## Contents

### Introduction
Purpose of this report .................................................. 1
Site Context ................................................................. 1

### Historical Context
The Abbey precinct ...................................................... 2
Bakers Row Site .......................................................... 2
Excavations within the Abbey precincts .................... 3

### Planning Context
Arc of Opportunity .................................................... 4
Open Space ................................................................. 4
Scheduled Ancient Monument .................................. 4
Archaeological Priority Areas .................................... 4
Footways and Cycleways ............................................. 4

### Current Situation
The Site ..................................................................... 5
Ownership and liability ............................................. 5
Immediate surroundings ............................................. 5
Proposed DLR station .................................................. 6
Bakers Row Context Works ....................................... 6
Friends of Abbey Gardens .......................................... 6

### Project Plan 1
Work carried out to date ............................................. 7

### Archaeological Evaluation ........................................ 8

### Project Plan 2
Plan for future work .................................................. 9

### Landscape Proposals
Introduction ............................................................. 10
Aims ........................................................................ 10
Consultations .......................................................... 10
Landscape Proposals ................................................ 11

### Cost Plan
Cost Summary .......................................................... 12
Funding ..................................................................... 12

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### Appendix A.
Summary of drop in held on June 27th ....................... 13
List of Consultees ...................................................... 13

### Bibliography .......................................................... 14

### Update June 2008
Desk Top Study .......................................................... 15
Scheduled Monument Consent .................................. 15
Planning consent ..................................................... 15
Community Excavation ............................................. 15/16
Interim Landscape Treatment .................................. 17
Access ................................................................. 17
Japanese Knotweed .................................................. 17
Soil Contamination ................................................... 17
Art and Interpretation ............................................... 18
Final Design ............................................................ 18
Cost Summary .......................................................... 19
Sources of funding ..................................................... 19
Update on other works ............................................. 20
Purpose of this Report

As part of the ‘Improve the Environment Legacy Programme’, the Newham Unit for the 2012 Games, funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF), have commissioned this feasibility study to look at opening up a vacant plot of land on Bakers Row to create a new public open space and to potentially display historic remains that exist on the site.

Site Context

The Bakers Row site is situated within West Ham Ward on the north side of Bakers Row, West Ham. It is flanked by the Councils Bridge Road Depot to the north and east, railway tracks to the west and by a three storey mansion block (Abbey House) and a row of terraced houses to the south.

The site is in a very overgrown, neglected state and is currently surrounded by railings with no public access. It contains the remains of what is thought to be the gatehouse to Stratford Langthorne Abbey, a Cistercian Abbey dating from the 12th century of which nothing now exists except the remains on the Bakers Row site. These remains are considered to be of national importance and have been designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument, one of only two Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the London Borough of Newham.

The site is in an area of great change and opportunity. The implementation of the London 2012 Olympics will have a major impact in the whole of the Stratford area. The Docklands Light Railway (DLR) have a planned extension to Stratford International to be completed prior to the Olympics and one of the proposed stations ‘Abbey Road’ will be located at the end of Bakers Row.
The Abbey precinct

The site is within the area known to have been the precincts of the former Abbey of St. Mary Stratford Langthorne, Essex. This Abbey was founded in 1135, originally as a Savigniac house, later in 1147 becoming absorbed into the Cistercian order. It quickly became successful, undergoing a number of periods of expansion and alteration. It was rare for a Cistercian monastery to be located so close to an urban area as the Cistercians desire for solitude meant they usually chose remote, rural locations. Probably due to its location, by dissolution in 1538 it was ranked the 5th most important Cistercian Abbey in England. After dissolution the Abbey was demolished though some of its ancillary buildings remained in use for some time. The area slowly became more industrialised and by the time railway works began in the mid 19th century nearly all visible traces of the Abbey had disappeared.

Bakers Row site

The site at Bakers Row is on the eastern boundary of the former precinct. The main entrance to the precinct was here, through what was known as the ‘Great Gate’. The gate would have been on what is now Bakers Row which seems to follow the original line of the road into the precinct.

The remains on the site are of a building which would have been adjacent to the ‘Great Gate’ and just inside the main entrance to the Abbey precinct. The earliest part of the building is thought to date from the 12th or 13th century. It is thought to have been a two storey guesthouse at this time. By the early 18th century, just prior to dissolution it had been extended and improved internally and had become the ‘tenement of the janitor of the Great Gate’, the guesthouse having been located elsewhere within the precincts. After dissolution, the building was one of the few that remained in use. It was modified and extended again, this time with a brick extension and possibly including stabling. It is thought to have been a place of high status occupation during this period.

