

# Roman Town House

Colliton Park  
DORCHESTER

**TOURISM  
FEASIBILITY  
STUDY**



**World Heritage 2003**

# The Roman Town House

Dorchester

Tourism Feasibility Study

World Heritage  
2003

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# **ROMAN TOWN HOUSE TOURISM FEASIBILITY STUDY**

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Abbreviations:       DCC – Dorset County Council

                              RTH – Roman Town House

                              EH – English Heritage

                              RCHM – Royal Commission on Historical Monuments

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## 1 Executive Summary■■■■■■■

Within this report we have come to the following conclusions and make the following recommendations:

1. The Dorchester Roman Town House, is a unique Roman monument with a fascinating story to tell and is one worth telling well.
2. The Town House is an ideal site for the creation of an exciting and innovative visitor attraction, which would be unique on both a regional and national level.
3. With good investment, visitor figures can be expected to start at between 31,000 and 58,000 per year for an innovative presentation with good marketing, falling to around 16,000 and 22,500 per year for a basic manned attraction, in various guises. All have growth potential, especially if the recommendations are accepted of adequate parking and good signposting. In Proposal 6 there is considerable growth potential for additional income from events, catering and increased retail sales. All however depend on the level of facilities.
4. The final cost will depend on the scale and the degree of technology used and the building plan.□Taking the mid-range, the sum needed to develop the presentations in both the covered west and the exposed south ranges of the Town House is in the region of £107,000. The costs for displays in the site museum/interpretative centre would be between £120,000 and £176,000 depending on the proposal chosen.
5. The budget option, Proposals 1 and 2 are the least preferred of all the options, as they reduce income streams to a low level.□We propose that at the very least, Proposals 3, 4, or 5 are adopted as relatively low risk, with Option 6 being the high risk but potentially the most effective and profitable option.
6. A key to success will be to create an innovative, exciting and engaging visitor experience, incorporating a number of multimedia and interactive elements.
7. Proposal 1, is to maintain the status quo but to carry out changes to the protective structure and a programme of remedial and conservation work that is necessary to preserve the monument. In

this Proposal there is no investment in the site as a visitor attraction and consequently there will be no income to offset the running costs.

8. At this time, there are too many variables to project accurately the capital costs or the breakeven number of visitors against running costs.
9. We conclude however that there is considerable merit in implementing a scheme to launch the Roman Town House as a viable visitor attraction.
10. It is important that all the remedial work on the Roman building and modern cover structure is carried out as a matter of urgency, as all the above recommendations depend upon an equilibrium being established for the building.

## 2 Introduction

- 2.1 The Roman Town House at Colliton Park, Dorchester, is a scheduled ancient monument owned by Dorset County Council and under the Protection of English Heritage. It is a listed building within a conservation area. The Town House is situated at the north-west corner of the Roman town of Durnovaria. Today it lies within the grounds of Dorset County Council's County Hall.
- 2.2 The Town House dates from the late 2<sup>nd</sup> to early 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD, and was occupied until abandoned in the late 4<sup>th</sup> or early 5<sup>th</sup> centuries. It is an antiquity of national importance as it is the only Roman Town House in southern Britain whose walls can be seen in their entirety. Its importance lies in that it is a domus, an urban town house and not a rural villa.
- 2.3 Excavated in the 1930's it was kept exposed for public viewing and in the late 1990's had the benefit of a covering structure.
- 2.4 The Roman Town House is the only major Roman remains in the modern town of Dorchester. Although many Roman antiquities have been discovered and some excavated over the years, the Town House is the only excavated building that can be seen in the modern town. It complements other Roman remains, such as the fragment of Roman wall at the Top o' Town, the aqueduct alongside Poundbury Hillfort, Maumbury Rings Roman Amphitheatre, and the site of one of the major battles of the Roman invasion, by the 2nd Augusta Legion under the future emperor Vespasian, at the iron age fort of Maiden Castle.

Roman Town House. Southern range and eastern entrance



### **3 Brief**

#### **Roman Town House**

#### **3 Brief** (subsequent numbering of this section refers to the original brief)

Main Aim: to assess whether or not it is feasible for the RTH to become a self-supporting or income generating visitor attraction.

