
OBAN CHORD - PROPOSED PROJECT PACKAGE FOR DELIVERY

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 In early 2012, the Oban CHORD Project Board and the CHORD Programme Board approved an Interim Business Case (IBC) for Oban CHORD. The IBC was prepared to allow the Project Board to make decisions on the way to proceed, accepting that the Case would evolve as the various elements were progressed and issues regarding, deliverability, affordability and risk became clearer. At that stage a project package of £1.84 million was approved.
- 1.2 Given the current position with the £1.84m package of works –see Table 1 at 3.1 below coupled with a clear desire to focus on “delivery” of the Oban CHORD project within the next three years from both the local members and the community, an Oban CHORD & Lorn Arc TIF workshop was held on the 28th February 2013 for Oban, Lorn and the Isles (OLI) members. The aim of the workshop was to outline and discuss how best to “deliver” the Oban CHORD project within the next three years. The workshop was well received by Members.
- 1.3 Subsequently, the Chair of the Oban CHORD Board asked the CHORD Project Team to bring forward a paper based on the presentation given at the workshop to the Oban CHORD Board for approval, outlining:
 - the current position with the £1.84 million IBC approved projects;
 - the intended utilisation of the remaining £4.865 million;
 - how the utilisation of the remaining monies complements the £1.84 million already approved;
 - the proposed timescales for the FBCs; and
 - timescales for the delivery of the complete package of CHORD projects

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Oban CHORD Project Board:
 - approves the proposed utilisation of the remaining £4.865 million
 - instructs officers to progress discrete business cases in order that the drawdown of the remaining monies can be approved by the CHORD Programme Board and Council
 - instructs officers to advise the CHORD Programme Board of the intended utilisation of the remaining £4.865 million

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 Oban CHORD has a funding allocation of £6.9 million. An Interim Business Case was endorsed by the Board on 6th January 2012 which recommended the release of £1.84 million of funding to progress 3 key elements – Traffic Management; Transport Interchange; and Reconfiguration of the Bay – Table 1 below outlines how funds are currently attributed.

Table 1 Breakdown of the £1.84m

Soroba Rd /Oban High School	Soroba Rd/Miller Road	Argyll Square	Transport Interchange	George St/Stafford St	North pier Pontoons
£370k	£30k	£100k	£340k	£700k	£300k
On Hold. Now outwith CHORD delivery timescale	Now funded from Roads budget	To be delivered by Roads	Now part of proposed public realm works	Now part of proposed public realm works	On hold awaiting outcome of Marine Tourism Review/Business Case

3.2 Given the above position with the current £1.84m package of works coupled with both the CHORD Board’s and OLI Members’ clear desire to focus on “delivery” of the Oban CHORD project within the next three years, the CHORD Project Team reviewed the current approach and came forward to the Workshop on the 28th February with the proposals outlined in Appendix A - Oban CHORD and Lorn Arc TIF Members Workshop.

3.3 The proposed way forward outlined in detail in Appendix A is to have four distinct project areas:

- **Oban Bay Public Realm** – Stafford St to Transport Interchange including the works to the Argyll Square area – see Appendix A slide 8;
- **North Pier Quarter** – Transit Facility and refurbishment of White Building along with public realm works to tie in with the Oban Bay Public Realm – see Appendix A slides 13, 14 and 15;
- **Oban Lighting Strategy** – to complement the above public realm works consideration of the lighting of buildings, structures around the Oban Bay area – see Appendix A slides 16 – 19;
- **South Pier** – investment in South Pier facilities, dependent on outcome of the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) application – see Appendix A slide 20.

3.4 **Oban Bay Public Realm (Stafford St, Queens Park Place, George St and Transport Interchange)** - Identified in the Interim Business Case as public realm improvements between north pier and railway pier, the CHORD Programme objective being met by this project is to improve the character, appearance and function of Oban for residents, visitors and investors.

The project will provide high standard improvements to address a wide range of issues, including: streetscape clutter, obstacles in the footway detracting from the appearance of the waterfront. This includes poorly placed and mismatched street furniture varying widely in age, quality, design and condition, redundant lighting columns and service boxes. Paving along the seafront is generally serviceable but old and drab in some areas and is a mixture of both block paving and slabs creating a patchwork effect along George St which detracts from the appearance of the waterfront - see Appendix A, slides 9 -10.

