



P.21-11

St George's Guildhall & Creative Hub Project Highlight Report

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

* CIO is now formed as per the registration here: <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/14526867>

Management Summary

	1. Overall Status	2.1 Risks	2.2. Issues	3. Financials	4. Timelines	5. Resources
This Report	A	A	A	R	A	R
Last Report	A	A	A	R	A	R

Project Definition

Project Stage: RIBA Stage 4 – Detailed Design

Objectives:

The project has the following defined aims:

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

Scope:

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

1. Overall Status (high-level summary)

Overall status following agreement to the Project Adjustment Request is AMBER, although the significant gap in funding should be noted. See comments in Financial Commentary (section 3.3) for direction of travel.

- **RIBA Stage 4 Design** - Ongoing and on programme with the team at maximum effort to hit dates.
- **Interpretation Works** - PLB bi-weekly client workshops have now been completed. The interpretation tour framework has been appraised and agreed by the client team. Key interpretation messages and themes have been agreed. The draft end of stage report and costs have been issued by PLB to the client team continue to review detailed proposal. A meeting has been set for 20th March for final comments and agreement of design for this stage.
- **Collections/Storage** – Removal of key collections completed following agreed NMS/BC strategy. Procurement of decant works agreed, quotes have been sought and suppliers instructed. Meeting scheduled to review progress for early March
- **King Street public realm** - Briefing workshop held. Fees advised and instructed to deliver design, works commence Feb 25. S278 works meeting scheduled for 13/03/2025 with NCC Highways.
- **Pre-Launch BC/CIO Resource review ongoing.** Agreement to be sought on the Sites Operational, Education and CEO/Creative Director role(s). Proposal also includes the appointment of a Fundraising Consultant asap. Agreement of how income once generated is receipted by the BC to allow for capital works on the site being reviewed by Legal. Paper is subject to internal review with Officers (if approved) on next steps.

- **Turnkey Fit out** - Meetings held about additional fit out requirements that the Site/ will need to make it a full turnkey operation at handover. Scope & costs compiled by AMA now reviewed by (AWN) & BCKLWN. Revised comments issued for incorporation in Stage 4 costs. The main contract ITT has now included these costs. Update March Board
- **H&S Reporting** - H&S/CDM/ PD reporting meeting held to provide oversight to workstream. Howarth Tompkins presented deliverables tracker and procedures being implemented. Next meeting planned for March/ April. Project requested to support a HSE review of (BC) live projects. No further action.

1.1 Decisions required by the Town Board

- No decision for the Town Board but a discussion on Project RIBA 4 budget, Fitout costs, Legal update to main contract. See agenda item 4 on upcoming meeting 11/03/25

1.2 Achievements during this period

- Contract has been agreed & signed for the Enabling Works Contractor (NCL). A successful pre-start meeting has been held on site. Works are due to start 17th March with 9-week programme. Decant of historical artefacts affected by EW has mostly been completed.
- BoQ & RIBA stage 4 design packs have been completed and the final Invitation to Tender (ITT) pack that included these has now been issued to the market 7th March.
- Ecological EPS Bat license consultant has now been appointed, review underway. License will be issued before the end of April to ensure they are in place prior to the main contractor starting on site.
- PLB key stage presentation was held on Wednesday 12th February key feedback was given and their draft report and costs have been issued for final review for final comments & design direction meeting on 20th March.

Priorities for Next Period:

- Monitor the ITT and respond to main contractors' queries, in relation to the BoQ & general wider suite of ITT docs.
- S278 design works to be developed, and procurement route agreed (i.e. ideally in main contractor works)
- Commence site works on the EW works on 17th March, conduct the progress meeting to ensure contractor is on programme. Report any significant archaeological finds during the remove of the seating.
- RIBA 4 costs (by QS) will be issued following issue of BoQ and final stage 4 reports. Important indicator of underlying cost position across main works. See agenda item 4 on upcoming meeting 11/03/25.
- Design team to assess ITT package for any late/ final updates to scheme requirements. Possible tender addendums or more likely contract variation as non-material. Final design matters paused as critical to support ITT stability.

