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Dear Councillor,

26 February 2021

You are summoned to attend an extraordinary meeting of the **TOWN COUNCIL OF WHITBY** to be conducted on-line, via Zoom and livestreamed on the Town Council's Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/WhitbyTC/> on **Thursday 4 March at 6:00pm**, the agenda for which is set out below.

Cllr Linda Wild
Town Mayor

To: Councillors Barnett, Coughlan, Dalrymple, Derrick, Harston, Jackson, Jennison, Lapsley, Nock, Smith, Sumner, Wild, Wilson and Winspear

NOTICE OF MEETING – Public notice of the meeting is given in accordance with schedule 12, paragraph 10(2) of the Local Government Act 1972.

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive and resolve upon apologies for inability to attend.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

To declare any interests which members have in the following agenda items.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Standing Orders will be suspended for up to 15 minutes to allow for questions or statements about business items on the agenda, submitted by members of the public¹ (limited to 3 mins per person).

4. OLD TOWN HALL AND MARKET PLACE

(Page 3)

The Clerk will present a report of the project team into the scheme to regenerate the Old Town Hall and Market Place.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83373418143?pwd=NIJFanZUYVVVlbWY1YU9EK0EzSElUT09>

Meeting ID: **833 7341 8143** Passcode: **139782**

One tap mobile

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Dial by your location (UK numbers)

0203 481 5237 0203 481 5240 0203 901 7895

1. Anyone who wishes to register to participate under Item 3, please contact the Town Clerk (town.clerk@whitbytowncouncil.gov.uk)

WHITBY TOWN COUNCIL
EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING – 4 MARCH 2021

**Project Team Report on the Scheme to Regenerate the
Old Town Hall and Market Place**

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to select a preferred option for the regeneration and repurposing of the Old Town Hall building and Market Place in Whitby to submit for planning and listed building consent.

2. Background

In 2018, Scarborough Borough Council (SBC) conducted a review into the operational management of Whitby Market. Following a report by SBC to its Cabinet meeting in March 2019, approval was given to;

- Implement operational changes to Whitby market including revised trading activity, regulations and agreements.
- Authorise officers to undertake feasibility studies to enhance the facilities and image of Whitby market.
- Authorise Officers to begin dialogue with Whitby Town Council and other stakeholders with regards to the future management of Whitby market.
- Authorise Officers to work with Whitby Town Council to explore and secure funding options for the old Town Hall building

Town Council approval was also given to accept “the invitation for open dialogue with SBC regarding the future operations of the Market and regeneration of the Town Hall building,” in February 2019 (Minute: 546/19b).

As a result of these approvals, a Project Steering group was established consisting of Officers from Regeneration Services, the Council's Conservation Officer, Planning Officers, representatives from Whitby Town Council, Historic England and Whitby Civic Society to look at possible regeneration and repurposing options for the Old Town Hall building and the provision of facilities for market traders.

In January 2020, Whitby Town Council was successful in securing a £15,000 project viability grant from the Architectural Heritage Fund to appoint specialist consultants to develop proposals and conduct feasibility into future sustainable uses for the Town Hall building. The aim being to make the building a key focal point for the town and ensure a vibrant and bustling market place.

A multi-disciplinary consultancy team lead by Burrell Foley Fischer architects was procured in July 2020 and has worked with the project team to develop proposals for the site including looking at ways in which services i.e. electricity and anchor points can be provided for market traders in the Market place which sits in front of the building.

Subsequently, the Old Town Hall & Market Place project was included in the Town Investment Plan for Whitby and submitted to MHCLG in October 2021 with a funding ask of £1m.

In total, the Whitby Town Investment Plan is seeking funding of £25M for the town of Whitby for nine individual projects. A decision is expected from MHCLG on the outcome of the submission no later than April 2021.

The aims of the project are to;

- Build on the history and heritage of the Old Town Hall Building and Market Place
- Make the Old Town Hall Building a key focal point for Whitby
- To create a vibrant and bustling Market Place
- Generate sustainable revenue income for the Council

In order to achieve the above aims, the project team have been working on proposals that not only secure the structural integrity of the Old Town Hall building, restoring it to its former glory, but also secure a sustainable future for both the building and Whitby outdoor market.

The anticipated benefits of the project are;

- Secured future for the Grade II* Listed Old Town Hall building
- Increased use of a heritage asset
- Improved access to culture and heritage for residents
- Secured future and sustainability of Whitby market
- Increase in Civic Pride
- Increase in revenue for the Council
- Increase in economic activity in surrounding area

3. Engagement

SBC's Conservation Officer and Historic England have formed part of the project team and regularly attended meetings providing advice and knowledge on the impact of restoring a Grade II* Listed building in keeping with the historical setting.

