

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Commercial Strategy, Estates and Property
Date:	20 July 2021
Title:	Gosport Old Grammar School
Report From:	Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek spend approval to the project proposals to refurbish and enhance the Gosport Old Grammar School heritage museum.

Recommendations

2. That the Executive Member for Commercial Strategy, Estates and Property gives approval to spend on the project proposals to refurbish and enhance the Gosport Old Grammar School heritage museum at a cost of £998,319 to be met from funds held by the Hampshire Cultural Trust.
3. That the Executive Member for Commercial Strategy, Estates and Property Gives approval to enter into a Funding Agreement with the Hampshire Cultural Trust (HCT) to secure the funding needed to implement the project.

Executive Summary

4. This report seeks spend approval to the project proposals for the refurbishment the Gosport Old Grammar School at an estimated total project cost of £998,319.

5. The funding for the project is included in the Culture, Communities and Business Services Capital Programme at a total of £998,319.
6. The Gosport Old Grammar School project will be managed and delivered by Hampshire County Council. The project has been developed by Hampshire Cultural Trust in partnership with the County Council.
7. All funding for the project has been raised by Hampshire Cultural Trust. This funding includes a contribution of £374,000 from the Hampshire County Council Leaders Investment in Hampshire fund.
8. It is proposed to refurbish the building and provide an enhanced heritage museum and café within the existing Grade II listed premises and undertake associated internal improvements. The proposals incorporate external improvements including a new courtyard, a new corridor link and associated landscaping.
9. The redevelopment is intended to be an integral part of the High Street Heritage Action Zone to rebrand the High Street and to reflect a unique, heritage-driven experience that is compelling for residents and visitors.

Contextual Information

10. The Grade II listed Gosport Old Grammar School building is located at the western end of the High Street Conservation Area of Gosport. The building is owned by Hampshire County Council and, until 2018, was operated jointly between Hampshire Library Service as part of the Gosport Discovery Centre campus and by Hampshire Cultural Trust, as part of their SEARCH initiative, providing educational facilities to compliment the nearby Discovery Centre run by Hampshire County Council. Since 2018, HCT have had sole occupation of the building.
11. In mid-2019, Gosport Borough Council carried out a range of consultation activities to improve understanding of the challenges facing Gosport and its High Street. The most significant of which was a perceptions study which resulted in over 700 contributions from residents.
12. Residents recorded having little reason to visit the High Street, whilst seeing town centre living as key to Gosport's future. Residents requested improvements to the high street and to the visitor offer; a sense of place to be created; and new live/work opportunities to be created. Culture and heritage were identified as two of the key themes for driving transformation of the high street.

13. In response to the findings, Hampshire Cultural Trust (HCT) partnered with Gosport Borough Council on the development of a successful bid to Historic England for High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) funding.
14. The HSHAZ redevelopment is intended to deliver the scheme's ambitions to rebrand the High Street to reflect a unique, heritage-driven experience that is compelling for residents and visitors.
15. The redevelopment of the Grade II listed Gosport Old Grammar School building will be a key element in these proposals and add to the historic streetscape reflecting local character; encourage footfall through a more balanced commercial and leisure offer in the town centre; and help to build a strong identity cultivated through heritage, culture, and community engagement.
16. The proposals will create an enhanced heritage museum, café and art hub and are designed to complement the form, character and scale of the original Grammar School building and the historical significance and setting.

Finance

17. As part of the HSHAZ scheme, the redevelopment of the Gosport Old Grammar School was identified as one of two key capital projects and was awarded £467,500 of funding from an Historic England grant.
18. HCT has also secured financial contributions from a range of other funders.
19. In April 2019, HCC funding of £374,000 was allocated to the Gosport Old Grammar School refurbishment from the Leaders Investment in Hampshire Fund, as a grant to HCT.
20. It is proposed that HCC Property Services will manage and deliver the building and fit-out works. It is estimated that the cost of the works is £998,319 including fees.
21. The remainder of the proposed improvement works, primarily exhibition and other fit-out works, are in the order of £430,000 and these will be designed, managed and delivered directly by HCT.

