



BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

To: All Town Councillors
Members of the Public & Press

Dorset Council Councillors

Dear Member

TOWN COUNCIL CORN EXCHANGE MEETING

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Town Council which will be held in the **Corn Exchange**, Market Place, Blandford Forum on **Monday 12th February 2024 at 7:00 pm** to consider the following items. This meeting will also be available to view online using Microsoft Teams [using this link](#).

Linda Scott-Giles
Town Clerk
5th February 2024

A G E N D A

Prior to consideration of the following Agenda, there will be a democratic quarter of an hour, which may be extended at the discretion of the Council, during which time members of the public may speak. During the course of the meeting, members of the public and our elected representatives from the Dorset Council may indicate they wish to speak, and, at the discretion of the Chairman, and with the approval of the Members, they may be allowed to do so on points of information only. The Council may on occasion invite members of the public to comment on specific issues where points of information or their particular knowledge on a subject might prove of benefit to the Council.

Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, belief or disability), Crime & Disorder, Health and Safety and Human Rights. Disabled access is available.

All in attendance should be aware that filming, recording, photography or otherwise may occur during the meeting.

1. Public Session
2. Apologies
3. To receive any Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations
4. [Minutes of the Town Council Corn Exchange Meeting held on 16th October 2023](#)
5. [To confirm the appointment of the contractor from the tender process, and associated expenditure, and approve the loan application to the Public Works Loan Board](#)

Minutes of the Town Council and Committee meetings are available from Blandford Library, the Town Clerk's Office and at www.blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk

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Town Clerk's Office
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Dorset DT11 7AD



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Grade I Listed Town Hall and Corn Exchange

To confirm the appointment of the contractor from the tender process, and associated expenditure, and approve the loan application to the Public Works Loan Board

Introduction

The Town Council is now in a position to finally proceed with the much needed, and anticipated, works to the Grade I Listed Town Hall, Council Chamber and Corn Exchange. This council's aim was to ensure this was started during the current term, and for many it is to leave a legacy for the next 100 years. Several Councillors have witnessed past failures with the project, leaving many disappointed and frustrated. With a new Design Team, Councillors have been able to see the project through to this final stage, which hasn't been achieved to date.

This public council meeting has been arranged to confirm the appointment of the contractor, subject to the successful completion of a process of value engineering, and to approve the application for a Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) loan. Councillors will read in the Tender section of this report that a value engineering process has started due to the difference between the funds available and the tendered works.

Planning permission and Listed Building consent have been granted by Dorset Council and the Decision Notices can be [viewed here](#).

As a reminder, the council resolutions that have led us to this point are listed at [Appendix A](#).

Staff / Hirers Update

Based on the council resolutions, staff have been working alongside the progress made by the consultants with ongoing communication to hirers, the archive of council documents, clearing out of storerooms, public consultations, sourcing an alternative location for the office staff to work from, and attempting to seek additional funding. A dedicated webpage is also maintained to keep residents/hirers updated with progress: <https://blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk/corn-exchange>

The Bookings Receptionist has kept the regular hirers up to date and the majority of the hirers left in January 2024, leaving us with just a few to provide the income during these last few weeks of opening.

Business Case

The Business Case, referred to in the Public Works Loan Board application, is attached at [Appendix B](#) for information.

Purpose of the Project

As a reminder, the aim of Councillors was as follows:

For the building to carry on doing what it has always done, but to do it much better, with the following strategic objectives (supported and summarised with the text in italics).

Accessible: The building must become more accessible for everyone, particularly to the historic first floor spaces which do not currently benefit from disabled access

The building will become more accessible with a new lift to the Town Hall and Council Chamber, plus improved access to the main hall.

Useable: The building must become more usable for visitors and hirers in terms of heating, lighting, acoustics, storage and back-of-house.

The improvement on the stage and the addition of new acoustic panels, the audio-visual booth on the new mezzanine and the black out blinds will mean the main hall is far more usable for local residents who will be able to enjoy a much-improved range of events.

In addition, the restoration of the whole building including the heating and lighting will make it a much more pleasurable experience to enjoy the functions that already take place.

Affordable: The building must continue to be an affordable option for local residents and groups to hire and not indirectly exclude the community it needs to serve

The Town Council has always said that its aim is to revive the building but not to put the hire charges out of the reach of the average hirer and that it should be a building that is financially accessible to the whole community. So, although hire charges will rise to reflect the works to the building and help to make it sustainable, they will not put it out of reach to residents of the town to hire and use.

Sustainable: The building must improve in terms of environmental and financial sustainability

The plans make the building much more financially sustainable in the future, cutting down on the spiralling maintenance costs which are currently experienced just to keep the building open, the plans allow for a building which is much more frequently used and therefore has its own income source compared to the underused complex which we have all grown accustomed to. The plans also add many environmental improvements which will help to make the building environmentally sustainable in the future.

Flexible: The building must continue to be flexible and capable of being used for as many different types of activities as possible

The plans aim to add to the flexibility of the building, introducing access to all floors and making the main hall a much more usable and flexible space.

Beautiful: The beauty of the building must be restored wherever possible, removing inappropriate additions and repairing, and enhancing, historic features wherever possible.

The beauty of the building will be massively improved by removing and rerouting all the unsightly pipework and boarding added in the 20th century which has spoilt the aesthetics that were originally envisaged. The restoration and display of the Victorian tiles and re-opening of the grand fireplace will add to the beautification of the main hall. Removing the new storerooms added to the front of the building in the Shambles and installing a much more appropriate staircase to lead people to the historic Town Hall will all add to this.

Tender Process

Contracts Finder has been used for the tender process and the Town Council received five expressions of interest from contractors intending on submitting a tender. One company withdrew from the process, due to timescales, but we did receive four tenders.

The summary report provided by the quantity surveyor can be read at [Appendix C](#). A start date has not yet been agreed, due to the need for a value engineering process, however the works will take 68 weeks to complete.

Once the four tenders were received the tender selection process, which assessed tenders against certain criteria for cost and quality, was carried out. A value engineering exercise has begun with the architect, quantity surveyor, consultants and staff working on this element of the project to ensure that the majority of works could still go ahead despite the limited funds, but future proofed so as not to prevent elements of work being reinstated if funds permit or carried out independently at a later date.

A site meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 6th February 2024 between the preferred contractor, who is local to the area, the consultants and staff to discuss the proposed inclusions of later work.

A document will subsequently be distributed to enable Councillors to visualise and understand the process that has been undertaken and detailing the suspended work proposals for further consideration. The suspension of some works will be selected by the project experts to avoid impact on other parts of the project.

The works to the office have already been removed due to the lack of impact on the public. Obviously, this is disappointing to the staff with regards to the double-glazed windows (the office staff's red line!) but we cannot do it all and always knew this would be the case from the beginning when Councillors resolved to proceed on the basis of 'Option A' on the understanding that value engineering would be required. We are fortunate that, following Simon Hoare MP's suggestion, a private donor has been forthcoming to support the project.

Finances to Date

To reach this point in the project, Councillors have authorised fees and costs of just over £450,000 since 2020.

We have also had to take out party wall agreements with three of our neighbours to allow the work to progress. This has been a laborious process, and the fees to a party wall specialist on our behalf which have been £6,399.85 including our neighbours' legal fees, which we are obliged to pay for. The Party Wall Awards have now been distributed and are in place ready to proceed.

The Town Council has been accruing funds/funding for this project for many years. However, building costs have increased significantly since the pandemic and we do not have sufficient funding to proceed without the PWLB loan. To reduce the amount borrowed, the following Reserves have been identified to be included in the council's funds for this, our priority project, and they total £180,000:

1060 PPM - £10,000
 1040 Town Improvements - £7,000
 1065 DDA - £2,000
 1010 Capital Interest - £20,000
 1001 Earmarked Interest - £6,000
 1002 Property Fund dividend £82,000
 1015 Support for Essential services £28,000
 1185 Pension Deficit £20,000
 2023/24 Budget Working Balance - £5,000

The current financial position is shown below (the outcome of the s106 monies application is awaited from the Dorset Council):

Income		
William Williams Charitable Trust	£ 400,000	Confirmed
Pilgrim Trust	£ 20,000	Confirmed
BFTC Corn Exchange reserve	£ 861,500	Confirmed at 24/01/2024
BFTC Corn Exchange reserve 24/25	£ 30,000	Added to precept from 01/04/2024
BFTC additional reserves	£ 180,000	Included in this report for approval (from various reserves)
Dorset Council retained s.106	£ 264,810	Allocated to the Corn Exchange – application submitted
Dorset Council additional s.106	£ 40,320	Application submitted
Community Ownership Fund	£ 265,000	Confirmed
Other fundraising (1)	£ 100,000	Confirmed
Dorset Capital Leverage Fund	£ -	Grant panel meets in February 2024
Maximum loan amount	£ 1,300,000	To be confirmed
Sub-total income	£ 3,461,630	
Costs		
Estimate of outstanding consultancy costs to project completion	£ 200,000	
Fee contingency	£ 50,000	
Preferred works contract price	£ 3,460,772	
Sub-total costs	£ 3,710,772	
Balance / VE target	-£ 249,142	Value engineering of around £250k from the preferred bidder contract sum

PWLB Application

The application form has been attached at [Appendix D](#) for Councillors' information. It is based on two repayments of £50,000 each year because Councillors approved £100,000 within the 2024/25 budget and agreed to the additional line being added to the budget. Notably, there is no increase to the precept because this expenditure – including the £30,000 committed to the capital project for 2024/25 – is £35,000 less than the amount included in the 2023/24 budget and precept, which was £165,000.

Clearly, it is not ideal timing to be bringing the appointment of the contractor and the loan application at the same time, but we were not in a position to apply until planning permission was in place and this was only recently determined. All councils are encouraged to let their County Associations know of their borrowing requirements as soon as possible, which we have done, and meetings have also been held with the DAPTC Chief Executive, Neil Wedge and Ross Ingham of IPA to enable us to further understand the process.

The PWLB asks that councils do not apply for borrowing approval until all negotiations have been completed, all other sources of funding have been secured and all other consents (e.g. planning permission) have been obtained. If an applicant council is successful, processing of the borrowing approval should generally take between 3–4 weeks from the date of its receipt by DLUHC. The borrowing approval will authorise the council to take out a loan within a period of twelve months starting with the date of issue of the borrowing approval.

It is recommended that the council applies for the loan with the repayments made based on Equal Instalments of Principal instead of annuity. This means each payment includes an equal amount in respect of loan principal, therefore the interest due with each payment reduces as the principal is eroded, and so the total amount reduces with each instalment. This is demonstrated at [Appendix F](#).

Unlike all other resolutions, which are passed subject to a majority vote, the loan application cannot be submitted if any Councillors are against the application, although the PWLB Borrowing Team will accept abstentions. The DLUHC office has confirmed the following:

'As per the official guidance, the resolution to borrow must be taken at a full council meeting with all the members present or, where that is not possible, the minimum amount to ensure the meeting is quorate. The resolution shall be considered as passed where all voting members are in favour of the application to borrow.'

In the instance where any votes are counted against the resolution, the application to borrow will not be considered by Secretary of State for the Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities. Any abstentions to the vote counted will not prevent the passing of the resolution.'

If any Councillor wishes to vote against the project, they are asked to be mindful of the public monies spent to date, referred to above, and the position it would leave the Town Council in.

The tender process we have been through is not suitable for value engineering up to the amount required without the loan, nor could we achieve many of the principal aims of the Council. Grant funding would also no longer be forthcoming due to the massive reduction of the project.

Hence, this would need to be restarted as a new project with the associated fees. In the meantime, the building would require closure to the public due to the current condition and the water ingress if there is no plan to resolve these matters.

Additional Information

Dorset Council has confirmed that the Town Council can take a three-month break from the business rates during the closure. However, we must continue to pay for the remaining (14 month) period.

Recommendation

It is recommended that this item is a recorded vote, due to its significance, and that Councillors approve and confirm the following:

- **The appointment of the contractor, subject to the successful completion of a process of value engineering, and confirmation of the notification on the Contracts Finder website.**
- **Expenditure authority for the project of £3,461,630 including fees (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence Localism Act 2011 s1-8).**
- **Approval of the PWLB application for a loan of £1,300,000 being submitted with the following wording:**

At the full council meeting of the Blandford Forum Town Council Corn Exchange meeting of 12th February 2024, it was resolved to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to apply for a PWLB loan of £1,300,000 over the borrowing term of 50 years (EIP) for the Grade I Listed Town Hall / Corn Exchange refurbishment project. The annual loan repayments will come to around £100,000 a year. It is not intended to increase the council tax/precept for the purpose of the loan repayments.

Linda Scott-Giles
Town Clerk
5th February 2024

Previous Resolutions

24/02/2020

To consider a recommendation from the Working Group to progress the project and approve expenditure

It was PROPOSED by Cllr L Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr White and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council agrees to appoint Ingham Pinnock Associates to progress the project using funds of £5,600 from the Corn Exchange Regeneration Reserves (n/c 1105) committed for this purpose (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence Localism Act 2011 S1-8).

20/07/2020

To receive the report/route map from Ingham Pinnock Associates and consider expenditure authority to proceed with the project

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Carter, SECONDED by Cllr Lindsay and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council agrees to proceed with the project based on the development of the most recently approved plans (at Appendix B and Appendix C, Step 1 to 9) and the route map with associated expenditure authority using funds from the Corn Exchange Project Officer/Consultant and Corn Exchange Project Development budgets (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).

15/02/2021

TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM INGHAM PINNOCK ASSOCIATES AND THE DESIGN TEAM

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Stevens and AGREED unanimously that:

The design team is asked to look into the possibility of making the stage area accessible and usable by all members of the community, including the disabled.

19/07/2021

TO RETROSPECTIVELY APPROVE EXPENDITURE FOR THE M&E STRATEGY

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Carter, SECONDED by Cllr Osborne and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council retrospectively approves expenditure of £5,000 + VAT for the M&E strategy of the Town Hall/Corn Exchange complex using funds from the Corn Exchange Project Manager budget line (Expenditure Authority: Localism Act 2011 2011 s1-8).

29/11/2021

TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM INGHAM PINNOCK ASSOCIATES INCLUDING FEE PROPOSAL FOR NEXT PHASE

Ross Ingham of Ingham Pinnock Associates talked Councillors through the next phase of working towards submitting a planning permission and advised that the professional fees have been estimated by the Quantity Surveyor.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr White, SECONDED by Cllr Carter and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council approves the fee proposal for the next phase of budget to planning using funds of £181,000 from the Corn Exchange budget line 1105 (Expenditure Authority: Localism Act 2011 s1-8) to cover the professional fees for the following members of the design team; architect, quantity surveyor, structural engineer, M&E engineer and surveys, to include the following steps:

**Review approach to project governance
Set up review meetings and milestones
Review gaps and procure any missing services
Start fundraising
Start work on the preferred option**

29/11/2021

To discuss amounts of project cost, potential loan and funding

IPA discussed the commercially sensitive figures with Councillors and, as a result of discussions, it was PROPOSED by Cllr White, SECONDED by Cllr Carter and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council agrees to proceed with a loan via the Public Works Loan Board subject to it being the most feasible option when the council is in a position to do so.

21/02/2022

TO RETROSPECTIVELY APPROVE EXPENDITURE FOR AN UPDATED HERITAGE STATEMENT

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Carter, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council retrospectively approves expenditure of £1,760.00 + VAT for Stage 1 using funds from the Corn Exchange Capital Projects budget line (1105) and a further cost will be brought for approval for Stage 2 (Expenditure Authority: Localism Act 2011 s1-8).

18/07/2022

TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM INGHAM PINNOCK ASSOCIATES (IPA)

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Carter and AGREED unanimously that

A disabled access audit is carried out, after seeking quotations, with delegated authority given to the Chair of Council, Chair of Finance & Staffing Committee and Town Clerk to select a contractor using funds from the Corn Exchange Capital Projects budget line (1105) (Expenditure Authority: Localism Act 2011 s1-8).

18/07/2022

TO APPROVE THE INTERIM PLANS FROM DESIGN STAGE TO PLANNING STAGE WITH FURTHER DETAILS TO FOLLOW PRIOR TO SUBMISSION TO THE PLANNING AUTHORITY

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Carter, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council approves the interim plans from design stage to planning stage with further details to follow prior to submission to the planning authority. This is subject to amendment pending receipt of the access audit report and council consideration of its contents/recommendations.

24/10/2022

TO CONSIDER OPTIONS FOR THE OFFICE RELOCATION DURING THE REFURBISHMENT OF THE TOWN HALL/CORN EXCHANGE COMPLEX

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Carter, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council supports the proposal to relocate to Legion House during the closure of the offices and Town Hall complex.

05/12/2022 (Planning)

To approve an application for a loan to the Public Works Loan Board

It was PROPOSED by Cllr L Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr White and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council authorises the commencement of a loan application to the Public Works Loan Board to enable the project to go forward.

05/12/2022 (Planning)

To seek approval to start the contractor procurement process

It was PROPOSED by Cllr L Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council authorises the commencement of the contractor procurement process, with officers then reporting back to council to seek a final decision on the appointment.

22/05/2023

To approve fees for the next phase of the project

It was PROPOSED by Cllr L Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr White and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council approves the fee proposal for the next phase of the project using funds from the Corn Exchange budget line 1105 (Expenditure Authority: Localism Act 2011 s1-8) to cover the professional fees for RIBA Stage 4.

Business Case

Blandford Forum Corn Exchange

**Outline Business Case to support a report to Council regarding an application
for a Public Works Loan**

February 2024

1 Introduction

This document comprises an Outline Business Case to report to Blandford Forum Town Council to apply for a loan from the Public Works Loan Board. It is an adaptation of an earlier outline business plan from late 2023 that was used to support a successful application to the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) for Community Ownership Funding.

Summary of the project

The Blandford Forum Corn Exchange is the main community venue in the large town of Blandford Forum. It serves a population of over 10,000 in Blandford itself and a large rural hinterland across Dorset.

The building is Grade I Listed. It was built by the 'Bastard brothers' after the Great Fire of Blandford in 1731. The Corn Exchange has been at the heart of community life since it was built, originally providing a court room and covered market, then as town's main entertainment venue.

Today the building is used for indoor markets, exercise classes, performances and by the Town Council itself for meetings. However, the building is in very poor condition with parts regularly having to be closed to the public. Parts of the building suffer from severe water ingress and others such as the Corn Exchange are no longer fit for purpose.

Without significant repairs the building will no longer be safe to use and will have to be permanently closed and most likely sold. This would mark the end of the 300-year life of this vital community venue and remove a key part of the social infrastructure of the town.

The Town Council have been working on a proposal to save the building for the last four years. The proposal will repair and revive this important community building and give it a viable life for the next 100 years. As well as delivering urgent repairs, the project will deliver improved accessibility, better heating, cooling and insulation to improve utilisation and long-term sustainability.

The community benefits of the project would include:

- Urgent repair work that would enable the building to remain open and available for a wide range of community uses
- Accessibility adaptations resulting in all the building being fully accessible for the first time, including new disabled WCs and a lift to the first floor
- Adaptations to improve heating and cooling that prevent use at certain times of the year and undermine effectiveness commercial sustainability.

A Planning and Listed Building Consent application for the project was submitted at the start of 2023 and both applications were approved in January 2024.

A full professional team is in place and a preferred contractor has been identified following a competitive works procurement.

Subject to the outcome of the Public Works Loan application the Council will be in a position to begin let the works contract in March/April 2024 with works commencing shortly thereafter.

Structure of the Outline Business Case

The structure and content of this document is as follows:

- Section 2 provides background information on the building including data on use and financial performance
- Section 3 provides a range of socio-economic information to provide context for the project and business planning
- Section 4 sets out a review of relevant strategy and policy
- Section 5 provides analysis of competitors and comparators
- Section 6 focusses on an appraisal of alternative options for the building that effectively identified the preferred option that is the subject of this application
- Section 7 sets out the preferred option
- Section 8 provides a range of financial information including capital and revenue
- Section 9 outlines management and governance arrangements
- Section 10 provides a risk register
- Section 11 includes a project programme.

2 The building

This section of the report sets out various information relating to the Blandford Forum Corn Exchange which is the subject of this Outline Business Case. The section comprises a description of the historical development of the building, the building as we find it today, accompanied by plans where appropriate and an analysis of its recent financial performance.

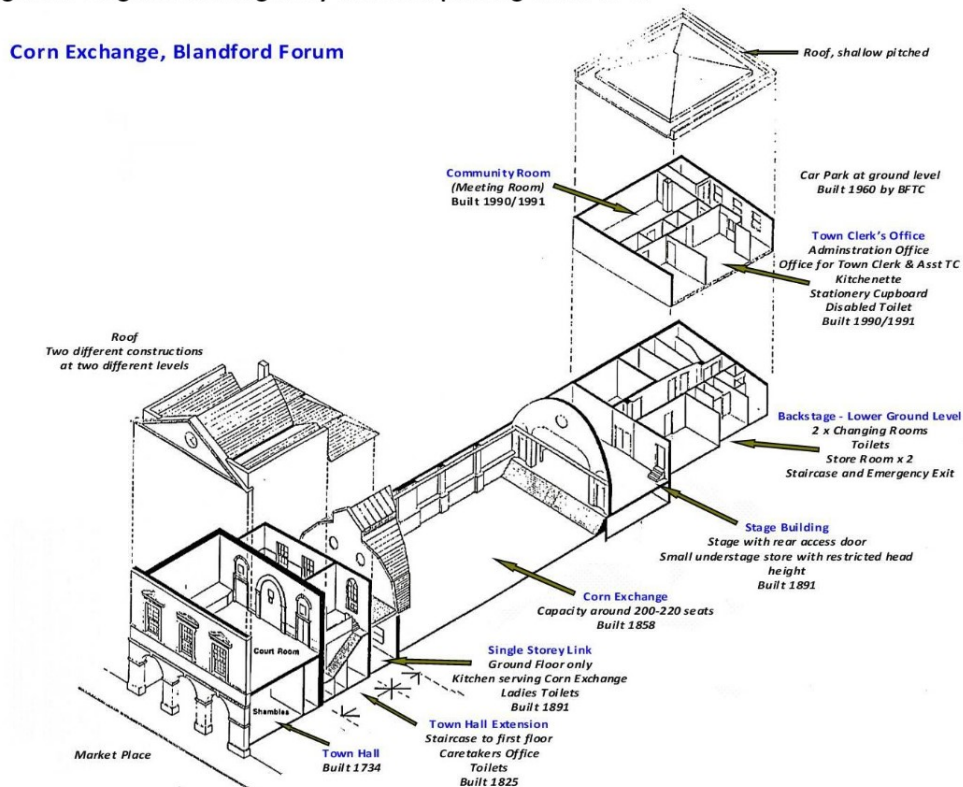
Historical development

Blandford Forum Corn Exchange was built in 1734 after the 'Great Fire of Blandford' (1731), which destroyed around 90% of the town. It was built by the Bastard Brothers who were responsible for remodelling large parts of the town following the devastating fire, possibly based on a design by Sir James Thornhill.

The previous Guildhall was positioned at the centre of Market Place but was destroyed by the 1731 fire. Its relocation to the current site is a result of the George II Rebuilding Act (1732), which prescribed that certain roads and passageways in the town including Market Place should be widened in order to limit the impact and spread of any future fires.

The 1734 building broadly comprised the Shambles and the Court Room above which is the principal elevation visible from the Market Place. This is a classic arrangement of uses at that time and is mirrored in countless equivalent buildings across England.

Figure 1: Diagram showing likely historical phasing of the BFCE



Source: Draft Conservation Management Plan

The Shambles originally had a commercial function as a very useful covered space to complement trading activity in the Market Place whilst the Court Room fulfilled a civic function where the operation of the town was managed, and justice was dispensed.

The building was extended in 1825 when a new bay was added to the rear of the original block to form the Town Hall. This space now contains the Council Chamber at first floor level and WCs & kitchen at ground floor.

The building was extended again in 1858 with the addition of the Corn Exchange which was needed to accommodate the growing local corn market. It is understood that the Corn Exchange replaced an earlier free-standing market building which itself was on the site of the Blue Boar Inn. The stage area was added to the Corn Exchange around 30 years later in 1891 as part of wider package of repairs and alterations.

The final significant phase of development was the addition of the new Town Council offices which were added in 1991, 100 years after the last major intervention.

Over its near 300-year history there have been numerous smaller alterations, repairs and re-purposings at the Corn Exchange. The most recent of which was completed a few years ago when the façade benefitted from a programme of repairs.

The above summary, cursory though it is, clearly illustrates how the Corn Exchange has adapted and changed over time to reflect the evolving function of it at the centre of Blandford Forum and the changing nature of local government as well as expectations of public buildings. The building began life as entirely functional, to deliver civic management and trade goods and was originally known as the Town Hall. As it expanded its uses became more varied and in the late Victorian period the building began to take on a much more popular function with the addition of the stage. Its changing use and possibly perception was reflected in its name with the building at this time referred to as the Municipal Buildings. Most recently and up to today the building is referred to as the Corn Exchange.

As well as representing a continuum of physical change, a review of the draft Conservation Management Plan highlights that numerous committees have formed over time, fundraising campaigns have been executed and much detailed thought and work has gone into making sure the building is in good condition and meets the functional needs of its community. The project that has been developed today is just the latest iteration in this endless process of evolution and it is reasonable to assume it will not be the last.

Key references

National Heritage List for England

The National Heritage List for England is the statutory List relating to historically significant buildings. The BFCE is Listed at Grade I (List Entry Number 1324806) and was first listed on 27th October 1950. The list entry is remarkably short, but states:

1. 865 MARKET PLACE (North Side) Town Hall and Corn Exchange ST 8806 1/50 27.10.50.IGV
2. Portland stone ashlar front. Signed "Bastard, Architect" and dated 1734. Frieze. 2 storey 3 window front, enriched cornice and pediment. Draped stone vases to pediment and quoin parapets. Clock in tympanum. The three first floor windows have moulded architraves, enriched pulvinated friezes, and

pediments, the central one being segmental. Moulded strings. The ground floor has 3 semi-circular arches with moulded imposts and archivolts leading to open portico, formerly a market. The front room on the first floor has some original fittings and also portraits of the Bastards. Behind is a mid-Victorian Corn Exchange with interesting elliptical roof-trusses. Gates to semi-circular arches in portico.

All the listed buildings in Market Place, and Nos 59 to 73 (odd) East Street, Conyer's Filling Station, Nos 1 to 7 (odd), Nos 2 to 8 (even) and No 12 West Street, and Church of St Peter and St Paul form a group.

Pevsner

The Pevsner Architectural Guides are a series of books cataloguing and describing notable architecture of Great Britain. They were begun in the 1940s by the art historian Nikolaus Pevsner and although they can be criticised for their somewhat dry and sometimes acerbic descriptions they remain an important reference.

The Pevsner guide for Dorset describes the Town Hall in typical unenthusiastic style as "a suitably municipal three bay façade with an overall triangular pediment, pedimented first-floor windows, and the ground floor open as an arcade on piers. So, a broad but textbookish design, executed with as much carved enrichment as the textbooks allowed."

Description of main spaces and uses today

The Shambles

The Shambles is the covered open space at the front of the building underneath the Court Room. The front of the space is marked with three impressive arches that are now enclosed by cast iron railings. The railings in the central archway can be opened to allow public access to the Shambles and the rest of the building beyond.

The use of the Shambles has varied over time and has always been the subject of debate within the Town Council. Originally they formed a useful piece of covered space completing the large outdoor market in the Market Place to the front of the building and today they are used in much the same way for a small number of stalls when there is market either inside or out in the Market Place.

Town Hall

The Town Hall is located at the front of the Corn Exchange at first floor level, above the Shambles. As noted above, this space and the Shambles below it represents the original 1734 building.

The Town Hall space is a large attractive hall that has been variously used over time as a meeting space, market hall, court room and Council Chamber. Today, the space is available for private hire with maximum capacity of 50 people.

The space contains some fixtures and furnishings related to its use as a court room as well as a number of interesting and attractive paintings and objects. The space is only accessible by stair and lacks disabled access.

Figure 2: Image showing interior of the Town Hall



Source: IPA

Council Chamber

The Council Chamber adjoins the Town Hall space and is a slightly later addition. Whilst originally intended to provide an anteroom to the Town Hall, as the name suggests, the space eventually became Chamber for the Town Council and the venue for its regular meetings.

The space that one sees today is the result of a major refurbishment in the early 20th century with high quality wooden panelling and matching furnishings including the Council meeting table and chairs. The walls have the names of previous Mayor's and Clerk's painted onto them and there are other interesting local government memorabilia decorating the space.

The Chamber is available for hire as a meeting room with capacity for up to 15 people seated around the large central table. The Chamber is also at first floor level and does not benefit from disabled access.

Figure 3: Image showing interior of the Council Chamber

Source: Town Clerk

Services

At the rear of the Shambles beneath the Council Chamber is a range of smaller rooms that are ancillary to the principal uses of the building.

This area of services is divided in two by a corridor that links the Shambles with the Corn Exchange and is the main public access/egress route. This range of service spaces includes male and female WCs, store rooms and kitchen space which extends into a single storey extension link with the Corn Exchange. The stair to the Town Hall and Council Chamber at first floor rises from this space.

As well as accommodating a large number of uses, this space has to deal with a level change as the building progresses up the slope away from the Shambles and it has to try to link together at least three different phases of the buildings.

Corn Exchange

The services link opens directly into the Corn Exchange from which the building currently takes its name. As one would expect, the space was originally used as a commercial corn market; its impressive scale and architectural style reflecting the success of the local market at that time.

The Corn Exchange includes a late Victorian stage and complex of back-of houses spaces. The back-of house spaces include WCs, changing rooms and storage spaces which are colonised by performers when large arts events are taking place. The back-of-house spaces are largely below ground level as a result of the way that the building works its way up-hill whilst trying to keep as many functions at-grade as noted above.

Today the Corn Exchange is used for a wide variety of different functions including indoor markets, Council meetings and arts activities and is broadly, a popular and important local community venue.

Town Council offices

Above the Corn Exchange service range the Town Council's own offices are located at the very rear of the building. This element is home to the management and administration of the Town Council and is the public face of the organisation.

Because of the long, linear and enclosed nature of the building, staff and visitors to the Town Council offices access this element from the rear via Church Lane.

