challenges and Priorities

2.2.1 Stevenage New Town was originally designed to serve a population of 60,000. The population already stood at 84,000 in 2011 and is forecast to increase to just under 93,000 by 2035 – growth of 50% of that of the original new town, yet there has been no increase in the size of

the town centre and growth of surrounding districts will have a significant influence on the town centre.

2.2.2 Meanwhile the economy of Stevenage has grown beyond the regional and national average over the past 15 years principally through expansion of knowledge-based industries and with the presence of an impressive array of world class businesses in life sciences, agri-tech, IT, advanced engineering and high value manufacturing. The area is fragmented with disjointed routes for walking and cycling. The town is currently 'cut off' from Gunnels Wood, now the largest employment site in Hertfordshire. Current challenges that need to be addressed can be summarised as follows.

- Town centres will have an important role to play in the post-Covid world. They now have to assume greater importance as employment and residential locations, focal points for community, social and recreation activity and as hubs for integrated transport.
- Significant investment in new infrastructure and buildings is needed to meet these conditions and to rectify the current shortcomings of Stevenage town centre.
- Leisure, culture and heritage are key to creating town centre's USP, and currently the number of cultural and leisure assets have reduced since its origin, and the remaining facilities do not provide the appropriate platform to project Stevenage as a cultural and leisure destination in to the 21st Century.

Although infrastructure and private sector investment are integral to the future of the town centre, the beating heart of rejuvenating the town centre as place must include creating Stevenage as a cultural destination and bring vibrancy and economic growth through activity; a core aspiration of this project.

Regeneration Proposals for the scheme

2.2.5 This project will aim to significantly enhance the attraction of Stevenage town centre by improving the cultural and wider quality of life offer. This will help ensure that the housing schemes currently under development will attract home buyers who are well qualified who can feed employment demand from proposed new offices and visitors with special interests. By so doing the project will enhance levels of spending in local retail, food and beverage and leisure activities, conducive in further investment in these facilities.

Progress to Date in Delivering the Stevenage Central Framework

2.2.7 An early start has been made in delivering the objectives of the Stevenage Central Framework with a number of key building blocks already in place to accelerate transformation and new development.

- A development agreement has been signed with Mace as a private sector development partner, enabling fast track approaches to be new development and construction.
- In addition to SBC's initiation of the SG1 and Queensway, a number of private sector developments have already been completed including Park Place, Vista Tower and Skyline, creating just under 500 new residential units.

- A number of redevelopment sites in the central core, northern and southern gateway major opportunity areas, pivotal to kick starting transformation, have been acquired. Preliminary enabling works are either underway or are scheduled.
- Selected preliminary public realm improvements are currently being implemented or are programmed around key sites with a view to building investment confidence amongst developers and future occupiers and promoting high quality development outcomes.
- Completion of the North Block project, utilising unused second floor space and converting this into a flexible co-working facility facing directly onto the historic town square.
- Construction of a new bus interchange on a new site alongside the station has been approved for funding and construction has now started. This has released a major development site which provides a major catalyst for transformation of the town centre. The new bus interchange, the transformation of Stevenage station and the addition of a 5th platform are the first building blocks towards creating a sustainable transport hub for road, rail, cycling and walking, which will be completed by the first phase of the Station Gateway project, which also forms part of the Town Investment Plan.

Evidence of Need

2.2.8 The project addresses 2 of the challenges set out in the Town Investment Plan.

- *Challenge 1: Ageing Infrastructure – Urban Disconnections and a Brake on Growth: Investment in our town’s infrastructure has not kept pace with the growth of our population and economy. Our town’s facilities and infrastructure are all ageing at the same time; our transport infrastructure, station shopping centre, sports centre and theatre are reaching the end of their realistic economic life... Without comprehensive regeneration and significant investment the town centre will not be resilient to future challenges.*
- *Challenge 2: Bridging the Skills Gap and Raising Aspirations - Stevenage has one of the lowest levels of A level grades and Apprenticeship achievement in Hertfordshire. We have a real mismatch between the medium and high value jobs available and jobs taken by local residents. Residents travel out of town, to earn less than the jobs available locally ... simply because they lack the skills and qualifications to obtain them. Average earnings are significantly below the regional average and there is a growing disconnect between the town’s businesses and residents. Resident-based skills and occupations evidence highlights:*
 - *lower levels of higher order skills and occupations among Stevenage’s resident working-age population;*
 - *significantly higher proportions of lower level skills and lower order occupations locally. The table opposite highlights the differentials;*
 - *54% of Stevenage jobs are taken by in-commuters, and the majority of the high value employment opportunities are taken by people from outside the area.*
- *Challenge 3: Town Centre Transformation: Stevenage needs to create the conditions for investment in the town centre. It needs a diversity of uses that generate footfall and*

activity throughout the day and into the evening, a programme to upskill and support local residents, enabling them to capitalise on opportunities created by local businesses. The town centre needs investment, funded through public and private partnerships, to ensure its resilience and regenerate facilities for local residents. With this investment, the town centre will deliver wider growth and productivity by providing quality workspaces, improving recruitment and retention, and helping the local population to share in these opportunities.

Addressing Conditions in the Post Covid-19 Era

2.2.9 The COVID-19 pandemic has led to many changes to how people use and visit high streets and as mentioned above, town centres will have an important role to play in the post-Covid world. They now have to assume greater importance as employment and residential locations, focal points for community, social and recreation activity and as hubs for integrated transport.

Implications for Town Centres Post Covid

2.2.10 These raise a lot of questions for the future of city centres, especially with the permanent closure of many businesses on high streets. 57 of 264 stores in Oxford Street have permanently closed since the start of the pandemic and major landlords are receiving only half of their usual income from renting out commercial spaces. Research from KPMG says that that it is clear things won't return to the way things were before the pandemic. With the reduction in commuter footfall and reduction in commercial rent, city centres may now have to consider serving their inhabitants in a different way. Suggestions in the KPMG report include setting up community facilities with focuses ranging from children's recreation to adult art courses and that residential property is also said to play a key role in the revitalisation of city and town centres. This project could go a long way towards addressing this role

New Concepts Being Planned for Revitalisation and Diversification of Town Centres

2.2.11 Hybrid and remote-working will create a new set of benefits but also challenges to local economies with its wide-spread adoption. Research by Legal and General and Demos showed that the new working model will provide opportunities for parts of the country such as rural areas and neighbourhoods that were previously ignored. The survey identified the following factors as being more important to between 50% and 70% individuals if working from home:

- Access to fresh air
- Good local shops
- Faster reliable Internet access
- Supportive communities and pleasant streets
- Places to go out
- Premises to support local jobs
- Housing that meets needs
- Exercise and sports facilities
- Good transport services

2.2.12 In his article on the same report for The Times, Gurpreet Narwan states that: "The findings underscore the need for thriving local high streets, which could require a rethink of town planning. It presents a challenge to the concept of high population density urban

accommodation. The report called for a renewed focus on “15-minute neighbourhoods”, with places close by to meet and work, as well as outdoor public spaces for leisure and recreation.”

2.2.13 the above mentioned ‘15 minute cities’ concept was developed by Carlos Moreno, scientific director and professor specialising in complex systems at University of Paris Panthéon-Sorbonne, who believes that city-life as we knew it before the pandemic won’t make a return. Instead, he proposes the creation of cities where everything an individual needs can be reached within a quarter of an hour by foot or by bike. In an article on BBC Worklife, the 15 minute city is quoted as requiring minimal travel between housing, offices, restaurants, parks, hospitals and cultural venues. Each neighbourhood is also quoted as needing to fulfil six functions: living, working, supplying, caring, learning and enjoying. The concept has proved popular, with Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo putting it at the centre of her successful 2020 re-election bid and hiring a commissioner to make the concept a reality. Certainly, the proposed new heritage museum and flexible leisure space will boost the 15 minute concept for a large proportion of the town’s residents.

Future Needs

2.2.14 The purpose of the Stevenage Central Framework and subsequent Town Investment plan for Stevenage town centre is to create a town centre for the 21st century. To do this, Stevenage Borough Council is seeking to achieve lasting regeneration through the development of offices, homes and leisure amenities within the town centre which will attract a broad range of workers to live there and be encouraged to take up employment opportunities nearby.

2.2.15 To deliver on the aims of the Regeneration Framework, 3000 homes are due to be completed within the town centre. By 2030, the numbers of people living within the town centre will rise from a 300 in 2015 to 7000. The aim is to create a sustainable community that avoids the need to travel long distances to work and to reduce use of the car for commuting, shopping and leisure visits as far as possible.

2.2.16 In addition to sustainability objectives, the current pandemic has emphasised the need for more self-sufficiency in local areas. Ideally, most needs would be met within about 15 minutes’ walk (a fundamental tenet of the original Stevenage development concept). In addition, there is a need to reduce dependence on crowded trains and buses if possible, to reduce infection risks.

2.2.17 To make this work and to achieve the above aims all of the necessary elements need to be in place to attract well qualified residents to the town. Without a strong cultural offer Stevenage town centre will remain relatively unattractive to the types of workers the town needs to attract to work in such developments such as the new Bioscience Centre and the high-quality offices that will soon be developed in the town centre.

2.2.18 This project addresses this need. Along with new employment opportunities, a proposed new sports and leisure centre, an improved town centre environment and food and beverage outlets, the heritage centre with its museum and the proposed flexible leisure space will be key building blocks in enhancing the attraction of the types of residents that Stevenage needs.

Barriers and Market Failures

2.2.19 Stevenage Borough council has for many years operated a museum with a collection depicting the town’s origin and post-modern development philosophy. Whilst this may be of interest to

audiences such as students and town planning professionals, in today's environment it does not go far enough to appeal to a wide enough set of audiences, mostly due to the facility current physical space restricting its ability to do so, flexibility and expansion for the audience, and poor location for passing footfall. A more exciting visitor attraction comprised of an expanded collection interpreted with the use of new technologies will create an exciting and interactive learning experience for attendees, one that is accessibly placed in a prime location in the heart of the town centre. This is not a service that is readily delivered by the private sector as it is not driven by profit criteria and for that reason public sector involvement is necessary.

Opportunities

2.2.20 Through the evidence an analysis for the Town Investment plan, it was acknowledged the need for culture and leisure to be a key element in the town's transformation. This developed one of the five key values of the plan to rejuvenate Stevenage in the 21st Century New Town: 'reflecting and reinterpreting our new town heritage for future generations'.

The project will address 2 of the five major opportunities defined in the Town Investment Plan.

- *Opportunity 3: The Untapped Potential of Stevenage's People. Our town was built by our people and their pioneering spirit. With help, today's generation can dream higher. Our town's global industries provide that opportunity. Our Town Deal will give our people the skills and inspiration to play their part in building the next chapter in Stevenage's story. The opportunity to raise skill levels so that our residents can access the great opportunities our international businesses offer, all point to huge untapped potential. Stevenage will always be the UK's first New Town, and as such, a unique part of our country's social history. Whilst we are proud of our identity, it is a story largely unknown to the rest of the world. There is an opportunity now to learn from our country's New Towns, their mistakes and successes and apply this to 21st century planning and urban development. The first phase of our Town Centre redevelopment has shown the clear interest that exists for this period of our history. Our Cultural Strategy reflects this and our ambition for a new future. By expanding accessibility to Stevenage's rich heritage, arts and culture more people can be engaged and encouraged to take up further learning, raising their motivation, confidence and aspirations. Moreover, Stevenage will be celebrated as a cultural destination which will drive greater economic growth and well-being.*

- *Opportunity 4: Building Wealth and Reclaiming Expenditure. was founded on a vision to create a new utopian way of life for its residents. Its town centre had the country's first pedestrianised town centre. This was revolutionary and cutting edge at the time is now dated, and its concrete structures have not aged well. This has driven shoppers away, and with them the retail expenditure that can underpin and sustain a vibrant and exciting town centre. The town centre has increasing numbers of vacant uses, an over-representation of discount retailers and an offer that lacks diversity when compared to neighbouring towns such as Hitchin, St Albans, and Milton Keynes. Even pre Covid, the town centre had a very limited evening economy and a lack of town centre residential and employment opportunities. For our town centre to thrive we need to build wealth and reclaim the expenditure that is being lost from the town. We need to secure footfall and investment, improve rents and investment yield to enhance capital values and therefore viability. Confidence lies at the root of this, and the delivery of developments such as SG1 and Queensway are critical to achieving this. Our town centre has always relied too heavily on its retail function. These developments and the*

follow-on Station Gateway and around the Garden Square will diversify the town centre, bring new residential and new businesses right into the heart of the town centre, bringing footfall, expenditure and with it a better and wider range of uses and occupiers.

2.3 Policy Alignment

National Policy Alignment

2.3.1 Arts Council England Strategy 2020-30: Key Outcomes

➤ Creative People

Stevenage Museum will build on its extensive experience and strong, growing relationships with artists through the Arts & Heritage Forum to implement innovative, creative approaches, including the use of new technologies, which will enable it to reach new audiences and inspire higher levels of learning and creativity. With an opportunity to reimagine its galleries and programming, the museum and other creative professionals will co-create with marginalised communities and youth in particular to nurture skills, confidence, creativity, and critical thinking to ensure that everyone has access to creativity and cultural sector career paths.

➤ Cultural Communities

The new museum and hub facility will produce greater outcomes through a higher-quality, accessible facility that enables a more innovative, collaborative, and attractive offer. This project aligns with Arts Council's prioritisation of cultural services that can work across local government, public, and VCSE services/agendas and take a community-led approach in order to reach more people and deliver greater outcomes, such as improved social cohesion, wellbeing, and local economies.

➤ A Creative & Cultural Country

Building on the museum's strong track-record of working with and nurturing artists, flexible spaces within the hub will also provide opportunities for collaborations with creative industries to realise creative and business innovations, which will boost local skills and economies. The reimagined museum, with greater capacity and profile for working across the museum sector, will support more international partnerships for knowledge-sharing, co-investment, and trading opportunities, including research, dialogue and collections sharing amongst museums (especially with new town partners).

2.3.2 Heritage Fund Strategic Funding Framework 2019-24: Strategic Objectives

➤ Continue to bring heritage into better condition

The Museum currently suffers from high risk of flooding, having already suffered heavy damages and loss of its collection and archives in 2016. A new facility with high building specifications, including environmental controls, will ensure the Museum's collection, archives, and assets are protected. It will also enable it to look after other touring collections, which will also in turn generate other community learning and sector partnership benefits.

- Inspire people to value heritage more

A purpose-built facility with new permanent and temporary galleries as well as other creative spaces provides an opportunity for innovation, creativity, and risk-taking in its approach to engaging with community participants and audiences through the co-creation of its collections, displays, and programmes. This will support a more engaging, accessible, inclusive, and relevant offer that enhances heritage learning and appreciation.

- Ensure that heritage is inclusive

Building on Stevenage Museum's experience working with marginalised communities, new exhibitions and programmes will be co-created with communities to ensure that communities are better included and represented by the museum's collections/stories. More people will therefore be involved in heritage.

- Support the organisations we fund to be more robust

A relocated and revitalized museum will enable increased partnership working and audience reach for greater outcomes and will generate increased opportunities to leverage funding and improve enterprising commercial operations through improved amenities such as its gift shop. This will increase organisational capacity and resilience for future sustainability.

- Demonstrate how heritage helps people and places to thrive

A more accessible, attractive, and engaging museum will enable greater audience reach in order to improve learning, creativity, confidence, skills development, and community cohesiveness. It will also help to reprofile Stevenage, which unfairly suffers from negative perceptions, which will further augment wellbeing outcomes through improved pride of place.

- Grow the contribution that heritage makes to the UK economy

A growing body of evidence demonstrates the huge impact that museums and galleries can create for economies. A redeveloped museum within will help reprofile Stevenage as a cultural destination through an iconic building design with cutting-edge spaces as well as its increased capacity to elevate the importance of new town heritage. This will help reach more people to build knowledge and skills as well as generate greater footfall for Stevenage and other new town partners, which will in turn boost surrounding high streets and support economic improvement and growth.

Town Centre Initiatives (Grimsey Reviews)

- 2.3.3 Following the Grimsey Review 1 and 2 high streets and town centres were beginning the transition to reverse the impact of the digital age on shopping and how at town centres could be. In light of Covid 19, the underlying issues highlighted in the reviews remain, but are greatly exacerbated. These include the such as the need to diversify uses, the need to encourage night time economies, drive footfall and create experiential shopping and spaces within your town. This project is a key in accentuating and celebrating the heritage and cultural assets that the town currently has to offer, but also physically placing culture, art, heritage and education in the centre of the town directly diversifying what is predominantly retail precinct. This project is part

of the broader programme of interventions that aligns with this vision for the future of towns, as social space, integral spaces but most important diverse and green spaces with quality modern facilities.

Sub-regional Policy Alignment

2.3.4 Stevenage's Arts & Heritage (Cultural) Strategy, Stevenage Re-imagined

- *CS aim no. 6. Relocate and revitalise the Stevenage Borough Museum to widen access and increase footfall and create the First New Town Museum as a unique selling point (USP).*

The relocation of a new museum within the future Hub building will create a more central and accessible facility, which will greatly increase its reach and inclusivity for new participants and audiences. A contemporary, purpose-built facility with reinvigorated operations and programming will contribute to place making, particularly through an increased focus on its seminal role within new town history with enhanced links and collaborations between new town partners.

- *CS aim no. 8: Support development of new focused Arts and Health initiatives and programmes (supporting the Borough Plan for Health and Well-Being*

The hub building will relocate the museum within a shared, purpose-built facility designed to maximise opportunities for collaboration. This will reposition the Museum to work closely with health and other public and VCSE sectors and services to initiate cross cutting programming, with a special emphasis on culture and health programmes, which build on foundational work, initiated through the Cultural Strategy and Healthy Stevenage Strategy and explore emerging social prescribing trends.

- *CS aim no. 9: Deliver the Cultural Education Challenge by supporting and enabling cultural opportunities for all children and young people*

A purpose-built facility will provide new creative and learning spaces that will enhance the museum's ability to undertake high-quality, innovative approaches to engaging with young people and schools, particularly through the use of new technologies. This will build on a foundation of work initiated through the Cultural Strategy and the Hertfordshire Cultural Education Partnership, in which the museum is the lead cultural organisation in Stevenage, working with cultural providers and schools to improve connections and cultural provision for young people.

- *CS aim no. 2: Facilitate new creative spaces for artists (studios), musicians (practice rooms/recording facilities) and creative/digital industry SMEs to build the local pool of artists, practitioners and creatives & CS aim no. 10: Create a Borough-wide Arts and Heritage Forum to act as a platform for communication and cultural advocacy, encompassing professional, amateur and community sectors*

With the development of the core Arts & Heritage Forum partnership between Stevenage Museum, SBC, and Junction 7 Creatives CIC, the Hub will offer a shared facility with permanent and flexible spaces for the aforementioned partners as well as other emerging organisations and talent. This will build a more cohesive partnership and community, with

opportunities for shared resources and learning, skills development, and innovative programming.

Hertfordshire Covid Recovery Plan

2.3.5 Stevenage has a pivotal role to play in the delivering the Recovery Plan for Hertfordshire. Its current regeneration strategy and Town Fund projects directly address the plan's two transformational programmes:

- equipping Hertfordshire's places for mid-21st Century living supporting town centres and town-level economies.
- connecting Hertfordshire for mid-21st Century living and working building digital connectivity.

Hertfordshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan

2.3.6 The project addresses each of the following priority within the current Hertfordshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan.