The building was demolished around 1750, although there may have been a further brick building constructed at a later date. The Great Gate also survived dissolution and remained in existence until the early 19th century when it too was demolished (around 1825). If there was still a building present it probably would have been demolished at the same time. A row of terraced houses was then constructed on the site, remaining until the middle of the 20th century.
Excavations within the Abbey precincts

The first excavations within the Abbey precincts were undertaken on the Bakers Row site in 1973-4, some time after the terraced houses were demolished. The excavation was carried out by the then Passmore Edwards Museum assisted by the West Essex Archaeological Group. It was during these excavations that the gatehouse building and part of the medieval and later moat were recorded. The site was declared a Scheduled Ancient Monument (County No. GL148). The remains were partially covered and the site has since remained undeveloped.

In the 1980’s, a number of excavations and evaluations were carried out mostly in what would have been the central part of the Abbey precincts. An extensive excavation co-ordinated by the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS) was carried out on the site of the Abbey prior to the London Underground Jubilee Line Extension works. Survival of the later phases of the Abbey were good and enabled, in conjunction with documentary sources, a reconstruction of the latest plan of the precinct to be produced. This shows the position of the building on the Bakers Row site in relation to the Abbey precinct as a whole. Of interest during these excavations were 847 burials which were uncovered in a cemetery to the north east of the Abbey, just to the south of the Bakers Row site. This is the largest number of burials known from a European Cistercian site and their discovery has added considerably to knowledge of the Cistercians health, demography and cemetery use, thereby increasing further the historical significance of the Stratford Langthorne Abbey site.

The information in this historical overview has been taken from ‘The Cistercian Abbey of St Mary Stratford Langthorne, Essex: archaeological excavations for the London Underground Limited Jubilee Line Extension Project’, Bruno Barber, Steve Chew, Tony Dyson and Bill White, MoLAS Monograph 18, published in 2004.
Arc of Opportunity

The Bakers Row site falls within the area identified in Newham’s current Unitary Development Plan (UDP) adopted in 2001, as the ‘Arc of Opportunity’, an area which is currently a focus for redevelopment in the Borough, largely influenced by major recent and proposed transport improvements.

Open Space

The site is identified in the current UDP as ‘Green Space to be protected’ and is included in the Borough’s list of Green Spaces smaller than 0.2 hectares. Despite this designation it is neither accessible nor usable for the general public in its current condition.

It is also identified within the UDP as being within ‘Areas deficient in tree cover’, ‘Areas of local park deficiency (more than 400m from any park over 2ha)’ and ‘Areas with Children’s play space deficiency (greater than 200m walking distance from an equipped children’s play space)’.

The UDP states the following in relation to Open Space provision:

“Small open spaces valued by local residents and workers, especially in areas of local park deficiency, will be protected, and where opportunities arise, new areas created. Communities will be encouraged to be involved in the improvement and care of their local open spaces...”

Scheduled Ancient Monument

The Scheduled Ancient Monument is one of only two in the Borough. It is protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Scheduled Monument Consent is required to carry out any work on the site in accordance with Section 2 of the 1979 Act. Applications are determined by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport who are advised on these matters by English Heritage. It can take up to 4 months for an application to be considered.

Archaeological Priority Areas

The site is identified within the current UDP as being within an ‘Archaeological Priority Area (APA)’. The UDP states that an archaeological assessment will normally be required for any development involving a site more than 0.4 acres within an APA.

Footways and Cycleways

A footpath runs adjacent to the railway line at the west end of the site. It provides a pedestrian link north to Stratford and south to West Ham and the nearby ‘Greenway’. The London and the Newham Cycle Networks both have proposals for routes in the immediate vicinity and the path also provides a link between these two routes.

The footpath/cycleway from the Abbey Road DLR station to Stratford has been identified as one of the main access routes to the 2012 games.
The Site

Prior to clearance and investigative work carried out recently by Urban Design, the site was in an overgrown and neglected condition. After the archaeological excavation in the 1970’s it was abandoned and remains undeveloped to this day. It is surrounded by railings, approx. 1.8m high which are in need of repairs and strengthening. There is a single access comprising padlocked double gates at the west end of Bakers Row. From the few records available from the earlier excavations it was not possible to determine the depth and condition of the remains which were covered up following the excavations. The area in which the remains are located was subsequently covered by fly tipping and was consequently very uneven and hazardous. A large mound of spoil at the eastern end comprises material from the excavations which was never backfilled. The vegetation covering the site consists mainly of invasive, self seeded species such as Brambles, Buddleia and Sycamore and there is a patch of Japanese Knotweed in the centre. Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, it is an offence to encourage the growth of Japanese Knotweed and this includes disturbing the surrounding soil if not properly managed. Any material containing Japanese Knotweed taken from site is likely to be classed as ‘Controlled Waste’ and require appropriate waste transfer documentation. The site was also subject to dumping of rubbish and had become a considerable eyesore.