Figure 4: The Town Council offices accessed through Church Lane Car Park (note the upper part of the Corn Exchange in the left of the picture which indicates how the levels change as you move through the building)

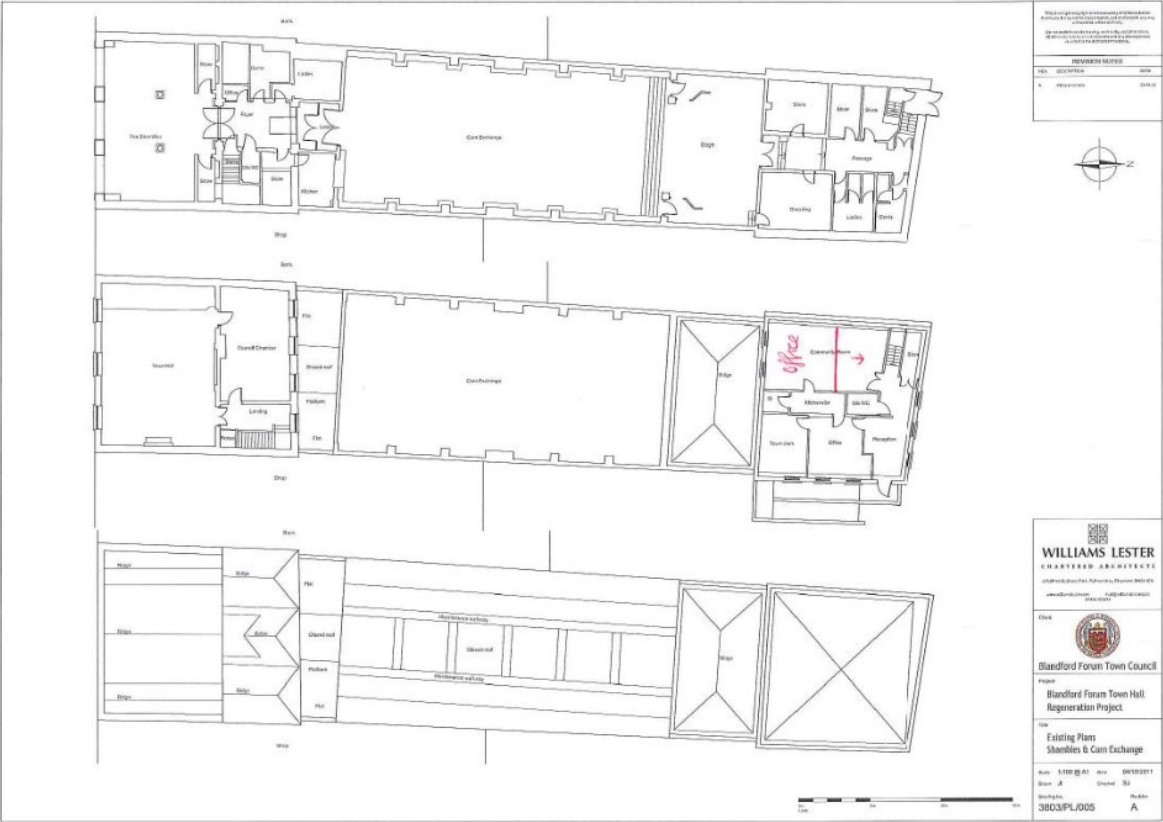


Source: Google street view

Existing plans

The plans below illustrate the current layout of the BFCE; they are for illustrative purposes only.

Figure 5: Existing floorplans

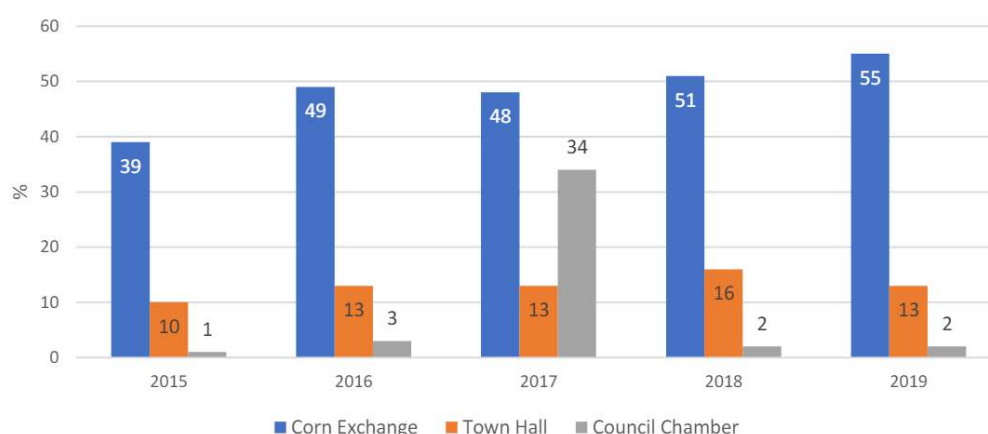


Utilisation

Presently the Corn Exchange has three spaces to hire; the Corn Exchange, Town Hall and Council Chamber. The Town Council offer these spaces for hire based on 3 bookable sessions per day. Excluding Christmas Day this equates to around 2,184 bookable sessions each year.

An analysis of utilisation over the past five years (pre-COVID) is presented in the figure below. It shows that the main Corn Exchange space is the most used space by some margin, achieving around 50% utilisation over the last four years on a trend that has been steadily increasing. Accepting that 100% utilisation is unlikely due to the nature of different types of bookings and issues with change-overs, 50% remains relatively low albeit not that bad. However, the utilisation rates for the Town Hall and Council Chamber are significantly less than this at around 13% and 2%.

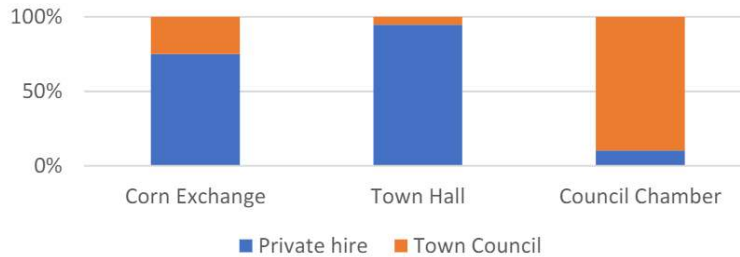
Figure 6: Utilisation rates of spaces for hire



Source: BFTC data

The figure below looks at the use of the three spaces in more detail, identifying the percentage of bookings that were for the Town Council's own use over the last five years (pre-COVID) versus bookings made by organisations outside of the Town Council.

The figure clearly shows that around 25% of all bookings for the Corn Exchange were made by the Town Council over the period 2015-2019. This is borne out of necessity due to the fact that the Town Hall, as the more suitable space, does not have disabled access. This represents a significant opportunity cost in terms of blocking out fee-paying hirers of the Corn Exchange.

Figure 7: Town Council use of spaces for hire

Source: BFTC data

If data is combined and utilisation is analysed as a whole for the entire building over the last five years (by bookable session), the utilisation rate overall drops to 24%. The actual figure will be higher than this as some of the bookings counted included multiple sessions. Whilst this overall utilisation rate is low, it should be noted that it has been increasing over recent years as the table below shows.

Figure 8: Utilisation of Blandford Forum Corn Exchange (pre-COVID)

Calendar year	Approx. total bookings	Utilisation (assuming 2 rooms with 3 sessions per day)
2015	369	17%
2016	441	20%
2017	442	20%
2018	508	23%
2019	523	24%

Source: BFTC data

Turning to the types of activities taking place in the Corn Exchange, a review of data highlights an extremely diverse range of users. Within this list of users there are a small number that use the building very regularly such as the indoor market, the Town Council itself and a slimming group.

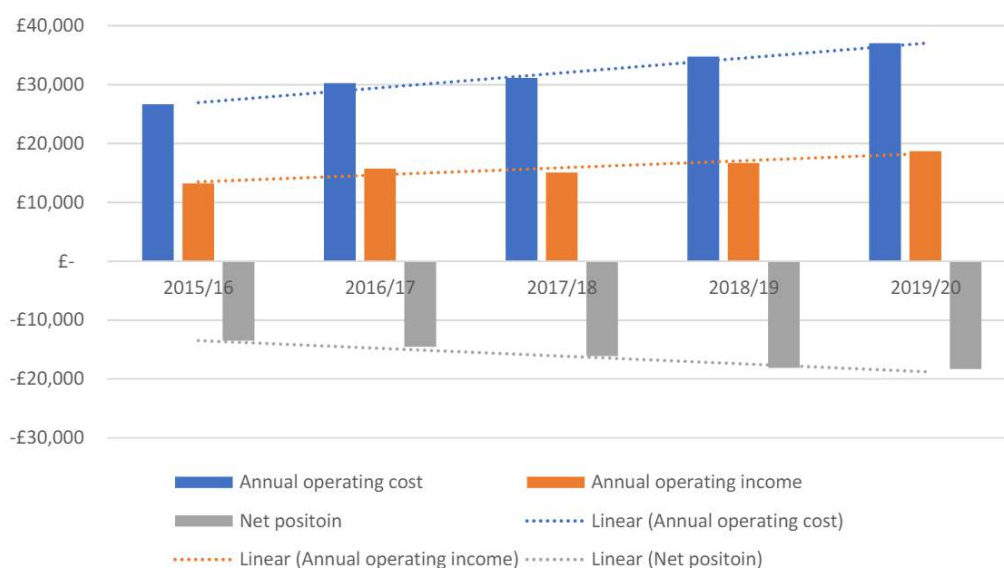
It is worth noting that the Council uses the Corn Exchange space for its regular meetings. Whilst this space is far too large and the Town Hall would be much more suitable, the lack of disabled access makes this impractical. This activity, accounting for around 130 bookable sessions is a good example of how the condition and facilities within the building hinder its performance. Whilst no one would question the need for the Town Council to meet, the fact that it must meet at ground floor out of necessity, means that it takes up what might otherwise be bookable sessions to users paying a venue hire fee; this acts like a deadweight on the financial performance of the building.

Financial performance

As noted in the section above, a number of spaces within the BCCE are available for private hire and generate an income for the Town Council. When set against the annual operating costs of the building (excluding staff) it is possible to assess the financial performance of the building.

The graph below illustrates annual income and expenditure on the building each year from 2015-2020 including the net position. The graph highlights that the building operates at a significant loss every year, generally, costing double to operate what it generates in income. The graph also illustrates that whilst income has risen over the period shown it has not risen as fast as the cost of operating the building i.e. the building is becoming less and less viable as time passes.

Figure 9: Financial performance of BFCE 2015-2020



For the last full financial year pre-COVID (2019/20) the building operated at a loss of around £18,300 which it could be argued in the context of a public body with a turnover the size of the Town Council's is a relatively small amount. However, if this loss is fixed at £18,300 and forecast into the future over 30 years (the timescale public sector projects such as this should be viewed across), this equates to a total cost to the Town Council (undiscounted) of around £550,000.

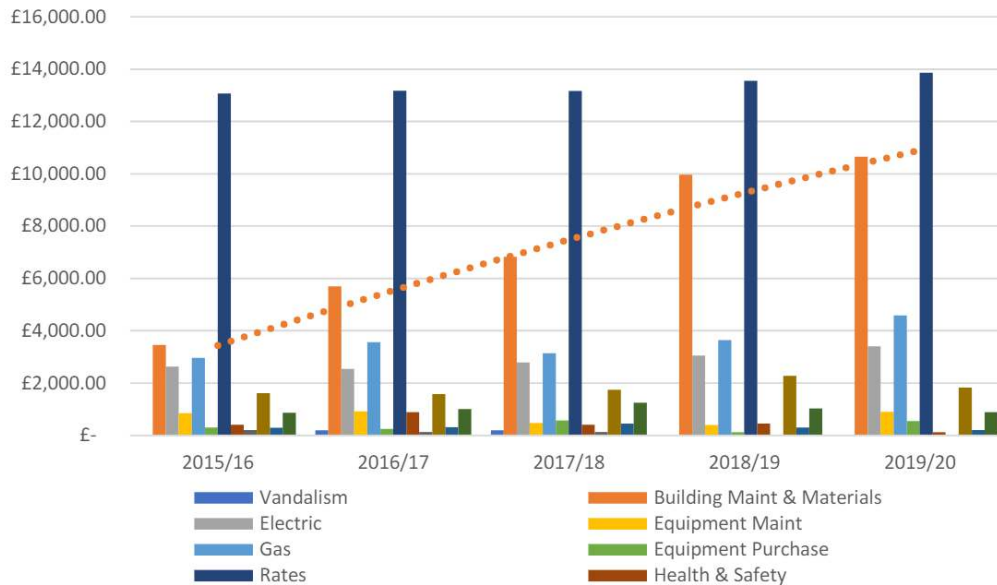
However, if the average rate at which the annual loss has increased over the last five years (7%pa) is applied and this is forecast 30 years into the future, which is arguably a more realistic scenario, the total cost to the Town Council (undiscounted) would be around £1.9m.

The graph below analyses the items that make up the running cost of the BFCE. Some costs such as non-domestic rates are relatively fixed and some have seen relatively minor increases over the period that might simply be down to inflation. However, it is clear that as well as being the single biggest item of expenditure after rates, the cost heading that has grown significantly over the period is building maintenance.

The increase in cost in building maintenance could be driven by an increased diligence amongst Town Council staff in recent years which means that earlier years were not painting a true picture but it is

more likely to be a symptom of the fact that historic buildings are expensive to run and that these costs increase over time when larger-scale repairs and restoration work has not been forthcoming as we understand is the case here.

Figure 10: Breakdown of operating costs for the Corn Exchange 2015-2020



Source: BFTC data

Summary

- The 'Corn Exchange' comprises a sequence of buildings extending back from the Market Place that were built one after the other in five main phases:
 - Shambles and Town Hall: 1734
 - Town Hall extension: 1825
 - Corn Exchange: 1858
 - Stage extension: 1891
 - Town Council offices: 1991
- The uses taking place in the building have changed over time to reflect the needs of the local economy and local community; the building has always adapted to remain relevant
- Today, the Town Hall, Council Chamber and Corn Exchange operate as spaces for hire and general community use. The Town Council offices remain the headquarters of the Town Council. The Shambles is a useful covered outdoor space that is also available for hire and creates a strong relationship between the building and the Market Place, used for a wide variety of activities. The WC's within the building function to an extent as general town centre conveniences
- Utilisation rates of different spaces vary significantly. Utilisation rates for the Town Hall and Council Chamber are very low at between 1% and 16%, driven primarily by poor access. The Corn Exchange is much better at around 50% though a reasonable proportion of this will be Town Council use which is non-fee-paying and not particularly well suited to the space
- As a whole the building generates around £19,000 of income each year from around 523 bookings; a significant number of these bookings will be the Town Council who do not pay to use the space. As a whole the building costs around £37,000 to run each year, excluding staff

costs. Taken together, the building runs at an annual loss of around £18,000 - £19,000 each year; this loss is covered by the Town Council

- Over time, income generation is steadily increasing but operating costs are increasing faster. The building is therefore becoming less and less 'viable' over time requiring a larger subsidy each year. It is likely that as time has passed whilst major repairs have been put off in the hope of them one day forming part of a more comprehensive programme of work, the condition of the building has suffered and the cost of repairs are ultimately likely to have increased.

SWOT

Finally, the table below provides an overall assessment of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats faced by the Corn Exchange.

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The building is located centrally within Blandford Forum and benefits from a significant volume of passing footfall • The building is an iconic landmark within Blandford Forum, highly visible and standing out in the market place • The building benefits from a wide variety of users who hire spaces for a range of different activities • The Corn Exchange and Town Hall spaces are extremely flexible and can be used for a wide range of different activities • The way that the building is managed means that it is relatively affordable and that the community is not priced-out of using it • The building has strong links to the community as a result of the huge variety of different uses and activities that have taken place over generations within it • The Shambles is a unique covered external space in Blandford Forum that is suited to a wide range of uses that helps the building as a whole contribute positively to activity in the Market Place. This space makes the building feel like part of the Market Place, not separate from it 	<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The links to the community and the high levels of footfall the building benefits from, means that the building will always be part of local people's consideration when they are thinking about hiring a space • The Town Hall and Council Chamber are under-utilised due primarily to the access arrangements, their condition and environmental performance. This could be remedied and utilisation and income generation could increase • There is significant and attractive historic fabric throughout the building that could be uncovered, revealed or re-instated that would increase its attractiveness and reinforce its position as a local historic icon • The various small rooms, WCs, stores etc. at ground floor beneath the Town Hall and Chamber could be rationalised and upgraded • The various spaces beneath the Town Council office could be rationalised and upgraded
<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no disabled access to the Town Hall and Council Chamber at first floor level; these spaces are therefore not suitable for a wide range of community uses and their ability to generate income is impaired • The lack of disabled access to the first floor means that regular and frequent Town Council meetings are held in the Corn Exchange. This 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parts of the building are in poor condition and deteriorating. If issues are not addressed the cost and impact could be significant • There is clear evidence of water ingress in the spaces underneath the Town Council offices that are having an impact on condition

<p>space is not particularly suitable for these meetings and it prevents other fee-paying users from hiring what is the building's most commercially attractive space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The space at ground floor between the Shambles and the Corn Exchange feels congested with numerous thresholds, doors-off into ancillary rooms, changes of levels, surface treatments etc. and feels underwhelming for a building of this stature. The arrangement of doors also obscures access to the stairwell when the doors to the Shambles are open • The quality of the décor in the lobby area and the Corn Exchange is mixed quality and does not reflect the stature or importance of the building • Building services are complex as a result of having been developed piecemeal over-time. This is likely to be inefficient and perform badly in terms of environmental and financial sustainability • Various lower quality additions have been made to the building over time that detract from its visual appeal and have a negative impact on this historic significance of spaces, for example the two storage spaces or the surface mounted services in the Shambles • Storage across the building has evolved ad-hoc with numerous different spaces used to store different items. Storage is also currently insufficient /inappropriate with stacks of chairs in the Corn Exchange and some located on the stage and others in the green room spaces which requires staff to lift items up and down sets of stairs • Various proposals have been put forward over the last 20+ years to restore or repurpose the building with limited progress being made. This will have created a degree of fatigue amongst the community and councillors and could impacted credibility with key stakeholders and agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cost of maintaining the building is increasing over time as a result of medium-term historic underinvestment • Other newer/fresher venues in Blandford Forum could capture market share from the Corn Exchange and result in reduced income • Users could drift-away over time if facilities are not improved to meet peoples needs and expectations
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3 Socio-economic baseline

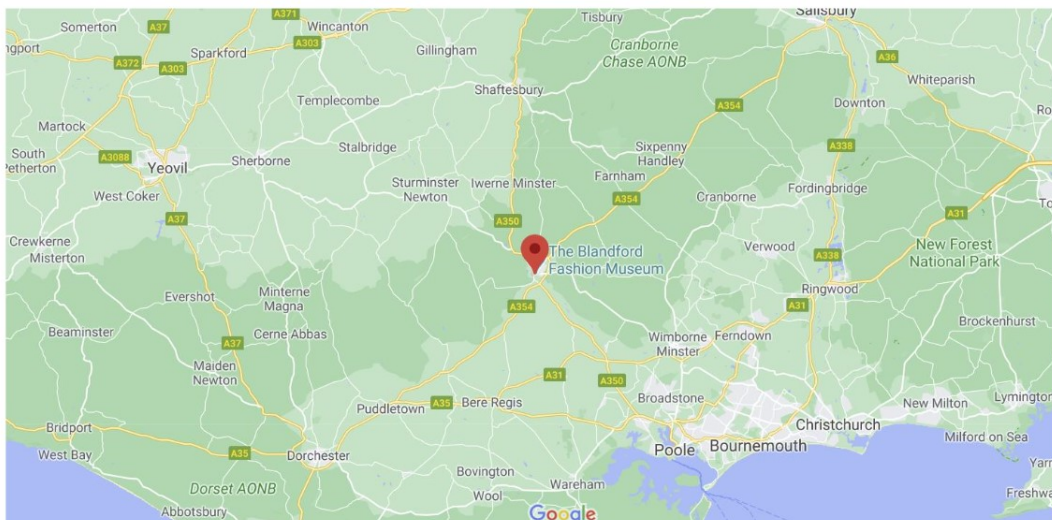
This section of the business plan summarises and analyses a range of empirical data relating to Blandford Forum. The purpose of this is to provide a sound and accurate understanding of trends in the local area that might influence the project and the appraisal of options for the Corn Exchange.

In most cases data for Blandford Forum is compared to trends across Dorset and England as a whole. However, in some places data for the four other market towns in what was the old North Dorset District is provided to help illustrate any more local differences.

Geographic and administrative context

Blandford Forum is a traditional market town in Dorset in the south west of England. Alongside Gillingham, Sturminster Newton and Shaftesbury it is one of four market towns located in what was, until recently, North Dorset Local Authority District. The Local Authority of North Dorset District was abolished in 2019 along with the four other districts in the County and incorporated into a new Unitary Authority covering all of Dorset.

Figure 11: Blandford Forum location plan



Source: Google Maps

Popular awareness

Blandford Forum is notable for several reasons but perhaps most famously for having been rebuilt in a single phase from 1731-1750 following a devastating fire that destroyed almost all the buildings in the town. The timing of this wholesale renewal and the high quality of what was built has meant that the town centre is commonly regarded as one of the finest and most complete Georgian townscapes in England.

Allied to this, additional notoriety is driven by the fact that the task of re-building the town after the fire was largely given over to two memorably named brothers, William and John Bastard or the *Bastard Brothers of Blandford Forum* by which slogan they are more commonly referred. The Bastards are

thought to have combined the roles of architect, surveyor, carver and designer of plasterwork. They were possibly more responsible than anyone else for the fine town centre that we see today.

The town is also notable for:

- The presence of the large military base at Blandford Camp which is home to the Royal Signals and the Royal Signals Museum although this is located outside of the Civil Parish
- Being the home of the historic Hall & Woodhouse brewery and Bryanston public school.

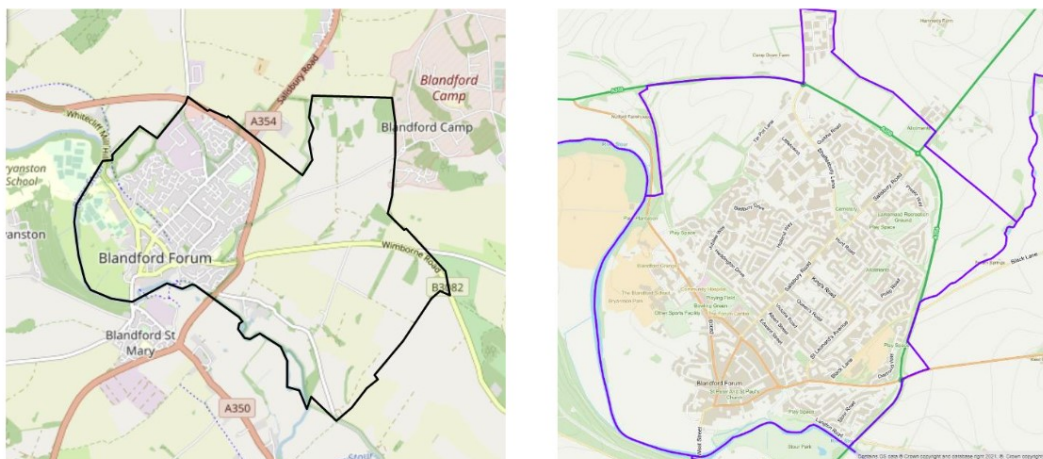
Resident population

The total resident population of Blandford Forum (Electoral Ward) in 2019 was estimated to be around 10,900.

At the time of the last Census in 2011 the actual population of the Civil Parish (see plan below, i.e. excluding Blandford Camp), was recorded as being 10,235. This represents an increase of over 1,500 people or 18% over the 10 years since the 2001 Census where the population was recorded as 8,745. For a town of its age and size, this represents a period of significant growth.

To put the population of Blandford Forum into context, the population of the Dorset Council area is around 412,000, so Blandford makes up 2.5%. Within the old North Dorset Local Authority area Blandford Forum and Gillingham were the largest of the four market towns (Gillingham had a population of 11,756), followed by Shaftesbury (7,314) and Sturminster Newton (4,292).

Figure 12: Plan showing Blandford Forum Civil Parish at the time of the 2011 Census on the left, which is the administrative area used for most of the data analysis below + Plan showing Blandford Forum Civil Parish today following a boundary review on the right



Source: Nomis, 2020

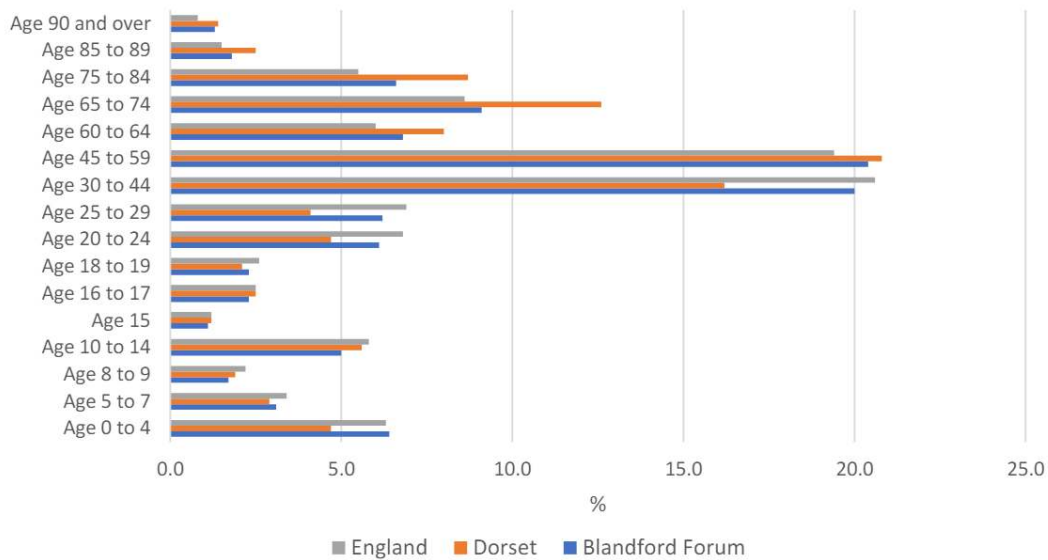
Age breakdown

The figure below illustrates the age breakdown of residents in Blandford Forum (Parish) and compares this to the equivalent data for Dorset (Unitary Authority) and England as a whole at the time of the 2011 Census.

The figure illustrates that the age breakdown of residents in Blandford Forum much more closely reflects that of England as a whole and deviates significantly from Dorset which is characterised by

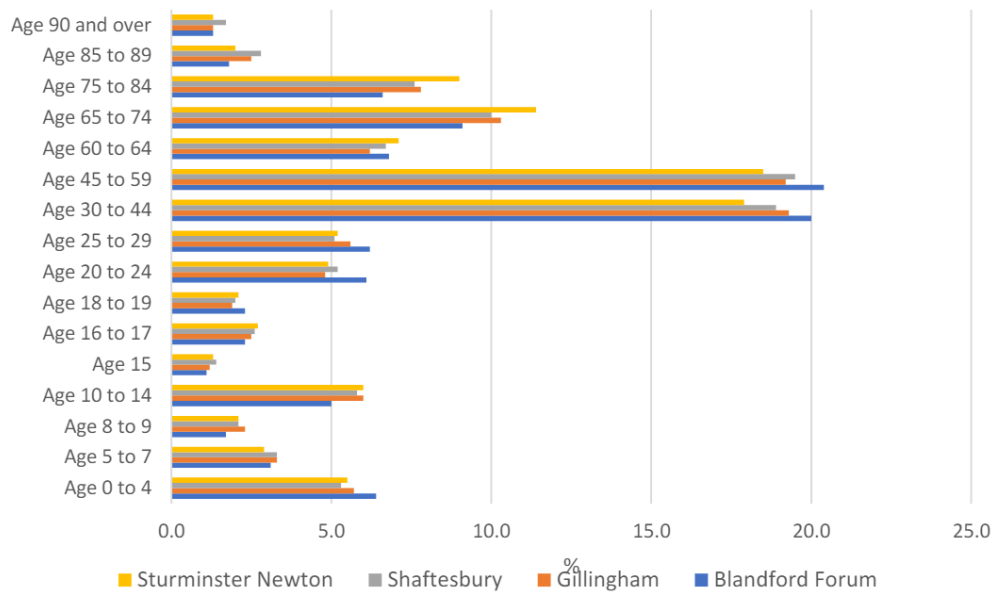
higher proportions of residents aged 60 and above. From this it is possible to suggest that within the Dorset context, Blandford is a relatively youthful place, as might be expected from a relatively large urban centre within a rural context.

Figure 13: Age breakdown in Blandford Forum compared to Dorset & England (2011)



Source: 2011 Census

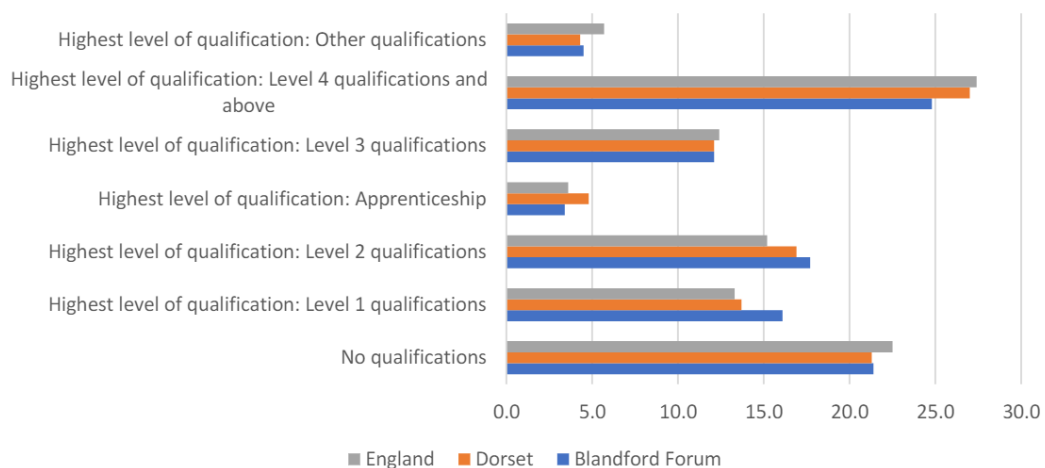
Looking at the trend locally, the figure below compares the age breakdown of Blandford Forum with the three other towns in the old North Dorset District at the time of the last census in 2011. Whilst not particularly significant there is a visible trend which indicates a slightly more youthful population in Blandford Forum than the other three market towns; see in particular the proportion of residents aged 20-59.

