

CABINET

1st February 2012

REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE

Staffordshire Hoard: Ongoing Exhibition Development at Tamworth Castle

EXEMPT INFORMATION

None

PURPOSE

To seek endorsement from members for the evaluation of the 2011 Staffordshire Hoard Touring Exhibition and recognise its success; to endorse the use of funds remaining from the 2011 Touring exhibition to establish an interim display of Hoard items within Tamworth Castle; and support in principle the further development of the Tamworth Story to showcase Tamworth's Mercian Heritage including the display of items from the Staffordshire Hoard.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Members endorse the evaluation of the 2011 Staffordshire Hoard Touring Exhibition, and note its success against the original objectives.**
- 2) Endorse use of funds remaining from the 2011 Staffordshire Hoard Touring Exhibition (£15k) to establish an interim exhibition from April 2012**
- 3) Support in principle, (subject to external funding), the re-development of the Tamworth Story exhibition, within Tamworth Castle, to house the Staffordshire Hoard and showcase Tamworth's Mercian Heritage.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Staffordshire Hoard on Tour Exhibition 2011 was very successful and resulted in a larger number of local people and visitors enjoying a high quality, professional display at Tamworth Castle. The Exhibition also contributed to the local economy with survey data showing that over £300k was contributed to the local economy as a consequence of the Exhibition. To build on this success and maintain momentum locally, as well as with partner agencies, the Castle will develop an interim display using £15k of funding remaining from the Tour. The Interim display will provide an improved display of our Saxon history at the Castle as part of the existing Tamworth Story Gallery and include items from the Hoard in a new security case.

The final section of the report provides a quick overview of plans for the future redevelopment of the Tamworth Story Gallery to provide a new visitor attraction at the Castle focusing on our Saxon heritage and displaying several cases of Hoard items.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The cost of the interim hoard exhibition will be met from funds remaining from the Staffordshire Hoard On Tour Exhibition 2011 (£15k). This £15k is the remainder of a contingency fund specifically set aside for the Staffordshire Hoard, that drew on the Castle's Reserve fund for events and existing revenue budgets. It is anticipated that this budget will fund all the costs of the interim exhibition. Should additional funds be required they will be

met from existing revenue budgets.

No additional staffing or on going revenue costs will be incurred by establishing the interim exhibition.

LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND

There are no risks or legal implications arising directly from this report. The delivery of the interim exhibition however, does involve some minor risks and legal issues which have been worked through with the partners involved. These are the same risks and legal issues that were factors in the Hoard Touring Exhibition but have now been resolved to a very minor level in light of Tamworth being part of the Board membership for the Mercian Trail Partnership, and the security measures that were implemented as a necessary requirement for venues hosting pieces from the Staffordshire Hoard.

Specific risk assessments relating to security of the hoard items have been conducted and form part of the day to day operations of the Castle. The fully upgraded intruder alarm and CCTV system complies with the terms of the loan of items of the Staffordshire Hoard, being a European Grade 3 throughout the building. Advice was taken from William Brown, Museum National Security Advisor, who recommended that the Tamworth Story would be adequate for the display of items of the Staffordshire Hoard, as long as the relevant security grade display case was used and that it be individually alarmed within our intruder alarm system.

Grant of Government Indemnity would not apply to the Tamworth Story area due to access issues, therefore commercial insurance would be required for the Hoard items on display within the Tamworth Story.

Legal Agreements which directly affect the interim exhibition:

- Loan Agreement between Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery (BMAG), Potteries Museum and Art Gallery (PMAG) and Tamworth Borough Council
- Heritage Commercial Insurance Policy

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

By supporting in principle the ongoing development of an interim display of the Staffordshire Hoard and authorising the use of money to complete the work in the Tamworth Story, Tamworth Castle will have a security grade display case of the type required for the display of Hoard items. This alone will ensure the ongoing viability to host exhibitions of the Staffordshire Hoard, within Tamworth Castle. It makes any displays of the Staffordshire Hoard in Tamworth, sustainable over time. This is a positive implication for the history and heritage of Tamworth.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Introduction

The Staffordshire Hoard on Tour 2011 exhibition was a huge success. Over 14,000 people came through the doors of Tamworth Castle in a three week period. The same high visitor figures were also repeated at both Stafford and Lichfield. The desire to see the gold in key Mercian localities was tremendous, highlighting the public's deep feelings of pride and connection to this unique archaeological find. Maintaining the presence of the hoard at the local sites is important and fundamental to the development of the Mercian Trail across the West Midlands. We now have the perfect opportunity to harness the momentum of the Hoard on Tour and take the public with us on the journey that is Saxon Mercia, delivered via the Mercian Trail.

