



P.21-11 St George's Guildhall & Creative Hub Project Highlight Report

Project Name:	St George's Guildhall & Creative Hub	Project Manager	Robin Lewis / Dan Mason/ Liam Bacon	Project Sponsor:	Duncan Hall	Report covers period of:	September 2025
Capital Code:	C9061	Client Dept:	Regeneration	Lead Designer:	Haworth Tompkins		
				Cost Consultant:	Andrew Morton Associates		
Project Code:	P.21-11	End User (if applicable):	CIO *	Contractor on Site:	Messenger Construction LTD		

Management Summary

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Project Definition

Project Stage: RIBA Stage 5 – Construction

Objectives:

The project has the following defined aims:

- Redevelopment and refurbishment of St George's Guildhall, from road to river, including a fully working Theatre.
- To conserve and promote King's Lynn's heritage and culture, and in particular draw upon the links between William Shakespeare and the Guildhall.
- Make our centre fully accessible and welcoming to all, whilst boosting new skills, and supporting new and existing creative businesses.
- To establish a vibrant cultural hub that will be a heritage attraction, education resource, commercial zone by day, and a theatre and entertainment venue by night.

Scope:

- Delivery of project outputs as identified in Towns Fund application & subsequent approved PAR summer 2024.
- Delivery of works identified in RIBA Stage 1 report including alterations to the listed buildings necessary to deliver the scheme.
- Fundraising for capital and revenue costs as necessary
- Promotion of the project and centre its links to Shakespeare within the town nationally and internationally.
- Delivery of activities to widen the engagement, support wider cultural, learning, and educational objectives for the town and develop existing and new audiences.
- Creation of the CIO to operate the world class venue.

1. Overall Status (high-level summary)

Overall status continues this month to be AMBER.

This follows both Cabinet and Town Board approval to proceed with the major scheme previously presented. There remains a significant demand to drive the project including sourcing an external fundraising resource to focus on this part of the project over the coming years. Financial Commentary, and the Dashboard summary contain latest details on this. (section 3.3).

- **Interpretation Works** – The tender for the "media consultant" who will work alongside PLB has now been published and multiple requests to visit the site have been received. The main interpretation works programme has been reviewed and a restart is programmed for December once the ITT/ tender process is completed. The Programme Rev 21 highlights this update.
- **Collections/Storage** – Good progress has been made within the pre-contract "exit site" objective (artifacts materials for reuse, rubbish, legal, compliance supply cut offs. Majority of items have now been moved from site into storage) until the reopening in 2028 with only a few minor items being sorted through by the site team. A clearance company has also now attended site to clear any final rubbish ready to hand the site over to the contractor.
- **King Street public realm** - JCLA has finalised the planning & S278 design pack for submission to relevant authorities. Recent guidance from BT received for our requirement to relocate a street cabinet. Budget risk mitigation needed as BT early quote appears well above previous guidance. A costing exercise is being undertaken before the planning packs are submitted.



- **Pre-Launch BC/CIO Resource status.** BC Governance Process reviews continue to determine best way of managing & supporting this complex project across 4-6 workstreams. Update will be shared with future Project Boards. Fundraising consultant appointment complete (Cause4) however on hold however until CIO confirm support for donations receipt protocols. An update will come in due course.
- Longer term User/ Site Operation** -. Internal reviews of ownership, scope, specification and timelines underway. This workstream critical to ensure that the Business case has maximum opportunity to be delivered and trade successfully.
- H&S / Insurance.** - H&S/CDM/ PD pre contract reviews continue with new contractor MCL. Howarth Tompkins "deliverables tracker" and procedures reported in RIBA 4 documents/ and with MCL in site pre start meetings. H&S considerations discussed at DTM's.
- **Main Contract Works** – Final Contract draft continues to be under review. Now agreed in principle with plans to confirm final signatures protocol on 06/10/2025. Coordination and drive still needed to get to a place of wet sign signatures. Ahead of the deadline of 17/10/2025.
Main Contract, Design Team continue to drive information release schedules. VE workshop to refine ideas/ options for taking forward into post contract.

