

## **MERTON PRIORY TRUST**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2012**

#### **1. PRESENT**

##### **ACTION**

Chair: Marcus Beale (MB), Cllr Richard Chellew (RC), Cllr Maurice Groves (MG), Cllr Geraldine Stanford (GS), David Saxby (DS), Nicholas Hart (NH), Cyril Maidment (CM), John Hawks (JH).

#### **2. APOLOGIES**

Richard Lancaster (RL), Angela Gorman (AG), Cllr Nick Draper, Vicki Carroll, Dave Roberts, Jane Sidell.

#### **3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Approved.

#### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

MB distributed copies of AG's final report and invited any comments by email. He reported that he had invoiced LBM for her fee. Meeting thanked her for her excellent input - AG would be kept informed of forthcoming Trust meetings and was most welcome to attend.

#### **5. STRATEGY/FUNDING**

MB reported on progress; he was asking his "friendly Q.S." to cost the scheme agreed at the last meeting. MB/NH/JH had met with RL to discuss protocols and the site plans which were ambiguous in respect of the tunnel and the concrete wall alongside the footpath ; the Land Registry plan would need some amendment, but it was agreed this would be done "in one hit", only when the project plan had been fully agreed - some "vagueness" was perhaps an advantage at this stage.

The priority was to concentrate on the scheme, which in turn depended on the funding possibilities. MB/JH had met Stephen Crabtree who was co-ordinating the Wandle Partnership HLF bid, and there was every expectation this might produce funding of £150,000, which added to our own available funds might produce a budget of £4-500,000. It was noted match funding could be augmented by costing voluntary or pro bono time. Stephen would need a costed proposal by end September.

MB was starting on the design straight away on the basis of a £500,000 budget. His three criteria were to enhance the physical area of the Chapter House itself, lowering the floor level and keeping the surrounding space low-key; to orientate (literally) the enclosure on the lines of the medieval structure rather than the latter day artificial boundaries; and to keep an open mind at this stage about the various components of the scheme. Marking out the external areas of the Priory was definitely on the menu. Once the scheme was under way, publicised and shown to be a significant advance, attitudes could change and further funding be attracted for further potential developments; but it was vital to start with a firm medium term plan.

#### **MB**

RC reminded the meeting that his contacts at National Grid were aware that the pylon was a problem needing a solution. DS would obtain a

survey of the floor levels, and advise MB on the archaeological layout. He also suggested existing fragments of the cloister arcade presently held at the Museum of London might be used as part of the internal display.

**DS**

## **6. ARCHITECTURAL INPUT**

MB presented working drawings to illustrate the orientation and levels, which the meeting discussed in some detail, and proposed that he continue to provide the necessary architectural input, at least *pro tem*, on a *pro bono* basis (plus necessary expenses). Meeting unanimously felt this was easily the best way to move the project forward, for reasons both of quality, economy and common sense, and thanked MB for his input so far and for his generous proposal.

## **7. REGULAR PROGRESS MEETINGS**

MB reported on recent meeting with MB/RL/NH/JH, and that to keep the project on the move it had been agreed that the same sub-committee would meet on the second Wednesday of every month, which meeting agreed.

## **8. MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT**

MB reported that RL had agreed to revert to LBM Legal Department with the suggestion that a management agreement rather than licence or lease was the way forward, and this would be discussed at the next monthly meeting 9<sup>th</sup> May.

**RL**

## **9. EVENTS**

The recent Easter Sunday opening had been well received, though as expected passing footfall had been limited owing to Sainsbury's closure on that day. Forthcoming events included May 4 (The Mayor's medieval banquet at St Barnabas Mitcham), June 2/3 (Wandle Weekend), July 14 (Pilgrimage), July 28/29 (Festival of British Archaeology, August 27 Kidsfest (?), September 22/23 (London Open House), September 29/30 (Merton Arts Trail) - JH would pass details to MB for website. DS would continue to post events on his Facebook pages. CM had pointed out that the "Friends" were advertising Nones this month on their website, but the whereabouts of this remained a mystery.

**DS/JH**

## **10. SHORT TERM PRIORITIES**

RL had obtained from Highways Department a quote of £10,000 for removing the sandbags, which had the meeting (as well as RL) gasping!! JH was looking at alternative means and costs, both for the existing sand and the bulk remaining inside, e.g. skips, grab lorries, conveyor etc.

**JH**

## **11. PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

It had been agreed that a dedicated project management role was required for at least the next twelve months, and had been proposed that JH might be employed in this capacity. Meeting agreed unanimously, and MB would write to RL for approval. In this event JH would resign as a trustee but continue to be fully involved as an associate/observer at Trust meetings.

**JH/MB**

**12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None to speak of.

**13 . NEXT MEETING DATE**

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> June at 5pm in the Chapter House.

JH/27.04.12