



WINTERBOURNE MEDIEVAL BARN

HLF Bid Reference HG-15-04570

Supporting Information

WMB5 – Activities Plan



Outline Activity Plan

Introduction

Refurbishment of Winterbourne Medieval Barn will support the development of additional activities at the complex. This will create the opportunity for the Barn to become a centre for learning about heritage of the complex and surrounding area, with an emphasis on its farming heritage, and will support the extension of educational facilities and as a visitor destination. The increase in number and variety of activities will also generate additional income to offset annual running costs with the aim of the complex becoming self-financing, with the consequential benefit for the maintenance of the heritage going forward.

The Development Phase of the Project will include the production of a detailed Activity Plan to be included in the Part 2 Submission. The Activity Plan will take account of:

- The activities currently held
- The potential for additional education support detailed in the Educational study previously carried out
- The Consultation Study conducted in the local area
- Market Research included within the Development Phase
- Other information available on potential heritage related activities.

The plan will also take account of the HLF “Activity Plan Guidance” which details the key requirements and areas to be covered.

Structure of the Proposed Activity Plan

The Activity Plan will reflect both the actions needed to extend the range of events and visits in line with the anticipated Business Plan and potential for additional opportunities for learning about the heritage.

(a) Stage 1

The first stage will be to identify the current situation. This will consider the current range of activities held and the basis of management and co-ordination of these. It will also consider the potential audiences both nationally and locally. As identified by English Heritage, the barn is an exceptional

survival of national importance, and hence would be of potential interest to groups from outside of the immediate vicinity.

Some work on potential activities has already been completed. A consultation survey was conducted to identify how the community use of the complex could be improved. The Barn is located close to the major communities of Winterbourne, Bradley Stoke and Frampton Cottrell and there are other major developments planned in the area. A study was also conducted on the potential use of the complex for educational visits, and possible links to the national curriculum. Copies of both of these studies have been included – WMB5A and WMB5B

Stage 2

The second element of the Activity Plan is to identify where we want to be in the future. This will focus on the potential for enhanced use of the complex and greater potential for the provision of heritage learning opportunities, as well as consideration of revenue generation. The study will cover two main areas – increased access to heritage and the need for a sustainable Business Plan. This will be based on specific studies already completed plus review of local data as well as national or general heritage research data.

Development of the activities has been considered in two parts. The ultimate objective is to increase opportunities for visitors and the local community to engage with the heritage, both of the Barn and the local area. To facilitate this, and support the long term future of the complex, additional revenue sources need to be identified. The analysis below has been split between these two aspects.

Heritage Opportunities

Enhancing the facilities of the complex as envisaged in the proposal will facilitate increased opportunities for people and communities to learn about the heritage of the building and the area, and to get involved in the complex. The key elements anticipated at this stage are:

- Opportunities for additional **community events/activities** including the involvement of local **volunteers** etc
- Opportunities for provision of rural craft **workshops**, building on experience gained to date
- Opportunities for visits from local and national groups interested in the **architecture** and heritage and history of the complex
- Opportunities for **school** visits linking to the national curriculum

Community events currently encompass open events such as Orchard Harvest Day, Medieval Fayres and cultural performances. These are attended by the local community as well as attracting visitors to the area. The scope for these is currently limited by the lack of amenities in the complex.

Improvement of the amenities will enable both the number and range of activities to increase. It will be possible to hold cultural events throughout the year, and success of events will be less exposed to the risk of bad weather etc. The events held to date cover two main areas:

- Open access events such as Medieval Fayres and Orchard Harvest Days. These are high profile events attracting large numbers of visitors. They are relevant to the history and heritage of the complex.
- Cultural events such as opera and performances of Shakespeare are well attended and there is definitely scope for expansion with improved amenities in the complex
- Improvement of the complex will make the Barn an attractive place for other community organisations to arrange events and activities

