

CHILHAM VILLAGE SQUARE AND ENVIRONS

**CONSULTANT'S BRIEF
FOR FEASIBILITY STUDY ON**

the renovation and development of Chilham Village and the protection and conservation of rural heritage together with the encouragement for tourist and craft activities.

[19th January, 2005]

**To be submitted with an application for a Grant under the Rural Enterprise Scheme,
DEFRA, South East Region**

DRAFT CONSULTANT'S BRIEF FOR FEASIBILITY STUDY ON

The Renovation And Development Of Chilham Village And The Protection And Conservation Of Rural Heritage Together With The Encouragement For Tourist And Craft Activities.

1. PREFACE

- 1.1 This Feasibility Study is commissioned by Chilham Parish Council. The Consultants are asked to investigate and advise on the sympathetic renovation and redevelopment of the historic Chilham Village Square to encourage tourism, craft and associated activities whilst respecting its historic and rural heritage”

2. OVERVIEW - BROAD AIMS AND RATIONALE

- 2.1 The primary aim is to improve the valuable, historic, available external public space at the heart of the village for all and to encourage tourism and craft activities. This aim to be achieved by

- (a) returning The Square to a largely (but not exclusively) pedestrianised public space rather than retaining its current use as a congested car park, which will in turn
- (b) increase visitor numbers, encourage tourism, local crafts and businesses and the sale of local produce whilst respecting The Square's historic and rural heritage
- (c) revitalise the village whilst improving the quality of life of residents, all parishioners and visitors,
- (d) contribute to the promotion of public health and safety.

- 2.2 In this document the term 'public space' is to be defined in accordance with the DPM in *Living Places: Caring for Quality* (January 2004), see especially Chapter 2.

- 2.3 The Consultants are required to produce detailed concepts and strategies for the enhancement of The Project Area as defined in paragraph 2.1. below which include:

- (a) a sensitive resolution of the problem of vehicular traffic management so as to sympathetically enhance the village scene: allowing tourists and residents to appreciate a sense of 'place' in a village of outstanding beauty of rural vernacular buildings, but which are not deleterious to the convenience of residents and the proper pursuit of trade by the local businesses.
- (b) suggested improvements to the overall quality of the external environment of the public realm of the Project Area which will create a sense of pride amongst local parishioners, preserve local distinctiveness, a positive, unified identity that generates tourist industry and small craft business confidence.

- (c) provide a comprehensive and innovative approach to implementing the above objectives in terms of best practice, optimum principles and standards of conservation and heritage and traffic/pedestrian management.
- (d) deliver *practical recommendations*, which Chilham Parish Council can actively pursue and implement as a project ("The Project"). It is intended that this will be achieved in partnership with Ashford Borough Council, Kent County Council, Kent Downs AONB Unit, CABI, English Heritage, Tourism South East and others so that the project of sympathetically enhancing this historic Square, the streets leading to it and Taylor's Hill Car Park will actually be carried out.
- (e) proposals which must be suitable for their intended use, of an outstanding quality, enduring, adaptable, safe and sustainable whilst contributing to their unique context.
- (f) All design proposals for the public realm should be assessed against the tests of quality of streetscape given in the CABI publication, *Paving the Way* (2002). However, a simple, inexpensive but imaginative and relatively easy to maintain scheme is to be preferred such as those in the Conservation Areas of Lavenham, Kernsley and Ballingdon Street in Suffolk which won The Royal Town Planning Institute for Street Design between 1989 and 1993, and at Battle Abbey commissioned by English Heritage: see Appendix B.

2.0 PROJECT AREA

The Project Area ("The Project Area") is The Square, and its environs notably, the roads leading to it and Taylor's Hill Car Park in the Parish of Chilham, Kent as outlined/highlighted on the map attached.

Chilham is a Kent village of outstanding beauty of rural vernacular buildings, which make an important contribution to the local character and heritage of England. It occupies a promontory in the valley of the River Stour between Canterbury and Ashford on the northern edge of the Kent Downs AONB. Chilham, is an ancient stronghold site with a Norman Keep, Church, Jacobean Mansion, square and roads with timber framed buildings, medieval in character and appearance. It has retained its medieval nucleated structure with all roads leading up to it from the broad river valley.