Ownership and liability

The site is owned by the Council, though it has not been possible to determine by which department. No ongoing maintenance is carried out on the site. Culture and Community Department have indicated that they are prepared to take on the future maintenance liability of the site once it is developed, and a local residents group, the ‘Friends of Abbey Gardens’ (see pg 6) have indicated that they would wish to maintain any area allocated as community garden.

Immediate surroundings

To the south of Bakers Row are a three storey mansion block (Abbey House) and a row of terraced cottages. Abbey House is currently run down and neglected. It is a privately owned block of flats and the Council is currently attempting to determine the owner’s intentions for the site. The terraced cottages along with a number of other streets in the area are locally distinctive and the Council’s planners have indicated that they would like the character of the area to be preserved and enhanced. Flanking the north and east sides of the site is the Council’s Bridge Road Depot and to the west are unused rail tracks (soon to be the DLR extension). The overall feel of the area currently is one in sore need of environmental improvement.

View of site looking north from Abbey House
Proposed DLR station

The proposed DLR extension to Stratford International is planned for completion by 2010. The proposed ‘Abbey Road’ station will be located at the end of Bakers Row and will turn this currently neglected cul-de-sac into a much higher profile public thoroughfare and bring new vibrancy to the area. There are plans to create a large scale artwork within the station environs based on a community-orientated project.

Bakers Row Context Works

In association with this project, Transport for London (TfL), the controlling authority for the DLR, jointly with London Borough of Newham, have instigated proposals to upgrade Bakers Row itself including resurfacing the road and footways to create a shared surface, tree planting and the creation of a paved square with seating at the end of the street. Funding is currently being sought by LBN to enable these works to be implemented.

Friends of Abbey Gardens

A group of local residents recently formed the ‘Friends of Abbey Gardens’ after they were consulted on the DLR proposals with the specific aim of trying to get the Bakers Row site opened up and made accessible. They are a constituted group currently numbering 7 members, but are actively seeking to recruit new members. They would like to create a community garden on part of the site with the intention of hosting low key events for the community, educational events for local schools as well as being a space for general use by local residents. They have secured a grant of £5,000 to date from UnLtd, who are supported by the Millennium Awards Trust, and they plan to apply for further funding if their proposals are accepted by the Council.
Work carried out to date (Clearance and investigation)

The neglected state of the site and unknown depth and condition of the remains made it difficult to develop any realistic proposals from the outset. The site initially required the clearance of overgrown vegetation and fly tipping in order to make it safe and a limited amount of archaeological investigation to determine, in conjunction with English Heritage, the state of the remains and the feasibility of ultimately uncovering and displaying them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>Description of Work</th>
<th>Timetable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Vegetation Clearance</td>
<td>Contractors appointed by Urban design carried out hand clearance of the vegetation (the minimum amount of work that could be carried out without Scheduled Monument Consent). It became clear that it was not going to be possible to ascertain the state and condition of the remains as they were covered by tipped material and the ground was very uneven.</td>
<td>Completed March 07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Groundworks</td>
<td>Regrading mound, removing fly tipping, large lumps of concrete and tarmac from site and levelling uneven ground surface</td>
<td>Completed May 07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ground Investigations</td>
<td>Bore holes and test pits</td>
<td>Completed May 07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Archaeological Evaluation</td>
<td>Evaluation trenches carried out by archaeological consultant (MoLAS) and monitored by English Heritage (Results outlined on page 8)</td>
<td>Completed May 07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results of archaeological evaluation (Phase 3)

The evaluation was intended to investigate a small portion of the remains to determine their condition and suitability in principle for display. A larger excavation will still need to be carried out prior to redevelopment of the site.

The following extract has been taken from the report on the trial trenches produced by Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS):

“Following the recommendations of English Heritage three evaluation trenches were excavated on the site to assess the level, nature and condition of structures on the site, a Scheduled Ancient Monument, with a view to eventual display. These revealed parts of the east end of a medieval building belonging to the abbey as well as later brick walls and two brick-lined cess pits dating from the 16th or 17th centuries, which were previously exposed during excavations in 1973-4........The report concludes that the flint and mortar walls of the medieval building would be suitable for display provided appropriate steps are taken to consolidate them and to adequately protect them from wear and tear and vandalism. However, the chalk foundation of the medieval building should remain buried to protect it from weathering. Similarly, most of the brick walls should not be exposed.

