

# Dyrham Park Rework'd

## All systems go -work has started

The Dyrham Park Rework'd project is starting to show signs of physical progress on site.

A few weeks ago the Transformation element of the project was approved by our central investment board to proceed with an approved budget of £2.4m.

Work is now starting in earnest in the house with the Best Staircase moving towards completion and very excitingly the Old Staircase work starting.

On the Infrastructure side the design process is continuing and our design team is making good progress on the developments across the site. We are also fast approaching the first planning application for Old Lodge.

The West Garden continues and the Avenues are being planted up.

## In the house

The repair of the Best Staircase is progressing well, if slowly. The stairs are now properly supported with a pier in the cellar vault which will pick up the bottom of the newel post, and transfer the load from the stairs down to the solid floor below – rather than the suspended floor above.

The floor timbers have been repaired and the joinery structure of the staircase stiffened. The floor build-up of a series of thin layers of lime mortar, is being laid and the marble paving is gradually being reinstated.

It's a slow process as the mortar has to be laid in shallow layers and each one allowed to cure before the next is laid. That's something we have to wait for; if we tried to speed up the process, the mortar wouldn't cure properly and would break up.

Over the next few weeks the marble slabs will be reinstated and the area will go back to normal.



Figure 1: temporary support of the stairs

## Dyrham Park Rework'd

### Stakeholder update - June 2019

Next on the programme is the repair and redecoration of the Old Staircase. Following a competitive tender process we have appointed Ellis and Co of Shepton Mallet to undertake the work. They are an experienced conservation contractor and have worked extensively for the National Trust.

Work started on 3rd June and they have been installing protections and scaffolding to enable the work to happen.

The plan is to complete the works in mid-September. We will be making it possible for visitors to see the work in progress and we will keep everyone up to date with the work as it goes along.

Ahead of the contractor starting, the house team have been working really hard over the last few weeks, moving the collection and taking down paintings, then putting them in accessible stores to make the area ready for the contractors.

Over the coming weeks the paint stripping will be undertaken on the panelling and we will learn exactly the condition of the underlying joinery.



Figure 2: Old Staircase cleared to start

The technique for the paint stripping has been established through extensive trials.

Trials have shown that a beautiful finish will be achieved with a combination of wax to the solid timber and veneered areas, and graining of any softwood sections. The flat wall areas will be painted a stone colour.



The plans for the exhibition space and the tasting kitchen have been pulled together, including detailed layouts for the services installations. This has been submitted for Listed Building Consent. We should hear the result later in the summer.

The next step will be to tender the work in July, with a view to start the work on site in the autumn if the price is acceptable.

We have also recommissioned Hara Clark, our exhibition designers. They are picking up on the next stage of the design process, the detailed design of the installations and the content of the story that will run through the different spaces.

If everything comes together as planned these areas should be ready to open in the spring of 2020, including the temporary home for the second hand bookshop in the Scullery.

## Stakeholder update - June 2019

# Infrastructure

20/20, an interpretation design studio, have been commissioned to develop site-wide interpretation for the period of the project.

The intention is to ensure we have clear and coordinated information across the site, from the start of the visit route at visitor reception, to Old Lodge, the house, the stables and the garden. It's important to be clear about what we are doing and when we are doing it, as well as our ultimate aim. It will all help to keep our visitors and supporters on board, and understanding the process.

On a practical note, further ecological surveys are being undertaken to fully understand the Whitefield site, as well as looking for evidence of bats around the stables and in Old Lodge. The results will inform the detailed design of both areas and also the methodology we follow for the construction process.

We are also undertaking further archaeological investigations at all three sites, to complete the picture of what exists below ground. In addition, at Old Lodge, we will be carrying out a percolation test late in June to determine the effectiveness of the subsoil to absorb water from the new sewage treatment system.

The designs for the car park and welcome building in Whitefield are developing, but still need more development before they are ready to be shared.

In addition we are in discussion with Highways England about the access to and from the A46 and the issues surrounding that. Not an easy nut to crack.



### Figure 3: Old Lodge proposals

The proposals for Old Lodge have been finalised, as have the routes around the park. An application for planning permission will be submitted in the next month.

To meet the requirements of the programme, the conversion of the building and the installation of some of the key routes will be tendered during the summer, with a view to starting on site in the autumn.

The plan is to tackle the building conversion during the winter months, after establishing the access track across the park from Badminton Doors. And then to lay new paths in the spring when the ground conditions should be better.

The team is working closely with Food and Beverage and Retail colleagues centrally, to design in detail the facilities required to service the increased visitor numbers, and support the new facilities across the site.



# Dyrham Park Rework'd

## Stakeholder update - June 2019



Figure 4: Old Lodge visualisation

It has taken time to understand the hierarchy of the routes required, but we now have a clear route from the proposed welcome building in Whitefield to create a route to Old Lodge, that then links between the east front of the house to the Terrace up to Umbrella Hill.