The Square, which lies on a small plateau between the church and the entrance to the Castle, forms the central core of the village. Prior to having a permanent surface, it will have been of beaten earth and flint on a chalk substrate. It would have been used for cattle markets and fairs. Its buildings developed during the great Tudor building era, probably built on many of the old existing foundations. The then wealth of oak enabled substantial timber framed houses to be erected. Such features are of social importance in fostering a sense of 'place' and are a well known and important attraction to tourists from all over the world. The Project Area is in a Conservation Area, designated an AONB in 1968. The North Downs Way, designated one of the 13 UK National Trails by the Countryside Commission, traverses The Square. Details of the present buildings, materials, road surfaces and other details may be found in Appendix A "*Copy draft Parish Design Statement, 2004*".

3.0 BACKGROUND CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Square has become gradually degraded by motor vehicles over a number of years and now is often so full of parked cars that pedestrians have difficulty in using it safely and emergency vehicles have, on occasions, been unable to gain access. This has prompted a great deal of local concern.
- 3.2 Following consultation, discussion and a thorough analysis of the situation by Councillors and other parishioners the Parish Council concluded that The Square is but in need sympathetic renovation and redevelopment as the best means of protecting and conserving this beautiful and historic asset. Furthermore, that this was an essential prerequisite for improving tourism and associated activities such as local craft and other businesses.
- 3.3 Accordingly, at a meeting of Chilham Parish Council on 4th December 2003, all Councillors present voted to form a Sub-Committee (now known as the Chilham Traffic Management & Environmental Improvement Group ("CTM&EIG")) to investigate ways of improving the public realm of The Square. As The Square cannot be viewed in isolation and solutions need to be holistic, The Project Area is somewhat wider in scope; acknowledging that the surrounding areas are in need of consideration.
- 3.4 The CTM&EIG, mindful that the expertise and experience of professionals would be needed to sympathetically enhance the unique and historic public space comprising The Project Area and The Square in particular, began investigating
 - (a) the commissioning of an independent Feasibility Study (by an expert landscape architect and/or town planner) and
 - (b) possible sources of funding for such a study.
- 3.5 On advice from various sources, the CTM&EIG is applying for funding for this Feasibility Study under the Rural Enterprise Scheme. An application will be submitted to DEFRA, South East Region at the end of Jan. beginning of Fe. 2005 entitled

"The Renovation and Development of Chilham Village and the protection and conservation of its rural heritage together with the encouragement of its tourist and craft activities."

4.0 THE FEASIBILITY STUDY WILL INCLUDE:

- 4.1 A full site appraisal and analysis
- 4.2 An examination and assessment of the problems which currently discourage tourism, are an inconvenience to residents and businesses and endanger public safety including:
 - 4.2.1 The unregulated, disorderly parking of vehicles in The Square and the streets leading to it and poor quality seating.
 - 4.2.2 Lack of quality public space for pedestrians: thus visitors, tourists and parishioners are currently dissuaded from lingering and enjoying The Square as a beautiful historic outdoor public space and from visiting its shops, the café, pubs and nearby church; poor quality seating is an added deterrent.

4.2.3 Impedes the safe passage of pedestrians including school children to and from the school, impeded by no separate pedestrian footways.

4.2.4 Impedes the flow of traffic including goods vehicles emergency vehicles and appliances.

4.2.5 Residents exiting their houses immediately into the thoroughfare often have their passage obstructed and sometimes their property damaged by passing vehicles/parked cars.

4.2.6 The poor quality of the signs in and around the village and of the surfaces of The Square detract from the sense of 'place', also, they do not discourage the indiscriminate parking of vehicles, and deter visitors, tourists and residents from lingering to enjoy The Square as a beautiful historic medieval outdoor space and using its shops and pubs.

4.2.7 Drivers of large vehicles (articulated lorries and the like) are not effectively forewarned and dissuaded from using the narrow streets leading up to The Square due to the poor quality of the signs and road surfaces: their attempts to enter or traverse The Project Area results very often in damage to property.

4.2.8 The poor quality of the surfaces, approaches, entrance, exit and sign posting of Taylor's Hill Car Park dissuades vehicle owners from using it for parking: the sign posting just does not make it apparent that there is a car park, the entrance and exit cannot be easily attempted by large coaches.

4.2.9 The general danger to pedestrians and schoolchildren of the unrestricted passage of vehicles.

5.0. ADVICE ON PUBLIC CONSULTATION MEASURES

5.1 Consultation is recognised by the Parish Council and the CTM&EIG as an essential part of The Project. The Feasibility study should take account of existing consultation exercises conducted by the Parish Council during preparation of the Parish Appraisal (1996) the Parish Design Statement (2003-4) and by the Chilham Environmental Protection Society (CEPS) 2001-4.

