

**Item 3g**                               **15/00307/FUL**

**Case Officer**                       **Ian Heywood**

**Ward**                                   **Chorley North West**

**Proposal**                           **Reinstatement of Chelsea Flower Show Garden (Artisan Garden)**

**Location**                           **Walled Garden, Astley Park, Park Road**

**Applicant**                           **Chorley Council**

**Consultation expiry:**   **19 May 2015**

**Decision due by:**           **16 June 2015**

**Recommendation**  
**Approve full planning permission**

**Consultees**

<b>Consultee</b>	<b>Summary of Comments received</b>
LCC Archaeology	Have commented that although the proposals lie close to an area of prehistoric activity excavated in the 1970s, the proposed groundworks are of such a limited depth and nature that they are not considered likely to disturb any archaeological remains that might survive within the proposed development area.
Historic England	Support the recreation of the Artisan Garden at Astley Hall subject to the agreement of the detailed design with your conservation officer.

## **Assessment**

### Proposed Development

1. This application relates to the reinstatement of the Artisan Garden which went to this year's Chelsea Flower Show. It is intended that the garden will be the focal point of the Council's first Flower Show in August 2015. It is proposed to reinstate the garden behind the walled garden in Astley Park.
2. The location of the garden will sit behind the Walled Garden in an area, which prior to the Heritage Lottery Fund project, was the location of a large mound of composting material. This was subsequently cleared and set to amenity grass. The main carpark sits beyond this outside the boundary of the park. This area is the primary vehicular entrance to the back of the buildings and park. A pedestrian access bisects the area linking the car park with the walled garden through a timber doorway.
3. The proposed garden is proposed to act as an entrance feature and encourage people to access the park via this pedestrian route rather than the vehicle entrance which enters the park between the walled garden and the courtyard and Coach House.
4. The garden is to be located a distance of approximately 6m from the walled garden to avoid the foundations of the wall.
5. The garden has been designed by a local designer the theme of which is based on the journey of the artist's father as an airman shot down in France during World War II. The design illustrates the bond between helper and evader in war-torn France and will feature a unique sculpture of a young flyer hiding up against the wall of a war-ravaged church. The sculpture will be constructed of multiple layers of corten steel or rusted mild steel, leading from the airman is a pathway constructed of carved Portland stone representing his parachute. The scene is set within the remains of a church the walls which are built from re-claimed dressed stone, the walls of the 'ruined church' will be a maximum height of 2.3m with foundations to a depth of 0.3m. Additional features incorporated into the walls are a backlit stained glass window and stone carved tablet.
6. Additional stone features will be incorporated into the design as artifacts scattered from the shell that originally destroyed the church. The design also includes tall shrub planting to the rear of the wall with mixed perennials and annuals growing through the rubble of the ruin, maximum depth of the dig for planting will be 0.3m.
7. A spur from the main path from the car park to the walled garden forms part of the proposals to enable access to the feature.

### Historic Context

8. Astley Park is an early Victorian park built around listed Grade I Astley Hall. From 1575 the Hall became the principal residence of the Charnock family. It was subsequently passed through marriage to firstly the Brooke family in 1653 then the Towneley-Parker family in 1787. The Hall and park were inherited by Reginald Tatton in 1906 which a few years later he conveyed to Chorley Corporation and dedicated as a War Memorial in 1922 and is still in use as a public park today.
9. Astley Hall sits at the centre of the historic core of the park and dates from C16. It is set in front of a timber framed courtyard house. To the west is situated a Coach House (listed Grade II) and probably of later C18 and immediately north is Astley Farmhouse. The listed buildings are considered to be Heritage Assets in accordance with the Framework. North of Astley Hall sits a walled garden and beyond that an area of open grass (proposed location of Artisan Garden) with carpark beyond.
10. Historic maps show this area as an 'orchard' (1928) and as a 'paddock' (1822). The park stretches from the front of Astley Hall to the west and east and includes the wooded Chor valley to the south covering an area of 12 hectares. Significant renovation took place between 2006 and 2009 as a result of a successful Heritage Lottery bid (HLF).

Refurbishment of the Coach House, stable block and courtyard has provided a new café, gallery space education room with landscaped courtyard and walled garden.