2. Risks and Issues

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

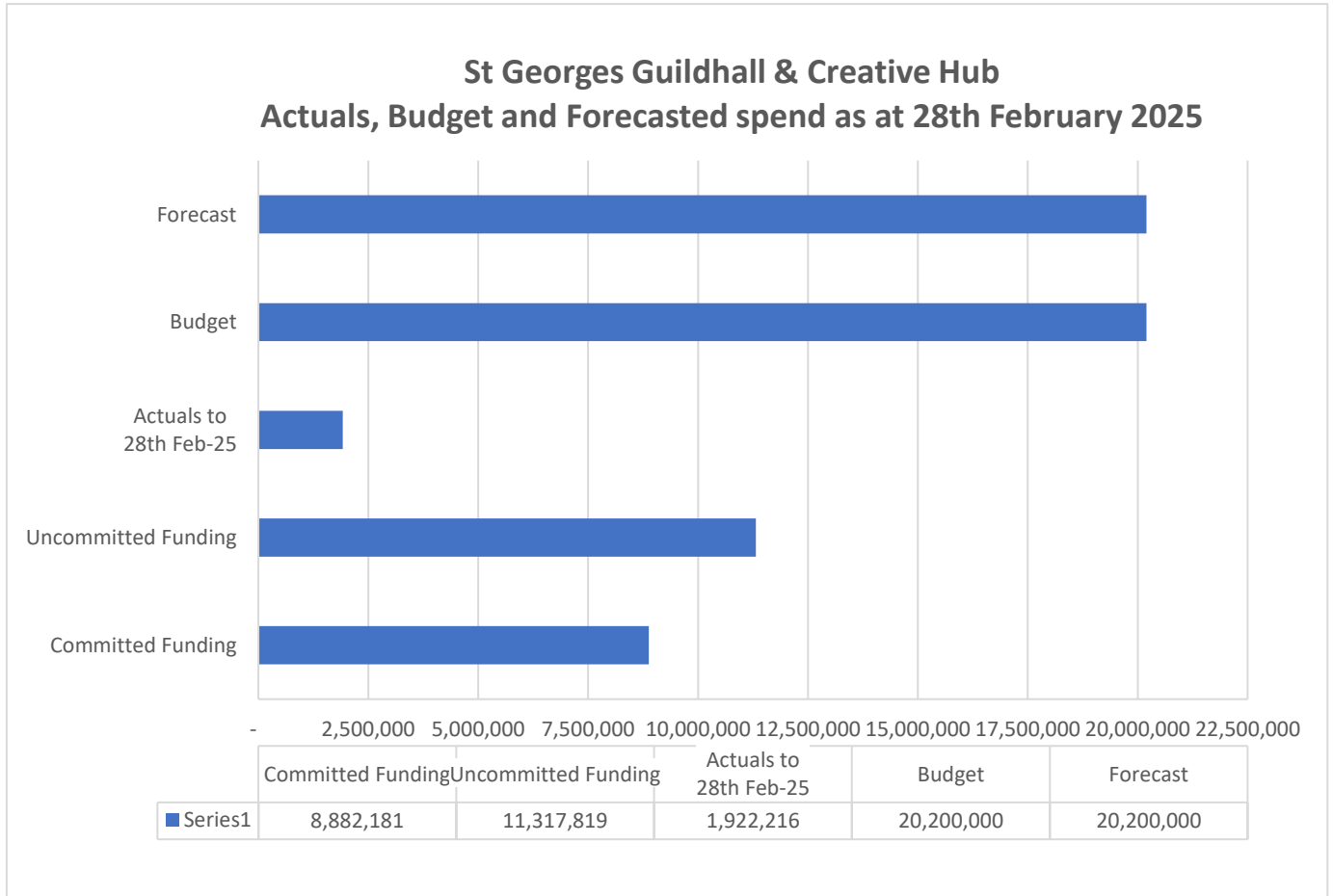
Risk ID (5/40)	Risk Title	Description	RAG Status	Risk Category	Mitigation	Dated Comments
003	Funding	Inadequate funding to deliver intended scope of project	R	Financial	TOWNS funding re-prioritised to provide £8.07m of capital funding. Following unsuccessful NLHF application for potential total ask of £3.3m (including the intended Stage 2 application ask). Some additional funding may come from other BCKLWN Towns Fund Projects to be reallocated to the Guildhall (amount TBC). Fundraising Consultant to be procured shortly. Estimated drawdown cashflow to be created by AMA for once the projects onsite. Reviewing options in respect of phasing without materially impacting project objectives and business plan (Core Scheme).	05/03/2025
016	Tenders received exceed the budget cost allowance	The project does not have the available budget to progress, major scope reduction of VE required.	R	Financial	Regular cost reviews throughout the design development period - undertake market testing of key cost items - regular review of inflation allowances against the market trends. Contingency review and costing advice being gathered to value the size of this risk.	05/03/2025
029	Unforeseen building works	Building works to areas of project require greater amount of work than currently envisaged (i.e. when areas are opened up).	A	Design	Analysis of condition surveys completed. Further survey works to be commissioned (opening up works). Contingencies to be put in place until more intrusive works can be carried out.	05/03/2025
2	End User Input to Design Development	BCKLWN operating site on phased handover basis to CIO.	A	Design	Early, consistent and regular engagement with End User / Client. Clear governance process to be identified. Project Steering Committees for client to review at end of RIBA stages. Ongoing design review meetings are being held with NT.	05/03/2025
002	Resources	As project activity increases, there is increased pressure on the project team in respect of balancing work loads.	A	Resources	Project has increased in size (by 100%) and pressures felt. Additional resources being reviewed continually. Note that Volunteers wellbeing on site being additionally supported given the decades of unbroken commitment they've offered.	05/03/2025

