

## Portfolio Holder Briefing

### Active and Healthy People– September 2020

#### Leisure Services

- Following Council decision to insource the Leisure Service on 21st July, a project group was formed with key individuals and teams from HR, Legal, Finance, Communications, Environmental Health, Estates and STRATA to lead on specific elements of this complex project.
- The task to effect the transfer by 1st September is a challenging one given the incredibly tight timescales and within the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, all work streams have progressed well and to date, all essential milestones have been met.
- Legal expertise was commissioned to advise on the settlement agreement with Parkwood; the transfer of staff into the Council and the branding of the new service.
- Assistance has also been commissioned from leisure health and safety experts who are advising on COVID secure operations of buildings; the activities within them and the training of staff.
- Design and marketing experts have been employed to create a new brand for the centres to mark the significance of the transfer and the new “best in breed” product we wish to offer.
- A raft of buildings, contents, public liability and business continuity insurance policies have been secured and expert VAT accounts are assisting in the development of financial strategies to ensure best value.
- Cloud based Customer Management System (Legend) has been commissioned including a payment and on-line booking system.
- Technical expertise has been commissioned to undertake assessments of each of the six centres from a building and mechanical and engineering perspective with specialist ventilation experts employed to assess the current air flow performance of each centre and to advise on mitigation actions to ensure that each centre meets the new COVID 19 ventilation standards
- A dedicated STRATA Project Manager has been employed to oversee all other ICT needs which includes: broadband and hardware for each site; agile and flexible working ICT equipment for key staff; setting up staff email accounts and access to the Global Desk Top.

#### Settlement Agreement

- Following protracted negotiations the termination of the Parkwood contract and the signing of the settlement agreement was completed on 31st August. This has delivered a reduction from the C£1m requested by Parkwood to a final figure of £355,012 (£100,397 of which has already been paid in management fees and utility costs resulting in a final payment of £254,614). This was £18,000 more than assessed at the time of the committee report in July 2020.

#### Transfer of Staff

- The transfer of staff took place successfully at mid night on 31st August following a formal consultation process as required under TUPE regulations. This included Zoom consultations with staff representatives on a series of intended measures, the production of a Q&A briefing and individual letters to transferring staff.
- 168 individuals have now transferred to the Council. There are 94 people on permanent contracts: 42 are full time and 52 are part time. There are 3 apprentices. 74 people are on casual contracts.
- Total gross salary cost is estimated to be £1,159,629 which is £4,29,416 less than anticipated in the underlying business case (based on 18/19 audited accounts) which is a positive outcome for the income and expenditure projections.
- 166 of these staff are on furlough through the Job Retention Scheme through which we anticipate drawing down funding from the Job Retention Scheme towards the September salary costs. Six Managers were bought back from furlough on 8th September to undertake their new employee induction and to assist in the Centre re-opening.

#### Leisure Centres

- Full inventories of fixtures and fittings for each centre have been completed.
- Detailed COVID 19 and health safety risk assessments have been completed for each centre along with detailed COVID 19 secure plans which include mitigation plans to resolve ventilation risks (siting of carbon monoxide monitors, additional air circulation fans; manual ventilation plans for windows and doors); safe

routes through each building and activity area; signage and sanitiser maps; legionella flushing; water testing; equipment and environmental deep cleansing regimes; social distancing measure and staff training.

- Leisure centre roles have been mapped to the Councils Corporate COVID 19 role risk assessments and these will govern the allocation of PPE and COVID training for all staff.

#### **Marketing, Branding and Communications**

An exciting branding, marketing and communications strategy has been devised with a membership offer aimed at giving us the best chance of retaining existing members, thanking them for their loyalty and introducing “good will” from the outset for existing and new members.

- Free membership for all existing members between September and December 2020.
- A new membership offer opening on 12<sup>th</sup> October of £15 per month from October to December with the aim of generating 1,000 new memberships.
- We anticipate reverting to a £25-£36 a month full membership from January 2021 with a range of incentives and offers building up to the re-opening of Riverside Swimming Pool and Health Spa and the launch of St Sidwell’s Point in July 2021

For the time being there will not be any pay as you go options: it will be a membership only option to help with the partial VAT exemption issue which is still under exploration by our expert accountants.