Figure 14: Age breakdown in the four towns (2011)

Source: 2011 Census

Qualifications

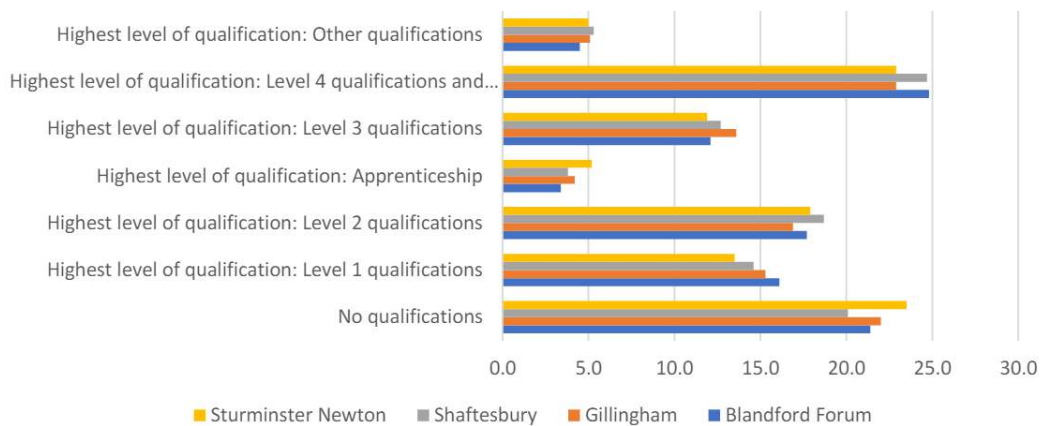
The figure below illustrates at the highest level of qualification achieved by working age residents in Blandford Forum in 2011 compared to Dorset and England. Relative to the trend for Dorset and England as a whole, the figure shows that whilst around 30% of working age residents in Blandford Forum have level 4 qualifications and above (degree level), the proportion of residents only qualified to Level 1 or 2 (GCSE/equivalent) is higher in the town than across Dorset and England as a whole.

Figure 15: Highest level of qualification achieved by working age residents in England, Dorset & Blandford Forum (2011)

Source: 2011 Census

The figure below compares qualification levels of residents in Blandford Forum with the three other market towns in the old North Dorset district. The graph presents a mixed picture but perhaps suggests generally higher levels of qualifications in Shaftesbury and to a lesser extent Blandford Forum than the two other towns.

Figure 16: Highest level of qualification achieved by working age residents in the four market towns (2011)

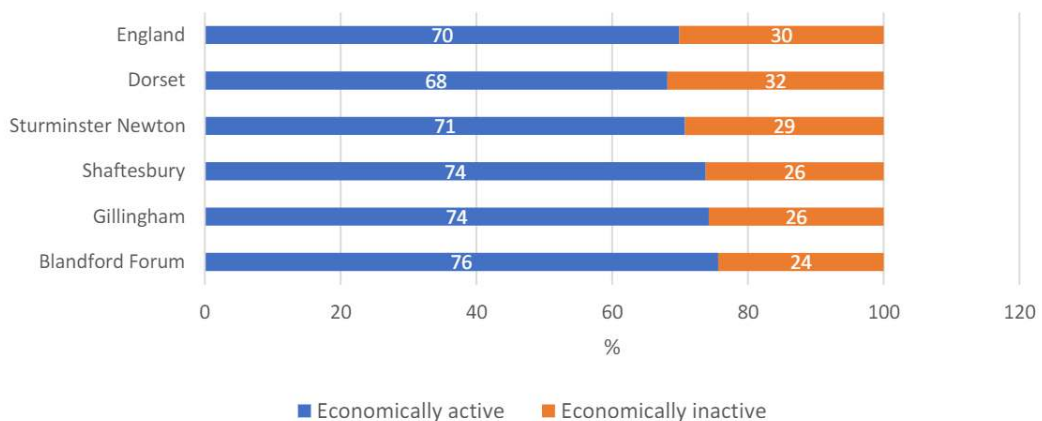


Source: 2011 Census

Economic activity / inactivity

The figure below illustrates the proportion of working age residents that are either economically active (in employment, unemployed or students) or economically inactive (retired, looking after home or family or long-term sick or disabled) in Blandford Forum and all of the other areas analysed. It illustrates that of all of the areas assessed, Blandford Forum has the highest proportion of economically active residents at 76%.

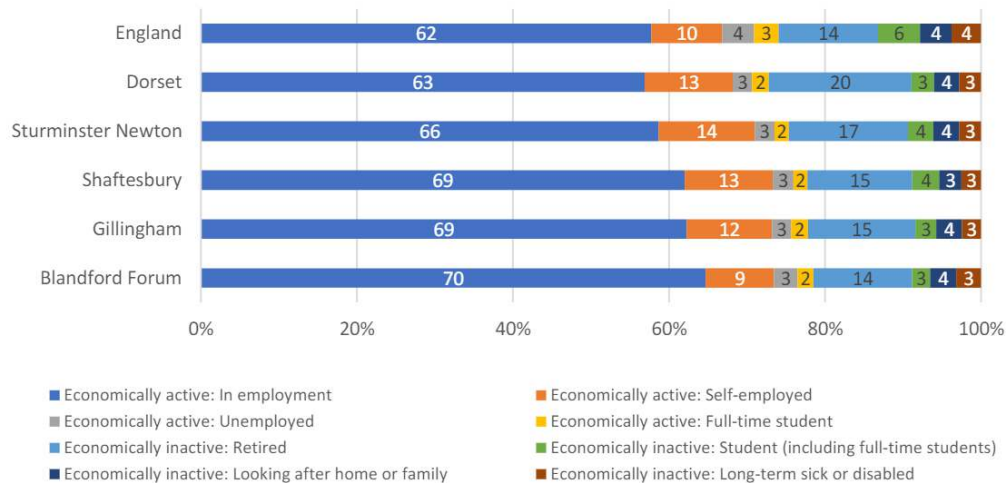
Figure 17: Economic activity amongst working age residents (2011)



Source: 2011 Census

The figure below looks in more detail at what makes up the two broad groupings of economically active/inactive working age residents. The graph shows that Blandford Forum contains a higher proportion of working age residents in employment than all of the other areas and the joint lowest proportion of retired residents.

Figure 18: Breakdown of economically active/inactive working age residents (2011)



Source: 2011 Census

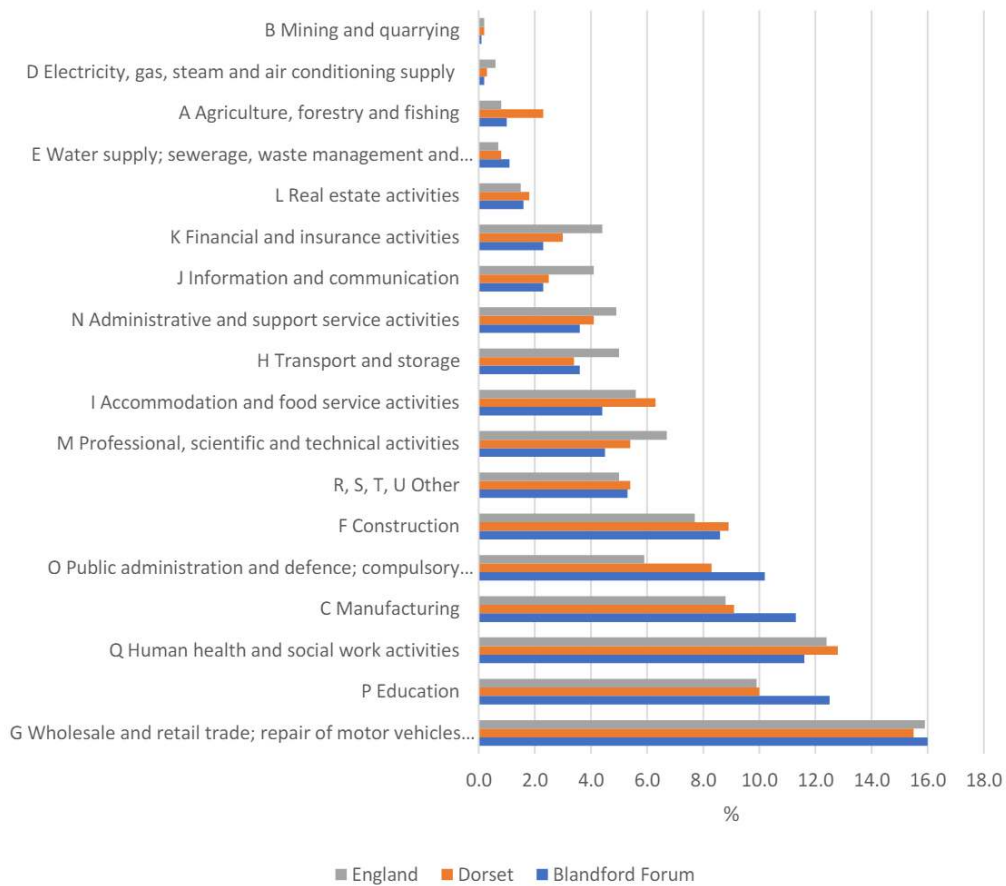
Industry of employment of residents

The figure below illustrates the industry of employment of working age residents in Blandford Forum, Dorset and England at the time of the 2011 Census. This data relates to the sector in which residents are employed, it does not show where they are employed i.e. a person working in the IT sector will be shown as a resident of Blandford Forum even if their job is located in Salisbury or London.

The figure illustrates a number of notable trends:

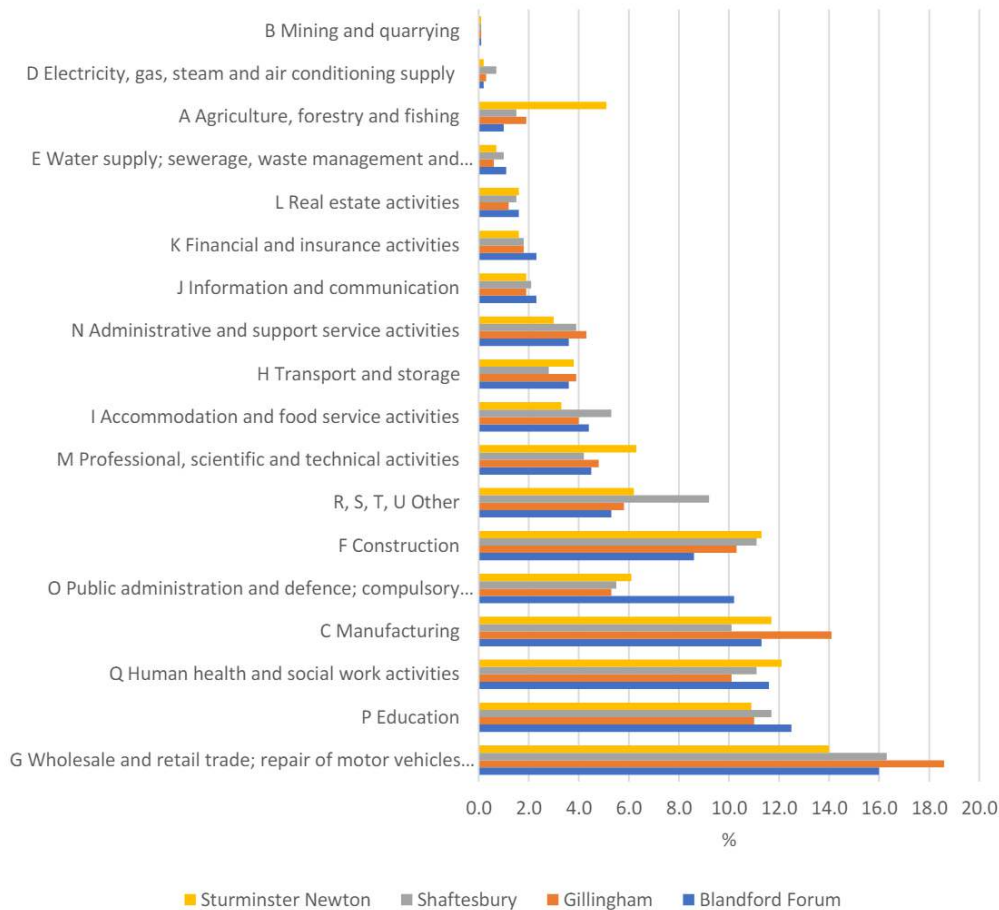
- Retail is the single biggest employer in Blandford Forum accounting for the employment of nearly 16% of all working age residents. This reflects national and sub-regional trends
- Education is the second largest sector of employment of residents in Blandford Forum, possibly driven for by the presence of Bryanston School in addition to the local state schools
- The proportion of working age residents employed in manufacturing and public administration and defence is higher than the national and Dorset-wide trend. The latter is likely to be the result of people who work at Blandford Camps living in the town
- The proportion of working age people employed in tourism and knowledge-led or professional service sectors (information and communications, professional, scientific etc), is lower than the Dorset and England trends. The former is particularly notable given the attractiveness of the town as a visitor destination.

Figure 19: Industry of employment of working age residents in England, Dorset and Blandford Forum (2011)



Source: 2011 Census

The figure below switches the analysis back to the four Dorset market towns. It appears that with a few exceptions, the composition of employment of working age residents in the four market towns is broadly similar. The exceptions being higher rates of employment in retail and manufacturing in Gillingham, higher rates of agricultural employment in Sturminster Newton and higher rates of employment in public administration and defence in Blandford Forum, likely to be driven by the presence of the Camps.

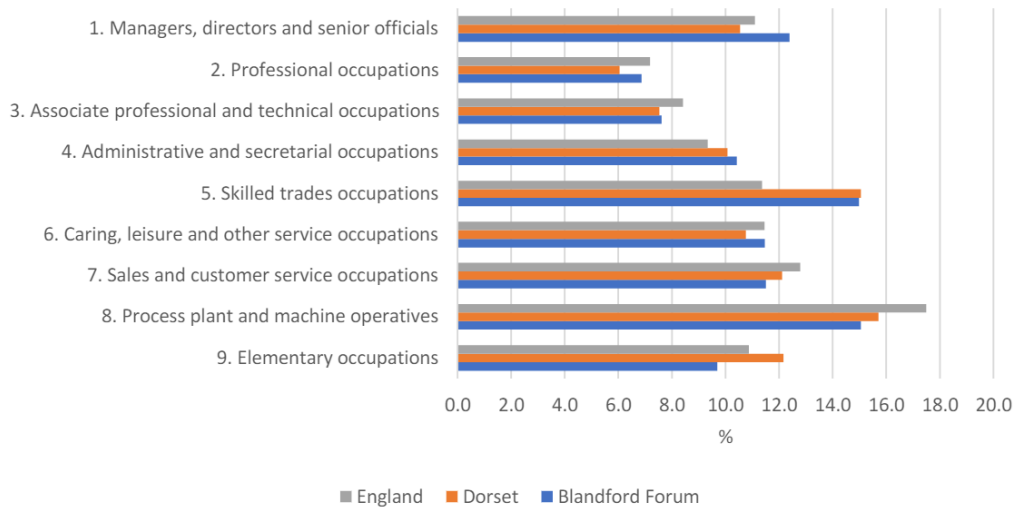
Figure 20: Industry of employment of working age residents in the four towns (2011)

Source: 2011 Census

Occupation

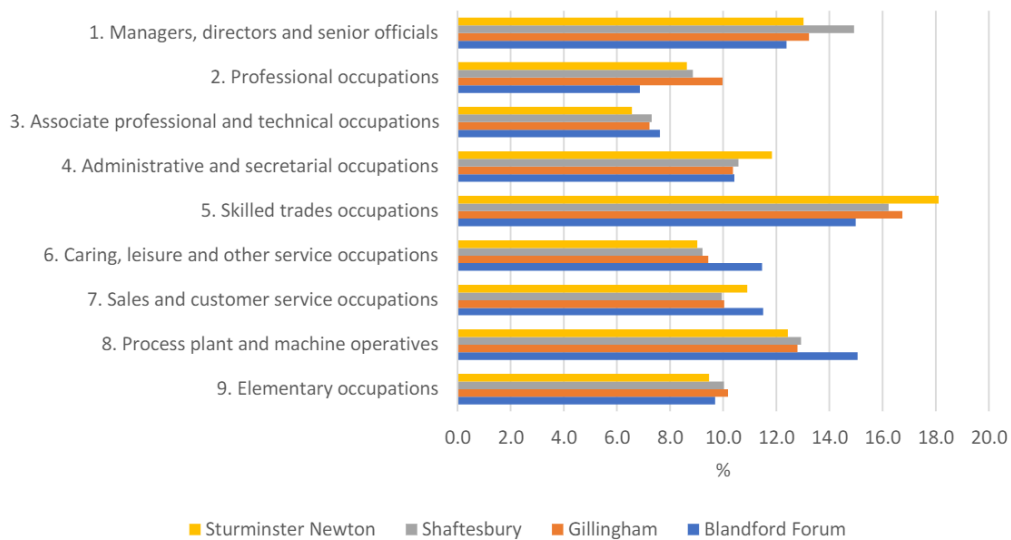
The figures below illustrate the occupation of residents in Blandford Forum compared to Dorset and England and the other local market towns. The first graph shows that Blandford Forum is home to a larger proportion of residents employed in the very highest order occupations and smaller proportions of residents in the lowest order occupations. However, the graph that follows, illustrating the trends across the four market towns, paints quite a different picture, where Blandford switches to containing higher proportions of residents in lower order occupations. So, whilst compared to the national and Dorset-wide picture Blandford is characterised as containing relatively high proportions of residents in higher order occupations and few in lower, when compared to the other market town this trend is reversed.

Figure 21: Occupation of working age residents in England, Dorset and Blandford Forum (2011)



Source: 2011 Census

Figure 22: Occupation of working age residents in the four towns (2011)



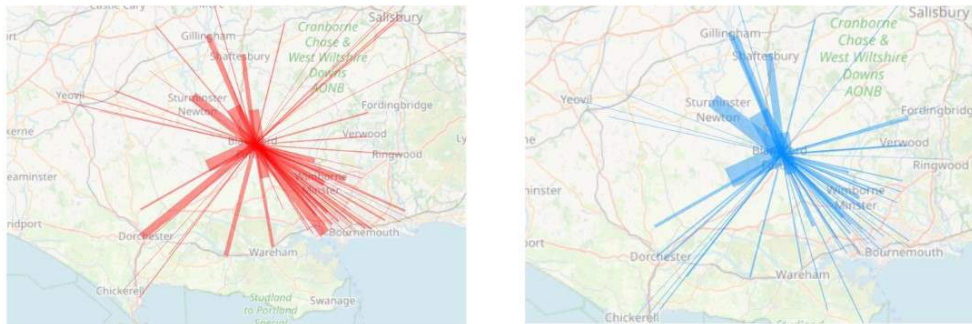
Source: 2011 Census

Commuting flows

The two images below illustrate commuting flows in and out of Blandford Forum. The image with the red lines illustrates people leaving the town for work and the image with the blue lines illustrate people travelling to the town for work from elsewhere.

The figures show that around 2,600 people commute to jobs away from Blandford Forum each day and around 2,000 commute into the town from elsewhere i.e there is a net outflow of around 600 people. Although it is not possible to pick-up from these images, a large proportion of out-commuting is people commuting the relatively short distance to Blandford Camps and also to the Poole and Bournemouth area which can be seen more clearly.

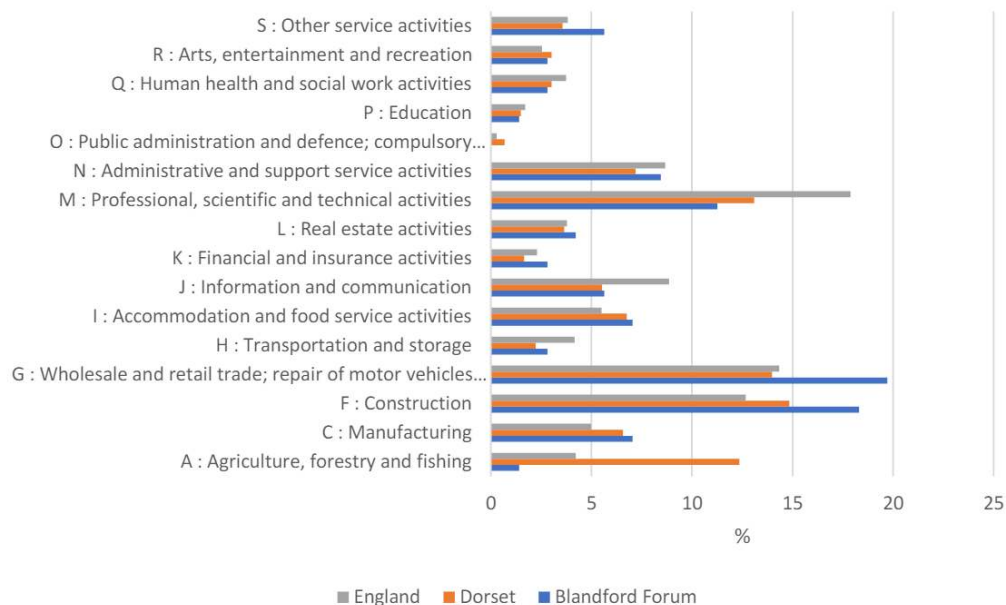
Figure 23: Commuting to and from Blandford Forum



Source: UCL Datashine

Business base

The figures below illustrate the types of businesses located in Blandford Forum, Dorset and England. The graph once again highlights the importance of the retail sector which accounts for around 20% of all businesses in Blandford Forum as well as a notable concentration of businesses involved in construction. Reflecting some of the other data earlier on in the section, the chart again illustrates the relative under-representation of knowledge driven businesses, for example in the professional, scientific and technical sectors.

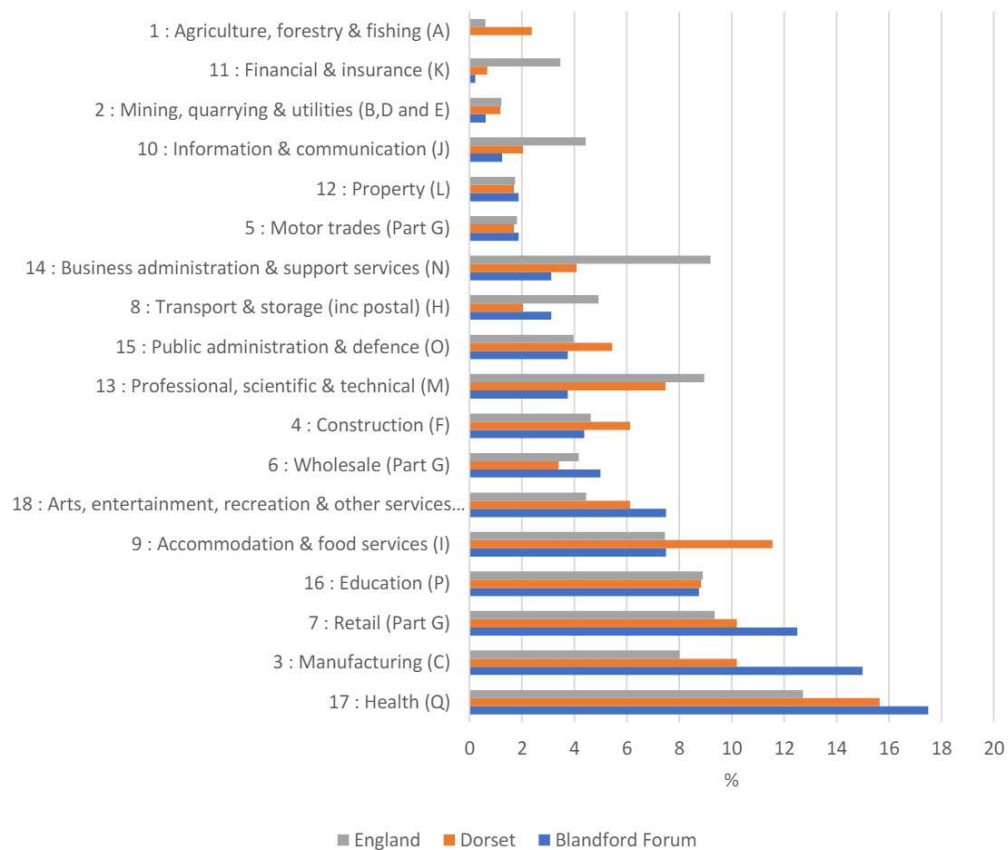
Figure 24: Business base relative to wider trends (2019)

Source: UK Business Count, ONS

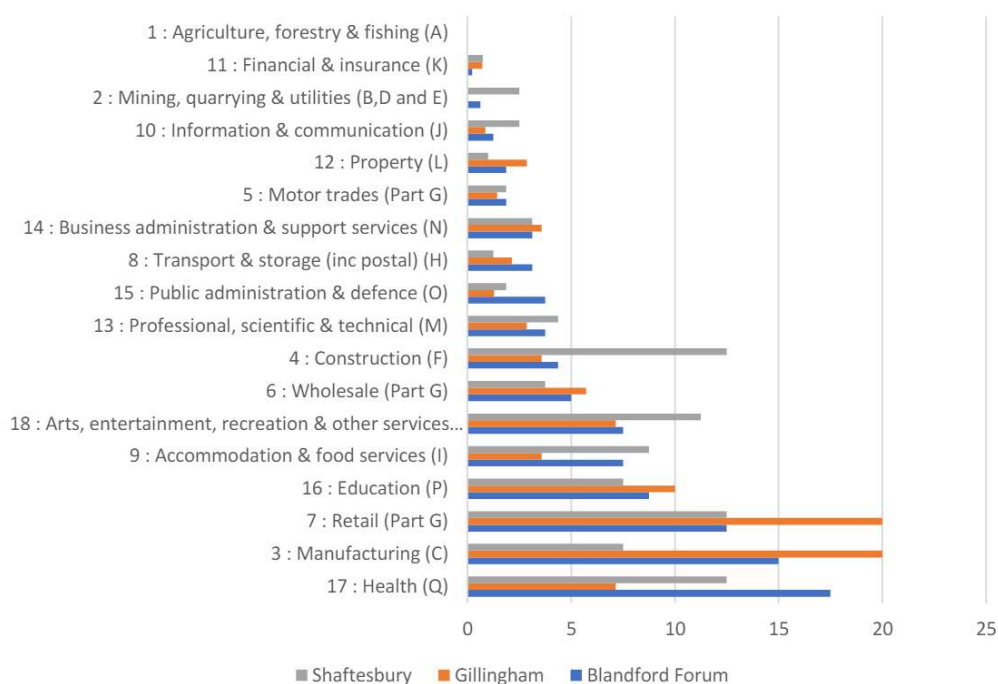
Whilst we have not included an assessment of the different sizes of business it is reported by the Town Council that the major employers in and around the town are Bryanston School, Clayesmore and Milton Abbey Schools, Damory Coaches, the Dorset Council, Dorset Health Care University NHS Foundation Trust, Environment Agency, Hall and Woodhouse Ltd, Hospital Metalcraft, Iracraft Ltd, KJ Pike & Sons, Royal Signals, Sovereign Housing Association, The Forum School, and Tesco.

Employment

The figure below illustrates employment located in Blandford Forum, Dorset and England. Unlike earlier data, this graph deals with jobs actually located in Blandford Forum i.e. jobs could be taken by people who live outside of the town (the data does not include the area containing Blandford Camp). The graph identifies healthcare as the single biggest source of jobs, presumably at Blandford Hospital, but also manufacturing which accounts for around 15% of all employment, possibly at Hall & Woodhouse. As with other data above, the graph again illustrates the importance of the retail sector and the underrepresentation of employment in professional service sectors.

Figure 25: Employee jobs located in England, Dorset & Blandford Forum**Business Register and Employment Survey, 2020**

The figure below illustrates the jobs located in Blandford Forum, Gillingham and Shaftesbury. We see the same data for Blandford as above but what is notable is how it contrasts with Shaftesbury and Gillingham. Gillingham is notable for high concentrations of jobs in manufacturing and retail whereas Shaftesbury has a particularly high proportion of jobs in construction, arts and entertainment.

Figure 26: Employee jobs in the three towns (2018)

Business Register and Employment Survey, 2020

Baseline summary

- Blandford Forum is one of four market towns in what was North Dorset District, a largely rural area that now forms part of the Unitary Authority area of Dorset. It is one of the larger market towns in the area surrounded by a large attractive rural hinterland
- Blandford Forum is a highly attractive town characterised by an unusual concentration of Georgian buildings as a result of a devastating fire around 300 years ago
- Compared to other areas Blandford Forum has a relatively young age profile with high rates of economic activity amongst residents. In particular, Blandford Forum has high rates of economically active working age residents in employment
- Relative to the national picture Blandford Forum contains a high proportion of residents in higher-order occupations indicative of a highly skilled and potentially affluent community. However, locally, the three other market towns in the old North Dorset Local Authority contain a larger proportion of residents in higher order occupations and Blandford Forum contains a higher proportion of residents in lower order occupations
- Whilst there is a net out-flow of people travelling to work from Blandford Forum every day, this is largely driven by the presence of Blandford Camps which is one of a number of large employers in and around the town. There is a significant inflow of people to the town and a number of large companies which suggests that Blandford Forum remains a working market town and important centre of employment in the area
- The retail and construction sectors account for the largest proportion of businesses in Blandford Forum and retail is a key source of employment. The prevalence of retail indicates the important role the town plays as a service centre for a large rural catchment

- The two biggest sectors for employment are health and manufacturing with employment in the knowledge economy is under-represented. Given the attractiveness of the town and situation within an attractive county it is notable that rates of employment in tourism are similar to England as a whole and do not reflect the rate across the County.

4 Literature review

The purpose of this section of the report is to review adopted Town Council strategies and a range of local statutory and non-statutory planning and related documents to understand more about the policy context for the Corn Exchange project. Local planning policy in particular will have a material impact on any potential options for the future of the Corn Exchange – directly or indirectly – and appropriate consideration is therefore required.

Town Council Strategies

Blandford Forum Town Council Town Council Plan 2019-2024

The Town Council has its own strategic plan for the period 2019-2024 which is aligned to the term of the existing Councillors. The stated aims of the Plan are:

- *To establish and clearly document BFTC's overall vision of project priorities and detail how and when these projects may be delivered.*
- *To give clear direction for resource planning and budget setting decisions.*
- *To guide discussions and decisions with the community and partner organisations.*
- *To support the BFTC vision of a professional, proficient Town Council developing quality facilities and services within the community.*
- *To be dynamic, responsive to demand and open to change.*

As the Council's adopted strategy, it is important that any consideration about the future of the Corn Exchange takes account of relevant outputs or outcomes the Council is pursuing; so, for example, if the Council is heavily committed to pursuing zero carbon as part of its strategy, it would be right to consider how the Corn Exchange could contribute to this.

The Plan includes an over-arching vision for Blandford Forum which incorporates aspirations for the delivery or facilitation of a wide range of outputs and outcomes. Parts of the vision that are relevant to future thinking about the Corn Exchange are set out below.

Vision

BFTC would like the town and the relevant authorities to be able to:

- *Deliver a range of operational services as effectively and economically as possible*
- *Develop the vibrant community – supporting all sectors of our community*
- *Continue to forge stronger relationships with key partners and community organisations*
- *Create a more diverse economy – with knowledge based small businesses enjoying a high quality of life, a better retail and night-time economy offer, a developed heritage-based tourism offer*
- *Respect our heritage & environment – having a co-ordinated approach to tourism, active engagement to ensure that new developments complement the town's existing heritage, in a town that cares both for its rural environment and environmental sustainability*
- *Reduce its carbon footprint and increase biodiversity in conjunction with the Climate Change & Biodiversity Action Plan*

Beneath the vision the Plan sets out goals arranged under three themes. Goals that are of relevance to the Corn Exchange include:

Theme 1: Professional & Proficient

Goals: We will aim to...