1. Evaluation

Evaluation of the Staffordshire Hoard on Tour Exhibition, took the form of both an economic impact assessment across the 3 venues and analysis of visitor questionnaires. At Tamworth Castle 14,853 visitors saw the exhibition; £17850.21 was taken in the Castle shop on both Hoard and Castle merchandise; £5311.28 was donated to the fundraising campaign for the ongoing conservation of the Hoard; 89% of visitors were from the local area (under 30 minutes drive) and of those local people 57% were from Tamworth; 10% of visitors were day trippers and 1% were on an overnight stay. Car park revenue increased by 11% for the period and the Castle increased volunteers by 78% for the exhibition. The overall economic impact of the exhibition for the local economy in the Tamworth area alone, was £358,669.15.

The Touring exhibition met all of it's original objectives:

- Thanking local people for their generous donations - 57% of visitors were from Tamworth
- A chance to display and interpret newly conserved and cleaned items - surveys show appreciation of the items and ability to see both conserved and unconserved items
- An opportunity to test the Mercian Trail Partnerships ability and commitment - all 3 venues delivered the exhibition within budget, on time, and to a high standard, all decisions were made collaboratively, all marketing was delivered collaboratively, all financial commitments and pay-back's were met.
- An opportunity to test the venue's planning and capacity for longer term exhibitions - all venues met the challenge of handling high volumes of visitors in a short space of time, all venues proved they could cope with this type of delivery. Tamworth Castle Survey feedback praised venue staff, the timing, ticketing and handling of the volume of people. Tamworth received much praise for the venue layout and atmosphere; the Great Hall was found to lend itself to such exhibitions. Commitment to upgrading the security meant all venues have potential to secure further exhibitions of the hoard.
- Opportunity to maintain public interest while conservation and research continues on the hoard - the visitors figures speak for themselves, public interest was very high and this interest was met by the exhibition.
- Opportunity to bring in visitors to support the local economy - £358,669.00 was the value to the economy in Tamworth alone.
- Opportunity to raise the profile and reputation of the towns and region - overseas visitors and out of region visitors indicates that the marketing worked to draw people into the region.

Our challenge is now to maintain this interest and momentum of the Staffordshire Hoard and develop the story of Mercian Staffordshire and Tamworth's place within it.

Please see the attached background paper for the full economic impact assessment of Tamworth Castle.

2. Interim display of the Staffordshire Hoard

Following the success of the Staffordshire Hoard on Tour the Castle is seeking to develop an interim display within an existing gallery space at the Castle, known as the Tamworth Story.

The Tamworth Story already provides an overview of the development of the town including a section on our Saxon origins, and specifically looks at the Saxon Buhr, Watermill, and mint. It includes relevant collections including the mill stones, the Glascote torc and early coins. The idea would be to refresh the section on the Saxons, updating the information, re-displaying some of the objects, and introducing information on the Staffordshire Hoard. While we would want to seamlessly integrate any new information into the gallery space, we also feel that the incorporation of Mercian Trail branding would be useful to highlight to visitors the new developments in the Mercian Trail Partnership and the ongoing development of Staffordshire Hoard exhibitions. We would also like the opportunity to display some items from the Staffordshire Hoard in one single display cabinet. It is anticipated that this single case would be a cabinet commissioned by the Castle, to the same specification as those purchased for the Touring exhibition.

Like Lichfield Cathedral, we recognise that the display of all the Hoard iconic items was a special feature of the touring exhibition, and that the expectation would be that only selected items of the Hoard would be available on a more permanent basis. We too would anticipate that any permanent displays would include a mixture of conserved and unconserved items of which there are multiple examples.

In Tamworth, the focus of the story of Saxon Mercia would be on Tamworth as the administrative and political capital; the seat of kings and the warrior society that existed on tribute. We intend to highlight the arms and armour of the time, and we already have a number of high quality armour replicas, as well as other warrior "battle kit" which is used as part of our education programme and living history events. These replicas will be used within the interim displays to enable visitors to handle, see and clearly understand for example, what the parts of a sword are; what is a pommel? what is a hilt collar? This will then allow them to make the connection to the items found in the Staffordshire Hoard, and the fact that these individual components of a sword were potentially "ripped" from the warriors armour before being hidden and buried.

