

## **PURCHASE OF COLLECTIONS RESOURCE CENTRE FOR WILTSHIRE**

### **AGREEMENT BETWEEN SALISBURY AND SOUTH WILTSHIRE MUSEUM TRUST AND THE WILTSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

#### **1. BACKGROUND**

In January 2016 Salisbury Museum was made aware of a potential storage facility on Cranborne Chase which is suitable to become a county store jointly managed with the Wiltshire Museum. The museums have been urgently looking for a facility to house archaeological archives generated by developer funded excavations – in particular those produced by Wessex Archaeology. Both Museums also need to store a significant amount of archaeological material off site to enable the museums to move forward with major redevelopment plans to enhance the tourism potential of the museums.

The Grim's Dyke Barn has a ground floor area that is 350 sq metres in size. The building has the potential to not only accommodate all of the backlog material and archives stored by Salisbury Museum and Wiltshire Museum. There is scope inside the building for further expansion with the addition of a mezzanine floor – plus the building itself could be extended. Located on Cranborne Chase – an area of huge archaeological significance – the site could become a Collections Resource Centre that not only opens access to the collections from this landscape, but also the landscape itself.

The issue of archaeological storage has been identified in the Wiltshire Council Core Strategy and the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site Management Plan. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan of the Core Strategy sets out the requirement for museum storage and this and Section 106 agreements offer potential mechanisms that would support the purchase and operation of a joint store.

#### **2. FUNDING THE PURCHASE**

The building will cost £300,000 (freehold). Salisbury Museum will purchase the site on behalf of both museums and have full title to the facility. Salisbury Museum will contribute £50,000 towards the costs of purchase in the form of a grant from the Garfield Weston Foundation. Salisbury Museum will meet the costs of purchasing the building (legal costs, stamp duty, survey fees and initial fit out costs up to a value of £50,000).

Wiltshire Museum will contribute £50,000 towards purchasing the facility and in return they will have free use of the site for their existing collections and archives. They will be vacating an existing storage facility and will transfer these collections to the new store. Any new archives produced via developer funded excavations in Wiltshire will be subject to a box storage fee paid by the developer (see below).

Salisbury Museum agrees that any grant paid to acquire the facility will be returned to the contributing bodies if the building is ever sold. This would be in the same proportion to the original contribution (i.e. Wiltshire Museum would get £66,667 if

property is sold for £400,000 in the future). This could be secured with a legal charge on the property.

### **3. OPERATING COSTS**

Salisbury Museum will enter into a partnership arrangement with Wiltshire Museum which will define how the facility will be jointly managed as the store/resource centre for archaeology for Wiltshire. This agreement will define how the space will be used, joint access arrangements and how the liabilities will be shared between the museums to lessen risk.

Salisbury Museum will set out a formal agreement with Wiltshire Council and the main museums collecting archaeology in the county that the store is *the* repository for archaeological archives in Wiltshire (Wiltshire Museum and Salisbury Museum are the main collecting bodies). This would follow on from work undertaken by the county museum's service to harmonise collecting areas and box fees.

Initially there will be a focus on the storage of bulk material until environmental controls are introduced for the deposition of more sensitive material. Salisbury Museum could temporarily accommodate more sensitive materials at the King's House if the museum's bulk material is shifted to the resource centre and Wiltshire Museum will retain sensitive collections on site.

All archaeological archives placed in the store (except those from the Salisbury Museum's collecting area and Wiltshire Museum) will be on long term loan to Salisbury Museum (in a similar way to how paper archives are deposited with a county records office). Legal title will remain with the depositing museum/organisation but all deposits would be publically available upon request. Loans/deposits will need to be reviewed/renewed every five years.

All archaeological archives (except for those from Wiltshire Museum highlighted above) – whether donated or placed on deposit/loan from another museum – would have an associated charge for deposition that would help to offset the running costs. This charge will come from the developer funding the archaeological project rather than the individual museums. This one off fee will need to be agreed with all contributing museums, main archaeological contractors and Wiltshire Council. The fee will be non-refundable - for example if an archive is completely withdrawn by a depositing museum after a five year period.

All archives deposited will need to follow detailed deposition guidelines to ensure the objects are suitable for long term storage. Both Museums guidelines need to be updated. Both museums will work with the Council's conservation and museums advisory service to develop consistent new guidelines.

Salisbury Museum will manage access to all the archaeological archives (except for those from Wiltshire Museum) – for example if staff from museums with archives on deposit want access to the collections, or researchers want to visit the store – this will all need to be done via Salisbury Museum. This will ensure secure and effective management of all the material stored at the centre and provide robust data on usage.

In addition to the income highlighted above (i.e. through a charge for deposition) Salisbury Museum and Wiltshire Museum will both contribute an initial £2,500 each per annum towards annual running costs.

Agreed by

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DAVID DAWSON  
DIRECTOR  
The Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society

Date 27/9/2016

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A Green', with a large loop at the start and a wavy tail.

ADRIAN GREEN  
DIRECTOR  
The Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum Trust

Date 27/09/2016

