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CHAPELS OF REST, BISLEY ROAD CEMETERY, STROUD, GL5 1EE
Grade 2 (#1306184)
OS Ref: SO048864

CLIENT BRIEF FOR COSTED FEASIBILITY ASSESSMENT
See: www.stroudpreservationtrust.org.uk/chapels-of-rest

Deadline for submission: 26th February 2021

Stroud Preservation Trust has been given the opportunity to renovate and re-purpose the Stroud Cemetery Chapels of Rest.

In order to decide the best way forward, and test the future financial viability, Stroud Preservation Trust is looking to commission a costed feasibility assessment from an architect's, surveyor's (building or quantity) or civil engineer's consultancy practice providing the lead professional for client presentation and reporting. The appointed consultant will either have all required skills in-house or have access to additional expertise by nominated sub-contracting professionals where needed, these to be known from previous or referred experience and this to be incorporated into the tender. Any consultant appointed will be asked to engage with at least two community consultation events in due course.



Introduction
Our background

Stroud Preservation Trust has been working in and around the town of Stroud, Gloucestershire, since 1982 renovating and restoring buildings, advising and monitoring about local planning issues and buildings at risk as well as project managing and fundraising for our own and other properties in the area. Seven Trustees are currently managing this project. They include a fundraiser, a heritage consultant, an architect, a chartered surveyor, urban planner, visual recorder and researcher.

The Chapels of Rest

They were built in 1856, and more details of their history can be found on our website. The buildings and their tarmac footprint are currently owned by Stroud District Council. They are surrounded by a landscaped, redundant, four-hectare, Victorian cemetery owned by Stroud Town Council who run the cemetery site as a designated nature reserve.



On October 8th 2020 the Strategy and Resources Committee of the District Council recommended that the Chapels of Rest be transferred as a community asset to Stroud Preservation Trust for £1 subject to a future report which will deliver a detailed feasibility study, proof of community consultation and compliance with S123 of the Local Government act. There is no set timetable for this return to committee.

The site is spectacular, overlooking Stroud's famous Golden Valley with the A419, River Frome and the newly regenerated Thames and Severn canal all within a few hundred yards. The boundary of the Cotswold AONB is very close by, and the site overlooks the opposite hilltop commons of Rodborough and Minchinhampton (both National Trust managed). The cemetery is very popular for walking and running and many hundreds of children in the area have learned to ride their bikes around the Chapels as this is the only flat surface in the area. The cemetery is an abundant nature reserve with over 400 species living there and some wonderful specimen trees.

The Buildings

This much loved and highly visual building is a twin chapel linked by a porte-cochère under a three-stage tower in a broach spire. Each chapel (originally one for Church of England and one for non-conformists) has a large porch and retain original outer and inner doors. Ashlar stone is the main building material with cement (in places) and limewash plaster lined internal walls. There are good decorative details in the Victorian Gothic form both inside and out. The pitched roof is mostly of stone slates with some slopes that have been replaced with concrete tiles. The windows were once fine with decorative tracery but all have been blocked up to the tracery tops with breeze blocks to counter vandalism. There is a little glass remaining to show the original designs. There are no period internal photographs showing it in use, or any original drawings for the buildings yet discovered.

The Chapels are empty barring a small temporary office, probably 1980s, with toilet and hand-basin with separate sink unit in the North Chapel, and only a mezzanine floor in the South Chapel. None of the internal building works in anyway need to remain in the building.

There is electrical and water supply and an unused gas supply (though this is to be confirmed). Although currently working their status needs to be ascertained. There is no telephone land line or internet connection. The roof drainage is assumed to be into a soak away and foul waste is to a septic tank placed below the tarmac to the south east of the building.

On an Open Day in October 2020 more than 200 people visited in a four-hour period to see inside the building that almost no-one had been inside of for 40 years. These visits engendered a great deal of interest and conversation about the future for the buildings.

Purpose of this Client Brief:

This document sets out not only the Trust's current short and long-term vision for the two redundant Chapels, but also the intention to adapt them to modern and viable uses while retaining the iconic status of the Grade II listed buildings and location which are prominent within the Stroud valleys area. The land area under consideration immediately surrounding the South Chapel to the south and west has been, and must remain, available for community recreational use enjoying as this does extensive views across the Golden Valley.

The Trust require this vision to be worked into a detailed, phased design and repair/improvement specification with feasibility assessment including the repairs and conversion costs against a projected end value. The resulting report may show a substantial conservation deficit between cost and end value but will provide the blueprint to enable the Trust to make a decision on proceeding with purchasing the property and seeking funding options.

The Trust requires a **feasibility study** with **three linked elements**:

- **The first element is to undertake a condition survey** of the building and its services, in order to inform the judgements and sketch designs involved in the other elements. There are earlier reports on certain aspects, and Trustees have already identified a number of potential issues which the survey should address. These are all set out in the chart later in this brief
- **The second element** is to establish what **minimum repairs, changes and adaptations**, on the basis of the condition survey, would be necessary for reuse of the building which would allow a range of 'community' uses, which might change and evolve over time – such as workshops, a puppet theatre, environmental exhibitions and occasional café – and the likely costs of these repairs. The intention is that the building would remain in its current general state, but with the essential fabric secured and adequate services available, including background heating. The work for this element would be subject to review (a meeting with trustees and possible public meeting). This review would also draw on the work undertaken by the Trustees to establish potential 'community' uses, and consider the viability of such uses in the shorter term (5 years?). Any work recommended should anticipate that in the longer term the buildings would be fully up-graded, as explored below.
- **The third element** is to consider **the full rehabilitation of the building** potentially for a mix of residential and community uses, again with both likely costs and also an opinion of end market value. It would build upon the first element with survey of fabric and services. Our expectation is that the northern chapel would be internally redesigned for residential use, either as one house or two apartments, utilising the height of the building to incorporate 2+ floors. The southern chapel would be for 'community' use, either maintaining the full height of the space, or community use on the ground floor with a higher rent activity (residential apartment or office) above, but with the option for full residential conversion as in the north chapel. The spire and its access spaces could be considered as potential link between the chapels or for bats and swifts.