Priority 3: Reinvigorating our places for the 21st-century. The strategy calls for high-density solutions recognising particular opportunities linked to railway hubs and transforming town centres into vibrant lively urban hubs underpinned by new models of living and working. The Stevenage Central Framework and this scheme align closely with this approach. This will be directly addressed by this project, by bringing place arts, culture and heritage in the heart of the town centre.

Local Industrial Strategy Grand Challenges

2.3.7 Grand Challenges for Hertfordshire highlights the importance of better facilities for cycling and walking and improved access to recreational activities will be conducive to helping the increasing numbers of older people to stay active, productive and independent.

Local Policy Alignment

2.3.8 Stevenage Local Plan 2019-2031. This was adopted in 2019 following Examination in Public and sets the overall spatial vision for the borough and growth direction to 2031. In total 7,600 homes are planned, 3,000 of these targeted for a regenerated Town Centre.

2.3.9 Stevenage Central Framework. This was prepared in 2015 to set a direction of change for the regeneration of Stevenage Town Centre. Now supported by the Local Plan, the Framework sets out a strategy for accelerated employment and housing provision on a large scale in the town centre to meet the demands of significant population growth and revitalised and enhanced and modernised amenities to service it.

2.4 Vision and Objectives

Vision

2.4.1 A highly attractive cultural offer inducing well qualified residents to move into Stevenage whilst enriching the learning experiences and raising the aspirations of local residents in general.

2.4.2 SMART Objectives Related to the Project

- 1) To complete construction of the New Town Heritage Centre of a minimum 550 sqm including a state of the art museum, and 200sqm for flexible culture and leisure purposes by Q4 2025/26.
- 2) Establish the new museum operation, fully fitted out with innovative interactive displays depicting and interpreting Stevenage’s past history, development philosophy and current achievements leading to a measurable 50% increase in museum attendees in Stevenage by Q4 2026/27.
- 3) To integrate the facility into the new civic Hub development so that public and relevant community services can take full advantage of the available facilities and vice versa.
- 4) To bring about the successful completion of 200 new homes in plots F & G and broader regeneration by Q4 2026/7.
- 5) To accelerate the take up of newly developed homes as a result of this enhanced lifestyle offer.

Measures of Success

2.4.2 Successes to be measured and the method of measurement each of element of the project are summarised below.

Project	Successes to be Measured	Method of Measurement
Heritage Museum with Culture Spaces	Completion on time and to budget	Project and Programme Management (see Management Case)
	Numbers of persons attending cultural attractions and events in Stevenage town centre to increase by 50% by 2027	Analysis of statistics on visitor numbers
	Number of jobs created	Assessment of new roles creation when facility is opened
	Number of co-located public facilities in to one building	Successful consolidation of facilities on opening of the Hub facility
New housing	Completion on time and to budget	Project monitoring
	All units successfully built and sold by 2027	Monitoring of home sales in conjunction with developer

2.5 The Proposed Investment

Options Considered

2.5.1 The Do nothing and Do minimum options considered in the first instance to deliver the solutions to meet the above objectives were:

- a) Do nothing: No new museum or new cultural and leisure space
- b) Do minimum: Carry out some basic improvements to the existing museum including some updates to the overall Stevenage story. No additional culture and leisure space.

2.5.2 A full list of the options considered is set out in Section 3 along with the criteria adopted in shortlisting them.

Preferred Option

2.5.3 The preferred option is to develop a museum with a minimum 550 square metres with state of the art, innovative interactive displays and go ahead with the development of a minimum 200 sqm of flexible culture and leisure space, plus to bring forward a development of 200 homes.

Project Risks, Constraints, and Interdependencies

2.5.4 Risks have been set out in the Register below, which is based on a 5x5 matrix indicating the exposure to risk, which is defined as the relationship between the likelihood of the risk occurring and its impact. Plotting the likelihood and Impact Scores assigned on the risk matrix will result in a risk level of between 1 and 25 and a colour code from Blue (insignificant) to Red (major) set out in the diagram below.

Risk matrix

		LIKELIHOOD				
		Rare (1)	Unlikely (2)	Possible (3)	Likely (4)	Almost Certain (5)
IMPACT	Major (5)	5	10	15	20	25
	Significant (4)	4	8	12	16	20
	Moderate (3)	3	6	9	12	15
	Minor (2)	2	4	6	8	10
	Insignificant (1)	1	2	3	4	5

Stevenage National New Town's Heritage Centre: Project Risk Register

Risk Register L: Likelihood; I: Impact; T: Total

Ref.	Risk	Triggers	Consequences	Controls	Risk Score			Contingency	Responsible Person	Date: Added/ Updated
					L	I	T			
001	Covid-19 Outbreak and possible introduction of lockdown measures	Negative changes to working practices through social distancing. Uneconomical for construction supply train to operate. Added delays due to drop in output levels through covid	Shortfalls in manufacturing capacity causing price inflation. Project delay by significant social distancing measures. Negative Change in payment practices.	The need to implement practices to ensure safety. Client, consultants, and contractors work together to agree common solutions. Innovative approaches to procurement are in place. Allow for time extension in contracts. Monitor financial resilience of supply chains.	4	4	16 R	Scenario planning to assess the impact of the closedown and reduced output levels and advise clients accordingly to ensure timely completion. Bring in additional temporary labour. Review planning conditions and seek changes where possible to enable sites to operate in shifts over longer working hours. Manage cash flow.		
002	Construction labour shortages create delays	Conclusion of contracts with building contractors for public realm and site redevelopment EU restrictions (Brexit) on contractors and independent consultants	Delays to completion of both due to recruitment difficulties for contractors and consultants, Cost overruns	Appropriate and timely contractual arrangements	4	5	20 R	In development agreement commitment to bring in additional temporary labour to ensure projects are completed on time.		

003	Labour shortages in freight transport and supply industries delay construction progress	Construction progress reports noting failure to progress on schedule. National shortfall in haulage capacity	Delays to completion of project due to shortages of materials and components. Cost overruns	Contractual arrangements	5	5	25 R	In development agreement incorporates commitment to build up advanced stocks of materials. Build in sufficient contingency time in delivery programme to address possible delays.		
004	Development of the Heritage Centre constrained by unknown site conditions.	Physical obstructions. Physical conditions. Asbestos removal issues.	Need to change working methods. Revision of the design. Delays in delivering the development. Cost escalation.	Clear and appropriate description of works in technical documents. Clearly defined scope of works e.g. contractor's design obligations and buildability obligations	2	4	8 Y	Contractual provisions to manage unforeseen site conditions e.g. physical obstructions or physical conditions.		
005	Climate changes and weather conditions	Unusually harsh weather conditions. Impact of unusually harsh weather conditions on aspects of project	Bad weather retards progress of the construction programme or parts of the construction programme	Regular progress reviews. Timely communication	3	4	12 O	Build in sufficient slack in the programme to cover for unforeseen eventualities such as weather		
006	The construction cost exceeds the limit for the project or other issues arising during the design & development phase	Capital & revenue overspends. Inadequate project management. Failure to resolve conflicting priorities. Robust financial systems are not established.	Impact on capital programme. Revenue overspends. Requirements to make compensatory savings to balance budget. Increased legal fees. Reputational damage.	Client management relationship. Rigorous and well-informed project monitoring reports. Effective communication. Appointment of key personnel.	3	4	12 O	Appointment of a B&D contractor in a two-stage process with a caveat to end the contract after the first stage should the Council wish to make that decision (PCSA - Pre-Construction Service Agreement). A cost consultant will be involved from an early stage of the project to ensure contractor's proposals are realistic and within budget.		

007	Failure to achieve planning approval	Notification of Council decision	Major delay to completion. and project interdependencies.	Planning approval has been expedited and is well advanced. Through consultation, scope of objections well understood.	1	5	5 Y	Close cooperation with Planning.		
008	Constrained nature of the site limits both the volume of building which can be accommodated, the range of uses and how the buildings are organised on site.	Funding restricted / stopped. Poor management decisions. Failures in contractor / partnership working. Poor project management. Poor planning	Project delays/overruns. Reputational damage. Cost overruns. Public dissatisfaction. Discouragement of future partnerships. Delay, impact on service delivery.	Regular meetings with designers / contractors. Effective procurement strategy. Post contract reviews. Regular and timely meetings with planning. Robust project management.	3	3	9 Y	Close cooperation with Planning.		
010	Dissatisfaction of local residents with proposed content and/or design of the new heritage centre	Publication of outline and detailed designs	Likely delays to construction if design changes are needed	Comprehensive consultation programme to be maintained particularly at early stage to capture preferences from local residents.	2	5	10 Y	Market Research and focus groups to provide ample evidence of what the public expect from the new Heritage Centre and leisure space. Extend process to enable preliminary designs to be market tested with the public.		

Description of the Project

Purpose and Key Elements of the Project

2.5.5 The purpose of this project is to bring a combination of heritage interpretation, culture and education uses together onto one site, integrating with local public and community services within the new Civic Hub so that:

- a) Visitor numbers in the town centre will grow thereby increasing patronage of and in the longer term more investment in good quality retail, food and beverage outlets and leisure amenities.
- b) An increase in younger people engaged in learning activities is conducive to higher levels of motivation and aspiration; a more accessible asset that has a broader appeal, especially for hard to reach groups
- c) Major synergies and cost efficiencies will be achieved by co-locating these activities; this supports providing value for money for the capital build of the project, as well as providing a more sustainable operational business model
- d) Stevenage can become more attractive to a broader range of people considering moving to and working in Stevenage due to the creation of a stronger culture offer.
- e) A broader range of visitors will utilise the multi-purpose space
- f) Part of an enhanced, integrated cultural offer within the town centre, including a new experience-based 'Garden Square', pop-up event space, and more diverse town centre events spaces

2.5.6 Key elements of the project are:

- A new and upgraded museum with a minimum space of 550 sqm with the potential to become a destination for a wide variety of audiences (nationally and internationally), including school children, local residents, students researching urban planning, professionals and policy makers learning from the New Town impact, residents and tourist visitors. A key focus will be linking the old and new aspects of Stevenage, exploring culture and art of the period when Stevenage was first conceived and developed, showcasing the New Town & modernist movements and linking this to current ideas and developments emanating from within the town, such as innovations in construction methods and local inventions of global significance such as the Mars Rover.
- A 200sqm adjacent flexible space culture and leisure space to provide a key venue for the town's cultural events and leisure activities. These might include musical and other live performances, dancing classes, film, special interest talks and events, conferences, and meeting spaces to support the town's key public services and community support groups.
- The construction of 200 high quality residential units on adjacent building plots Plot F and G.

Key Project Activities

2.5.7 Project activities will include:

- Scoping series of engagement and consultation events to inform audience development plan
- Creation of audience development plan for the new facility
- Market engagement with commercial and cultural opportunities
- Design (RIBA 1- 4) and appraisal of space size as part of the Hub design work stream

- Construction of a museum and cultural centre with a minimum size of 750sqm
- Relocation of the existing museum collection and the development of modern interactive and experiential displays for depicting the town’s history.
- Development of 200 new mews style homes on Plots F & G as part of the SG1 scheme

Development Scheme

2.5.8 Currently there are a range of options for the size for the museum and flexible culture and leisure spaces. In Appendix I produced by architects Bennetts Associates, there are 5 options that have been explored as part of the feasibility study for the site. The appraisal and further design of these spaces are part of the Design and Development work stream for the Hub. The minimum space suggested at this stage is stated below.

Floor space areas:

Use	Sqm
New museum	550
Flexible culture and leisure space	200
TOTAL	750

How the Project Addresses the Objectives and Vision

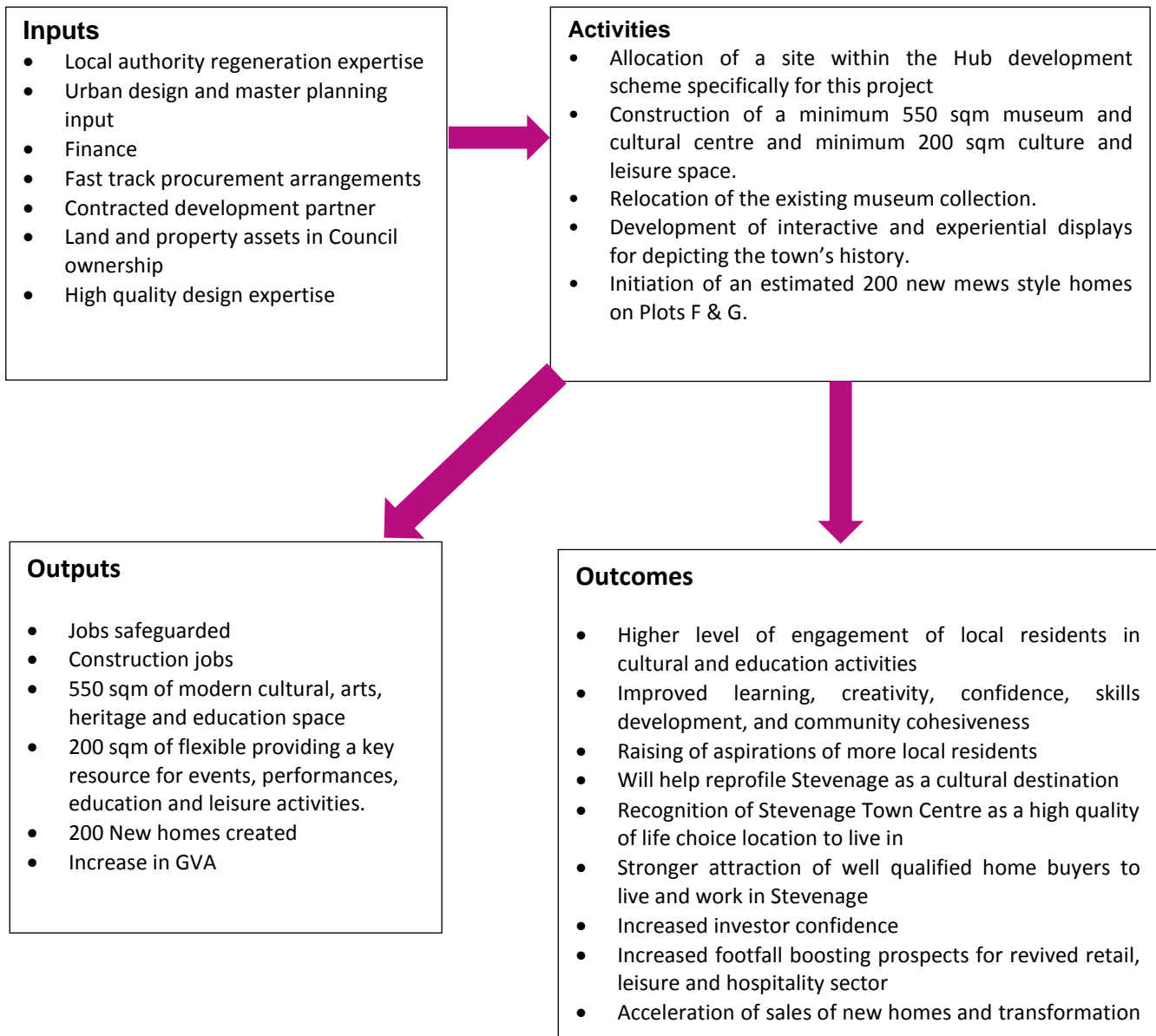
2.5.9 The vision and objectives will be addressed as a result of the following outcomes.

2.5.10 By creating a high-quality museum and dedicated culture and leisure space, the project would significantly enhance the cultural offer of the town centre leading to higher visitor numbers, levels of participation in learning, cultural activities and events. Learning opportunities, particularly for young people would be enhanced, helping to raise aspirations.

2.5.11 Higher visitor numbers would increase footfall and spending in the town conducive to higher levels of investment in retail, food and beverage and level and leisure amenities. An enhanced cultural offer and higher quality outlets in the town centre would attract more well qualified people to live in Stevenage and in so doing it would accelerate the sales and build out of planned residential developments.

Project Theory of Change

2.5.10 The following logic model explains the theory of change.



Expected Outputs and Outcomes

2.5.11 Quantified Outputs

Summary of Outputs

Jobs Created	3
Museum, Arts, Cultural, Education Floorspace Developed sqm	550
Flexible Leisure Floorspace Developed sqm	200
Total New Floorspace	750
Net Increase in Heritage museum and flexible leisure space sqm	200
Additional homes brought forward	200
Additional GVA Generated per Annum	£1,269,914
Number of public facilities collocated	3

2.5.12 Wider Outcomes and Benefits

Economic

- High quality culture and leisure facilities will attract a wider range of new residents to the area, providing a good choice of high-quality workers to the advanced high value industries Stevenage is seeking to attract.
- This should increase demand for high quality commercial space in the town centre.
- Expanded demand will help assure long term commercial viability of the centre.
- More people will visit the town centre increasing demand for retail and food and beverage facilities and thereby investment in these facilities.
- Higher profile generated by the new museum and cultural centre
- Acceleration of the redevelopment of key housing sites in the town centre.
- Improved town centre environment.
- Stronger perception of Stevenage as a place to invest.

Environmental

- Enhanced scope for living and working in the town centre, thereby reducing the need to travel.
- Cleaner air and healthier lifestyles.

Social

- Meets anticipated demand from population growth.
- Broadens scope for engaging more people in cultural activities and for raising aspirations.

Expected Different Impacts by Protected Characteristics and/or Income Groups

2.5.13 No adverse effects are identified. A full EQIA has been produced.

2.6 Stakeholders

Approach to Wider Stakeholder Engagement

2.6.1 In a wider context, stakeholders' views have been captured through the Stevenage engagement programme, encompassing a number of mechanisms.

Local Residents

- A wide range of digital engagement utilising social media other related platforms
- A dedicated Visitor Centre in Town Square open to the public, where people could view, engage with and discuss the regeneration of the town.
- A 'virtual visitor centre', which contains all of the content in a digital platform on our dedicated website; this has enabled the Council to continue to reach residents of all ages and abilities during the pandemic.
- Stevenage residents' survey

Currently engagement is focused on the consultation and promotion of the Council's priority projects.

Business

- Business networking events, a number of project based consultations, such as the Local Plan, SG1, and the Bus Interchange and a number of roadshow events.

Other Stakeholders

- Regular consultation with public sector bodies such as Hertfordshire County Council, the LEP and relevant statutory bodies
- Project specific consultation as part of the planning process

2.6.2 The key themes that have emerged from residents, business and community groups are:

- Create inclusive accessible transport
- Create great spaces to live in and socialise
- Create a vibrant town centre offer that is a destination for all
- Create aspiring communities and opportunities that create a lasting legacy. events through to a wide range of digital engagement utilising social media other related platforms.

Summary of Stakeholder Viewpoint of the Project and how it has influenced the Strategic Case

2.6.4 In preparation for the business case a series of engagement consultation sessions were held to understand what community stakeholders with a vested interest in Stevenage Museum, value about the current museum and the guiding principles that should be taken forward for the new facility. A wide range of stakeholders attended one of three focus groups in November 2021 including regular visitors, volunteers, public sector and community partners, business owners and other leading organisations. The focus groups discussed:

- Current and future audiences
- Barriers to engagement
- The current museum – what works and what does not
- The new facility
- Potential ways of working together
- Physical infrastructure
- The most important elements to take forward

The full findings of these meetings can be viewed in Appendix II, however the essence of the findings are that the new facilities should be:

“A community asset based on the ground floor of the new building, with additional staff and resources to tell the story of Stevenage contextualised by the story New Towns. The community stakeholders want the spaces to be interactive, co-created, developed and delivery in collaboration with the local community and embodying the pioneering spirit of Stevenage.”