Within this interim project we would wish to display hoard pieces that are solely related to armour. In fact we would like to display multiple examples of single items e.g. pommel caps to allow audiences to appreciate the sheer quantities of armour pieces that were found. We consider that we could display up to around 14 items - 7 pommel caps, 4 hilt collars, 3 hilt plates, together in one case. Within these categories, we would love to show pieces that highlight a range of craftsmanship, thus the pommel caps would include some with filigree work, some with garnet decoration and some with zoomorphic decoration. However like Lichfield Cathedral this would be a wish-list of wants and would clearly depend on what items have been conserved, as well as what items are on display at other venues. We expect to be flexible on what can be shown and that be guided by advice from BMAG and PMAG on any chosen items.

Our initial list of hoard items would be as follows:

294	Sword Pommel	679	Hilt Collar
286	Sword Pommel	660	Hilt Collar

284	Sword Pommel	278	Hilt Collar
554	Sword Pommel	688	Hilt Collar
553	Sword Pommel	271	Hilt Collar
558	Sword Pommel	691	Hilt Collar
664	Sword Pommel	570	Hilt Collar
669	Sword Pommel	690	Hilt Collar/loop
666	Sword Pommel		
697	Sword Pommel		

Alternatives if others not available

290	Sword Pommel	307	Sword Pommel
292	Sword Pommel	722	Broken hilt collar
674	Sword Pommel	276	Pommel
680	Sword Pommel	702	Hilt Plate
689	Sword Pommel	282	Hilt Plate
693	Sword Pommel crushed	698	Hilt Collar mangled
701	Sword Pommel	544	Hilt Collar mangled
		568	Broken Hilt Collar

Timescale

It is anticipated that the interim display would be ready for completion within 6 months, with an opening date in May 2012. Therefore any loan arrangement for hoard items would need to be in place by May 2012.

3. Permanent display of the Staffordshire Hoard.

Tamworth's longer term ambition is to have a permanent display of selected Hoard items at the Castle. This would require the redevelopment of the whole of the Tamworth Story gallery space within the Castle. Again, the focus of the story of Saxon Mercia would be on Tamworth as the administrative and political capital; the seat of kings and the warrior society that existed on tribute. A more detailed exploration of Saxon life, Royalty, Battles and Tribute, Aethelflaeda and the decline of Mercia would be covered through a mixture of information, hands-on activities and object collections, for a family audience. We have commissioned an initial design proposal which makes provision for a maximum of four display cabinets in which to have a permanent display of items from the Staffordshire Hoard. We would suggest at this stage that each display cabinet could show 15-20 Staffordshire Hoard items per case. Our ambition would also be to agree a minimum number of items that we could permanently display within Tamworth Castle and agree with all partners the rotation of some of the "star items" and minimum periods of time that these "star items" could be on display. We realise that existing contracts with National Geographic and the Art Fund may have some impact on this.

Timescale

Early design and costings for our proposals suggest that we would need to consider external funding opportunities. One option is to make an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund in order to raise funds to realise the full refurbishment of the gallery. The refurbishment would be delivered in line with a detailed timetable, however the following is an outline timescale for the application to the HLF and redevelopment of the gallery:

- Discussion with HLF and submit pre-application proposal December 2011
- Submit application for First Round Heritage Grant March 2011
- Six -month Development Phase July to Dec 2012
- Submit Application for Second Round Heritage Grant March 2012
- Deliver Second Round Heritage Grant Jun 2013 to Jun2014
- Opening of Gallery July 2014

4. Conclusion

Tamworth Castle is working towards both a short term (within 6 months) and longer term (within 3 years) display of items of the Staffordshire hoard, within the Castle. We are looking forward to being part of the Mercian Trail Partnership to deliver the Mercian Trail along with the partner venues, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Staffordshire Museum Service and Lichfield Cathedral. We will work with all the partners to ensure we can display hoard items securely and appropriately and within exciting exhibitions that complement the Mercian Trail venues.

REPORT AUTHOR

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Robert Mitchell - Deputy Director Communities Planning and Partnerships

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Mercian Trail Draft Strategy (November 2011)

Mercian Trail Partnership - Long Term Loan of Hoard Items at Tamworth Castle (November 2011)

Mercian Power and Influence - The Staffordshire Hoard Gallery at Tamworth Castle (December 2010)

Staffordshire Hoard on Tour 2011 - Economic Impact Assessment (December 2011)

APPENDICES

- A) Mercian Power and Influence
- B) Draft Mercian Trail Strategy