

Borough, Economy and Infrastructure Executive Advisory Board Report

Ward(s) affected: Holy Trinity

Report of Director of Environment

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Guildford Museum development project – progress report

Executive Summary

Following a review of Guildford Museum the Executive agreed to commission a feasibility study to develop the Museum on its existing site. This was to include a new build extension, an action plan and a fundraising strategy.

ZMMA was appointed to assist with the physical redevelopment of the museum site and buildings. A report was produced which included an analysis of usable space within the site and a schedule of the space requirements for the new facility. The report then provided a series of options for expansion.

From this, the museum working group agreed to the development of the under-utilised courtyard area, which would improve the connection between the museum and castle grounds.

A grant was secured from Arts Council England to carry out community engagement and consultation exercises to discover what the people of Guildford wanted from their museum. This programme, “Your Stories, Your Museum”, commenced in October 2016 and was completed in March 2018. During this time the Heritage Services team engaged with 1610 people at 21 events, as well as delivering 5 co-curated exhibitions with community groups.

Results from this work was analysed to inform the themes of the new museum. The report for this is shown at Appendix 1.

Finally, the Council plans to raise external funding to supplement the Council’s financial investment in order to achieve its vision for the new museum. An outline fundraising strategy and an options paper on appropriate forms of charitable trust has been produced.

Further work during 2018/19 will concentrate on developing the content, activities and interpretation for the museum with further detailed work on the buildings and fundraising activities.

The aim is to complete the feasibility study and business case by December 2018 to enable a decision to be made to proceed to the final design and delivery stage.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide members of the Borough, Economy and Infrastructure Executive Advisory Board with an update on the museum development project.

2. Strategic Priorities

- 2.1 The review aims to improve the museum offering for Guildford. This supports the themes of Our Borough, Our Economy and Our Society by contributing to the Council's Tourism Strategy and enhancing the quality of life for residents and visitors. It is also a stated target within the corporate plan:

"To produce proposals for the development of a new cultural and educational centre in the town centre taking into account the future of Guildford Museum".

- 2.2 The new offering will celebrate the story of Guildford, using a wide range of content, display and interpretation methods with changing programmes to appeal to a broader audience. The evolving theme is one of celebrating the creativity and innovation of Guildford supported by stories of interesting people and their achievements.
- 2.3 The newly developed museum will also provide a social space and focal point where visitors will feel welcome, can enjoy and find inspiration in exhibits, art, history and science and meet friends in a unique and special setting.

3. Background

- 3.1 Visitor numbers to the existing museum have been declining, exhibits look tired and rarely change and the service was deemed to offer poor value for money.
- 3.2 As a result a councillor and officer working group, the Museum Review Group (MRG), was formed to conduct a review. Stuart Davies Associates (SDA) were commissioned to produce a detailed report to inform and support the process.
- 3.3 The SDA report, An Approach to Museum Development, concluded that the existing museum offering fell short of public expectations, but confirmed Guildford to be large and historically important enough to deserve and benefit from a good modern museum. It however stated that a new Guildford Museum should have:
- modern visitor facilities
 - displays based on strong stories including that of the castle
 - lively and attractive programmes of events and activities

- learning opportunities for all
 - effective branding and marketing
 - provision for people with disabilities
 - sound business planning and opportunities for income generation
- 3.4 It also stated that while making long term plans the Council should also start refreshing the current museum offering, building partnerships with external groups and industries and embedding the museum in its community to make it more relevant to local people.
- 3.5 The result of the review was presented for discussion to the Borough, Economy and Infrastructure Executive Advisory Board on 4 April 2016 and then considered by The Executive on the 19 April 2016.
- 3.6 The Executive:
- (i) Confirmed support for the vision of developing an updated and exciting museum offering at the existing site
 - (ii) Agreed to commission a feasibility and costing report for the proposed new build extension to the current Museum buildings
 - (iii) Approved the transfer of £240,000 to the approved capital programme to carry out this work
 - (iv) Authorised the Director of Environment to create a Development Group, consisting of internal representatives and external partners, to assist in the delivery of improvements to the Museum
 - (v) Authorised the Director of Environment to develop a fundraising strategy and related fundraising committee with a view to identifying and securing external grants and funding for improvements to the Museum
 - (vi) Agreed to the MRG looking at the Victorian Schoolroom with a view to determining its continuation and to consider the sale of 39 ½ Castle Street, if not needed
 - (vii) Approved the Action Plan and the continuation of the Museum Working Group to deliver the Action Plan
- 3.7 The MRG also agreed to explore partnerships and the value of co-location with external groups, including the Surrey Archaeological Society, Carollian Wonderland Trust and the Surrey Infantry Museum.