1.1 Decisions required by the Neighbourhood Board

- None required at this October Board

1.2 Achievements during this period

- The three items reported last period, and their progress are noted below.
 1. RIBA 05 information release – initial packages have now been issued, and we are awaiting MCL feedback.
 2. MCL contract comments – comments were responded to and negotiated and where necessary documents updated.
 3. Advance payment/ deposit amounts – in principle agreed, however each item will be negotiated when orders placed.
- Pre-commencement conditions have all been submitted to the local authority. The CPP has been formally approved, and we are awaiting feedback on one item, BNG & Contractor Project Plan.
- Regular DTM's are being held with the contractor ahead of starting on site to ensure our start on site is meaningful. Prestart meeting was held on site.
- The site closed to the public on the 15th of September.

Priorities for Next Period:

- Signatures on the contract by both BCKLWN and Contractor, confirmation of start on site date for main contract works.
- Work with the main contractor to finalise any Post contract VE items and work through the pre-start development to ensure a robust start on site when that final date is agreed.
- Gain costings for S278 works application following feedback from the relevant stakeholders.
- Finalise the Sprinkler tank, MICC and Lightning design development and incorporate changes into the main design and post contract works agreement.
- Receive additional insurance quotes from alternative Insurance providers for Buildings & Construction works, once received review and agree insurance in principle before signing of contracts.
- Historic England grant award for roof repairs continues to be driven forward. Contractor advised of target spend/ date. HE project team site visits and agreed how to be worked through.



2. Risks and Issues

2.1 Key Risks [all red and increasing amber] – something that may happen

Risk ID	Risk Title	Description	RAG Status	Risk Category	Mitigation	Dated Comments
003	Funding	The project has now secured adequate funding from various funding streams (Towns Fund / BC/ others etc.). Risk continues that further fundraising does not reduce the £15.5m required to cover the BCKLWNs borrowing.	A	Finance	TOWNS funding re-prioritised to provide £8.07m of capital funding. Additional funding has been requested from other BCKLWN/ & Towns Fund Projects and reallocated to the Guildhall. Fundraising Consultant procured. Cashflow created by AMA to support capital timing demands of project being updated in Sept 2025. Review latest spend/ funding profile for full project.	30/09/2025
78	Construction Insurance	Construction Insurance not being in place ready to sign contract (contract cannot be signed without full cover in place).	A	Programme	Alternative quotes are being sought, once received the team will review and act quickly to minimise impact to programme	02/10/2025
29	Unidentified conditions	Unforeseen building works	A	Programme	Building works to areas of project require greater amount of work than currently envisaged. Further Timber survey underway of roof asap. New lift pit excavation will be likely to impact sensitive archaeology. Access only available post SB demolition. 2026.	02/10/2025
44	Programme	Construction programme is 2.5 years risk that this could extend.	A	Financial	We are challenging the main contractor to reduce their tender programme by 10 weeks. We hold regular programme reviews before with the main contractor & during works.36 x A3 gantt by MCL.	02/10/2025
57	Sprinkler Inclusion	Discussions held with insurers, National Trust and internally at the BC	A	Design	Following concerns expressed by Conservation Officer/ NT on impact of location of tank. I.e. clash between the existing vault and the sprinkler tank alternate location agreed. Impact on design, costs, timings underway but it provides an acceptable solution from key stakeholders	02/10/2025
29	Design coordination	BoQ & design pack coordination	A	Design	Design team will review pack for discrepancies before issuing the finalised RIBA 05 information	02/10/2025
49	Party Wall	Party Wall Issues causing delays to work	A	Party Wall	Party Wall notices issued at earliest opportunity & regular reviews ongoing with party wall surveyor	02/10/2025