Measures to consolidate and protect the exposed remains might include pointing exposed walls and providing the top surfaces with a capping layer of solid mortar, establishing a new undulating ground level to reveal selected structures while leaving more vulnerable brick structures covered, providing drainage to prevent ponding in low areas and possibly the construction of a barrier around the exposed remains. However, before such work is carried out further archaeological investigation would probably need to be undertaken to investigate the interior of the medieval building to establish the nature, level and condition of internal structures.”

The inspector of Ancient Monuments for English Heritage, has yet to comment on the MoLAS report at time of writing this report but following the evaluation has made some initial recommendations to inform the next stage of archaeological work. These can be summarised as follows:

- The evaluation has established that the masonry of the medieval building is in principle suitable for display and that this would be a desirable objective.
- The presence of the later brick additions imposes restraints on this, as they are not suitable for display.
- Further investigation would be required to define precisely which parts of the building are displayed and how.
- A desk top assessment would be required prior to a full scale excavation to uncover the remains and this should include the following:
  - Locating the archive from the 1970’s excavations and establishing the edge of the excavations on site.
  - Locating illustrations of the great gate and establishing whether or not there is a case for attempting to locate the great gate, which may have encroached onto the site.
  - Investigation of the west end and the interior of the guesthouse with a view to displaying this on the site.
Plan for Future Work

(Timetable is based on a start at Month 1, being the date funding is agreed for the project)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Description of Work</th>
<th>Timetable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>Consultations</strong></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing consultations to be carried out with local residents, ‘Friends of Abbey Gardens’ and community forum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liaise with DLR and other relevant parties to ensure co-ordination between station design, street design and scheme proposals.</td>
<td>July 07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continued consultations with English Heritage to ensure quick and smooth processing of applications for scheduled monument consent.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Archaeological Excavation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Desk top study incorporating requirements of English Heritage (see previous page). This will be required as part of the submission to DCMS for Scheduled Monument Consent. It will include the research objectives and methodology for the excavation work.</td>
<td>Month 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Submission to DCMS for Scheduled Monument Consent for excavation and landscape works</td>
<td>Month 2/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Excavations to uncover the remains and determine the best approach to preserve and display them. It is hoped that this can be done as a community excavation, managed by MoLAS but using volunteers from the local community. As part of this stage, the Japanese Knotweed which is right over the remains will have to be removed from site. Due to the unknown nature and extent of the archaeological remains, the scope of this stage has to remain flexible and subject to change.</td>
<td>Month 4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preservation works to remains to be left exposed as well as retaining walls to edges of excavations.</td>
<td>Month 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>Landscape Works</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Design (the layout may have to be revised at this stage subject to the results of the excavation).</td>
<td>Month 5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contract Documents</td>
<td>Month 6-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tender</td>
<td>Month 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Start of contract on site</td>
<td>Month 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Completion of works on site</td>
<td>Month 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Completion of maintenance period</td>
<td>Month 24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

The gatehouse remains on the Bakers Row site represent the only extant part of Stratford Langthorne Abbey and as such are deemed nationally significant. With the developments in this area and the funding opportunities this represents, the council has the opportunity to bring this important site into use and to create a site of great historic and amenity value for the Borough and for the local community.

Aims

The proposals have been developed with the following aims:

- to uncover and display the remains of this important historical site
- to provide a green space in an area which is lacking in tree cover, local parks and open spaces.
- to form part of a safe, well lit and appropriately paved walkway/cycling route from the new DLR station to Stratford and to the games in 2012
- to address the negative appearance of the site and its surroundings and resolve issues to do with dumping and long term neglect
- to provide a new community orientated open space in response to the interest shown by the ‘Friends of Abbey Gardens’
- to provide a public space to benefit users of the new station
- to complement and co-ordinate with proposals associated with the new DLR station

Consultations

After the development of a preliminary design, the plans were shown to councillors at a members ‘drop-in’ on March 22nd 2007 and informal consultations were carried out with the local residents group ‘Friends of Abbey Gardens’. A revised plan was presented to a wider audience at a drop-in event on June 27th 2007. A full list of consultees invited to this event is attached in appendix A.