#### **Leisure Centre re-opening plan**

The above work has enabled us to now set dates for re-opening. There are still some unknowns in relation to the Pyramids swimming pool and Riverside gym which are still being assessed however we are pretty confident that the following is now achievable. We anticipate the direct costs of re-opening each centre are in the region of £10k-£15k which should come within the agreed budget.

28th Sep	-	ISCA Centre & Exeter Arena
5th Oct	-	Wonford Sports Centre & Northbrook Swimming Pool
12th Oct	-	Pyramids Swimming Pool & Riverside dry-side

### **St Sidwell’s Point Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre Build**

Please note: This is a ‘point in time’ briefing note on matters as understood / expected as at 11<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

#### **Progress**

- By the end of February 2020 there were over 120 operatives working on site on a daily basis. There were three cranes in operation on site (one tower and two mobile cranes), and a mobile concrete boom distributing the concrete across the frame. Site operations were circa 7am until 8pm five days a week, and Saturday morning working was also in place. The concrete frame contractor alone had over 70 operatives on site.
- Once the restrictions were announced in relation to Covid19, the site operations were greatly reduced. From late March to mid-April 2020, there were circa 20 operatives on site on a daily basis, and only one crane was in use.
- With constant review of site logistics, operations and welfare facilities, the number of operatives on site increased to 60+ in May and now circa 80+ since mid-June. The original programme for the project (pre-Covid 19) would have had over 200 operatives on site per day at this time (September 2020).
- There are now three cranes operational on site again.
- Due to the current Covid19 restrictions in place and the measures adopted to address the restrictions, one of the main factors previously limiting resource on site was the capacity of the welfare facilities. Kier have now installed a marquee on the lower apron of the bus station which has increased the capacity for operatives to safely have food breaks, rest, etc. In addition, the team changed the existing toilet configurations and brought in more toilet blocks. These alterations have increased the site capacity to circa 120 operatives.

- The critical activity throughout the past 12 months has been the concrete frame. This was severely delayed during Covid19 lockdown / restrictions, however these works have now been completed.
- The completion of the concrete frame has allowed the internal Mechanical & Engineering installation to progress in earnest, whilst the internal walls, external cladding and steelwork have been progressed.
- Achieving the installation of the Glulam timber beams and associated structure was a great achievement and allows progress to be made in the pool hall areas.
- The next period will see more trades on site as areas are made available for the different trades, with an associated increase in the number of resources / operatives on site.

#### **Forecast Completion and Risks to Completion**

- The site team are currently working weekends (Saturdays) and extended days during the week. This extended working has been formally agreed with the Planning Department.
- The construction programme has been updated in the past month, which identifies completion in July 2021.
- Kier have identified that they expect future problems are likely to manifest with the supply chain and ongoing / future availability of resource and materials. At this stage they don't know exactly where these problems will arise, or indeed if they will arise, they just believe there is a high likelihood of future challenges in this regard.
- There are a myriad of elements in the completion of the project which may be affected by restrictions now, or may not even become apparent until sometime in the future. (Such as the collapse of a supplier of parts which make the machines which make the windows we need, or a spike in demand for resources in the future as projects have 'backed up', or indeed matters such traffic orders which have been affected by the pandemic).
- Any forecasting of completion will need to be carefully considered, and it is very possible completion cannot be guaranteed until the actual day of handover.

#### **Cost Matters**

- The Forecast Project Cost for the Leisure Centre is currently within the approved budget.
- The measures put in place by Kier on this project to manage the impacts of Covid19 have been costly (direct costs for storage of materials off site, the increased welfare facilities, sub-contractor agreements & arrangements, etc.). Additionally, the programme / project duration increase a result of the pandemic (currently forecast as 4 months – March 21 to July 21) has cost implications relating to staff, hire of office accommodation, plant, equipment, etc., on site.
- The Contractor has issued formal notification of their view that all costs associated with Covid19 are a contractual entitlement to them. This view has been reviewed by ECC Legal (& Counsel) who have a different interpretation and further discussions are ongoing with the contractor to seek agreement.

