




We are Colchester

WE ARE COLCHESTER BOARD MEETING

16 December 2021 – 9.30am
Microsoft Teams





AGENDA

- 1. Chairman's Welcome, Apologies & Declarations of Interest – Simon Blaxill**
- 2. Progress, Timeline & Milestones – Simon Thorp**
- 3. Project Spotlight:**
 - **Introduction – Lindsay Barker**
 - **Digital Working Hub, Digital Skills Hub, 5G – Leonie Rathbone**
 - **Transformed Youth Facilities – Lucie Breadman**
 - **Town Centre & Gateways, Walking & Cycling – Mandy Jones**
 - **Heart of Greenstead – Rory Doyle**
- 4. Business Case Assurance update – Adrian Pritchard / Paul Cook**
- 5. Decisions, Closing remarks & future meetings – Simon Blaxill**



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1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

Simon Blaxill
Chair



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2. PROGRESS, TIMELINE & MILESTONES

Simon Thorp
Programme Manager

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Project	RAG		July-Sept			Oct-Dec			Jan-March			April-June			
	Last month	This month													
Project 1: Town Centre & Gateways	Yellow	Yellow	7 x Business Cases 80% complete						Draft complete			★			
Project 2: Heart of Greenstead	Yellow	Yellow							Draft complete			★			
Project 3: Transformed Youth Facilities	Yellow	Yellow							Draft complete			★			
Project 4: Digital connectivity	Green	Yellow							Draft complete			★			
Project 5: Physical connectivity	Yellow	Green							Draft complete			★			
Summary documents to MHCLG	Green	Green									●				
Engagement Plan	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	
Monitoring outcomes	Green	Green					Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	

Top programme risks	RAG	Mitigations	
Heritage projects – Jumbo and Holy Trinity Church	Red	Jumbo ownership transfer to charity confirmed; Holy Trinity Church outstanding issues re repairs before transfer of ownership to be confirmed.	LB / MJ
Digital connectivity – 5G business case	Yellow	Finalisation of business case and dependencies with other projects (e.g., Jumbo, Youth, Digital) confirmed.	LB / MJ
Townhouse Youth Club and other locations.	Yellow	Finalise non-Townhouse locations and evidence base, effectively manage Member comms.	PD / LB / GC
Programme wide – costs and legal/planning permissions.	Yellow	Develop alternative delivery options, finalise planning and legal positions.	Sponsors / Owners - All

Milestones	
Achieved since last Board	Upcoming milestones
Draft business cases nearing completion. Draft partner SLAs prepared.	Business case full drafts (Jan 2022) prior to self-assurance and governance.

Budget		
Actual spend	Budget	Forecast outturn
£116,964 Jumbo, Holy Trinity Church, Town Centre public realm	£18,200,000	£18,200,000
Overall programme rating		
AMBER		

MILESTONES – NEXT 6 MONTHS





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3.PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Programme Owner:

Lindsay Barker

Project Owners:

**Leonie Rathbone
Lucie Breadman
Mandy Jones
Rory Doyle**

Executive Summary

- Development of grow-on workspace for creative and digital business and Digital Hub
- Redevelopment of the old bus depot site on Queen Street
- Demolition work set to commence in mid-December, followed by a full archaeological excavation
- Construction is scheduled to start in Summer 2022
- Appointing an exciting operator to run the building – AIXR

Project Features, Outcomes

- Immersive Innovation Centre
 - Training and skills development and cross-sectoral links with other industries
 - Huge opportunity for inward investment
 - 86 full time jobs by end of year 15
- Mixed Reality Capture Studio
 - Podcasting Studio
 - Coworking space
 - Café/Events space
 - 8 large studios

Issues, Risks and Mitigations

- Delays to programme due to archaeological finds
 - Cost rises to due materials and supply chain issues or issues with the complex site
- Delays due to supply chain issues
 - Operator getting bored/seeking other site if delays occur
- Difficulties / delay in letting studio space

Before



After



Executive Summary

- Underutilised gym building at Wilson Marriage in Colchester will be fully refurbished and kitted out to create a new Digital Hub
- Support the identified need for improved digital skills
- Enable residents to access digital services and gain good jobs (including those in the digital sector)
- The project will use sustainable materials and energy sources (where possible)