Vision, aims and objectives of the Museum Development Project

- 3.8 The overarching aim is to establish Guildford Castle and Guildford Museum, as a unified site and attraction in the centre of the town and help develop a Heritage Quarter.
- 3.9 The new Museum will be a cultural and social centre for the community, where visitors can meet and look at art and exhibits that will add to their quality of life and wellbeing. It will also attract increased number of visitors to the Castle and Museum and contribute to tourism and visitor economy of the town.

- 3.10 To achieve this we will update and reconfigure the existing Museum site, supporting it with a new extension that will open into the adjoining castle gardens and castle ruins.
- 3.11 The project will incorporate a new museum entrance and exhibition space into the castle grounds to exploit its footfall and public use and link to galleries in the existing museum.
- 3.12 Refurbished displays will tell the story of Guildford using a wide range of display and interpretation methods, including interactive and digital technology. It will offer changing programmes to appeal to a broader audience and stimulate learning about our past. It will provide new learning spaces with the potential to expand the programme of activities and generate increased income.
- 3.13 The Museum will provide improved conditions for collections including better environmental controls for the display of different materials.
- 3.14 The project will create a temporary exhibition gallery that will fulfil the Government Indemnity standard, enabling the museum to display touring exhibitions and loans from other museums and private collections.

4.0 Work to date

Property

- 4.1 An officer working group, the Museum and Castle Feasibility Group, oversee this element of the project and report to the Museum working Group. It appointed museum specialist architects, ZMMA to assist with this work.
- 4.2 A feasibility report for the redevelopment of the museum was produced in February 2017 and identified options for the museum and castle site. This included a reconfiguration and refurbishment of the existing museum along with the addition of a new building. ZMMA benchmarked requirements with exercises undertaken at other museums and developed a schedule for the space required within the new facility and undertook an analysis of the possible usable space within the existing buildings. From this, an estimated area for the new build that would be required, was produced.
- 4.3 The schedule incorporated the following functional and spatial requirements (detailed analysis of these can be found in the ZMMA report):
- Permanent display space
 - Temporary exhibition space
 - Lewis Carroll Gallery
 - Environment / security requirements
 - Café
 - Toilets
 - Shop
 - Lockers / cloaks
 - Learning spaces

- Events and activity space
- Storage / collection
- Small workshop
- Staff facilities

4.4 A summary of the space analysis prepared by ZMMA is shown below:

Existing situation

Space currently used by Museum:

Guildford Museum not inc. Quarry Street Flat = 640m²

Victorian Schoolroom (estimated) = 130m²

Total = 770m²

Space that could be made publicly accessible with minimal / limited alterations to structure/fabric = 180m²

Space that could be made publicly accessible but only through considerable changes to structure/fabric, and the addition of lifts etc = 160m²

Space that is not possible to make accessible to the public = 30m²

Due to the heritage value coupled with the general inaccessibility of the museum however, it is acknowledged that a large amount of the existing museum might be unusable as public space, even after development.

Proposed space required

Below is summary of schedule of proposed areas:

Proposed space required = 1350 m²

Proposed use of existing space

48 Quarry Street staff facilities = 165m²

Potential publicly accessible space = 180m²

Castle Cottage = 60m²

Therefore, Required New Build = 945m²

The above required new build area include 250m² of display area to include Lewis Carroll Gallery or similar.