#### **Assistance to help the project during the crisis: Ongoing**

- We continue to help the contractor with the following :
- To help the contractor with receiving deliveries of reinforcement steelwork materials, ECC freed up the lower apron of the bus station and handed this over to Kier. This was successfully used to enable the bulk reinforcement to be delivered and then distributed around the site. This lower apron space has subsequently been used for the additional welfare facilities mentioned earlier in this Briefing.
- The Government issued a Procurement Policy guidance note PPN02/20 to look at how the public sector can support construction firms and help their cash flow during the crisis. ECC have agreed to have fortnightly valuations of the works on site (instead of monthly valuations) and have also agreed to pay the invoices within 7 days of receiving the invoices – all to help the contractor cash flow.
- Additionally, ECC have agreed to pay for goods purchased by Kier but held off-site, such as the Glulam beams, etc. The appropriate vesting certificates and insurances will need to be in place and evidence of such provided.
- The Contractor held Contingency (within the Contract Sum) has also agreed to be released – as the contingency is due and is there to cover unforeseen events, such as this.

- Other proposals were submitted by Kier for consideration under PPN02/20, however those that exposed ECC to an unacceptable level of risk, or could have increased the total cost of the project above the amount approved by Council were not implemented.

### **Riverside Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre Refurbishment**

Please note: This is a 'point in time' briefing note on matters as understood / expected as at 11<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

#### **Current Progress & Successes**

- Although works were significantly delayed during April and May 2020 due to Covid19, there has been good progress since.
- The high level internal painting and M&E installations have been completed in the pool hall and the internal birdcage scaffolding system has been removed.
- The ground floor changing village and adjacent pool hall area has been stripped of floor tiles and structural repairs have been undertaken to the concrete soffit.
- The design scheme for the wall cladding, showers, changing cubicles and lockers to the ground floor and first floor changing villages has been agreed.
- The design scheme for the new spectator seating and handrails in the pool hall have been agreed.
- A membrane water proofing system is being proposed to be applied onto the existing roof of the gym & central area of the building. This is an interim measure, intended to last for 3-5 years which is hoped will greatly reduce the water ingress into the gym over the next few winters. This solution will not deal with the structural defects in that section of roof. A full replacement of the roof will be required at some stage (which is understood as notionally being 3+ years in the future). Snow weather warnings or the like would result in sporadic closures of the gym over the coming years until such time as the roof is replaced. We are awaiting costed options from the Contractor which cover varying extents of work to the existing Mechanical & Electrical Plant / equipment on the gym roof – ranging from 'do nothing' to 'full replacement & relocation to a different area'. A decision on what to do with the M&E on the gym roof will be made once all the costs have been provided.
- The critical element being delayed by Covid 19 was the geotechnical investigation of the ground around the pool (so the foundations for the new pool surround could be designed). These works were on hold until a safe method of working could be established in accordance with the Covid 19 restriction measures. Changes in the government guidance for construction sites enabled these critical investigations to be concluded. Weekend working was adopted with the specialist to undertake the investigations as soon as viably possible.
- Now that the birdcage scaffolding has been removed from the pool hall, the pool surround construction remains the largest element of work to complete. The sequence of works required to this area is detailed, extensive and is the largest time constraint on the programme for the project, the works to this area include :
  - Pile foundations in the made ground around the pool – with a small hand held machine (which requires pre-drilling of pilot holes in each location to break through existing concrete obstructions underground)
  - Mass fill of concrete poured around the outside of the pool to create a base
  - Installation of all the pool filtration and water supply pipework
  - Protection of all the pipework
  - Pouring of concrete to fill the poolside void
  - Creation of the topping slab & screed
  - Drying time for the concrete (tiles cannot be applied until the concrete has suitably dried.
  - Application of the new floor tiles

#### **Forecast Completion and Risks to Completion**

- The detailed construction programme has been updated in the past month. This identifies completion in July 2021.

- Although a construction programme has been developed, there is a risk this will be impacted by Covid19 – whether through further working restrictions on-site, timely availability of workforce if key suppliers miss work through Covid related symptoms / illness, availability of materials if production lines are further affected by Covid, etc.
- The performance of the pool tank when it is filled with water is also a significant risk on the project. As the tank has been empty of water for over 3 years, the weight/pressures of the water and any movement in the tank could cause tiles to become loose, or indeed the tank itself to adversely suffer. The tank and tiles will be monitored throughout the water filling process – which will be managed over a number of days to slowly build the pressures in the tank.