The plans were very positively received. A summary of comments received is also shown in Appendix A. The minor revisions resulting would be made to the plan when it is developed in further detail.
Landscape Proposals

The design incorporates the following in 3 broadly defined zones:

Public Open Space

A paved, public open space immediately outside the station entrance incorporating:
• a grid of trees (indicative of the orchard that existed within the Abbey precinct just to the north of the site)
• interpretation of the Abbey remains (to be developed alongside the DLR’s proposals for a public art commission)
• seating and lighting

This space has been designed to complement the TIL/LBN context work proposals for a tree lined square at the end of Bakers Row. It is proposed that the 2 spaces should be designed as one continuous space using the same materials, trees etc.

Display of Historic Remains

The remains will be uncovered, preserved and displayed within the public open space but at a lower level (approx. 0.5m below pavement level), with 2 or 3 broad steps down. Railings would be required adjacent to the road but it is hoped that the area generally would remain open.

Community Garden

This would occupy the eastern end of the site where it relates directly to the adjacent houses. The local residents group, ‘Friends of Abbey Gardens’, propose to manage this as a community garden. They have requested a space for low key community and educational events to take place, some shelter, a space for a permanent bread oven (to hold bread making workshops which again relates historically to bread making that was carried out within the Abbey) and areas managed for wildlife.
### Cost Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Desk Top Study</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Community Excavation</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Removal of Japanese Knotweed</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Retaining walls and security Fencing</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Archaeological Excavation Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>73,000</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Site Clearance and Grading</td>
<td>25,500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Public Open Space</td>
<td>39,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Paving</td>
<td>7,500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Site Furniture</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Steps to sunken area</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Surfacing around remains</td>
<td>13,500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Planting and Trees</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Drainage</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Lighting</td>
<td>18,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Interpretation/Artwork</td>
<td>53,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Community Garden</td>
<td>13,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Paths</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Pond area</td>
<td>28,500</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Planting and Trees</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Sheds/Storage</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Shelter</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Provision of water supply</td>
<td>12,500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Lighting</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Railings</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>12 months maintenance</td>
<td>2,500</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td><strong>Landscape Works Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>328,500</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Construction SUB TOTAL (ARCHAEOLOGY AND LANDSCAPE)</strong></td>
<td><strong>401,500</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contingency Allowance @15%</td>
<td>60,225</td>
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<td><strong>WORKS SUB-TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>461,725</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Allowance for inflation to 2008 costs @6.25%</td>
<td>28,857</td>
<td></td>
<td>Construction costs based on 2007 rates</td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>WORKS TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>490,582</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fees @13%</td>
<td>63,775</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>TOTAL PROJECT COSTS</strong></td>
<td><strong>554,357</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Funding

Funding for the project is yet to be secured. The following potential funding sources have been identified to date:

- Neighbourhood Renewal Fund
- Transport for London
- Heritage Lottery ‘Heritage Grants’ – for grants of £50,000+, 6 months required for decision and 10% min. match funding to be provided

In addition the ‘Friends of Abbey Gardens’ will be able to access a range of funding bodies. They have already secured a £5,000 grant from UnLtd. (Supported by the Millennium Awards Trust) and will be applying for the next level of funding from UnLtd. of £25,000.

Other possibilities for the ‘Friends’ group are Newham’s “Go for it” grants (grants of up to £2012) and the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme. There may be other sources that they may be able to source by registering with Newham’s ‘Grantnet’ service, a free grant finding service for Newham residents.
Summary of drop-in held on June 27th at Manor Primary School, Richardson Road

Environmental Improvement Schemes - 2012 Legacy Programme

Scheme: Bakers Row
Date of consultation: 27/06/07
Venue: Manor Primary School, Richardson Road

Officers that attended:
- Sharon Swift (Urban Design Group)
- Josh Chana (Urban Design Group)
- Bernard Tausu (Urban Design Group)

Council members that attended:
- Cllr Ron Manley
- Cllr Freda Bourne

No. of invitations and consultation documents posted: 600 approx
No. of Residents/Stakeholders that attended the ‘drop-in event’: 10
No. of returned questionnaires: 8

Notes:
The consultation was based on a single layout developed from informal consultations with the local residents group, ‘Friends of Abbey Gardens’. The layout and background information were displayed for discussion.

Brief Development/ Responses:
- Residents were all very much in favour of the scheme as it stood, only one identifying a few minor points for consideration regarding the layout.
- One resident expressed concern about vandalism in the area.
- One resident was keen to become involved in the ‘Friends’ group and to assist with ongoing maintenance if a community garden was developed on the site as proposed. This resident was put in touch with the group.

Conclusion:
- To develop the layout and continue to involve residents and the ‘Friends’ group when appropriate, i.e. during proposed excavation work on the site and to involve them in planning the community garden.
- To incorporate the comments on questionnaires when detailing the final scheme.