5.2 The Consultants will consult as per list 6.2.1 and 6.2.2 and have regard to material as described in 6.2.3".

5.3 The Feasibility Study will be required to advise what *further* consultation is appropriate when the outline proposals are available (and before their implementation). Such advice should include the appropriate form of such consultation and any awareness education that is required for the implementation of the proposals.

6.0. TIMETABLING OF FEASIBILITY STUDY & TASKS

6.1 This Feasibility study will be submitted to the CTM&EIG not later than 5pm on Tuesday, 5th July, 2005. It will advise on and address all the issues mentioned in Paragraph 4 above and will include any necessary data collected.

6.2 The Consultant will consult

6.2.1 All residents of the parish

- the residents especially those in and around The Square;
- the business;
- the walkers;
- the car users;
- the tourists generally;
- worshippers and visitors to the church;
- the School; staff, parents and children;

6.2.2 relevant statutory and non-statutory bodies and individuals including:

The Chairman of Chilham Parish Council and members of the CTM&EIG

The Borough Councillor

The Chairman of the Chilham Environmental Protection Society

Richard Alderton: Strategic Planning Manager Development Services Directorate, Ashford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford, Kent, TN23 1PL

Katherine Putnam: Spatial/Urban Designer, Ashford Borough, Council, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford, Kent, TN23 1PL

Highways Dept, Ashford Borough Council

Nick Johannsen: Director, Kent Downs AONB Unit, West Barn, Penstock Hall Farm, East Brabourne, Ashford Kent TN25 5LLAONB

Sarah Loftus Sustainable Rural Tourism Officer Kent Downs AONB Unit, West Barn, Penstock Hall Farm, East Brabourne, Ashford Kent TN25 5LLAONB

Tourism Officer, Tourism, South East, SEETB, Regeneration Section, The Old Brew House, Warwick Park Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5TU

Sarah Barber: Tourism & Heritage Manager, Ashford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford, Kent, TN23 1PL

Kent County Council

Kent Fire Service

English Heritage (Richard Morris or a colleague of his)

CABE SPACE, (Peter Neal or a colleague of his) 16th Floor, The Power, Building, 11 York Road, London SE1 7NX

6.2.3 The Consultant will have particular regard to:

research already undertaken and to be supplied by the CTM&EIG which will include:

-CTM&EIG's material comprising photographs, historical information, research into previous uses and surfaces (e.g. from old photographs and other archives),

- Kent Downs AONB Management Plan for 2004-2009 Case Study: Surface Enhancement in Village Conservation Areas published by The Institute of Historic Building (IHBC):

http://www.ihbc.org.uk/context_archive/41/casestudy2_dir/casestudy2_s.htm

Battle Abbey Scheme, Battle, West Sussex by English Heritage

The improvement scheme drawn up and consultation undertaken by CEPS in 2001.

The renovation and improvements to the village of Grassingham (North Yorkshire)

6.2.4 The Consultant will also have regard to:

Such other examples of best practice as may be relevant concerning the sympathetic renovation and development of similar tourist destinations and villages in conservation areas whether in the UK and on the European Continent: practices which foster the protection and conservation of the rural heritage of such villages whilst encouraging tourist and craft activities.

The Parish Council and other local parishioners will provide every assistance regarding the material, organisations and contacts specified in particular in paragraphs 6.2. – 6.4 for example, by supplying lists of businesses, copies of documents, archive material including photographs and other such other tasks as will help the Consultants and save costs.