Capital Expenditure:

22. The following tables outline the breakdown of the distribution of capital expenditure across the project.

Capital Expenditure	Current Estimate £'000	Capital Programme £'000
Buildings	866,332	866,332
Fees	131,987	131,987
Total	998,319	998,319

23. Sources of Funding:

Financial Provision for Total Scheme	Buildings £'000	Fees £'000	Total Cost £'000
1. External Funding			
a) Hampshire Cultural Trust	866,332	131,987	998,319
Total	866,332	131,987	998,319

Furniture & Equipment:

Included in the above figures is an allocation of £14,799 for the provision of loose furniture, fittings, equipment and I.T. (inclusive of fees).

Details of Site and Existing Infrastructure

24. The Old Grammar School Museum and Art Gallery is a key destination in the heart of Gosport, conveniently situated at the western end of the High Street. It occupies an iconic Grade II listed building, constructed in 1901, and houses a local museum and public art galleries.

Scope of the Project

25. Hampshire Cultural Trust plan to redevelop Gosport Old Grammar School into Gosport Museum and Art Gallery (GMAG), a vibrant community hub to include a new museum, café, courtyard and refurbished learning spaces. GMAG will support neighbourhood regeneration in Gosport through provision of locally relevant arts and cultural experiences and learning opportunities, continuing the legacy of the Old Grammar School as a place of curiosity and learning.

26. The museum will make Gosport's rich naval, military and social heritage more visible and provide a platform for a greater range of heritage-based participatory and learning programmes, ranging from talks, workshops and

events for adults, to curriculum-linked science and history sessions for schools.

27. A new café will provide a more inviting, inclusive and informal community meeting space. Collections will be integrated throughout the space and diverse audiences will be made to feel welcome, with consideration of dementia friendly and family friendly facilities, and relaxed areas for those with additional needs. A retail offer will provide opportunities for local makers to sell original products alongside Gosport memorabilia.
28. Further targeted community outreach programmes will build on established evidence, using heritage to improve wellbeing, mental health and attainment for all, and specifically for young parents, isolated older people and those who are not in employment, education or training.
29. The proposals have been developed to ensure the building is as accessible as possible within the constraints of the existing building fabric. The building will provide level access from the main High Street Entrance to all public areas, including the Café, Museum, and Gallery spaces. It is also proposed to enhance the accessibility of the toilet accommodation within the building through the inclusion of new accessible toilets and a changing place.

Proposed Building Works

30. The proposed building works comprise:

Museum

- Improved facilities for interpreting and making accessible the extensive local history collections held by HCT.
- Objects from the collections displayed throughout the site.

Gallery

- A new link from the main entrance will be constructed. In order to enhance the connectivity of the Gallery Spaces to the High Street and to the other facilities within the building, it is proposed to create a new link gallery extension, connecting the original High Street library building directly with the gallery wing which is currently only accessed directly off Ordnance Road. The link is designed to maximise views through the building from the High Street entrance, ensuring the Gallery becomes a more accessible and visible public facility.

Café

- A new café offer including a servery and seated areas.
- New loose fixtures, fittings and equipment

Retail / Revenue Generation

- A retail offer will provide opportunities for local makers to sell original products alongside Gosport memorabilia.
- New and improved opportunities for earned income generation will also include spaces for hire.

Other internal

- Toilet refurbishment (public and staff).
- Improved access.
- Signage, branding, wayfinding and graphics.

External Works

31. The new link gallery will enable the creation of an enclosed courtyard garden in the space currently occupied by a car park. This will provide a valuable quiet external space for use by visitors to the building. The provision of a new ramp within the link gallery will enable the removal of the existing ramp and steps to Ordnance Road. Remodelling of this area will provide an increase in the area of soft landscape as well as new concealed bin storage and cycle parking.