List of Consultees

Jackie Morrison - LBN, Regeneration and Development
Stephen Pavett - LBN Regeneration and Development
Paul Bowker - LBN Regeneration and Development
Mark Perkins - LBN Parks Services Manager, Culture and Community
Stephen Brindle - Inspector of Ancient Monuments, English Heritage
David Divers - Archaeological Advisor to LBN, English Heritage
Dave Lakin - Museum of London Archaeology Service
Jo Lyon - Museum of London Archaeology Service
Kathy Taylor - Site Manager, N Woolwich Old Station Museum, Culture and Community
Robert Rogers - Newham Homes
Councillor Ron Manley - West Ham Ward
Councillor Freda Bourne - West Ham Ward
Councillor Megan Harris - West Ham Ward
Gerry McKinney - Newham 2012 Unit
David Stubbs - London 2012
Richard Sumray - London 2012
Alison Young - Stratford Renaissance Partnership
Neil Smith - DLR
Naomi Spencer - DLR
The Friends of Abbey Gardens
Residents and tenants of Bakers Row, Abbey Road, Pond Road, Richardson Road, Wakelin Road, Leywick Street, Hubbard Street, Mortham Street, Rokeby Street, Skiers Street, Asland Street, Dell Close, the Leather Gardens Estate

Barber B, Chew S, Dyson T and White B, 2004 The Cistercian abbey of St Mary Stratford Langthorne, Essex, MoLAS Monograph 18

London Borough of Newham, 2001 Unitary Development Plan

Update on Work carried out to June 2008

When this feasibility study was completed in July 2007, Phases 1 to 3 on the project plan (see pg 7) had already been carried out. This included site clearance, ground investigations and archaeological evaluation. Work has continued and has now reached the end of Phase 5 (see pg 9).

The following is an outline of work carried out in the period from July 2007 to June 2008.

Desk Top Study

A desk top study was carried out by Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS) in August 2007. Its purpose was to address specific research questions raised by the evaluation and to assist the formulation of a strategy for planning the excavation and future management of the monument. The study led MoLAS to conjecture that the building on the site could possibly form the northern part of the abbey gatehouse rather than being a separate building, which had been the most recent interpretation. The document formed part of the subsequent application for Scheduled Monument Consent.

Scheduled Monument Consent

An application for Scheduled Monument Consent was submitted to the Dept. for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in November 2007. It requested consent to carry out a community excavation, further evaluate selected areas of the rest of the site and remove the Japanese Knotweed and the large mound of spoil at the eastern end of the site. It also requested approval in principle of the landscape plan shown on page 11. Scheduled Monument Consent was received on 8 January 2008.

Planning Approval

A planning application was also submitted in November 2007, for approval in principle of the landscape plan. Planning Consent was received on 14 February 2008.

NB: Both the above give consent to the landscape plan in principle but are subject to approval of any details relating to implementation of the plan.

Community Excavation

MoLAS were engaged to carry out an excavation of the remains during Jan/Feb 2008. The latter part of the excavation (4th to 15th Feb) was open to volunteers from the local community to participate. The community excavation was very successful. Approx. 50 people participated in the dig, some becoming regular attendees, and 1 school party visited. An additional 80 people visited during an open weekend held on 9th and 10th February.

(Contd. on next page)
Community excavation (contd.)

The excavation uncovered the full extent of the medieval remains and an area extending out approx. 2m from their outer edges. It revealed that the building was part of the original gateway to Stratford Langthorne Abbey and not a separate building. The northern extent and location of the great gate, previously conjectured from old and inaccurate maps, can now be confirmed. It is not known how far the gate extended southwards across Bakers Row or whether it extended into the site of Abbey House to the south. Any future developments in these areas should present the opportunity to investigate this.

It is known that the gateway was remodelled on more than one occasion and that in the latter part of the 18th century the east front was faced or rebuilt in brick. What is believed to be the base of this brick wall was uncovered. The bases of the very narrow Victorian terraces that existed on the site from the mid 19th to the mid 20th century were also uncovered.

The medieval remains unfortunately proved too friable to remain exposed and would have been too easily damaged by weather and vandalism. On the recommendations of English Heritage, they were reburied. A specialist architectural conservator (Holden Conservation Ltd) were engaged to carry out repairs to the remains prior to reburying and to construct an outline of the remains in flint and mortar to indicate their position at ground level.

The bases of the 18th century brick wall and Victorian terraces were considered less vulnerable and equally worthy of interpretation and have remained exposed. To protect the soft 18th century brickwork Holden Conservation have capped it with brickwork matching the original.