‘The heart of a town lies in its people’ is the motto on Stevenage’s coat of arms; a phrase that was recounted a number of times in the consultation as the guiding principle for how Stevenage Museum is currently delivered and how it should be delivered in its new home in the centre of its town.

Appendix II is the report produced by Claire Alder, Heritage consultant, who was the vacillator for the workshops which captures the aspirations of the attendees of what works well at the current facility and what the space should aspire to look like in the new facility.

Following three formal Committee meetings, an informal meeting and two site visits to other arts centre/museums at Colchester and Milton Keynes the Committee have suggested the following draft recommendations and split them into 5 main key areas of (i) curation and arts programme linked to community engagement and governance; (ii) virtual museums and digital technology linked to the concept of museums without walls; (iii) the building design features linked to the use of technology in the building; (iv) the commercial activity/funding/cost point for entry and (v) developing a hub and spoke approach for arts & historical heritage across the town. Further detail can be reviewed in Appendix IV. These recommendations draw direct parallels with what the consultation session highlighted through their discussions too.

Echoing the sentiment from both of these reports, it is integral that the community are key part in developing what activate and events are held within the facility, and therefore a series of engagement and consultation sessions will be held to inform the audience development plan which will shape the content of the new facilities and its spaces. Further detail about stakeholder engagement can be viewed in the Management case section of this business case.

2.6.6 Key stakeholders and their role or interest in the project are listed below.

Project	Stakeholders	Comment
New Heritage Museum and Flexible Leisure Space	Council regeneration team	Impact on the success of parallel town centre regeneration initiatives.
	Local residents’ groups	Range of activities and facilities to be made accessible in the new centre
	Arts Council, Heritage Fund and related bodies	Scope for promoting take up of heritage appreciation. cultural and education, wellbeing and aspiration raising activities.

ECONOMIC CASE

3. ECONOMIC CASE

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This economic case defines the benefits from the scheme identified and how they will have come about, the geographical scale of the benefits by way of a place-based analysis and how the how benefits estimated link to the theory of change and strategic case set out above. Quantified benefits have been calculated and an assessment made of non-quantifiable benefits. The economic case indicates which benefits have been monetized and how these will be generated year by year. Factors such as additionality, deadweight and displacement of benefits and double counting have been considered as have distributional impacts.

3.2 Approach to the Economic Case

Options Initially Considered

3.2.1 In the first instance, the following long list of options was considered for addressing the opportunities and constraints described above.

- Do nothing; No new museum or new cultural and leisure space.
- Do minimum. Carry out some basic improvements to the existing museum including some updates to the overall Stevenage story. No additional culture and leisure space.
- Develop a museum space of 830 square metres with state of the art, innovative interactive displays but no additional culture and leisure space.
- Develop a museum space of 550 square metres with is state of the art, innovative interactive displays but no additional culture and leisure space.
- Develop 200 sqm culture and leisure space only.
- Develop a museum space of 550 square metres with state of the art, innovative interactive displays and go ahead with the development of 200 sqm of culture and leisure space.

3.2.2 The following options were not shortlisted for the reasons stated.

- *Develop a museum space of 830 square metres with state of the art, innovative interactive displays but no additional culture and leisure space.*

The new facility could be beneficial in stimulating learning and new aspirations via a substantial museum. A larger museum facility, reliant almost entirely on public funding could be riskier than the smaller option considered. There would be no enhancement to the town centre's cultural offer and associated increase in footfall and spending in the town centre.

- Develop 200 sqm culture and leisure space only.

This would significantly enhance the cultural and leisure offer of the town centre but would lack profile and momentum without the Heritage Centre and its museums. Children and young people would benefit less due to a reliance on an outdated museum facility.

How Project Options Were Shortlisted

3.2.2 The following criteria have been adopted in shortlisting options. Projects must be able to:

- Align with Stevenage Town Investment Plan strategic objectives
- Provide a positive local economic impact
- Address the stated objectives of and benefits sought from the project and those of associated strategic policies
- Be delivered within the spend window month timescale.
- Significantly accelerate delivery of the Stevenage Central Regeneration Strategy
- Significantly improve accessibility in an out of the Town Centre
- Demonstrate a significant impact on air quality, adoption of ultra-low vehicles and reduction of traditional car usage

Shortlisted Options

3.2.4 Currently, there is still a significant amount of design work for the entire Hub building and ensuring that co-location of uses are appropriate and maximise the impact of the building. However, through the fit study, it has been suggested there are opportunities for where these spaces can fit. Further work will be required in the detailed design stage of the hub, whilst also be informed by the consultation and engagement with the public.

The remaining options, which have been shortlisted, are appraised as follows.

Option 1	Do nothing: Do nothing; No new museum or new cultural and leisure space
<i>Appraisal</i>	<i>Museum would need to rely on a restricted collection space and a building susceptible to flood risk. Museum attendances would remain or fall, reducing an important facility for stimulation for learning and raising of aspirations. That would be no enhancement to the cultural offer of Stevenage town centre making it less attractive to new incoming residents. There would be no increase in footfall in the town centre brought about by an enhanced cultural offer.</i>
Option 2	Do minimum. Carry out some basic improvements to the existing museum including some updates to the overall Stevenage story. No additional culture and leisure space.
<i>Appraisal</i>	<i>Museum would need to continue to operate in a building which is not within their ownership which means that there are limited opportunities for improvement. There would be a very limited enhancement to the cultural offer of Stevenage town centre making it less attractive to incoming residents. There would be no increase in footfall in the town centre brought about by an enhanced cultural offer.</i>
Option 3	Develop a museum space of 550 square metres with is state of the art, innovative interactive displays but no additional culture and leisure space
<i>Appraisal</i>	This option will go some way to improving the scope for stimulating learning and developing enhance aspirations and would be more realistic in terms of costs and viability. However, there would be only a minimal enhancement to the town centre's cultural offer and associated increase in footfall and spending in the town centre.
Option 4	Develop a museum space of 550 square metres with state of the art, innovative interactive displays and

	go ahead with the development of 200 sqm of culture and leisure space.
<i>Appraisal</i>	This option would create a high quality museum increasing visitor numbers and impacting strongly on raising aspirations and learning opportunities, particularly for young people. It would significantly enhance the cultural offer of the town centre leading to higher visitor numbers, levels of participation in learning, cultural activities and events.

Preferred Option

3.2.5 The preferred option would be Option 4 - to develop a museum space of 550 square metres with state of the art, innovative interactive displays and go ahead with the development of 200 sqm of flexible leisure space. By creating a high-quality museum, learning opportunities, particularly for young people would be enhanced. It would significantly enhance the cultural offer of the town centre leading to higher visitor numbers, levels of participation in learning, cultural activities and events. In so doing it would accelerate the sales and build out of planned residential developments, increase footfall and spending in the town conducive to higher levels of investment in retail, food and beverage and level and leisure amenities.

3.3 Economic Benefits

3.3.1 Quantified Benefits

Summary of Outputs

Jobs Created	3
Museum, Arts, Cultural, Education Floorspace Developed sqm	550
Flexible Leisure Floorspace Developed sqm	200
Total New Floorspace	750
Net Increase in Heritage museum and flexible leisure space sqm	200
Additional homes brought forward	200
Additional GVA Generated per Annum	£1,269,914
Number of public facilities collocated	3

How Benefits Have Been Monetised

3.3.2 Benefits have been monetised by projecting:

- a) the GVA per head for each of the new jobs to be created
- b) income generated from space for hire in the new leisure space
- c) income from shared gate takings from events
- d) income from catering services to service meetings, conferences and social events taking place within the new space
- e) Additional spending in the town centre that would be generated as a result of visits to the museum and flexible leisure space.

Current projected annual revenue streams from the above are summarised as follows. These assumptions will require further commercial testing in the next 12 months to inform the updated detail business case. Furthermore, this will require integration with the Operational Management workstream of the Hub.

Increase in GVA from new jobs	£177,317
Income from Space for Hire	£161,000
Income from Events Gate Proceeds	£282,500
Income from Local Catering	£311,800
Increase in Town Centre Spending	£337,297
Total	£1,269,914

Additionality, Deadweight, Displacement and Substitution of Benefits

3.3.3 These are explained as follows.

Additionality	<p>Additionality affects that would not have been realised but for this project are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional capacity for heritage appreciation and cultural activities enabling more people to participate in cultural, education and associated leisure activities. Enabling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Enhanced scope for heritage appreciation – Increased capacity for cultural events – Increased scope for engaging people marginalised local communities – Increased scope for raising aspirations amongst young people – Increase visits and spending in the town centre
Leakage	This project is about place specific site development which cannot take place elsewhere in the borough, so no leakage is anticipated.
Deadweight	The benefits from this project could not have happened anyway given identified market failures and the amount of investment needed to take the proposed site forward for development. The private sector could not accomplish the range of activities and services offered by this council run centre nor would it have the motivation to culture development issues in the wider community.
Displacement	There is a shortage of culture and leisure capacity on the borough so will not displace other activities.
Substitution	The centre will be unique in scope so will not substitute other activities.

Assessment of Non-Quantified Benefits

3.3.4 Non-quantified impacts and benefits are summarised below.

Project	Impact	Assessment of Benefits
Museum	Upgraded accommodation	Museum's collection, archives, and assets are better protected
	Larger audience reach	Enhances heritage learning and appreciation
	Opportunity to engage and co-create with marginalised communities and youth	Improved learning, creativity, confidence, skills development, and community cohesiveness

Project	Impact	Assessment of Benefits
	Increased opportunities for partnership working; initiatives to inspire higher levels of learning, creativity and critical thinking can be leveraged	Will help reach more people to build knowledge and skills
Flexible Leisure Space	Creates a more innovative, collaborative, and attractive offer	
	Enables cultural services that can work across local government, public, and VCSE services/agendas	Enables greater outcomes, such as improved social cohesion, wellbeing, and a boost to the local economy
	Enhanced capacity for daytime and night time culture and leisure activity	Increased footfall boosting prospects for revived retail, leisure and hospitality sector
	Will help reprofile Stevenage as a cultural destination	Enhances the appeal of living in the town centre, accelerating sales and development of new homes
Development of 200 new homes	Increased demand for town centre retail and leisure, cleaning, maintenance, security and delivery services	Generation of indirect employment

Consideration of Distribution of Impacts

Employment and income

3.3.5 The project will predominantly museum and culture staff as well due increased demand for cleaning, maintenance, security and delivery services to service the new facilities. . The new museum and flexible leisure centre will make Stevenage attractive to skilled workers.

Geographical

3.3.6 Beneficiaries will be primarily current residents of Stevenage for education and cultural fulfilment. However, students and professionals with an interest in urban development will be drawn in from nationwide sources.

Protected Groups

3.3.7 Initiatives mounted by the museum project will target marginalised protected groups. More detail about the approach of this can be viewed in the Management Case. Furthermore, protected groups are consideration within the Town’s Fund EQIA and project EQIA’s.

3.4 Economic Costs

Heritage museum and flexible leisure space	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	Total
Development Costs					
Shared building costs	£23,925	£38,464	£354,458	£118,153	£535,000
Construction cost			£584,560	£1,038,076	£1,622,636
Fit Out Costs			£125,000	£375,000	£500,000
Professional fees	£92,070	£86,490	£80,910	£19,530	£279,000
Total	£115,995	£124,954	£1,144,928	£1,550,759	£2,936,636

3.5 Value for Money Assessment

3.5.1 A BCR has been calculated as shown below.

Value for Money Assessment	Present Value	Undiscounted
	30 Years	30 Years
Cost	£2,612,775	£2,936,636
Benefits	£17,622,599	£17,622,599
Net Present Value: Benefits Less Cost	£15,009,825	£14,685,963
BCR Calculation	6.74	6.00

3.5.2 As can be seen from the table above, the net cash flow taking account of economic benefits gives a net present value of £15m and benefit cost ratio of 6.74.

3.5.3 Appropriate measures are being applied to ensure that the construction works for the project can be delivered in the most cost-effective manner possible, without sacrificing the quality and functionality of the end product. To this end, the appointed contractors will be asked to assess scope for further savings from the supply chain, alternative configurations and materials with a view to optimise value for money. In addition, quotes for ongoing design and survey activity will be retendered should this be considered to have scope for further savings.

3.6 Place Based Analysis

3.6.1 Benefits related to the preferred option which are quantifiable and those wider in scope or non-quantifiable are set in the place-based analysis described below, taking account of local employment impacts.

Place Based Analysis	
Target Area	Central Core, Stevenage Town Centre, SG1
External Dependencies	<p>The main dependencies are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the development of the new civic Hub as this project forms an integral part of the Hub’s structure and operational arrangements and – continued house building in the town centre to assure demand for the facilities is maintained.

Place Based Analysis																	
Target Area	Central Core, Stevenage Town Centre, SG1																
Benefits to the Target Area: Quantified	<p>Summary of Outputs</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">Jobs Created</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Museum, Arts, Cultural, Education Floorspace Developed sqm</td> <td style="text-align: right;">550</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Flexible Leisure Floorspace Developed sqm</td> <td style="text-align: right;">200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total New Floorspace</td> <td style="text-align: right;">750</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Net Increase in Heritage museum and flexible leisure space sqm</td> <td style="text-align: right;">200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Additional homes brought forward</td> <td style="text-align: right;">200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Additional GVA Generated per Annum</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£1,269,91</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of public facilities collocated</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3</td> </tr> </table>	Jobs Created	3	Museum, Arts, Cultural, Education Floorspace Developed sqm	550	Flexible Leisure Floorspace Developed sqm	200	Total New Floorspace	750	Net Increase in Heritage museum and flexible leisure space sqm	200	Additional homes brought forward	200	Additional GVA Generated per Annum	£1,269,91	Number of public facilities collocated	3
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Additional homes brought forward	200																
Additional GVA Generated per Annum	£1,269,91																
Number of public facilities collocated	3																
Benefits to the Target Area: Qualitative	<p>Enhances heritage learning and appreciation</p> <p>Increased scope for engaging marginalised groups</p> <p>Improved learning, creativity, confidence, skills development, and community cohesiveness</p> <p>Will help reach more people to build knowledge and skills</p> <p>Enables greater outcomes, such as improved social cohesion, wellbeing, and a boost to the local economy</p> <p>Increased footfall boosting prospects for revived retail, leisure and hospitality sector</p> <p>Enhances the appeal of living in the town centre, accelerating sales and development of new homes</p>																
Possible collateral effects in the target area or wider spatial area	<p>Higher level of engagement of local residents in cultural and education activities</p> <p>Raising of aspirations of more local residents</p> <p>Will help reprofile Stevenage as a cultural destination</p> <p>Will help generate greater footfall for Stevenage</p> <p>Stronger attraction of well qualified home buyers to live and work in Stevenage</p> <p>Increased investor confidence</p> <p>Acceleration of sales of new homes and transformation</p> <p>Generation of indirect employment</p>																
Adverse effects on protected groups	None identified. EQIA has been produced.																
Different impacts by income group	Enhanced museum and leisure space will widen the audience reach and enable more of those who are marginalised on low incomes and in high areas of deprivation to become engaged in cultural and education activities and to raise their aspirations.																
Views of local stakeholders	Desire to create aspiring communities and opportunities that create a lasting legacy.																
Alignment with wider public policy in the relevant area/s and	<p>Arts Council England Strategy 2020-30: Key Outcomes</p> <p>➤ Creative People: an opportunity co-create with marginalised communities and youth in particular to nurture skills, confidence, creativity, and critical thinking to ensure that everyone has access to creativity and cultural sector career paths.</p>																

Place Based Analysis	
Target Area	Central Core, Stevenage Town Centre, SG1
the UK as a whole/s	<p>➤ Cultural Communities: greater outcomes through a higher-quality, accessible facility that enables a more innovative, collaborative, and attractive offer.</p> <p>➤ A Creative & Cultural Country: museum’s strong track-record of working with and nurturing artists, flexible spaces within the hub will also provide opportunities for collaborations with creative industries to realise creative and business innovations, which will boost local skills and economies.</p> <p>Heritage Fund Strategic Funding Framework 2019-24: Strategic Objectives</p> <p>➤ Continue to bring heritage into better condition: a new facility with high building specifications, including environmental controls, will ensure the Museum’s collection, archives, and assets are protected.</p> <p>➤ Inspire people to value heritage more: a purpose-built facility will support a more engaging, accessible, inclusive, and relevant offer that enhances heritage learning and appreciation.</p> <p>➤ Ensure that heritage is inclusive: working with marginalised communities, new exhibitions and programmes will be co-created with communities to ensure that communities are better included and represented by the museum’s collections/stories. More people will therefore be involved in heritage.</p> <p>➤ Support the organisations we fund to be more robust: will enable increased partnership working and audience reach for greater outcomes and will generate increased opportunities to leverage funding.</p> <p>➤ Demonstrate how heritage helps people and places to thrive: a more accessible, attractive, and engaging museum will enable greater audience reach and help to reprofile Stevenage, which unfairly suffers from negative perceptions.</p> <p>➤ Grow the contribution that heritage makes to the UK economy: a redeveloped museum within will help reprofile Stevenage as a cultural destination, reach more people to build knowledge and skills and generate greater footfall for Stevenage.</p> <p>Grimsey Reviews</p> <p>➤ The project will help drive footfall and create experiential shopping and spaces within the town.</p>
Dependency on the successful delivery of other proposals	Continued house building in the town centre to assure demand for the facilities is maintained.
Link of Benefits Estimated Link to Theory of Change and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scheme will make Stevenage more attractive to well qualified workers. • Increased footfall boosting prospects for revived retail, leisure and hospitality sector. • More high quality and high value businesses will be attracted to Stevenage. • Recognition of Stevenage Town Centre as a high prestige business location. • Increased investor confidence.

Place Based Analysis	
Target Area	Central Core, Stevenage Town Centre, SG1
Strategic Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acceleration of transformation of other SG1 major opportunity areas and sites.

3.7 Summary of Preferred Option for Investment

Purpose and Key Elements of the Project

3.7.1 The purpose of this project is to bring a combination of heritage interpretation, culture and education uses together onto one site, integrating with local public and community services within the new Civic Hub so that:

- a) Visitor numbers in the town centre will grow thereby increasing patronage of and in the longer term more investment in good quality retail, food and beverage outlets and leisure amenities.
- b) An increase in younger people engaged in learning activities is conducive to higher levels of motivation and aspiration; a more accessible asset that has a broader appeal, especially for hard to reach groups
- c) Major synergies and cost efficiencies will be achieved by co-locating these activities; this supports providing value for money for the capital build of the project, as well as providing a more sustainable operational business model
- d) Stevenage can become more attractive to a broader range of people considering moving to and working in Stevenage due to the creation of a stronger culture offer.
- e) A broader range of visitors will utilise the multi-purpose space
- f) Part of an enhanced, integrated cultural offer within the town centre, including a new experience-based 'Garden Square', pop-up event space, and more diverse town centre events spaces

3.7.2 Key elements of the project are:

- A minimum size 550 sqm new museum space with the potential to become a destination for a wide variety of audiences (nationally and internationally), including students researching urban planning, professionals and policy makers learning from the New Town impact, residents and visitors.
- A minimum 200sqm adjacent flexible space to provide a key venue for the town's cultural events and leisure activities. These might include musical and other live performances, dancing classes, special interest talks and events, conferences, and meeting spaces to support the town's key public services and community support groups.
- The construction of 200 high quality residential units on adjacent building plots.