Planning

32. The proposals are considered to be low impact and non-contentious. A Listed Building Consent application was made in January 2021 and a decision is anticipated in July 2021.

Construction Management

33. Areas of the building will be closed to the public during the planned building and fit out works. Where areas remain in use during the refurbishment, local arrangements will be put in place to manage the health and safety impact to all users. A full building closure is planned towards the end of the building contract to enable the completion phase of the project including fit out works.

34. The works will be procured through the Hampshire Minor Works Construction Framework. It is anticipated that works will commence on site during the autumn 2021 and complete during summer 2022.

Building Management

35. The building management arrangements with the Hampshire Cultural Trust are currently defined by the licence under which they have occupied the building since April 2019. A lease is currently being finalised by solicitors which will replace this licence.
36. Executive Member approval was granted for a lease term of 25 years at a peppercorn rent.
37. External and structural repairs will remain the responsibility of the County Council with internal repair, decoration and the maintenance of landscaping resting with the Trust.
38. Hampshire Cultural Trust will not be permitted to assign or underlet the premises under the terms of the lease.
39. The Cultural Trust will be responsible for the payment of all business rates and utilities.
40. Alterations to the building will only be permitted subject to consent from the County Council.

Professional Resources

41. Chargeable professional resources for the project are:

i. Architectural/Interior Design	HCC Property Services
ii. Mechanical & Electrical	HCC Property Services
iii. Structural Engineering	HCC Property Services
iv. Quantity Surveying	HCC Property Services
v. Principal Designer	HCC Property Services

Consultation and Equalities

42. At the outset of the project HCT engaged cultural researchers to undertake a panel survey to assess the interest and in and priorities for a redevelopment of the Old Grammar School site. Over 990 people responded. Participants were asked to rank their interest in a range of facilities, with the museum (74%), café and bar (70%), and shop (63%) emerging as the three top facilities prospective visitor were most likely to use. The study also showed with the proposed changes, the redeveloped site had an estimated annual visitor potential of 42,000, more than double current visitor numbers.
43. Following this study HCT has run further focus groups and surveys to better understand the needs and interests of the local community. Focus group

respondents identified the venue's potential to foster a sense of pride in Gosport and serve community needs.

44. In January 2021 two new long-term community engagement programmes commenced; a community reference group will be established to represent the interest of key audiences for the redevelopment; and a community story group will be established to develop the displays and interpretation in the museum.
45. HCT is also consulting with Arts Council England (ACE) to ensure the redevelopment allows accreditation of the gallery and museum for the collection to be maintained with the works planned.
46. The following have also been involved and consulted during the development of this project,
 - Hampshire Cultural Trust
 - Gosport Borough Council
 - Friends of Gosport Museum
 - Historic England
 - Arts Council
 - Gosport Borough Council Conservation Team
 - Hampshire County Council Fire Team
 - Hampshire County Council Access Team
 - Hampshire County Council Planning Officer
 - Hampshire County Council Highways Officer
 - Hampshire County Council Ecology Team
 - Hampshire County Council County Archaeologist

Risk & Impact Issues

Fire Risk Assessment

47. With respect to fire safety and property protection, the proposals have been risk assessed in line with the agreed Property Services procedures and the proposals will comply with relevant legislation.
48. The proposals will meet the requirements of the Building Regulations and are consistent with current fire safety legislation, the partnership arrangement with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Services, and are in line with the County Council's policy to manage corporate risk.

Health and Safety

49. Design risk assessments, pre-construction health and safety information and a Health & Safety File will be produced in accordance with the Construction Design and Management Regulations for the proposed scheme.