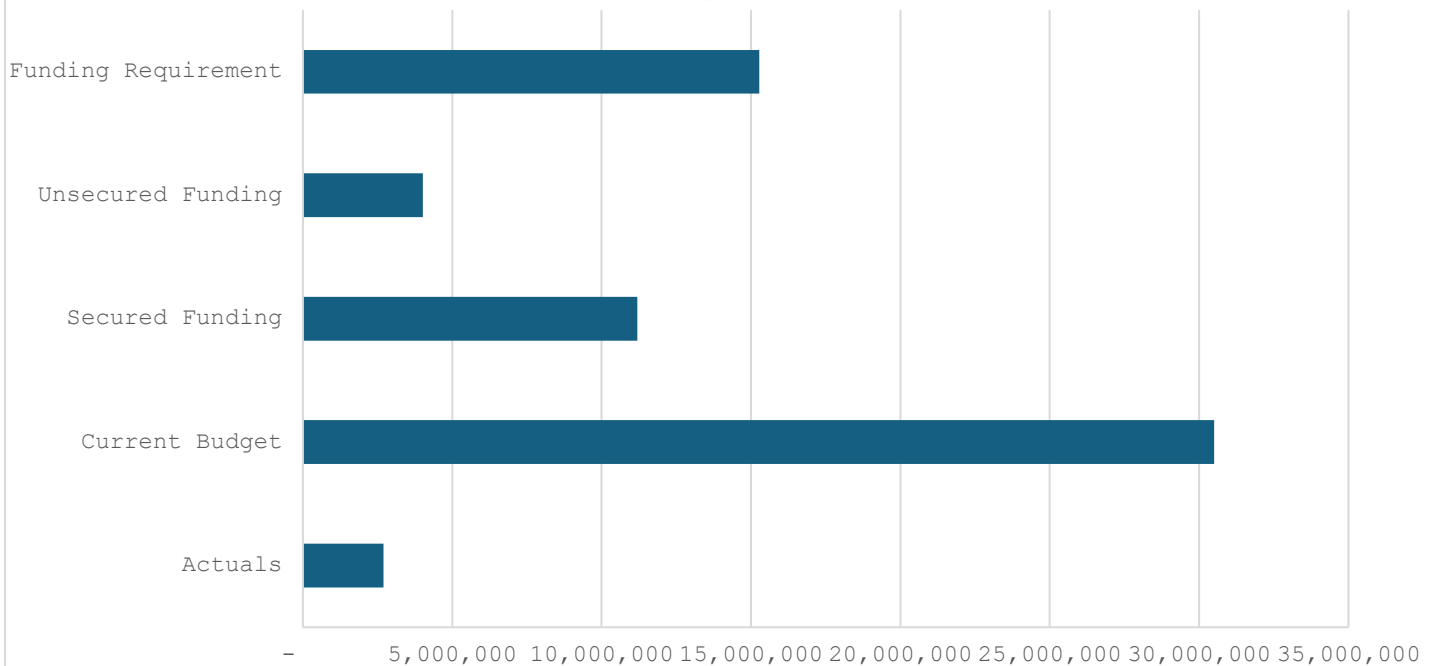
76	RIBA 5 Design team fee	Design team fee uplift to support c14 month extended programme (RIBA 5) is higher than estimated in June/ July 2025.	A	Design team	Review fees & scope with design team and negotiate fee down. If still over budget use contingency to cover additional cost.	04/09/2025
75	RIBA 5 Pack	RIBA 5 Design information issue agreement	G	Contract	Discuss with both contractor and design team to develop an agreed information release schedule that minimises impact to the start date.	30/09/2025

2.2 Key Issues [all red and increasing amber] – something that has happened

Issue ID	Issue Title	Description	RAG Status	Issue Type	Resolution Plan	Dated Comments

3. Project Financials

St Georges Guildhall & Creative Hub Actuals, Budget and Forecasted spend as at 30th September 2025



	Actuals	Current Budget	Secured Funding	Unsecured Funding	Funding Requirement
■ Series1	2,692,819	30,500,000	11,200,000	4,021,000	15,279,000



3.1 Financial Commentary

Financials are currently AMBER

- Actuals to date from the commencement of the project are £2.7m against an overall budget of £30.5m.
- 2025-26 actuals from 1st April to 30th September 2025 are £0.4m, actuals primarily relating to QS, PM and consultancy costs.
- Secured funding is £11.2m (£8m Towns Deal Funding, £2m PAR transfer from the Riverfront, £1m from BCKLWN and £0.2m from UK Shared Prosperity Funding), unsecured funding is c£4m (£2.5m Plan for Neighbourhood, £0.8m Trust and £0.7m Heritage Trust) with a £15.3m funding requirement.