Project Features, Outcomes

- The project will provide residents with:
 - Opportunities to progress into Higher Education Studies,
 - Apprenticeships to access the digital workforce
 - Skills for work from basic to advanced levels
 - Flexible options to undertake online courses in a facilitated environment
- In year one our ambition is to upskill a minimum of 145 residents at the hub

Issues, Risks and Mitigations

- Some aspects of the build may need to be scaled back should building costs rise beyond budget
- This has been built into the project plan and areas for scale back identified
- Building delays may cause push back on new classes starting in October 2022
- Classes can initially take place in the main building if required



Existing space within the Wilson Marriage Building



Executive Summary

- True-5G network across the town centre - first deployment of its type in Colchester
- Designed to enable and facilitate future Smart City technologies
- Footprint will include the new Digital Working Hub
- Research has confirmed the best, current real-life use application of 5G in Colchester is virtual-reality tourism
- Future options will include ultrafast mobile connectivity, a third party concession and autonomous vehicles

Project Features, Outcomes

- Multiple technology platforms will be proposed with a focus on the ease of deployment and system maintenance
- Chosen technology platform will be multi-use and future-proof
- Compelling content to provide a worthwhile user experience with the focus on a number of key sites including Roman Wall, Colchester Castle, and Jumbo.
- VR-enabled tourism of these sites will enable visitors to see recreated historical events and streetscapes
- Project Team include experts in the field including the Head of 5G Programmes at DCMS and the former Head of Digital Content at the BBC
- Investor interest in further development of the infrastructure is already secured

Issues, Risks and Mitigations

- Need to achieve the correct balance between the costs of building the network and producing high-quality content to enable the experience
- Practicalities of deploying hardware to heritage-sensitive sites
- Satisfactory commercial returns to make the infrastructure financially viable depends on adequate take-up
- On-going need to explain and promote the opportunities 5G will deliver, given other use cases are future-focused





Business Case 2

Transformed Youth Facilities £1.32M Town Deal Budget

Executive Summary

- YP 13-19 up to 25 (SEND)
- Improved opportunities and life chances
- Raising confidence and aspirations
- State-of-the-art facilities
- Town Centre universal offer, and
- Focus on those from deprived communities

Project Features / Outputs / Outcomes

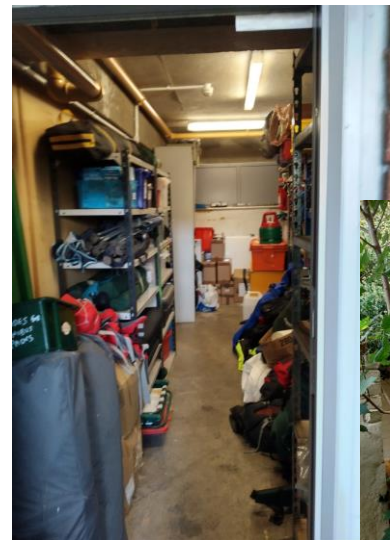
"Happier, healthier and more confident young people with improved life chances and reduced inequalities"

Redevelopment of Town House

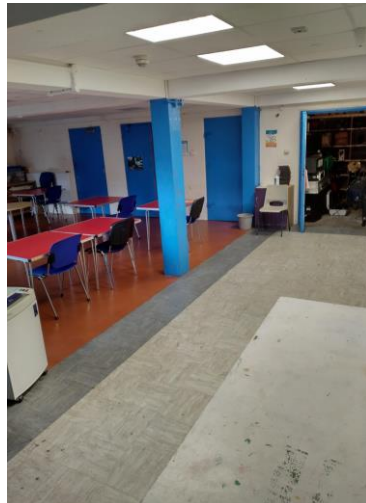
- Updated Electrical systems and full redecoration / Sports Hall upgrade / IT infrastructure inc smart boards / Teaching Kitchen / Recording studio / Garden area / Storage area & Secure outside area
- 21 NET FTE jobs created, 250 people in work / life skills sessions, 250 people receiving 1:1 support (e.g. mental health support), 25 groups delivering services supported (outreach), 100 people in employment support sessions and 100 people receiving accredited training.
- **Evidence-based and outcomes-driven selection of non-Townhouse locations**

Issues, Risks and Mitigations

- **Outputs/outcomes not achieved** - mitigated by effective engagement with young, community and voluntary sector and ECC Youth Services business planning.
- **Budget overspends** - closely monitoring and escalating risks, also ensuring built in contingency.
- **Political concerns linked to Youth Zone** mitigated by effective communication, transparent decision making and engagement linked to features and benefits of the project.
- **Additional elements** of the project not linked to Town House - exploring a number of options to ensure deliverability.