It is the view that any interventions that are deemed harmful to a heritage asset such as the installation of glazed panels must be considered and assessed against the community benefits achieved from the proposal which would outweigh any harm. Following approval of the preferred option, formal comments will be sought by both Historic England and SBCs Conservation Officer as part of their pre planning application consultation process.

Engagement with market traders and market place businesses has been carried out over the winter months and will continue to be undertaken as the project develops. A summary of the comments received so far are attached at Appendix 1.

Wider engagement with members of the public and wider business community of Whitby will commence in March 2021. Any comments received as part of this consultation process as well as those received from Historic England and SBCs Conservation Officer as mentioned in 3.1 will be used to inform, and amend if necessary, the final design which will be submitted for planning and listed building consent.

4. Assessment and Conclusions

The draft proposals presented today provide options that will see the Old Town Hall building brought back into use and provide a sustainable year-round space for community and cultural activity as well as market trading activity.

Option 1 (railings)

Installing railings to the undercroft of the building will provide an aesthetic improvement to the building and can provide an element of security via lockable gates at the entrance/exit points helping to reduce anti-social behaviour when the undercroft is not in use.

It is proposed that the undercroft will still be used by traders on market trading days and community events on non-market days. However, the railings will provide no protection from the weather and therefore uses and events will be limited if dependent on good weather.

Pros

- Improves the aesthetic appearance of the Old Town Hall.
- Provides security from anti-social behaviour when the building / market place is not in use.
- Not considered a significant intervention.

Cons

- Space will not be weatherproof.
- Limited uses dependent on weather.
- Undercroft will no longer be 'open' to the public if the market or an event is not operating.

Option 2 (glazed panels)

Installing glazed panels to the undercroft of the building also improves the aesthetic look of the Old Town Hall but in addition makes this space weatherproof creating the ability to use the space for a variety of activities all year round. It would be a secured space reducing anti-social behaviour in this area when the market or events are not operating.

The newly glazed undercroft will still be used by traders on market trading days but on non-market days the space can be used for a number of different community activities and events such as 'pop-up' art exhibitions. The enclosed space will enable market trading to continue throughout the whole year and would no longer be limited to a seasonal market.

Pros

- Improves the aesthetic appearance of the Old Town Hall
- Provides security from anti-social behaviour when the building / market place is not in use
- Year round weather proof space for community and cultural activity
- Improved trading conditions for market traders
- Potential to create a vibrant year round market reducing seasonality

Cons

- Significant intervention to a Grade II* Listed building
- Undercroft will no longer be open to the public when the market or an event is not operating
- Glazing this space will require careful consideration of the impact on the building such as adequate ventilation and pedestrian circulation

Option 3 (Market Place landscaping)

The landscaping of the Market Place can work alongside both Option 1 and Option 2 or as a stand-alone intervention. Extending the undercroft level from the Old Town Hall out onto the market place as a continuous platform, creating a levelled stepped landscape allows the market traders a more convenient, safe and flexible space to trade. This continuous platform will also allow activity from the Old Town Hall to spill out onto the market square and can be used for events such as musical performances.

When the market is not in operation the steps will be an inviting area to encourage the public to sit and dwell in the area.

Pros

- Connects the Old Town Hall building and Market Place as one area
- Creates a level stable platform for market stalls
- Encourages dwell time in the area
- Can be used for a variety of events such as musical performances on non-market days than currently
- Creates a more vibrant area

Cons

- Significant intervention
- Possible vehicular access issues which will need to be resolved

5. Conclusion

With all of the options outlined above, the first floor of the building will also be restored increasing amenity space which allows more activity to take place throughout the year. It can enhance the program of activity for the ground floor and Market Place but could also function as an independent space for community activity, events or meetings.

Substantial investment in the building and its surrounding offers a significant (once in a lifetime) opportunity to secure the building in a productive use and to preserve and protect its fabric in a way which embeds it at the heart of the community with a twenty-first Century purpose.

It is **recommended** that:

Whitby Town Council approves Option 2 (Glazing) and Option 3 (landscaping) as the preferred option for development and;

- a. submits the preferred option to Historic England and the Planning Authority for formal feedback on the proposals and;

- b. carries out wider engagement with the community and businesses and;
- c. submits the preferred option for planning and listed building consent subject to the results of this engagement.

Further information sources

SBCs Whitby Market Review report (19/071) – SBC Cabinet 12th March 2019

Whitby Old Town Hall and Market Place design proposals

OLD TOWN HALL WHITBY STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Glazed Undercroft

Makes the space much more usable and versatile. Would recommend used for entertainment, visitor/archive centre with mini film shows, gallery, meetings etc. Outside space used by adjacent cafés for seating when entertainment/shows not taking place

Whilst sure about the glazing aspect, it has worked at Malton and other locations, my reservation is that WTH is smaller and has worn steps and pillars and fitting regular glass panels to curved pillars could pose problems.