#### **Assistance to help the project during COVID 19 : Ongoing**

- We continue to help the contractor with the following :
- The Government issued a Procurement Policy guidance note PPN02/20 to look at how the public sector can support construction firms and help their cash flow during the crisis. ECC have agreed to fortnightly valuations of the works on site (instead of monthly valuations) and have also agreed to pay the invoices within 7 days of receiving the invoices – all to help the contractor cash flow.
- Additionally, ECC have agreed to pay for goods purchased by Kier but held off-site. The appropriate vesting certificates and insurances will need to be in place and evidence of such provided.
- The Contractor held Contingency (within the Contract Sum) has also agreed to be released – as the contingency is due and is there to cover unforeseen events, such as this.
- Other proposals were submitted by Kier for consideration under PPN02/20, however those that exposed ECC to an unacceptable level of risk, or could have increased the total cost of the project, were not implemented.

#### **Exeter Arena Development Plan**

##### **Background**

- Exeter Arena and the ISCA Centre are located to the north east of Exeter city centre, just over a mile to the west of the M5. The built facilities previously managed by Legacy Leisure (Parkwood Leisure) under contract to the Council until September 2020 are now managed in-house
- Exeter Arena, primarily an athletics venue, has grown to include a gym, football pitch, sauna suite, physiotherapy room, spin studio and social areas. The ISCA Centre includes an indoor bowls rink, bar/café area and a recently refurbished gym
- The Built Facilities Strategy 2019 identified Exeter Arena as a priority for development with an aspiration to deliver a much more connected and integrated Sports Village. A new facility mix would include a swimming pool, sports hall and a strategic cycling hub including off road cycle circuit, family cycle trails, a pump track and skills areas for beginners.
- Several development options have been produced with a preferred option being prepared for progressing to a full business case.
- The development of the site will be through a phased approach dependent of funding and opportunity.

##### **Progress**

- A Project plan has been produced with indicative timescales
- Initial consultation with existing user groups has taken place including all the key clubs currently using the site. The general consensus was that all clubs are excited about the outline proposals and all wish to be involved in ongoing consultations.
- The general health of the clubs consulted was good, although some expressed concerns over returning to sport and the knock on financial health (lost members, increased facility costs, payments for events carried forward to 2021)
- Specifically, the local cycling community has been consulted in partnership with British Cycling. The feedback is overwhelmingly positive.
- The preferred site plan with new facility mix is being developed into a series of Computer Generated Images and ‘Virtual flyover’

- Necessary site surveys have been commissioned by ECC Parks & Open Spaces team, conducting land quality, ecology, flood risk and noise assessments along with a whole-site Topographic survey.
- British Cycling Places To Ride: Stage 1 project funding bid is being submitted in September for a c.£500k bid towards the new cycling hub. This includes a request for Project Development Costs to support site surveys and formal consultation. If successful, the project will be allocated specific case officer and technical support from Sport England and British Cycling
- Further dialogue with Sport England facilities team is taking place and included progress on Exeter Arena proposals and feasibility.

#### **Next Steps**

- Informal presentation of CGIs and video flyover to portfolio holder
- Preparation of outline business case and proposal to move to full business case and formal public consultation through council committee
- Outcome of application to British Cycling expected in early October 2020
- Continued dialogue with Sport England to prepare approach to Strategic Facilities Investment Fund.

### **Playing Pitch Strategy**

#### **Background**

- We are conducting a full review of the 2018 Draft Playing Pitch Strategy and producing a new strategy based on a complete understanding of current supply and demand of sports pitches
- The brief follows Sport England methodology and will produce a clear, strategic framework for the management, maintenance and development of outdoor playing pitches and ancillary facilities over the next ten years (2020 to 2030)
- The scope includes priority sports: Football, Rugby, Cricket and Hockey whilst also taking the opportunity to review Tennis and Bowls provision in the city. Other outdoor sports will be assessed on a demand basis, for example Exeter Spitfires Baseball Club have indicated a willingness to work with the Council to develop a new home
- COVID-19 has had a significant effect on local community sport with all outdoor team sports only now considering phased return to play plans. Many National Governing Bodies (NGBs) have been focussing on response and recovery plans for their sports and supporting clubs to access resources to ensure survival.

