

Informal War Memorial Site Meeting

11th February 2022

PRESENT

Parish Councillors – John Bailey, Iain Keeping, Jonny Kershaw, Norman Sharp, Ann Wright (Clerk).

Chester Cathedral – Ted Comer (Clerk of Works), Tom Livingston (Stonemason), Naomi Watts-Kitto (Conservator),

Purpose of Meeting: To discuss repair of War Memorial.

It was highlighted that the area around the Memorial is frequently flooded and that the Millfield and land around the Memorial is to be used as an area to hold the water during flooding.

It was noted that the priority is to retain the Memorial, which is in 3 sections, the base of 4 steps, the shaft and cross. It was discussed the rest of the area should be levelled for accessibility and possibly surfaced with grasscrete allowing it to be grassed.

It was explained that the Cathedral has not had its own team for the last 3 or 4 decades and the current team has only been in place for the last 3 years and as such has limited resources and would not be able to take over the project but could offer a range of help and support.

It was suggested the project needs to be managed by a conservation architect.

It was discussed if the project could be phased:

Phase 1 – Dismantling and storage of Memorial.

Phase 2 – Construction of base for Memorial.

It was thought the stone could be stored on the Millfield.

It was discussed that reducing the size of the base would reduce the weight to be supported but that needs to be balanced against a larger surface area spreading the weight of the Memorial.

It was noted the Memorial is made of Cheshire Red Sandstone which was most likely quarried locally on the Bolesworth Estate, although it was thought there are two modern posts at the front of the wall.

It was suggested the plaques could be restored during the works.

It was discussed that the Memorial will have been pinned using an iron dowel and that when the Memorial is being dismantled there is a risk that the pressure on the dowel could split the memorial. As such any company undertaking the works will require adequate insurance.

It was noted these works would require a road closure and a large crane.

It was noted that planning permission is not required to undertake emergency works for safety reasons.

It was noted that dismantling the Memorial, given its construction, will be very challenging. As such it was suggested a better option would be to leave the Memorial in place and

support it while undertaking works to support the base. It was suggested it might help to install some drains below the Memorial to help remove water.

Next Steps:

It was noted the Clerk is still waiting for prices from companies for the project.

Create brief (John Bailey) to ask structural engineers to quote for works which will be forwarded to the cathedral team to comment on.

Update CW&C Conservation Officer of situation.

Representatives from the Cathedral confirmed they would be happy to meet structural engineers on site to discuss the project and also to attend the site when works are taking place to monitor the protection of the Memorial.

The Cathedral might be able to help identify sources of funding noting that it is difficult to obtain funding through the War Memorial Trust.

It was suggested that funding could be raised by people buying paving stones similar to the Church path or by asking construction companies building in Tattenhall to provide support.

Ann Wright
11th February 2022.