Report/interpretation

A detailed report with plans is currently being prepared by MoLAS. MoLAS have also been commissioned to produce two interpretation boards which are in production. One will focus on the medieval aspects of the site and will include an artists reconstruction of the gateway. The other will focus on the post medieval development of the site.
Interim landscape treatment

Whilst the community excavation was in progress, the mound of spoil at the east end of the site was removed and the site cleared and levelled. No further funding had become available to continue with the project so in order to bring the site into an acceptable and usable condition it has been covered with topsoil and seeded with grass and wildflower seed. It will be maintained as grassland until funding can be obtained to develop it in accordance with the landscape plan. Responsibility for the site has been handed over to the council’s Culture Service (Parks Services Manager). Culture Service (previously Culture and Community) will take on the client role and responsibility for securing the necessary funding to finalise the landscape treatment to the site.

Grounds maintenance will initially be carried out by the contractor who carried out topsoiling and seeding for a period of 12 months following completion of their work. This will be monitored by Urban Design. At the end of this period Culture Service will also take over responsibility for grounds maintenance.

Access

It was decided in conjunction with the Parks Services Manager and the residents group to retain the boundary railings at present as there is a concern that opening up the site too soon may encourage fly tipping again. The gates will be kept locked and the residents group will be able to gain access via the existing gates through agreement with the Parks Services Manager. A decision as to the appropriate time to open the site up for general public access will be made at a later date.

Japanese Knotweed

It had been intended to dig out and remove the Japanese Knotweed from the site following the excavation. Although expensive, this would have been the only option had the site been developed immediately due to the risk of spreading the Knotweed around and off the site during construction works. As this was not the case, it was decided to leave the Knotweed in-situ and continue to treat it as necessary by cutting and spraying during the summer of 2008. This is a much cheaper, more environmentally friendly and risk free strategy for controlling the weed.

Soil contamination

Soil tests have been taken on three occasions. The first to determine the condition of material to be removed from site (from the mound and area around and beneath fly tipping), and the second to test the material to be disturbed during the excavations. Both tests indicated slightly raised levels of 3 contaminants, which if present in the soil left on site may affect the growing and consumption of fruit and vegetables in the proposed community garden. It was not thought that these tests gave a true indication of the soil remaining on site, so a third set of tests were carried out over the whole site as soon as it was cleared and levelled and prior to the seeding taking place. 12 samples were taken at depths of up to 0.6m below ground level. All were below the level of the imported topsoil.

The results were received in June 2008. They indicate elevated concentrations of contaminants in the existing soil, both zootoxic (posing potential risks to humans) and phytotoxic (posing potential risks to plants). Of main concern were concentrations of Arsenic, Lead and Benz(a)pyrene and Petroleum Hydrocarbons over the whole site and an elevated ‘hot-spot’ of Mercury contamination in the eastern half of the site.

The report concludes that significant remediation would be required if the site was used to grow vegetables or fruiting trees and that if this was the case a site specific remediation strategy is likely to be required. This would take into account the landscape plan and look at each end use in more detail, taking into consideration plant species proposed, possible root spreads etc. It is estimated that such a report would cost between £1250 and £1750.

A conversation with the reports authors inferred that the risks to humans and plants were likely to be low in areas proposed as amenity grass or shrub planting. The main concern would be areas proposed for vegetable and fruit production. A strategy would most likely conclude that vegetables should be grown in a minimum of 600mm clean topsoil (this could mean constructing raised beds of at least 300mm high on top of the existing 300mm imported topsoil) and that fruit trees should be planted in oversized, lined tree pits or trenches.

It should be stressed that the above is stated for guidance only. The commissioning of a specific remediation strategy is strongly recommended before any work is carried out on site.
Art and interpretation

LBN had made an allowance in the budget for an interpretative artwork on the site (in addition to the interpretation boards mentioned on pg16). The DLR were incorporating a public arts programme into their proposals for the Stratford extension, so LBN instigated discussions with the DLR in November 2007. The aim was to try to integrate artwork/interpretation proposals for the station and the Bakers Row site or at least to ensure that any proposals on the Bakers Row site did not conflict or overlap with those of the DLR. The ‘Friends of Abbey Gardens’ had already approached Modus Operandi directly by this stage, similarly to explore the possibility of the DLR’s commission for Abbey Road addressing the site. The DLR were in the process of engaging a principal artist to cover the whole of the Stratford Extension and were considering locations where separate commissions would be appropriate for individual stations. It was agreed by all parties that the opportunity for involving artists presented itself outside rather than inside the station. LBN therefore took on the responsibility for engaging an artist to work solely on the Bakers Row site, with the DLR part funding the commission. The commission was jointly progressed between Modus Operandi, LBN and the ‘Friends of Abbey Gardens’. The ‘Friends of Abbey Gardens’ were closely involved with the commissioning process throughout, researching and proposing artists to include on the shortlist and attending meetings and interviews panel. Competitive interviews were held in March 2008 and two artists engaged (Nina Pope and Karen Guthrie). They were commissioned to produce design proposals and costs that could be incorporated into the final scheme and their proposals are due to be presented during July 2008. As a first stage and to begin to engage with the site and the local community, they installed a temporary ‘seed shape’ on the site in April 2008 reflecting the shape of the remains, and they plan to hold an interpretation event around the seed shape later in the year. Information about the artists and the progress of their ideas for the site can be found on their website ‘somewhere.org.uk’.