##### **3.1.2 Sub aims – to assess**

- (a) the potential number and type of visitors
- (b) how they can be managed
- (c) the potential for income generation
- (d) the need for and levels of staffing – comparing public to private operating parameters and any potential for voluntary assistance
- (e) how the site can be linked to other aspects of Roman Dorchester

To advise on

- (f) an appropriate strategy for interpreting and presenting the site
- (g) an appropriate marketing and promotion strategy
- (h) a suitable management regime and initial finance costs

##### **3.1.3 To advise on**

- (a) where a perimeter should be and what form it should take
- (b) conservation of south range of building in summer
- (c) access to the site including suitable disabled access and facilities
- (d) immediate signing that DCC will provide to direct visitors to site, discourage dog walking on site and to indicate where guide books can be purchased. Ultimate signing for site as part of a more comprehensive scheme
- (e) the drainage scheme as it affects the interpretation and management of site

- (f) mosaic conservation and how it affects use, interpretation and management of site
- (g) measures to reduce clutter
- (h) maps received, illustrating the points in the brief and feasibility study
- (i) on funding, as it is unlikely that DCC could meet the £1.1M capital costing, this to include alternative provisions and strategies

### 3.3.1 Conservation and Environmental Problems

To advise on conservation and environmental problems as it affects the feasibility of the Roman Town House as a tourist attraction

- (a) as set out in brief
- (b) as revealed by site visits
- (c) as revealed by conversations with conservators
- (d) as seen by English Heritage

### 3.3.2 Management Issues

To advise on

a viable level of opening provision, based on

- year round access
- summer months only
- weekends only allowing dedicated car park access
- weekends and some days to cover school visits
- a short two week burst of access and interpretation – opera, performance, plays, son et lumiere, history fair, re-enactment week

To advise on what form the site perimeter should take and where it should be located together with any access control.

To advise on the management and booking of school parties and the provision of educational facilities

To advise on the level and access for those with disabilities and differences, in particular:

- visitors with physical problems, wheelchair/walking difficulties
- visitors with visual impairment and the effect of guide dogs on the site
- visitors with hearing impairment
- visitors with verbal impairments
- visitors with learning difficulties
- visitors with illiteracy
- foreign language visitors

To advise on Health and Safety management

To advise on the Capital funding of an interpretation centre other than DCC

To advise on how the site can be linked to other Roman features within the town e.g.

- Roman wall
- Mosaics
- Maumbury Rings Amphitheatre
- Maiden Castle (Iron Age and Roman [Attack by Vespasian; Roman temple etc])
- Dorset County Museum

To advise on how the site can be linked to other Roman sites in the country

To investigate whether a Roman garden should be provided – as at Fishbourne

### 3.3.3 To advise on

possible presentation, interpretation and display techniques to provide more panache through high tech guides, audio visual, and other means.

how sign posting can be integrated into Colliton Park depending on management choices and infrastructure?

### 3.3.4 Publicity, Advertising and Marketing Strategy

To advise on

- the market for the Town House
- a publicity and marketing strategy
- possible links to local educational establishments such as Kingston Maurward, Bournemouth University etc.
- whether there can be links to other visitor attractions such as the County Museum, the Tutankhamun Exhibition etc.

### 3.3.5 Infrastructure

To advise on

- what should happen to the existing building adjacent to the site
- where the principal access points are
- whether further fencing or screening is required
- any modifications that may be required to the car park accepting that it is wholly in use for County Council staff during the week
- any new buildings that may be required
- the need for power and services

