

EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL Wednesday 6th December 2017

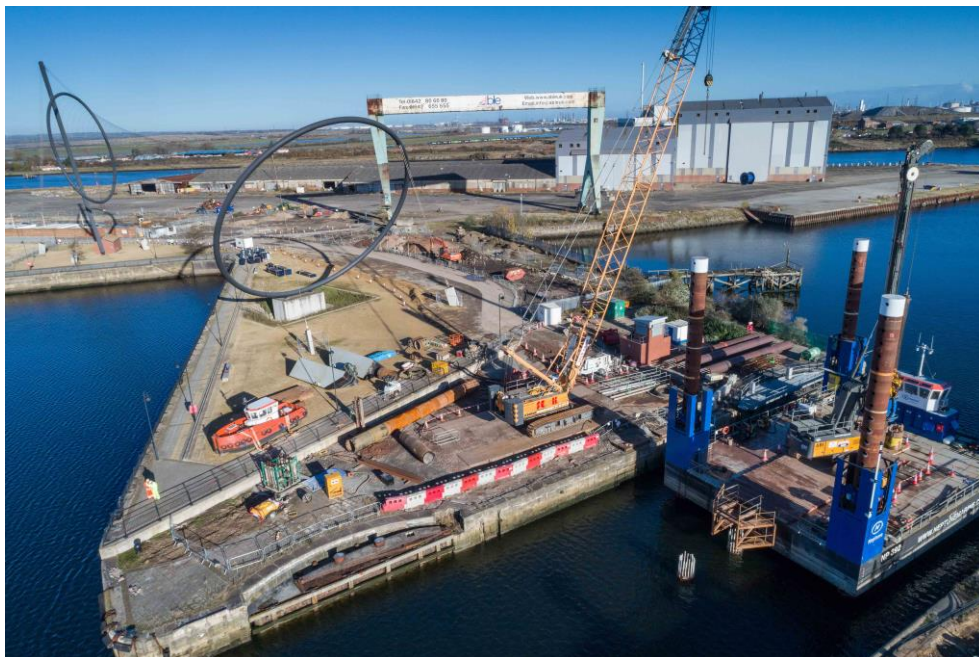
1. Middlehaven Dock Bridge and Road

A progress update was provided by Balfour Beatty for the scheme, having completed a quarter of construction project. The project commenced on 24th July 2017, due to complete end of July 2018. Councillors, along with representatives from the TVCA, were invited to attend a presentation on progress to date, as well as a site visit, to observe some of the piling works taking place on site. Key milestones to date include demolition of the former Able office buildings, substantial earthworks completed in preparation for the new road, footbridge having been removed and commencement of the marine piles – foundation for the bridge, being in. The project is on track financially, and to programme operationally.

Discussion took place on other benefits of the scheme:-

- One fixed term (12 months) job has been created by Balfour,(Middlesbrough resident employed)
- 49% of all sub contracted/contracted work is from local labour force (within a 10 mile radius)
- Middlesbrough College has agreed a number of work placements (with Balfour) as well as using the construction project as part of their syllabus for a number of courses, with the potential of this leading to apprenticeships.
- Discussion already held with University of Teesside to again provide opportunities for work experience and/or other placements for current students on relevant courses
- Invite to all Middlesbrough schools (primary) for site visits/health and safety talks – open ended invite till the end of the contract.

Local media covered this event, with many Councillors having attended, see article for specifics.
<http://www.gazettelive.co.uk/news/teesside-news/riverside-bridge-link-road-scheme-13901621>



2. Middlesbrough Rail Station and Rail Enhancements

Works on the masterplan for Middlesbrough Rail Station is continuing, with all stakeholders involved and actively contributing to the process. This is in light of the already committed new rail enhancements that the station will see; a half-hourly service between Middlesbrough, Stockton and Newcastle, providing 30 trains per day in each direction. The current service is generally hourly. At least 10 services per day will be 'Northern Connect' services, operated by larger, fully-refurbished, air-conditioned Class 158 trains by December 2019.

There will be an improved service frequency in the evenings to Saltburn, with two additional services per day leaving Middlesbrough after 19:00. There will be more seats on refurbished trains, as all the outdated pacer units are withdrawn. An additional morning service will be provided from Whitby, to arrive in Middlesbrough by 08:30. At present the first arrival in Middlesbrough is too late to be useful for commuters. This will benefit all intermediate stations between Whitby and Nunthorpe. Northern Rail are continuing to work with the local community to explore the scope to provide a new evening service from Middlesbrough to Whitby. As part of the planning approval for a substantial new potash mine in the area, the developer is required to fund infrastructure enhancements that will enable an increase in service frequency between Middlesbrough and Whitby. Colleagues at North Yorkshire County Council are continuing to work with both Middlesbrough Council and Tees Valley Combined Authority to seek additional improvement to the Esk Valley Line associated with the potash development.

This in addition to the recently announced later TransPennine Express service from York to Middlesbrough this December as part of a timetable change. This masterplan work will continue to build upon planned services, and seek to secure further rail service improvements and station enhancements.

3. Town Centre Manager

The Economic Development and Infrastructure service has currently recruited to the new post of Town Centre Manager, Michelle McPhee. This role has been deliberately designed to be strategic rather than operational, designed to have responsibility to maintain and improve the quality and vitality of the town centre for all users. It has strategic lead for the delivery of the development and improvement of the town centre and the growth of its retail, leisure and commercial properties and will act as a key conduit between public and private sectors. The dedicated delivery and management of Town Centre Investment Programme will form a key function of this role. The Town Centre Manager is due to commence their post in January 2018.

4. Town Centre Update

Flannels

The luxury retailer opened its doors to customers on Friday 10th November following a £9.5m refurbishment of the former BHS store. The building is also now home to newly refurbished USC and Sports Direct stores. The project has created over 100 new full and part-time jobs across the three stores.

Christmas Opening Hours

All of the shopping centres have aligned their opening hours in the build up to Christmas. They will be open till 8pm every Thursday throughout December, and until 8pm all week from 18th December (Thursday 9pm, Saturday normal).

Albert Road

Public Realm improvements to the paving between Holiday Inn and Centre Square have recently completed. This will be followed by additional table topping and granite treatment to the road surface in the New Year. This will improve connectivity between the retail quarter and Centre

Square whilst complementing much of the private investment in the area from the likes of Bistrot Pierre and Lane 7. Bistrot Pierre has received excellent customer ratings since it's opening in September whilst Lane 7 is set to open its doors in December.

St James House

The redevelopment of the 4 storey office building has commenced to provide office space at ground floor and 59 student apartments above with some external alterations. The student apartments would be accessed off an entrance onto Albert Road where there would be a student office and show apartment, with the office being accessed of the side street. Work is due for completion is Summer 2018.

Jomast

Jomast have commenced work to bring their properties, 15 to 25 Albert Road back into use. This will include external works to the frontage of the buildings including new windows, roof and brick work repairs, as well as the installation of new shop fronts. Internal works will be carried out to the ground floor of each of the properties enabling them to be brought back into use as businesses. The works will rejuvenate this area which acts as a key link between the Railway and Historic Quarter and Centre Square.

Council officers will be working with Jomast to create marketing brochures and tidy up the street in order to attract future businesses/tenants.