4.5 The ZMMA report explored the potential area of new build that could be achieved by developing different sections of the museum and castle grounds site. The intention at this stage being to ascertain the amount of development that would be possible on the site and the areas that were considered suitable to develop further.

4.6 The possible locations for extending the museum included:

- a. Re-roofing the ruinous New Chamber and King's Chamber (option 1 and 5),
- b. Building on the gardens to the rear of Castle Arch House (option 6),
- c. Building within castle gardens (option 3, 4, 7 and 8),
- d. Building in Castle Cliffe Garden (option 11),
- e. Building on the site of the modern strong room attached to Castle Arch House (option 2)
- f. Utilising the unlisted Castle Cottage (option 10)

4.7 The eventual scheme will likely be a combination of a number of options but there were two main options put forward. These were to either build within the museum courtyard garden or build on Castle Cliffe Gardens:

4.8 Building within the museum courtyard garden

A new extension within the museum courtyard will develop currently under-used space and provide links between the existing museum buildings. There is the potential to have three storeys in the courtyard but there will need to be careful consideration of views / links to the rear elevation of the museum.

4.9 Building on Castle Cliffe Gardens

This option considers building on the land lying south of the museum, Castle Cliffe Gardens. This option would link the new build to the museum via a bridge. Castle Cliffe Gardens is protected open space in the town centre.

4.10 Consideration was also given to the future use of Castle Cottage. One option is that the vacant property (apart from the front room used by the Bowls Club) could be converted into a dedicated learning centre, including moving the Victorian schoolroom from 39 ½ Castle Street to this location. The other option is to build a new purpose made learning facility on the site of the Cottage. This would provide the museum with a learning centre which could also be used for other functions such as public events or hire. Relocating the educational facility to this location has many benefits as it: brings the schoolroom onto the site of the Museum and Castle Grounds, provides a safe space for school groups to gather away from the road, and provides an attractive and safe route through the castle grounds when visiting the museum.

4.11 Given the historic nature of the site involving listed buildings and a site of known archaeological interest and sensitivity, the Museum and Castle Feasibility Group engaged with Historic England at an early stage in the design process. This has been a complex and time consuming activity but was necessary to identify the limitations of the site and to assist the Council in determining whether development could take place. In support of this work the Council referred to its existing conservation management plan for the site (this alone totals five volumes).

4.12 Historic England officers examined the options being considered and reached views on what might be and what might not be acceptable to them. Inevitably, this is a balance between what would be lost by developing the site compared to

the potential historic and heritage gains. Unfortunately, however, this is not an exact science and discussions will continue through the life of the project.

- 4.13 Other feedback from Historic England was that the existing museums facilities are inadequate and outdated and it therefore welcomed the Council's vision to unite the museum and castle as part of a single heritage quarter.
- 4.14 That said, in their opinion, a requirement to provide 945m² of additional space within a site of such exceptional heritage significance presents a considerable challenge and more work is required to justify the amount of required new development without causing an unacceptable level of harm to the significance of this nationally important collection of heritage assets.
- 4.15 In considering the two main options, Historic England's view was that a new building in Castle Cliffe Gardens is likely to be harmful to the aesthetic and illustrative qualities of the area. In addition, significant archaeological remains are preserved in Castle Cliffe Gardens (these have previously been uncovered, documented and re-covered) so this option is considered likely to have a serious impact on existing archaeological deposits.
- 4.16 As a result, the least harmful of the main options considered would be to develop in the gardens at the rear of Castle Arch House and redevelop Castle Cottage.
- 4.17 Given the above and following consideration of the views of other stakeholders the Museum Working Group decided to pursue the option of extending into the museum garden courtyard.