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

Issue ID (2/9)	Issue Title	Description	RAG Status	Issue Type	Resolution Plan	Dated Comments
011	Budget	Budgetary pressures following RIBA Stage 3 & potential RIBA 4 cost plan status.	R	Finance	Project Team have reviewed phasing options to best deliver Towns Fund and Project output/outcomes. Fundraising streams reviewed to identify key opportunities to support funding gap.	05/03/2025
015	Procurement of Main Contractor	Lack of resource in main contractor market. Geographical location of project is challenging.	R	Performance	SQ completed. 5 strong contractors have been invited to tender following review of responses. . Risk that they may be offered other works ahead of the June award date. Team keeping comms open with MC's.	05/03/2025

Note: further detail on Project Risks and Issues can be found in the Risks and Issues Log.

3.1 Project Financials



3.2 Financial Commentary

Financials are currently RED

Actuals to date are £1.9m against an overall budget of £20.2m with actuals primarily relating to Professional fees and Consultancy costs. 2024-25 actuals in this financial year are £1m up to 28th Feb-25.

At present there is uncommitted funding of c£11.3m based on the £20.2m budget.

The funding gap will reduce by £2m to c£9.3m once the PAR to transfer funding from the Riverfront Towns fund Project has been approved by MHCLG.

It would be proposed to reduce the RED RAG rating once the additional funds have been secured. The Project Team believe that the significant gap in overall funding could still impact on the Towns Fund monies being spent within the required timescales and therefore, this remains rated as Red.

A decision on the final project scope and funding package was made at Town Board and Cabinet during July 2025 using the RIBA 4 cost plan and the results from the main tender now underway. Further to this the RIBA 4 cost update will also include updates on the latest additional scope, project and client contingency strategies designed to support this complex project, with lessons learnt from similar schemes of this nature.

The deep dive 2024-25 full year minimum spend requirements (75% of the full year budget) is £0.8m and £0.7m at 11 months up to 28th Feb 25, current 2024-25 actuals are £1m and is within the required target spend of £0.8m, therefore no deep dive would be triggered.