## **4 History of Site**

- 4.1 Although a number of Roman sites have been found and excavated during the construction of the modern town, the only substantial antiquity visible of the period in the town is the Roman Town House at Colliton Park. First excavated in the 1930's by Drew and Selby in advance of the construction of the County Hall it has never been fully published. After excavation it was left exposed to the elements for public exhibition.
- 4.2 It is not a villa but its importance is due to the fact that it is one of the most complete Roman town houses in the country to be excavated and displayed in its entirety. The finds, which for many years were stored in a cellar, are now in the Dorset County Museum.
- 4.3 Since its excavation very little conservation work and maintenance was undertaken. After the excavation some mosaics were covered by a shallow layer of soil and turf. A glazed timber structure was erected over the only visible mosaic (Room 8) but there was no real attempt at conservation and preservation until in 1996. Up to that time it was uncertain to what extent the mosaic floors, excavated but not properly recorded, had survived.
- 4.4 In March 1996, Dorset County Council with the support of English Heritage decided that major conservation work and display should be undertaken. To this end, and in advance of local government restructuring £100,000 was made available with a further £60,000 in 1996-7, and £50,000 in 1997-8.
- 4.5 On the advice of English Heritage it was decided to re-excavate all of the interior of the Town House, conserve the walls and mosaics and erect a cover building over the west range for its long term protection. The south range was to be left exposed. In addition outline plans for an Education and Interpretation Centre were to be drawn up and the access to the site landscaped with new disabled friendly access routes provided. Scheduled Monument Consent and planning permission were obtained.
- 4.6 In May 1996 architects John Stark and Crickmay Partnership, of Dorchester, were appointed from a list of four architects experienced in architectural and heritage conservation. Designs for the whole project were then drawn up.
- 4.7 By the spring of 1997 the west range had been re-excavated and the mosaics originally discovered in the 1930's re-exposed by Laurence Keen, (Dorset County Archaeological Officer) and AC Archaeology. They were found to be in reasonable condition. Mosaic conservation

was undertaken by Sophie Bartlett for Cliveden Conservation Workshop in 1998-1999.

- 4.8 The walls of the west range of the Roman building were conserved, load bearing tests carried out and the cover structure completed in the year.
- 4.9 Funding was granted by the European Commission under the Raphael Programme. Due to shortage of funds no grant aid was given by English Heritage. A contribution was made by West Dorset District Council.
- 4.10 Dorset County Council's application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for funding of the Education/Interpretation Centre was unsuccessful. Thus a major part of the scheme to revitalise, conserve, interpret and communicate the site for the public has remained largely unfulfilled.
- 4.11 The County Council however took the lead in initiating work on a conservation and restoration programme and improving the visitor experience. The erection of the covering structure, the uncovering of mosaics, not seen for some 60 years, and the provision of more on-site information added to the public's appreciation of this important monument but has also resulted in some unexpected problems. *See 5 Present Situation.*



DVRNOVARIA.  
BUILDING I

Scale of Feet  
0 10 20 30 40 50

DVRNOVARIA.

BUILDING I

Scale of Feet

## 5 Present Situation

Since the erection of the new steel and glass cover structure with its Purbeck stone roof, a number of problems have shown themselves, in particular with the Roman Building and its mosaics and with the Town House site as a whole, the latter mainly with its presentation and facilities.

### 5.1 Problems with the Existing Cover Structure

- 5.1 It has become evident over a period of observation of the building by World Heritage, covering a period of over seven months 2002 – 2003, that apart from the problems caused by inadequate drainage to the site, the cover structure is causing a number problems to the remains of the Roman Town House and to its interpretation and presentation to the public. *See Appendix I, Roman Town House Site Assessment Visits – 2002/2003.*

These can be summarised as follows:

### 5.2 Preservation and Conservation of the Roman Town House

- 5.2.1 Rather than aiding the conservation and preservation of the building the new cover structure is actually adding to the deterioration of the monument. The cover structure has been designed with the following criteria in mind:
- a The need not to damage the existing walls of the Roman building. To this end the present steel and glass structure rests on the Roman walls and does not encompass them.
  - b The desire to reflect Roman design in the appearance of the structure.
- 5.2.2 This has resulted in an attractive but potentially problematic roof of Purbeck stone. Although following ancient design, the tiles have not been secured in a waterproof manner as would have been carried out by Roman builders. The roof equally does not benefit from modern weatherproofing such as roof felt. This has resulted in wind blown rain entering the building at various places. Evidence of this can be seen by reference to the oak rafters which indicate, through water staining, that rain has penetrated the building. (See particularly Rooms 15 and 18). In one case the tiles have actually shifted and there is a hole.