3.2 Project Contingency and Change Control

Change Ref	Description	Cost Impact	Programme Impact	Other Impact	RAG Status	Approval given by	Date of change
1	Formal change control tracker being reviewed /reissued for use during the RIBA5 + Project timelines, to capture delegated/ various Project Governance thresholds.						

4. Timelines – High Level Milestones

Task Name	Duration	Start	Finish	Predecessors	2024	2024
St Georges Guildhall - Master Programme	1280 days	Mon 19/06/23	Fri 21/07/28			
Procurement of Professional Team and Consultants	285 days	Mon 31/07/23	Fri 13/09/24			
Approved Inspector	235 days	Mon 31/07/23	Fri 05/07/24			
Catering Consultant	95 days	Mon 07/08/23	Fri 15/12/23			
Comms Agency	45 days	Mon 31/07/23	Fri 29/09/23			
Fundraising Consultant	113 days	Wed 11/10/23	Fri 29/03/24			
Business Planning / Visitor Attraction Consultant Ref HBA Findings	108 days	Wed 18/10/23	Fri 29/03/24			
Party Wall Surveyor	45 days	Mon 20/11/23	Fri 02/02/24			
Design Team VEAT Notice	30 days	Mon 24/06/24	Fri 02/08/24			
Interpretation Designer	70 days	Mon 10/06/24	Fri 13/09/24			
Procurement and Completion of Surveys	518 days	Mon 19/06/23	Wed 09/07/25			
Measured Survey	110 days	Fri 18/08/23	Fri 02/02/24			
Historic Building Analysis	80 days	Mon 19/06/23	Fri 06/10/23			
Conservation Management Plan (CMP)	170 days	Mon 17/07/23	Fri 22/03/24			
Structural/ Intrusive Surveys (Trial Pits, Opening Up, Plaster Removal)	177 days	Mon 30/10/23	Tue 16/07/24			
Utilities/ Below Ground Drainage	50 days	Mon 14/08/23	Fri 20/10/23			
Condition Surveys (White Barn, Annexe & Old Warehouse)	30 days	Mon 14/08/23	Fri 22/09/23			
Full Bat Survey	443 days	Mon 02/10/23	Wed 09/07/25			
Asbestos R&D survey	85 days	Mon 24/06/24	Fri 18/10/24			
Guildhall Floor Surveys	60 days	Mon 08/01/24	Fri 29/03/24			
Thermographic/ Air Tightness and Timber Damp Surveys	240 days	Mon 27/11/23	Fri 08/11/24			
RIBA Design Stages 2-4 and Statutory Approvals	911.5 days	Mon 19/06/23	Tue 09/02/27			
RIBA Stage 2	95 days	Mon 19/06/23	Fri 27/10/23			
RIBA Stage 2 - Update Report Inc HBA Findings	65.5 days	Mon 25/09/23	Mon 08/01/24			
RIBA Stage 3	170 days	Mon 27/11/23	Fri 02/08/24			
Statutory Approvals + Consultations	793 days	Fri 11/08/23	Tue 06/10/26			
RIBA Stage 4	170 days	Mon 05/08/24	Fri 11/04/25			
King Street Design and Section 278 Approval	526.5 days	Mon 06/01/25	Tue 09/02/27			
Main Contractor Procurement	501 days	Mon 04/09/23	Mon 01/09/25			
RIBA Stage 5	975 days	Mon 02/09/24	Fri 21/07/28			
VE process	75 days	Fri 18/07/25	Thu 30/10/25			
Contractor Mobilisation	10.1 wks	Fri 08/08/25	Fri 17/10/25			
Main Contract Works	650 days	Mon 20/10/25	Fri 26/05/28			
Enabling Package (Guildhall Floor Reveal/ Archaeology)	210 days	Mon 02/09/24	Fri 04/07/25			
Interpretation Design & Fit Out (note - based on PLB/ HT programmes)	834 days	Tue 01/04/25	Fri 21/07/28			
General fit out	8 wks	Mon 29/05/28	Fri 21/07/28	385		
Training	3 wks	Mon 03/07/28	Fri 21/07/28	459FF		
Opening	0 days	Fri 21/07/28	Fri 21/07/28	460,459,458		