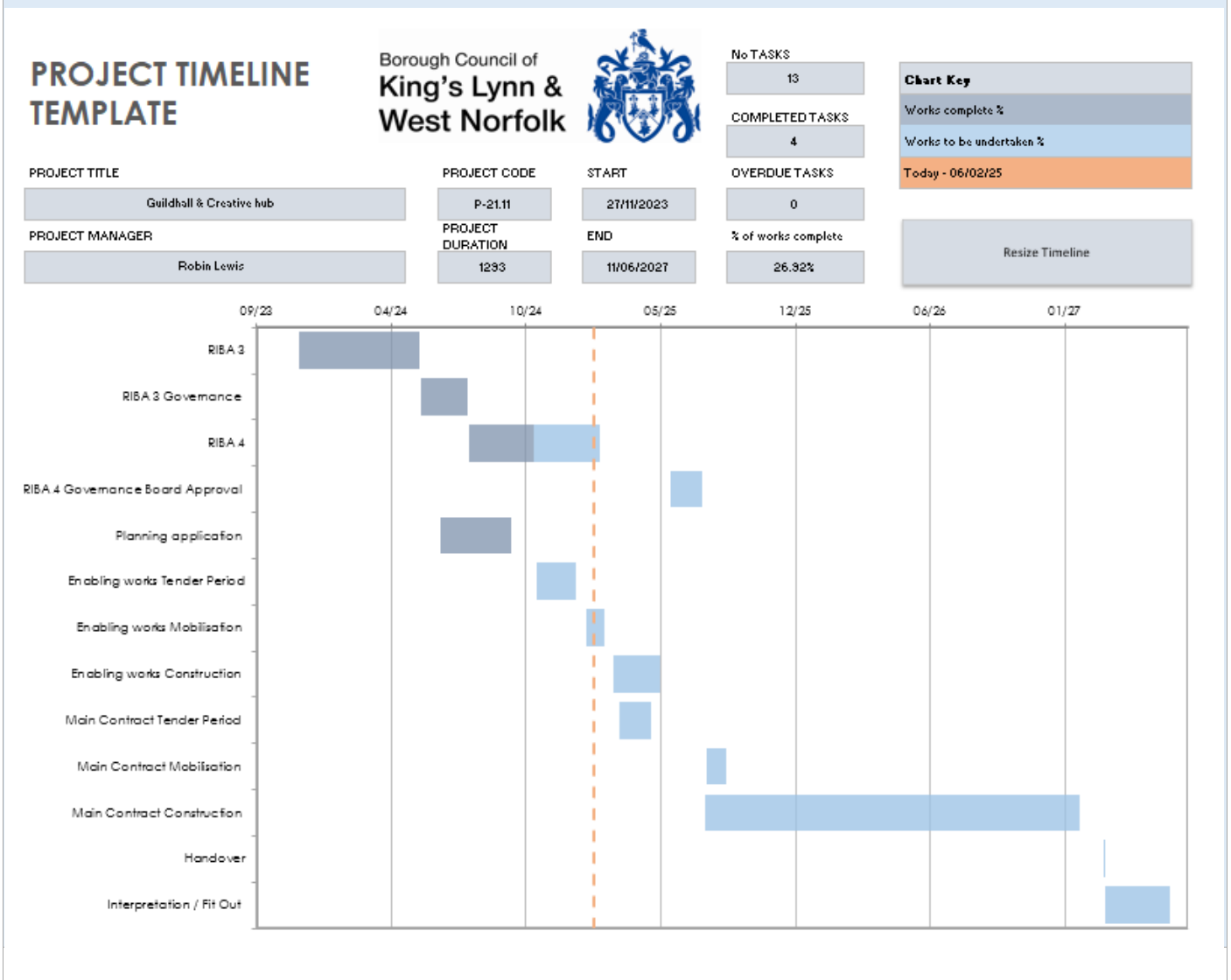
A fundraising consultant is being procured to seek additional fundraising opportunities and enact fundraising strategy. Gap in funding and the status will be reported at Town Board and Cabinet in June/ July 2025 for a final decision on progression forward and the appointment of a Main Contractor in July 2025.

Internal Officer reviews continued in November looking at the overall capital position as advised by the project team. This included a review of the significant wider external risks to the budget, and the overarching contingency strategy required to support the project. Outputs and recommendations of these reviews will be shared in 2025.

3.3 Project Contingency and Change Control

Change Ref	Description	Cost Impact	Programme Impact	Other Impact	RAG Status	Approval given by	Date of change
1	For info: Formal change control tracker being used to manage project through RIBA 4.						

4. Timelines – High Level Milestones



4.1 Timelines Commentary

Timeline RAG rating has been adjusted to AMBER to reflect the fact that the project outputs dates have been re-set as part of the recent Project Adjustment Request approval process.

The latest construction completion date is forecast for spring 2027. This has been approved in principle as part of the RIBA 3 Programme update to both Town Board and Cabinet in July 2024. This delay, because of important design changes at the start of RIBA 3 (archaeological survey findings, M&E compliance updates, environmental specification upgrades) has extended the overall programme by approx. 11 months. The Towns Fund grant will still be expended before the March 2026 deadline however the outputs will not start being realised until the scheme opens in 2027. The balance of required additional funds will be required to support the second half of the construction programme. (Circa funds in place by Dec 25/ Jan 26 to support cashflow demands.)

The interpretation workstream continues its progress. It has been advised/ estimated that the fit out, testing and commissioning period for the Interpretation scheme will require c14 weeks following the completion of the main construction works. The project team have initiated a review of the launch and the various demands that will need to be managed. This collectively is called the “soft launch strategy” a term used on other similar projects to seek to meet the Contract, fit out and rehearsal times needed to ensure an efficient opening. More progress will be shared in 2025.

The enabling works have been delayed due to the availability of the successful enabling works contractor. The start date for these works will now be 17th March. Despite these changes there is no overall delay to the programme completion date as the delay can be absorbed while tendering/ mobilising the main contractor.

5. Resources Commentary

Resource continues to be maintained as a RED RAG rating in the period.

