

## **Brief notes from site meeting –Merton Abbey Chapter House 20th April 2012**

**Purpose ; to look at scope/range of potential improvement works which could form a part of the HLF Living Wandle stage 2 application, to set out draft requirements for inclusion in stage 2 LWLPS application (Jan 2013)**

### **Present;**

Stephen Crabtree (Living Wandle development officer)

Marcus Beale (Architect) Merton Priory Trust

John Hawks Merton Priory Trust

### **Notes**

The remains of the chapter house sit below the Merantum way flyover next to Sainsbury's and are quite hidden and difficult to find (as well as being pretty inaccessible).

The site is of immense historic importance and in 2010 was included by Department for Culture, Media and Sport in the tentative list to become a World Heritage Site. It is also, already a great learning resource for local schoolchildren and would benefit enormously from improvements to make the space more welcoming, accessible and exciting

Description of works / project (from previous email briefing);

The Merton Priory Trust has an aspiration to make the remains of the chapter house a lot more accessible. The scope of works identified to achieve this would include (but not restricted to);

- Volunteer facilities - New WCs and kitchenette in 'pods' within the Space

- Replace the south facing brick wall with a sophisticated glass wall With blinds/shutters - adding light and solar warmth to the space

- Quick response heating to moderate but not fully heat the space all Year round. Could be under floor heating within the chapter house Itself.

[Ventilation and heating. Note: due to TFL's requirement to keep the Underside of the road ventilated and open to visual inspection, it will Be difficult to make the space an all year round heated enclosure. Even if we could solve the TFL problem, the cost of heating the space Would be enormous. It may be possible to have a partial enclosure Above the chapter house itself where the floor is lowered, but this Would have to be removable.]

The external space to be landscaped, perhaps as a 'monastic garden'

Marcus has agreed to start working up plans for this project this year, these could probably be progressed to at least RIBA Stage B/C which would be detailed enough

for inclusion in the stage 2 HLF bid (particularly if this were to be delivered during years 2/3 of the Living Wandle Partnership - SC to confirm detailed requirements at a later date). Looks as though Marcus would be doing this work without payment – so we should at least be recording his time/rates spent on this as evidence of “contribution in time” to the project

LB Merton own the site but are in the process of tying up a licence (at peppercorn rent) to lease it to the MPT (Merton Priory Trust). The trust and Merton council (Richard Lancaster) are meeting monthly to try and resolve this lease issue (which would be critical to the HLF submission).

There is a section 106 agreement which is tied to the “preservation of the chapter house” which has a sum of approx £250/300k for the works and it is anticipated that the MPT would access this funding for this piece of work. SC stated that there was currently approx £150,000 of “spare” funding within the LWLPS budget, so if the MPT could secure (and evidence the securing of) the 106 money, then this could be augmented with the £150k from the LWLPS, to undertake the scope of works desired (to include all fees/overheads etc). It might be prudent /efficient if Marcus were to almost design 2 options in outline: option 1 being what they could do if the HLF application is successful (the “gold taps” version), and an option 2 being a “fall-back” position, to undertake a scope of improvement works with only the 106 monies, should the HLF application not be successful. The biggest issue would probably be getting all of the HLF requirements addressed before stage 2 submission;

- Planning permission and scheduled ancient monument permissions would be required.
- Sc discussed requirements for the project to be included in the stage 2 HLF bid, these need to be confirmed in detail, with a possible agreed “programme” but it looks likely that we would require ;
  - 1.) Outline designs to RIBA Stage C/D
  - 2.) A fairly accurate stage C cost plan (probably provided by professional QS) to show some surety of costs and enable us to fix budgets for stage 2 (delivery)
  - 3.) Evidence that match funding is “secure” for this project
  - 4.) Evidence of some authority to carry out works, normally planning permissions / SAM permissions, but as this would be year 2/3 project we are not expected to have these “in full”, however some evidence that these issues were being progressed favourably would give some comfort.
  - 5.) Evidence of ownership/lease (another permission/authority to undertake works). If lease is not resolved by stage 2 either a Heads Of Terms, or a letter of comfort from the landlord might be sufficient.

### **Next steps/process**

In summary, as Marcus was proposing to start design work quite soon, and seemed to have a pretty good understanding of what the basic requirements would be in order

for the scheme to be included in the stage 2 HLF submission, we agreed that I could probably just leave him to start progressing design ideas with a view to meeting up again in about 6 weeks / 2 months. I have another meeting with the HLF between now and then so can probably discuss / confirm stage 2 requirements before we meet again.

**ACTIONS; SC; confirm stage 2 requirements with HLF. MB/MPT ; start progressing design work, keep pushing on the lease issues and getting confirmation that the 106 money is available and can be used for this project**

Notes by S.Crabtree 01.04.12