- Upgraded mixed use sports hall
- State of the art music recording studio
- New teaching kitchen
- Full redecoration and electricals
- Safer outside spaces, including garden
- Enhanced storage
- IT upgrade including smartboard technology
- Transformed reception area



Town Centre and Gateways (£4.5m +£1m Accelerated Town Deal funding)

Executive Summary

- Investment in public realm, key spaces and heritage assets across the Town Centre

Original Project Features and Outcomes

Heritage assets

- Jumbo - urgent repairs to facilitate Architectural Heritage Fund submission to adapt building into tourist attraction / destination (retail, restaurant, museum, events).
- Holy Trinity Church - Providing funding (as match for bid to National Lottery Fund to bring Grade 1 Church building back as community hub

Public realm and key spaces (before changes)

- Enhancement of public realm in St Nicholas's Square and Balcerne Gate (Phase 1)
- Kerbless Streets: St Isaac's Walk, Eld Land and Short Wyre Streets (to improve access and enable cycling and walking)
- Holy Trinity Square - improvements to surrounding public realm (complements HTC restoration)
- Balcerne Gate (Phase 2) area around Jumbo and south to Church Street
- Public space included in the redevelopment of Essex County Hospital
- Public realm included in Vineyard Street development

Issues, Risks and Mitigations

- Significantly increased construction and material costs mitigated by scaling back or phasing some public realm work. DLUHC have agreed to provide flexibility.
- Heritage building ownership issues mitigated by appropriate legal transfer arrangements and negotiations with owners to allow for transfers (St Nicolas Square – Diocese)
- Adverse reactions to changes or design in public spaces mitigated by strong engagement to inform projects.



Business Case 4 Town Centre & Gateways

Proposed changes

Our principles

We have approached the issue of escalating costs on public realm areas by:

- **Assessing cost across all public realm areas (including St Nicolas Square)**
- **Maintaining a strong focus on the quality of the work we do**
- **Preference for quality and aiming to meet the overall objectives for enhanced public realm areas across the town centre**
- **Phasing work where possible to capitalise on other funding opportunities**

The following schemes have not been significantly altered during the writing of the Business Cases:

- 1. Jumbo – assigned £1m**
- 2. Holy Trinity Church – assigned £51,000**
- 3. Essex County Hospital - assigned £500,000**



Business Case 4 Town Centre & Gateways

Proposed changes – Public realm Town Centre

Changes

To bring this theme in on budget, the following changes are proposed:

- 1. Assign more funding to St Nicholas's Square to meet construction inflation**
- 2. Remove small area of land not in public ownership (outside St Nicolas Hotel)**
- 3. Reduce cost of Balcerne Gate Phase II by adopting a lighter touch to the scheme and retaining grass areas**
- 4. Adopt a greener scheme for Holy Trinity Square including retaining the existing boundary as recommended by English Heritage**
- 5. Phase the scope of Kerbless Streets to Sir Issacs Walk only now, to accommodate cycle way, retaining our ambition to make other streets kerbless with future funding**
- 6. Remove Town Deal funding from Vineyard Street, achieving the public realm there within the development's own financial envelope**





Business Case 7 Physical connectivity – walking and cycling links Town Centre/Greenstead/University

**£2.95M Town Deal Budget (total
project value £4.646M)**

Executive Summary

This project provides coherent walking and cycling infrastructure addressing current deficits. It physically links the town, Greenstead and the University together making travel by the greenest, healthiest option also the best most attractive, convenient and natural choice.