Additional resource demands are being reviewed and considered in a range of areas including works required to cover the Fundraising Consultant role, BC/ CIO pre-opening operational planning of the overall new site, and an extension of time request to support the Education Officer's role. There is also an exceptional demand on the time required to develop a more suitable legal framework between the CIO/ Borough Council (Birkett's are undertaking this piece of work). The execution of the enabling works package to mitigate a significant risk to the overall project has taken more resources than estimated to ensure a compliant, quality contractor appointment for the strip out of the Theatre.

6. Communications and Engagement

The Comms Agency have developed the branding associated with the site. Their work is changing to support the delivery of the on-going activities, and events post the closure of the Guildhall main site.

Note that No29 and Shakespeare Barn are being used to provide an interim solution for the public to access the site/ learn/ and see exhibitions and storytelling about the new scheme. Soft launch planned for the 5th of March and public access from the 10th subject to final review of arrangements.

Comms will commence shortly with the neighbouring properties with a view to issuing Party Wall Notices early in 2025. Agreements will be sought ahead of commencing works onsite.

7. Outputs and Outcomes

Outputs

Description	Target	Full Scheme revised outputs, agreed by KLTB and BCKLWN Cabinet July 2024
Number of temporary FT jobs supported during project implementation	110	55
Number of full-time equivalent (FTE) permanent jobs created through the projects	22	34
Number of improved cultural facilities	5	8
Amount of capacity of new or improved training or education facilities	1*	
Amount of capacity of new or improved training or education facilities	10,300	10,300
# of derelict buildings refurbished	6	6
# of heritage buildings renovated/restored	10	10
# of enterprises receiving non-financial support	50	50
# of potential entrepreneurs assisted to be enterprise ready	60	60
Amount of existing parks/greenspace/outdoor improved	1240 m ²	1572m ²
Amount of new office space	669m ²	814m ²
Mandatory indicator - Year on Year monthly % change in footfall	900%	1680%

Outcomes

Description	Notes
Refurbishing the Historic Theatre and enhancing physical access – with a reference to its exceptional historical value and Shakespearian connection	
Creating opportunities for local creative enterprises	
Creating inspiring spaces, for the community and visitors alike, for formal and informal learning including youth engagement.	

8. Other Matters	
Item	Comment
General stage progress	RIBA stage 4 commenced and works on programme.
Procurement progress	Main Contractor SQ responses received, and tender shortlist confirmed.
Proposed form of contract (e.g. JCT, NEC, Traditional, D&B)	Construction – JCT with quantities - Procurement Strategy prepared agreed with BCKLWN Procurement Officers.
Proposed route to market (e.g. ITT, Framework i.e. DPS, HPCS, LCP)	Procurement will be via a two-stage tender (SQ followed by full ITT), open market tender via the Councils procurement portal.
Legal progress	Support development of CIO governing document, Fundraising guidance for both BC to share with CIO/ NT to ensure compliance with law, Charity Commission, the Lease between the BC, and NT. HMRC Tax rules.
Legal instruction form issued?	Legal instruction issued in October 2022 for development of CIO agreement & then again in Sept/October 2024 in relation to fundraising and overall tripartite strategy required to align the BC, CIO and NT redlines for the site and its operation.
Surveys Status	Surveys identified and completed with HT following their RIBA 4 appointment.
Statutory updates	Conversations ongoing National Trust, Planning and Development Team and Building Control to ensure views are captured during design and delivery process.
Local schemes / dependencies	Other Towns Deal programme and projects. Wider BCKLWN work including update of Cultural Strategy and volunteering. Work with National Trust and Norfolk Museum Service regarding visitor trends

9. Approved Documents								
	OBC [RIBA 0 Approval]	Client Brief [RIBA 1 Initiation]	Resource Brief	PID [RIBA 1 Gateway]	PID Update [RIBA 2 Gateway]	PID Update [RIBA 3 Gateway]	PID Update [pre tender]	Final PID [post tender]
Status:	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓		
Date Approved:	24/06/22	21/12/22	-	21/12/22	30/11/23	09/07/24		
Approved by:	Cabinet	TF Prog Board	-	TF Prog Board	OMP	Project Board		

Latest approved document: PID November 2023

Spend - Budget Variance (inc. contingency)	
R	More than 10% over or under budget
A	Between 5% & 10% over or under budget
G	Within 5% of budget or less than £10k

Milestone Delivery RAG Status	
R	13 weeks or more behind the critical path
A	4 to 12 weeks behind the critical path
G	4 weeks or less behind the critical path

Risks & Issues RAG Status	
R	Needs immediate attention
A	Needs attention before next project review
G	Can be managed