7.0 EXPECTED OUTPUTS

- 7.1 Costed outline concept designs including provision of advice on the development and implementation of the proposed measures. There will be one or two, perhaps three proposals including a detailed Final Project Proposal. This shall provide sufficient information to show how the Final Project proposal can be delivered including detailed specifications, work programmes and a detailed costing exercise to enable the submission of further bids for further funding. Sources of further funding should be identified with advice on the applications to obtain such funds. Key milestones together with a timetable for funding and the actions which should be taken for its overall implementation should be provided identifying by whom, that is by which Authority, organisation or person, and the priorities of each.
- 7.2 Improvements to the public realm of The Square and its environs will have specific impacts with regard to maintenance, public safety and accessibility by the emergency services. A range of key statutory bodies will need to be involved in any improvements and it is important that they have an integral role in the implementation of the Project. Recommendations on how to take this aspect forward will be required.
- 7.3 All proposals shall focus on methods of enhancing conserving, renovating and developing The Project Area in particular The Square and Taylor's Hill Car Park, so that:
 - the rural heritage is protected and conserved and
 - tourist and craft activities are encouraged
- 7.4 Proposals shall include provision for the prevention of disorderly parking of motor vehicles in The Square and subtle traffic management (calming) strategies. These shall be aimed at improving the historic external public space of The Square as an important amenity site and thus the quality of life of parishioners, tourists and visitors by enabling them to enjoy the space and appreciate the buildings; further, to provide necessary safeguards to public safety for residents, schoolchildren attending the local school and others such as those gathering for services in the church and outside the public house.
- 7.5 There shall be proposals for highway renovation and a change to the surface materials of The Square, (and perhaps roads leading to it and Taylor's Hill Car Park) to enhance the village scene through a street palette of unified and consistent surface materials,

signage, advertising/information displays, street furniture design, landscaping and the removal of unnecessary clutter.

7.6 The materials used for The Square's surface must be given very careful consideration: proposals must consider and advise on the desirability of following the simple, inexpensive schemes in the Conservation Areas of Lavenham, Kersley and Ballingdon Street in Suffolk which achieved awards from The Royal Town Planning Institute for Street Design between 1989 and 1993 and the scheme at Battle Abbey in West Sussex;

7.7 Proposals shall ensure that

- the flow of traffic into The Square is reduced and limited to that which is absolutely necessary for the proper conduct of the businesses, the school and the material convenience of the immediate residents;
- pedestrians are given priority over vehicular traffic, with an emphasis on a safer walking environment (for both able bodied and the disabled) with the necessary traffic calming measures and speed limitations to 20mph and less;
- parking of vehicles is limited and is self regulated by the characteristics of the renovation, development and enhancing features;
- emergency vehicles and appliances have unimpeded, rapid access for the health and safety of people (especially schoolchildren) and the protection of the buildings especially the church and those in and around The Square (e.g. in the event of a fire);
- all visitors (including resident visitors) are encouraged to park their cars in the Public Car Park at the bottom of Taylor's Hill and walk up to the Square;
- the possible provision of garages for use of the residents and the encouragement of residents to park vehicles in them is considered;
- improved pedestrian and cyclist facilities are put in place (eg. possibly with safe cycle racks at Taylors Hill Car Park); optimising the North Downs Way National Trail route through the Square and linking the Square with other pedestrian/cycle networks.
- There is sufficient, considered, quality signage, street furniture and other visitor management initiatives that will help define routes and inform visitors
- The Project Area especially the Square is reclaimed from the car by slowing traffic down, encouraging people to walk and cycle, removing lorries and encourage the use of public transport

7.9 The Consultant will outline to CTM & EIG the consultant's Plan of Consultation with the organisations and individuals listed in paragraphs 6.1 to 6.4 above.

Stage 1

The Consultant will outline to CTM & EIG the consultant's Plan of Consultation with the organisations and individuals listed in paragraphs 8.2 to 8.3.

Stage 2

The Consultant will report to CTM & EIG on the full analysis/appraisal findings. The Consultants will present a report to CTM & EMG with a draft proposal or proposals, with plans and pictures after researching all relevant material and consulting with the individuals and organisations as specified above. The Consultant will include any plans, maps and pictures that will be needed for public consultation.

Stage 3

The Consultant will, having taken account of further instructions by the CTM & EIG and after the Public Consultation, present to a Final Report and Proposal at the same time designating the bodies or persons who may carry out the work; and sources of funding.

Stage 4

The Consultant will when requested advise on the making of applications for funding.

8.0 STEERING ARRANGEMENTS

- 8.1 The consultant will be steered initially by CTM & EIG but it is intended as soon as practicable to set up a wider Steering Group to include CTM & EIG and representatives from ABC, KCC, Kent Downs AONB Team, the Tourism South East Development Officer and if available, CABE.
- 8.2 The Consultant will liaise with the Secretary of CTM & EIG, Helen Kirwan, who will consult with the CTM & EIG, Parish Council and Borough Councillor. All decisions must be agreed by the Parish Council.
- 8.3 On the award of the contract, a first meeting will act as an initial briefing. Additional meetings will then be scheduled. It is expected that the tenderer will liaise with other members of the CTM&EIG, the Chairman of the Parish Council and the Borough Councillor.
- 8.4 A final meeting will involve the presentation of the study findings to the Steering Group and partners.
- 8.5 The report will be circulated to the Steering Group prior to publication, to allow final comments to be made.