Climate Change

50. Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.
51. The Adaptation Project Screening Tool identifies that in extreme circumstances, strong winds, storm events and heat waves arising from Climate Change in the future, could have the potential to affect the use of the building, but generally the scheme is considered to have low vulnerability to climate change.
52. The carbon mitigation tool does not calculate emissions for refurbishment projects so is not applicable. However, the project will incorporate the following features to reduce energy consumption and mitigate the impact of climate change:
- New lights will be energy efficient LED
 - Timber will be sustainably sourced.
 - A site waste management plan will be developed to ensure the principles of minimising waste are maintained during construction.
53. The project is important for meeting Hampshire County Councils' strategic priorities, including economic growth and contributing towards strong, resilient and inclusive communities in the following ways:
54. Strategic Outcome 1: Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity.
- The new Gosport Museum and Gallery HCT will create new job opportunities in arts and creative programming, as well as new operational roles.
 - The enhanced cultural programme delivered by HCT will offer new learning experiences focusing on life skills, literacy and creative practice, helping people to develop and maintain skills.

- The capital works will improve the quality and quantity of cultural experiences on offer and will improve the long-term financial sustainability of both organisations.

55. Strategic Outcome 2: People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives.

- The capital works will provide more opportunities for engagement with local families by improving the dedicated area for younger children (ages 0-11) and improving the play gallery with space for facilitated activities.
- The venue offers learning opportunities for school aged children and their families, and provides a range of resources to support young people outside of the classroom.
- Gosport Museum and Gallery will bring together broad cross sections of the community, and provide spaces and events that enable shared experiences.
- Gosport Museum and Gallery will provide free leisure and cultural experiences to residents and visitors.
- Hampshire Cultural Trust will engage with under-represented and hard-to-reach communities to improve opportunities for these groups to actively participate in all aspects of culture and learning in a familiar space.

56. Strategic Outcome 3: People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment.

- A significantly expanded cultural programme will meet visitors' needs and interests throughout their lifetime.
- Gosport Museum and Gallery is a Grade-II listed building that situated on Gosport's High Street and forming part of the High Street Heritage Action Zone. Proposed capital works will refresh and enhance the current space in a sympathetic way and in accordance with relevant listed building consents.

57. Strategic Outcome 4: People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities.

- The venue will be an important cultural hub, providing a safe, accessible, and inclusive space for individuals and groups to meet, learn and discover.

Equalities

58. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been prepared. The proposals are intended to have an overall positive impact and advance equality for members of the public.

Conclusions

59. That the Executive Member for Commercial Strategy, Estates and Property gives approval to spend, enter into the necessary contractual arrangements to implement the project and enter into a Funding Agreement with the Hampshire Cultural Trust to deliver the project.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u> Executive Member for Policy and Resources Report	<u>Date</u> 24 April 2019
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

3. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been prepared. Overall this project has a positive impact on equalities, especially for the following protected characteristics:

- **Disability:** the venue will be accessible and will provide free leisure and cultural experiences. Where paid opportunities are offered, free tickets are available to carers. A Changing Places toilet will be built as part of the redevelopment. The venue will also provide meeting places for a range of community groups and services, such as Gosport Voluntary Action, who support and connect disabled residents. The building is accessible to carers and free tickets to any paid programmes are offered to carers visiting with those they care for. The building opening times are also being reviewed through the redevelopment, and three evening openings per

week, as well as extended hours on weekend, will improve opportunities to visit.

- Race: the venue will bring together broad cross sections of the Gosport community, and provide spaces and events that enable shared experiences. The onsite museum will also provide an opportunity to showcase diverse local stories, highlighting the role of different cultures and communities in building the present-day town.
- Pregnancy and maternity: the venue will provide dedicated facilities for parents and carers of young children, including baby change areas, nappy disposal and a play gallery specifically designed for children under 5 years. The venue will also provide a range of employment and volunteering opportunities suitable and accessible to parents looking to return to the workforce.
- Age: the venue offers formal learning programmes for school aged children and their families and provides a range of resources to schools to support young people outside of the classroom. The venue also hosts a range of low cost and free programmes designed to improve educational attainment in young people.