In some cases the tiles have not been finished and laid correctly (southern side Room 13) resulting in wind blown rain penetrating horizontally up the pitch of the roof. *See plates below.*



Room 13 (and corner of Room 17) - Uneven tiles. This plate illustrates the fixing of the roof tiles, which, because they have not been attached in the original Roman manner and no other weather proofing has been provided (roof felt etc) allows wind blown rain to penetrate.



Room 13 -Uneven tiles. This plate illustrates the fixing of the roof tiles, which, because they have not been attached in the original Roman manner and no other weather proofing has been provided (roof felt etc) allows wind blown rain to penetrate. Close up.

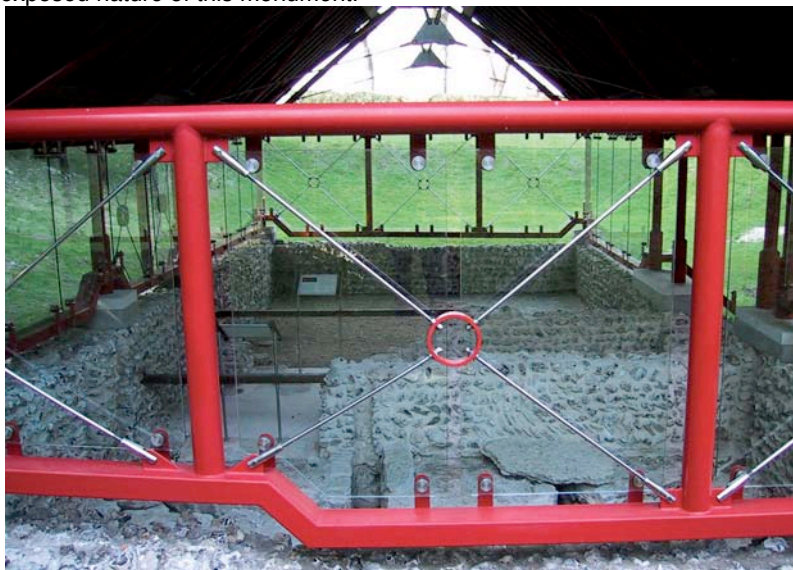
5.2.3 The glass panels of the structure are held in position on the steel frame by stainless steel fixings. *See plate below.* The panels do not fit flush with the tubular painted steel structure, resulting in large gaps between the panels both vertically and horizontally. These gaps allow the entry of water, both windblown and as drips flowing down the glass from the tiles and upper steel structure, onto the Roman walls and thus into the building and onto the mosaics. Organic debris, animals and birds also penetrate the building by this means. The external steel bracing rods also make it possible for the adventurous to gain access.



Detail of the steel and glass structure.

- 5.2.4 Weather and debris penetration is further exacerbated by the fact that the gables of the building, with one exception, are not filled in. *See plates below.*

View looking north through gable end of Room 17. This illustrates the exposed nature of this monument.





Room 15 - exterior, gable end. This plate illustrates the huge unprotected area of the gable ends of the cover structure allowing wind, rain, birds etc to enter the building.

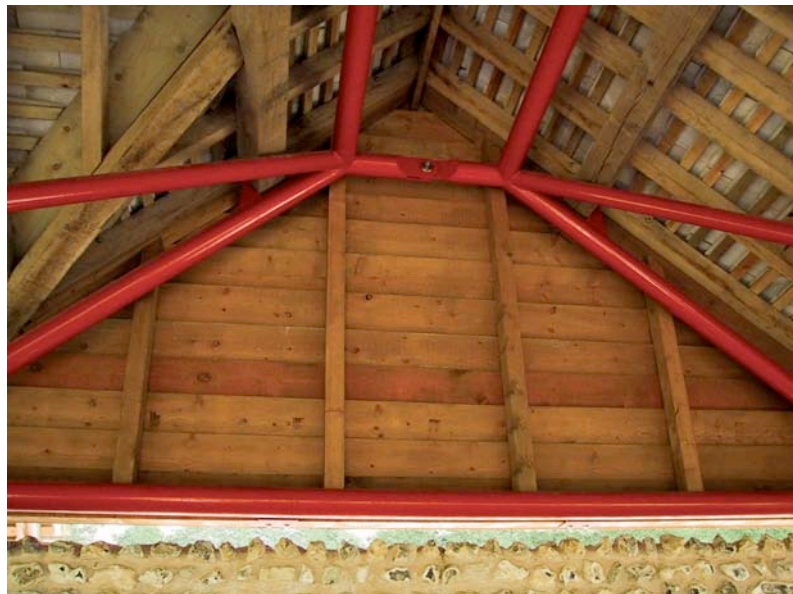
Room 18 - exterior, gable end. This plate illustrates the huge unprotected area of the gable ends of the cover structure, allowing wind, rain, birds etc to enter the building.