#### **Progress**

- BELAP consultants were engaged in February 2020 to review existing strategies and conduct winter sport site visits to assess quality and supply of pitches in the city. This work has been concluded and evidence base of winter sports pitches collated and analysed.
- A reviewed specification is being prepared developing a 6 month programme of work to complete the Playing Pitch Strategy in light of COVID-19 context with individual sports
- Individual meetings with NGBs are taking place with a full steering group planned for October 2020 to agree the programme and communication to specific stakeholders and clubs
- Both Tennis and Bowls NGBs have positively indicated their intent to be included in the study.
- In parallel to the study specific projects will be undertaken to assess feasibility of improvements/enhancements to both priority sites at Wonford (football) and Exeter Arena (rugby).
- A programme of works is being delivered to improve the adult and junior playing pitches in Pinhoe ahead of the 2021 season.
- Exeter Spitfires (Baseball Team) are working with officers in both Active & Healthy People and Parks & Open Spaces to realise their aspiration to return to the city and make Bromham's Farm their home pitch. This site is currently being 'made good' as it returns to ECC following extensive Environment Agency works over a number of years.

## Background

- Exeter City Council on behalf of the partners signed a Lottery Funding Agreement with Sport England in June 2019 to implement the proposals set out in the submission agreed by the Board in January 2019.
- The focus up to January 2020 has been on developing firm foundations upon which to build sustainable delivery platforms for the community-based People and Place programmes whilst simultaneously developing strategy and policy alignment across the whole system. Whilst this approach is winning hearts and minds and positively disrupting the system it is proving to be challenging. The process evaluation has been very helpful in ensuring that we regularly take stock and learn as we go.
- Contracts were awarded to a range of delivery partners including Devon County Council, Devon Community Foundation, Active Devon, SERIO, Grow Consultancy, CAG Consultants, Exeter City Living, and KYMA/ETL. Devon Community Foundation have awarded contracts to new Wellbeing Exeter delivery partners including Exeter YMCA and Exeter Community Trust.
- In January 2020 the board met and were presented with an overview of the process learning and agreed to a series of workshops in February and March 2020 to address a number of issues which had been identified in the initial development phase of the programme. The focus of the workshops was to establish shared values, language and agreed ways of working going forward. Three of the four workshops took place before the Covid-19 pandemic.

## Progress

- The existing work of the LDP enabled a rapid community response to the pandemic. This in turn is generating evidence which will be valuable for the future planning and delivery of the LDP as the 'new normal' emerges. Therefore, an interim plan has been implemented for April to September 2020 to transition from the pre-Covid-19 situation to a place to enable us to continue to deliver on the LDP priorities, albeit in a different format, during this uncertain time.
- A review of governance has been completed and a new more streamlined governance system has been agreed with strategic oversight now being provided by the Liveable Exeter Place Board. This was implemented in July. A Partnership Oversight Group has also been established to provide a 'check and challenge' to the Programme Management Team and Director. The inaugural meeting will take place on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September.
- Through Wellbeing Exeter, social prescribing is expanding to include a specific referral programme targeted at Children, Young People and their Families with a focus on active lifestyle motivational conversations. New referral pathways are being developed to include schools. Community Connectors are building trust with young people and their families through a series of linked conversations and developing action plans to help improve wellbeing and engage in active opportunities in their neighbourhoods.
- In Cranbrook, a local programme of social prescribing is being established and a new Community Connector has been appointed to lead motivational conversations towards active lifestyles with patients referred by the local GP practice. A local Move More Cranbrook Community grants programme has been prepared for launch to support local resident groups that are establishing grass roots activity opportunities
- In Wonford, the Health & Wellbeing Hub community engagement programme is building considerable momentum as stakeholders continued to work together virtually through lockdown. The local Community Sounding Board has helped to engage over 300 residents to identify priorities of the facility mix for the hub. Architects Space & Place are working with the Community Sounding Board to draw up the first design options to be taken forward into a full business case.
- A successful submission has been made to Sport England for extension of core and evaluation funding up until 2025.
- Detailed delivery plans for 28 projects across the programme are being finalised with delivery notching up a level from October 2020.