Project Features & Outcomes

New or upgraded 2.96kms walking and cycling route with improved facilities, including lighting and cycle parking (LCWIP 4)

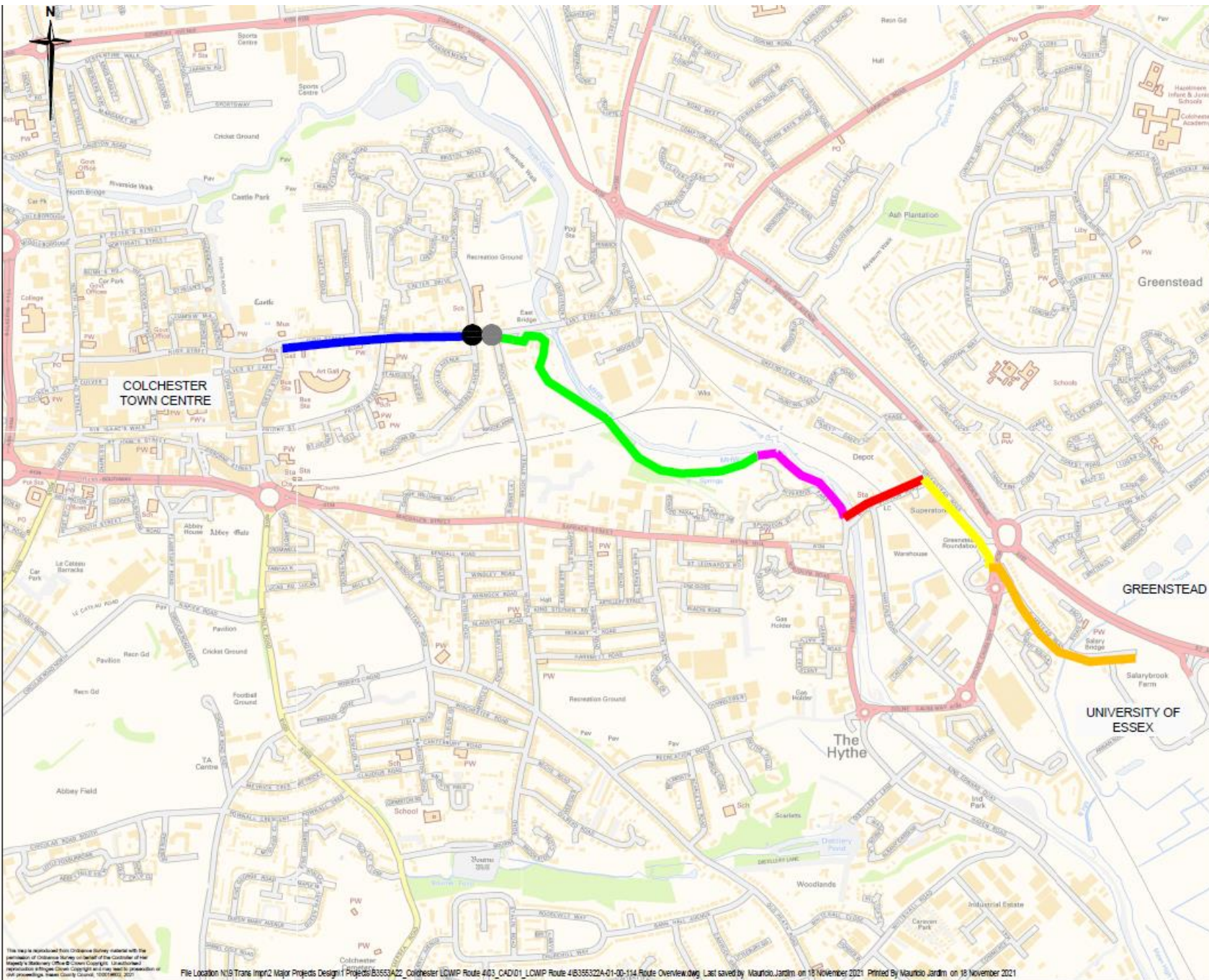
Additional expected cycle trips of 190 per day in 2026, 700 by 2033, and 1,324 by 2041.
Corresponding reduction in car movements on the network

Issues, Risks and Mitigations

- Active Travel Fund not forthcoming – programme will be adjusted and timing modified, but a complete LCWIP 4 can still be delivered
- Land ownership issues – use CPOs if necessary
- Unscheduled utility works – work with Stats companies as early as possible
- Environmental issues – work with environment team from the outset
- Adverse ground conditions – undertake early surveys

Opportunity:

- ECC has recently bid for **£1.317m** match funding from the Department for Transport's Active Travel Fund.
- Should this be successful this will provide us (along with S106 already secured) the match funding to the Town Deal funding (£2.95) required to complete the route in full.