- retain Quality Gold status

Theme 2: Provision of Facilities & Services

Goals: We will aim to...

- *provide multi-purpose venues that are 'fit for purpose'*
- *to fulfil the Town Council's Statutory Duties to:*
 - *Consider conserving biodiversity and the impact on the environment*
- *work with our partner organisations to improve the living environment*
- *help to preserve the town's unique historic heritage*
- *improve upon our existing provision*

As the home of the Town Council and the subject of various proposals over the last few years, the Corn Exchange project is directly mentioned a number of times.

The document states that the Corn Exchange project is a continuing project, brought into this strategy document from previous iterations and that the Council holds a number of Earmarked Reserves for the restoration of the Corn Exchange complex.

Planning policy context

National Planning Policy Framework, (NPPF)

The NPPF is at the apex of the English planning policy system providing guidance to Local Authorities and others on plan making and development control.

Section 16 of the NPPF addresses the historic environment and provides important context for thinking about the future of the BFCE. The section opens with a clear statement about how historic buildings such as the Corn Exchange should be considered:

These (heritage) assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance so they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

There is limited information regarding the positive repair or adaptation of historic buildings such as BFCE in the chapter but it does provide some guidance to local authorities in determining applications involving historic assets:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- *The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation*

- *The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality;*

Where proposals may impact the significance of a heritage assets such as BFCE, the NPPF states that:

great weight should be given to the asset's conservation irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Planning Practice Guidance: Historic Environment

In addition to the NPPF, at the national level the Government provides a series of more detailed Planning Practice Guidance notes. The guidance on the historic environment/heritage begins by setting out a very useful explanation of what is meant by the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment and sets out some context for how possible changes should be handled. It states that:

Conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change. It requires a flexible and thoughtful approach to get the best out of assets as diverse as listed buildings in every day use and as yet undiscovered, undesignated buried remains of archaeological interest.

In the case of buildings, generally the risks of neglect and decay of heritage assets are best addressed through ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation. Ensuring such heritage assets remain used and valued is likely to require sympathetic changes to be made from time to time.

North Dorset Local Plan, January 2016

The North Dorset Local Plan (adopted in January 2016) remains the principal local statutory planning guidance for the area. The plan sets out a vision for how it sees the area changing into the future and a series of spatial and thematic policies.

The Local Plan provides important context for any future planning for the Corn Exchange; for example, any proposals will need to reflect relevant policies that might relate to conservation or the distribution of uses in Blandford Forum town centre. Equally, stakeholders and other external parties such as prospective funders will be interested to see how any ideas for the Corn Exchange reflect or conflict with adopted local planning policy as a means of measuring how realistic or deliverable they might be in policy terms.

The Local Plan sets out a vision for what it would like North Dorset to become over the duration of the plan period (to 2031). Whilst not a statutory policy the vision does provide a strong indication of how the Local Authority and stakeholders that have contributed to the Plan want the area to change/or not, over time.

Elements of the vision that are relevant to potential proposals for the future of the Corn Exchange are noted below:

By 2031 North Dorset will:

- *Be a District that has played a positive role in addressing the causes and effects of climate change*
- *Have expanded thriving market towns collectively providing homes, jobs and services for those living within them and within the communities they serve;*
- *Have a conserved and enhanced locally distinctive historic and natural environment that retains the qualities that make the District's urban and rural areas even more attractive and desirable places to live, work and visit*
- *Have a more robust and prosperous economy (including sustainable tourism) with high quality jobs and skills, focused in locations that best support the District's growing population*
- *Have a range of community, leisure, cultural and recreational facilities in locations that are accessible to the local population.*

In addition to the vision the Local Plan includes more detailed objectives; those that are relevant to the Corn Exchange include:

- *Meeting the challenge of climate change;*
- *Conserving and enhancing the historic and natural environment;*
- *Ensuring the vitality of the market towns;*
- *Improving the quality of life.*

Policy 3: Climate Change

Where the proposal involves the re-use or extension of existing buildings, developments should seek to improve the buildings energy performance unless it can be demonstrated that it is not practical or viable to do so.

Policy 5: The Historic Environment

Any development proposal affecting a heritage asset (including its setting) will be assessed having regard to the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of that asset and securing a viable use for it that is most consistent with its conservation.

For any designated heritage asset, great weight will be given to its conservation when considering any proposal that would have an impact on its significance. Clear and convincing justification for any development that would cause harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset will be required however slight and whether through direct physical impact or by change to its setting.

Policy 11: The Economy

Spatial Approach to Economic Development

The economic development of the four main towns (i.e. Blandford, Gillingham, Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton) will be supported by:

- c the continued improvement of town centres (in accordance with Policy 12) as the main focus for retail, leisure and other commercial activities.*

Community Halls and Places of Worship

Outside of the policy text, in accompanying narrative, the Local Plan states that:

During the plan period the following measures will be taken to ensure that the community venues in the main towns are adequate to cater for planned growth:

- *Blandford – the refurbishment of the Corn Exchange, to provide a multipurpose hall for community use;*

Policy 14: Social Infrastructure

The Council will work with partners and developers to ensure that the level of social infrastructure across the District is maintained and enhanced through the retention and improvement of existing facilities and new provision, where required.

Development should support the maintenance and enhancement of existing social infrastructure and the provision of new social infrastructure, through provision on site and/or contributions to provision off site, as appropriate.

Through these measures the Council will ensure that:

Community Facilities (Non-Commercial)

- k. existing community halls, places of worship and other non-commercial community facilities are protected and new facilities provided where there is an identified need.

Policy 16: Blandford

In the period up to 2031, social infrastructure to support growth will include:

- the refurbishment of the Corn Exchange to form the main community venue for the town and*
- the provision of neighbourhood halls to serve new development in the northern part of the town and Blandford St Mary;*

Blandford Forum Neighbourhood Plan (January 2019 – submission version i.e. not adopted)

The Blandford+ Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2031 was submitted for examination in the summer of 2016 and was examined during the first half of 2017. A public hearing was held on 10 April 2017. The Examiner's Report has now been received and concludes that provided the recommendations in her report are followed the plan would meet the basic conditions. In light of this the plan as modified, can proceed to a referendum and is proposed to do so in 2021 or once the coronavirus restrictions have been lifted.

The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to maintain the special heritage and landscape character of the plan area and in particular it seeks to protect and enhance the special landscape and ensure that historic assets will be protected and enhanced.

The Plan includes a number of policies of relevance to the BCCE as follows:

Policy B5: Community Facilities

The Neighbourhood Plan defines the following properties as community facilities:

- i. The Corn Exchange, The Market Place, Blandford Forum, DT11 7AF*
- ii. Etc.*

Proposals that will result in either the loss of or cause significant harm to a defined facility will be resisted, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the operation of the facility, or the on-going delivery of the community value of the facility, is no longer financially viable.

Development proposals to sustain or extend the viable use of existing community facilities, and the development of new facilities, will be supported.

Policy B8 – Blandford Forum Town Centre

The Neighbourhood Plan defines the Town Centre Area and the Primary Shopping Area, as shown on the Policies Map, for the purposes of managing proposals for retail, leisure and other commercial development.

Proposals for new A1 Retail floorspace in the Primary Shopping Area will be supported. Proposals to establish new A2 Financial Services, B1 Offices, C3 Residential and D1 Community uses on the upper floors of buildings in the Primary Shopping Area and that will contribute to the vibrancy and vitality of the town will be supported.

All proposals in the Town Centre Area should retain or create, where an appropriate use, an active street frontage and should seek to enhance the public realm through street planting and other measures intended to enhance the vitality of the town centre and to increase pedestrian footfall.

All proposals for development or a change of use must sustain and enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Policy B11 – Managing Design in the Conservation Area: Blandford Forum

Proposals within or affecting the setting of the Conservation Area, as shown on the Policies Map, must sustain and enhance its character and appearance and should demonstrate:

- i. consistently high standard of design and detailing reflecting the scale and character, including the layout of the streets, development patterns, burgage plots, building lines and building form;*
- ii. the use of building materials and finishes which are sympathetic to the area, in particular the use of red brick in facades;*
- iii. no harmful impact on the townscape and roofscape;*
- iv. the retention and protection of trees, gardens, spaces between buildings, and other open areas which contribute to its character and appearance, and the use of permeable surfaces to reduce surface water flooding;*
- v. where appropriate, the removal of unsightly and inappropriate features or details; and*
- vi. the retention and, where appropriate, the reinstatement of original features such as chimneys, chimney pots, gates, railings and shop fronts and small scale architectural details such as mouldings which individually or cumulatively contribute to its character and appearance.*

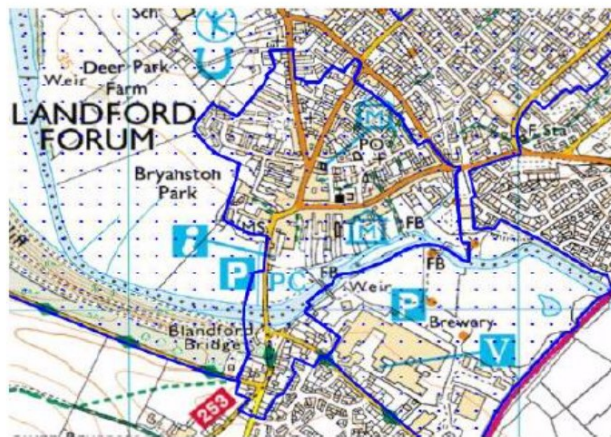
All planning applications within the Conservation Area must demonstrate how the design of proposals has sought to preserve and enhance the significance of the heritage assets and their setting in line with the recommendations of the Character Area Appraisal.

Proposals including proposed changes of use that are likely to have an adverse impact on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area will not be supported.

Blandford Forum Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal, 2018

A Conservation Area was designated in 1972 to preserve and enhance Blandford's historic character with subsequent expansion of the area in 1990. The Corn Exchange is located at the centre of the Conservation Area.

Figure 27: Blandford Forum Conservation Area



Source: Blandford Forum Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal, 2018

The Blandford Forum Conservation Area was designated because of its special architectural and historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

Given the significant historic and architectural interest of Blandford Forum, a series of management policies have been produced which aim to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the conservation area. These policies seek to support local planning policies adopted by the Council in addition to those within the National Planning Policy Framework.

The two management policies of most relevance to any future proposals for the Corn Exchange are provided below:

Alterations and Extensions

The Conservation Area is not a museum, but a living historic landscape. Changing lifestyles and expectations will result in pressure for changes to existing buildings and spaces. Requirements can sometimes be met without diminishing the character and appearance of the area, but care is required to ensure that new developments preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Even changes such as the repainting of a shopfront, a change of window or door, the installation of external plumbing fixtures or ventilation stacks and chimney flues can have a detrimental impact on the external character of a building and therefore the area.

The Council has produced guidance on alterations to historic buildings which can be found under the North Dorset Pages on Dorset for You. This provides guidance on the principles to be adopted when considering changes to historic buildings and they can also be applied to any building within an historic area. Reference should also be made to the Dorset Thatching model to inform works to thatched roofs within the area.

Uses

Blandford Forum like many market town high streets and retail areas is facing increasing pressure from a number of factors:

- Increase in on-line shopping, which can be easier and is normally cheaper*
- Increase in edge of town supermarkets, where people can purchase almost all they need, and the location often doesn't encourage people to visit the town centre.*
- Income squeeze over the last few years has exacerbated the problem, as people have less to spend*
- Increasing overheads for retailers and other town centre businesses*

In order to secure economic vitality opportunities should be sought which provide visitors and residents with an 'experience', with a mix of main shops and small independent shops, a mix of markets, a sense of activity and a place to socialise. The quality of the heritage and architectural fabric provides an important framework and place for this to occur. Proposals which contribute and enable a vibrant town centre to exist will be encouraged.

5 Competitors and comparators

The following section summarises information about several competing and comparable buildings in Blandford Forum and the surrounding market towns. The purpose of this research is to increase understanding of the existing market for the types of facilities that the Corn Exchange currently provides and identify its relative strengths or weaknesses in this context.

Competitors: Venues for hire

The Crown Hotel

The Crown Hotel is located on the western edge of the town centre about 150 metres from BFCE. Owned by the famous local brewery Hall & Woodhouse since 1931 The Crown has around 27 bedrooms, a bar, restaurant, large outdoor seating area, gardens and its own private car park. Adjoining the hotel is the Sealy Suite which comprises a well-equipped, high quality, complex of function rooms. As a result of being part of the same business as the hotel and restaurant, the Crown is able to offer a range of packages which could include catering and bedrooms which are priced on a per-delegate basis ranging from £27 to £130 per delegate.

The facilities at the Crown are pitched towards the business/conferencing market; it suggests it is ideal for training days, conferences, exhibitions, team building days, networking and AGM.

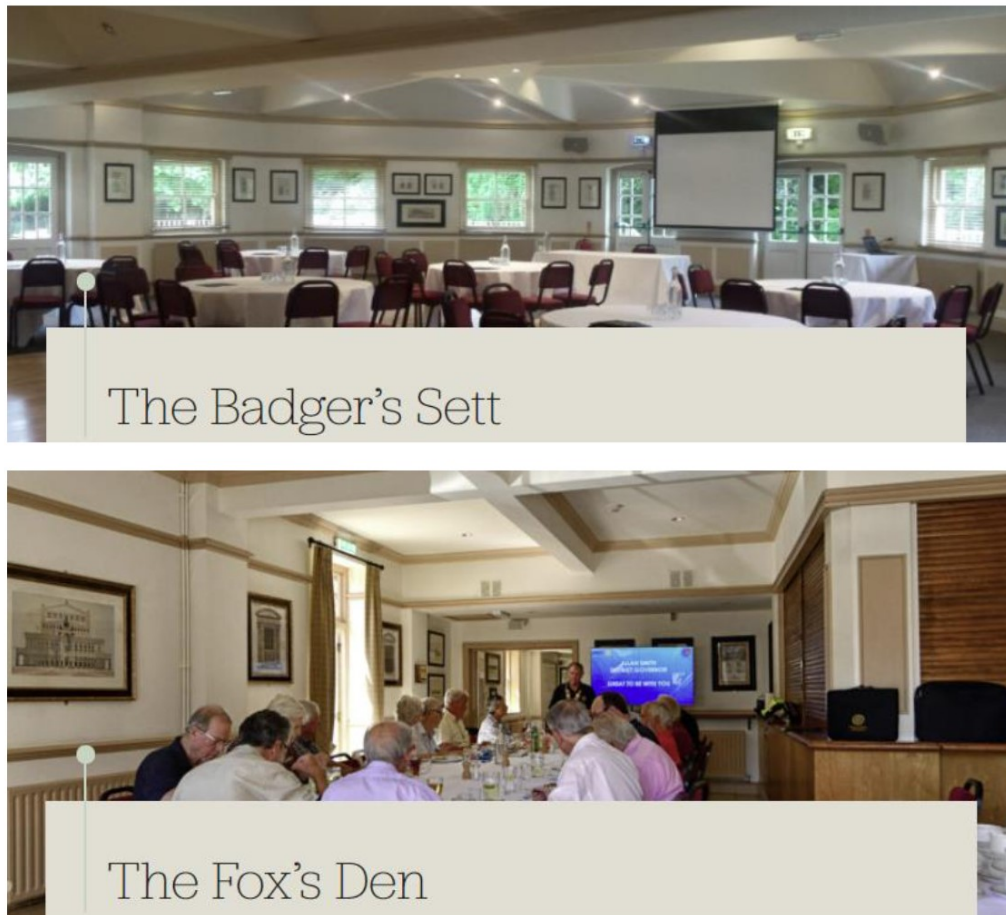
Figure 28: Entrance to the Sealy Suite decorated for a wedding



Source: The Crown Hotel website

Within the Sealy Suite, the Crown offers two spaces for hire individually or in combination: The Badger Sett is the larger of the two spaces, advertised as being suitable for 30-180 delegates. The Fox's Den is much smaller, for 5-20 delegates. In addition to standard day hire, the Sealy Suite can be hired in its entirety from 7pm-midnight for evening functions and parties.

Figure 29: Images of the Badger Sett & Fox's Den



Source: Crown Hotel website

Figure 30: Crown Hotel Pricing (2020)

	Advertised rate for up to 4 hours	Advertised rate for up to 8 hours	Advertised rate 7pm-midnight
The Badger Sett	£150 (£37.50/hr)	£300 (£37.50/hr)	-
The Fox's Den	£50 (£12.50/hr)	£100 (£12.50/hr)	-
The Sealy Suite (both spaces)	£200 (£50/hr)	£400 (£50/hr)	£500 (£100/hr) or £300 if buffet package included

Blandford Parish Centre

Blandford Parish Centre is located on the northern edge of the town centre on The Plocks. Understood to be part of the Parish Church, the Parish Centre contains a hall, meeting room and kitchen for hire as well as a small garden.

Figure 31: Image showing the entrance to the Parish Centre



Source: GoogleEarth

The Parish Centre appears to be a relatively modern and attractive facility which is fully accessible for disabled users. Around seven parking spaces are immediately in front of the building including a disabled space and there is pay and display parking nearby.

The largest of the spaces for hire at the Centre, the 'Galilee Hall' is around 72sqm and can seat up to 70 people around tables with direct access to the kitchen. The space is marketed for children's parties, meetings, arts and crafts groups and performing arts. The other space, the 'Emmaus Room', is much smaller and more of a typical meeting room which can seat up to 20 people.

The Parish Centre appears well catered for in terms of ICT equipment and furniture as well as having a modern kitchen. Hire rates were requested in September 2020 but never provided.

Figure 32: Images showing Gaililee Hall (left) and Emmaus Room (right)



Source: Parish Centre website

In addition to the Crown Hotel and the Parish Centre there are a number of other less comparable venues in Blandford Forum offering space for private hire; where information is available a summary is provided below.

Blandford Scout HQ

The Blandford Scout Group markets its early 20th century headquarters building for hire. The facility contains two large halls that can be used individually or as one and there are two further meeting rooms. The facilities appear to provide what one might imagine as a traditional 'Scout hut', i.e. lightweight, timber-framed, timber clad semi-permanent structures. The nature of the buildings and their principal use means that the spaces available (those seen on the website) are quite utilitarian and robust. They don't share the politeness of BFCE or the Parish Centre for that matter, but this reflects their intended function which needs to be much more hard-wearing.

Figure 33: Blandford Scout HQ



Source: Blandford Scout website

Blandford Evangelical Church

It is understood that the Blandford Forum Evangelical Church offers spaces for private hire; no information was available at the time of writing.

Blandford United Reformed Church

The Blandford United Reformed Church continues as an active place of worship. Located to the north of the town centre, the building is also available for private hire. Limited information is available on the Church's website other than the capacity of the three available spaces:

- Church: 200 capacity
- Main Hall: 80 capacity
- Kingston Room: 20 capacity

The main hall is hired out at a rate of £13.00 per hour and the Kingston Room at £7.00 per hour.

Figure 34: Blandford Forum United Reformed Church

Source: Blandford Forum United Reformed Church Website

Competitors: Arts venues

The Exchange, Sturminster Newton

The Exchange is located close to the centre of Sturminster Newton, around 9 miles to the north west of Blandford Forum. The Exchange is a relatively new building, opened in December 2007 by Julian Fellowes. It is part of a much larger mixed-use development on the site of an old cattle market and forms a local centre with adjoining uses such as a Coop and small office space. Similar to the BFCE The Exchange is a flexible venue for hire with a number of smaller meeting spaces arranged around a large auditorium which is used for a wide range of arts activities. In addition to this, The Exchange includes a café/bar and linked gallery space (The Bibbern) which is open to the general public. The Exchange markets itself for conferences, team building events, meetings and celebrations.

At the time of writing the 'what's on' calendar for The Exchange included a wide range of music, theatre, comedy and film events some of which had been postponed or cancelled as a result of COVID. However, the schedule gives a good sense of the type of artists and touring performances coming to the area. This includes various tribute acts, nationally famous comedians, small touring theatres and music acts.

Figure 35: Stour Hall at The Exchange

Source: The Exchange website

We would expect that the meeting rooms for hire cater for the local market in Sturminster Newton and will not compete with BFCE to a significant degree. The Stour Hall would possibly be in competition with the Corn Exchange for arts and entertainment performances in the region although as can be seen in the image above, The Exchange is a more modern purpose-built arts venue.

Consultation with The Exchange confirmed that a flexible approach is taken to hire charges with different rates for private and commercial users and certainly different rates during COVID. Typically the Stour Hall (seating up to 300) would cost £500 - £600 per day or £250 for a morning hire. Large ancillary spaces such as the Bow Room which can seat 80 is around £85 per session and smaller rooms are around £15 per hour.

The Tivoli, Wimborne

The Tivoli is located in Wimborne, around 10 miles to the south east of Blandford Forum. It is an historic 'cine/theatre' built in 1936 with fixed seating capacity of over 450.

Closed for a time and at risk of demolition, the theatre was rescued in the early 1990s and continues today to double up as a cinema/theatre.

A review of the bookings calendar at the time of writing highlighted an impressive range of nationally known comedians, tribute acts and film screenings.

Figure 36: The Tivoli, Wimborne



The Tivoli is less flexible than the BFCE and The Exchange, unable to host the same breadth of activities. In terms of performing arts, it is likely to be in competition with the BFCE and The Exchange for acts wanting to tour in this part of Dorset.

Summary

- There appear to be two main competitors to the Corn Exchange in Blandford Forum providing general space for hire in the Crown Hotel and the Parish Centre, both within a few hundred metres of the BFCE. Both provide a range of spaces finished to a high standard and generally appear to be very attractive alternatives to the BCCE; it appears that both also benefit from better disabled access. The Crown Hotel appears to focus more on business and commercial venue hire as well as weddings and parties, taking advantage of the presence of the hotel. The Parish Centre appears to focus more towards community meetings and use for clubs and societies.
- None of the competing venues for hire can, arguably compete with the profile, prominence or history of the BFCE. Its appearance, location and story mean that it is iconic in Blandford Forum and very well known and well loved by the local community.
- Adaptations were made in the Corn Exchange in the 1890s to provide a stage and ancillary back-of house spaces to that the building could be used for a range of arts and entertainment uses. Since that time the building has hosted a huge range of, broadly, arts events, such as the annual town pantomime, music concerts, lectures, comedy performances etc. The physical capacity of the Corn Exchange and its location mean that it is a local/regional venue competing with similar sized venues in other market towns and large villages. Within the old North Dorset Local Authority area there are two other facilities in direct competition with the BFCE at the Exchange in Sturminster Newton and Tivoli in Wimborne.

6 Options appraisal

This section of the report provides an appraisal of a range of options for the future of the Corn Exchange. The purpose of this is to identify a preferred option for the building that can be developed in more detail. This work effectively identified the preferred option for the project that is the subject of the application for a Public Works Loan.

This appraisal assumes an entirely 'blank canvass'; it assumes the property is vacant and not in the ownership of the Town Council. Whilst the Council is the owner this is somewhat hypothetical, but it serves as a useful test and an opportunity to pause and consider other potential ideas and check that no major opportunities are being missed.

The exercise therefore appraises different land uses assuming that they occupy all of the Corn Exchange i.e. they are single use options. Uses are appraised against a simple but comprehensive set of criteria as follows:

- Social impact: How will the option impact upon local people and the community of Blandford Forum
- Economic impact: How will the option impact upon the economy of Blandford Forum and the surrounding area
- Environmental impact: How will the option impact upon the environment in terms of its sustainability
- Heritage impact: How will the option impact upon the heritage embodied in the BFCE
- Deliverability: Broadly, how likely is the option to be viable or deliverable

Each option is scored -2, -1, 0, +1 or +2 against each of these criteria where:

- 2 = Strong negative impact
- 1 = Negative impact
- 0 = Neither positive or negative
- +1 = Positive impact
- +2 = Strong positive impact

A number of uses have not been appraised on the basis that they are considered wholly inappropriate as follows:

- Industrial: Inappropriate location surrounded by residential development and incompatible with neighbouring a Landmark
- Warehousing/storage: Inappropriate location surrounded by residential development, incompatible building and inadequate access
- Retail warehousing: Inappropriate location, incompatible building.

The appraisal is presented in the table below.

Figure 37: Appraisal of long-list of single use options

	Do Nothing	No change + repair + upgrades	Residential	Employment (office)	Leisure (arts venue or cinema)	Leisure (food & drink)	Leisure (museum/gallery)	Permanent Retail	Institutional use (nursery etc)
Comments	Assumes the building continues to deteriorate and become un-useable / obsolete	Assumes that the use of the building continues as existing as a general flexible venue for hire but with sensitive adaptations and repairs	Assumes the building could be converted into private residential and sub-divided into flats, for example.	Assumes the building could be converted into employment space and used as an open plan office or sub-divided.	Assumes the building could be converted into a permanent performing arts venue or permanent cinema	Assumes the building could be converted into a permanent pub/restaurant/cafe	Assumes the building could be converted into a permanent museum or art gallery	Assumes the building could be converted and used for fixed retail – single shop or concession based model	Assumes the building could be converted to provide some sort of institutional use such as a children's nursery or church
Social impact	-1 Negative impact as building becomes less used	+2 Strong positive impact as building provides greater general social function	-1 Negative impact as social function is lost to a certain extent	-1 Negative impact as social function is lost to a certain extent	+1 Positive impact as building provides social function for certain audiences	+1 Positive impact as building provides social function for certain audiences	+1 Positive impact as building provides social function for certain audiences	-1 Negative impact as social function is lost to a certain extent	+1 Positive impact as building provides social function for certain audiences
Economic impact	-1 Negative impact on town centre economy as building becomes less used	+1 Positive impact on town centre economy via footfall	-1 Negative impact on town centre economy	+2 Strong positive impact on local economy via job creation and footfall	+1 Positive impact on town centre economy via footfall	+2 Positive impact on town centre economy via job creation	+1 Positive impact on town centre economy via footfall	+2 Positive impact on local economy via job creation	+1 Positive impact on town centre economy via job creation
Environmental impact	-1 Negative impact as sustainability deteriorates	+1 Positive impact from improvements & repairs	+1 Positive impact from improvements & repairs	+1 Positive impact from improvements & repairs	+1 Positive impact from improvements & repairs	+1 Positive impact from improvements & repairs	+1 Positive impact from improvements & repairs	+1 Positive impact from improvements & repairs	+1 Positive impact from improvements & repairs
Heritage impact	-2 Strong negative impact as significant heritage	+2 Strong positive impact as heritage is	-1 Likely negative impact on heritage	0 Neither positive or negative as potential impact on built	0 Neither positive or negative as potential impact on built	0 Neither positive or negative as potential impact on built	0 Neither positive or negative	0 Neither positive or negative as could be	0 Neither positive or negative as potential impact on built

	deteriorates/is lost	conserved and enhanced	required for conversion	heritage outweighed by active use of building	heritage outweighed by active use of building	heritage outweighed by active use of building		achieved with limited impact	heritage outweighed by active use of building
Deliverability	-1 No action could lead to enforcement and community opposition	+1 Some value from end use and justifiable in terms of consents	-1 Lucrative end use + demand but difficult to gain consent	0 Some value from end use + likely demand but difficult to gain consent	-1 Lack of evidence of demand and questions over viability	+1 Established market for conversions and precedent	-1 Lack of evidence of demand, lack of collection and questions over viability	+1 Established market for conversions and precedent	-1 Demand not known and difficult to gain consent
Total score	-6 / 10	+5/10	-3 / 10	2/ 10	+2 / 10	+5 / 10	+2 / 10	+3/ 10	+2 / 10

The appraisal presented in the table above resulted in the different single use options achieving the following scores and ranking:

1. No change + repair + upgrade: +7
2. Leisure (food and drink): +5
3. Leisure (museum/gallery): +2
4. Leisure (arts venue/cinema): +2
5. Employment (office): +2
6. Residential: -3
7. Do nothing: -6

Option 1. No Change + repair + upgrade scored higher than all of the other options considered, and more than the score of the second ranking option (Leisure – food and drink).

7 Preferred option

As noted above, based on the research, consultation, literature review and high-level options appraisal presented in the previous section we do not think there is a case for fundamentally changing the function of the Corn Exchange and introducing wholesale new uses. It is clear that the building is well loved by the local community and users and it is poorly suited to significant change.

The preferred option is, in the simplest terms, for the building to carry on doing what it has always done, but to do it much better.

The issue with the Corn Exchange is that it has suffered from long-term under investment and partly as a result of this it has not been able to keep pace with other competing venues for hire in the area. Utilisation is not therefore great because spaces don't meet modern expectations around provision of facilities or quality or comfort and on top of this some of the most marketable spaces for hire do not benefit from disabled access which for many prospective users would automatically rule them out.

The purpose of this section of the report is therefore to develop the simple one-line idea in the previous chapter and start to put 'flesh on the bones' of a preferred option for the Corn Exchange.

Strategic objectives

As a starting point for the development of the preferred option and based on the findings of the research presented earlier, a series of strategic objectives for the future of the Corn Exchange were prepared.

The aim of these strategic objectives is to establish a fixed framework around which the future of the Corn Exchange can be planned and ideas can be developed. The objectives are intended to establish an agreed position on what the building could and should do in the future and provide a framework for checking back on how the project develops over the next few years. They should remain central to everyone's thinking as things progress and they should provide a point of reference against which progress and performance can be measured. Ultimately, at completion, it should be possible to look back at these objectives and establish that they have all been delivered.

The strategic objectives developed for the Blandford Forum Corn Exchange are as follows:

1. **Accessible:** The building must become more accessible for everyone, particularly to the historic first floor spaces which do not currently benefit from disabled access
2. **Useable:** The building must become more usable for visitors and hirers in terms of heating, lighting, acoustics, storage and back-of-house.
3. **Affordable:** The building must continue to be an affordable option for local residents and groups to hire and not indirectly exclude the community it needs to serve
4. **Sustainable:** The building must improve in terms of environmental and financial sustainability
5. **Flexible:** The building must continue to be flexible and capable of being used for as many different types of activities as possible

6. **Beautiful:** The beauty of the building must be restored and enhanced wherever possible, removing inappropriate additions and restoring and enhancing historic features wherever possible.

The framework of objectives will provide a robust basis for the project to develop and help to communicate to others such as the community or statutory stakeholders such as Historic England or Dorset Council or funders what the project is seeking to achieve. Reflecting their importance the proposed objectives for the Corn Exchange project were therefore developed, presented and agreed at a Council meeting held in public on 20th November 2020.