Volunteers currently play in a major role in the development of community events/activities. They are also a link between the Barn, and the communities in which they live. Expansion of activities will provide opportunities for volunteers to gain new skills and develop greater local knowledge. For example many of the current volunteers already have specific skills which they use to the Barn's advantage. The Trust will provide support for the enhancement of those skills and the development of new skills to mutual benefit. One particular example is the development of the detailed Activity Plan. The volunteers always work with the local community in the development of potential events/activities. The project will cover employment of an Activity Development Manager to lead on the detailed Activity Plan. Involving the volunteers in this activity would not only support the overall plan development, but would also give them an opportunity to consider new ways of looking at potential community involvement. This could then be taken forward after completion of the project.

Rural craft workshops have been held at the Barn for many years. Recently these have concentrated on activities such as Basket Weaving and Dry Stone Walling. Due to lack of heated facilities these tend to be held in the summer months. Refurbishment of the Barn would provide opportunities for expansion of both the range of workshops and the periods they can be held. The aim is to provide resources that are not readily available elsewhere in the area. The Activity Plan development will consider potential subjects and assess both practicality and interest. Indications from previous workshops are that the Barn provides an attractive and appropriate venue for such events.

Visits from groups interested in the **architecture** and heritage have been held in the past. However the current state of refurbishment and interpretation means that there is limited scope. Refurbishment of the complex and provision of supporting information would increase potential interest, and hence visitors. Availability of better facilities within the complex would also make it more attractive.

There have been a limited number of **school** visits in recent years. The Education Plan referred to above demonstrates the great potential the complex has for teaching about history and heritage as well as the development of food production. The improvement in available facilities as well as provision of additional resources and teaching materials will increase the attraction of the complex as a venue.

The Activities Plan will need to identify what could practically be achieved and resources and actions required to achieve them. For example an Education Study completed previously identifies potential for school visits and the learning opportunities that could be achieved. It also identifies the need for a dedicated resource to manage and develop this element. The costs and opportunities will be fully explored as part of this exercise

The potential for development of activities in partnership with other organisations will be reviewed, particularly where the potential activities match the overall vision for the complex. These could include links with local agricultural and horticultural groups.

All the above activities will be supported by enhanced **Interpretation** of the Barn and its history and heritage. The Trust is fortunate in having a great deal of information available on the history of the complex and its builder. It also has the advantage of detailed studies of the architecture to support its status as a building of national importance. The available information needs to be presented in an appropriate format for the various potential visitors. The detailed proposals will be covered on the Activity Plan to be developed during the Development phase. They could include:

- Provision of Information Boards on the history of the complex – up to 5 boards
- Provision of Information Boards on the architecture of the complex – up to 5 boards covering the various parts of the complex
- Provision of Information Boards on the surrounding area eg history of the “Hatters” industry – up to 4 boards
- Provision of information designed to appeal to visitors of all ages and interests in various forms

- Provision of educational resources to support school visits
- Development of leaflets and guides for visitors
- Development of guides to the overall area, and its general history
- Review and upgrade of the website
- Consideration of alternative methods eg development of a mobile phone “App” to guide visitors around the barn and the area

These are considered to align with our financial projections.

The Interpretation proposals need to provide facilities which can be maintained and have resilience. The potential use of technology will be considered, but a pragmatic approach will be taken to ensure that the Trust and visitors can maximise the benefit of additional information without committing it to significant ongoing expenditure. Some preliminary discussions have been held with potential consultants to identify the potential methodologies and these have been incorporated in the suggestions above.

The Part 1 application includes funding for a consultant to develop the proposals. The consultant will work with Trustees and Volunteers, who have detailed knowledge of the Barn and its history and heritage. Further funding for implementation is included in the Delivery phase.

Revenue Generation

The second element covers the need for the complex to become economically self-sufficient. Whilst some of the events outlined above will generate income it is unlikely that it would be sufficient to cover the running costs and ensure that there is adequate funding for essential maintenance. Hence the Business Plan assumes that there will be some element of letting the building out to third parties, plus other opportunities such as use as a film location. The Part 1 Development Costs include an allowance for Market Research and the results of this exercise will be used to inform the Activity Plan.

