



**Symington Building, Harborough District Council HQ
Redevelopment Project**

ART & HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION STRATEGY Brief

Document author: Chris Clarke, Project Manager
Version: 2.0
Date: 11 April 2013

1 Aim

- 1.1 To identify how the redeveloped Symington building (HDC headquarters) will inspire and support the local community and workforce, through the use of visual art and historical interpretation will be used in the redevelopment of the Symingtons' building (HDC Headquarters)

2 Key Objectives

- 2.1 To identify the opportunity areas for the display of art and historical interpretation within and to the external fabric for the Symingtons' building and the benefits that artistic display and interpretation can offer;
- 2.2 Identify how these opportunities can be effectively exploited, both during the redevelopment project itself and during the ongoing future use of the building, to maximise the benefits for the two key beneficiary groups who will utilise the building:
- Residents and visitors of Market Harborough, Harborough District and surrounding areas, as part of the project's Community Engagement Plan;
 - Those organisations and their employees who will be working and operating from the building in the future, including Harborough District Council and Leicestershire County Council and other agencies including community groups and volunteers;
- 2.3 To identify and manage the interrelationships between the display of art and historical interpretation with other key outputs of the project, including the aesthetics of the internal and external building finishes, statutory and non-statutory signage, including specifically ensuring that any compliance with listed building consent is satisfied.

- 2.4 To identify where art and historical interpretation may improve access to and use of the building, through the use of different media and methods of providing information recognising that barriers may be intellectual, emotional, social, political and economic as well as physical.

3 Background

- 3.1 Harborough District Council (HDC) is committed to a major redevelopment of the Symington building; its headquarters, located on Adam and Eve Street in the centre of Market Harborough.
- 3.2 The project, jointly funded with Leicestershire County Council (LCC) is currently under construction which is forecast to be completed on the 20th December 2013. The building will provide accommodation for HDC back office, civic and democratic functions and customer services together with Registration services, adults and children's social care, adult learning and library services provided by LCC. The building also will continue to house Harborough museum and will provide rental accommodation for three retail units and other public sector office tenants.
- 3.3 The building, erected in stages from the 1870s onwards, is the only remaining component of the once substantially larger R&WH Symington Co. Ltd. factory and headquarters; producers of the famous Liberty bodice, corsets and other foundation garments, as well as parachutes during World War Two, swimwear for the 1983 Miss World competition and lingerie for Leicestershire retailers Next,. The company sold the building to Harborough District Council in 1980 and ceased trading in 1992. The development has been respectful of the Grade 2* listing of the building, and the important place that the Symingtons name has in the local industrial history of Market Harborough.

4 Governance/Ownership of the Strategy

- 4.1 The strategy will be “owned” by the project Executive Advisory Panel; the supervisory panel of elected members (cross party, and including a co-opted Member from Leicestershire County Council) who are monitoring the progress of the project and its performance, who will endorse the strategy;
- 4.2 The officer Project Board will provide the governance for the delivery of the strategy, ensuring it fits with the overall Project objectives, including recognising all funding parties and that the scheme is affordable within the project business case;
- 4.3 The project team, led by the Project Manager, will be responsible for overseeing the development and delivery of the strategy during the redevelopment of the Headquarters building;

Nb. It is anticipated that determining the best approach for the ongoing management of the strategy and it's implementation once the redevelopment project is completed will be one of the outcomes of the strategy.

5 Key Outputs from Art Strategy



- 5.1 Identify opportunities for display of visual art and historical interpretation within the Symington building re-development, which must include:
- how the use of an artistic commission can deliver one strand of the HQ redevelopment project's approved Community Engagement Strategy - an art competition;
 - the display of the U3A Millennium Tapestry within the development.
 - the appropriate use and location of historical images of the Symingtons' building
- 5.2 Set out proposed delivery route and timetable to exploit these opportunities.
- 5.3 Set out the proposed community and staff (HDC, LCC and any other future tenants) engagement approach to ensure the involvement of future building users.
- 5.4 Identify potential costs to the project and additional funding opportunities
- 5.5 Identify how the use of art and historical interpretation within the building will be applied alongside the required statutory and non-statutory building signage, and aesthetic finishes to be delivered as part of the main refurbishment contract.

6 Programme

- 6.1 The art strategy must be developed in sufficient time to deliver any recommended art and historical interpretation for the re-opening of the building.
- 6.2 The building contract (being undertaken by Willmott Dixon) is forecast for completion on the 20th December 2013, with the building being re-occupied from January 2014.
- 6.3 It is envisaged that this strategy will cover both the redevelopment of the building and its subsequent use for at least 12 months of operation. Outcomes of the strategy are therefore not solely to be delivered prior to re-opening of the building, but should also consider how art and interpretation will help the building become an inspiring and valued cultural resource by the local community and also visitors to the area.
- 6.4 Identify opportunities for display of art and historical interpretation within the Symington building re-development, which must include both public and staff areas, and take into account the multi function and multi agency use and needs of the building.
- 6.5 Work with officers of the county and district councils and other partner organisations to compliment the plans in place for the public service areas, including but not limited to the museum, library and adult learning, customer services and reception, and the civic suite.