Design development

Specification

With the establishment of an initial preferred option and the agreement of a series of objectives for the future of the Town Hall a specification has been prepared and developed over the last few years to allow the project to progress and, for example, procure an accurate cost estimate. A summary specification for the design is provided below along with a series of proposed plans illustrating alterations and changes:

Town Hall

- Throughout: Repairs, decoration, M&E improvements and upgrades
- Alterations throughout as per the agreed Malcolm Simmonds Architects initial sketch proposal from 2020 principally focussing on an improved arrival area within the building with larger foyer and improved more gradual stair to first floor including lift access to first floor.
- Installation of improved service access to Council Chamber and Town Hall roof voids and roofs for maintenance.
- Relocation of electrical and gas services boxes, pipework and cabling in the Shambles to improve visual amenity
- Removal of the two storage areas to the rear of the Shambles
- Installation of electrical services in Shambles either side of main entrance to allow for pop-up uses
- Cleaning and re-presentation of art work and Council objects in Town Hall
- Uncovering/opening up original fireplaces in Town Hall and Council Chamber – albeit potentially not for use
- Investigate returning items of original furniture to the Town Hall where they can improve the usability of the space

Corn Exchange

- Throughout: Repairs, decoration, M&E improvements and upgrades
- Development of an interior decoration strategy restoring the damaged historic character and appearance and its implementation
- Relocation of intrusive services such as high-level gas and water pipes that run the length of the space
- Repairs to the roof and glazing where necessary and introduction of insulation where possible to improve thermal performance
- Investigation into viability of repairs to original circular louvre ventilation system to allow for re-use or alternative strategy.
- Inclusion of system to allow black-out of roof glazing

- Subject to M&E strategy: Replacing historic boilers to improve thermal and environmental performance and overhauling heating system throughout retaining historic radiators wherever possible
- Subject to acoustic engineering advice: Introduction of measures to improve acoustics of the corn exchange space for performances taking place on the stage and meetings held in the main volume of the space
- Purchase replacement higher-density stacking chairs capable of being moved into new mezzanine store or area beneath the stage

Stage

- Replacement of existing roof include potentially raising roof level to allow for improved performance of stage/rigging
- Removal of suspended ceiling and introduction of new flexible rigging system for lighting, sound etc.
- Reinstatement of proscenium arch and other historic stage elements
- Creation of ramped/scissor lift system to access stage and under-stage area to allow for use of area as storage of chairs, tables etc. currently stored in main Corn Exchange space

Back-of-house

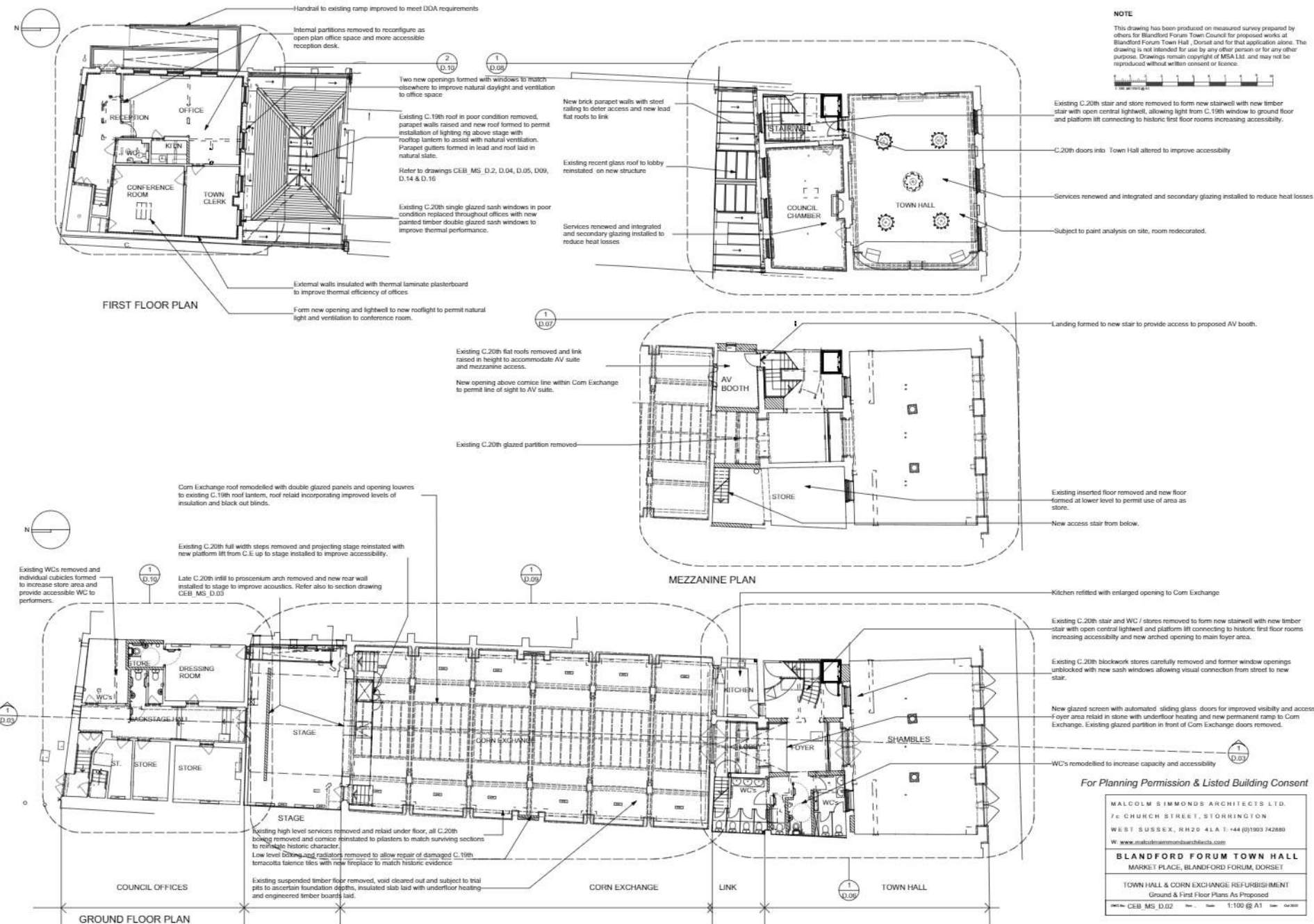
- Consolidation of male and female WCs to provide unisex WC's in a smaller area
- Clearance of Town Council items from 'Dressing Room' and relocation to new storage space created by consolidating WCs
- Improved natural ventilation to improve environmental conditions

Town Council office

- Installation of sensitively detailed double-glazing windows throughout to improve thermal performance
- Improved insulation throughout wherever possible
- Internal alterations to re-arrange office space to provide more usable kitchen + office areas

External

- Removal of redundant masonry wall running parallel to the western elevation of the Council office
- Improvements to surface water drainage system across car park to reduce volume being discharged via the BFCE
- Investigations and improvements to drainage system which captures rainwater and channels it through the BFCE



For Planning Permission & Listed Building Consent

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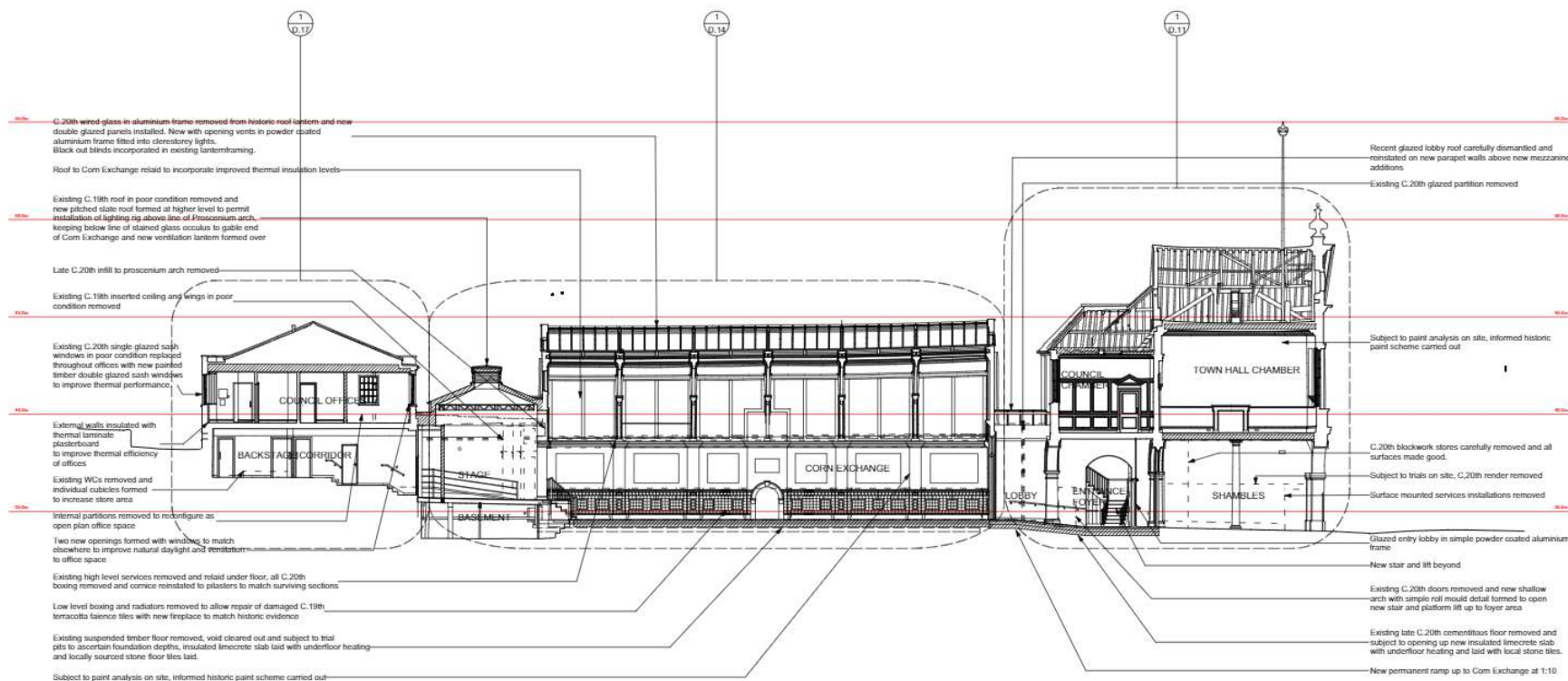
BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN HALL
MARKET PLACE, BLANDFORD FORUM, DORSET

TOWN HALL & CORN EXCHANGE REFURBISHMENT
Ground & First Floor Plans As Proposed

Scale: 1:100 @ A1 Date: Oct 2022

NOTE

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SECTION THROUGH CENTRAL AXIS OF SITE LOOKING EAST

For Planning Permission & Listed Building Consent

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BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN HALL MARKET PLACE, BLANDFORD FORUM, DORSET
TOWN HALL & CORN EXCHANGE REFURBISHMENT Building Section as Proposed
0901 Rev: CEB, MS, D.03 Date: 1:100 @ A1 Issue: Nov 2023

NOTE

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Carefully lift C.20th floorboards, voids cleared out and structure and plaster inspected. Breathable insulation laid to improve thermal efficiency, maintaining all necessary air paths to ventilate roof space.

Remove existing mineral wool insulation, voids cleared out and structure and plaster inspected. Breathable insulation laid to improve thermal efficiency, maintaining all necessary air paths to ventilate roof space.

Existing C.20th sashes removed and draught stripping fitted to reduce draughts and heat losses..

Secondary glazing in bronze coloured powder coated frames fitted within oak reveals to further improve thermal performance

Location of proposed new loft access hatch submitted under application PL/B/C/2022/04366

Recent glazed lobby roof carefully dismantled and reinstated on new parapet walls above new mezzanine additions

Existing C.20th glazed partition removed

Subject to trials, existing mouldings to door modified to better represent traditional raised and fielded panels, doors stripped of gloss varnish and painted

Existing late C.20th cementitious floor removed and subject to opening up new insulated limecrete slab with underfloor heating and laid with local stone tiles.

Existing temporary ramp @ 1:1 removed and new permanent ramp with landing laid up to Corn Exchange at approx 1:10 with continual handrail



Carefully lift C.19th and C.20th floorboards, voids cleared out and structure and plaster inspected. Breathable insulation laid to improve thermal efficiency, maintaining all necessary air paths to ventilate roof space.

Subject to paint analysis on site, informed historic paint scheme carried out

Existing C.20th sashes removed and draught stripping fitted to reduce draughts and heat losses..

Secondary glazing in off white powder coated frames fitted within reveals to further improve thermal performance

Boarded over fireplace revealed and flue draught stopped with ventilation to stack above

Existing plasterboard soffit removed to permit re-routing and replacing services with minimal disturbance to floor boards in Town Hall. Void insulated with mineral fibre insulation to reduce thermal losses. Soffit reinstated in renovating plaster on E.M.

Glazed entry lobby in simple powder coated aluminium frame

Existing C.20th doors removed and new shallow arch with simple roll mould detail formed to open new stair and platform lift up to foyer area

C.20th blockwork stores carefully removed and all surfaces made good.

Subject to trials on site, C.20th render removed

Surface mounted services installations removed

For Planning Permission & Listed Building Consent

Subject to trials, existing mouldings to door modified to better represent traditional raised and fielded panels, doors stripped of gloss varnish and painted

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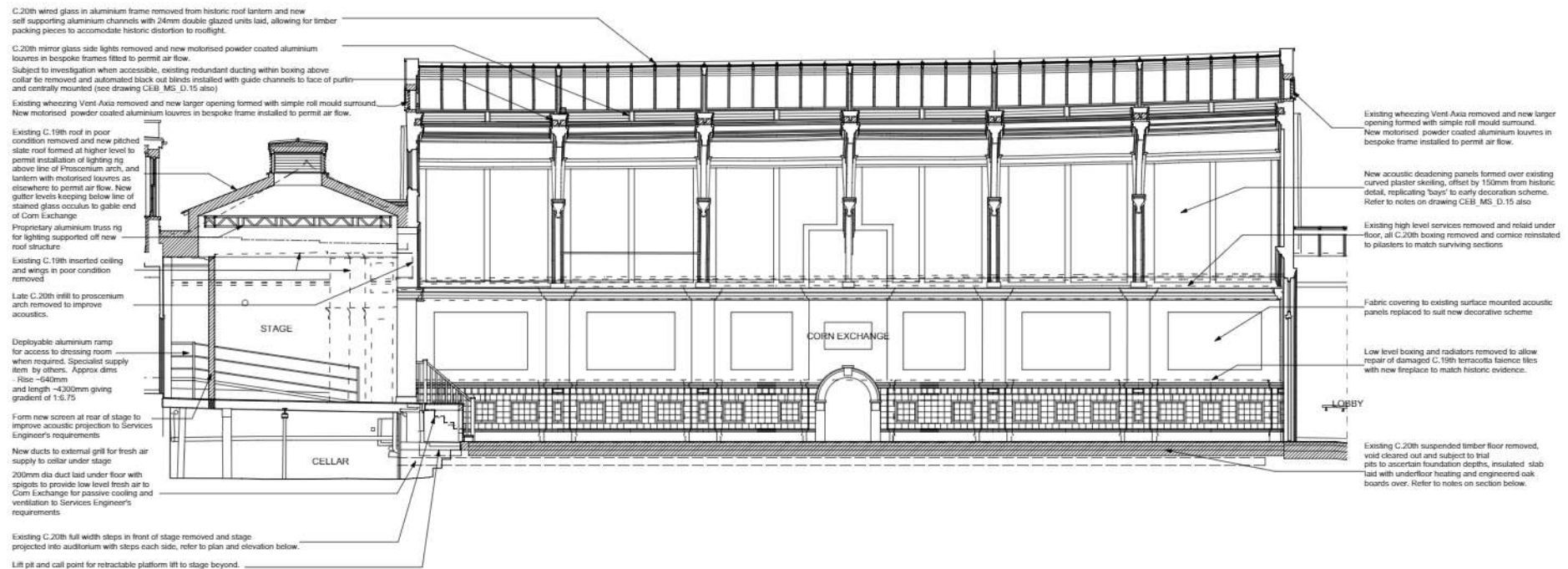
BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN HALL
MARKET PLACE, BLANDFORD FORUM, DORSET
TOWN HALL & CORN EXCHANGE REFURBISHMENT

Town Hall Section on Centreline looking East as Proposed

2023 Rev: CEB_MS_D.11 Date: 1:50 @ A1 Scale: 1:50 @ A1 Date: 04/03/23

NOTE

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1. SECTION THROUGH CENTRAL AXIS OF CORN EXCHANGE & STAGE LOOKING EAST

For Planning Permission & Listed Building Consent

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BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN HALL MARKET PLACE, BLANDFORD FORUM, DORSET
TOWN HALL & CORN EXCHANGE REFURBISHMENT Corn Exchange Section Looking East as Proposed
DRAWN BY: CEB MS D.14 Date: 1:50 @ A1 Date: 04/03/20

8 Project finances

The purpose of the following section is to summarise the capital and revenue cost and income profile of the project.

Capital

Capital income

The approach to funding the capital works is based on a combination of using the Town Council's ring-fenced reserves, grant funding and a loan from the Public Works Loan Board. Numerous grant applications were submitted to different bodies, including the National Lottery Heritage Fund; several major awards were secured from the William Williams Charitable Trust and Community Ownership Fund but the National Lottery Heritage Fund opted not to invest in the project.

An option to establish a charitable structure that would be better placed to raise grant funds and receive private donations was explored but Councillors resolved not to progress it.

The table below sets out the current funding matrix which effectively provides the budget for the capital works and remaining professional fees. It identifies a total remaining budget of £3,461,630.

Figure 38: Funding matrix

Source	Value
William Williams Charitable Trust grant	£400,000
Pilgrim Trust grant	£20,000
BFTC Corn Exchange reserve	£861,500
BFTC Corn Exchange reserve 24/25	£30,000
BFTC additional reserves	£180,000
Dorset Council retained s.106	£264,810
Dorset Council additional s.106	£40,320
Community Ownership Fund grant	£265,000
Other fundraising (private donor)	£100,000
Other fundraising (private donor)	£-
Dorset Capital Leverage Fund	£-
Maximum loan amount	£-
Sub-total income	£3,461,630

The exact amount the Council can apply to the PWLB for is based on the Town Council's own strict affordability test that seeks to ensure that the loan, in isolation, will not have an impact on the precept i.e. the loan itself will not result in the precept going up.

Capital costs

An open competitive procurement was undertaken at the end of 2023 to find a contractor to deliver the project. Four potentially suitable suppliers were shortlisted and invited to provide a fully costed tender for the project. Based on a combination of their price score and quality score, a contractor (Contractor A) was identified as the preferred bidder. Contractor A's tender price was the cheapest.

In addition to the capital cost, there is also an outstanding cost for professional fees to the end of the project including a contingency.

If the capital cost and professional fees are combined the total project cost is in excess of the available budget. This situation was anticipated on the basis of recent inflation in the construction sector, general market volatility and the fact that the scope of work that was tendered was expected to exceed the affordability envelope. A process of value engineering with the contractor is therefore now taking place to bring the contract price in line with the budget and this should be resolved in the next few weeks.

Revenue

The tables below present estimates of the net revenue position of the Do Nothing option and the Preferred Option that comprises the proposed project; two sensitivities are presented for the Preferred Option one of which is cautious (bearish) and the other is more optimistic (bullish).

The revenue position is presented from the perspective of Blandford Forum Town Council as owner and operator of the Corn Exchange. It assumes that various spaces within the Corn Exchange continue to function as per the preferred option and the building continues to be an affordable venue for hire.

In order to arrive at a net revenue position for the Do Nothing and Preferred Options a range of data has been taken into account and assumptions made:

- Revenue costs for Do Nothing are based on average actual running costs of the Corn Exchange over five years (pre-COVID) from 2015/16 to 2019/20. Within this we have increased annual maintenance costs to £25,000 per annum to reflect long-term backlog maintenance and the increasing need to invest in repairs. The date range will exclude any impacts of Coronavirus that would otherwise skew the data
- Revenue costs for the Preferred Option are based on average actual running costs of the Corn Exchange from 2015/16 to 2019/20 with a 25% discount applied to electricity and gas costs to reflect improved insulation, services performance and services control and a £15,000 annual allowance for investment in building maintenance or a sinking fund for long-term cyclical works to reflect the fact that the building will have been comprehensively restored
- Revenue income for the Do Nothing Option reflects the average actual annual income from 2015/16 to 2019/20
- Revenue income for the Preferred Option assumes no change to the existing pricing structure i.e. the venue remains relatively affordable, but the base case assumes a 35% uplift in average annual income across the Corn Exchange, Town Hall and Council Chamber. This is a result of improved attractiveness to hirers resulting from improved facilities and performance, and the ability of Town Council meetings to take place in the Town Hall, thereby freeing up the main Corn Exchange space.

Do Nothing

Under the Do Nothing option the net annual revenue cost to the BFTC of the Corn Exchange is around £33,800 per annum; i.e. every year the building operates at a loss of £33,800 which the Council is currently subsidising from its funds. If this annual loss is extended over the next 30 years (standard public sector project appraisal period) assuming that nothing changes and not allowing for inflation, that equates to a cumulative cost of over £1.1m. In reality, the lack of investment in maintenance over the last decade+ would probably mean that the cost of maintaining the building would increase and this number would be larger.

Preferred Option

Under the Preferred Option (base case) the net annual revenue position to the Town Council is estimated to be around -£13,900 i.e. the building runs at a reduced annual loss of around £13,900. A more optimistic bullish scenario sees the building operating at smaller loss of around £11,200 and a more pessimistic scenario sees the building operating at an annual loss of around £15,500.

If the base case is extended over 30 years, the uninflated cost to the Council would be £416,000, compared to £1m under the Do Nothing scenario.

As shown in the table below, the preferred option continues to operate at a notional loss each year. However, a number of factors need to be taken into account:

- The preferred option includes a significant annual sum being invested into short term maintenance and/or long-term cyclical repairs. This system is designed to build up a reserve of funding to avoid the need for major capital fundraising in, say, 50 years time and effectively fund the long-term future of the building
- The preferred option assumes no change in hire charges. Whilst it is important that the building remains affordable to local people and community groups, it may be that a differential rate is introduced for other types of hirer

Figure 39: Net revenue estimates

	Do Nothing	Preferred option – base case	Preferred option - bearish	Preferred option – bullish
Income	£15,900	£24,200	£20,600	£26,900
Running costs	£49,700	£38,000	£38,000	£38,000
Net position	-£33,800	-£13,900	-£17,500	-£11,200
Net position after 25 years	-£1.01m	-£416,700	-£524,000	-£336,000

9 Management and governance

Governance

The project is overseen by the full Blandford Forum Town Council, which has ultimate decision-making responsibility. As a public body, the Town Council has transparency and good governance at its core.

The Council's Standing Orders are provided as an **Appendix**. This document provides information on how we manage finances and prevent fraud. It also includes various other important Council policies.

The full Town Council is responsible for making a number of major decisions such as:

- The scope of the project that was the subject of the Planning Application (decision taken)
- Using the Council's prudential borrowing powers (decision taken)
- Award of the works contract and ultimate contract value (pending)
- Signing off practical completion (pending)

Management

Corn Exchange Sub-Committee

The Town Council has established a formal committee to manage the project (the Corn Exchange Sub-Committee). The Corn Exchange sub-committee meet at least every quarter with meetings attended by all Town Councillors, key staff and members of the design team. Meetings are open to the public to ensure maximum transparency.

Core Team

On a day-to-day basis the project is led by a project team or 'Core Team' which has been established to drive project development and oversee delivery, monitor progress, risk and budget. The Core Team currently meets at least every month; it is anticipated that frequency of meetings will increase as the project progresses into delivery.

The Core Team comprises a number of specialist advisors and Council staff including the Town Clerk as the Senior Responsible Officer. Membership includes:

- Blandford Forum Town Council: Town Clerk (SRO)
- Blandford Forum Town Council Operations Manager
- Malcolm Simmonds Architect: Lead architect, conservation specialist
- The Morton Partnership: CARE accredited conservation structural engineer, principal designer, contract administrator and project manager for project delivery
- Ian Walker Associates: Specialist conservation quantity surveyor
- QODA: Specialist conservation M&E engineers
- Ingham Pinnock Associates: Project coordination, delivery, business planning and fundraising, specialising in historic buildings and places

All of the advisors have a strong track record in conservation projects of this nature and all of the advisors have worked together on similar commissions elsewhere in the past.

Contractor team meetings

Following the completion of the value engineering process it is envisaged that there will be weekly meetings with the contractor team as the capital works progress. These meetings will be attended by key members of the Design Team and the Town Clerk or Operations Manager.

Management post-completion

At completion of the capital works the Corn Exchange will continue to be managed by the Town Council staff.

In order to ensure that the Corn Exchange re-establishes itself and grows its audience the Town Council will deliver a number of activities designed to increase engagement. This includes:

Developing a partnership programme with local schools.

This activity will see the Town Council work with schools in the area to become their partner venue where the Corn Exchange hosts, for example, major annual assemblies, end of year exhibitions, prize giving's, performances etc. There are great precedents across the UK where town halls and corn exchanges are used by their local schools to host major events and this is something the Council is seeking to replicate in Blandford. The Corn Exchange has the benefit of a large capacity, central location and some level of public profile or prestige that should transfer to the young people that are involved. It also has the benefit of being in a central location and publicly accessible which would benefit school events that are seeking to attract audiences such as end of year exhibitions. By establishing long-term partner relationships with schools and their students, it is hoped that we can embed the Corn Exchange much more into daily life in Blandford and leave a lasting impression with young people who will be more likely to use the facility in the future.

Running coffee and reminiscence mornings

This activity will see the reinstatement of the long-standing coffee mornings hosted in the Corn Exchange to coincide with the weekly market. Historically market day has been the busiest day in Blandford town centre with residents (particularly the elderly) travelling into town to shop and socialise. Part of the market has always been located in the Corn Exchange which presented the Council with the opportunity to sell teas and coffees to weary shoppers. This incidental idea eventually became a key part of market day as it provided an opportunity for elderly residents to meet one another and catch up; we were also able to provide refreshments very cheaply making the event extremely affordable. The benefit for residents, particularly the elderly was a key opportunity to overcome varying level of isolation and to simply socialise with old friends helping to support wellbeing.

We propose to reinstate the weekly coffee mornings following the completion of capital works and for the first year, facilitate a process of capturing elderly residents' memories and reminiscences of the Corn Exchange. The Council will quietly and tactfully promote the coffee mornings, including the objective of recording the social history of the building and then work with an engagement specialist to talk to visitors every few weeks. Where possible this project will seek to engage young people to help volunteer to promote cross-generational engagement and understanding. The output from the exercise will be a publication that captures and presents more about the social history of the Corn Exchange which will be made available as part of the interpretation of the project on the Council website.

Blandford Community Expo

This activity will see the Corn Exchange host an annual Expo for local community groups to engage with the community and promote themselves. It will see the whole of the Corn Exchange space given over to community groups for a day in the summer every year. Groups will be invited to bring along marketing and promotional material and stage events and activities to engage the community.

The purpose of the activity is to support our local groups and societies promote themselves to the community, attract new members and participants and remain active parts of life in Blandford Forum. The Corn Exchange provides an appropriate space to host such an event as the principal secular community space in the town centre located right on the town's market place.

By working with the local community we will ensure that these events represent a true cross section. We hope that they will encourage new and existing residents to become involved with the community and break down any barriers to participation in local activities.

Consultative Group

In order to ensure that the community remains involved in the operation and programming at the Corn Exchange (over and above Town Councillor representation), the Town Council will establish a Consultative Group towards the end of the works period. The Consultative Group will meet quarterly to review the performance of the Corn Exchange and to ensure that it continues to deliver for the community whether in terms of pricing, availability or facilities. It will provide critical feedback from users and community members that can help to ensure the way that the building is run responds to community needs.

Initially the Consultative Group will comprise stakeholders and users who have been involved in detail in the planning of the project. As time passes the Town Council will continue to recruit and refresh members of the Group from regular hirers and other local stakeholder organisations.

10 Risk

The table below sets out the key strategic risks to the project and information on risk mitigation.

Figure 40: Strategic risk matrix

Risk	Risk Owner	Likelihood of risk (H/M/L)	When might the risk occur	Impact	Level of impact (H/M/L)	Mitigation	Likelihood of risk (H/M/L) post mitigation
1) 'Failure to secure statutory permissions (Planning and LBC)	Design Team	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Planning permission now in place.	Low
2) 'Failure to secure all of the external funding required to deliver the project	Core Team	High	2024	Budget: This risk would result in the need to undertake value engineering	Low	This risk has been realised and a process of value engineering is now taking place with the contractor to bring the contract price down to meet the available budget.	Low
3) 'Cost increases caused by inflation and/or unforeseen issues arising during works	Core Team	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	This risk has effectively been mitigated by the completion of the contractor procurement and securing fixed tender prices.	Low
4) 'Failure to secure tenders for capital works	Design Team	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	This risk has effectively been mitigated by the completion of the contractor procurement and securing fixed tender prices.	Low
5) 'Tenders for capital works are over budget	Design Team	High	Q4 2023	Budget: This risk would result in the need to undertake value engineering	Medium	This risk has been realised and a process of value engineering is now taking place with the contractor to bring the contract price down to meet the available budget.	Medium

6) 'Community opposition	Core Team	Low	Ongoing	Perception: This risk could create a negative perception around the project	Low	This risk has already been mitigated to some degree through a process of community engagement and consultation. This process will continue right up to the point at which the building re-opens in order to inform the community about what the project is seeking to do and to respond to any comments as they arise.	Low
7) Unforeseen issues arising during construction	Design Team	Medium	Ongoing	Programme and cost	Medium	This risk has been mitigated to an extent as a result of undertaking extensive survey work to inform design proposals. It will be mitigated further during construction through the careful management of a contingency pot which is designed to account for any unforeseen costs.	Medium

11 Programme

The figure below provides the current programme for the project.

[illegible][illegible]

Report on Tenders

Report on Tenders

Blandford Forum Town Hall and Corn Exchange Complex

for

Blandford Forum Town Council



walker associates
chartered quantity surveyors



January 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Tenders were invited on a selective invitation basis in September 2023.
- Three assessable tenders were received although all contained qualifications or errors that required further clarification or correction. A fourth tender from Company C was received but was not assessable due to missing information, incomplete pricing, heavy qualification and other factors. The Employer confirmed, however, that they wished to see four complaint tenders and so Company C were not disqualified and were given the opportunity to submit a compliant bid.
- After the clarification/correction process, three tenders remained that were capable of acceptance. The tender from Company C was substantially revised, including a final revision received very late in the day and was not considered further on the grounds that further assessment would further delay the award of the contract and the tender was likely to finish in fourth place in any event.
- The tenders were scored on a 30% quality/70% price basis, in accordance with the invitation to tender and the tender from Company A achieved the top score. There were no significant concerns on Company A's pricing which would be grounds to disqualify them.
- There is one minor clarification to be resolved on Company A's tender and subject to this, under the terms of the tender the contract should be awarded to Company A.

