

Nichols Group - Written evidence (RAR0022)

Question 4: What will be the major risks or challenges in delivering a programme of this scale and how should they be addressed?

We have highlighted a number of challenges that may arise during the programme and provided high level solutions for each. As an elite company of strategic change specialists with over four decades we have advised on large, iconic programmes, complex projects and major change initiatives. We have based our recommendations on our in depth experience and the lessons we have learned in a range of industries.

Challenge	Proposed Solution
Delays and cost growth, due to changes in the decisions made over the requirements during the life of the restoration. One Parliament is unable to bind the next; it is unlikely that there will be continuity in leadership for this nationally significant and complicated undertaking.	Create an organisation with the powers of a Utility Company, with accountability to the key stakeholders of Palace of Westminster (POW) and with complementary objectives. The new organisation could be vested as a Parliamentary Delivery Authority, with their governance aligned with five year Parliaments. The Authority would have certain agreed decisions to guide it over each five year period. Each Parliament would have an opportunity to decide the scope and budget for the five years ahead.
Reluctance of either House to accept a lengthy decant outside the Palace.	If this is an absolute constraint to be placed on a Delivery Authority, then there are solutions to conducting even major works with only intermittent disruption. Nichols is familiar with these solutions from our experience on major rail schemes which required similar projects, for example; the restoration of St Pancras and the current building of Crossrail alongside the existing infrastructure, including six underground stations and network rail main line routes. There are costs incurred when confining works to nights or recess periods, but these are calculable before decisions are taken for the quinquennial periods described above.
A specialist skills shortage as English Heritage embarks, over the same period, on the expanded programme of similar works for which it has an estate from Government.	Using the brand of the POW as gold standard in heritage skills development. Develop a POW Heritage Skills Academy with English Heritage to safe guard expertise for future generations of projects. The Academy could act as a key provider of expertise for maintaining the nation's heritage.

Challenge	Proposed Solution
<p>Inefficiencies driven by the complexity of the work, lack of specialist materials and limited access to site; particularly considering cultural and behavioural customs and ceremonies.</p> <p>Unforeseen challenges in a live programme environment.</p>	<p>The key to addressing these challenges is how to effectively deploy innovative thinking. Utilising an Innovation Integrator to develop a community of innovators including the Client, the supply chain, English Heritage (trial of potential solutions) and industry partners. This will encourage a different perspective on current procedures and enable the team to be more flexible with unforeseen challenges if they arise.</p> <p>Nichols is providing this support having developed the capability for Crossrail, which is considered a huge success and benchmark for future major projects.</p>
<p>Lack of asset information and opportunity to use BIM.</p>	<p>Introduction of Asset Information Management Modelling techniques, with an improvement in the systems used to quantify and prioritise works. With enhanced asset management information comes the opportunity for POW to operate as a flagship in the use of BIM on heritage estate.</p>
<p>The cost of not deploying innovative solutions during the delivery lifecycle of the programme.</p>	<p>In its role as the Innovation Integrator, Nichols enables clients to benefit from collaborative problem solving in order to identify and gain support for preferred solution, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A structured process for the introduction of fresh ideas. • Brokering ideas from our database of past innovative solutions. • Bringing in technical expertise that is tailored for each specific client challenge. • A non-partisan approach to finding the best value solution. • Resolving their biggest strategic challenges, creatively. • Giving tangible articulation of the risk and reward balance having adopted an innovative solution. <p>We would be delighted to come and share our lessons learned from our work at Crossrail, which led to the development of the Innovation Integrator offering.</p>

The creation of an effective Flagship for SME integration models and socio economic sustainability in the built environment.

The works and services required are complex and will need to be drawn from a wide supply chain. The POW client body can act as a model of effective integration of SME businesses, as a proactive enabler to facilitate SMEs in the provision of works and services within a complex physical and political environment. The use of market engagement tools, such as CompeteFor and ContractFinder, can be deployed to ensure the transparency of the opportunities and provide feedback to shareholders.

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