The residential properties would be designed to a high specification in all respects, and would incorporate innovative best practice in environmental sustainability and low-carbon energy systems. A small external garden area with possible parking could be created from the existing tarmac surround improving privacy from community uses of the adjacent cemetery and South Chapel.

The purpose of the feasibility study will be to evaluate different sketch design and service possibilities and their cost implications, allowing the Trust to compare costs with projected end value.

Work anticipated for the First and Second elements:

Areas in need for essential repairs and improvements	Action: All to be costed to support fundraising
EXTERIORS	
Survey	<p>A full survey of the buildings' condition and all services (including drone survey) with reference to any possible stonework repairs required and of any asbestos containing materials seen or thought to exist (not an asbestos survey).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimate ongoing longterm building maintenance requirements. • These will be overheads to the whole project and the purchase. <p>NB. The trust does not require old buildings to be externally perfect, but values the patina of age.</p>
Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed plans can be drawn up at a later stage if the current plans are thought to be sufficient. • Also provision of sketches and descriptions of potential community uses by to share with local people and for reporting to Stroud District Council. These might include sketches that support the 'third element'.
Roof repair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the survey provided by 'Ward and Co' in 2013 of roof coverings report with schedule, plan and photos with survey. • Cost of replacement with standard limestone tiles properly coursed throughout, in addition to general repairs based on both the 2013 report and new building survey findings. • Offer PV options and costs. • Determine what work needs to be undertaken in the near future, and what can be tackled at a later stage.
Gutters and down-pipes	Water test these and identify any work that needs doing.
Roof drainage below ground	Water test and investigate any non-discharge to soakaways (by excavation if necessary), and identify any work needed.
Tower and Spire	Estimate costs of installing a heavy duty galvanised mesh to stop all bird ingress activity; whilst retaining ventilation, installing a high security back door to the tower, reinforcing the tower floor and removing the trapdoor.
Windows	<p>Estimate the cost of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • removing the infilling blocks carefully to avoid damage to delicate stone mouldings of original mullions and transoms. • installing temporary toughened polycarbonate (must let in light and be vandal proof) using wire or cable fixing ties to a wedged timber framework to the interior of openings to maintain security while not causing damage to the Grade II original stone features.

SERVICES	
Water Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the existing water supply sufficient for envisaged development of the site? • Will installation of separate water meters be needed? • Consider remedial options for water supply to 122 Bisley Road ie new supply or water meter.
Electricity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is existing overhead supply sufficient for future development? • Assess implications of separation of the supply between the North and South chapels, and adequacy for possible sub-division into separate community and additional residential conversion uses in each building.
Sewage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing foul water drainage may be non-compliant with current environmental standards. Specialist assessment and advice is required with costed recommendations for any works for both the North Chapel and the South Chapel, to include any proposed community uses in either property, and also to accommodate needs of any residential user conversions. • Are there indications that an updated filtration field will be needed? • Is there a need for a second septic tank for the South Chapel? Specifications and costings are required.
Gas	Investigate current gas supply? Will it be adequate/sufficient and safe for all these potential future uses being outlined for the site?
Internet	Internet and wifi supply at highest rate essential with separate distribution to both chapels.
Fire Safety	Provide specification for Fire Alarm systems linked between chapels installation. Firefighting extinguishers – water, foam and CO ₂ . Evaluate the implications of the likely separation of ownership into two or more properties.
INTERIORS	
Radon Test	Check for presence of radon gas in all of the Chapel of Rest buildings. If above “action level” specify and cost remedial measures.
Damp	Check for damp throughout the building. Recommended course of actions for each chapel for future use.
Asbestos	If asbestos suspected a full accredited asbestos survey will be needed with remedial advice and costs.
The above costed condition survey for minimum repairs, changes and adaptations will inform future decisions for elements two and three.	

Work anticipated for the Third Element:

The Third Element – for the proposed more comprehensive, longer term residential uses for the Chapels of Rest we are asking for sketch designs, services, cost implications and opinions of end values.

We have considered certain criteria that would be included in that third element as follows:

All improvements	To work towards best practice in environmental standards.
Floors, ceilings and walls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With full rehabilitation these will require full insulation measures. • Suggest the most cost-effective way of doing this without losing too much internal space.
Roof	Identify those non-urgent repairs at stage 2, and then any further works needed for full repair.
External stonework	Any necessary repairs
Windows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost installation of fully double-glazed bespoke windows with corrosion resistant grills and pale green stained glass in the tracery. • Windows to open where needed for building regulations compliance with residential use.
North Chapel residential conversion and South Chapel community upgrade and/ or part or full residential conversion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the North Chapel a small extension is possible. • A garden and parking area is required. • To achieve best value this must have high functioning services.

The following information and contacts will be made available to the successful candidate:

- Historical maps
- Water pipelines – A Severn Trent Water supply map of the location and deeds information on distribution to the Chapels and, to be determined, on to the North Lodge, 122 Bisley Road
- Link to Stroud Local History Society Cemetery Project
- Preliminary research on drainage. Prepared for identification purposes only
- Roof assessment from 2013 by Ward and Co for Stroud District Council with photos
- Bat survey (Stroud District Council)
- Valuations of the buildings prepared in 2016 by Guy Welfare, and by D James & Partners