1.0 TENDER PROCESS

1.1 Process

- 1.1.1 Tenders were invited on the basis of a single stage selective tender and assessment based on a scoring algorithm taking into consideration factors of price, quality and social value. Invitees were selected, based on relevant experience and technical capacity, via a prequalification exercise undertaken during September 2023.
- 1.1.2 Tender documents were issued on 23 October 2023 and the return date was 8 December 2023. This was later revised to 15 December 2023.
- 1.1.3 A total of 72 queries were raised by tenderers during the tender period, all of which were answered.

2.0 TENDERS RECEIVED

- 2.1.1 Five tenders were submitted.
In ascending order, the following prices were received:

Tenderer	Amount of Tender	Proposed Contract Period
Company A	£3,303,973.00	68 weeks
Company B	£3,649,956.20	80 weeks
Company C	£3,690,545.36	78 weeks
Company D	£3,991,953.85	82 weeks

Company E withdrew from the process shortly after invitations were issued.

3.0 REPORTS ON TENDERS RECEIVED

3.1 Process

- 3.1.1 Because the tenders were to be evaluated on quality criteria as well as price, all four tenders received were examined in detail.
- 3.1.2 Tenders were examined for arithmetic correctness and qualifications. Qualifications are conditions that a tenderer attaches to his tender. Under the rules for tendering, tenders should not be qualified at all; and any qualified tender should be rejected; but this is a rule that tenderers often do not observe and so it is often necessary to be pragmatic in dealing with a tender that contains qualifications, provided this does not unfairly advantage one tenderer over any other.

- 3.1.3 A technical check was also carried out to ensure that the tender has been fully and properly priced and to identify any unusually high or low rates, or other anomalous pricing that may give cause for concern or further query.
- 3.1.4 All tenders included one or more qualifications and so a follow-up process was conducted in which tenderers were invited to consider the issue(s) highlighted and either amend or withdraw their tenders. In the course of this process, it emerged that two requirements in the specification, concerning scaffolding and paint stripping, could be open to interpretation and so a second process was undertaken to clarify the specification and again ask tenderers to confirm or amend their tenders.
- 3.1.5 Tenders that submitted a valid price at the end of the price clarification process were then evaluated on quality and social value criteria, according to a scoring matrix.

4.0 PRICING CHECK

4.1 Company A (£3,303,973.00, corrected to £3,460,722.15)

- 4.1.1 Arithmetic Check: the tender was found to be arithmetically correct.
- 4.1.2 Qualifications: the tender contained 6 qualifications, two which were significant. One of these, relating to the louvre actuators, is outstanding at the end of the clarification process but is not considered significant enough to disqualify the bid or constitute a significant factor in the scoring process.
- 4.1.3 Technical check: the tender was fully priced on an item-by-item basis with no significant grouping of items together, indicating a properly considered bid. Overhead and profit was declared to be 15%, which is at the higher end of the normal range and preliminaries amounted to 7.7% of measured works which is at the low end of the normal range. It is possible that some 'preliminaries' items may form part of the general overhead structure, considering that a combined 22.7% is around the middle of the normal range.
- 4.1.4 One significant error was found in the calculation of the contingency value which, when corrected increased the tender price by around £125K. A number of smaller errors were found and corrected.
- 4.1.5 Following the clarification process, the tender was adjusted to £3,460,722.15, an increase of £156,749.15.
- 4.1.6 The bid is considered capable of acceptance subject to the clarification of one outstanding query which is minor in nature.

4.2 Company B (£3,649,956.20, corrected to £3,654,711.61)

- 4.2.1 Arithmetic Check: the tender was found largely to be arithmetically correct although there were some carrying errors of section totals to summary page. There was also one item which had not been extended to the total's column. These are considered to be genuine errors and therefore, Ellis were given the opportunity to correct them, which was accepted.
- 4.2.2 Qualifications: the tender contained 10 qualifications, a number of which were significant. These were all withdrawn upon further enquiry.
- 4.2.3 Technical check: the tender was fully priced on an item-by-item basis with no significant grouping of items together, indicating a properly considered bid. Overhead and profit was confirmed to be 7.5%, which is at the lower end of the normal range. Preliminaries amounted to 22.3% of measured works which is high (normally 10-15%), but consistent with three of the other four tenders. Time-related project management costs accounted for 65% of the total preliminaries value and so is a function of the long project period at 80 weeks, which would justify a level of preliminaries costs above the normal range.
- 4.2.4 The tender was adjusted following the clarification process to £3,654,711.61, an increase of £4,755.41.
- 4.2.5 The bid is considered capable of acceptance.

4.3 Company D (£3,991,953.85, corrected to £4,014,953.85)

- 4.3.1 Arithmetic Check: the tender was found to be arithmetically correct.
- 4.3.2 Qualifications: the tender contained 6 qualifications, two of which were significant. These were all withdrawn upon further enquiry. There is one remaining outstanding comment, noting that if the Contractor is unable to secure the use of the rear car park, the project will not be possible. BFTC have made preliminary enquiries with the County Council and, although exact terms could not be given until specific proposals were put

forward, there appears to be no objection in principle to the use of the car park as proposed. On this basis, the remaining comment from Daedalus should be taken as an advisory note, rather than a qualification.

- 4.3.3 Technical check: the tender was fully priced on an item-by-item basis with no significant grouping of items together, indicating a properly considered bid. Overhead and profit was stated to be 7.5%, which is at the lower end of the normal range. Preliminaries amounted to 20.2% of measured works which is high (normally 10-15%), but consistent with three of the other four tenders. Time-related project management costs accounted for 56% of the total preliminaries value and so is a function of the long project period at 82 weeks, which would justify a level of preliminaries costs above the normal range.
- 4.3.4 Post-tender queries: a total of fifteen queries were raised and satisfactory responses were received for all.
- 4.3.5 The tender was adjusted following the clarification process to £4,014,953.85, an increase of £23,000.00.
- 4.3.6 The bid is considered capable of acceptance.

4.4 Company C (£3,690,545.36, corrected to £4,080,121.16)

- 4.4.1 Initial observations: the tender was found to be substantially flawed including incomplete pricing, provisional pricing, arithmetical errors, and significant groupings of items under large lump sum prices. The document submitted was not in the format required and included various alterations to text including the insertion of a 'comments' column. A page of 'clarifications' had been added. Most of the comments and clarifications constituted qualifications to the tender. The Employer was notified and advised that although genuine errors could be corrected, the extent of unfinished and incorrect work went beyond reasonable correction. The Employer was asked in an e-mail dated 21 December 2023 to confirm whether Company C should be allowed the opportunity to amend their tender in such circumstances and this was confirmed in their e-mail of the same date.
- 4.4.2 A list of 70 queries was issued to Company C on 21 December 2023 setting out the matters which need to be addressed. Over the course of the next three weeks, corrected and additional information was submitted and a further 15 queries issued. By 19 January 2024, the price had been corrected to £4,080,121.16 but some further information was still outstanding, including a breakdown of eth roofing works pricing for asbestos removal and the completed Bill of Materials, required by the AV consultant. A further request was made for this information, and a deadline set for submission by close of play on 23 January 2024.
- 4.4.3 Company C responded at 20:53 on 23 January 2024 with a revised pricing document and the outstanding information requested. The revised pricing document introduced a revised price of £4,040,203.59. The revised pricing document was not in the format required under the terms of tender and, being completely revised, now omitted all the notes of the corrections made on the document by the QS in the previous weeks. Further consideration of Company C's tender would therefore require a wholesale review of the new document, rather than confirmation that particular items had been addressed.
- 4.4.4 In the meantime, all the tenders had been scored based on information available at 16 January 2024, at which point, Company C provisional tender price stood at £4,080,121.16 and their score was lowest of the four tenders. The revised price would not significantly affect that score or their position relative to the other tenders and so there would be little purpose in assessing their latest submission in detail.
- 4.4.5 For the purpose of final scoring, therefore, the tender price has been taken as the checked and verified value available at the time of the tender scoring panel, at £4,080,121.16, an increase of £389,575.80.

5.0 COMPARISON OF TENDERS

- 5.1.1 A 'heat map' comparison of sectional totals is included below. Lowest priced elements amongst the tenders are shaded in green and highest in red. Intermediate values are graded from light green through yellow to light red, according to how close they are to the lowest/highest values in the range.
- 5.1.2 The following should be noted:
 - a) Company B and C had included their overhead and profit allowance within their measured works rates, rather than on the summary page. The figures in the heat map have adjusted for this to ensure a like-for like comparison.
 - b) The four tenderers have priced their scaffolding in different places. Company B and D have priced within the measured works, whereas Companies A and C have priced within the preliminaries. Adjustments for these differences have not been made in the heat map as this would impact upon other allowances and potentially be misleading. The scaffolding pricing is isolated within certain

sections of the heat map and so it is sufficient to read the 'as tendered' figures alongside the notes below. The as tendered figures may be extracted as follows:

- i) Company A: £119,478.08
- ii) Company B: £61,190.88
- iii) Company D: £214,429.02
- iv) Company C: £174,942.50

Scaffolding prices are notoriously variable as scaffolders have the capacity to adjust their hire rates for owned components according to how busy they are – it being preferable to hire components at reduced rates (or even no cost) in order to secure work for the labour. It is, therefore, difficult to draw conclusions from the spread of prices received. Company C have included a lump sum of £50,000 for a temporary roof, which none of the others have allowed for. Company C's price would be similar to Company A' with this excluded, leaving Company D very much as the outlier.

5.1.3 It can be seen that Company A values are mainly green and Companies C and D mainly red. Company B values are mainly yellow to light green. This indicates that the overall price advantage enjoyed by Company A is quite consistent across the board, rather than in one particular area, and this indicates a consistent level of lower pricing across the piste, rather than anomalies in any particular section(s) which might be a cause for concern.

5.1.4 The following observations are made:

- a) Approximately one-third of the overall value of Company A's pricing is the lowest in the field. Of this, 15% is significantly lower and 85% marginally lower. Pricing which is significantly lower than the field may be a cause for concern if it applies to a significant proportion of the overall tender value, but in this case, it amounts to less than 4% of the total and is concentrated in masonry work, some joinery repairs, builder's work in connection and drainage.
- b) The other two-thirds of the overall value of Company A tender is not the lowest.
- c) Company A are significantly lower than the others in the mechanical works but this is due mainly to the others having all included the mechanical louvre vents in this section rather than the Corn Exchange roof work.
- d) Company A's price for preliminaries includes their scaffolding allowance. If this is excluded the price would reduce to £453,134.42, which would be the lowest of the field, but this reflects the shorter contract period proposed (68 weeks versus 78-82 weeks).

Overall, the comparison indicates that about 96% of Company A's pricing is consistent with at least one of the other tenderers and therefore competitive, rather than concerningly low. The other 4% may be in areas where they have a competitive advantage – e.g. by employing in-house resources, rather than sub-contracting – or this may simply be a matter of a different pricing strategy. It should be noted that 3% of their overall price is highest in the field, so there may be some swings and roundabouts.

Heat Map Comparison of Tenders Received (After Clarification)

	Company A	Company B (OHP extracted)	Company C	Company D (OHP extracted)
Town Hall				
Temp works/scaffolding	0.00	8,053.50	42,298.50	2,125.00
Demolitions	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Roofs/rainwater	40,531.08	31,300.77	41,212.50	11,771.45
Chimneys/ext walls	7,528.33	4,516.39	9,402.53	10,244.90
External doors/windows	20,234.95	31,217.34	30,662.52	31,776.54
Internal repairs/alterations	357,612.81	325,288.37	430,573.19	332,947.73
Decorations	25,307.43	63,433.55	30,313.59	66,719.50
Sub-total Town Hall	451,214.60	463,809.91	584,462.83	455,585.13
Corn exchange				
Temp works/scaffolding	3,986.64	53,137.38	171,130.52	2,125.00
Demolitions	7,400.00	2,403.30	3,950.00	0.00
Roofs/rainwater	351,508.68	296,048.78	347,854.47	427,104.37
Chimneys/ext walls	6,011.91	12,534.90	14,581.91	15,469.62
Internal repairs/alterations	271,552.59	356,265.01	327,735.28	284,755.28
Decorations	22,510.52	64,951.48	27,955.18	58,473.82

Sub-total Corn Exchange	662,970.34	785,340.85	893,207.36	787,928.09
Council Offices				0.00
Temp works/scaffolding	172.40	3,492.14	10,051.00	2,125.00
Demolitions	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Roofs/rainwater	717.20	568.94	1,497.73	2,545.04
Chimneys/ext walls	1,416.69	3,708.63	4,879.41	4,902.66
External doors/windows	45,260.70	19,024.71	24,302.67	47,421.29
Internal repairs/alterations	32,168.58	49,904.33	61,695.92	76,760.03
Decorations	5,108.35	11,404.26	4,503.84	15,812.21
Sub-total Council Offices	84,671.52	88,103.02	106,930.57	149,566.23
M&E				
Mechanical	168,786.58	233,023.21	283,001.00	272,930.49
Electrical	218,469.04	221,951.88	224,956.00	139,503.28
AV	113,840.00	89,810.18	105,202.00	126,647.72
Lift	38,990.00	38,246.75	42,419.23	14,343.75
BWIC	29,622.21	63,503.37	50,586.38	36,526.76
Sub-total M&E Services	569,707.83	646,535.39	706,164.61	589,952.00
Drainage	15,470.45	20,936.81	22,418.50	21,804.77
Provisional sums	430,600.00	430,600.00	430,600.00	430,600.00
Preliminaries	572,612.50	511,651.53	552,325.06	636,118.54
Daywork contingency	99,250.00	106,165.00	101,400.00	117,750.00
OHP	250,867.77	278,973.97	247,208.17	530,640.84
General contingencies	303,828.74	322,595.15	354,331.73	360,215.56
Adjustments	19,356.00	-0.01	17,000.00	-39.99
TOTALS	3,460,722.15	3,654,711.61	4,016,048.83	4,080,121.16

6.0 QUALITY ASSESSMENT AND FINAL SCORING

6.1 Process

- 6.1.1 Tenderers were asked to respond to a series of project specific questions relating to programme, the proposed project team and proposed approach to the work. The quality scores were determined by individual members of the scoring panel and then moderated to a single score after a panel discussion. The final tender score was based on 30% quality and 70% price.

6.2 Scores

- 6.2.1 Including the score related to pricing, the overall scores were as follows:

Bidder	Score					Position
	Programme	Team	Approach	Price	Total	
A	4%	8%	6%	70%	88%	1
D	5%	8%	12%	60%	85%	2
B	3%	4%	9%	66%	82%	3
C	3%	8%	9%	59%	79%	4

7.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Summary of findings

- 7.1.1 After a process of clarification, three of the four tenders received submitted prices that were considered capable of being accepted. The fourth tender, from Company C is not capable of acceptance because it includes a wholly new pricing document submitted at a late stage and assessing this would further delay the contract award. In any event, the scoring, and relative position of Company C in fourth place, would not be impacted regardless of the new submission.

- 7.1.2 Following the quality assessment, the highest overall combined quality/price score was achieved by Company A.
- 7.1.3 Examination of Company A tender pricing did not highlight any areas of concern which would cause their bid to be rejected, although the final query concerning the actuator to the automated vents should be resolved.
- 7.2 Conclusions**
- 7.2.1 Under the terms of the tender, having achieved the highest score, the contract should be awarded to Company A, subject to any value engineering required to achieve the available budget.

End

24 January 2024

Public Works Loan Board Application

The following text has been taken directly from the PWLB application form:

Councils wishing to borrow will have to get in touch with the County Association, whether a member or not, to submit the Application Form. Where a borrowing approval is required the purpose must be detailed on the application and in a report to Council. Approvals should only be sought for capital expenditure. Please complete the borrowing application form and provide the following supporting information;

1. Copy of full minute of the Full Council Meeting with the resolution to seek the Secretary of State's approval for the proposed borrowing drafted in accordance with the example criteria;
2. Copy of the Council's budget or cash flow forecast for the current year, and next year (if available), showing the provision made to meet the loan costs, as well as a copy of the latest Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR);
3. Full report to the Council or business case. This should include a breakdown of the proposed works, estimated costs, financial planning to fund the loan repayments and the steps/options the Council/has in place to mitigate the risk for not being able to afford the loan repayments;
4. Please provide information on how the Council will afford the loan repayments, breakdown of funding resources, amounts to be used from reserves, and any increase of precept to fund the borrowing;
5. If the Council precept is to be increased to cover the loan repayment, please confirm the amount and percentage of the planned increase related to the loan only (if possible how much increase for house holders at Band D);
6. If applicable, please provide evidence of public support to increase the precept to cover the loan repayment (e.g. the result of any consultation).
7. You still need to provide details how local residents were consulted on the project and associated borrowing even if you are not increasing precept to fund the loan (e.g. newsletter/website/in the agenda of public meeting).

Full provision of this information with the application demonstrating that it meets the guidance criteria will expedite the approval process. For further information,

- Please read full guide to parish borrowing in Page 5 and the supporting documents;
- For any queries, please contact your local association at first instance or;
- For clarification on any aspect of this guidance, please contact DLUHC by email: parish.borrowing@levellingup.gov.uk

APPLICATION FOR BORROWING APPROVAL FOR TOWN/PARISH COUNCILS

- If you have any queries about completing this form please contact your local county association.
- When completing this form please use CAPITALS.
- Once completed and signed please send this form to your local county association.

1. Name of Council	BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL
2. Name of Clerk	LINDA SCOTT-GILES
Working Address (inc. Postcode)	TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE, CHURCH LANE, BLANDFORD FORUM, DORSET DT11 7AD
Email address	LINDA@BLANDFORDFORUM-TC.GOV.UK
Telephone	01258 454500
3. Name of Chair	COUNCILLOR HUGO MIÉVILLE
4. Home Address (inc. Postcode)	4 ALBERT STREET, BLANDFORD FORUM, DORSET DT11 7HY
Telephone	01258 480366
Email address	CLLRMIEVILLE@BLANDFORDFORUM-TC.GOV.UK
5. District/Unitary Council area	DORSET COUNCIL
Purpose of Borrowing Please give a brief description of the purpose for which funds are required. Example of Capital projects : Purchase of land/building or, construction/building works or, provision of other assets or; provision of grants to another body for a Capital expenditure	THE TOWN COUNCIL IS PROPOSING TO BREATHE NEW LIFE INTO THE GRADE I LISTED TOWN HALL AND CORN EXCHANGE COMPLEX AND A PLANNING APPLICATION HAS BEEN APPROVED BY DORSET COUNCIL. THE HISTORIC COMMUNITY BUILDING, AND HOME OF THE TOWN COUNCIL, HAS LONG BEEN RECOGNISED AS IN NEED OF REVIVING FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE COMMUNITY AND THE TOWN CENTRE. IMPORTANT PARTS OF THE BUILDING SUCH AS THE MAIN CORN EXCHANGE SPACE DON'T PERFORM AS THEY SHOULD AND USERS ARE PUT OFF BY POOR ACCESS, HEATING, LIGHTING, ACOUSTICS, AND A LACK OF BACK OF HOUSE FACILITIES. PARTS OF THE ROOF COVERINGS HAVE STARTED TO FAIL LEADING TO INSTANCES OF WATER INGRESS, WHICH WILL BE ADDRESSED. IN ADDITION, THE FIRST FLOOR OF THE BUILDING WHICH CONTAINS SOME OF THE MOST HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT AND BEAUTIFUL SPACES, IS NOT ACCESSIBLE TO

	<p>THOSE WITH MOBILITY ISSUES WHICH CUTS OFF A SIGNIFICANT PART OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.</p> <p>THE WORK, THEREFORE, INCLUDES RE-ROOFING THE CORN EXCHANGE, NEW IMPROVED ACCESS TO THE FIRST FLOOR OF THE TOWN HALL WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF A LIFT AND NEW STAIRCASE, AS WELL AS ASSOCIATED MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL WORKS.</p> <p>RESPONDING TO COMMUNITY FEEDBACK, THE PROJECT WILL PROVIDE EQUAL ACCESS TO THE EXQUISITE FIRST FLOOR ROOMS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE BUILDING'S 300-YEAR HISTORY AND THE PROJECT WILL TRANSFORM THE CORN EXCHANGE INTO A WARM, FUNCTIONAL, FLEXIBLE COMMUNITY VENUE TO MEET THE DEMANDS OF THE INCREASING NUMBER OF RESIDENTS WITHIN THE PARISH AND SURROUNDING AREA.</p> <p>THE CORN EXCHANGE WILL BE SENSITIVELY REPAIRED TO REVEAL THE BEAUTIFUL HISTORIC BUILDING WHICH LIES BENEATH AND RESTORE A SENSE OF PRIDE INTO THE MAIN CIVIC BUILDING IN BLANDFORD FORUM.</p> <p>THIS PROJECT IS A ONCE IN A LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY TO REFURBISH THE BUILDING AND CREATE A MORE USEABLE, FLEXIBLE AND ACCESSIBLE SPACE THAT IS FIT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS OF THE TOWN AND ITS SURROUNDINGS.</p> <p>FURTHER INFORMATION IS PROVIDED IN THE BUSINESS CASE AT APPENDIX C.</p>
7.Total Contract/Project Value	£3,460,772.00 PLUS FEES OF £250,000 = £3,710,772
Funding from Council's own resources	£1,071,500.00
Funding from other sources	£1,090,130.00
Added row	<i>Minus Costs of £249,142 from Value Engineering</i>
Amount to be borrowed	£1,300,000.00
8.Deadline for approval (if applicable) If borrowing is required by a specific date – eg an auction date, or to meet match-funding requirements - give details here.	4 TH MARCH 2024 THIS WILL ENABLE THE TOWN COUNCIL TO PROCEED WITH THE PRICE HELD BY THE CONTRACTOR FOR THE TIME PERIOD AGREED AS PART OF THE TENDER PROCESS.
9. Is funding from other sources confirmed?	YES
10. Proposed Borrowing Source	NO OTHER BORROWING SOURCES PROPOSED

11. Repayment option (if borrowing from PWLB)	ANNUITY EIP N/A HTTPS://WWW.DMO.GOV.UK/DATA/PDFDATA PORT?REPORTCODE=D9A.1			
12. Intended Borrowing Term (please specify the number of years)	50 YEARS			
13. Details of Existing Loans	1 ST LOAN	2 ND LOAN	3 RD LOAN	4 TH LOAN
	£	£	£	£
Date Taken Out				
Amount Outstanding	£	£	£	£
Unexpired Term				
14. Are you increasing Precept to fund this borrowing?	NO			
What will be the amount and percentage of the planned increase per annum?	£N/A			
What will cost band D per annum?	£N/A			
15. If applicable, have you assessed the extent of public support to increase precept for this loan?	YES			
If yes, what were the results of the assessment to increase precept for this loan?	<p>PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED DOCUMENT AT APPENDIX E SUMMARISING THE CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT.</p> <p>SEVERAL PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO DEVELOP AND DELIVER A PROJECT TO REPAIR AND ALTER THE CORN EXCHANGE HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED AND PROGRESSED SINCE 2000. THESE ATTEMPTS INCLUDED DETAILED CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT WITH THE COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDERS. NONE OF THESE EFFORTS CAME TO FRUITION DUE TO A COMPLEX RANGE OF REASONS BUT THEY DEMONSTRATE A DEEPER HISTORY OF ENGAGEMENT AND PUBLIC SUPPORT.</p> <p>THE CURRENT PROPOSAL WAS BEGUN IN 2019. THE 2018/19 ANNUAL TOWN COUNCIL REPORT MARKED THIS NOTING THE PROCUREMENT OF A DESIGN TEAM TO DEVELOP PROPOSALS FOR THE CORN EXCHANGE.</p> <p>THE PARISH NEWSLETTER IS SENT TO ALL RESIDENTS' HOMES TWICE A YEAR AND POSTED ONLINE AND IS USED REGULARLY TO ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY IN THE PROJECT. MEETINGS OF THE CORN EXCHANGE STEERING GROUP HAVE TAKEN PLACE SINCE 2020 INCLUDING DURING COVID. ALL MEETINGS ARE COMPLETELY OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND INCLUDE ALL COUNCILLORS. THEY ARE</p>			

ADVERTISED WIDELY INCLUDING ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND RESIDENTS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND EITHER ONLINE OR IN PERSON. THE TOWN COUNCIL ALSO MAKES USE OF UPDATING RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES VIA A FREE MONTHLY PUBLICATION CALLED THE 'AROUND BLANDFORD GUIDE'.

THERE WAS A CONSULTATION EVENT AT THE SEPTEMBER 2020 BLANDFORD COMMUNITY EXPO TO CANVASS RESIDENTS ON THEIR VIEWS ON THE BUILDING AND DISCUSS PROPOSALS FOR CONSERVATION AND ALTERATIONS TO THE BUILDING.

THE TOWN COUNCIL HELD A MAJOR ONLINE CONSULTATION EVENT OVER WINTER 2020/2021 TO CONSULT RESIDENTS IN MORE DETAIL ON UTILISATION, LIKES, DISLIKES AND ISSUES WITH THE CORN EXCHANGE AND IDEAS FOR THE BUILDING.

VARIOUS INTRUSIVE SURVEYS WERE UNDERTAKEN IN 2022, INCLUDING REVEALING THE OLD VICTORIAN TILES, TO UNDERSTAND MORE ABOUT THE BUILDING. WHERE THEY WERE OF POTENTIAL INTEREST TO THE COMMUNITY, INFORMATION WAS POSTED ONLINE VIA SOCIAL MEDIA TO HELP KEEP PEOPLE ENGAGED IN THE PROJECT.

EXHIBITION BOARDS WERE ERECTED IN THE CORN EXCHANGE WITH CONSULTATION ON EMERGING PROPOSALS, THESE WERE LAUNCHED AT THE 2022 BLANDFORD COMMUNITY EXPO.

PANELS SOUGHT TO ILLUSTRATE PROPOSALS AND EXPLAIN THE MAIN CHANGES ALONG WITH DETAILS ON PROGRAMMING.

PRESS RELEASE TO LOCAL MEDIA OUTLETS AND AN ARTICLE WERE PLACED IN THE JUNE 2022 PARISH MAGAZINE SENT TO ALL RESIDENTS AND POSTED ON-LINE UPDATING RESIDENTS ON THE PROPOSAL AND PROMOTING ENGAGEMENT IN THE PROJECT VIA A PROJECT TO COLLATE LOCAL IMAGES AND INFORMATION ON THE INTERIOR DECORATIVE SCHEME.

THE PLANNING APPLICATION AND LISTED

	<p>BUILDING CONSENT APPLICATIONS WERE SUBMITTED TO DORSET COUNCIL IN JANUARY 2023. STATUTORY NOTIFICATIONS WERE ERECTED, A PRESS RELEASE WAS ISSUED TO LOCAL MEDIA OUTLETS AND THE TOWN COUNCIL ENCOURAGED PEOPLE TO GET INVOLVED VIA SOCIAL MEDIA BY VIEWING THE FULL APPLICATION AND SUBMITTING ANY COMMENTS.</p> <p>A DRIVE TIME INTERVIEW ON 21ST FEBRUARY 2023 WITH LOCAL RADIO STATION UPDATING THE COMMUNITY ON THE PROJECT AND NOTIFYING THEM THAT A PLANNING APPLICATION HAD BEEN SUBMITTED.</p> <p>EXHIBITION PANELS DESCRIBING PROPOSALS FOR THE CORN EXCHANGE WERE INCLUDED IN THE SPRING COMMUNITY EXPO IN MARCH 2023 HELD IN THE CORN EXCHANGE. THE EVENT WAS WIDELY PUBLICISED INCLUDING ON SOCIAL MEDIA.</p>
16. Precept for previous year:	£ FOR BAND D: 227.13 2022/23
Precept for current year:	£ FOR BAND D: 232.23 2023/24
Precept for next year:	£ FOR BAND D: 246.45 2024/25
17. Number of Electorate	7,930 (JANUARY 2024)
18. Value and purpose of all funds, capital/revenue reserves and balances currently held.	UPDATE RESERVES S/S, SUBJECT TO CHANGES, TO ACCOMPANY APPLICATION
19. Have you provided the following supporting evidence?	PLEASE TICK THE APPROPRIATE BOXES BELOW
a) Full Council minutes with resolution to apply to DLUHC for borrowing	YES – APPENDIX A
b) Report to the Council/ Business Case	YES – APPENDIX C
c) Council Budget for current year and next year if available	YES – APPENDIX B
d) Communications with local residents on the purpose of borrowing, borrowing amount and increase in precept (if applicable)	YES – APPENDIX E
20. Approval of Full Council <p>The above application was agreed by resolution of the full council on MONDAY 12TH FEBRUARY 2024, the Report to Council and Budget attached have been taken to and approved by the full Council, and the draft Minutes attached have been seen and authorised for submission by the Chairman.</p> <p>The Council undertakes to notify the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), as soon as reasonably practicable, in the event:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • of not exercising the approval, or, • it finds that the original amount requested is greater than the actual borrowing need. 	

SIGNED.....
(Chair of the Council)

DATE.....

NAME...CLLR HUGO MIEVILLE

SIGNED.....
(Responsible Financial Officer)

DATE.....

NAME.....AMANDA CROCKER.....

*Please send signed, completed forms and all supporting information to your county
association of local councils.*

Failure to submit all required information will delay your borrowing approval.