3.7.3 Key benefits of the project will include:

- Provision of 750sqm additional space for cultural and leisure activity.
- Enhanced heritage learning and appreciation
- Improved learning, creativity, confidence, skills development, and community cohesiveness
- Will help reach more people to build knowledge and skills

- Enables greater outcomes, such as improved social cohesion, wellbeing, and a boost to the local economy
- Increased footfall boosting prospects for revived retail, leisure and hospitality sector
- Enhances the appeal of living in the town centre, accelerating sales and development of new homes

FINANCIAL CASE

4. FINANCIAL CASE

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This section sets out the financial case for the project first describing the approach and funding options, details of the build-up of costs, proposed funding and an affordability assessment.

4.2 Approach to Financial Case

Funding Options Considered

4.2.1 Stevenage Borough Council has been investigating a range of funding opportunities to fund projects within the Regeneration programme and working across the organisation to create a centralised review of available funding opportunities and determine which projects are most appropriate. The financial impact on the council following COVID 19 will be significant, and it is anticipated that the capital programme will be affected. Having said that, the Council needs to be the initiator and owner of the project because of the business model being wider in scope from that of the private sector, as criteria such as widening participation in cultural pursuits is conducive to increasing the aspirations and cohesiveness of the population come into play particularly measures to engage with those on low incomes and in high areas of deprivation and who may be marginalised. For these reasons, the Council will be obliged to fund a major part of the cost of the scheme. However, were this project to be funded 100% by the Council, it would divert funds earmarked for other initiatives essential to accelerating the regeneration and renewal of the SG1 area, such as strategic site acquisitions and associated enabling works., or simply would be unable to happen.

Other Public Sector Funding Options

4.2.2 Other funding options such as Future High Street, One Public Estate and Levelling Up funding are less aligned in terms of criteria and the urgency surrounding the scheme, though these were explored in conjunction with the Town Development Board.

Following guidance from the town's Fund coordinators, a roundtable discussion has been held with Arts Council, Historic England, National Heritage Lottery and other partners for support and guidance with the progression of the project. The discussions will be on going throughout the project to ensure that all funding opportunities are explored with our partners.

Private Sector

4.2.3 The private sector is not oriented towards offering facilities such as museums to attract local people, particularly those on low incomes that need to be encouraged to engage in active cultural pursuits. For these reasons the project would not be attractive as an investment proposition for the private sector.

Town Fund

4.2.4 The Town Fund is an ideal option to be deployed where there is a funding gap which presents a barrier to a project being able to move forward and where a number of collateral benefits can be identified as a consequence of being able to make up the funding as is the case with this project.

Furthermore this project is linked to the creation of other Town's Fund project, and therefore the maximum potential for this can be achieved as part of the Town's Fund programme of projects than as a standalone item; the symbiotic nature of culture, town centre revival and economics is undeniable and this project is a key component of this.

Preferred Funding Option

4.2.5 The Town Fund is considered to be an ideal option for this scheme as it makes up the required amount of resources to implement the scheme. This can realistically be expected to create the level of confidence needed to secure the investment and development commitment necessary for the new heritage museum and flexible leisure space to move forward.

Funding Profile and Scheduling

4.2.6 The funding profile is summarised as follows.

Funding Profile	Total
SBC	£936,636
Town Fund	£2,000,000
Total	£2,936,636

4.2.7 The table below shows the scheduling of the funding.

Funding Profile	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	Total
SBC	£23,925	£38,464	£354,458	£519,789	£936,636
Town Fund	£92,070	£86,490	£790,470	£1,030,970	£2,000,000
Total	£115,995	£124,954	£1,144,928	£1,550,759	£2,936,636

It is to be noted that a further £3 million of match funding has been attributed to the project, highlighting some of the cost to construct the building as a whole.

4.3 Costs

4.3.1 The project costs are as set out below.

Heritage museum and flexible leisure space	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	TOTAL
Development costs					
Shared building costs	£23,925	£38,464	£354,458	£118,153	£535,000
Construction cost			£584,560	£1,038,076	£1,622,636
Fit out costs			£125,000	£375,000	£500,000
Professional fees	£92,070	£86,490	£80,910	£19,530	£279,000
TOTAL	£115,995	£124,954	£1,144,928	£1,550,759	£2,936,636

4.4 Funding and Revenues

4.4.1 Funding options considered are as described above. Sources and uses of funds are summarised below.

Funding Profile							
Source	Use	Value	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	Total
SBC	<i>Shared building costs</i>	£535,000	£23,925	£38,464	£354,458	£118,153	£535,000
	<i>Construction</i>	£401,636	£0	£0	£0	£401,636	£401,636
SBC Total		£936,636	£23,925	£38,464	£354,458	£519,789	£936,636
Town Fund	<i>Construction</i>	£1,221,000	£0	£0	£584,560	£636,440	£1,221,000
	<i>Fit out costs</i>	£500,000	£0	£0	£125,000	£375,000	£500,000
	<i>Professional fees</i>	£279,000	£92,070	£86,490	£80,910	£19,530	£279,000
Town Fund Total		£2,000,000	£92,070	£86,490	£790,470	£1,030,970	£2,000,000
Combined Total		£2,936,636	£115,995	£124,954	£1,144,928	£1,550,759	£2,936,636

4.5 Affordability Assessment

4.5.1 A BCR has been calculated as shown below.

	Present Value	Undiscounted
	30 Years	30 Years
Cost	£2,612,775	£2,936,636
Benefits	£17,622,599	£17,622,599
Net Present Value: Benefits Less Cost	£15,009,825	£14,685,963
BCR Calculation	6.74	6.00

4.5.2 As can be seen from the table above, the net cash flow taking account of economic benefits gives a net present value of £15m and benefit cost ratio of 6.74.

4.5.3 It is proposed that the Town Fund provides £2,000,000 to the project.

COMMERCIAL CASE

5. COMMERCIAL CASE

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1. This section sets out the commercial case, describing the potential commercial options for delivery of the project model and supporting rationale, taking account of the existing commercial strategy of Stevenage Borough Council and on this basis the procurement strategy adopted, based on a review of possible options for the preferred procurement route. The proposed procurement process, including key milestones, and processes for assurance and approvals are then set out.

5.2 Commercial Deliverability

Potential Delivery Options

5.2.1 There are two delivery options.

1. Stevenage Borough Council promoting a development with its own finances and management resources, working with a construction partner.
2. Attracting proposals from speculative developers.

5.2.2 The first option, where the Council would act as the developer is an acceptable use of its resources and expertise if it is able leverage investment from sources such as the Town Fund. The project relates entirely to the support of traditional public sector and voluntary and community sector activity, and the Council has a good understanding of museum operations due to the operation of its current facility, as well as wider public sector partners to learn from.

5.2.3 The Council's regeneration strategy has identified the need to build a definitive portfolio of schemes within a limited timescale. Leaving the opportunity solely for the market to decide on is unlikely to result in an improved asset; the public benefits of delivering the asset are less tangible and are unlikely to result in private sector economic return its timing risks potential delays if market or economic conditions deteriorate. Private sector led development is underway with Mace as developer for the broader SG1 scheme, however, the hub and all its component provide no commercial return for private sector and therefore it is the public sector who must deliver this form of intervention. Moreover, through Council control the ease of access (including any chargeable elements) is retained by a public body, who can build justification around the public benefits.

Proposed Delivery Model

5.2.4 The proposed delivery model is for the Council to take the lead as the developer, working with a construction partner, Mace as part of the SG1 scheme to design and deliver the building.

Rationale for Proposed Delivery Model

The delivery approach for the SG1 area (14.2acres / 5.75ha) was agreed by decisions taken through four previous Executive committee meetings (2016-2019). An OJEU compliant Competitive Dialogue tender process appointed “Mace” as developer with a contractual partnership governed by a Development Agreement (DA), signed in March 2019. The SG1 proposals will deliver the regeneration of a significant proportion of the town centre, across multiple development sites, and include circa 1800 homes, public spaces including a new Garden Square adjoining the Town Square, Public Services Hub, school, and new boulevard route connecting the rail station and new Bus Interchange with the Town Square. The partnership commits the Council and Mace to four broad sequential Phases of work, comprising ten development plots in total. The baseline Programme to deliver all four Phases is over ten years, assuming a successful hybrid planning permission in summer 2020.

5.2.5 These arrangements have a number of advantages. The Council needs to be the initiator and owner of the project because of the need to:

- a) widen participation in heritage appreciation, culture and education active pursuits conducive to increasing the quality of life and aspirations of the population
- b) achieve this by offering improved facilities offered to maximise patronage and make the facilities accessible to those on low incomes and in high areas of deprivation
- c) provide an important building block for night time economy, leisure and culture provision to support the full vision of delivering a regenerated the town centre
- d) Use its expertise and funding need to be deployed to stimulate leveraged investment and transformation.
- e) Engage and consult with the Stevenage community to co-design programme of events, exhibitions and activities which will enhance community vibrancy within the town centre and continue to uphold the strong pride in Stevenage, it’s unique history as well as it’s bright and innovative future.

5.2.6 For these reasons, the Council is best placed to initiate and deliver the scheme, utilising the expertise of construction and development management from Development Partner Mace.

Existing Commercial Strategy

5.2.7 Stevenage Borough Council has a strong track record of delivering projects and are working collaboratively with partners to increase momentum to regenerate the town centre. In particular, in March 2019, the Council entered into a development agreement with the urban developer Mace to bring forward two of the Major Opportunity Areas (MOAs) of the Framework - Southgate Park and the Central Core – as well as acting as a catalyst to deliver major place shaping changes to the town centre.

Evidence of Market to Deliver the Project

5.2.8 Examples of such partners with whom the Council has previously worked are:

- In relation to completed construction for public infrastructure projects, the Council have worked with a variety of contractors.
 - Within the last 12 months, the Council have directly contractor with Willmott Dixon, a local building contractor, for the completed of the Bus Interchange project which had a

project cost of over £9million. Other examples where the Council has acted as developer and directly include the complete of North Block and Town square, working with Mace and development manager and contractor Ashe construction for the rejuvenation of the town square public realm and lighting as the creation of 18,000 sqft of flexible co working space within the town centre.

- Other commercial routes that the Council Regeneration team are currently working with developers are larger schemes as development partner. The two clear examples of this can be viewed below:
- Mace, who are contracted to bring forward two of the six Major Opportunity Areas (MOAs) of the Framework - Southgate Park and the Central Core – as well as acting as a catalyst to deliver major place shaping changes to the town centre.
- Reef, an urban regeneration specialist with a £4bn regeneration portfolio and expertise in enhancing communities and environments, providing design expertise and end-to-end management including programming, cost analysis, procurement, construction and leasing. In Stevenage, Reef have acquired the former M&S site and in partnership with SBC are delivering a £20m+ mixed-use regeneration scheme of 110 apartments, diversified leisure, retail and restaurant uses, and new commercial space. This is due for completion in the New Year.
- Mace, who are contracted to bring forward two of the six Major Opportunity Areas (MOAs) of the Framework - Southgate Park and the Central Core – in the scheme called SG1. This will be the key catalyst to deliver major place shaping changes to the town centre.

This project is part of the SG1 scheme, as the Hub building is a keystone project within the whole development. In the establishment of the SG1 scheme a development agreement was signed between Mace and the Council which creates the contractual environment for delivery.

Key Contractual Arrangements

5.2.9 As the asset will be developed as part of the wider public sector hub, a number of key services including the Architect and professional support teams, will be procured in partnership with the Council's Development Manager for the SG1 scheme, Mace. The first key contractual arrangement for this element of the project will be the appointment of an external specialist, so support specific heritage & cultural design proposals, to ensure the internal and external design of the hub is able to fulfil the needs of the cultural sector. The second key appointment will be the contractor; ensuring that at an appropriate point in the future, the contractor has relevant expertise in the design and fit-out of exhibition spaces, or has the contractual ability or requirement to sub-contract expertise in. The final key contractual arrangement will be the operator; at this time it is envisaged that the public sector will oversee the operation of the asset, but more work will be carried out as the business plan evolves during the life of the project.

Delivery Arrangements

5.2.10 The new facility will be delivered as part of the wider public sector hub, with a number of milestones linked to the wider project. These will include the following key gateways:

- Appointment of the professional design team, including the architects
- RIBA 1&2 early design work to develop the concept and update cost plans
- Review of overall facility mix and partner commitment prior to RIBA 3 design stage
- Procurement of construction contractor
- Final design sign-off prior to construction
- Build & implementation of the new facility

Therefore separate agreements will be needed will be set up for design and construction of the new facility The responsibility for initiating and managing these agreements with relation to the Hub will lie with the SBC Regeneration team. Further detail on the delivery arrangement can be viewed within the management case.

Risks

5.2.11 The identified risks are assessed as follows.

Risks	Likelihood	Mitigation
Renewed risk of Covid-19 Outbreak and possible introduction of lockdown measures	High	Scenario planning to assess the impact of the closedown and reduced output levels and advise clients accordingly to ensure timely completion. Bring in additional temporary labour. Review planning conditions and seek changes where possible to enable sites to operate in shifts over longer working hours. Manage cash flow.
Failure to achieve planning approval	Medium	Outline planning permission has been granted for the totality of SG1, which includes the Hub. Project is moving in to design stage where appropriate engagement with planning will support the progress of the project. This will be accompanied by public consultation.
Labour shortages in construction, freight transport and supply industries delay construction progress	High	In development agreement with Reef and with public realm contractors incorporate commitment to bring in additional temporary labour and stocks of materials to ensure projects are completed on time.
The construction cost exceeds the limit for the project or other issues arising during the design & development phase	Low	A cost consultant will be involved from an early stage of the project to ensure contractor's proposals are realistic and within budget.
Commercial opportunities cannot be achieved through this model	Medium	Initial benchmarking works has been undertaken by reviewing potential venue hire rates as reviewed what similar facilities achieve. Outline business plan to be robustly tested and updated and tested over the next 12 months with commercial and cultural experts to support.

5.3 Procurement Strategy

Projects that will need to be procured

5.3.1 There are two projects that needs to be procured:

- the design and build of a new town heritage museum and flexible leisure space scheme, to be integrated with the development of the proposed new public services hub

- the development of 200 homes on Plots F & G.

Procurement Process, Milestones, Assurance and Approvals

5.3.2 Stevenage Borough Council follows public procurement procedures and complies with public procurement law (s35 Local Government Act 1972 plus current OJEU regulations). Information regarding this can be viewed on the SBC website. Stevenage Borough Council will perform the procurements for the remaining elements.

As part of this there have been recent improves to the procurement strategy of the council to ensure that maximise impact for social value, sustainability and innovation is embedded within tendering and contractor management processes. For these projects, this approach will be continued and monitored through the monitoring and evaluation process which can be viewed in the Management Case of this business case.

MANAGEMENT CASE

6. MANAGEMENT CASE

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 This section sets out the approach and experience of SBC in delivering similar projects and sets out the proposed arrangements for Project Organisation and Governance. The approaches to oversight and approvals and to assurance and the assurance plan are then described.
- 6.1.2 The scope of the project and its key elements are then described along with the approach to specifying and managing requirements, the interfaces with third parties and related management approach and the approach to solution development, confirmation management and acceptance.
- 6.1.3 The structure of the project programme and principal stages and work streams and related timescales are then described, making reference to interdependencies with rest of TIP and non-TIP projects.
- 6.1.4 The key milestones and key decision points, assurance, consents, approvals are then summarised. Constraints and assumptions are then summarised and the most likely forecast completion date stated.
- 6.1.5 This section also elucidates on the approaches to risk and opportunities management, project management, stakeholder engagement and benefits, monitoring and evaluation.

As structured through this report, where needed the individual project elements will be separated should there be a need to highlight difference approaches in the management case. If this is not highlighted, then assume that the process encompasses the entirety of the project.

For this project Stevenage Borough Council has two distinct responsibilities- delivery team/ vehicle and Accountable Body for the Town's Fund programme and monies.

Evidence of Application on Similar Projects

- 6.1.6 In the last five years, SBC's Regeneration team have completed:
- 4 Public realm schemes totally 45,520 sqft (£3 million)
 - Refurbishment of disused 18,000 sqft of office space end retail space (£6 million)
 - Relocation of the CCTV control room, decant and vacant possession of office building (£2.4 million; and
 - The construction of a £9.6 million Bus Interchange including highway interventions and public realm (due for completion in Q4)

The accumulative impact of these projects have resulted in the Council have secured 2 developers bringing private development investment of over £500 million. The Council has a dedicated

regeneration directorate to deliver a programme of projects with a current capital value in excess of £30 million. This team maintains strong working relationships with HCC in their growth, education, highways and development capacity and with the LEP, who have experience of programme management of major schemes.

6.2 Project Organisation and Governance

6.2.1 There is a very well established two- tier governance system which is already overseeing the delivery of the programme of projects delivery regeneration in the town centre. The Town Development Board has been recently established after drawing the previous Stevenage First board to a close. This board operates a strategic steering group, which sets the vision and direction for the Town Investment Plan funding. In terms of the project delivery, there is a two tier governance structure in place at a programme and project level. Regeneration Steering Group, which monitors the overall performance of the programme. Working groups are established relating to the project with standardised governance and project management approach that escalates progress, risks and relating to budget, timescales and tolerance levels to the Regeneration Steering Group. Projects delivered to date under this supervision model include the public realm project s- Forum Square, Littlewoods Square, Market Place, Wayfinding and more recently North Block, Town Square and the vacant possession of Swingate House.

Project Delivery Organisation

6.2.3 The project delivery organisation is summarised below.

Organisation	Functions	Key Roles	Capability	Competences and Resourcing
Stevenage Borough Council	Orchestration of regeneration strategy and projects	Stakeholder consultation Project scoping Sourcing of funding Initiation of delivery partnerships Formalising approvals	Well-developed stakeholder engagement strategy, organisation and processes Devising high impact regeneration solutions Delivery through partnership and contract	Expert and experienced regeneration team Town Fund award and match funding for key projects Delivery partnerships
Mace	Contractor and Development Partner for the construction of the hub as part of the SG1 scheme	Main contractor the design and the construction of the Hub Coordinating sub-contracting Ensuring Healthy and Safety onsite	Well-developed company Track record of delivering complex and high quality schemes	
Stevenage Borough Council Accountable Body	To act as the Accountable Body ensuring robust processes are followed for the	Monitoring and Evaluation Assurance	Well-developed Council processes which will be adhered following the endorsement	Expert Finance Team with knowledge of capital schemes

	delivery of the project	Financial security	from the Development Board Capital Programme experience	Shared learning with LEP
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Governance Arrangements for Oversight and Approvals

6.2.4 The Town Development Board will continue to monitor the progress of the programme of Town Investment Plan projects. The Board includes a number of local leaders from key sectors and businesses, including:

- a) companies such as Airbus, MBDA, Wine Society and Groundwork East;
- b) all tiers of local government and Hertfordshire LEP;
- c) community sector;
- d) education sector including North Hertfordshire College (FE) and the University of Hertfordshire ;
- e) others such as the local NHS Trust.

6.2.5 Stevenage Borough Council (SBC) will be the accountable body. The Council has a dedicated regeneration directorate to deliver a programme of projects with a current capital value in excess of £60m. SBC will be supported by both the County Council and the LEP. The LEP has considerable experience of major programme management (BEIS/MHCLG Getting Building Fund, Growth Deal and Growing Places funding). The LEP approves and monitors its projects using an Assurance Framework and this will be utilised for administering Town Deal.

6.2.6 As mentioned, the Regeneration Steering Group will monitor the performance of the scheme against its milestones.

Project Governance at this stage

In the past 12 months there has been a significant amount of work exploring is the Hub and ultimately SG1 can be accelerated to achieve some of the key transformational need of the town centre early, in particular bringing forward the Hub and the other elements that are included within this phase of development.

