

Windmill Sub-Committee – 5 September 2003

Minutes of the meeting of the **Windmill Sub-Committee** held on **5 September 2003** when there were present:-

Cllr A J Humphries (Chairman)

Cllr Mrs J R Lumley
Cllr G A Mockford

Cllr Mrs M J Webster

OFFICERS PRESENT

D Timson	-	Property Maintenance & Highways Manager
B Broadbent	-	Principal Officer (Architecture)
E Rowland	-	Arts Development Officer
S Worthington	-	Committee Administrator

ALSO PRESENT

N Grant	-	Historical Society of Rayleigh
M Stone	-	Chairman, Rayleigh Mount Local Committee
M Symes	-	Historical Society of Rayleigh
K Turner	-	National Trust

11 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2003 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs J R Lumley declared a personal interest by virtue of membership of the National Trust Rayleigh Mount Local Committee and of Rayleigh Town Council.

13 RAYLEIGH WINDMIL – DISCUSSIONS WITH ESSEX MUSEUMS SERVICE

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) providing Members with an update following a meeting held with the Essex Museums Service on 8 July 2003.

The Essex Museums Service advised that the Rayleigh Windmill had the potential to be developed as a local history museum and heritage attraction. This corroborated the views of the Heritage Lottery Fund. It was further considered that the National Trust potential development of the barbican gate, providing a good linkage between the windmill site and the facilities in The Mill and Rayleigh Mount, would enhance the bid's opportunity of success.

Issues relating to access and space, perceived as presenting a challenge in terms of opening the windmill up to the public, were identified by the Essex Museums Service. These issues were being actively addressed by officers.

Essex Museums Service also stressed that it would be useful for visits to be undertaken of similar sites that had undergone conversion into a museum or heritage attraction.

It was clear, however, that additional space, of approximately 80 square metres, would be required in order for the windmill to operate as a registered museum for the purposes of properly storing museum artefacts, for archiving and for office and toilet facilities for museum staff and the general public. The estimated new building costs were £2,000 per square metre, thus totalling £250,000 with fees and oncosts.

During debate, the following options were identified as possibilities for addressing the need of additional building space:-

- building on land adjacent to windmill / adjoining 21 London Hill
- acquiring an existing building on Bellingham Lane which backed onto the windmill site
- bidding for space in the crèche for the purpose of providing an educational facility
- building an extension to the back of the Mill

It was the general consensus of the Sub-Committee that it would be important to be able to extend any building space as might be required at a future date.

It was further noted that the Heritage Lottery Fund would be able to support revenue posts for up to 5 years. This would be an important element of the bid. It would facilitate extended opening hours for the museum and, in addition, provide staff effort for archiving and training volunteer helpers.

14 EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY ELEMENTS

The Sub-Committee received a verbal report from the Arts Development Officer on the elements linking museums, education and the community to the Windmill Project.

It was noted that it would be possible to apply to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a pre-project planning grant of up to £50,000. This would provide the revenue for professional advice to assist in creating the correct scheme and for specific knowledge of museums.

This would have the effect of delaying the bid by 6 to 12 months but would, however, ultimately considerably improve the prospects of creating a successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund. In addition, it could provide the National Trust with an opportunity to further develop their plans for the

barbican gate.

Officers advised that the Council's objective for the scheme was to develop a timeline theme for the museum illustrating Rochford District through the ages, with, potentially, different levels within the windmill devoted to different ages. Educational tours would be offered to schools in Essex and the London Boroughs and on site there would be temporary exhibitions and learning centre activities for schools. As the museum developed there would be an increased requirement for storage, as people would come forward with various artefacts for display. Room would also be required for electronic archiving to enable members of the public to conduct historical research on computer.

During debate there was a general consensus that there would be merit in a permanent exhibition within the museum illustrating the historical perspective of Rayleigh Mount by means of different models.

Recommended to the Community Services Committee:-

- (1) That officers should apply to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a pre-project planning grant of up to £50,000 while progressing the requirement for additional building space and for restoration works tenders.
- (2) That the draft pre-project planning bid be considered at a meeting of this Sub-Committee in November. (CD(F&ES))

15 COMPETITIVE TENDERING

The Sub-Committee received a verbal report from the Principal Officer (Architecture) on progress with regard to competitive tendering for Windmill restoration works.

It was noted that competitive tenders for the restoration works would be received at the end of November. Tender documentation would take into consideration inflation; it would be a fixed price tender.

An inspection of the brickworks would soon take place. Some of the brickwork had recently collapsed over one of the window arches necessitating some maintenance work.

16 TIMESCALE FOR THE BID PROCESS

The Sub-Committee received a verbal report from the Property Maintenance & Highways Manager on the timescale for the Heritage Lottery Fund bid.

The following timescales were noted:-

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- Pre-project planning bid to be submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund before Christmas.
- Notification of pre-project planning bid outcome by the end of March 2004.
- Final Windmill Project bid submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund by October 2004.
- Opening of the new Windmill museum by Summer 2005.

17 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled for Friday, 28 November 2003 commencing at 10.00am in Committee Room 4, Civic Suite, Rayleigh.

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and closed at 11.45 am.

Chairman

Date