Next steps in buildings development

- 4.18 Indicative costings will now be prepared for the preferred option as part of RIBA Stage 2 (concept design). The Museum Working Group will then agree the scope for work on the masterplan. Once developed a detailed cost plan will be produced and this will conclude the feasibility stage of the project.
- 4.19 Detailed design work would follow as part of RIBA Stage 3 of the project if the business case for the new museum is accepted and the Executive approves progression on to the delivery stage.

Service Development

Explanation of the elements of service development

4.20 In broad terms museum development focuses on a number of core elements:

Core element	Focus	Possible examples
Assets	what do you have?	object collections, stories, buildings, oral history, photographs, other information
Aims	what do you want to achieve with them?	increase tourism, improve local residents' wellbeing, promote links with a notable person or highlight a collection
Audiences	who are you doing it for and where do they come from?	families, researchers, young adults, underrepresented users in the community, visitors from a wider area
Activities	what will you do and how to meet their needs?	Interpretation - how you tell and present your stories: graphics, display methods, audio guides, smells, handling items, high or low tech interactives, reconstructions Activity - how you involve and engage the public: touring exhibitions, schools' sessions, publications, creative workshops, events

4.21 The Guildford Museum project is more about transforming the service: providing a stunning visitor attraction, connecting with the community, developing collaborative partnerships, undertaking research, planning and future programming, than it is about providing a new building. Developing the service offer for a new museum is, therefore, a lengthy, iterative process that ensures the organisation is clear on what it and its visitors want, that best use is made of its assets and that audiences are involved in shaping the new museum and its activities. Work undertaken to date has focused on these elements while also seeking more immediate improvements to the existing service.

4.22 The work undertaken to date is described below:

Assets

4.23 The core of the new museum will be its collections including its main (and largest) exhibit, Guildford Castle. The Heritage Services team are working with volunteers to produce a comprehensive list of assets in its care. By systematically checking items in the Guildford Borough Council and Surrey Archaeological Society collections, the team is compiling a list that will identify material of relevance and value for future displays and exhibition themes.

Audiences and Activities

- 4.24** A considerable amount of audience research into museum visitors and non-visitors was undertaken as part of the applications to the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2013 and 2015. In 2017 the team undertook further face to face surveys with visitors to the Castle and Museum to build upon this.
- 4.25** The Heritage Services team also established the Guildford Specialist's Group to involve stakeholders who have expert knowledge of Guildford's history. The group included: Matthew Alexander, former curator of Guildford Museum; Rob Poulton, lead archaeologist on the 1990-94 excavations of Guildford Castle; Gavin Morgan, originator of the Guildford Heritage Forum; David Rose and Carol Brown, both local historians and Hugh Anscombe, former chairman of the Guildford Town Guides. The work undertaken produced an outline list of events, characters and turning points in the town's past, together with sources of information for future research. Following further consultation and analysis the list was distilled into 15 main themes, providing a pool of information and a starting point for devising interpretation and activity for the existing and new museum.
- 4.26** In addition to the above, the Heritage Services Team secured a grant from Arts Council England for the project *Your Stories, Your Museum*. The project was in response to findings in the SDA Museum Review report that we needed to build links with local people and work with them to make services more engaging and relevant. The project commenced in October 2016 and was completed in March 2018.
- 4.26.1 The team consulted with 1610 members of the public at 21 community events around the borough, from the County Show and the Friary Centre to the Normandy Village Fair, ages ranged from 2 – 70 plus. This was a fantastic success, creating the opportunity for the Heritage Service to gain a pool of useful information to help plan improvements to the existing and future Museum.
- 4.26.2 The consultation focused on three questions; asking people about their memories of living in Guildford, key events that have happened in Guildford in their lifetime and what they felt defines the town and the borough.
- 4.26.3 The consultation had several purposes:
- to indicate the best way to structure content in the new museum.
 - to gather people's memories, opinions and stories for possible content, stories and activities.
 - to raise the profile of the Museum, including with those who do not visit the Museum, and give staff the opportunity to share plans for its future development.
- 4.26.4 The team also tested visitors' responses to different methods of interpretation i.e. different ways of telling people about historic objects and themes. This was carried out within the Museum, through a new "test" display called the Discovery