Room 18 - exterior, gable end. This plate illustrates the huge unprotected area of the gable ends of the cover structure, allowing wind, rain, birds etc to enter the building.

The exception in Room 10, on the southern side has been filled in with wood. *See plate below.*



Room 10 – gable wooden infill.

The writer is given to understand that this wooden infill was added shortly after the structure was erected. The filling in of the gable by means has eased the problem in this area. It has also resulted in a reduction of light and protection from sunlight, which according to discussions with the conservator Carol Edwards, is one of the factors causing a conservation problems to the mosaics.

- 5.2.5 The cleaning of the glass panels is also causing problems.  
Communication with a contractor employed to carry out this task

indicated that the work, both inside and out takes approximately six man-hours each time it is cleaned. A time consuming factor is the stainless steel fixings that apparently slow up work and make cleaning difficult. *See plate below.* The contractor said he was not aware of any precautions necessary to protect the mosaics from water and from mechanical damage while cleaning was being undertaken.



View looking north through gable end of Room 17, illustrating the stainless steel fixings on the glass panels.

- 5.2.6 The practice of admitting the public to the interior of the building is also causing a number of problems, both to the preservation of the mosaics through mechanical damage, the introduction of organic debris on visitors footwear, and by vandalism (i.e. the removal, as souvenirs, of individual tesserae). (see *Edwards, Roman Town House, Mosaics Conservation Study, 2003*). Some of these problems so caused can be controlled through strict management supervision by an on site custodian who could control, direct and regulate visitors through the interior and make sure they did not walk over the mosaics, but such a solution is not cost effective. It would still expose the floors to potential danger and drastically restrict the potential number of visitors to the site, as the area available for walking on would be extremely narrow and cause problems to flow and safety, particular to disabled visitors in wheelchairs. The latter by their very nature pose an additional threat to the floors.

- 5.2.7 The provision of a raised walkway through Room 13 would not alleviate the problems of drastically restricted visitor numbers, visitor flow or the necessity of providing manned supervision and security for the interior. *See plate below.*



Room 13 - mosaics open to the public! This area is at present open to the public and is the main walkway from the entrance to view Rooms 16, 17, and 18. The southern side has a rope barrier directing visitors to walk on the northern side which is damaging the mosaics in this area. Increased traffic and contra-flow exasperates the problem. Note acute sunlight, shadow and damp patches. Steps from Room 10 to 13 are unsuitable for less-abled.



Rope Barrier

### 5.3 Presentation of the Building

- 5.3.1 In addition to the conservation problems of the building, information and presentation in the existing structure is not user friendly and needs to be brought up to modern day standards of information communication. The problems caused by the steel and glass structure, of excess light and sunlight, weather penetration, and the close proximity of visitor access, make improvement to presentation difficult. *See Appendix II, Roman Town House Light Survey, 2003.*
- 5.3.2 The lack of imaginative interpretation and the lack of a Site Museum/ Interpretation/Education Centre has also in some ways aggravated the visitors' expectations and appreciation of the site and generally resulted in a sense of disappointment with their visit to the monument. While the building appears to be interesting they don't quite know why it is. Both the public and educational use of the site is hampered by lack of presentation and of appropriate facilities.
- 5.3.3 The roof overhang to Rooms 17, 16, 18 on the western side and Room 8 on the southern side also presents a safety hazard and visitors must be restricted from these areas until suitable viewing conditions can be established. Serious inclines and depressions on the southern side also pose potential safety hazards and must be borne in mind when representing the site. *See plates below.*



SW corner of Room 8 showing roof overhang. Relative height of roof to adult as illustrated. This area should be restricted to public access.