4.1 Timelines Commentary

- Timeline RAG rating has been adjusted to GREEN to reflect the fact that the project programme post Cabinet and Town Board approvals in July 2025 have reset the base timeline for the overall project that will be reported against for the delivery period ahead.
- The project needs to be in contract by the deadline of March 2026. The Towns Fund grant revised forecast dates for expenditure are being updated and will confirm when it is expected that the TF awards & additional reallocated funds will be fully utilised. This will allow confirmation of when other funds (from the BC) will be required to support the cashflow of the project in 2026. Many of the TF Outputs will be realised when the scheme opens/ and one re construction/ project temp employment will be reported during the project.
- Messenger (MCL) pre & construction programmes have been subject to review to drive a meaningful and compliant start on site date. This continues to be subject to amendments as MCL develop further their prestart requirements for site set up, key sub-contractors' availability, site management and other licence, & obligations contained within the planning approvals secured.
- The Interpretation Design workstream will restart after a brief pause to allow the Project team to put in place a new ITT to help secure the specialist design skills of an immersive media company to deliver a critical new element to the scheme. It has been advised/ estimated that the fit out, testing and commissioning period for the Interpretation scheme will require c8 weeks (PLB) following the completion of the main construction works.
- The project team continue to consider the window of time in the build up to and post launch to ensure all the various demands on site will be managed by the relevant accountable teams. (Construction, Operational, Marketing, Property Services, etc). Progress will be shared over the coming 12/24 months.
- The theatre removal works have proved very beneficial in revealing significant features and historical architectural details providing even more unique insights into the previous life of the Guildhall and its patrons. These findings have helped reshape certain aspects of the design that are being incorporated into latest RIBA 5 scheme. (Stage details)

5. Resources Commentary

Resource this month has moved to AMBER. This follows the Project Team, Officers, and external contractors' efforts over the period.

- Activities, Events, Social Delivery outputs remain RED due to ongoing people resource challenges.
- Fundraising consultant appointment for the project ready to start.
- Pre-opening operational planning of the overall new site, ownership updated.
- Temporary home for engagement to continue for longer duration need support for wider solution ideas vs budget.
- Time required to develop the legal framework between the CIO/ Borough Council has more time for its consideration.
- Main contract award, contract and VE resource demands have peaked but continue to be a focus.
- This period has driven tender review, agreed design updates, start on site planning, the discharging of planning pre-start conditions.
- Historic England Award requirements during site set up and reviews demanding high level of internal resource input.
- Internal/ External Teams including key people at MCL are generally now clear of summer seasonal leave window.
- Full Project Governance Reviews continue. Updates at Project Board next month.

6. Communications and Engagement

- Positive Your Local Paper article published that its expected will ignite a wider national interest over the coming days. One to watch.
- Positive Press and good coverage re Historic England HARC/ award. Options under review with HE on future press opportunities to promote the GH, Roof repairs and local public/ schools' engagement for the project.
- KL Magazine dual articles with both scheme and Cllr Ring updates.
- Press Reach 340k news on plans.
- Site visits: 2000 people in July and over £1000 in donations.
- Since October 2023 we have reached over 921 million people globally. This coverage at the market rate would have cost the Borough over £8 million.
- Venue closed 15th September.
- Norwich Castle visit being planned to aid understanding of scheme and key lessons learned. – Date 6th Nov but may move.
- "Spade in the Ground" - BCKLWN & Contractor opportunities being considered.
- Introducing Contractor and their appointment also under consideration. Not until post contract signing at earliest.
- Heritage Open Day 14th Sept.
- Plan for Contractor to use Nos 29 as their site accommodation and entry point for contract visitors. Also planned to be used as public touch point for news on the scheme/ progress etc. The potential for a volunteers' desk to be maintained to aid public updates in 29 under review. Joint approach to talking to public is clearly a positive thing.
- Social Value KPI being reviewed to include TF outputs
- External Hoarding to King Street GH montage being prepared for sign off and placing on this important public facing feature of the works.