There has been some review of the potential market. The Barn needs to be regarded as a unique building and marketed accordingly. It has the capability to provide a special venue. There are similar venues in the wider area at Nailsea and Bradford on Avon. However there does not appear to anything in the immediate area. It is recognised that the complex is not aiming to compete with hotels and similar commercial venues. The main aim is to provide sufficient income to cover annual running costs and create a reserve for repairs etc. Hence the future marketing needs to demonstrate the potential to offer a unique venue which would open itself to a variety of uses. A recent Wake was held at the Barn and the Trust received the following feedback:

"It was a long time since I was last in the barn (on the occasion of the visit of Oliver Rackham) and most of those there on the 5th May had never been into the building. I was delighted to see the progress with its "restoration" and many people have expressed pleasure at being in such a wonderful building"

This demonstrates the potential. The Complex also benefits from a number of advantages:

- When complete it will be self-contained with a number of small and large spaces
- It is an extremely attractive building both internally and externally
- It is sited next to a medieval church, offering the opportunity for joint events
- It is set in an open area, providing space for some outdoor activities eg childrens games

- It is away from the Main Road, and can provide a relatively safe area
- It has a designated car parking area

Experience to date has shown that many people appreciate a venue that is flexible and allows them to manage the event in their own way. There has to be a balance between the provision of adequate facilities and allowing sufficient flexibility. When refurbished the Barn should be able to produce a perfect compromise. The potential income in the Business Plan is based on values charged by similar venues.

Review of similar facilities in the wider area and locally indicates that there is a high demand for facilities such as the barn. For example a similar size historic barn in the North Cotswolds is fully booked for weddings in 2016 and is now advertising for 2017. Local hotel conference facilities also appear to be in short supply.

On this basis there are a number of potential uses:

- Hire as a venue for family parties etc
- Hire as a wedding venue
- Hire for conferences and workshops

There are other opportunities that could be available. The possibility of hiring space to groups on a regular basis would be considered. For example there have been enquiries from a local group for pre-school children to hire on a weekly basis. The refurbished West Barn could provide an appropriate space, with the added bonus of having external open spaces available.

The project also includes provision for the creation of rural craft units. The barn already has a resident willow hurdles maker and there is scope for additional activities when the units are available. Not only would these generate some additional income, they would provide an attraction to potential visitors.

When considering the potential market there will be an emphasis on heritage related activities, and ensuring that the need to generate income does not detract from the planned heritage activities described in the previous section.

Resources

The Part 1 Development Costs include an allowance for professional support to develop the Activity Plan. The intention would be to involve existing and potential volunteers in the exercise with a view to increasing community involvement in the overall project.

The Part 2 Delivery Costs include provision for a paid resource to implement the Activity Plan, again working with volunteers to provide the Trust with a legacy of local knowledge.

(b) Stage 3

The final element will be the production of a detailed Activity Plan for implementation after completion of the capital phase. The plan will list the actions required using the HLF template. These cover the actions required and the resources to achieve them, as well the potential audiences and implications for heritage education. A draft Activity Plan is attached.

The project costs include provision for a resource to deliver the Activity Plan. The intention would be to also give volunteers an opportunity to enhance their skills along with further development of activities.

Timetable and Costs

On the assumption of Part 1 approval in March 2016 the Activity Plan development will take place between October 2016 and September 2017 with a view to providing supporting information for the Part 2 Submission in October 2017.

The Part 1 Submission includes £15K for development of the plan and a further £35K for implementation after completion of the capital work.

Draft Activity Plan

The draft Activity Plan lists the main actions to be covered. More detail will be developed as part of the Development phase.