Closely associated with refurbishment and reconfiguration of the North Pier is the pedestrianisation of the Stafford Street area. It is proposed to create one large open space for pedestrians that will greatly improve the appearance of

this popular area, provide a greater gathering of people and should have a positive influence on trading in the adjacent local businesses. The restriction of northbound right turning and u-turn manoeuvres will improve traffic flow and a new pedestrian crossing should also provide a more direct route for pedestrians in line with natural desire lines.

The Interim Business Case identifies one of Oban's strengths as the close grouping of its ferry terminal, rail and bus stations - creating a single point of interchange. It proposes building on this by improving integration and creating an attractive arrival point to Oban. Such a gateway to the town would be more attractive to tourists, visitors, residents, business users and potential investors. The aim is to secure in the short term a unified solution to the area around Station Square and its environs that integrates with the Oban seafront, specifically addressing: public realm; pedestrian and vehicle signage; provision of integrated information and orientation facilities at Station Square; improved bus stops and shelters; and enhanced accessibility.

Initial discussions have taken place with Transport Scotland on taking forward the above proposals in partnership. The next step will be the appointment of a design team to develop clear proposals.

- 3.5 **North Pier Quarter** - The report on the Oban Marine Tourism Facilities review discusses how to take this proposal forward.
- 3.6 **Lighting Strategy – Subject** to approval from the CHORD Project and Programme Boards to proceed with this early action initiative, proposals will be brought forward to the next CHORD Project Board for consideration and approval.
- 3.7 **South Pier –** Project will be brought back to the CHORD Project Board for discussion following outcome of EFF application.
- 3.8 Table 2 below outlines the proposed utilisation of the Oban CHORD Capital budget allocation of £6.9m

Table 2 - Proposed breakdown of the £6.9m

Oban Bay Public Realm	North Pier Quarter	Lighting Strategy	South Pier	Project Manager	Allocated to Revenue	Total
£2.6m	£3.5m	£0.1m	£0.36m	£0.145m	£0.195m	£6.9m

- 3.9 The proposed breakdown in Table 2 incorporates the approved £1.84m package of works that remain with the Oban CHORD delivery timescale of three years i.e. Stafford St, Argyll Square and the Transport Interchange. If the North Pier Quarter transit berthing facility goes ahead there will be no requirement for the North Pier pontoons at this time, as previously proposed. Slide 21 of Appendix A clearly demonstrates how each of the proposed project elements at 3.3 above complements each other.
- 3.10 When the Interim IBC was approved in early 2012, the intention was to bring forward a FBC covering the entire Oban CHORD project elements, however, given the differing timelines to bring each project element to FBC stage, along with the clear wish to deliver projects on the ground as quickly as possible, it is recommended that business cases are brought forward for each project element as follows and draw down sought from the Programme Management

Board and the Council:

- § **Oban Bay Public Realm and Lighting Strategy**- FBC autumn 2013.
- § **North Pier Quarter** - FBC summer/autumn 2014 (White Building component to be progressed for delivery in 2014).
- § **South Pier**, date dependent on decision of EFF application

3.11 The intention is to deliver the four projects by the following dates:

Oban Bay Public Realm	November 2014
North Pier Quarter	April 2015
Oban Bay Lighting	November 2013
South Pier EFF	To be advised, following decision on funding application

3.12 The above projects (to be delivered in the short term) need to be seen in the context of the longer term development of Oban and Lorn and the wider ambitions for the area. Longer term ambitions will be delivered by working with a range of partners, including HIE and Transport Scotland, and aligning and optimising other potential investment streams such as the proposed Lorn Arc TIF (Tax Incremental Finance) initiative. These longer term ambitions will be captured in the Lorn 2030 Plan (to be finalised once TIF outcome is known).

4.0 IMPLICATIONS POLICY

The delivery of the CHORD programme fits with the Council's Corporate Plan, Single Outcome Agreement and approved Development Plan policy for town centre regeneration. The economic outcomes from these projects will contribute to the Government's Economic Strategy.

FINANCIAL

The Oban Bay/Harbour CHORD Interim Business Case has approved £1.84m; additional approvals will be required to drawdown remaining monies once business cases suitably developed.

PERSONNEL

Recruitment is underway to appoint an Oban Project Manager to progress the CHORD projects. The design consultants required to take the projects forward will be appointed from the new CHORD Framework Agreement.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES LEGAL

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken for Oban Bay/Harbour.

Each of the CHORD projects requires differing levels of legal resources to ensure their timely delivery. Resources have been allocated to each project as per the approved Project Initiation Documents.

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