1. Do not scale.

Key

- Section 1 - High Street and East Hill - On Street Cycle Enhancements
- Section 2 - Guildford Road/ East Hill - Junction Modifications
- Section 3 - East Hill/ Brook Street - Junction Modifications
- Section 4 - East Bay to Haddon Park - Off Street Cycle Route Enhancements
- Section 5 - Haddon Park to Hythe Station Road Bridge - On Street Cycle Enhancements
- Section 6 - Hythe Station Road - On Street Cycle Improvements
- Section 7 - Greenstead Road - On Street Cycle Enhancements & Traffic Management Measures
- Section 8 - Colne Causeway to University - On Street Cycle and Pedestrian/Cycle Crossing Improvements.

No.	Date	Description of review	Drawn	Checked	Reviewed/Approved

FOR INFORMATION

Essex Highways, Essex House, Victoria Road South, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH. Tel: 02045 803700 © Essex County Council

COLCHESTER LCWP 4

ROUTE OVERVIEW

DESIGNED	DRAWN	CHECKED	REVIEWED	APPROVED
MJ	MJ	PW	PW	SPC
DATE	DATE	DATE	DATE	DATE
NOV 21	NOV 21	NOV 21	NOV 21	NOV 21
DIMENSIONS IN MILLIMETRES				SCALE OF DIMENSIONS
LEVELS IN METRES				N.T.S.

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Business Case 5 Heart of Greenstead

**£6.7m Town Deal Budget
(Total Project Value £34.7m)**

Objectives from the Town Investment Plan

- 640 sqm of new or improved public realm created to 'liveable neighbourhood' principles.
- 4 direct FTE jobs created.
- 68 people supported into employment.
- 139 high-quality homes created (103 new, 36 refurbished) of which 50% to 100% will be affordable through 'routes to home ownership' and social rent.
- Upto 700 new bikes delivered.
- Aligned significant investment in key routes to/from Greenstead notably the Town Centre.

Executive Summary

This scheme will build iconic new housing, a refreshed and expanded community hub, and very attractive public space in the centre of this community whilst helping those furthest from employment and training to participate including through much better physical and digital connectivity; a 'liveable neighbourhood' which gives freedom by making walking and cycling easy and safe and providing bikes.

Alongside and interwoven with these physical assets, digital infrastructure, a digital working hub, digital skills development, a new Memorandum of Understanding with the neighbouring University of Essex, and further health and wellbeing interventions will together inspire this proud and strong community through a once-in-a-generation investment.

The project recently secured an additional £2.3m DLUHC grant, and a further bid for £5m to Homes England is planned, closing the financial gap for the whole scheme.

Issues, Risks and Mitigations

- **Community: proposed masterplan is disliked or derided -**
Clear messaging and robust communications planning. Active, extensive and authentic engagement.
- **Community: sensitivity in the timing of releasing information and messaging in line with the planning process (for example) -** These risks are already being mitigated effectively through a planned and comprehensive approach to community and stakeholder engagement already underway and intensifying.
- **Asset transfers required cannot be agreed: Requirement to spend Estate Regeneration Fund before 31st March 2022 cannot be met -** This risk is being mitigated; we are working closely with partners concerned and are identifying terms and status of all extant leases on the development site.

Before



After





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4. BUSINESS CASE ASSURANCE - UPDATE

Adrian Pritchard
Chief Executive

Paul Cook
Head of Finance / Section 151 Officer

Colchester Borough Council





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5. DECISIONS, CLOSING REMARKS & FUTURE MEETINGS

Simon Blaxill



- **Approve draft Business Cases and Summary Documents**
- **Note Progress Report**
- **Note Project Business Case updates**
- **Note any reappportionment of funding in the public realm schemes.**
- **Note Business Case assurance update**

To note:

- **Provisional Board meeting dates:**
 - **17 February 2022**
 - **17 March 2022**
 - **26 May 2022**