Appendix B

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL SUMMARY OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

PROPOSED REVENUE BUDGET 2023/24

	2021/22			2022/23			2023/24		Increase in budget
	Annual Budget	Actual	Forecast	Annual Budget	Actual to 31/10/22	Forecast	Proposed Budget	Plus Inflation @ 3 %	
Income									
Admin	34,343	63,100	58,175	33,430	34,351	77,433	32,915	33,519	89
Grant Income	1,624	650	6,261	0	10,000	16,000	0	0	0
Admin Total	35,967	63,750	64,436	33,430	44,351	93,433	32,915	33,519	89
Cemetery	12,485	9,933	12,485	12,672	10,179	13,000	13,000	13,390	718
Larksmead	0	101	992	1,810	905	1,810	1,810	1,864	54
Corn Exchange	13,796	6,991	13,974	13,786	8,352	14,130	9,090	9,092	(4,695)
Woodhouse Gardens	4,568	3,347	6,000	6,090	3,758	6,500	6,500	6,695	605
Sundries	3,409	4,990	5,405	3,497	3,148	3,480	3,480	3,573	76
Skatepark	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
R & A Income Total	34,258	25,363	38,856	37,855	26,342	38,920	33,880	34,614	-3,241
Markets and planters	21,044	12,546	23,400	23,448	15,473	25,547	21,200	21,200	(2,248)
Tabernacle Toilets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Marsh & Ham Toilets	800	850	850	508	945	945	500	515	7
T & GP Income Total	21,844	13,396	24,250	23,956	16,418	26,492	21,700	21,715	(2,241)
Total Income	92,069	102,509	127,542	95,241	87,110	158,845	88,495	89,848	(5,393)
EXPENDITURE									
Admin	78,743	59,521	80,325	77,620	46,051	78,683	76,948	78,611	991
Corn Exchange Project Officer / Consultant	20,000	0	0	20,000	0	20,000	20,000	20,600	600
Salaries (4400)	460,230	420,158	432,024	500,000	241,441	460,000	500,000	500,000	0
Admin Total Costs	558,973	479,679	512,349	597,620	287,493	558,683	596,948	599,211	1,591
Vehicles	12,461	5,691	12,338	12,625	5,948	12,102	12,198	12,564	(61)
Glenmore Business Park Workshop	7,422	4,048	7,375	7,618	3,695	7,206	7,201	7,399	(219)
Cemetery	6,731	4,403	6,731	6,886	4,697	6,892	6,569	6,753	(133)
Larksmead	2,420	804	2,356	2,336	1,685	2,359	2,360	2,425	89
Corn Exchange	45,820	16,690	37,889	44,717	25,100	42,231	42,952	44,240	(477)
Grant to Barnes for a Recreation Ground	42,295	16,584	41,869	35,547	12,204	36,163	36,097	37,163	1,616
Woodhouse Gardens	3,702	886	2,923	3,655	2,102	3,795	3,445	3,548	(107)
Sundries	21,988	9,626	21,398	21,137	10,549	19,951	18,751	19,314	(1,823)
Langton	338	226	408	333	98	328	325	335	2
Badbury Heights	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Skatepark	1,495	96	1,100	1,421	591	1,203	1,403	1,445	24
R & A Total Costs	144,671	59,051	134,387	136,275	66,669	132,230	131,301	135,185	(1,090)
Tabernacle Toilets	3,617	(800)	572	1,672	467	1,705	1,440	1,483	(189)
CCTV / Planters / Markets	22,193	11,664	20,944	22,118	12,971	22,071	22,571	22,983	865
Marsh & Ham Toilets	17,228	4,403	12,574	15,551	6,664	14,483	14,553	14,990	(561)
T & G.P Total Costs	43,038	15,267	34,090	39,341	20,103	38,259	38,564	39,456	115
Total Expenditure	746,682	553,997	680,826	773,236	374,264	729,172	766,813	773,853	617
TOTAL	654,614	451,488	553,284	677,995	287,153	570,327	678,318	684,005	6,010

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

SUMMARY

PROPOSED REVENUE BUDGET 2023/24

	2021/22			2022/23			2023/24		Increase in budget
	Annual Budget	Actual	Forecast	Annual Budget	Actual to 31/10/22	Forecast	Proposed Budget	Plus Inflation @ 3 %	
ADMINISTRATION	44,400	(3,579)	22,150	44,190	1,701	1,250	44,033	45,092	902
Corn Exchange Project Officer / Consultant				20,000	0	20,000	20,000	20,600	600
PAYROLL PLUS PENSION	460,230	420,158	432,024	500,000	241,441	460,000	500,000	500,000	0
ADMIN/PAYROLL TOTAL	504,630	416,579	454,174	564,190	243,142	481,250	564,033	565,692	1,502
VEHICLE RUNNING COSTS	12,461	5,691	12,338	12,625	5,948	12,102	12,198	12,564	(61)
CEMETERY	(5,754)	(5,530)	(5,754)	(5,786)	(5,482)	(6,108)	(6,431)	(6,637)	(851)
GLENMORE BUS PARK WORKSHOP	7,422	4,048	7,375	7,618	3,695	7,206	7,201	7,399	(219)
LARKSMEAD	2,420	703	1,364	526	780	549	550	561	35
CORN EXCHANGE	32,024	9,698	23,915	30,931	16,748	28,101	33,862	35,149	4,218
GRANT to Barnes for a Recreation Ground	35,396	16,584	37,598	35,547	12,204	36,163	36,097	37,163	1,616
WOODHOUSE GARDENS	(866)	(2,461)	(3,077)	(2,435)	(1,656)	(2,705)	(3,055)	(3,147)	(712)
SUNDRIES	18,579	4,636	15,993	17,640	7,401	16,471	15,271	15,741	(1,899)
LANGTON ROAD	338	226	408	333	98	328	325	335	2
BADBURY HEIGHTS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SKATEPARK	1,495	96	1,100	1,421	591	1,203	1,403	1,445	24
RECREATION & AMENTIES	103,514	33,689	91,260	98,420	40,327	93,310	97,421	100,572	2,152
TABERNACLE TOILETS	3,617	(800)	572	1,672	467	1,705	1,440	1,483	(189)
CCTV / PLANTING & MARKETS	1,149	(882)	(2,456)	(1,330)	(2,503)	(3,476)	1,371	1,783	3,113
MARSH & HAM TOILETS	16,429	3,553	11,724	15,043	5,720	13,538	14,053	14,475	(568)
TOWN & GENERAL PURPOSES	21,194	1,870	9,840	15,385	3,684	11,767	16,864	17,741	2,356
Total	629,339	452,138	555,274	677,995	287,153	586,327	678,318	684,005	6,010

Plus Accounts Revenue Balance b/t 2022/23

150,752

Proposed Revenue Budget 2023/24

533,253

PROPOSED OVERALL BUDGET 2020/21 & PRECEPT RECOMMENDATION

	2023/24 Budget	2022/23 Budget
Net Revenue Costs	533,253	600,661
Standard Asset Replacement	38,998	25,480
R & A	15,000	16,000
T & G P	15,500	10,000
Railway Arches (moved to T&GP Earmarked Reserves)	0	500
Corn Exchange (1105) Capital Project Replacement	55,000	24,600
Corn Exchange Project Development - (1115)	55,000	40,000
Corn Exchange Matchfunding	55,000	20,000
Office Relocation, DC loss of income, storage	18,000	0
Election Costs (By-Election Recharge for Old Town Ward, £2707.35)	1,000	0
Grants Budget - Includes Green Grants (2x £500 per year)	11,000	11,000
Service Level Agreements - BSVB £1,500 / CA £5,000 / TIC £2,000 / Fashion Museum £2,500 / Town Museum £2,000 / TREADS £2,000 / Boxing Club £2,500 / Blandford Food Bank £5,000.	22,500	35,000
Youth Centre (subject to receipt of business plan and council approval)	0	15,000
Working Balance	5,000	5,000
	* 825,250	803,241
Less Government Grant from Dorset Council	0	0
	New Net 825,250	803,241

2.74%

New Basis

Increase over last Year

2023/24 equivalent Band D properties	=	3,553.60	= Council Tax	£232.23	2.25%	£5.10
2022/23 equivalent Band D properties	=	3,536.50	= Council Tax	£227.13		

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL
SUMMARY OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

PROPOSED REVENUE BUDGET 2024/25

Income	2022/23			2023/24			Previous Year Plus Inflation @ 3%	2024/25	
	Annual Budget	Actual	Variance	Annual Budget	Actual to 31.10.23	Forecast		Proposed Budget	Increase in budget
Admin	33,430	85,917	(52,487)	33,519	66,914	34,772	34,525	66,190	32,671
Grant Income	0	15,775	(15,775)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Admin Total	33,430	101,692	(68,262)	33,519	66,914	34,772	34,525	66,190	32,671
Cemetery	12,672	19,095	(6,423)	13,390	5,567	10,000	13,792	11,000	(2,390)
Larksmead	1,810	1,810	0	1,864	1,384	1,864	1,920	1,500	(364)
Corn Exchange	13,786	13,972	(186)	9,093	6,988	9,212	9,364	0	(9,093)
Woodhouse Gardens	6,090	6,287	(197)	6,695	4,498	6,695	6,896	7,500	805
Sundries	3,497	4,255	(758)	3,573	3,410	3,662	3,680	3,700	127
Skatepark	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
R & A Income Total	37,855	45,418	(7,562.79)	34,614	21,847	31,433	35,652	23,700	-10,914
Markets and planters	23,448	26,764	(3,316)	21,200	14,312	22,342	21,836	15,800	(5,400)
Tabernacle Toilets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Marsh & Ham Toilets	508	675	(167)	515	691	691	530	550	35
T & GP Income Total	23,956	27,439	(3,483)	21,715	15,003	23,033	22,366	16,350	(5,365)
Total Income	95,241	174,549	(79,308)	89,848	103,764	89,238	92,543	106,240	16,392
EXPENDITURE									
Admin	77,620	72,353	5,267	78,611	58,880	80,736	80,969	86,163	7,552
Corn Exchange Project Officer / Consultant	20,000	0	0	20,600	0	0	0	0	(20,600)
Salaries (4400)	500,000	442,469	57,531	500,000	231,771	529,341	515,000	578,575	78,575
Admin Total Costs	597,620	514,822	62,798	599,211	290,651	610,077	595,969	664,738	65,527
Vehicles	12,625	10,341	2,284	12,564	6,283	12,829	12,941	12,902	338
Glenmore Business Park Workshop	7,618	8,319	(701)	7,399	5,729	7,642	7,621	7,418	19
Cemetery	6,886	9,770	(2,884)	6,753	5,112	6,969	6,956	6,918	165
Larksmead	2,336	12,154	(9,818)	2,425	2,557	3,458	2,498	1,930	(495)
Park Road					1,417	2,429		3,000	3,000
Corn Exchange	44,717	43,652	1,065	44,240	34,459	45,184	45,568	25,900	(18,340)
Grant to Barnes for a Recreation Ground	35,547	28,593	43,166	37,163	20,758	37,189	38,278	36,844	(319)
Woodhouse Gardens	3,655	3,807	(152)	3,548	2,297	4,026	3,655	4,072	524
Sundries	21,137	22,990	(1,853)	19,314	10,493	21,267	19,893	20,334	1,020
Langton	333	2,999	(2,666)	335	128	335	345	330	(5)
Badbury Heights	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Skatepark	1,421	15,023	(13,602)	1,445	87	1,445	1,488	1,100	(345)
R & A Total Costs	136,275	157,647	14,840	135,186	89,320	142,773	139,242	120,748	(14,438)
Tabernacle Toilets	1,672	661	1,011	1,483	302	1,654	1,528	1,135	(348)
CCTV / Planters / Markets	22,118	19,436	2,682	22,983	16,258	22,985	23,673	22,821	(162)
Marsh & Ham Toilets	15,551	11,968	3,583	14,990	7,564	14,562	15,439	14,703	(287)
T & G.P Total Costs	39,341	32,066	7,275	39,456	24,124	39,201	40,640	38,659	(797)
Total Expenditure	773,236	704,535	84,912	773,853	404,095	792,051	775,851	824,145	50,292
TOTAL	677,995	529,986	164,221	684,005	300,331	702,813	683,308	717,905	33,900

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL
SUMMARY

PROPOSED REVENUE BUDGET 2024/25

	2022/23			2023/24			2024/25		Increase in budget
	Annual Budget	Actual	Variance	Annual Budget	Actual to 31.10.23	Forecast	Year Plus Inflation @	Proposed Budget	
ADMINISTRATION	44,190	(13,564)	57,754	45,092	(8,034)	45,964	46,445	19,973	(25,119)
Corn Exchange Project Officer / Consultant	20,000			20,600	0	0	0	0	(20,600)
PAYROLL PLUS PENSION	500,000	442,469	57,531	500,000	231,771	529,341	515,000	578,575	78,575
ADMIN/PAYROLL TOTAL	564,190	428,905	115,285	565,692	223,738	575,305	561,445	598,548	32,856
VEHICLE RUNNING COSTS	12,625	10,341	2,284	12,564	6,283	12,829	12,941	12,902	338
CEMETERY	(5,786)	(9,325)	3,539	(6,637)	(455)	(3,031)	(6,836)	(4,082)	2,555
GLENMORE BUS PARK WORKSHOP	7,618	8,319	(701)	7,399	5,729	7,642	7,621	7,418	19
LARKSMEAD	526	10,345	(9,819)	561	1,172	1,594	578	430	(131)
CORN EXCHANGE	30,931	29,680	1,251	35,148	27,471	35,972	36,203	25,900	(9,248)
GRANT to Barnes for a Recreation Ground	35,547	28,593	36,163	37,163	20,758	37,189	38,278	36,844	(319)
WOODHOUSE GARDENS	(2,435)	(2,480)	45	(3,147)	(2,201)	(2,669)	(3,241)	(3,428)	(281)
SUNDRIES	17,640	18,735	(1,095)	15,741	7,083	17,605	16,213	16,634	893
LANGTON ROAD	333	2,999	(2,666)	335	128	335	345	330	(5)
BADBURY HEIGHTS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SKATEPARK	1,421	15,023	(13,602)	1,445	87	1,445	1,488	1,100	(345)
RECREATION & AMENTIES	98,420	112,229	15,400	100,572	66,056	108,911	103,590	94,048	(6,524)
TABERNACLE TOILETS	1,672	661	1,011	1,483	302	1,654	1,528	1,135	(348)
CCTV / PLANTING & MARKETS	(1,330)	(7,328)	5,998	1,783	1,946	643	1,837	7,021	5,238
MARSH & HAM TOILETS	15,043	11,293	3,750	14,475	6,873	13,871	14,909	14,153	(322)
TOWN & GENERAL PURPOSES	15,385	4,627	10,758	17,741	9,121	16,168	18,273	22,309	4,568
Total	677,995	545,761	141,443	684,005	298,914	700,384	683,308	714,905	30,900

Plus Accounts Revenue Balance b/f 2023/24 65,290
Proposed Revenue Budget 2024/25 **649,615**

PROPOSED OVERALL BUDGET 2024/25 & PRECEPT RECOMMENDATION


	2024/25 Budget	2023/24 Budget
Net Revenue Costs	649,615	533,253
Standard Asset Replacement	28,000	38,998
R & A	15,500	15,000
T & G P	15,500	15,500
Corn Exchange (1105) Capital Project Replacement	10,000	55,000
Corn Exchange Project Development - (1115)	10,000	55,000
Corn Exchange Matchfunding	10,000	55,000
Corn Exchange Public Works Loan Board Repayments	100,000	0
Office Relocation, DC loss of income, storage	10,000	18,000
Election Costs	2,500	1,000
Grants Budget - Includes Green Grants (2x £500 per year)	6,000	11,000
Service Level Agreements - BSVB £1,500 / CA £5,000 / TIC £2,000 / Fashion Museum £2,500 / Town Museum £2,500 / TREADS £2,000 / Boxing Club £2,500 / Blandford Food Bank £5,000.	23,000	22,500
Youth Centre (subject to receipt of business plan and council approval)	0	0
Working Balance	0	5,000
	* 880,115	825,251
Less Government Grant from Dorset Council	0	0
	New Net 880,115	825,251

6.65%

New Basis

Increase over last Year

2024/25 equivalent Band D properties =	3,571.20	= Council Tax	£246.45	6.12%	£14.22
2023/24 equivalent Band D properties =	3,536.50	= Council Tax	£232.23		

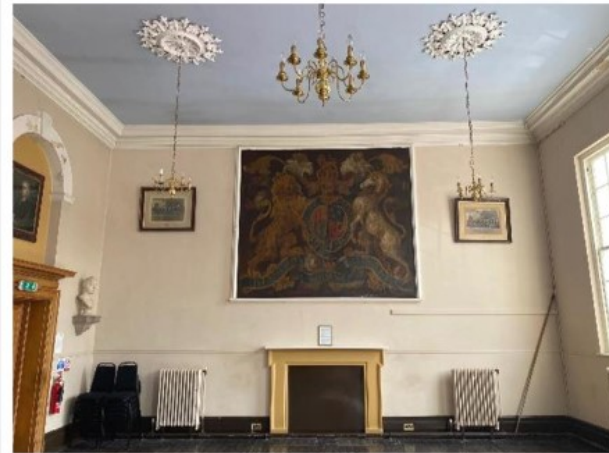


Blandford Forum Corn Exchange project: Report on community engagement and consultation

September 2023

Introduction

- This report provides part of an application to the PWLB for a loan to support the repair and alteration of the Blandford Forum Corn Exchange building.
- It provides information on how the community has been consulted thoroughly and extensively on the project over the last four years in addition to more historic consultation on earlier iterations of the project. It also provides information on how residents were consulted on the idea of borrowing and potentially increasing the precept in order to help fund a loan.
- Summary information is provided in chronological order outlining what consultation was undertaken alongside evidence of that consultation.



2000-2019

- The idea of a project to repair and alter the Corn Exchange building dates back to at least 2000 when issues with fabric condition, poor environmental performance and a lack of disabled access were starting to be acknowledged.
- Several attempts to develop and deliver a project to repair and alter the Corn Exchange were progressed since 2000 based on different levels of intervention and project cost.
- Each iteration of the project included community consultation and engagement with users and local residents via surveys, workshops and consultation events. Throughout this time the different proposals to repair and alter the Corn Exchange were well supported by the community.
- For various reasons none of these efforts came to fruition of reasons but it is important to reference them here as they demonstrate a long history of engagement and public support for the project that is proposed today.

Review and Summary of Customer Survey Results August 2009

Background

A questionnaire was developed to send to local voluntary organisations and other existing customers in order to get feedback from current users of the building. It was also designed to gauge requirements and their future use for a refurbished venue. The questionnaire purposely omitted comments rather than just fill the answers in order to get as much feedback from respondents as possible.

In total 152 questionnaires were sent out - 131 were posted and 21 were handed out to market visitors at the indoor market held on 28th July 2008. 66 questionnaires were returned representing a response rate of 55.52%. With this level of response we can be fairly certain that the answers received are a representative mix from our current customer base.


Having said that it should be borne in mind when considering the answers that due to the varied locations of the buildings our current customer usage is broken in terms of access and this has been obviously reflected in results. Comments due to the condition of the building and the historic building on offer are concentrated about being in need of work they do not need modern requirements that the response has around meeting the requirements of market visitors and the surrounding community.

Q.1 Just under 75% of those surveyed had visited at least one of the venues at the venue. The vast majority - 96% of those being the users of the Corn Exchange itself. The Corn Exchange received 75% of the buildings. Usage of the Town Hall and the Council Chamber was virtually non-existent - only only 5 and 3 bookings respectively.

Of the Corn Exchange buildings the most usage was for markets and fairs. This was in part due to the high return rate from the indoor market held on 28th July market and due to the fact that the primary usage for the market/fairs groups and organisations was the hall for their annual fundraising events. The usage for the Community Room reduced, around around meetings and classes in various buildings.

Q.2 Frequency of use - this question was designed to gauge how up to date users' experience was of the venue. 85% of respondents had used the venue in the last year and 64% in the last 6 months.

Q.3 Overall satisfaction levels were high - 57% were very satisfied, 30% fairly satisfied and 20% were satisfied. Only 5% of users were dissatisfied with the venue.



BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

PROPOSED MULTI-USE VENUE

CUSTOMER SURVEY

The Town Council is working towards providing the Town Hall and Corn Exchange into a multi-use venue.

We are committed to consulting with all current and potential users of the venue in order that the development proposals are progressed in an informed and inclusive manner.

As part of our research we are conducting a survey of past, present and, hopefully, future customers. By taking a few minutes to complete this questionnaire you will be helping us to understand your requirements more fully and to plan for the future accordingly.

We would be grateful if you could amend your address details in the box above if they are incorrect or incomplete. Any information you provide us will be treated in the strictest confidence.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO ASSIST US

NAME

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

Address Line 3

Postcode

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

PROPOSED MULTI-USE VENUE

Survey of local schools

Please return the completed questionnaire by 31/01/03

Q.2.9 In general, how is arts related work funded in your school? Please tick as many as apply

School fund	<input type="checkbox"/>	Voluntary parental contributions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Departmental funds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parents Association or PTA funds	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sponsorship or trust funds	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other (please specify)			

Q.2.10 Which of the following activities/services provided by the centre would you find useful? Please rank in order of priority - 1 being the most important

Information about arts events for children	<input type="checkbox"/>	Theatre space to hire	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workshops for schools in performing arts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Film hall to hire	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Venue based (HALL) days for teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	Literature events	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Performing arts during the day	<input type="checkbox"/>	Performing arts in the evening	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)			

Q.3 Please provide any other information or opinion that you feel may be useful

2019

- The current proposal for the Corn Exchange begun in 2019 when, following several previous unsuccessful attempts, Councillors resolved to take a fresh look at proposals to repair and alter the Corn Exchange. This was driven by recognition of ongoing issues of the building's poor condition, poor environmental performance and falling utilisation rates.
- The idea of re-starting a project was discussed publicly at Council Meetings and referenced in the 2018/19 Annual Town Council Report which marked this milestone explaining that the Council was procuring a design team to develop proposals for the Corn Exchange. The Parish Magazine is sent to all residents and posted online and has been used regularly to engage the community in the project.
- This marks the start of the project and sets an important precedent for engaging the community in its development which has continued throughout.



BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

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Chairman of Blandford Forum Town Council

Annual Report 2018/19

At the Town Assembly held on Monday 15th April 2019, in the Corn Exchange, the Chairman of Council, Cllr Roger Carter reported on some of the activities of the Town Council throughout 2018/19. Cllr Carter spoke about the precept, which is the amount of local tax residents pay to maintain the range of services and facilities the Town Council offers. For 2019/20 the Town Council has confirmed the precept at £794,744, which equates to an increase of 2.21 % on the previous precept. This is a below inflation rate figure and, for the average Band D property, this amounts to 0.09p per week. The precept, along with some revenue, maintains the properties and services the Town Council is responsible for (notably the Corn Exchange complex, the cemetery and its two chapels, Woodhouse Gardens and Pavilion, the majority of play areas around Blandford, the skate park, insurances and public toilets, just to name a few). The Town Council resolved to extend the service level agreements with the Blandford-based groups and organisations that enhance the lives of the residents of the town for a further three years as follows: the Fashion Museum (£2,000 a year); the Town Museum (£2,000 a year); the Information Centre (£2,000 a year); Treads (£4,000 a year); the Youth & Community Centre (£15,000 a year). It also has a service provision agreement with the Stour Valley Band of £1,500 a year. The Town Council continues to support the Leisure Centre at £50,000 a year and numerous smaller grants have been awarded throughout 2018/19.

Progress has been made with the Blandford Plus Neighbourhood Plan 2, working with Blandford St Mary and Bryanston Parish Councils. Consultations have been completed and the examination of the plan is expected to take place in Summer 2019.

In May 2018, Councillors appointed a new, local architect to formulate a plan for the repair and regeneration of the Corn Exchange, in close partnership with the Town Council, for which plans are currently being drawn up. The aims are not only to maintain a beautiful Grade I listed building for future generations, but to enhance its appeal as a venue for various activities. The Council has continued with day to day running of repairs and enhancements, following the cleaning and repair of the facade. A new AV screen and speaker system were introduced as well as replacement/repair of some of the flagstones in the Shambles and a new kitchen has been installed.

2020 - present

- Since 2020 the Corn Exchange project has been managed by a formally constituted sub-committee of the Town Council; the 'Corn Exchange Steering Group'.
- In order to maximise inclusiveness and representation all members of the Town Council are invited to attend these meetings (rather than delegating attendance to a small sample) and all meetings are completely open to the public to attend.
- Meetings take place at least quarterly and have done since the start of 2020 including during COVID when meetings switched to online.
- All meetings are advertised widely on noticeboards, the Council's website and via Social Media.
- The proposal to use the Council's borrowing powers has been discussed at these public meetings. In November 2021 the Town Council agreed in principle to the use a public works loan and in December 2022 the Town Council agreed to make an application in due course once more detail on the actual budget was available.

 **Blandford Forum Town Council** @BFTC_Blandford · Feb 21 ...

Please follow the link to view the agenda for the Corn Exchange meeting scheduled for Monday 27th February 2023 at 7:00pm in the Corn Exchange: blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk/wp-content/upl...

 **BLANDFORD FORUM
TOWN COUNCIL**

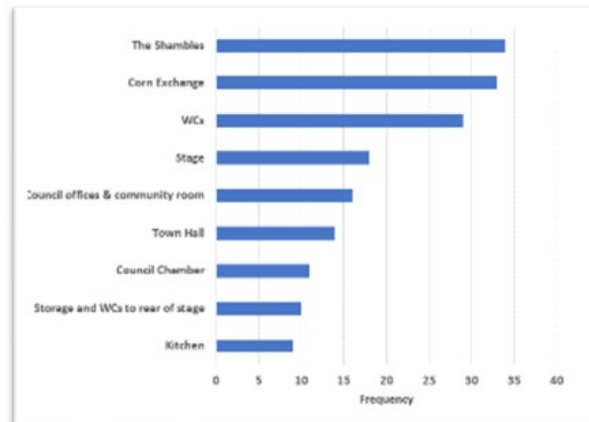
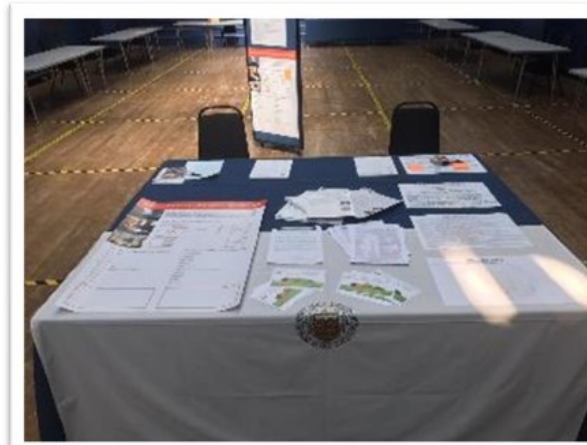
Corn Exchange Agenda

**The Corn Exchange Meeting
will be held on
Monday 27th February 2023
at 7:00pm in the Corn Exchange
and using Microsoft Teams.**



2020

- An important public consultation event on the project took place in September 2020 at the Blandford Community Expo, held in the Corn Exchange itself.
- The purpose of this consultation event, relatively early in the project development process, was to canvass the community on their general views of the building asking them what they liked and didn't like and about the spaces that they used. Information was also provided on early ideas for conservation and alterations.
- The response to the consultation was positive with lots of data provided that has helped to inform proposals.



Blandford Forum Corn Exchange & Town Hall

The Town Council, working with conservation specialists, is currently looking at how best to proceed with restoring the Corn Exchange and Town Hall. As we start this work we are keen to learn more about how the spaces are used. We would be grateful if you could spare a couple of minutes to tell us more about what you like and dislike about the building.

Which parts of the building have you been in?

Ground Floor

First Floor

What do you **like** about the building?

What do you **dislike** about the building?

Other:

2021

- Following on from the September 2020 physical consultation event at the annual Community Expo, a major online consultation exercise was held over the winter of 2020-2021
- The consultation was publicised online and via a more traditional press release
- The purpose of this consultation exercise was to engage the community in much more detail on their views on particular parts of the building and more specific issues relating to its condition, performance and utilisation
- The consultation exercise ran for several months and was well received with data helping to inform the proposals.

Community Consultation

Satisfaction: Various

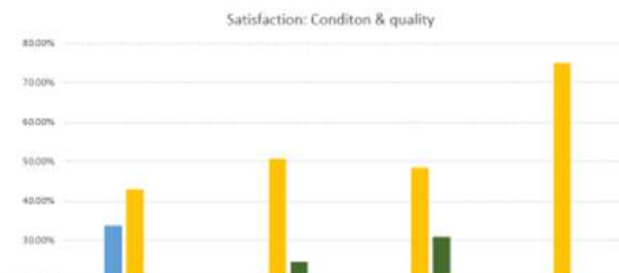
- Accessibility of Town Hall identified as issue of most significant concern
- Some dissatisfaction with levels of comfort of the Corn Exchange but this is balanced out by people being content



Community Consultation

Satisfaction: Condition & quality

- Stage and kitchen identified as particular issues with high dissatisfaction and low satisfaction
- However, some dissatisfaction with the WCs and back-stage areas

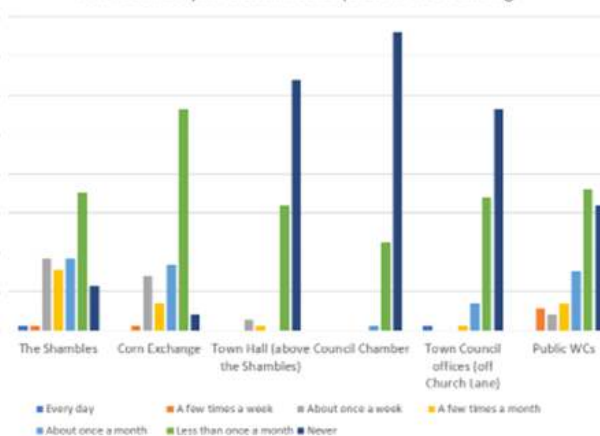


Community Consultation

Visits to different spaces

- Clearly highlights issues with Town Hall and Council Chamber
- The Shambles and Corn Exchange are the most frequently visited but the frequency is low
- Some dissatisfaction with the Corn Exchange but also good level of satisfaction

How often to you visit different parts of the building



2022

- In 2022 design work on proposals for the Corn Exchange was well underway. In order to inform the design work and help to mitigate the risk of unforeseen issues arising later in the project various intrusive surveys were undertaken to understand more about the building.
- In some cases where modern panelling was being removed, historic interior decoration was revealed.
- These surveys presented a great opportunity to engage the community in the design process and the history of the building and so were widely publicised online and via social media. Panels were also left off to allow visitors to the building to see historic decorative schemes themselves.



Blandford Forum Town Council @BFTC_Blandford · Apr 28, 2022

After removing sections of the panelling in the Corn Exchange, we have discovered the majority of the Victorian Faience Tiling was still in place and mostly in very good condition. Please visit blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk/corn-exchange for information.



5



21



2022

- Following on from the publicity about the survey work, a press release was issued and an article written in the June 2022 Parish Magazine providing a general update on project progress and appealing for images and information on the interior decorative scheme.
- The press release was issued to local media and the article was placed in the Parish Magazine which is sent to all residents and posted online.

Rare glimpse into the original Corn Exchange interior

As more detailed work takes place on proposals to repair and improve the Corn Exchange, some of the low-level modern plywood panelling has been removed and offered a rare glimpse of the original decorative scheme.

As part of the project, emerging proposals seek to repair and restore some of the original historic features of the building and bring back some of the original beauty of this fantastic building. As part of this, the team behind the project were keen to understand what was behind the plywood panelling that runs all the way around the walls of the Corn Exchange, how much of the original tiled scheme remains and what condition it is in having only seen tantalising glimpses behind the radiator vents and two historic photographs.

The maintenance team at the Town Council carefully removed a series of demountable panels and the design team visited a few weeks ago to inspect. Everyone was thrilled to see that the majority of the Victorian Faience Tiling was still in place and mostly in very good condition. The tiles were a beautiful combination of earthy greens, browns and reds with repeating patterns and panels. The uncovering also revealed two large fireplaces either side of the hall though sadly the surrounds have been removed and the fireplaces blocked up. Perhaps most exciting and intriguing is a repeating tile showing a female portrait in relief which we hope to find out more about in the future.

