North York Moors National Park Authority

Finance, Risk, Audit and Standards Committee

16 November 2026

Item 14, Property update

1. Purpose of the report

1.1 To update Members on the progress on the construction of the new HQ and other property matters.

2. The New Headquarters

2.1 Construction continues at a pace and currently remains on schedule and within budget. The structure, roof and stone cladding at ground floor level are complete and the first-floor cladding will follow the installation of the windows which are currently being fabricated. Internal walls are starting to go up together with the wiring. Externally, the ground works are largely complete with the tarmac being laid on the rear car park. Once this is complete, the contractors will move their compound to the rear car park and will then start the ground works on that elevation.

2.2 Final decisions on mapping the precise design of the wiring, sockets and switches for the whole building, but in particular for the committee room, are in the final stages. Several meetings with the wider team of consultants have been useful to ensure that there is early communication, problem identification and solving. A lot of design expertise has also been invested in the project by our preferred audio-visual supplier to help ensure a significantly improved audio and visual experience for the committee room.

The total cost adjustment for all aspects of this work will be calculated when the final design has been costed. Savings are also being identified and being used to offset any increases. As an example, whilst we have installed additional sockets, savings have been made in changing lampshade designs. The total 'addition and subtraction' exercise will follow in the next couple of months and be reported in the next update.

2.3 In response to questions raised by the EDI Group with regards to door mechanisms, front entrance automatic sliding doors have been instructed. The second part of this initiative, to upgrade all internal doors to have assisted opening mechanisms plus fob entry access, has been costed at £20,000. A 'fob' system is also more user friendly and less susceptible to codes being shared and keys lost as fobs can easily be reprogrammed or cancelled. A figure was included for this in the last report to Members, but the final cost for all of the door changes is higher than previously reported by £5k.

2.5 To upgrade the staff cycling store for e-bike charging and to lay the infrastructure for public EV bike chargers to the front of the building is an additional cost of £10k – with £7k of this for the staff cycling store and £3k for the public facility.2.4 The staff cycling store was designed with a hardstanding floor but this was then not costed in the specification. In addition, infrastructure for e-bike charging is not incorporated but was something that staff were keen to have in the workshops. The cost to put in the hardstanding floor and to lay in the cabling and electric points for e-charging is £7k. We also have the opportunity to lay the infrastructure for public EV bike chargers to the front of the building at a cost of £3k for the public facility which would be funded from S106. This work has had to be commissioned due to the timing of laying electric cables and tarmacking the car park. It is felt that as part of our active travel aims, facilities that promote the use of bikes and increases the opportunities of biking to work that e-bikes would offer is important for staff.

Building Control require bin stores to be connected to the main foul drain. The resurfacing and ground works, drainage and cable laying for for this has been priced at £3.6k. This cost is being challenged but has been put into the financial summary in section 6.

2.5 We continue to work with the contractors to design a dark sky friendly environment. The infrastructure has been laid for our preferred location and height of the light posts to both front and rear car parks. A final recommendation on light fittings for the walkways and building elevations to meet these requirements are being researched.

The colour scheme of the interior building was presented to staff and Members on 28 October. The introduction of more colour was commonly requested by staff in the first workshop. Therefore, a more muted colour palette suggested by the interior decorators has been developed to meet the recommendation of our communications team to use our brand colour palette.

Furniture choices are also being progressed. A selection of chairs and an example of the new desk set up were available to staff to try out in the most recent workshop. Feedback from this session will help inform the next stage of the purchasing process.

2.6 Staff and Members took part in the construction site visit on Friday 28 August. Feedback from the outing was really positive as walking around the building helped to bring the project to life and give staff an idea of the size of the facility.

3. The new depot and the Old Depot

3.1 Staff and volunteers have moved out of Sawmill Lane and are fully operational in the new depot.

3.2 The depot at Sawmill Lane was marketed by McBeath Property Consultancy earlier this year inviting offers around £260k. A number of viewings took place over the summer, but with no firm commitments from any party, the decision was made to reduce the asking price. An offer has since been forthcoming and accepted by the

CEO under delegated approvals. Whilst the sale is in progress, the sale price will remain commercially sensitive.

4. The Old Vicarage

4.1 Cundalls launched the marketing of The Old Vicarage on Saturday 10 October.

5. Other property update

5.1 There was a break in at Sutton Bank Visitor Centre on 25 October. Thieves smashed a hole in the outside wall to gain entry to the store area. The safe was stolen which contained approximately £800 in cash. A similar value of stock was also damaged and made unsaleable in the break in. An insurance claim is currently underway. The Sutton Bank team on site dealt with the situation incredibly well as they managed police, crime scene and the disruption. A review of security at Sutton Bank will take place to see if there are any enhancements that we need to make.

5.2 The capital programme this year includes works on the Danby Lodge overflow car park and refurbishment of two toilet blocks. A contractor has been procured for the overflow works which will take place over the winter. Due to resources to deliver, the current plan is to carry out one toilet block refurbishment this year and one in 2027/28.

6. Financial and staffing implications

6.1 The table below illustrates the latest expected financial outturn position for the HQ project against the approved budget without contingency from the January Full Authority meeting.

Approved budget excluding contingency	£3,562,000	(Including contingency £4,048,000)
Value engineered savings pre-contract sign	-£48,238	Various small savings pre-contract signing
Additional cost of steels, fuel etc	£40,867	As previously reported to Members
EDI and security improvements to external doors and two internal doors	£26,583	Sliding doors and internal security between public and private areas.
Changing cubicles	£1,680	2 changing cubicles added to the facilities
Infrastructure for Solar canopy for EV - futureproofing	£5,311	-
Bin store	£3,680	Building Control bin store drainage requirements.
E-bike facilities for staff and visitors.	£3,443	E-bike wiring and electrics for charging for staff.
Cycle store hardstanding floor	£3,900	Hardstanding for the cycle store, missed off original designs
Move of outside tap and electrics	£8,000	Moved to back door, design to provide clean down options by entrance.
Current budget expectation	£3,607,226	-
Potential contingency call	£45,226	-

6.2 Key areas that are still under consideration include the furniture and IT solutions for the new build and final electric adjustments. Currently this report assumes that these will be on budget, but a full update on these areas will be brought to the February committee.

6.3 The current call on contingency funding is £45,226. Work will continue to offset the additional cost within the project, but on the basis of current expectations, it is anticipated that this will be contingency funding.

7. Financial and Staffing implications

7.1 The report covers a number of aspects of cultural change for staff which will need to be closely managed. The focus on staff is key as we move closer to the move and the project team includes the Head of People as well as representatives for each directorate to ensure that communications and people focussed approach to the move. Line managers are also encouraged to have conversations with staff about the move to ensure everyone is supported. A strategy session with Members in October highlighted the importance of this.

7.2 As the build progresses, thoughts start to turn to the transition plan next year. The project group will consider the best way to transition staff from the Old Vicarage to the new HQ with IT considerations also key to logistics of this.

8. Contribution to National Park Management Plan

8.1 Ensuring the working environment is fit for purpose for an ambitious organisation is one of four pillars of our organisational strategy.

9. Legal and sustainability implications

9.1 The new headquarters building has been worked through with architects and the builders at every stage to ensure legal and health and safety compliance. Sustainability has also been a consideration – both in the build and the energy efficiency of the new building.

10. Recommendation

10.1 That Members note the contents of the report.

Contact Officer:
Peter Williams, Director of Corporate Services
Helen Barry, Property Manager
01439 772700