As part of this an Executive paper was taken in March 2021 with the recommendation to accelerate SG1, and create the appropriate project work streams to ensure that this was achieved. Below outlines the five project work streams that have been set up to delivery this project and how they relate to the Regeneration Steering Group, and Stevenage Development Board.

1. Land Assembly
2. Design development
3. Operational Management
4. Funding Strategy
5. SBC Transformation

This project will interact with all of the work streams as some stage; however the two key interactions will be the Design Development, Operational Management and the Funding Strategy due to the nature of this project.

6.3 Assurance

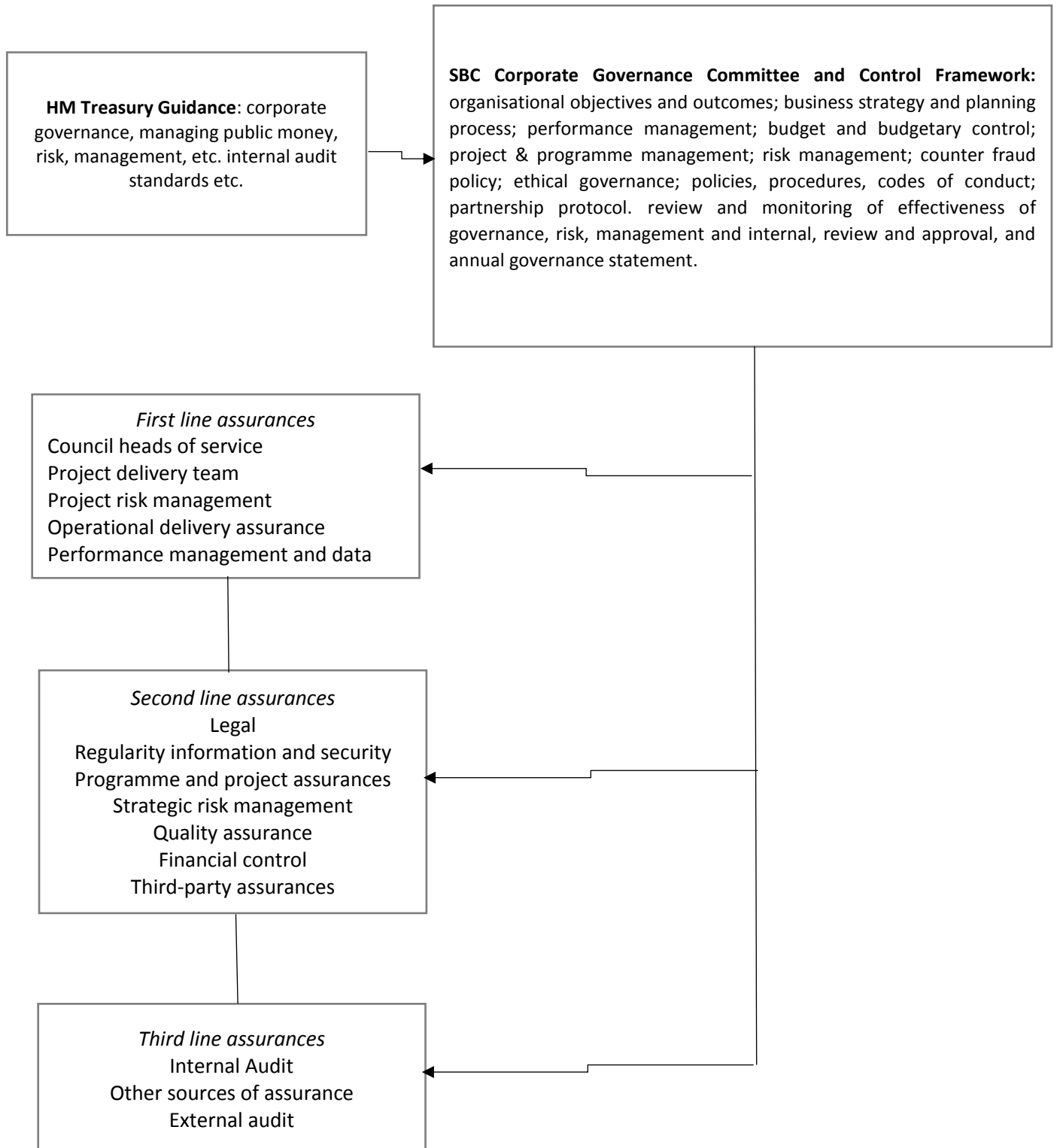
Approach to Assurance

6.3.1 All proposals and business cases will go through a transparent and robust application and scrutiny process, based on three simple principles:

- Robust interrogation to maximise value for money and ensure outputs and outcomes are deliverable and achievable
- Streamlined and efficient process, utilising private sector partners, to ensure pace of delivery is maximised
- Transparency and openness, with the process and framework published (without prejudice to commercial confidentiality).

Summary of Assurance Plans and Timing of Key Reviews and Links to Decision Points

6.3.2 The assurance process will proceed via the following framework.



Integrated Approvals and Assurance Plan

6.3.3 The approvals and assurance arrangements are illustrated in the table below.

Project Delivery Team	Stevenage Development & Town Board		Independent Auditing
	Approvals	Oversight Actions	Investigations and assurances
Heritage Museum and Flexible Leisure Space			
Prepare brief for building design team	Approval of building design brief.		
Tender and select building design team- <i>current stage</i>	Approval of selected design team	Review of design team budget and work programme	
Appoint design team	Approval of outline design proposals		
Scope and finalise engagement and consultation plans	Approval of scope from project group		
Engage and consult with the community and collate feedback on programme of events and activities		Review outreach numbers	Update and include Stevenage Development board and key Council stakeholders in shaping the activities
Create final draft of audience development plan			
Undertake site surveys and specialist reports. Prepare outline design to RIBA stage 2 and consult stakeholders.			
Explore further commercial opportunities with partners		Review against business plan aspirations	Work with S151 officer and Hub programme manager linking with Funding Strategy work stream for the hub.
Update business plan to reflect audience feedback and any commercial commitments	Approve of updated detailed business plan	Review against experiential and commercial aspirations	Work with S151 officer and Hub Programme manager linking with Funding Strategy work stream for the Hub.
Design up to RIBA stage 3 detailed planning application including supporting documentation and formal consultation	Approval of detailed design proposals	Review and commentary on risk profile and combined project risks, mitigation proposals and actions	Submission of comments on project design proposals
Pre-construction works			
Planning application period			
RIBA Stage 4 Technical design, discharge of planning conditions and construction information	Approval of technical design proposals	Review and commentary on risk profile	
Contractor shortlist and tender period	Approval of tender brief		
Review tenders and appoint contractor	Approval of contractor appointment		
RIBA Stage 5.	Approval of construction programme		

Project Delivery Team	Stevenage Development & Town Board		Independent Auditing
Actions	Approvals	Oversight Actions	Investigations and assurances
Commission monthly project reports: progress, achievements, risk mitigation actions and expenditure	Approve stage gate construction completions	Review monthly project reports Stage gate assessments Decisions and interventions in the event of serious delays or emerging major uncertainties Commission interim project audit report Directions in event of financial and other irregularities	Interim project audit
Tender for and appoint museum design team and contractor	Approval of selected design team and contractor		
Design and development of interactive and experiential displays for depicting the town's history.	Approval of museum design proposals		
Museum fit out and staff training	Approve staff training plan Approve fit out	Verification and sign off of development completion	
Museum and leisure space open to community			
Development of 200 Housing Units-(Lead by Mace Developments with development partner SBC)			
Securing RIBA Stage 2 outline approval for content of Plot F & G housing scheme	Approval of outline permission		
Implement necessary site preparation works	Agreement to works budget		
Conclude development agreement with chosen partner	Approval of agreement terms		
Transfer of site ownership to development partner			
RIBA Stage 3 detailed planning permission	Approval of detailed permission		
Start on site			
Development Completion		Verification and sign off of development completion	

6.4 Scope Management

Summary of the Scope of the Project and its Key Elements

- 6.4.1 The scope of the project specification is driven by the Stevenage Central Framework produced in 2015, through which Stevenage Borough Council has set out to comprehensively regenerate the town centre through the transformation of its major opportunity areas.
- 6.4.2 In accordance with this objective, the scheme being supported by the Town Fund will involve the bringing forward and a new heritage museum of minimum 550 sqm and 200sqm of flexible culture and leisure space. This will bring relocate the existing museum collection from an

outdated building prone to flood risk into a new facility and create interactive displays using innovative technologies to explain and depict the story of Stevenage. The flexible leisure space will be designed with scope for its use to integrate with the public and community services at the new civic HUB, with a view to getting maximum synergies in the way related services are delivered and related impacts.

6.4.3 The museum and leisure space will take place within the SG1 Central Core. This will involve:

- Outline and detailed design.
- Securing planning approval.
- Technical design.
- Construction and fit out of 750 sqm of new museum and leisure space.

6.4.4 The project will also incorporate the development of 200 homes on Plots F & G, which lie immediately to the South of the proposed Hub. This will involve the Council getting the site development ready then initiating the scheme through a development agreement.

Approach to Specifying, Approving and Managing Requirements

6.4.5 The Stevenage Central Framework also sets the parameters underlying the specification of requirements. This has set targets for the amounts of employment space and number of homes to be developed and jobs to be created. The Council's Arts & Heritage (Cultural) Strategy and sub-regional economic growth objectives, such as those set out in the Hertfordshire LEP strategic economic plan have an influence on the scope of the project.

6.4.6 To achieve these aims and targets, the Council has specified the resources, processes and tools that need to come together in place to create the New Town's Heritage Centre and flexible leisure space and to take forward the development of 200 homes on Plots F & G. Specifically:

- Identification of the sites on which the two developments in the scheme will take place.
- A costed project plan and programme for the creation of the new Museum, as set out in the current business plan for the Museum and the Council's Arts & Heritage (Cultural) Strategy.
- An agreed housing development scheme for Plots F & G.
- Measures to secure the necessary planning approvals.
- Putting in place other relevant enabling measures affecting both sites.

6.4.7 The responsibility for initiating and managing these processes will lie with the SBC Regeneration team. Key management tasks the SBC Regeneration team will be concerned with are:

a) Site Specific:

- Detailed design.
- Consultation with relevant third parties.
- Securing planning approval.
- Selection and appointment of a building contractor.
- Assuring satisfactory construction and fit out.
- Sign off.

b) Marshalling Resources:

- Assembling the necessary funds and expertise to take the project forward.

c) Integration:

- Ensuring the timely completion of the proposed museum and flexible leisure centre.
- Smooth transfer of equipment and staffing from the existing museum.
- Configuration and arrangements to assure seamless sharing of space resources between the museum and various council and community functions
- Consultation with neighbouring uses.
- Provision of the necessary accessibility to the site.

d) Project development and assurance

- Mechanisms to ensure the project is delivered on time and to budget i.e., through a tight project plan and construction agreement.
- Identification and management of risks.
- Assuring the performance of the contractor in delivering the required built product within the agreed timescale through effective monitoring.
- Monitoring and evaluation to ensure that the targeted outputs and outcomes are delivered.
- A detailed project plan specifying how the above will be brought together and implemented.

e) Approvals

- Approval for the project plan, design proposals, tender brief, contractor appointment, construction programme, stage gate construction completions, staff training plan and fit out will be sought from the Town Development Board who will also sign off project completion.

Interfaces with Third Parties and Management Approach

6.4.8 A number of key interfaces need to be managed:

- Monitoring of the contractor's progress to ensure that what has been promised through the construction contract is actually delivered.
- Consultation with the general public to assure support for emerging and final designs.

Approach to Solution Development, Confirmation Management and Acceptance

6.4.9 The solution for the creation of the new heritage museum and flexible space has been extensively informed by the Stevenage Arts & Heritage (Cultural) Strategy, Stevenage Re-imagined. The solution development process beyond this will comprise the following stages.

- i) Objective setting.
- ii) Consultation with the prospective users and local residents.
- iii) Issues identification – examination of how key outcomes to be realised, particularly in terms of upgrading the health of particular groups in the local communities.

- iv) Specification of requirements that will inform the building and museum design briefs.
- v) Identification, investment appraisal and evaluation of solution options.
- vi) Selection of optimum solution.
- vii) Specification of the project.
- viii) Verification that the specification will deliver what is required.
- ix) Interim development of value-improving proposals
- x) Interim checks on the project to ensure that the right product is being built.

Confirmation Management and Acceptance

6.4.10 The confirmation management and acceptance process will cover the reviews and decisions to address:

- the relevance and appropriateness of the objectives
- whether the requirement reflects the objectives and addresses the issues identified
- whether the project specification will meet the preferred solution
- whether the final project outcome has met what was required.

6.5 Programme/Schedule Management

Summary Structure of the Programme

6.5.1 Key elements of the programme are:

- Allocation of a site within the Hub development scheme specifically for this project
- Construction of a 550 sqm museum and cultural centre and 200 sqm events and leisure space.
- Relocation of the existing museum collection.
- Development of interactive and experiential displays for depicting the town’s history.
- Development of 200 new mews style homes on Plots F & G.

Summary Timescales

6.5.2 Main milestones are as summarised below.

Milestone	Timescale
Heritage Museum and Flexible Leisure Space	
Accountable body authority to proceed	Q1 2022/3
Scope and complete audience development plan	Q1 2023/24
Explore and secure commercial opportunities	Q1 2023/24
Update business plan for Accountable Body and Development board	Q1 2023/24
Design up to RIBA stage 3	Q4 2022/3
Detailed Planning Approval	Q2 2023/4

Milestone	Timescale
Construction Start	Q1 2024/5
Completion	Q4 2025/6
Housing Development Plots F & G	
Securing RIBA Stage 2 outline approval	Q2 2022/23
Development agreement with chosen partner	Q2 2023/24
Detailed planning permission	Q4 2023/24
Development Completion	Q4 2026/7

Interdependencies with the Rest of TIP and non-TIP Projects

6.5.3 The interdependencies are:

- the development of the new civic HUB as this project forms an integral part of the Hub’s structure and operational arrangements and
- continued house building in the town centre to assure demand for the facilities is maintained.

Decision Points, Assurances, Approvals and Critical Paths

6.5.4 These are summarised as follows.

Key Decision Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign off of final business case • Sign off of project designs final costings and delivery plan for public realm works • Sign off of risk mitigation measures • Authorisation of project start • Commissioning of interim and final audits • Sign off of project completion summarised as follows.
Assurances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated review of project risks and strategic risks, mitigation proposals and actions • Review of monitoring reports • Stage gate assessments • Decisions and interventions in the event of serious delays or emerging major uncertainties • Interim project audit • Directions in event of financial and other irregularities if required • Interventions in event of non-delivery of development agreement • Sign off of independent audits
Consents & Approvals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of final business case • Approval of project designs, final costings and delivery plan for public realm works • Approval of terms of land sale • Approval of development agreement • Approval for project start • Local authority planning approval • Sign off of project completion
Critical Paths and Higher Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim arrangements for reallocated car parking capacity • Completion of multi-storey car park

Workstreams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalisation of land sale and development agreement
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Summary of Schedule Hierarchy

Summary of Constraints, Assumptions, and Basis for Programme Durations

6.5.5 These are summarised below:

Issue	(Possible) Constraints	Assumptions	Basis for Programme Durations
Planning	Public dissatisfaction with proposals	Approval expected	Delays would affect project start
Site development scheme	Difficulty in receiving tenders due to resource constraints	Tenders will come through	Delays would affect project start
Site development scheme	Consultation with neighbouring uses may throw up objections	No major issues expected as project expected to benefit neighbouring uses	6 months for design and approval and 21 months for construction

Forecast Completion Date (within stated range)

6.5.6 The forecast completion date is between November 2025 and March 2026, target date being January 2026.

6.6 Risk and Opportunities Management

Summary of Risk Management Strategy

6.6.1 The risk management strategy is focused around maximising the popularity of the scheme amongst local residents, and managing these risks of labor shortages and supply chain disruption which could potentially cause delays and bring about cost overruns. The aim will be to build on appropriate provisions to the construction contract to assuring timely delivery of the new heritage museum and flexible leisure space.

Summary of Processes and Tools

6.6.2 The Town Development Board takes responsibility for the assessment of the project risks and the measures necessary to mitigate them, working with the project delivery team and other sources of assurance such as the auditors.

6.6.3 The board has adopted an assurance plan that provides for an integrated review of project risks and strategic risks, mitigation proposals and actions. As part of this process the board will seek comments on risk profile and combined project risks, mitigation proposals and actions from the SBC audit team. The board will initiate interventions in the event of serious project delays, emerging major uncertainties (e.g. a climate change disaster), non-contract compliance or financial irregularities.

Summary of Risk Themes and Key Risks and Mitigations

6.6.4 The main risk areas relate to:

- Potential delays, due to changing weather conditions, labour shortages or supply chain issues.
- The design of the new complex proving to be unpopular
- Poor delivery performance by the building contractor
- Potential cost overruns.

6.6.5 Key mitigation measures will include:

- Timely commencement of consultation activity in order to identify and address major issues.
- Use of the construction contract to secure a commitment to tight delivery standards, to ensure availability of spare labour and measures to address unforeseen eventualities such as weather and shortages of materials.
- Involvement of a cost consultant will be involved from an early stage of the project to ensure contractor's proposals are realistic and within budget.
- Contractual provisions to manage unforeseen site conditions e.g. physical obstructions or physical conditions.

Approach to Opportunities Management and Realisation

6.6.6 The Town Development Board is attuned to the concept of opportunities management, since its core function is to find ways to maximise the social, community and economic benefits from the resources available within the town. The generation of ideas is a process that is proactively managed by the Council and the Development Board and addressed through the following processes:

- Proactive stakeholder consultation as a means of capturing useful ideas
- Acquiring new ideas through partnership working
- Developing options in response to changing circumstances e.g. climate change, disruptive innovation etc.
- Seeking optimum uses of under-utilised resources, such as sites with scope for redevelopment
- Examining opportunities as a response to identified risks
- An up-to-date comprehensive vision of where Stevenage wants to be, providing a framework in which ideas can be generated and opportunities identified, evaluated, scoped out and where appropriate taken forward.

6.6.7 These processes are built into the remits, work programme, meeting agendas of the Development Board and relevant Council delivery teams.

Assessment of Opportunities to Gain from Industry Productivity Initiatives

6.6.8 This is an integral part of the process described above as well as being tied into the solutions for the development process. For example:

- The potential use of new construction techniques are constantly considered when specifying tendered contracts.
- Exploiting opportunities brought about by climate change. For example, the need for an expanded multi-storey car park and new cycle ways are a means of promoting use of electric vehicles through the provision of charging infrastructure and facilitating the adoption of electric bikes and scooters as an alternative to car use.

- The on-going adoption of digital technologies in all aspects of urban development and operations

6.6.9 Assessment of these types of opportunity is embedded into the agendas of the Council and Development Board.

6.7 Project Management

Proposed Project Management Approach

- 6.7.1 The project delivery team will be assembled from key officers within the Stevenage Borough Council Regeneration division. This team will take responsibility for day-to-day project management of the scheme. This will include ...
- 6.7.2 The detailed implementation of the project will be set out in a comprehensive delivery plan. This will schedule all activities from project inception, through design, costing, approvals, construction activity through to completion and handover. It will build in necessary ongoing stakeholder liaison processes. The governance structures in place ensure there is responsibility for overall control of the scope and progress the project and for putting in place the necessary assurances.