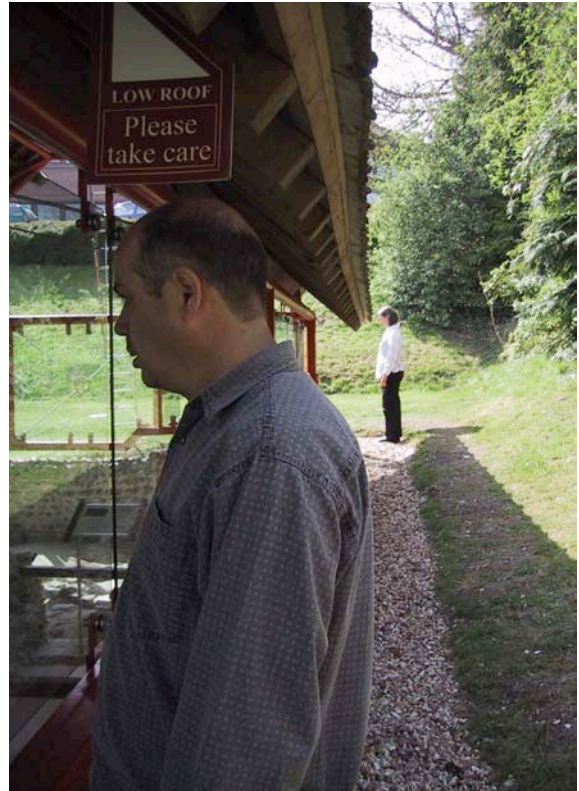
SW corner of Room 17. Close up illustrating the relative heights of an adult to the corner of the roof overhang. This is a severe danger.





Room 18 - NW corner roof overhang. Close up showing change in level of adult to roof overhang. Note hanging roof warning. This needs fixing firmly and better positioning.

Room 17 - SW corner. Close up illustrating the relative adult height to corner roof overhang. This is a severe danger.



Room 18 - NW corner exterior, looking south towards SW corner showing change in level of adult to roof overhang. Note hanging roof warning. This needs fixing firmly and better positioning.

Room 17 - SW corner. Illustrating the relative adult height to corner roof overhang. This is a severe danger.





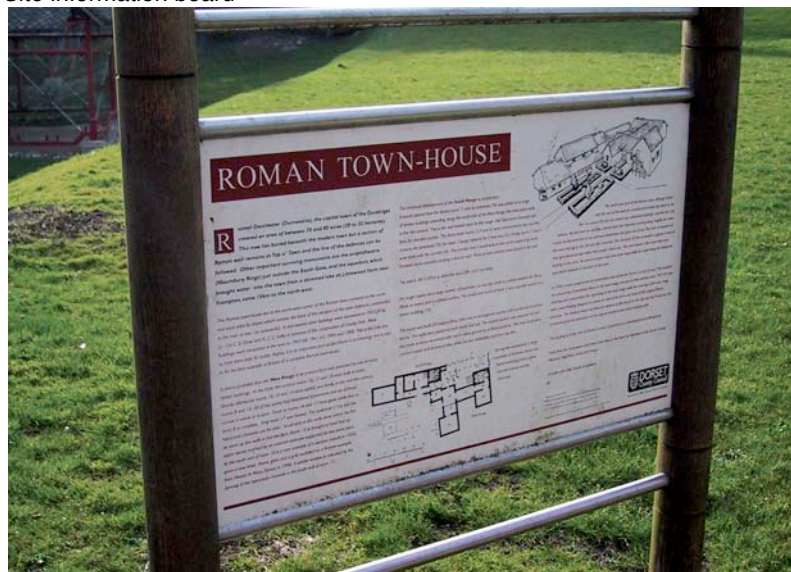
The roof overhang on the SE corner of Room 8. This area is particularly dangerous as can be seen in this plate which shows the relative height levels to an adult. Danger to children is even more acute as they may be at eye level to the roof. This area should be restricted from public access.

SE corner Room 8. Adult facing south illustrating potential of roof overhang and the change in levels from the wall of the south range. Public access should be restricted here.



