

Meeting re Cryfield Grange Project Tuesday 15th November 2016

Present:

Jenny Alexander (History of Art), Ingrid De Smet (CSR), Katie Klaassen (RIS), Lizzie Morrison (Modern Records Centre), Jane Openshaw (Estates), Alexander Russell (CSR), Richard Weston (Estates)

1. Context and purpose:

RW reported that at the time of the purchase of Cryfield Grange (ca. 2008-09) the legal work surrounding the property had not been very accurate. JO and her colleagues are currently investigating planning permissions.

An action plan is to be devised before end of December, so that planning approval for refurbishment and further work can be sought in 2017.

Besides the history of the building(s) on the plot and the land, any planning proposals will also need to take account of any wildlife (amphibians, birds) in the area.

The fate of the 'modern' indoor swimming pool, which is now part of a Grade II listed building is still uncertain.

Retrospective Listed Building consent is needed for the replacement of windows. Also under review are the sand-cement pointing and the limitations of the gravel car park. The ornamental pond needs to go; the School of Life Sciences can determine if any newts live in it.¹

Neighbours 'Frank & Jane', who live in Red Barn, may also have some information on the site.

The lay-out on existing building or site plans does not seem to correspond to what is on-site.

However, the architects (Heather) (from Melville conservation architects²) are currently updating the drawing for planning-permission / working purposes. These will include elevations and plans that can be used for the archaeological survey, of the two dwellings, which in the past had been turned into one, then turned back into 2.

2. JA stated that a thorough archaeological survey is needed (e.g. of the cellar, timber frames and floors, stoneware present in the grounds, including rockeries; the crumbling wall in the garden; possible rubble under patio?...). Does the University have units with ground penetrating radar?
3. IDS argued that in addition to the archaeological work, a documentary historian may summarize and analyse existing studies. The work of Nat Alcock was flagged too: Nat has a special interest in historic timber frames.
4. It was proposed and agreed that Estates would fund a Research Fellow for up to 7 months. A clear research strategy / programme needs to be compiled for the RF.
5. AR sketched some avenues and sources for documentary research (handout tabled): since Cryfield Grange was owned by Stoneleigh, there may be evidence in documents such as the *Valor ecclesiasticus*, which lists the holdings and wealth of monasteries, and may provide insights into patterns of landholding. The Shakespeare Birth Trust is particularly rich in archival materials.
6. Further research (2nd stage) could be a broader investigation into idea of Cistercian granges. There is present Cistercian research at Leeds.

¹ http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/lifesci/research/archaeobotany/ecological_forensics

² <http://www.rodneymelvilleandpartners.com> (based in Leamington Spa and Bristol)

RESOLVED:

1. Estates will fund a fixed-term Research Fellowship appointment for a suitably qualified historian to undertake for documentary research (desktop, library and archive-based) as well as interviews (e.g. retired staff, neighbours...) – to work with JO and under the academic aegis of the CSR (IDS).
2. JA will look into the feasibility of an on-site work experience project with History of Art UG students:
 - Estates will cover reasonable work-related expenses
 - Estates will provide safety-kit for students
 - JA will meet with her students in January
 - A regular day a week will be best for the work experience team, to start in T2, week 2 through to March; more time available in T2, week 6 ('reading week').
 - KA underlined it is important to capture photographic evidence – not just for the project but also for Open Days
 - It may be possible to have £1K grants for UG research, funded by Estates --- up to 3.
3. The group will investigate bringing in colleagues from Physics/Engineering look for non-invasive Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) and resistivity surveys.
4. KK will talk to Sarah Shalgosky (Mead Gallery) about the materials from the exhibition on campus archaeology that used to be displayed in Scarman.
5. EM will investigate the digitization of an UG dissertation on *The Archaeology and History of Cryfield*
6. IDS will pursue the establishment of a website for the "Cryfield Grange" project, under the CSR pages. She will also ask the IAS for a PDF of its brochure on Cryfield Grange.
7. Target: the RF's report, the reports from JA's student work experience groups, and any other findings will be due in July 2017.

Next meeting: Wed 30 November 2016 at 10.30 am, in H4.50 - with coffee!