Key Processes for Controlling Scope, Programme, Cost, Risk and HSE Assurance and Reporting

- 6.7.3 The final scope, scheduling and budget for the project will be worked up by the project delivery team then presented to the Development Board for consideration. The Development Board will then ensure that the project scope is in line with predefined regeneration objectives and the TIP and that the proposed implementation programme is realistically deliverable.
- 6.7.4 The Development Board will also review all risks and mitigation measures taking into account any views of the council's internal audit team. It will provide directions to the project delivery team for any additional measures that need to be put in place to minimise risks identified.
- 6.7.5 A number of the controls will be brought about through the contractual process, in particular provision for addressing possible causes of delay, health and safety assurance, quality control and tight and regular reporting.

Processes for Managing Key Interfaces, Consents, and Compliance

- 6.7.6 The project delivery team will act as the key vehicle for liaising with the parties such as neighbouring uses, the site developer and contractor for the public realm works. As mentioned above the control mechanisms will be built into the contractual process for the developer and contractor and a regular process of monitoring will assure that contract compliance, and implement remedial actions where this is not achieved. The delivery team will also take responsibility for regular liaison with statutory authorities for planning and other consents required throughout the development process. A further dimension is the initial consultation and ongoing liaison with neighbouring uses so that the public realm proposals and any issues that are likely to arise during the implementation phase are dealt with in a satisfactory and cooperative manner.

Approach to Information Management

6.7.7 A designated member of the project delivery team will take responsibility for information management so that all aspects of the project and its progress and related issues arising are comprehensively recorded and reported upon where necessary. Regular monitoring reports will be submitted to the Development Board and relevant service heads within the Council.

Details for Managing Change

6.7.8 The risk register has identified a number of areas where there might be a need for managing change. These could include severe weather conditions, unexpected problems with site conditions or delays caused by labour shortages affecting the development and construction process.

6.7.9 It will be the responsibility of the Development Board to decide on alternative structures, processes, organisational and governance arrangements that may need to be put in place to address major changes of circumstances.

Arrangements for Managing Professional Service Contracts and Third-party Agreements

6.7.10 As mentioned above the contractual process would be a key tool in controlling the performance of the developers and contractors and related outcomes. The responsibility for managing these another agreements with life with the project delivery team advised and supported by the Council's legal services team.

6.8 Stakeholder Engagement

Key Stakeholders, Interests and Power to Influence Delivery

6.8.1 Key stakeholders and their role or interest in the project are listed below.

Project	Stakeholders	Comment
New Heritage Museum and Flexible Leisure Space	Council regeneration team	Impact on the success of parallel town centre regeneration initiatives.
	Local residents' groups	Range of activities and facilities to be made accessible in the new centre
	Arts Council, Heritage Fund and related bodies	Scope for promoting take up of heritage appreciation. cultural and education, wellbeing and aspiration raising activities.

Strategy to Engage through Development, Delivery

6.8.2 In a wider context, stakeholders' views have been captured through the Stevenage engagement programme, encompassing a number of mechanisms.

Local Residents

- A wide range of digital engagement utilising social media other related platforms
- A dedicated Visitor Centre in Town Square open to the public, where people could view, engage with and discuss the regeneration of the town.

- A ‘virtual visitor centre’, which contains all of the content in a digital platform on our dedicated website; this has enabled the Council to continue to reach residents of all ages and abilities during the pandemic.
- Stevenage residents’ survey

Currently engagement is focused on the consultation and promotion of the Council’s priority projects.

Business

- Business networking events, a number of project based consultations, such as the Local Plan, SG1, and the Bus Interchange and a number of roadshow events.

Other Stakeholders

- Regular consultation with public sector bodies such as Hertfordshire County Council, the LEP and relevant statutory bodies
- Project specific consultation as part of the planning process

6.8.3 The key themes that have emerged from residents, business and community groups are:

- Create inclusive accessible transport
- Create great spaces to live in and socialise
- Create a vibrant town centre offer that is a destination for all
- Create aspiring communities and opportunities that create a lasting legacy. events through to a wide range of digital engagement utilising social media other related platforms.

Summary of Approach to Communications with Stakeholders Including the Public

6.8.4 The Council’s stakeholder consultation and communication processes are well designed, extensive and far-reaching. Stakeholder’s views have been captured more widely through the Stevenage engagement programme, encompassing a number of mechanisms. These processes will operate in parallel with the stakeholder consultation process specific to the project as described above in order to fully inform the course and outcomes of the project.

6.8.5 The key themes that have emerged from residents, business and community groups are:

- Create inclusive accessible transport
- Create great spaces to live in and socialise
- Create a vibrant town centre offer that is a destination for all
- Create aspiring communities and opportunities that create a lasting legacy. events through to a wide range of digital engagement utilising social media other related platforms.

6.9 Benefits, Monitoring and Evaluation

Summary of Benefits Register

6.9.1 Key benefits from the project are summarised as follows.

Economic

- High quality heritage museum and flexible leisure space facilities will attract a wider range of new residents to the area, providing a good choice of high-quality workers to the advanced high value industries Stevenage is seeking to attract.
- This should increase demand for housing in the town centre.
- Expanded cultural facilities will help assure long term commercial viability of the centre.
- More people will visit the town centre increasing demand for retail and food and beverage facilities and thereby investment in these facilities.
- Improved town centre environment.
- Stronger perception of Stevenage as a place to invest.
- Investor confidence will be enhanced because of development momentum generated by the new heritage museum and flexible leisure space and the site released conducive to wider acceleration of transformation throughout Stevenage Central.
- Acceleration of the redevelopment of key sites in Central Core.

Environmental

- Enhanced scope for living and working in the town centre, thereby reducing the need to travel.
- Cleaner air and healthier lifestyles.

Social

- Meets anticipated demand from population growth.
- Widens opportunities for engaging marginalised groups in education and aspiration raising activities.
- Shared use of the wider range of facilities offered will increase effectiveness and impact of Council and Voluntary and Community Sector services.
- Broadens scope for reducing the education and income disparities amongst residents in different parts of the borough.

6.9.2 Quantified Outputs are as follows:

Summary of Outputs

Jobs Created	3
Museum, Arts, Cultural, Education Floorspace Developed sqm	550
Flexible Leisure Floorspace Developed sqm	200
Total New Floorspace	750
Net Increase in Heritage museum and flexible leisure space sqm	200
Additional homes brought forward	200

Approach to Developing a Benefits Realisation Plan and its Approval

6.9.3 The benefits realisation plan will focus primarily on assuring successful delivery of the following outcomes.

- i) Successful completion of the new heritage museum and flexible leisure space with the required capacities on time and to budget.
- ii) Wide recognition of the quality of the scheme amongst local residents, prospective employers, investors and house buyers considering Stevenage.
- iii) Realisation of plans to improve engagement of marginalised groups amongst the Stevenage communities.
- iv)

6.9.4 The benefits realisation plan will define the mechanisms through which the benefits projected from these outcomes are fully met. Thus, the plan will demonstrate how the scheme will improve health and wellbeing and general quality of life of local residents and the positive impact it will have on the image of Stevenage as a high-quality place to live and work and in which to invest. The plan will show how the realisation of quantifiable outputs and non-quantifiable benefits will be tracked by way of interim and post project audits conducted with the centre operator and residential occupiers.

Arrangements for Tracking and Reporting Benefits Through Delivery

6.9.7 The tracking and reporting of benefits through delivery will be closely tied into the formative, interim and summative evaluation process described below. This will be based on defining what needs to be measured against each type of benefit and the method of doing so. Key mechanisms to be established in the regard will include:

- i) Recording additional jobs created as a result of the scheme
- ii) Surveys and focus groups amongst users of the heritage museum and flexible leisure space
- iii) Surveys amongst local residents
- iv) Interviews with partner bodies such as the Arts Council and the Heritage Fund
- v) Interviews with local commercial property agents and developers.

6.9.8 These activities will be built into the benefits realisation plan and scheduled accordingly. The plan will then presented to the town development board for review and approval.

High Level Strategy for Monitoring and Evaluating Benefits Realisation

6.9.9 Internally the project will be subject to continual evaluation and monitoring through the governance structures and arrangements outlined above. It is intended that key milestones are built into the programme to monitor the tracking of projected outputs and outcomes (e.g. at planning consent, start on site, completion).

6.9.10 In parallel, the evaluation will seek to clarify whether the project achieved what it set out to do and what benefits accrued from it from the points of view of a range of stakeholders. Points to be clarified in evaluation to discussions with stakeholders would be:

The Council

- Did the Town Fund help accelerate the development and help meet defined targets?
- Was the money spent wisely and could better value for money had been achieved?
- Has the centre been a catalyst in forming or strengthening partnerships leading to measurably higher levels participation in heritage appreciation, cultural activities and aspiration raising initiatives locally?

General Public:

- How satisfied have users become with the new heritage museum and flexible leisure space?
- What use has been made of the new capacity and of new activities made accessible as part of the new scheme?
- What else did external visitors do in the town centre and how much was spent on food and beverages and other activities there.
- Case studies on experiences of individuals from marginalised groups
- Examples of individual self-advancement that followed on from initial engagement with the project.

Community and Voluntary Sector

- How the existence of and co-location of the heritage centre and flexible leisure space helped enhance the delivery and impacts of community services on targeted groups.

Stevenage Planning and Regeneration Team:

- To what extent has the project helped to build momentum for wider regeneration in the town centre and beyond?
- How have other developments or improvement projects been encouraged as a result of this project?
- To what extent has footfall within the town centre increased since the completion of the project?
- What lessons can be drawn from the policies for operation of the new museum and flexible leisure space?

Building contractors:

- How well was the project programme planned and implemented?
- Was the site preparation implemented adequately?
- How could the implementation process overall have been improved?

6.9.11 The evaluation will determine whether the outputs and non-quantified benefits projected from the project have been delivered. This will partly be evaluated by quantitative measures, monitoring the impact of the project in terms of outputs i.e., the number of residential units, floorspace and jobs that are created. Both core and non-core outputs will be monitored and evaluated by SBC.

Draft recommendations of the Community Select Committee – New Towns Heritage Centre review

Following three formal Committee meetings, an informal meeting and two site visits to other arts centre/museums at Colchester and Milton Keynes the Committee have suggested the following draft recommendations and split them into 5 main key areas of (i) curation and arts programme linked to community engagement and governance; (ii) virtual museums and digital technology linked to the concept of museums without walls; (iii) the building design features linked to the use of technology in the building; (iv) the commercial activity/funding/cost point for entry and (v) developing a hub and spoke approach for arts & historical heritage across the town

From the Members notes of the two site visits on 15 & 22 October and the informal meeting of the Committee on 25 October and the formal meetings of the Committee on 21 September, 3 November and 30 November 2021 the following suggestions and observations were made by Members (*in italics*), which have led to the following draft recommendations:

Curation (Arts programme)/engagement with the community/ Governance structure

Curation

- *Curation - Whatever we come up with has to be a mix of: aspirational, informative, inclusive, accessible and affordable to Stevenage people. It is precisely the curating, archiving and sharing of our local new town heritage, the memories and stories, that is worthy of national and international interest.*
- *Co-curating – MK Museum make use of this, but as well as getting ideas from the public they are keen to give over areas of the museum for the public to take on for a time to fill the space – this sounded like a very positive move that Stevenage Museum should look to investigate*
- *Arts Programme at MK – varied. Initially feedback was that the 3 main collections were too cutting-edge, following extensive public engagement have a more varied programme. Charge for the main exhibitions (£9.50 for adults - if it's free people don't value it – Free Tuesday for MK residents) and free access to café/shop and other non-exhibition areas of the building. – (Charging point discussion)*
- *"I think it would be an asset to have a comparable film of Stevenage showing in the new Hub."*
- Having a unique selling point/exhibition (outside of the New Towns story) could be worth considering – e.g. Mars Rover Space Exploration

Draft Recommendation 1 - Curation (Arts programme)/engagement with the community/ Governance structure:

- (i) Stevenage Museum's curation should continue to be led by the expertise of the Museum Curator and engage with local residents through co-curation projects to provide a mix of: aspirational, informative, inclusive, accessible and affordable museum and arts offers to Stevenage people.

- (ii) As well as a New Towns focus consideration should be given to having a unique selling point/exhibition, outside of the New Towns story, so could be worth considering – e.g. Mars Rover Space Exploration.

Community Engagement

- *Community engagement - The museum fully embraces the beautiful diversity of Colchester. The inclusivity and diversity attract the community to get involved and contribute to the shows and event. The ideas are being drawn from the community of what they want for the museum. They have events for NHS and key workers, refugee action, religious group, people with disability and private groups.*
- *sense of pride and ownership of the museum from the community*
- *Engaged with the community about what they wanted – Important*

Draft Recommendation 2 - Community Engagement:

It is important that whatever is offered at the Museum or any public art that is provided within the Hub that it is accessible to the whole of the community, so engagement with all members of the local diverse community should happen to see what would they like to have included?

Management/Governance Structure

- *Management structure - That requires a Stevenage specific partnership approach between SBC as programme lead and arch facilitator, and arts and heritage voluntary and community groups.*
- *Governance structure - The Chair, Cllr Sarah Mead having heard the feedback from Members and the input from John Mead and Jo Ward stated that the success of future bids will depend on the autonomy of the Heritage Centre. The Chair has suggested that the answer to this could be an Arts Board made up of stakeholders similar to the model of The Town Centre board? In this way SBC would still be a major player but the independent voice of the board would assure investors that independent voices are given equal voice? To this end an Arts and Heritage Board on the lines of the Town Centre Board with a mix of stakeholders could be supported by panels of people who are independent and have specialist arts and heritage expertise from Stevenage, Herts and/or Eastern Region. These could be project or programme specific.*
- *Governance Structure - The museum being its own distinct identity, supported by the Council, needed looking at in detail, as it appears that the museum has had funding bids fail due a lack of independence*
- *Solely reliant on volunteers. Only a few members of staff on the payroll – Yes good to have volunteers but not as dependent as MK Museum*

Draft Recommendation 3 - Management/Governance Structure:

That serious consideration is given by the Executive to the New Towns Heritage Centre's governance arrangements, setting up an independent Arts Board to provide autonomy for the Heritage Centre made up of a mix of stakeholders, similar to the model with the Town Centre Board, an Arts Board could be supported by a panel of people who are independent of the Council and have a specialist arts and heritage expertise from Stevenage, Herts and/or the Eastern Region.

Museum without walls – Use of technology virtual museum and QR codes around the town

- *SBC should be thinking of the concept of “Museums without walls”
Narrative – & Recommendation – Stevenage should aspire to examples - Bristol Know Your Place / historyPin.co.uk / Coventry digital – This shows old maps overlaid over new maps and has various tabs and icons that when clicked on reveal local history of the place, who lived there (Blue Plaque), conservation areas, local authority planning history, audio archive of oral history, photos which the public can add their own records to so it democracies the process.*
- *A dedicated website for the Museum is vital*
- *The Chair stated that the walks/QR codes idea was excellent and officers should consider getting this started ahead of the outcome of the Towns Deal bid process to show the intent of the Council.*
- *Separate funding bid for website software - Jo Ward, Stevenage Museum Curator stated that duplication of effort was a danger as many websites overlap their offer. The cost of the software was in the region of £8.5k, the Chair stated that a possible route to this could be in part bids to Members Local Community Budgets (LCBs), and suggested that Jo contact Paula Mills to enquire about the details. Other routes could be approaching large companies based in Stevenage to see if they can support this heritage project.*
- *Digital collections via a web portal - Jo Ward stated that she was interested in the examples provided by John Mead to pull together digital collections via a web portal where people can access all they need for social history in one place*
- *The pandemic showed that people want to access info and some experiences online*
- *Only 10% of a museum’s physical collection can be seen at a time*
- *There are reasons why you might want to not handle documents physically due to their fragile nature*

Draft Recommendation 4 - Museum without walls – Use of technology virtual museum and QR codes around the town:

- (i) That the Executive consider, as well as a physical New Towns Heritage Centre as part of the new Civic Hub building in the regenerated Town Centre, pursuing the concept of “Museums without walls”. This could include providing funding from the Towns Deal fund or Members Local Community Budgets (LCB) towards a dedicated website for the Museum that is independent of the Council’s website. It was quoted that with the existing Council website to have compressed digital photos with the current provider would cost in the region of £8.5k. This initiative could be pursued in parallel to the main Towns Deal bid/New Towns Heritage Centre, and would incorporate QR codes around the town. The “Museum without walls” concept would include a strong web presence similar to the examples shown at Bristol Know Your Place, which included digital collections via a web portal and was very interactive for users. It was suggested by the AD Communities & Neighbourhoods that a “museums without walls” bid to external funding bodies would be more likely to be successful if it was a joint bid with other New Towns, so it is recommended that it is pursued in this way.
- (ii) That the Executive considers approaching the City Design Group regarding purchase of the digital maps of areas revealing history through the ages to reveal what the area/town looked like in the past, which could be linked to the joint bid above.

Building – design features – use of technology in the building

- *Design features - The wall dividers that can make the room smaller or bigger according to the needs.*
- *Environmental and Energy saving - t's expensive to run with the cost of energy bills due to materials used (lighting and others) and lack of Solar Panel. This is something that was significantly highlighted for us to think and plan well.*
- *Design features - keen on the touch screen information that were in use at Colchester Castle Museum*

Design features –

- *The Museum space would have to be agreed in advance with the permanent exhibit areas well thought through so that the Museum doesn't get crowded out by other uses*
- *Having a mixed use/flexible building is very useful so moveable internal walls would be very favourable*
- *Had QR codes to give information of the gallery viewing you were entering. The gallery had tablets on the wall to give further information and to provide interactivity.*

Milton Keynes:

- *Gallery in city centre but in my opinion not well advertised around the shopping mall where it was next to - *Signage and visual clues to where the building is and what's in it will be important*
- **MUST HAVE A CAFÉ**
- *Design features - Cinema – Both sites visited at Colchester and Milton Keynes had a cinema which provided a great Arts asset and way of making income. Both have a contract with Curzon for the cinema – varied programme including family orientated programme as well as art house. If possible would be a very good feature for Hub/New Town's Heritage Centre as this makes money and pays for other activities.*
- *Design features – Environmental Carbon Neutral Building*
- *Key feature of the new build part of the Museum will be use of digital images. The example below on the left is from Milton Keynes Museum and on the right is what a possible space image linked to Stevenage's space industry could look like*



Draft Recommendation 5 - Building – design features – use of technology in the building:

- (i) That the Executive consider as part of the New Towns Heritage Centre 21st Century design features. The building should have the highest possible environmental credentials and be a carbon neutral building and incorporate the use of technology in the building. The building should incorporate:
- Have a mixed use/flexible building with wall dividers that can make the room smaller or bigger according to the needs
 - Provide touch screen information points
 - Provide digital images as visitors walk through different spaces – (example provided of Mars Rover space vehicle)
 - The Museum space should be agreed in advance with the permanent exhibit areas well thought through so that the Museum doesn't get crowded out by other uses
 - A small seated cinema would be very desirable feature as a draw for visitors as well as an income stream. Members are aware that this would be an expensive capital outlay but could be a major asset in the future
 - Lessons from the sites visited showed the value of having an on-site Café as a place for people to visit and provide a positive user experience

Commercial activity/Funding/Cost point for entry

- *Cost Entry Fee - free entry museum to encourage everyone to visit but there's a bank card tap station for donations. contactless payment/donation points*
- *Commercial activity - events, theatre (livestream) and other activities that raised money*
- *Commercial activity - There should be places in the building for commercial activity with a profit share with the Council. This could include small start-up linked businesses to provide spaces to sell their services such as on site catering etc. and spaces for new/young artists to display their work and sell it*
- *Hiring out of the building at specific times could be an option for extra income if it is seen as being a desirable space for events etc. so the design/architecture needs to be very attractive as well as environmentally friendly- (make this a selling point)*
- *Should run at least at break-even "wash its face" and not rely on a large subsidy such as Firstsite has*

Narrative - The Community use of the building and engagement with content and activities was very good but the core activities/financial offer needs to be as secure as possible to make this possible

- *Funding - go directly to the big companies, and major developers, under their corporate social responsibility agendas for grants and sponsorship*
- *Commercial activity - careful consideration of the future revenue funding options, some of this could come from commercial activity as well as private hire events and functions but she favoured the core offer to remain free with community*

activities supported and the option to seek support from the business community should be a recommendation to be pursued.