11. The main carpark for the Park sits to the rear of the Hall beyond the walled garden and as such, historically was not one of the main entrances to the Park and Hall.
12. Historic England have made the following comments on the application. The grade I status of Astley Hall places it in the top 2.5% of listed buildings nationally. Key elements that add to the high significance of Astley Hall include the survival of early fabric and the evidential value of the development of the house over six centuries; for the high quality design and the craftsmanship in its execution; for the historical association with some of the most important families in this part of Lancashire; and while the designer of the earlier phases of the hall is not known it is associated with one of the most important architectural dynasties in the likely work of Lewis Wyatt.
13. Historic England are happy that the proposals will have minimal impact on the setting of the grade I listed Astley Hall. This was historically an area at the back of the hall and its present setting is in part compromised by its location adjacent to a large car park and modern housing.

#### Archaeological significance

14. There have been a number of archaeological finds over the past 50 years the first of which was in 1963. Work at Astley Hall Farm uncovered a number of pottery fragments and created remains identified as dating back to the Bronze Age some 3000 years before the construction of Astley Hall. The finding of a Neolithic tranchet arrowhead in 1998 within the walled garden lead to excavations the following year lead by Chorley Young Archaeologists. This resulted in the findings of a number of pottery fragments of storage vessels and ointment pots dating from early 18C. Work during the HLF project in 2006 uncovered a stone lined water tank in the walled garden which is believed to be part of a ramp pump water supply system for Astley Hall. However in respect of this part of the Park the Archaeologist at LCC has confirmed that the proposals are not considered likely to disturb any archaeological remains that might survive within the proposed development area.

#### **Overall Conclusion**

15. The successful HLF bid enabled the renovation of an historic park for the benefit of the local community and visitors to Chorley thus enabling promotion of Astley Park and its facilities as a visitor attraction in the North West. The proposed garden will enhance the visitor offer that the Park offers and assist in attracting further visitors to the Park.
16. The proposed location for the Artisan Garden would be visible to visitors arriving at the park by car and encourage visitors to enter the Park via the doorway into the walled garden. The location of the garden ensures that its visual impact is limited and from the south side the site is obscured by the northern wall of the walled garden. It is not considered that the proposals will adversely impact on the significance of designated heritage assets close to the site in accordance with the Adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy (2012) Policy 16; Emerging Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026, BNE8 and Section 12 of the Framework.

#### **Planning Policies**

17. In accordance with s.38 (6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), the application is to be determined in accordance with the development plan (the Central Lancashire Core Strategy, the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review 2003 and adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance), unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Consideration of the proposals has had regard to guidance contained with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), the development plan and the emerging Local Plan 2012-2026. The specific policies/ guidance considerations are contained within the body of the report.

18. In October 2013, the Local Plan Inspector issued her partial report on the findings into the soundness of the Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026 which is a material consideration in the consideration of any planning application. In summary, the plan is considered to be legally compliant. In relation to soundness, the plan is considered sound, with the exception of matters relating to Gypsies and Travellers.
19. Paragraph 18 of the Partial Report states: *“For the avoidance of doubt, the Plan may not be adopted until it has been changed in accordance with all the main modifications set out in the Appendix to this partial report and any which may be specified in the Appendix of my forthcoming supplementary report. However because of the very advanced stage in the examination process that the main modifications set out in the Appendix have reached, significant weight should be attached to all policies and proposals of the Plan that are amended accordingly, where necessary, except for matters relating to Gypsies and Travellers.”*
20. The Council accepted the Local Plan Inspector’s modifications for Development Management purposes at its Executive Committee on 21st November 2013. It is therefore considered that significant weight can be given to her report, and to the policies and proposals of the emerging Local Plan, as amended by the main modifications.
21. Further consideration has been given to matters relating to Gypsies and Travellers, and the Local Plan Inspector’s Supplementary Report on Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople was issued (08 May 2015) and it concludes that the part of the Chorley Local Plan dealing with Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople policy and site allocation is also sound, providing a number of main modifications are made.

### **Suggested Conditions**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Condition</b>												
1.	The proposed development must be begun not later than three years from the date of this permission. <i>Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004</i>												
2.	The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: <table border="1"><thead><tr><th><b>Title</b></th><th><b>Received date</b></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Location Plan</td><td>2<sup>nd</sup> April 2015</td></tr><tr><td>Construction details (wall, sculpture and path)</td><td>21<sup>st</sup> April 2015</td></tr><tr><td>Garden layout (overview)</td><td>2<sup>nd</sup> April 2015</td></tr><tr><td>Sculpture Plans</td><td>2<sup>nd</sup> April 2015</td></tr><tr><td>Front view plan</td><td>2<sup>nd</sup> April 2015</td></tr></tbody></table> <p><i>Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning</i></p>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Received date</b>	Location Plan	2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2015	Construction details (wall, sculpture and path)	21 <sup>st</sup> April 2015	Garden layout (overview)	2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2015	Sculpture Plans	2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2015	Front view plan	2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2015
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