The conclusion of the exercise suggests that there is a high-quality interior scheme behind the panelling and that it is largely in-tact. Whilst uncovering will bring back some of the history and beauty of the space it could also create challenges with acoustics that will need to be carefully considered and addressed to make sure the Corn Exchange is fully fit for purpose.

Building on this exercise, the Town Council is keen to collate any historic images of the interior of the Corn Exchange and other parts of the building that people may have. The team behind the project want to understand more about previous decorative schemes and, in particular, the design of the fireplaces which were removed many years ago. If you have any images from parties, pantos, events or any other activity within the Corn Exchange from pre-1973 we would love to hear from you, so please get in touch via admin@blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk.



Blandford Forum Corn Exchange

PRESS RELEASE: April 2022

For local websites, newspapers and newsletters

"Rare glimpse into the original Corn Exchange interior"

Work takes place on proposals to repair and improve the Corn Exchange, some of the plywood panelling has been removed and offered a rare glimpse of the original decorative scheme.

Next, emerging proposals seek to repair and restore some of the original historic features and bring back some of the original beauty of this fantastic building. As part of the project, the team were keen to understand what was behind the plywood panelling that runs all the way around the walls of the Corn Exchange, how much of the original tiled scheme remains and what condition it is in having only seen tantalising glimpses behind the radiator vents and two historic photographs.

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The team would also like to thank all those who attended the Community Expo in March, where exhibition panels that explained more about proposals for the Corn Exchange were on display. It was great to see people taking an interest and engaging with the Council.

-Ends-

Images provided

2022


- Following on from the success of the consultation event at the 2020 Community Expo the 2022 Expo was used as an opportunity to launch the emerging proposals for the building based on previous consultation and engagement.
- Several large exhibition boards were produced and erected in the Corn Exchange with detailed information on the emerging designs and the process going forward.
- In particular panels sought to illustrate proposals and explain the main changes and how they relate back to community feedback.
- The exhibition was well received and remained in place on public display for several months after the Expo event.

Blandford Forum Corn Exchange & Town Hall

What is going to happen to the Corn Exchange?

Over the last couple of years, the Council has been working with heritage specialists to develop a deliverable project at the Corn Exchange. Recognising that there has been a long history of proposals over the years that have not come to fruition for a variety of reasons, the Council has decided to commission a specialist to undertake an in-depth and detailed feasibility study. The Council has also asked the local community for their thoughts on how the Corn Exchange could be improved and their thoughts have fed into the proposals where possible.

Initial concept plan



The project will:

- Provide a new disabled access to the Town Hall and Council Chamber for the first time in a long time.
- Deliver a comprehensive scheme of repairs throughout the building.
- Install new infrastructure such as roof access to allow us to care for the building more easily in the future.
- Provide new toilets, including an accessible WC.
- Remove some of the less desirable aspects and reveal some of the beautiful historic fabric of the building.
- Improve the security and temperature control in the Corn Exchange to make it better for users and audiences.
- Improve the stage so it more suits the 21st century.
- Provide a new kitchen facilities.
- Ensure the building is ready to receive the new theatre company.
- Ensure that all areas are accessible by all, including those with disabilities.

Blandford Forum Corn Exchange & Town Hall

Why bother?

It is clear that the Corn Exchange needs extensive works in a number of areas, the majority of the building requires significant structural work, a study has been carried out to assess the building. It is also clear that the building needs upgrading in places, for example providing better disabled access and improving the heating system, better security and facilities for public services. The large repairs are put off the more expensive they will eventually be and the longer we put off upgrading the more and more people will come away from the building as it is no longer meeting their needs. The Council has also a duty to ensure the building is a safe place for the community and the public. We also have a duty to ensure the building is a safe place for the community and the public. We also have a duty to ensure the building is a safe place for the community and the public.

How long will this all take?

Proposals for this scheme are being developed in a phased approach and the building is expected to be completed in the summer of 2024. It is likely that the building will be open to the public in the summer of 2024. It is likely that the building will be open to the public in the summer of 2024. It is likely that the building will be open to the public in the summer of 2024.

What about activities that take place in the Corn Exchange?

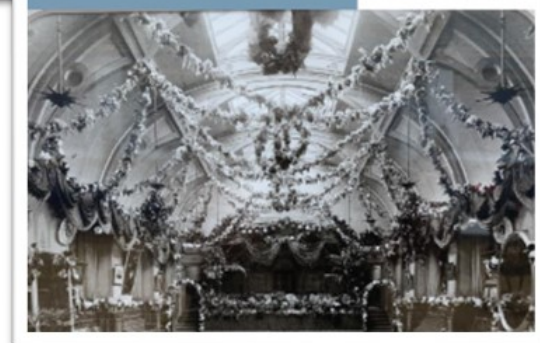
When we have a clearer idea about the timetable for the works, we will be able to tell you more about the activities that will be taking place in the building. We will be able to tell you more about the activities that will be taking place in the building. We will be able to tell you more about the activities that will be taking place in the building.

How is the project being paid for?

The Council will be using a combination of funding from the local authority and the private sector. The Council will be using a combination of funding from the local authority and the private sector. The Council will be using a combination of funding from the local authority and the private sector.







What about the Town Council?

The Town Council will continue to support the project and will be involved in the decision making process. The Town Council will continue to support the project and will be involved in the decision making process. The Town Council will continue to support the project and will be involved in the decision making process.



2022/23

- During 2022 and 2023 as the designs for the project were developing more detailed engagement sessions were held with key building users and stakeholders such as Arts Reach, local groups and Historic England. This programme of engagement was designed to ensure that proposals reflected detailed user feedback and need to ensure the scheme was ultimately fit for purpose.

JOIN OUR MAILING LIST DONATE ARTS AWARD     SEARCH 

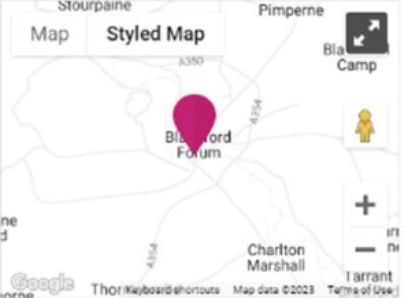

HOME WHAT'S ON PROJECTS NEWS ABOUT SUPPORT

What's On Venues

Blandford Corn Exchange

Blandford Forum

Blandford Forum is located to the north east of Dorchester and to the north west of Wimborne. Roads leading to the town include A350, A354, B3082. Car parks in the town are free after 6.00pm and on Sundays.



blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk/the-corn-exchange

✓ Disabled Access

✓ Disabled Toilets

17 Market Place,
Blandford Forum,
West Dorset,
DT11 7AG

2023

- In January 2023 the Planning Application and Listed Building Consent application for the project were submitted to Dorset Council.
- To mark this milestone and promote feedback on the proposals a press release was issued and the Town Council publicised the submission via its social media account including information on how to comment. This publicity was in addition to the traditional statutory consultation process of neighbour notifications and the placing of public notices.

Blandford Forum Corn Exchange

PRESS RELEASE: January 2023

For local websites, newspapers and newsletters

Planning application for Corn Exchange submitted

The planning application for making changes that will breathe new life into the Corn Exchange has been submitted and is now being assessed by Dorset Council.

The historic community building and home of the Town Council has long been recognised as in need of repairs and updating. Important parts of the building such as the main Corn Exchange space don't perform as they should and users are put off by poor access, heating, lighting, acoustics, and a lack of back of house facilities. In addition, the first floor of the building which contains some of the most historically significant and beautiful spaces such as the Town Hall room, does not have equal access which effectively cuts them off from a whole section of the local community. More recently the building has been subject to vandalism and parts of the roof coverings have started instances of water ingress.

The project which is the subject of the Planning Application will restore and revive the building and in so doing breathe new life into the historic town centre for generations.

Responding to community feedback, the project will provide equal access to the rooms for the first time in the building's 300-year history and the project will transform the Corn Exchange into a warm, functional, flexible community venue. Responding to a report, the Corn Exchange will be sensitively repaired to reveal the beautiful history that lies beneath and restore a sense of pride to the main civic building in Blandford.

The project will re-model the lobby area to provide new WCs including an accessible toilet, a light, airy stairwell that welcomes people into the building. Environmental improvements will be made to the heart of the scheme which will incorporate PV cells where it can as well as improve energy and thermal performance throughout.

The scheme hopes to give the Corn Exchange a new lease of life for the next 300 years.

Further updates on progress will be posted on the Town Council website in due course.

-Ends-



Blandford Forum Town Council @BFTC_Blandford · Jan 24

📢 The planning application for making changes that will breathe new life into the Corn Exchange has been submitted and is now being assessed by Dorset Council. For more information please visit: blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk/corn-exchange



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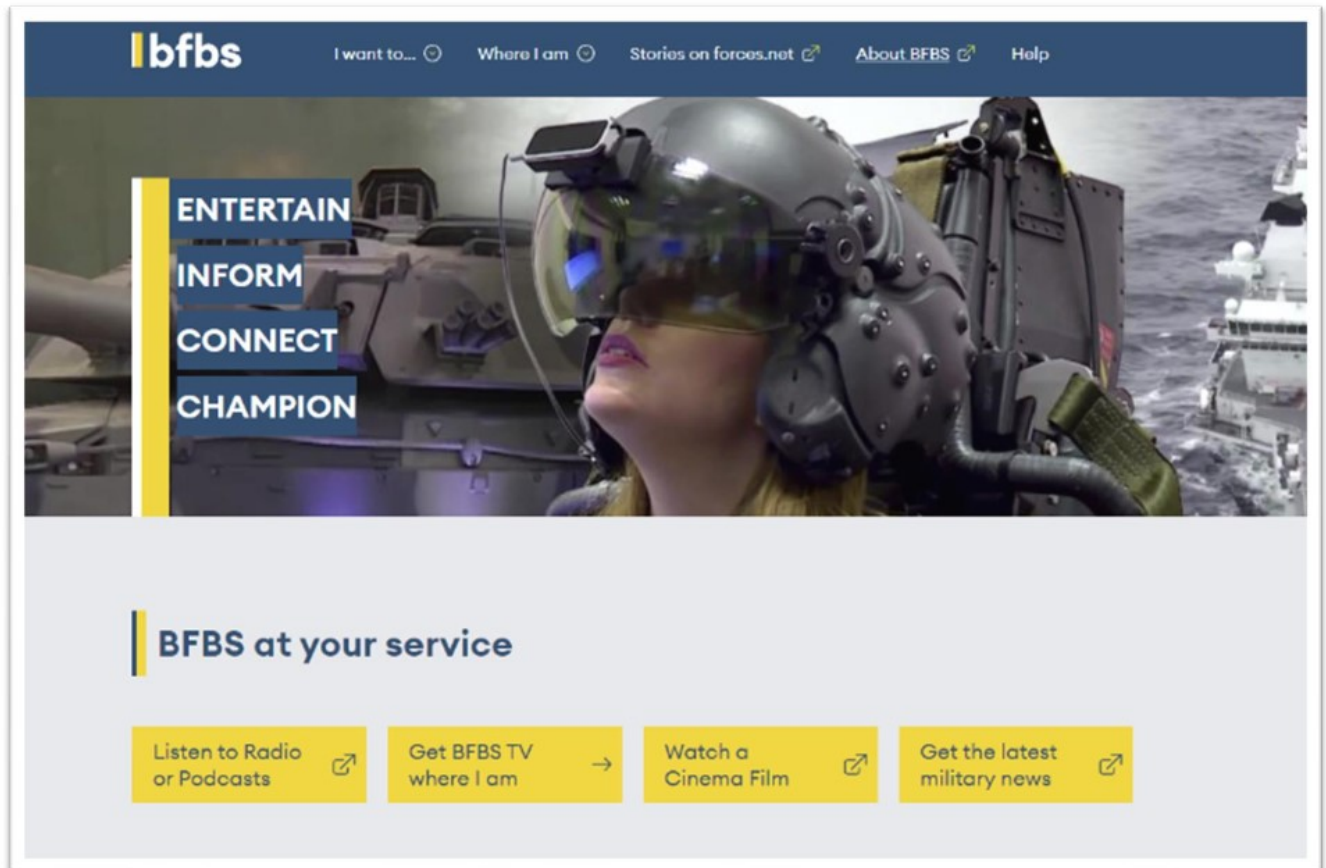


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2023

- In February 2023 the project was invited to participate in an interview on the local radio Drive Time show
- The purpose of the interview was to promote the project, explain why the project is being proposed and highlight some of the major changes
- The interview was also a useful opportunity to publicise the submission of the Planning Application and encourage community feedback.
- The interview was a success and received positive feedback.



2023

- In March 2023 the Blandford Community Expo was once again used as an opportunity to undertake community consultation and engagement.
- Updated exhibition panels were prepared which illustrated proposals in more detail and described the timetable for the project in the future.
- The event was widely publicised including on social media and well attended by the community. The project received support and positive feedback.



Blandford Forum Town Council @BFTC_Blandford · Mar 24

👏 We are looking forward to the Community Expo tomorrow at 10am in the Corn Exchange! More information can be found here: fb.me/e/7A59tzl97



COMMUNITY EXPO

SATURDAY 25TH MARCH

- 10am-1pm
- Corn Exchange, Market Place

COME ALONG TO FIND OUT WHAT LOCAL GROUPS IN YOUR AREA HAVE TO OFFER AND HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED!

MORE INFO

For more information please contact us
Telephone: 01258 454500
Email: admin@blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk

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2023

- Following several unsuccessful attempts to secure a major grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund it became clear in 2023 that the Council would in all likelihood need to apply to the PWLB to borrow funds to help pay for the project. This had been discussed previously in principle but the outcome of the process with the Heritage Fund meant that discussions did not progress into detail.
- In response to the specific requirements regarding consulting on borrowing and possible increases to the precept, a major online consultation event was launched in May 2023 which ran for a month (and was extended into July to help promote a bigger response rate).
- The consultation demonstrated strong support for borrowing to help fund the project and support for a possible modest increase in the precept, if that was necessary.

Blandford Forum Corn Exchange

Over the last few years Blandford Forum Town Council has been working on proposals to repair, conserve and upgrade the Town Hall/Corn Exchange complex. Proposals are based on the results of previous public consultation, engagement with users and stakeholders and input from industry specialists. Several proposals have been put forward for the building over the last three decades as a result of its deteriorating condition, but sadly none have come to fruition. The scheme being developed now is the most deliverable and enjoys significant support from the Council and wider community. A planning application has been submitted and it is hoped that work will begin soon. Whilst work on the scheme has been going on, the Council has sought to raise funding from grant making organisations to help pay for the project and has had some success; but these funds in addition to the Council reserves will not be sufficient to cover the total cost of the project. The Council therefore proposes to apply for a loan from the Public Works Loan Board to make up the difference.

1. Where do you live? *

- ☐ Within Blandford Forum (Parish)
- ☐ Outside Blandford Forum (Parish)
- ☐ I'd rather not say



Blandford Forum Town Council @BFTC_Blandford · Jun 1

Whilst we await the outcome of the planning application, the Town Council is carrying out another public consultation to gauge how residents feel about usage of the building, the condition it is in and financing the project.



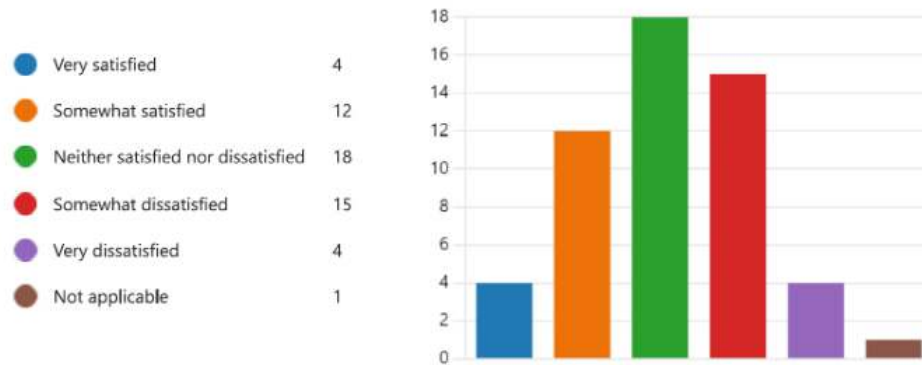
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Blandford Forum Town Council @BFTC_Blandford · Jun 1

We would really appreciate you taking the time to complete the short survey by typing the following into your search bar: forms.office.com/e/5zA6HYarQb by 10th July 2023. Hard copies are also available from the office.

4. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the building facilities



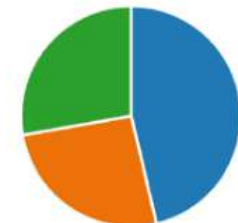
5. In response to the poor condition of the building and the results of public consultation, the Town Council has been working on proposals for the last few years to repair and upgrade the Corn Exchange. Do you support proposals to repair and upgrade the building?



6. On the basis that the Town Council precept (Council tax) does NOT increase as a result, are you happy for the Town Council to apply to the government's Public Works Loan Board to help pay for the project?



7. If it meant that the Council could deliver particular parts of the project such as improved environmental sustainability, better heating and cooling in the Corn Exchange and improved accessibility, for example, would you be happy if there was a modest increase in the precept in order to help pay back the loan?



Appendix F



United Kingdom
Debt Management
Office

PWLB FIXED RATE LOANS
ESTIMATED REPAYMENT COSTS

Amount of Advance: 1,300,000.00

Period (years)	Annuity			EIP			
	Rate	½ Yearly	Total	Rate	Initial ½ Yearly	Reduces by	Total
	%	Cost (£)	Cost (£)	%	Costs (£)	each ½ year (£)	Cost (£)
1 year	-	0.00	0.00	-	0.00	0.00	0.00
Over 1 not over 1½	-	0.00	0.00	-	0.00	0.00	0.00
Over 1½ not over 2	5.61	348,105.79	1,392,423.16	5.61	361,465.00	9,116.25	1,391,162.50
Over 2 not over 2½	5.53	281,959.03	1,409,795.15	5.53	295,945.00	7,189.00	1,407,835.00
Over 2½ not over 3	5.46	237,833.63	1,427,001.78	5.46	252,156.67	5,915.00	1,424,215.00
Over 3 not over 3½	5.39	206,266.37	1,443,864.59	5.40	220,814.29	5,014.29	1,440,400.00
Over 3½ not over 4	5.32	182,546.55	1,460,372.40	5.33	197,145.00	4,330.63	1,455,902.50
Over 4 not over 4½	5.27	164,134.34	1,477,209.06	5.28	178,764.44	3,813.33	1,471,600.00
Over 4½ not over 5	5.21	149,343.43	1,493,434.30	5.22	163,930.00	3,393.00	1,486,615.00
Over 5 not over 5½	5.16	137,252.03	1,509,772.33	5.18	151,851.82	3,060.91	1,502,020.00
Over 5½ not over 6	5.11	127,155.68	1,525,868.16	5.13	141,678.33	2,778.75	1,516,742.50
Over 6 not over 6½	5.07	118,631.88	1,542,214.44	5.09	133,085.00	2,545.00	1,531,595.00
Over 6½ not over 7	5.04	111,351.58	1,558,922.12	5.05	125,682.14	2,344.64	1,546,187.50
Over 7 not over 7½	5.00	104,996.39	1,574,945.85	5.02	119,296.67	2,175.33	1,561,040.00
Over 7½ not over 8	4.97	99,462.48	1,591,399.68	4.99	113,685.00	2,027.19	1,575,697.50
Over 8 not over 8½	4.95	94,611.76	1,608,399.92	4.97	108,775.59	1,900.29	1,590,745.00
Over 8½ not over 9	4.93	90,298.01	1,625,364.18	4.94	104,332.22	1,783.89	1,605,045.00
Over 9 not over 9½	4.91	86,436.29	1,642,289.51	4.93	100,466.05	1,686.58	1,620,450.00
Over 9½ not over 10	4.90	82,997.91	1,659,958.20	4.91	96,915.00	1,595.75	1,635,107.50
Over 10 not over 10½	4.89	79,888.91	1,677,667.11	4.90	93,754.76	1,516.67	1,650,350.00
Over 10½ not over 11	4.89	77,103.93	1,696,286.46	4.89	90,875.91	1,444.77	1,665,527.50
Over 11 not over 11½	4.88	74,526.71	1,714,114.33	4.89	88,306.74	1,381.96	1,681,420.00
Over 11½ not over 12	4.89	72,245.74	1,733,897.76	4.88	85,886.67	1,321.67	1,696,500.00
Over 12 not over 12½	4.89	70,115.57	1,752,889.25	4.88	83,720.00	1,268.80	1,712,360.00
Over 12½ not over 13	4.90	68,194.43	1,773,055.18	4.89	81,785.00	1,222.50	1,729,097.50
Over 13 not over 13½	4.91	66,423.57	1,793,436.39	4.89	79,933.15	1,177.22	1,744,990.00
Over 13½ not over 14	4.93	64,827.80	1,815,178.40	4.90	78,278.57	1,137.50	1,761,825.00
Over 14 not over 14½	4.94	63,311.75	1,836,040.75	4.91	76,742.59	1,100.52	1,778,725.00
Over 14½ not over 15	4.96	61,945.42	1,858,362.60	4.92	75,313.33	1,066.00	1,795,690.00
Over 15 not over 15½	4.97	60,635.90	1,879,712.90	4.93	73,980.48	1,033.71	1,812,720.00
Over 15½ not over 16	4.99	59,456.97	1,902,623.04	4.94	72,735.00	1,003.44	1,829,815.00
Over 16 not over 16½	5.01	58,359.27	1,925,855.91	4.96	71,633.94	976.97	1,848,080.00
Over 16½ not over 17	5.03	57,335.69	1,949,413.46	4.97	70,540.29	950.15	1,865,337.50
Over 17 not over 17½	5.06	56,422.57	1,974,789.95	4.99	69,577.86	926.71	1,883,830.00
Over 17½ not over 18	5.08	55,529.38	1,999,057.68	5.00	68,611.11	902.78	1,901,250.00
Over 18 not over 18½	5.10	54,693.49	2,023,659.13	5.02	67,765.14	881.89	1,919,970.00
Over 18½ not over 19	5.12	53,910.43	2,048,596.34	5.04	66,970.53	862.11	1,938,820.00

Period (years)	Annuity			EIP			
	Rate	½ Yearly	Total	Rate	Initial ½ Yearly	Reduces by	Total
	%	Cost (£)	Cost (£)	%	Costs (£)	each ½ year (£)	Cost (£)
Over 19 not over 19½	5.14	53,176.22	2,073,872.58	5.05	66,158.33	841.67	1,956,500.00
Over 19½ not over 20	5.17	52,531.16	2,101,246.40	5.07	65,455.00	823.88	1,975,577.50
Over 20 not over 20½	5.19	51,884.43	2,127,261.63	5.09	64,792.32	806.95	1,994,785.00
Over 20½ not over 21	5.21	51,276.75	2,153,623.50	5.11	64,167.38	790.83	2,014,122.50
Over 21 not over 21½	5.23	50,705.45	2,180,334.35	5.12	63,512.56	773.95	2,032,160.00
Over 21½ not over 22	5.26	50,213.10	2,209,376.40	5.14	62,955.45	759.32	2,051,725.00
Over 22 not over 22½	5.28	49,707.75	2,236,848.75	5.16	62,428.89	745.33	2,071,420.00
Over 22½ not over 23	5.30	49,232.12	2,264,677.52	5.18	61,930.87	731.96	2,091,245.00
Over 23 not over 23½	5.32	48,784.35	2,292,864.45	5.19	61,394.57	717.77	2,109,640.00
Over 23½ not over 24	5.34	48,362.74	2,321,411.52	5.21	60,948.33	705.52	2,129,692.50
Over 24 not over 24½	5.35	47,919.39	2,348,050.11	5.23	60,525.61	693.78	2,149,875.00
Over 24½ not over 25	5.37	47,545.29	2,377,264.50	5.24	60,060.00	681.20	2,168,530.00
Over 25 not over 25½	5.39	47,193.04	2,406,845.04	5.26	59,680.20	670.39	2,188,940.00
Over 25½ not over 26	5.41	46,861.42	2,436,793.84	5.28	59,320.00	660.00	2,209,480.00
Over 26 not over 26½	5.42	46,501.86	2,464,598.58	5.29	58,913.30	648.77	2,228,395.00
Over 26½ not over 27	5.44	46,207.90	2,495,226.60	5.31	58,589.07	639.17	2,249,162.50
Over 27 not over 27½	5.45	45,883.47	2,523,590.85	5.32	58,216.36	628.73	2,268,240.00
Over 27½ not over 28	5.46	45,575.08	2,552,204.48	5.34	57,924.29	619.82	2,289,235.00
Over 28 not over 28½	5.48	45,330.33	2,583,828.81	5.35	57,582.02	610.09	2,308,475.00
Over 28½ not over 29	5.49	45,051.81	2,613,004.98	5.36	57,253.79	600.69	2,327,780.00
Over 29 not over 29½	5.50	44,786.99	2,642,432.41	5.38	57,003.90	592.71	2,349,100.00
Over 29½ not over 30	5.51	44,535.18	2,672,110.80	5.39	56,701.67	583.92	2,368,567.50
Over 30 not over 30½	5.52	44,295.74	2,702,040.14	5.40	56,411.48	575.41	2,388,100.00
Over 30½ not over 31	5.53	44,068.07	2,732,220.34	5.41	56,132.74	567.18	2,407,697.50
Over 31 not over 31½	5.53	43,801.73	2,759,508.99	5.42	55,864.92	559.21	2,427,360.00
Over 31½ not over 32	5.54	43,595.72	2,790,126.08	5.43	55,607.50	551.48	2,447,087.50
Over 32 not over 32½	5.55	43,399.91	2,820,994.15	5.44	55,360.00	544.00	2,466,880.00
Over 32½ not over 33	5.55	43,163.27	2,848,775.82	5.45	55,121.97	536.74	2,486,737.50
Over 33 not over 33½	5.56	42,986.24	2,880,078.08	5.46	54,892.99	529.70	2,506,660.00
Over 33½ not over 34	5.56	42,767.11	2,908,163.48	5.47	54,672.65	522.87	2,526,647.50
Over 34 not over 34½	5.57	42,607.23	2,939,898.87	5.48	54,460.58	516.23	2,546,700.00
Over 34½ not over 35	5.57	42,404.06	2,968,284.20	5.49	54,256.43	509.79	2,566,817.50
Over 35 not over 35½	5.58	42,259.86	3,000,450.06	5.49	53,994.86	502.61	2,584,660.00
Over 35½ not over 36	5.58	42,071.27	3,029,131.44	5.50	53,805.56	496.53	2,604,875.00
Over 36 not over 36½	5.58	41,889.41	3,057,926.93	5.51	53,623.22	490.62	2,625,155.00
Over 36½ not over 37	5.58	41,713.99	3,086,835.26	5.51	53,382.57	483.99	2,643,062.50
Over 37 not over 37½	5.59	41,597.16	3,119,787.00	5.52	53,213.33	478.40	2,663,440.00
Over 37½ not over 38	5.59	41,434.01	3,148,984.76	5.53	53,050.26	472.96	2,683,882.50
Over 38 not over 38½	5.59	41,276.51	3,178,291.27	5.53	52,828.12	466.82	2,701,855.00
Over 38½ not over 39	5.59	41,124.44	3,207,706.32	5.54	52,676.67	461.67	2,722,395.00
Over 39 not over 39½	5.59	40,977.58	3,237,228.82	5.54	52,465.70	455.82	2,740,400.00
Over 39½ not over 40	5.59	40,835.71	3,266,856.80	5.55	52,325.00	450.94	2,761,037.50
Over 40 not over 40½	5.59	40,698.64	3,296,589.84	5.55	52,124.38	445.37	2,779,075.00
Over 40½ not over 41	5.59	40,566.17	3,326,425.94	5.55	51,928.66	439.94	2,797,112.50
Over 41 not over 41½	5.59	40,438.14	3,356,365.62	5.56	51,802.65	435.42	2,817,880.00

Period (years)	Annuity			EIP			
	Rate %	½ Yearly Cost (£)	Total Cost (£)	Rate %	Initial ½ Yearly Costs (£)	Reduces by each ½ year (£)	Total Cost (£)
Over 41½ not over 42	5.59	40,314.35	3,386,405.40	5.56	51,616.19	430.24	2,835,950.00
Over 42 not over 42½	5.59	40,194.66	3,416,546.10	5.57	51,499.12	425.94	2,856,815.00
Over 42½ not over 43	5.59	40,078.90	3,446,785.40	5.57	51,321.28	420.99	2,874,917.50
Over 43 not over 43½	5.59	39,966.93	3,477,122.91	5.57	51,147.53	416.15	2,893,020.00
Over 43½ not over 44	5.59	39,858.60	3,507,556.80	5.57	50,977.73	411.42	2,911,122.50
Over 44 not over 44½	5.59	39,753.78	3,538,086.42	5.58	50,876.74	407.53	2,932,150.00
Over 44½ not over 45	5.58	39,597.26	3,563,753.40	5.58	50,714.44	403.00	2,950,285.00
Over 45 not over 45½	5.58	39,498.91	3,594,400.81	5.58	50,555.71	398.57	2,968,420.00
Over 45½ not over 46	5.58	39,403.70	3,625,140.40	5.58	50,400.43	394.24	2,986,555.00
Over 46 not over 46½	5.58	39,311.51	3,655,970.43	5.58	50,248.49	390.00	3,004,690.00
Over 46½ not over 47	5.58	39,222.24	3,686,890.56	5.58	50,099.79	385.85	3,022,825.00
Over 47 not over 47½	5.58	39,135.77	3,717,898.15	5.59	50,019.21	382.47	3,044,080.00
Over 47½ not over 48	5.57	38,996.04	3,743,619.84	5.59	49,876.67	378.49	3,062,247.50
Over 48 not over 48½	5.57	38,914.75	3,774,730.75	5.59	49,737.06	374.59	3,080,415.00
Over 48½ not over 49	5.57	38,835.99	3,805,927.02	5.59	49,600.31	370.77	3,098,582.50
Over 49 not over 49½	5.57	38,759.68	3,837,208.32	5.59	49,466.31	367.02	3,116,750.00
Over 49½ not over 50	5.56	38,629.17	3,862,917.00	5.59	49,335.00	363.35	3,134,917.50

Note: 1. If a borrower wishes to make a premature repayment of a loan, either in whole or in part, it should contact the Board giving full details beforehand. The Board will usually agree to accept this request but it should be noted that a premium will be payable when the interest rate on the loan to be repaid is higher than the current rate applying to the premature repayment of a loan repayable by the same method and over the same period as that remaining on the loan which it is proposed to repay. When the interest rate on the loan to be repaid is lower than the current rate applying to the premature repayment, a discount will be allowed.