Activity: Detailed Description	Audience	Benefits for People	Outcome	Resources	Costs in Project Budget	Timetable	Targets and Measures of Success	Method(s) of Evaluation
Development of Community Activities – Open Events	Mainly local communities	Opportunities to see heritage	Increased attendance and wider range of activities – more people and a greater range of people will have learnt about the heritage.	Activity Development Manager in conjunction with Volunteers	£65K for overall programme	August 2016 – March 2021 and then ongoing	Increased visitor numbers and feedback received	Visitor numbers and evaluation of visitor feedback
Development of Community Activities – Concerts and Plays etc.	Mainly local communities	Opportunities for events not normally available in a unique setting	Wider range of activities and more people will have had an opportunity to visit the complex	Activity Development Manager in conjunction with Volunteers	As above	August 2016 – March 2021 and then ongoing	Increased visitor numbers and feedback received	Visitor numbers and evaluation of visitor feedback
Development of Volunteers- Activity Planning	Current and new Volunteers	Opportunities for people to learn new skills	Volunteers have new skills and greater confidence	Trust and Volunteers	To be funded by Trust	Ongoing	Volunteers have additional skills	Completed training activities
Development of Volunteers – Event Support	Current and new Volunteers	Opportunities for people to learn new skills	Volunteers have opportunity to broaden their activities	Trust and Volunteers	To be funded by Trust	Ongoing	Volunteers have worked on a wider range of activities	Volunteer satisfaction and feedback
Development of Rural Craft Workshops	Potential participants	Opportunities for people to learn new skills	People will have had an opportunity to learn new skills	Activity Development Manager in conjunction with Volunteers	£65K for overall programme	August 2016 – March 2021 and then ongoing	Increased participant numbers and feedback received	Course participants and evaluation of visitor feedback
Development of Architectural and Heritage Visits	Potential visitors	Opportunities for people to engage with heritage	More people will have had an opportunity to visit the complex	Activity Development Manager in conjunction with Volunteers	As above	August 2016 – March 2021 and then ongoing	Increased visitor numbers and feedback received	Visitor numbers and evaluation of visitor feedback
Development of School Visits	Potential school visitors	Opportunities for people to engage with heritage	More people will have had an opportunity to visit the complex and learn about the heritage	Activity Development Manager in conjunction with Volunteers	As above	August 2016 – March 2021 and then ongoing	Increased visitor numbers and feedback received	Visitor numbers and evaluation of visitor feedback
Development of Interpretation proposals	Potential visitors	Opportunities for people to engage with heritage	More people will have had an opportunity to visit the complex and learn about the heritage	Interpretation Consultant in conjunction with Trustees and Volunteers.	£15K for development (plus a further £50K for implementation)	August 2016 – September 2017 for development and implementation October 2018 – September 2019	Increased visitor numbers and feedback received	Evaluation of visitor feedback

Carry out detailed Market Research for Trust Events and Activities	Potential visitors	Opportunities for people to engage with heritage	More people will have had an opportunity to visit the complex and learn about the heritage	Market Research Consultant in conjunction with Trustees and Volunteers	£15K	August 2016 – September 2017	Trust have greater knowledge of potential market	Evaluation of range and number of events and activities, and attendance
Carry out detailed Market Research for Third Part hire	Potential hirers and Trust	Opportunities for people to engage with heritage	More people will have had an opportunity to visit the complex	Market Research Consultant	£15K	August 2016 – September 2017	Trust have greater knowledge of potential market	Evaluation of ability to develop a realistic marketing plan
Produce Marketing Plan for Third Party hire	Trust	Opportunity for Barn to be self - sustainable	The future of the heritage will be secured	Market Research Consultant	Part of the £15K overall cost	August 2016 – September 2017	Trust have a workable Marketing Plan	Ability to implement the plan
Develop Third Party hire	Potential hirers and Trust	Opportunity for Barn to be self – sustainable and for people to visit the barn	Visitors will have an enjoyable experience and have an opportunity to visit the heritage. The future of the heritage will be secured	Trust	To be funded by Trust	Post project completion	Increased income	Income levels compared to current value