- Table. The table provided interpretation of a museum theme in a number of different ways, including a graphic panel of information, a relevant object from the collection in a display case, an iPad containing interactive content relating to the theme, audio content and a children's activity. Visitors were invited to provide feedback about their preferences during two different themed displays, the medieval Castle and the First World War.
- 4.26.5 Results from the consultation programme were analysed by the team and by consultants and used to inform a proposed interpretative approach. This is people-led, telling the story of Guildford through a series of encounters with individuals whose interests, passions and experiences seem to connect them across time.
- 4.26.6 These results complemented topics or themes, identified through the work of the Guildford's Specialists' Group. Many of these relate to the stories of individuals within Guildford's history, reinforcing the fit of this approach. For example, Innovation with Ada Lovelace; Politics with Queen Matilda, Creative Guildford with Lewis Carroll.
- 4.26.7 Many of these themes are still central to Guildford's identity today and could include more recent developments such as gaming and satellite technology
- 4.26.8 Given the willingness and flexibility of visitors to use different methods of interpretation, the new museum will use a variety of approaches and media to express themes and stories in the new museum.
- 4.26.9 The results and analysis are presented in full in the report attached as Appendix 1. The work has increased awareness of the museum and this, together with making the museum a visitor destination and community space, will attract a variety of new visitors.
- 4.27** Through the project the Heritage Services Team recruited 34 new volunteers to help with activities and programmes. Volunteers included university students recruited through outreach work at Surrey University.
- 4.28** The team has also created two new galleries within the museum. The Discovery Lounge was created from the former Surrey Archaeological Society library, giving public access to this interesting room in the 16th century Castle Arch house for the first time. The team also removed the old railway layout to create the Rabbit Hole gallery. This was used as a gallery for changing displays, particularly those co created with others from outside the museum, for example a number of displays about Lewis Carroll and Alice, curated by a member of the Lewis Carroll Society and the exhibition created as part of the community curators projects.

Next steps in service and content development

- 4.29** Work to be undertaken in 2018-19 includes:
- Developing the aims of the new museum in light of the consultation and other work undertaken

- Producing the interpretation and activity plans and continuing the process of testing and developing themes, approaches and models of engagement
- Continuing to build engagement and audiences for the existing and new museum through activities and communications
- Assessing the collections to ensure that the content and collections exist to support the proposed narratives and themes
- Developing a collection programme to bring narratives up to date and support the acquisition of new material.
- Working with the external project support to consider spatial, environmental and circulation needs of museum content
- Completing the feasibility study for the new museum, bringing together the architectural and service elements in a concept scheme.
- Obtaining a conservation audit of collections for display to help inform environmental conditions and fittings required in addition to planning a programme of conservation of items.

Fundraising

4.29 The Council has earmarked some funding to plan and deliver the new museum but this is unlikely to be sufficient to achieve its vision. It therefore, plans to obtain external funding from a range of other sources. The target for external fundraising will be refined as more detail on the project costings are obtained.

4.30 Sources of funding are likely to be a combination of:

- Trusts, Foundations and Livery Companies
- Corporates
- Community fundraising
- Individuals
- Legacy and In Memoriam opportunities
- External grants

4.31 The Council is considering the establishment of a fundraising trust and appeal for the project. The former will be essential to raise money from other charitable trusts and foundations, the large majority of which will only accept applications from organisations which have charitable status. In addition, registered charities enjoy certain tax exemptions and there are tax reliefs for taxpayers who make donations to charity.

4.32 The trust will also provide benefits for the Council in creating a body that makes the development project, rather than the Council, the cause and in creating a body of ambassadors for the project. The fundraising trust will harness the time and energy of well-connected individuals who gain satisfaction from being associated with a good cause and its success.