- *MUST HAVE A CAFÉ*
- *Narrative - What we need is a successful Museum that provides a gallery, business incubator, cinema and café that enables us to tell the story of Stevenage.*

Draft Recommendation 6 - Commercial activity/Funding/Cost point for entry:

- (i) That the Executive consider the possible Commercial activities associated with the New Towns Heritage Centre. During the site visits Members were taken with the crucial role that various commercial activities can do to support the users of the building: This could include:
 - Irrespective of the whether free or not for entry, contactless payment/donation points for bank card use should be provided at various points around the building
 - events, theatre (livestream) and other activities that raised money for other non – commercial activities in the Heritage Centre
 - There should be places in the building for commercial activity with a profit share with the Council. This could include small start-up linked businesses to provide spaces to sell their services such as on site catering etc. and spaces for new/young artists to display their work and sell it
 - Hiring out of the building at specific times could be an option for extra income
 - Officers supported by Members should go directly to the big companies, and major developers, under their corporate social responsibility agendas for grants and sponsorship
 - There should definitely be a Café that is either run in-house to provide income for the building or is run under a profit share by a tenant to bring in income
 - Having a unique selling point/exhibition (outside of the New Towns story) could be worth considering – e.g. Mars Rover Space Exploration (linked to recommendation 5)

Funding Bids:

- (ii) Linked to the suggestions for joint funding bids that are detailed under Use of technology – museums without walls at recommendation 4, the Executive are asked to appraise the feasibility of museums without walls and to explore funding steams with potential partners.
- (iii) That the Executive consider approaching the 20th Century Society for a bid to support and promote the 20th Century building heritage of the New Town.
- (iv) That there be a bid to English Heritage with reference to the Fairlands Valley Farmhouse as part of Stevenage’s Cultural Heritage linking it to its pre-New Towns history and heritage, to preserve the building and make it part of Stevenage’s heritage offer, incorporating artefacts from the Museum’s collection depicting past trades and farming and utilising it as a venue for school workshops.

Developing a hub and spoke approach for arts & historical heritage across the town

- *Hub and Spoke - We should maybe adopt a hub and spokes model that makes best use of our CNM and Play Services infrastructure, i.e. in our neighbourhoods, as well as the few remaining historic structures like Fairlands Valley Farmhouse, even Rooks Nest (E.M.*

Forster)

Draft Recommendation 7 - Developing a hub and spoke approach for arts & historical heritage across the town:

That the Executive consider continuing a hub and spoke model which makes best use of our CNM and Play Services infrastructure, i.e. in our neighbourhoods which would support the main hub core offer at the New Towns Heritage Centre.

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2021

Community Stakeholder consultation report for Stevenage Museum



Claire Adler

Heritage Consultant:

Learning, Community, Development

07970671965

claire@claireadler.co.uk

www.claireadler.co.uk

Contents

Contents.....	1
1. Executive Summary.....	2
2. Consultation findings.....	3
2.1. Introduction.....	3
2.2. Findings.....	3
2.2.1. Current audiences.....	3
2.2.2. Future audiences.....	5
2.2.3. Barriers to engagement.....	5
2.2.4. The current museum.....	6
2.2.5. What does not work well for the current museum.....	6
2.2.6. The new museum.....	7
2.2.7. Potential ways of working together.....	13
2.2.8. Physical infrastructure.....	15
2.2.9. The most important elements to take forward.....	15
3. Implications.....	17
3.1 Building.....	17
3.2 Museum content.....	17
3.3 Programming.....	18
3.4 Staff, volunteering and resources.....	18
3.5 Promotion and publicity.....	19
4. Next steps.....	19
3. Appendix A: Attendees.....	20

1. Executive Summary

'The heart of a town lies in its people'

Stevenage Museum is a hidden gem just outside the town centre; hidden beneath a church and beyond a dual carriageway. But it is a place where people gather to tell their stories, learn about their town and their neighbours' histories, to share life experiences, to learn, grow and have fun. Stevenage has received funding to move the museum to the town centre, to a new building that it can share with community partners which will bring it to life, update the displays and share stories and experiences with the wider community.

To support the museum's move this consultation was commissioned to understand what community stakeholders with a vested interest in Stevenage Museum, value about the current museum and the guiding principles that should be taken forward for the new museum. Therefore, thirty three community stakeholders attended one of three focus groups in November 2021.

The findings of these meetings are outlined in detail below but the essence of the findings are that the new Stevenage Museum should be a community asset based on the ground floor of the new building, with additional staff and resources, to tell the story of Stevenage contextualised by the story of New Towns. The community stakeholders want the museum to be interactive, co-created, developed and delivered in collaboration with the local community and embodying the 'pioneering' spirit of Stevenage.

'The heart of a town lies in its people' is the motto on Stevenage's coat of arms; a phrase that was recounted a number of times in the consultation as the guiding principle for how Stevenage Museum is currently delivered and how it should be delivered in its new home in the centre of its town.

2. Consultation findings

2.1. Introduction

In November 2021 thirty three community stakeholders attended one of three focus groups to understand what they value about the current Stevenage Museum and what they would like from the new Stevenage Museum. A full list of attendees can be found in Appendix A, but they covered a cross section of the local community stakeholders, including museum and council staff, volunteers, councillors, artists, university lecturers, teachers, community leaders and business owners. The one thing they had in common was that they all had a deeply held commitment to and love of the museum.

The sessions were held on a weekday afternoon, a weekday evening and a Saturday morning to ensure that as many people as possible could attend.



3

2.2. Findings

Below are the combined findings of the three focus groups. It must be noted that all the attendees were current stakeholders, their commitment to the museum and the impact it can have is reflected in their comments, and this is echoed in the very similar responses to the questions by each of the focus groups.

2.2.1. Current audiences

To facilitate the groups to think about what the museum currently offers, a list of the existing audiences was developed. These lists have been amalgamated below:

Formal education:

- Mostly primary schools
- Limited secondary schools
- Outreach, including loans boxes
- Arts Award
- 6th Form
- University Students

Claire Adler

Heritage Consultant: Learning, Community, Development

Families:

- Under 5s
- Under 8s – it was noted that there had been a decrease in age for family workshops since the beginning of the Covid 19 pandemic
- Birthday parties

Volunteers:

- Adults
- People with additional needs
- 6th Form and University students
- Teenagers

Community groups

- Drop in visits
- Workshops
- Projects
- Meetings
- Outreach, including loans boxes

Elders

- Volunteers
- Events
- Community groups – dementia groups, Age Concern etc

4

Specialist interest groups and researchers particularly of

- New Towns
- Family heritage
- Social history
- The Vincent motor bike

Tourists

- Overseas visitors from the nearby Hotel
- Day trippers, particularly during the Covid 19 pandemic

General visitors

- New residents to Stevenage, to understand the context of the town.

Social media and the website were felt to target across all of these audiences.

The audiences that were felt to cut across these core audiences were people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and also people of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic heritage.

'It is amazing the diversity of the audience that is coming through the doors here, given the current location... it is important to recognise what a huge shift translating this place, with its ethos, collections and staff will be for the new museum.'

2.2.2. Future audiences

Having ascertained the current audiences for Stevenage Museum, the participants were shown the following breakdown of the demographic of Stevenage residents, based on the 2011 census.

- Dominant adult age group is 34 – 49 years old
- Dominant child age group is 0-4 year olds
- 53% have no dependent children in their family; 47% do
- 12% of people living in Stevenage are from a Black, Asian or mixed ethnic group
- 7% are limited a lot and 9% are limited a little in their day-to-day activities by ill health or disability
- C2/D/E households make up 48% of households in the target area, compared with 40% of households in the base area
- 22% have achieved Level 4 qualifications and above (e.g. Higher Education/Higher diploma) and 22% have achieved no qualifications
- 45% economically inactive people in Stevenage are retired, 19% looking after home or family and 13% are long-term sick or disabled.

As a result, the participants were asked to identify who the new museum should target in addition to the core audiences outlined above. These lists have been amalgamated below:

- Passers-by – these are very limited with the current location
- People of Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic heritage through community groups and as individuals
- Possibly 12 to 18 year olds through volunteering programmes such as Duke of Edinburgh
- 19 to 24 year olds through volunteering programmes
- More young professionals, or working 30 to 49 year olds, who do not have children
- Pub goers – people who do not see museums as relevant to their lives but are interested in local history
- People with mental and physical ill health
- People without qualifications
- People within a one hour travel time of Stevenage, this will include Hertfordshire, north London and into Cambridgeshire.
- Coach tours
- Retired adults
- Transport enthusiasts

5

These audiences were used to frame the thinking of the purpose of the new Stevenage Museum.

However further work is needed with the museum staff to work out which of these audiences need to be the target audiences for the new museum, and what the space, programming and storytelling implications will be for the museum.

2.2.3. Barriers to engagement

Some of the barriers to engage with the museum that were discussed included:

- the dual carriageway;
- being within a church;
- perceptions of museums 'being for posh people' – although it was noted that 63% of families participating in an event at the museum said that they hadn't visited a museum before;

- perceptions that potential visitors will not see representations of themselves, or people who look like them in the museum.

2.2.4. The current museum

The focus groups were asked what they valued most about the current museum, that should be carried into the new museum. Their responses can be summarised as: the staff and their methodology of being community focused and responsive to their communities needs.

However, the following elements were discussed:

- The staff and volunteers are viewed as a significant asset to the museum.
- The museum is seen as warm and friendly:

'It is free, it is warm and people can get a drink. That is a really important thing for the town as there are so few places you can go now that you can sit if you need somewhere to sit and not have to spend money.'

'I think it has an alternative appeal, a bit fringy, alternative, not clinical, approachable and not like the rest of the town and that would be nice if it was kept in the new museum.'

- The formal and informal education programmes for families and schools that are developed and delivered to meet the needs of the audiences.
- The temporary exhibition programme developed in collaboration with the local community.
- The willingness of staff to collaborate and to be responsive to the needs of the audiences.
- The collaboration with local artists and art organisations *'...is outstanding'*.
- The use of local experts for the delivery of programmes, such as Alan Ford.
- The extensive and inclusive volunteer programme.
- Outreach projects such as reminiscence work.
- That events can spill outside into a green space outside the museum [see comment later though as well].
- The facilities that enable visitors to research areas of interest.
- A place to understand yourself within the context of the history of Stevenage.

'Because it is a New Town, a lot of us don't roots here... they came in as pioneers and that creates a different mindset... I was always looking for a bit of extra roots, and that is what a museum can do.'

- The fascinating objects that are used to tell the story of Stevenage

2.2.5. What does not work well for the current museum

The focus groups were asked what does not work so well for the current museum and needs to be changed for the new museum. The key issues that were discussed were that the publicity and promotion need improvement, as well as the opening times and staff and financial resources.

It must be noted that these stakeholders, all of whom were very committed to the museum, felt that the museum was currently doing a wonderful job, but the discussions included:

- The current level of resources and staff in the museum is a significant issue:

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Heritage Consultant: Learning, Community, Development

'The current budgets must be the absolute minimum – they cannot deliver more on what they currently have.'

'They are currently underfunded and need more staff, which will cost more.'

'The new museum needs more resource and more funding. To be a new museum that is best at what it is, it will need more resource and money... I don't see how you can deliver this new level of development without more resources.'

- The location of the current museum is not appropriate for a public/ tourist site.
- The opening times are not long enough – in terms of the days it is open and the hours it is open for:

'If it is not open every day in the town centre then we have got it wrong... and it needs to be open one or two evenings a week.'

- The current museum cannot accommodate large groups, such as the local three-class entry primary schools.
- There is not a social space for people to stop and spend time in the museum.
- The museum spaces are not currently appropriate for hiring out:

'No one will pay to hire this space' [education room in current museum].

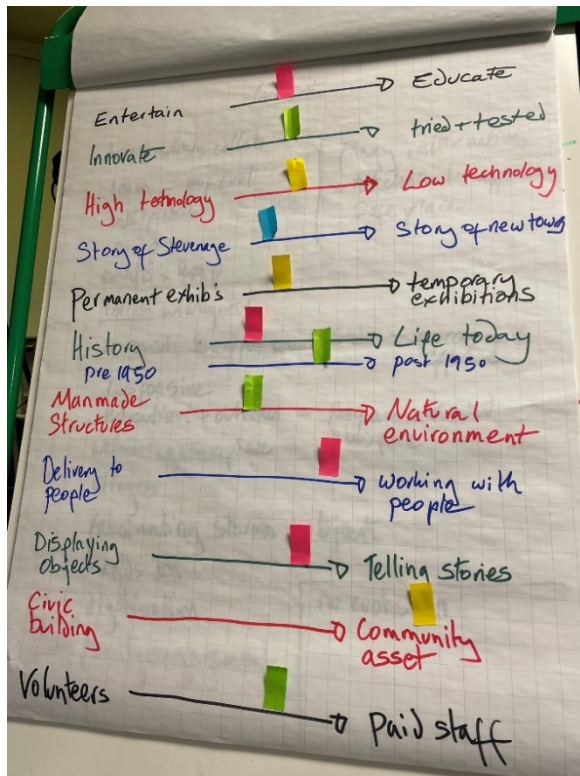
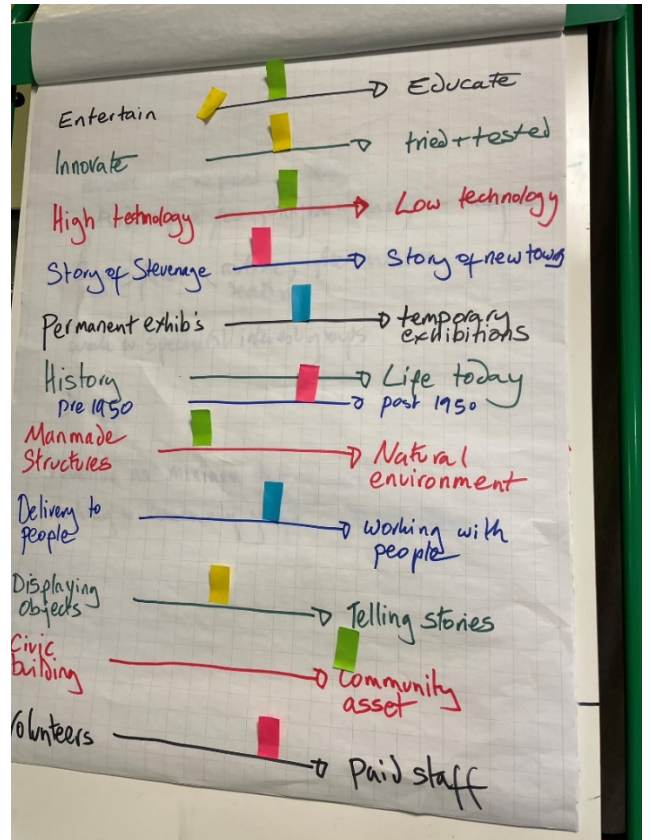
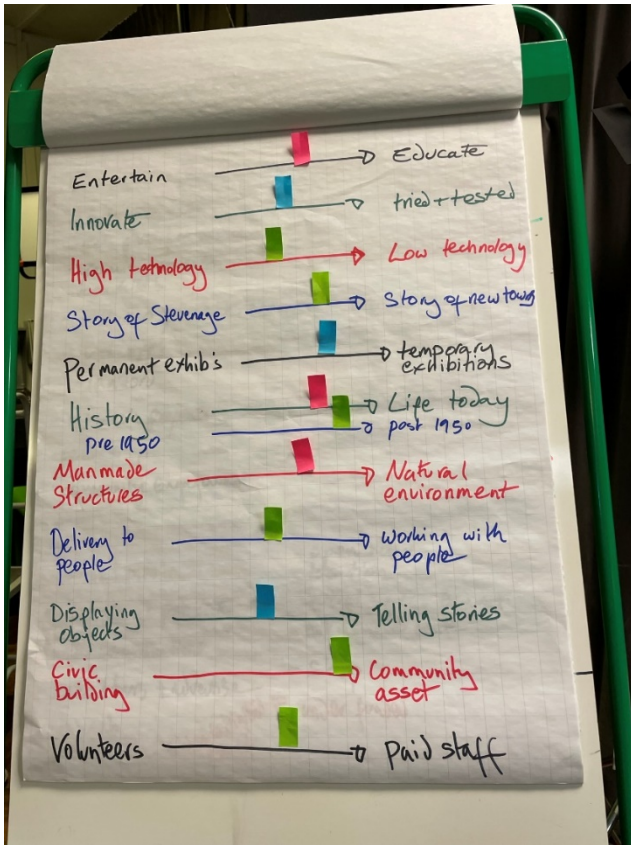
- The current outside space cannot be used:

'We don't need to take the junkies with us... we can't use the outside space here because there are sharps out there.'

- There is not a space for film showings with high quality sound.
- The layout of the museum is confusing.
- The museum is not as interactive as it could be.
- There is poor IT infrastructure in the museum.
- The social media and marketing could be more effective.
- The website needs to be improved.
- There is a minimal digital offer, including virtual tours.
- The shop is in a corridor, hard to see what is for sale and is not effective for enticing people to buy anything. They also only have a budget of £200 a year.
- There is not a Friends of Stevenage Museum.

2.2.6. The new museum

Discussions were held about the starting principles of the new museum. The groups were asked where a pointer should go between two binary statements, with each statement being discussed before the pointer was finalised. Below are three photos of the final sliders. They show that there was generally agreement across the three groups that give some very strong indicators of the guiding principles for the museum for the current stakeholders.



To make the decisions about where the pointers should be placed there were some interesting discussions that explain the thinking behind the placements.

All the focus groups felt that the museum needed to use **entertainment to educate** people about the content of the museum, and as such education and entertainment were equally important:

'Good education is entertaining.'

'If you get them in by entertaining them, they are more likely to come back.'

'The secret is to educate people without them realising it.'

The participants generally felt that the museum needed to use the **tried and tested methods** of engagement and developing and delivering museum displays, but there had to be some **innovation** as well. The pride that the local community have in being a 'pioneering' town needs to be visible in the museum, not just through the displays but also in how they are displayed. Therefore, some new techniques need to be developed, but people also need to know that they will also be able to see objects and stories that they are already familiar with. This can also be summarised as there is interest in the museum developed with low risk strategies but there is a commitment to some risk in its development.

'Tried and tested works but you do need to push boundaries because history is a changing thing.'

'If you don't innovate you can often fall behind.'

'The curator needs to listen to the community to see what is possible.'

'While we have a new building, a new museum ... we really should be innovating.'

'Innovation could alienate people.'

'You might have some audiences that you are working really well with at the moment, so you need to be careful not to move away from how you work with them.'

'In a town there is a tendency to go for tried and tested but ... culturally Stevenage has an incredible legacy of pioneering creativity, underpinned by social progress and this needs to be reflected in the development of the museum.'