9.0 SUGGESTED TIMETABLE OF OUTPUTS

- 9.1 The Project is dependent on a successful application to DEFRA for funding.
A *suggested* timetable would operate as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 20 st January 2005 | Invitations to tender, based on successful DEFRA application. |
| 10 th February 2005 | Tender bids submitted by noon. |
| 14 th February 2005 | Application to DEFRA formally submitted |
| 21 st March 2005 | Anticipated approximate date of DEFRA 's decision |

| | | |
|------------------------|------|--|
| 7 th April | 2005 | Consultant selected and all applicants informed of result. |
| 21 st April | 2005 | Completion stage 1. |
| 21 st June | 2005 | Completion stage 2. |
| 5 th July | 2005 | Completion stage 3. |
| 26 ^h July | 2005 | Completion stage 4. |

9.2 We would like to have the study completed and findings presented to us by Tuesday 12th July 2005 but a degree of flexibility will be available.

[NOTE: *dates in 9.1 and 9.2 may be revised if and when DEFRA awards the grant applied for.*]

10.0 EVALUATION

10.1 The successful tenderer will need to demonstrate a proven track record of village enhancement schemes including the protection and conservation of rural heritage and the revitalisation and encouragement of tourist and craft activities. The consultant must have a sound awareness of the potential for craft activities and the development of tourism, especially 'green tourism' in a sensitive, sustainable manner within Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

10.2 The consultant must have access to any other expertise (e.g. landscape Architect) which may be necessary, experience of desktop research, and organising and running community consultation exercises, with sound urban design/spatial planning experience to analyse the problems involved.

10.3 Our choice will be based upon:

- Confidence that the consultant fully understands the research objectives;
- Demonstration of a practical approach to investigating the study area;
- Experience of the personnel involved in carrying out similar studies;
- Value for money.

11.0 SUBMISSIONS

11.1 Tenderers are invited to submit two copies of a detailed proposal for the work described. This will include:

- (a) Names and qualifications and relevant experience;
- (b) An indication of how the consultant proposes to undertake the delivery of tasks and outputs;
- (c) An indication of time-scales for the delivery of outputs (if these differ from suggested timescales).
- (d) A price for undertaking the project.

11.2 The submissions should be received by 12 noon on Friday 10th February, 2005 in accordance with the invitation to tender letter from Robert Berry dated 19.01.05

12.0 INVOICING ARRANGEMENTS

12.1 The value of the contract will include consultant fees, expenses, travel and subsistence costs and VAT. A small amount of money will be available for public consultation costs e.g. hire of village hall, postal consultation, etc. Free accommodation locally is

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Rural Enterprise Scheme: South East Region: Renovation and Development of Chilham Village and the protection and conservation of rural heritage together with the encouragement for tourist and craft activities.

available for 2+ persons for up to seven nights if needed, in a holiday cottage (Graded ETB 4 star). An office for all reasonable work activities is also available locally FOC.

12.2 All invoices shall be submitted to Chilham Parish Council and shall be paid against invoice on satisfactory completion of each of the outputs.

SIGNED.....DATE.....

END OF DRAFT

APPENDIX'S

APPENDIX A *"Copy Draft Parish Design Statement, 2004"*.

APPENDIX B Copy extracts from *Living Places: Caring for Quality* (January 2004)

DEFINITION:

In this document the term 'public realm' is to be defined in accordance with the ODPM as follows:

"Public realm relates to all those parts of the built and natural environment where the public has free access. It encompasses: all streets, squares and other rights of way, whether predominantly in residential, commercial or community/civic uses; the open spaces and parks; and the 'public/private' spaces where public access is unrestricted (at least during daylight hours). It includes the interfaces with key internal and external and private spaces to which the public normally has free access".

APPENDIX C

1. Photographs

2. Brief outline of other projects

(a) Case Study: Surface Enhancement in Village Conservation Areas published by The Institute of Historic Building (IHBC)
http://www.ihbc.org.uk/context_archive/41/casestudy2_dir/casestudy2_s.htm

(b) Battle Abbey Scheme, Battle, West Sussex by English Heritage (2 photos)

3. The improvement scheme drawn up and consultation undertaken by CEPS in 2001.