7. Outputs and Outcomes

7.1 Outputs

Description	Target	Full Scheme revised outputs, agreed by KLTB and BCKLWN Cabinet July 2024 and 2025
Number of temporary FT jobs supported during project implementation	110	55
Number of full-time equivalent (FTE) permanent jobs created through the projects	22	34
Number of improved cultural facilities	5	8
Amount of capacity of new or improved training or education facilities	1*	
Amount of capacity of new or improved training or education facilities	10,300	10,300
# of derelict buildings refurbished	6	6
# of heritage buildings renovated/restored	10	10
# of enterprises receiving non-financial support	50	50
# of potential entrepreneurs assisted to be enterprise ready	60	60
Amount of existing parks/greenspace/outdoor improved	1240 m ²	1572m ²
Amount of new office space	669m ²	825m ²
Mandatory indicator - Year on Year monthly % change in footfall	900%	1680%
NEW – Improvement to King Street Public Realm (subject to planning)		350m²

7.2 Outcomes

Description	Notes
Refurbishing the Historic Theatre and enhancing physical access – with a reference to its exceptional historical value and Shakespearian connection	RIBA 04 Design details the site wide improvements to access for both the public and members of staff working there in the future scheme.
Creating opportunities for local creative enterprises	The creative hubs will provide a real base for these new enterprises.
Creating inspiring spaces, for the community and visitors alike, for formal and informal learning including youth engagement.	The scheme has many flexible meeting and public discussion spaces across the 10 buildings on the site. Community engagement continues to build on many positive news stories about place and the needs of local people.

8. Other Matters

Item	Comment
General stage progress	RIBA stage 4 design reports delivered early April.
Procurement progress	Main Contractor tender completed.
Proposed form of contract (e.g. JCT, NEC, Traditional, D&B)	Construction – JCT with quantities & 8 amendments following review
Proposed route to market (e.g. ITT, Framework i.e. DPS, HPCS, LCP)	Procurement will be via a two-stage tender (SQ followed by full ITT), open market tender via the Councils procurement portal
Legal progress	Support development of CIO governing document, Fundraising guidance for both BCKLWN to share with CIO/ NT to ensure compliance with law, Charity Commission, the Lease between the BCKLWN, and NT. HMRC Tax rules
Legal instruction form issued.	Legal instruction issued in October 2022 for development of CIO agreement & then again in Sept/October 2024 in relation to fundraising for the site and its operation.
Surveys Status	Surveys identified and completed RIBA4. Ongoing risk e.g. timber conditions being monitored and further archaeological “rescue” matters subject to survey/appointment. Focus of recent finds in foyer floor/ Shakespeare passage/



	Undercroft, Main stage area built into design changes being worked through in this period.
Statutory updates	Extensive coordinated updates with National Trust, plus Planning, Development Team and Building Control to ensure views are captured during design and delivery process. Conservation Officer regularly gathered to support any updates to approved scheme. It appears new planning applications not required but variations to be agreed. A new LBC application needed (you cannot vary LB consents.) i.e. to cover sprinkler tank change, Lightening protection requirements continue to be under review. Ecologist and Construction Management plans focus to discharge ahead of start on site
Local schemes / dependencies	Other Towns & PfN Deal programme and projects. PAR from Riverfront to support reallocation of funds to the Guildhall. Wider BCKLWN work including update of Cultural Strategy and volunteering. Work with National Trust and Norfolk Museum Service regarding visitor trends

9. Approved Documents

	OBC [RIBA 0 Approval]	Client Brief [RIBA 1 Initiation]	Resource Brief	PID [RIBA 1 Gateway]	PID Update [RIBA 2 Gateway]	PID Update [RIBA 3 Gateway]	PID Update [RIBA 4 Design]	Final PID [pre-post tender]
Status:	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Date Approved:	24/06/22	21/12/22	-	21/12/22	30/11/23	09/07/24	28/03/25	7th & 17th July 2025
Approved by:	Cabinet	TF Prog Board	-	TF Prog Board	OMP	Project Board	Town Board	Cabinet, Full Council Town Board,

Latest approved document: PID July 2025

Spend – Budget variance (Inc. Contingency)	Milestone Delivery RAG Status	Risk & Issue RAG status
R More than 10% over or under budget	R 13 weeks or more behind the critical path	R Need immediate attention
A Between 5% & 10% over or under budget	A 4 to 12 weeks behind the critical path	A Needs attention before next project review
G Within 5% of budget or less than £10k	G 4 to 12 weeks less behind the critical path	G Can be managed