There is, inevitably, caution about using high **technology** in terms of costs and maintenance with many people citing concerns about museum interactives being broken and seeing blank screens. But there is a need for high technology, such as computer interactives, as a means for storytelling, particularly to engage younger visitors. There was also interest in using personal hand held devices to access further information rather than risk having lots of screens that are broken.

'Low technology portals to engage with high technology stories... you shouldn't have to be tech savvy to understand how exciting the tech is.'

'As time goes on high technology can become low technology... it can become obsolete.'

'The young only really engage electronically... it is trying to be open to different types of engagement and opportunities.'

'There needs to be as much interaction as possible – people will spend more time in the museum if they are engaged.'

Claire Adler

Heritage Consultant: Learning, Community, Development

'When families come, they want to interact with each other and not with a screen. It is about putting your phone away when you are here. But I also think there are smart ways of using your phone and technology that allow people to access deeper into the stories. We need to use tech smartly.'

There was significant discussion about whether the museum should focus on the **history of Stevenage** or **the story of the New Towns**. Although many people want the New Towns story told, overall there was a feeling that the museum should be focused on the story of Stevenage but contextualised in the New Town story. There is also aspiration for the museum to have a national reach, although there is understanding that logistically meeting the Arts Council's accreditation standards for a National Museum would be preventative. Some of the participants therefore felt that the story of New Towns could be told through temporary exhibitions or through a space that is delivered in partnership with the library and archives.

'We should be the First New Town Museum.'

'Could we have a Museum of Stevenage but a separate room of archives or study centre for New Towns... that flows into the library service.'

'It needs to have a national reach...'

'The existing Stevenage has to be told and the roots of the people need to go back into the old town... we should not forget the origins of Stevenage.'

'If it doesn't tell the story of old Stevenage from Neolithic times then it is criminal; it is all context.'

'The history of Stevenage should be the starting point, and the new town next but then heavily contextualising that to look at the bigger picture.'

'Instead of being a national, which is a red flag for me, we could become a centre for the study of New Towns. Basically, I want us to become bigger than we currently are but we have to be realistic.'

'My ambition is that there would be a museum of New Towns that would be an international destination.'

All the focus groups agreed that the museum should not be entirely made up of **temporary exhibitions**. Instead, there should be **permanent displays** that tell the story of Stevenage and the New Towns with additional temporary exhibition spaces that have touring and community developed exhibitions.

'I like the idea of temporary exhibitions and I have been to St Albans, and I don't think it is a success and they have three times the staff that we have... instead our spaces need to be flexible and adaptable.'

'You need some items that are on permanent display ... that are like your favourite slippers.'

'We have to work well with our space, team and funding and having a temporary exhibition based museum really doesn't make sense.'

'The temporary exhibition gives you scope for the innovation.'

'Some exhibitions that are touring have a real wow factor. We currently can't host larger touring exhibitions, but it definitely would be an aspiration for us.'

'We need a strong permanent space but would be good to have a big space for temporary exhibitions that could last four or five months and also a smaller space that is used with communities.'

'My instinct is that the temporary exhibitions should be free because otherwise we would have to staff it and also it would exclude some people.'

'If there are high profile temporary exhibitions there will need to be secure storage and also appropriate goods lift to get them to the 1st floor.'

'There should be a space where you can sit and have a cup of tea and not look at an exhibition space.'

One of the groups felt that there should be an emphasis on **history**, whereas the other two felt that **life today** was the best way to engage audiences in the history of Stevenage. On further discussions all groups felt that the emphasis and focus on the museum should be on post 1950s history. In one of the groups, it was discussed that using the archaeology of the new town could be a way of telling the story of the old town.

'It needs to resonate with people ... the more it is up to date the more people will be able to relate to the history.'

'Most people who live in Stevenage don't care about the new town identity... I think the youngsters don't think about the pioneering spirit, it is beginning to be a distant past.'

'To have a community group using it today it must be relevant to their lives.'

'As a new resident I am personally fascinated by Stevenage's 20th century history.'

'Reminiscing and nostalgia are important.'

'If you don't understand the past, how will you understand the present?'

'We don't need much on Roman and Anglo Saxon era as they are not Stevenage.'

'Use the new town to tell the story of the old town through the archaeology.'

'It is easier to engage with people with growing up in Stevenage in the 1970s than farming in the 1760s or Neolithic pot fragments.'

'If you focus on the past, it excludes a lot of people who won't see themselves in that past. They won't see themselves in that history.'

'We are all immigrants, everyone who came to the new town, has moved from across the UK, and far far further.'

'You have to be really careful that it doesn't become too stale and turn it into a museum that only academics come to.'

The balance of understanding the history of the **manmade structures** and the **natural environment** was felt to be one that the museum could address. It was felt that the green spaces in Stevenage were as important as the buildings and the museum's role could be to get people to value the green spaces.

'Over Covid it has proven that nature and environment is really important, and it is important that the museum reflects that.'

'The ethos of the new town was about healthy living, allotments and things like that and that needs to be included in the displays.'

'One of the problems we have with the town is that people associate New Towns with concrete buildings.'

'It doesn't matter whether it is the man made buildings or the natural environment – it is the people and their stories that will bring anything we put in the museum alive.'

When asked if the museum should be **delivering to people**, through talks and exhibitions or **working with people**, to develop projects and co-create exhibitions, there was significant interest in working with people, but it was also acknowledged that some people prefer to simply access information. Therefore, the museum must continue its work with the community whilst also delivering information for those people that do not want to be so deeply engaged with the museum. As a result, there will need to be a mixture of project and co-creation work and also exhibitions and events that people can just drop into.

'You have to do both to be inclusive for everybody.'

'It is all about developing the key relationships with people ... you need to be focussed on a modern way of work... people feel more connected if they are engaged.'

'Working with people is resource heavy.'

'We need a range of offer according to the different audiences we want to work with and attract.'

12

All the groups felt that the **objects** are in the museum as a tool for **telling stories**, they are not there to be admired as objects of beauty (apart from the motorbike!) but are generally seen as a way of getting people to understand the stories of people and place.

'They go hand in hand... display objects in a way that tells stories.'

'You need to know the stories to understand the object.'

'It is the context and the people that makes the museum.'

'You tell the story of the displayed objects.'

'That is something we do well now – you can physically interact with our objects, you can play in the 1950s kitchen and pull down the pans.'

The overwhelming consensus was that the Stevenage Museum of the future needed to continue the work they have been doing by being a **community asset**. rather than a place for telling the **civic story**. This is key to how the museum needs to be developed and delivered in the future as it is about developing and delivering the museum for and with the local communities.

'It needs to be civic funded, for the community.'

'That is the advantage – you can complain about the boiler and find out your history at the same time!'

'That is the way the majority of our staff think – they are providing a service to the people of Stevenage. It is a facility for the people.'

'Stevenage's moto is 'The heart of a town lies in its people' and the museum needs to be showing this.'

There was a unanimous agreement that the museum needs **paid staff** to make and manage the museum a professional, high quality organisation, but **volunteers** are essential to the delivery of the service. There is a need for a Friends of Stevenage Museum to support the museum, staff and recruit volunteers.

'Paid staff are there to do the core stuff that opens the museum, and the volunteers are here to do the nice extras... the volunteers should not have to do the things that aren't nice. They are like your best visitors – they are so committed.'

'But we need more staffing resource than we have now.'

'You need a good solid core [of paid staff] ... if you are too volunteer based the organisation can fall over very quickly.'

'You need to be careful not to devalue the paid staff. We need as many paid staff as possible.'

'You need the paid staff, but you also need the volunteers as the backup.'

'Volunteers need to be supported well.'

'Volunteering offers opportunities for young people ... you have to have experience.'

'Volunteers can't be relied on. They have other lives. They are also wanting to move on and go on holiday!'

'What is important is not if the museum needs the volunteers, but if the volunteers need the museum. They should not rely on the volunteers labour to open.'

'There needs to be a History Society to support the museum.'

2.2.7. Potential ways of working together

The participants were asked how they and their organisations might be interested in working with the new museum.

There is significant belief across all the focus groups that the new Hub building could have a significant impact on Stevenage if the occupants of the building and the wider community of organisations work closely together.

'The strength of the library and museum is they cut across services. With the new Hub there is a real opportunity to do something that is at the forefront of thinking within the cultural sector of working with health partners, MIND, Age Concern – to be able to work with these audiences by collaborating with them is a real opportunity.'

'We know there are not loads of resources to go round but we can collaborate so well. We can be a model of best practice and that is really exciting.'

The Hertfordshire Archives is the official legal depository for the New Town records, and hold the records of the building of Stevenage, Hemel and Harlow. They are very interested in working closely with the museum to tell these stories and also helping with physically moving the museum and the associated archives, as well as digitising the records. Further discussions are needed with the archives staff about how they can work with the museum.

When projects have been developed that work across organisations in and around Stevenage it is acknowledged that the impact can be far larger than the sum of their parts, such as the previous World War I project and suffragette project. As a result, Stevenage Library and Knebworth House are very interested in working more closely with the museum in the future to develop partnership projects.

MIND would like to continue working with the museum because:

'...we now know how important creativity is to people's mental health, and how it can support their recovery. ... if we get the resources, we would definitely be up for working with the museum.'

Junction 7 Creative are very interested in working more closely with the museum:

'A permanent space with the museum would be great. We are creative producers; we are very nimble and new but the way we are working is co-creation that is absolutely embedded in the community and the town centre. ... joining forces [with the museum] we have an amazing potential that joins up as many people as possible, combining heritage learning with creative expression.'

14

There was discussion that there would be a Creator Space, that includes 3D printers, digital cutters etc, similar to the one in [St Albans Library](#) in the new Stevenage Library. This could be utilised by the museum and Junction 7 Creative:

'We will definitely have a Creators Space, as Stevenage is one of the big five libraries in Hertfordshire, and we have been wanting to redevelop for many many years and they will definitely want to make a splash with it.'

There is scope to explore relationships with BeMe Stevenage, the University of Hertfordshire and local artists who attended the focus groups. Partnerships also need to be developed with local companies that can result in exhibitions, events and projects that can explore Stevenage as a science hub and also address climate change and sustainability.

There were discussions that community groups and community leaders need to be paid for their time and expertise, if they are helping to develop the museum in the future:

'People cannot be expected to always give their time for free.'

There is a need for a Library of Things where people/ community based organisations can borrow resources:

'...wouldn't it be wonderful if there was somewhere where you could access to a kiln, a stage etc that people could borrow.'

2.2.8. Physical infrastructure

There is overwhelming consensus that the museum really needs to be on the ground floor to entice people into the building.

'At Harlow the museum and gallery is on top of the council offices, you go in and there is really horrible municipal welcome where someone is complaining about their neighbours guttering. The fun bit is upstairs, but you never get to the fun bit because of what you have to get past first.'

'People with dementia do not like going in lifts. It has to be as simple as possible – from the door handles, to being able to feel walls. There are probably similarities with other people with disabilities... a ramp between floors would be the solution.'

'As long as it is accessible, and can't be difficult to manage, it does not matter if it is on the first floor as well.'

However, there is an issue with accessibility if there is some of the museum on the 1st floor, as not everyone likes using lifts.

'There is also a psychological barrier about going upstairs'

There were discussions about how the building needs to spill out into a safe green space around the museum that can be used for education and entertainment. This space could be in the square, an atrium, internal courtyard or it on the roof of the building:

'You need an outdoor space that you have control over, you can ticket.'

There were discussions that:

- there should also be a contemporary art gallery in the building;
- there does need to be a museum store on site;
- a large lift is needed for the moving objects about;
- the museum needs to be designed with flexible spaces so it can be used in different ways – so there can be live music played in the galleries, or theatre performances around the museum;
- internal signage is going to be key to understanding how the different spaces work in the building;
- the shop needs to be easily visible and have plenty of space for selling books.

The Hub was seen as a space to inspire people's creativity, both through its design and also by having spaces within it that encourage creativity.

'The building needs to be aspirational for children.'

'It would be good to have a space where people can have a creative response to what they have seen.'

Outreach to schools, care homes and businesses will still be needed for people who cannot come to the museum.

2.2.9. The most important elements to take forward

All the groups were asked what the most important element of the discussions were that needed to be taken forward. All of the groups felt the most important aspect of the current and the future

Claire Adler

Heritage Consultant: Learning, Community, Development

Stevenage Museum is that it is and should be a community asset that needs to be based on the ground floor of the building with additional staff and resources telling the story of Stevenage contextualised by the story of New Towns.

3. Implications

From the consultation outlined above the following implications need to be considered for the development of the new Stevenage Museum.

3.1 Building

- There needs to be a museum store onsite that meets [Arts Council Museum Accreditation Standards](#), as well as a larger off site store.
- There needs to be a space for people to do their own research – this will need to be a secure space where documents and objects can be examined.
- There is a need to continue digitising the collections, this will have implications for space and the museum store.
- A green/ outside space is needed for events to be run. This could be in the square outside the museum, an atrium, internal courtyards or it could utilise the roof of the building.
- Ideally the museum would need to accommodate up to 90 school children in one visit in both the museum and the education space.
- There needs to be a space to show films with high quality sound.
- It will be important that the building has the most modern IT infrastructure possible.
- There needs to be a shop that has a reasonable budget for the purchase of goods and books and is designed and delivered so that it will attract visitors.
- The temporary exhibition space could be on the first floor if it has good access, but this space will need to meet Museum Accreditation standards in terms of security and environmental conditions to also enable the Government Indemnity Scheme to be used for the insurance. If the exhibitions are paid for, the space will also need a welcome desk and will need to be staffed.
- If the museum is based over two floors, there will need to be an appropriate goods lift that can carry large items to the first floor.
- The museum will need to be open at least one evening a week with regular events programmed.
- There has to be a Changing Places toilet onsite.

In addition, the following ideas need to be considered:

- having a contemporary art gallery in the building to complement the museum;
- having a ramp that can be used to access the different floors, so that stairs and lifts are not needed;
- having a [Library of Things](#);
- having a space for Junction 7 Creatives in the building.

3.2 Museum content

- The museum must be free and continue the tradition of welcoming all.
- The museum must continue being about, for and with the local community. It may be useful for the museum to join the [Of/By/For all network](#).
- The museum needs to have permanent displays that tell the story of Stevenage contextualised within the New Town's movement.
- The museum displays need to be representative of the local community that live in Stevenage today. People need to come into the museum and see representations of people and places that they can relate to, whether they have lived in the town for generations or only recently moved there.

Claire Adler

Heritage Consultant: Learning, Community, Development

- Although there is a need for a chronological understanding of the history of Stevenage, this could be done through the lens of the New Town and seeing the history of the town through archaeology rather than an incremental time line.
- There needs to be a lot of physical interactivity in the museum but people can delve deeper into the stories by using additional information accessible on their own mobile phones.
- The museum displays need to include interactivity with the objects.
- The museum needs to be easy to navigate with high quality internal signage as well as carefully designed storylines.
- There needs to be a space in the museum where people can stop and reflect and connect to each other. (Possibly similar to the [Wellcome Reading Room](#))
- The displays and information about the New Towns movement could be a space that combines the library, archive and museum, and could link into the space for reflection and connection.
- The museum needs to have two temporary exhibition spaces – one for touring or locally produced or high profile temporary exhibitions and one for exhibitions developed specifically with the local communities. (Possibly similar to [Hackney Museum's](#) temporary exhibitions spaces)
- There is interest in high quality temporary exhibitions that would be in the space for four to five months. There are implications of this around security and if they are paid for, how the reception desk will be managed. Therefore if there is a temporary exhibition space it needs to meet national [Accreditation standards](#) and therefore the [Government Indemnity Scheme](#) for the insurance.
- There needs to be plenty of spaces for people to sit and relax without having to feel that they have to spend money.
- The emphasis on the history of Stevenage means realistically that the museum will not have a target audience of people across the UK, it is more likely to be people within a one hour travel time of the museum or with a specialist interest in New Towns or the local history, such as the Vincent Motorbikes.

3.3 Programming

- The museum needs to continue and grow the current co-creation programme of working with the local communities to understand and tell the stories of Stevenage.
- To attract young professionals and 30 – 49 year olds workers without children an evening events programme will be needed.
- Programmes need to be developed targeting people without qualifications.
- Programming is needed to target those that have an interest in local history but don't feel that the museum is a place for them.
- There is a lot of interest in the museum working with other cultural venues in the local area to create projects on a single theme.
- There are plans for a [Creator Space](#) in the library that the museum needs to negotiate access to so that they can deliver programmes that include high quality making.

3.4 Staff, volunteering and resources

- The current staff and resources are not enough to deliver the current museum; they will both need to grow to deliver the new museum.
- If there is an increase in opening hours and associated events there will need to be an increase in staff accordingly.

- The current volunteers are highly valued and feel integral part of the museum and will be needed in the delivery of the new museum.
- There needs to be a Friends of Stevenage Museum that can access additional funding for the museum and also develop and support new and varied volunteers.
- A Community Steering Group could be established that supports the museum staff and helps to prioritise the future museum.

3.5 Promotion and publicity

- A budget is needed to develop a strong brand for Stevenage Museum and to ensure effective marketing to all the target audiences, including those that will travel up to one hour to visit the museum.
- Training and support is needed in delivering high quality social media and marketing.
- The museum needs to link into the coach tour companies that are currently visiting Stevenage to ensure that the museum is one of the key places they will visit on a tour of Stevenage.

4. Next steps

Further to the consultation there are deeper conversations and consultations needed:

- A workshop with the museum staff to work out exactly who the target audiences are for the new museum and starting points for working out the implications for the museum.
- Consultation with community groups that are not currently using the museum
- Consultation with young people
- Consultation with non-users
- Consultation with people of black, Asian and minority ethnic heritage (this should be cut across the consultations above).
- Consultation with people living with physical and mental ill health.
- Creation of Community Steering Group for the museum, where people are paid for their time.
- Deeper conversations and partnership agreements need to be drawn up with Hertfordshire Archives and Stevenage Library.
- Consultation with all the potential organisations to be housed in the Hub to see how the organisations can be working together for the future and how this could impact the design of the building.

3. Appendix A: Attendees

Alan Ford; Volunteer
Alina Congreve; Trustee at the Harlow Arts Trust
Anji Archer; Artist
Brian Piggott
Christina Anderson; Early Years teacher and SLICE in local platinum Artsmark
Craig Maret; Local film maker
David Martin
Diane Wenham; Wellbeing Services Manager & Stevenage Helps Team Manager
Dora Housham; Senior Museum Assistant
Gary Moyle; Archivist, Herts Archives and Local Studies
Gerry Strohm; Junction 7 Creatives
Getrude Acheampong; BeMe Stevenage/ Black Women in Business Awards (BWB)
Hilary Spiers; Chair of Stevenage Arts Guild
Hugh Madgin; Local historian
Jackie Burton; Volunteer
Jill Wadsworth; Senior Museum Assistant
John Gardner
John Prebble; Director, Junction 7 Creatives
Jo Ward; Museum Manager
Judy Kinnear
Kate Johnston; Learning Officer, Stevenage Museum
Kath Pope; Museum volunteer
Kevin Johnston
Lisle Weekes; Ex-volunteer and trainee secondary school teacher
Martha Lytton Cobbolt; Managing Director, Lytton Enterprises Ltd./Knebworth Estates
Melissa; Volunteer
Michelle Lloyd; Stevenage Library
Nick Mallinger; Cultural Development Officer, Stevenage Borough Council (SBC)
Pam Pellen; recently retired from being head of Drama and Senior Leader in Cultural Education (SLICE) at Barnwell School
Pauline Maryan; Volunteer
Richard Henry
Sam Daisley; Casual Senior Museum Assistant
Sharn Tomlinson; CEO, MIND in mid-Herts

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