- Working arrangements with delivery partners have been reviewed and a more structured approach to project management established. Three new Project Managers have been employed within the Exeter City Council Active & Healthy People team to accelerate delivery

#### **Next Steps**

- The Communications strategy and new branding “Live and Move” is progressing to a soft launch in September with a website and series of campaign actions being planned to support the next stage as we move into delivery. We have identified community storytellers and are producing a launch video. The emphasis in the early stages of the platform is on storytelling and community engagement. We have developed relationships with various local individuals and partners who are ready to support our digital growth strategy upon launch.
- The second wave of our Local Active Lives survey is about to start. The survey captures physical activity and wellbeing insights as part of the national evaluation framework along with a blend of local measures including how our Priority Areas have been impacted COVID. It’s a large scale study, with over 2,000 people due to take part. As this will be the first major face to face study in Exeter and Cranbrook since COVID our first step is to conduct a small-scale pilot with doorstep rather than in-home interviewing.

#### **The delivery team will be implementing 28 projects within the programme including:**

- Relaunching the Exeter Green Circle with a focus on engaging residents from priority areas to enjoy actively accessing a circular walking route around the city.
- Delivering a programme of Play Streets in priority areas enabling local residents to lead temporary closures of their streets to encourage family play and local neighbourhood connections
- Supporting 20 local physical activity groups and clubs in priority areas and developing an online community hub for local champions and activity providers to interact and share best practice
- Delivering 2 school street programmes to reduce peak time drop off traffic and help more children and families to walk and cycle to school every day.
- Undertaking community and school engagement in Newtown to develop ideas for a new ‘active environment’ including active street design and enhancements to the public realm
- The first designs of the new Wonford Health & Wellbeing hub are being shared to the local community for consultation, further engagement and working towards a preferred design
- In Cranbrook, we will launch the Move More Grants programme for local groups to access support to grow activity initiatives that are re-starting and emerging out of the pandemic. A Community Connector will be embedded within the GP practice and able to signpost to these local opportunities following referrals with families seeking support to lead a more active lifestyle.

### **Sport England Local Delivery Pilot: Wonford Development Plan**

#### **Background**

- Following the initial consultation phase in 2019, the project is now in the Feasibility Stage. This stage commenced in February 2020 and is due to be completed this calendar year.
- Good progress was initially made in February and early March 2020, including meetings with the Wonford COGs and Sounding Board, to understand the ambitions, requirements, concerns, challenges and opportunities of the potential new facility in the neighbourhood / community.
- At the heart of the Feasibility Stage is a community-led design ethos. With the activities and needs of the community being paramount to specifying and designing the new facility. The outbreak of COVID 19 and subsequent lockdown measures materially affected the ability of the team to meaningfully engage with the community to fully understand their needs & requirements. This resulted in the project being largely ‘on hold’ throughout April, May & June

#### **Progress**

- In the past couple of months changes to the COVID 19 restrictions have enabled the project to recommence in earnest.
- A detailed community engagement plan has been developed which takes into account the current & anticipated COVID 19 measures.

- Community engagement activities were relaunched at the start of July. This involved digital (website, Facebook, Instagram), mail drop of flyers to households, and promotion of the engagement through the local primary & secondary schools.
- An online survey was undertaken, seeking community feedback on the key activities they want in the new facilities. Over 350 households responded to the survey, with some really good information / data to help shape the forthcoming 3 design options.
- Over 70 households provided comments / feedback through the local Primary Schools.
- A survey focused on the 'youth' and younger people is currently running.
- Discussions have progressed with the Wonford Green GPs surgery to confirm the spatial requirements and operational flows for their practice in the new facility, including future proofing for growth rates, etc.
- Initial discussions have taken place with the NHS CCG to understand funding opportunities & constraints

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**Next Steps**

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- 3 design options will be developed by the team. These options are not concerned with the look / aesthetics of the facility, they are focused on the activities and interaction / arrangement of activity spaces within the facility.
- A 'public event' will be held (online) on 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> October to obtain comments and feedback on the 3 design options
- Further discussions will take place with the Wonford Green GPs & ECC Estates to conclude the financial estates matters (land valuation, rental values, etc.).
- It is currently the intention to conclude the Feasibility Stage this calendar year, with indicative designs / sketches, financial modelling and a feasibility report.