

STOURBRIDGE AREA COMMITTEE – 14TH NOVEMBER 2005

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

LYE & WOLLESCOTE CEMETERY CHAPEL

Purpose of Report

1. To update the Committee as to progress made in relation to the future of Lye/Wollescote Chapel with specific regard to:-
 - i) The designation of the building
 - ii) The potential of securing funding to support the refurbishment of the chapel
 - iii) The future actions required to move the project forward.

Background

2. At the meeting of the Area Committee on 9th February 2004 the Director of the Urban Environment was authorised to:-
 - Apply to Department of Culture, Media and Sport for Lye/Wollescote Chapel to be considered for designation as a listing building.
 - Undertake pre-application discussions with the Heritage Lottery Fund in order to establish the viability of option 1 and to report the results to this Committee.
 - Undertake discussions with the West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust in order to establish the viability of option 2 and to report the results to this Committee
3. This report provides the Committee with the current position as regards the above.

Outcome of the application to DCMS

4. At the meeting of this Committee on the 9th February 2004 Members considered that it would be advantageous if Lye and Wollescote Cemetery Chapel had statutory listed building status mainly because to be listed is an essential eligibility requirement for the major sources of grant assistance relating to historic buildings. In addition, it allows VAT advantages in terms of any necessary alterations.

5. The Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) confirmed on the 8th March 2005 that Lye and Wollescote Cemetery Chapel has now been added to the Statutory List of buildings and is now a Grade II listed building and has increased its potential to attract certain external grants.

Outcome of the discussions with the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)

6. At the meeting of this Committee on 9th February 2004 it was resolved that Council Officers formally contact the Heritage Lottery and enter into pre-application discussions to establish the potential for the Council to be awarded a Heritage Lottery grant for Lye/Wollescote Cemetery Chapel – hereafter known as ‘Option 1’.
7. Representatives from the HLF visited Lye and Wollescote Cemetery Chapel on 25th June 2004. Following the site visit they wrote back to the Council providing their initial thoughts and advice in which they recommended that the Council appraise the different options available for the future use of the building and that the best way this can be achieved is by carrying out a **feasibility study**. A feasibility study is a prerequisite to the HLF being in a position to consider receiving an application (from either Dudley MBC or from a Building Preservation Trust) for grant assistance.

Outcome of the discussions with the West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust.

8. At the meeting of this Committee on 9th February 2004 it was resolved Council Officers contact the West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust (WMHBT) and enter into discussions to establish if the Trustees of WMHBT would be prepared to apply to the Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF) for grant-assistance towards the costs of undertaking a **feasibility study** - hereafter known as ‘Option 2’.
9. On the 28th February 2004 the Management Committee of the WMHBT were provided with a guided tour of the chapel. The Trust confirmed that it would be prepared to apply to the Architectural Heritage Fund for grant-assistance towards the costs of undertaking a **feasibility study** on Lye and Wollescote Cemetery Chapel.

Feasibility Study

10. Discussions therefore with the Heritage Lottery Fund and with the West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust have concluded that the production of a Feasibility study be the first necessary step towards the Chapel securing a suitable future use and to it obtaining external grant aid.
11. A feasibility study will demonstrate the importance of the building, it will consider **all** possible options for its future, it will include public consultation, recommend the most beneficial option and establish the likely viability of the project (if necessary, with the aid of grants and other funds and to indicate possible sources). This report provides the fundamental evidence to support all applications for support towards the project. The feasibility study would take between 8 to 10 weeks to undertake.

12. A Feasibility Study can be funded either 100% by Dudley MBC or alternatively the West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust can apply to the Architectural Heritage Fund for grant assistance to undertake a feasibility study. Given a successful application, the AHF grant can be to a maximum of 75% of the cost of the feasibility study. The WMHBT will need to find the remaining 25% (support from the Council for this part of the cost would remove any delay caused by the need otherwise to find alternate funding).
13. On 26th August 2005 an 'Invitation to tender' document was put together and quotations subsequently obtained from 4 companies for the cost of undertaking a feasibility study on Lye and Wollescote Cemetery Chapel. It is known from the tenders received back that the potential cost of undertaking the feasibility study is between £ 6995 and £28, 188.32 of which the council would be expected to find either 25% or 100%, dependent on which option is selected.

Finance

14. The proposals have no financial implications at this stage, however, for future reference and indicative purposes only, here follows a brief summary of the potential financial implications:-
15. Given a successful application, the AHF grant to the West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust can be to a maximum of 75% of the cost of the feasibility study. The BPT will need to find the remaining 25% (a donation from Dudley MBC for this part of the cost would remove any delay caused by the need otherwise to find a willing sponsor). The potential cost of any feasibility study is between £6995 and £28, 188.32 of which Dudley MBC would have to find 25%. Alternatively, Dudley MBC would have to consider funding the full cost of undertaking the feasibility study and try to identify the required resources.

Law

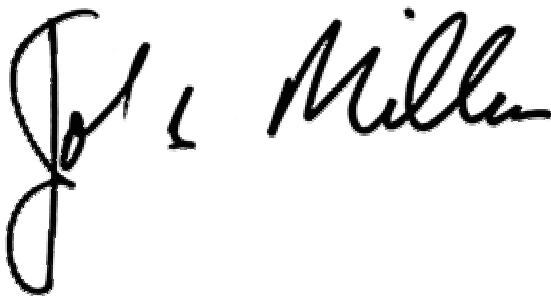
16. The relevant provisions regarding listed buildings are contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
17. The Council's powers to manage and improve Cemeteries are contained in a variety of legislation, including Section 214 and Schedule 26 of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Cemeteries Order 1977.

Equality Impact

18. The proposals contained in this report are in full accordance with the Councils equal opportunities policies and should in no way have any impact of different racial groups, disabled people, both genders and/or other relevant groups.

Recommendation

19. That the Committee request the Director of the Urban Environment to:
- Approach the West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust and request that they apply to the Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF) for grant assistance to undertake a Feasibility study on Lye and Wollescote Cemetery Chapel the success of which will be reported back to this Committee for further consideration.
 - To explore internally, potential sources of money to fund either the full 100% cost of undertaking a feasibility study or to provide a 25% contribution towards the cost of the West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust undertaking the feasibility study.



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List of Background Papers

1. Stourbridge Area Committee report dated 15th September 2003
2. Stourbridge Area Committee report dated 9th February 2004
3. Letter from the Heritage Lottery dated 8th July 2004.
4. Correspondence from DCMS dated 8th March 2005 confirming that that Lye and Wollescote Cemetery Chapel has been added to the Statutory List of buildings.
5. Copy of the feasibility study specification sent out Consultants on the 26th August 2005.