The ‘Friends of Abbey Gardens’ as primary stakeholders in the project are continuing to work closely with the appointed artists. As co-initiators of the commission, they will continue to be involved in any decision making regarding the artist programme.

Final Design for the site

The layout for the site will require finalising now that this phase of work is nearing completion. It is intended to do this once the artists have completed and submitted their proposals. The final design can then incorporate the artists ideas, as well as comments previously made by residents at consultation events.
**Cost summary**

**A Proposed project costs, phases 4 to 6 (incl. fees) as estimated on page 12**

£554,357.00

**B Works spend to date (excl. fees)**

(corresponds roughly to items to 1 to 5 and part of item 13 on cost plan)

1 Desk Top Study £2,722.00
2 Community Excavation, evaluation trenches and preservation works to monument £30,538.00
3 Site clearance, regrading, addit. work assoc. with excavation, interim Landscape treatment and 12 months maintenance £85,485.05
4 Interpretation boards/publication £5,443.00
5 Engagement of arts consultants and artists (design phase only) £13,819.00

£138,007.05

**NB**: The scope of work involved during the excavation changed considerably as was expected due to the unknown nature and extent of the remains. Removal of Japanese Knotweed was not carried out and retaining walls and security fencing were not required as the finished levels were relatively flat. This was offset by the actual cost of the excavation, cost of reburial and construction of the flint/mortar outline, removing the mound of spoil (higher than anticipated due to the contamination levels and concrete/rubble content) and the need for interim landscape treatment.

**C Approx. level of funding required to complete Scheme**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Works (2007 estimate)</td>
<td>£263,493.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingency @ 15%</td>
<td>£39,523.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Works sub-total</td>
<td>£303,016.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allowance for inflation to 2008 @ 6.25%</td>
<td>£18,938.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allowance for inflation to 2009 @ 6.25%</td>
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<td>£342,076.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fees @ 13%</td>
<td>£44,469.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Project costs remaining</td>
<td>£386,545.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources of future funding**

Heritage Lottery Fund

This remains a possibility, but it must be shown that the part of the project that funding is required for, is directly related to Heritage, and not general landscape improvements. This could be possible if the type of planting and elements of the garden reflect monastic gardens. The project would require working up in more detail before a bid could be put together.

**Section 106**

There is a possibility of Section 106 funds if a proposed development on the Abbey House site goes ahead. Other possible sources of S.106 funds are being investigated.

**B & Q**

B & Q have offered to supply tools and materials as part of their commitment to supporting works in the community.

Culture Services are looking into other sources of funding.
Update on other works

Bakers Row Context works

The Councils Regeneration and Development service have been seeking funding for the context works to Bakers Row (see pg 6). Bids put forward to date have been unsuccessful.

Abbey House

The owner of Abbey House has had pre-planning talks with the Council regarding a proposed development of the site. A formal planning submission has not yet been submitted and details of the proposals are not yet in the public domain.

DLR

The construction contract for the Stratford Extension was awarded to Skanska Grantrail in July 2007. Designs for the stations are in progress. The DLR still plan to complete the station by 2010. As part of their works, the footpath on the south western boundary of the site will be relocated 2m to the north east encroaching onto the scheduled monument site. This will involve removing the existing boundary wall and railings on the south west boundary of the site. If the site remains secured at this time, the DLR will re-erect a new boundary 2m into the site. DLR have undertaken their own archaeological evaluation pits in this part of the site which revealed mostly post-medieval and modern strata in the depths and areas affected.

Latest plan dated April 2008 showing proposed treatment to external areas around Abbey Road station
SITE OF FORMER STRATFORD LANGTHORNE ABBEY
Bakers Row
West Ham
London E15

Feasibility Study for Landscape Works
Project Ref: EC-UD/29
July 2007
(Updated June 2008)