Work undertaken

- 4.33** An outline fundraising strategy was produced by an external consultant to advise on the fundraising process, the use of a charitable trust to raise additional, external funding for the museum development project, possible trustees for the trust and initial indications of possible sources of funding.
- 4.34** An internal fundraising group of councillors and officers, led by Councillor Nikki Nelson-Smith was created to lead work on fundraising.
- 4.35** An options paper was commissioned from Browne Jacobson to provide legal advice on setting up a charity to specifically target funds, initially to the museum development project. This considered appropriate governance models and structure, the process of set up and possible EU procurement issues. Their conclusion was that the most appropriate model for the Council is a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO). This is a new form of not for profit organisation that can act as an independent business in its own name but whose limited liability safeguards trustees from contributing to any financial loss. A CIO only needs to register with the Charity Commission, as opposed to other similar organisations which have to register with both Companies House and the Charity Commission, so involves less bureaucracy.

Next steps in Fundraising

- Establishing the scope and objects for a charitable trust, the boundaries of its relationship with the Council and the project, and transmission methods for giving funding to the project
- Identifying a suitable chairperson for the trust
- Developing and researching a long list of potential trustees
- Creating a proposal and timescale for establishing a trust and seeking Council approval
- Identifying a shortlist of potential trustees and making initial approaches
- Undertaking legal requirements of setting up trust
- On agreement of feasibility study, producing prospectus and materials to commence initial, non-public, stage of fundraising, high net worth individuals, business sponsorship

Timeline

5.0 The following project timeline incorporates the property work along with service development and fundraising.

RIBA Stage 1	Completed Stage 1 Museum and Castle Gardens Feasibility Report	October 2016 – March 2017
Intermediate Stage 2 Activities	Castle Cliffe Levels and Link Studies Work Castle Cliffe v Courtyard Comparative Study Wider Context & Significance Report Development of Masterplan Courtyard Proposal Historic England Consultation and Feedback Completed Stage 1 Interpretation Plan	April 2017- March 2018
RIBA Stage 2	Concept Design Prepare and review Cost Plan Business Planning	April 2018 – December 2018
RIBA Stage 3	Developed Design Update and review Cost Plan Planning / Statutory Approvals Completion of interpretation and activity plans Development of exhibition design	November 2018 – April 2019
Statutory Approvals	Pre Application Period Planning Permission / Listed Building Consent / Scheduled / Scheduled Monument Consent Preparation and Submit Planning Permission / LBC Determination Period Secretary of State Determination Period Scheduled Monument Consent Determination Period – timescale to be defined	April 2018 – November 2019
RIBA Stage 4	Technical Design Prepare Pre tender Estimate Client sign off Building Control Approval	August 2019 – September 2020

	Planning conditions discharge period Tender Period	
RIBA Stage 5	Construction Preparation of exhibition and interpretative content Delivery of interim outreach activity during any closure period	May 2020 – January 2021

5.0 Financial implications

- 5.01 £2.337 million was originally included in the capital programme pending a HLF bid for works to the museum (including £73,000 grant which was later removed).
- 5.02 The HFL bid was unsuccessful and the scheme was reviewed and it was agreed to develop the museum and proceed with the project in its current form. The money in the capital programme remained and was transferred to the new project approved by the Executive on 19 April 2016 (£2.264 million in the provisional programme).
- 5.03 A capital bid for the 2017-18 estimates was approved and the total in the budget is now £6.659 million (£267,000 on the approved programme, and the remaining on the provisional programme) to progress and complete the service and content elements of the museum development project between 2018-19 to 2020-21.

6.0 Discussion points for the EAB

- a) Should the new museum aim to be a local attraction or seek to be a visitor attraction for the wider area?
- b) The evolving vision for the new museum, supported by the Museum Working Group, is to promote and celebrate Guildford's history of creativity and innovation. This would be supported by exhibitions (both "permanent" and "temporary") celebrating local individuals and their successes. Does this seem the right approach?

7.0 Background papers

- 7.1 **Appendix 1** Guildford Museum "Your Stories, Your Museum" Interpretation Plan and Evaluation, Philip Simpson Design Ltd