Access to the undercroft keep the same - 4 entrances open with doors possibly foldable to allow easy access to set up/dismantle small stalls. Having 4 door entrances/exits will allow customers free access in from all 4 key selling sides and will allow trade to flow through and surrounding business all around equal footfall. No fixed tables.

This would keep the undercroft on open market/community public event days more inviting rather than some sides being totally enclosed like a shop. The beauty of this would be there would be flowing option of trade through to all stalls and if the weather is bad high winds /rain cold - the doors could be closed quickly and still allow trade to continue.

The doors should not be clear glass for safety - but could have key focal point images of Whitby in white silhouette.

If totally encased in glass, in the summer months with the sun it does get quite warm at the back corner and at the front top right corner. Ventilation would be needed.

In favour of glazing the undercroft. If money is going to be spent renovating it then it may as well be done properly. Envisages that this could be used year round, 7 days a week by craft stalls and trader start-ups and be almost like a 'shop' before they relocate to premises. Doesn't like the railings options – reminds them of a prison and does nothing to protect against the weather.

Will shut out residents (from freely accessing).

How will residents access when market not on.

People won't be able to gather under to shelter from rain.

Supportive of glazing and good lighting scheme.

In favour of the glazing but worried it would be a target for vandalism / graffiti.

Landscaping

Split Level Landscape - I feel this is more versatile particularly for an entertainment space - the platform could be used for entertainment, with the steps used as seating.

I can see why it would help to level the market area however the amount of area left after the ingress of steps would hardly be worthwhile. It would be simpler and cheaper to have wooden/metal stalls with legs that compensated for the slope. This would have far less

visual impact and would be much cheaper. I think of its possible use on non-market days and I can see that raising/ levelling the area is a non-starter, it would reduce the actual useable area too much as well as the steps becoming a hazard.

There may be an issue re access to the lifeboat/fire /ambulance. Stalls are not fixed, steps will be. They will also create a sitting and litter problem as we saw on the war memorial that WTC built.

Is it proposed to remove the not fit for purpose "cobblestones" they have always been a nightmare to walk on especially if this is now a pedestrian area! They are NOT proper cobblestones, ill fitted and dangerous.

Not in favour of the landscaping – could cause accidents especially from intoxicated customers leaving Abbey Wharf. Also issues re access for the RNLI.

Raised Structure in the Market Square – We liked some of the designs, but we think there should not be any steps or raised structure stepped area in the market square – this would be used for visitors sit and eat their own food for long periods– if trading on this raised fixed stage area it is not accessible for all. The raised step design does look quite high and could be a safety hazard. Also would a trader be expected to trade on top of this structure with a stall? And the wind can be a hazard on occasions.

How would fire /ambulance emergency services get through if there was a permanent stepped structure, this would reduce space for market stalls also limiting space for any future events being held in the square. Leaving it an open space would be better and more adaptable.

Not keen on landscaping – was built on slope and should remain on slope.

Will encourage people to sit on steps in front of stalls blocking access.

Trading area looks reduced.

The landscaped steps (and if the area was better lit on evening) would encourage drinkers and asb on a night

Access issues for emergency vehicles attending the RNLI premises

Surface water drainage – currently rain water runs down the market place – would the steps cause the rainwater to disperse down the sides of the market place instead.

Market Stalls

Where would these be stored? I feel this area is no longer suitable for a market area – too small, no storage, virtually inaccessible, narrow roads for vans, high level of foot traffic etc. A market space would be much better relocated to a harbourside car park such as the Endeavour Wharf, much more accessible with parking moved to out of town Park & Ride. This could facilitate bigger and more varied markets, following the pandemic we need to encourage local farmers/fish markets.

Is it envisaged that the stalls are fixed or as many years ago the council stored and put out on market days? I would most certainly welcome a more unified image to the stalls rather than the makeshift adhoc present day appearance.

First Floor

I am not greatly in favour of yet another building in Whitby turned into holiday accommodation. How would residents access the upper area if the glazed area is locked up at night or is it proposed to leave the undercroft open to ? at night ?

Suggested the first floor is used as office space – for WTC or a permanent market presence.

First Floor - activity planner for the space with a capacity of approx. 26, with hidden kitchen etc. Storage solution needed for seating & tables, but options available using ceiling/wall space. Materials used must work with the original listed building materials. The first floor **MUST NOT** be turned into a holiday cottage, this historic building should be open to the general public.