It is essential that we create robust routes that are fit for purpose, but at the same time they need to be carefully designed and routed, in order to minimise the visual impact on the landscape. The aim is to ensure the routes look as naturalistic as possible.



Figure 5: how the path to old Lodge might look

In order to test the theory a little more, we are intending to build sample sections of the proposed route treatments, so we can demonstrate to planners etc. the appearance of the paths. At the same time, this will help us understand how the construction will work.

As part of the design process for Old Lodge we are also giving detailed thought to how we run it logistically. Being remote from the main hub, we need to think carefully about staff access and delivery routes etc.

The design of the stable-block restaurant is also progressing and the proposed designs are really interesting. There are now some elevations of how the building might look which show a lightweight structure with quite a lot of glass onto the courtyard.

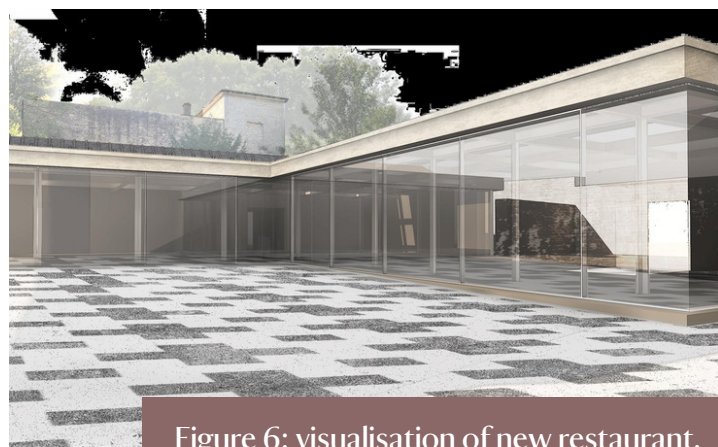


Figure 6: visualisation of new restaurant.

The requirements for the existing stable buildings, that will be vacated by shop and café, and the change in office requirements are all being planned at the same time. We need to ensure we provide adequate space for lavatories, visitor lockers, buggy storage, the second-hand bookshop and an orientation space. Quite a lot to fit in, what is a relatively small space.

However, at the moment the concentration of effort is going into the new building, as we have to get that right first to make sure it's a viable option.

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## Stakeholder update - June 2019

Planning is underway for the proposed workshop facilities for the garden team on the present compost area. The design team are looking at the size and form of a new building. This has to be installed to release the area for the restaurant to be built, so it's the key that unlocks the developments in that area.

As part of the project we are looking at the options available for the future replacement of the present bus. The aim is to find a vehicle that is much more environmentally friendly, ideally electrically powered, that can provide transport for those who need it, between the new welcome building and the house.

The steepness of the hill is the obvious issue that needs to be overcome, and it is a challenge for electric motors. A new vehicle, together with better defined routes around the park, will provide good options for movement across the site.

Following on from the initial consultation sessions held earlier in the spring with staff and volunteers, we have developed a series of FAQs which will be shared through representatives and Heads of Department.

Further consultation sessions will be organised once the designs for the Whitefield development have developed further.



## In the West Garden

The Listed Building Consent application was submitted for the West Terrace parterre in March, but it hasn't been determined yet. We should hear in the next few weeks.

Unfortunately, our application for a grant from Enovert (a landfill related grant) was unsuccessful, which leaves us with a funding gap of around £50k. This disappointment, combined with the delay in the consent coming through, means we are unable to make the planned start this summer.

Rather than delay by a just few months and run the work through the winter, we think it's better to wait for the spring when the weather should be more favourable and start the work in March 2020.

This will mean the work will follow on after the completion of the exhibition space. Once consent is secured, the works will be started later in the year, coordinated with the conversion works to the exhibition area.

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## Stakeholder update - June 2019

### Programming

#### *Over the next few months:*

- Best staircase repairs will be completed.
- Old Staircase repairs and redecoration will progress to completion in September.
- Listed Building Consent should be secured for the exhibition areas and West Garden.
- For Infrastructure there will be meetings with the planners and further meetings with English Heritage.
- Planning applications will be submitted for Old Lodge and the routes around the parkland.
- Application will be submitted for RDPE (Rural Development Programme) grant towards the Old Lodge project.

#### *Longer term timings:*

- Old Staircase – complete autumn 2019.
- Exhibition area and tasting kitchen – start autumn 2019, complete spring 2020.
- Mansion internal works – undertaken in phases throughout 2020.
- Old Lodge – start autumn 2019 and complete spring 2020.
- Stable-yard restaurant - start early 2020 and open spring 2021.
- New car park and welcome building – start spring 2020 and open spring 2021.

*All of the above timings are dependent on tenders being on budget, and consents being achieved on time.*

Further updates will be issued throughout the project to keep everyone informed of progress, and as mentioned above there will be further consultation sessions.

Tim Cambourne, Project Manager