- 5.3.4 At the moment site is just in a grass area, with an information board. There is no restriction on access. Visitors do not go there to do experience things or to learn about the Romans. Also, there is no way of keeping an eye on visitors and they are free to do whatever they want at the site. There is no attempt to encourage the public to engage with the site. Those with knowledge of the period would feel comfortable visiting such a site, but generally it will not connect with those without such a background. There is also nothing to interest children so they tend to use the site as a playground and run up the banks and terrace and play amongst the walls of the southern range.

Site information board



*Some of the above points together with others were communicated to Carol Edwards on her site visit on the 7th April 2003. (See Edwards, Roman Town House, Mosaics Conservation Study, 2003). And with Duncan Coe, English Heritage at a site visit on April 8<sup>th</sup> 2003.*

#### 5.4 Marketing and General Awareness of the public to the Roman Town House

- 5.4.1 Although the site is technically open to visitors there is on the whole little public awareness of the site as a possible place to visit. It is generally not on their 'list of things to do'. See Appendix IV.
- 5.4.2 Marketing experiments (see Copson report) carried out in 2000 and 2001, in association with the Dorset County Museum, have for a number of reasons been only partially successful. Due to the effect of visitors to the interior of the Roman Town House, and the deterioration

of the mosaics, the interior of the Town House has been closed and the experimental manned opening ceased. The site itself has however remained open and those visitors interested enough still make their way to the site.

5.4.3 In general the Roman Town House does not feature in tourist literature on Dorset, or the south of England. This for a site of national significance is regrettable and must be addressed. *See 13, Marketing Proposals.*

5.4.4 There is also a lack of co-ordinated signing to the site, both within the County Hall complex and within Dorchester. *See 14, Signing.*



Room 10 – SE corner near window. Showing effects of damp and algae

Room 10 – mosaics. This area at present is only restricted to the public by a flimsy rope barrier





Room 13 – South wall. Damp. This plate shows the effects of water that drips down from the top of the Roman walls on to the mosaic floor

Room 15 – mosaic. Small plants have begun to grow in the lime mortar and gravel. The effects of algae can also be seen



Room 10 – Cracks to lime mortar floor surface



## **6 Methodology**

The key stages of the work programme to be undertaken were as follows:

- 6.1 Commissioning meetings.
- 6.2 Consultations and Interviews.
- 6.3 Site meetings at the Roman Town House.
- 6.4 Site visits to other Roman attractions.
- 6.5 Market Appraisal.
  - a. current market characteristics and visitor profiles.
  - b. trends, past, present and future.
  - c. comparative analysis with other heritage attractions.
  - d. market appeal of Dorchester.
  - e. potential demand.
  - f. impact on visitor profile and expenditure.
  - g. impact on Dorchester's profile nationally and internationally.
- 6.6 Strategic Direction.
  - a. vision.
  - b. capacity.
  - c. scale.
- 6.7 Development of Options & Estimates.
- 6.8 Commercial Appraisal of Each Option.
  - a. relative capital costs.
  - b. operating costs.
  - c. income generation.
  - d. sensitivity analysis.
- 6.9 Heritage Appraisal of Each Option & Estimate and Benefit Analysis.
- 6.10 Environmental Appraisal of Each Estimate.
  - a. constraints and opportunities.
  - b. the site in context.

## **7 Location Analysis**

- 7.1 The Roman Town House is situated in the county town of Dorset. It is a popular tourist centre in its own right. Located on the main A35 trunk road which takes traffic from London and the Home Counties to the south west. Dorchester is also well situated in relation to the holiday resorts drawing visitors from both the extreme east of Dorset and the extreme east of Devon.
- 7.2 The town has one of the largest concentrations of museums and visitor attractions in the south west. However, there are no brown tourist signs giving any indication as to what lies within the town and the direction that motorists should take to travel to park. Experience in operating tourist attractions in the town shows that, unless informed otherwise, motorists enter the town looking for a particular attraction and get caught in traffic. This could be avoided if vehicular traffic for the town's attractions were directed to the main car parks, from where the passengers could reach the attraction following the pedestrian finger signs.
- 7.3 All efforts in approaching the County Council's highway department over a period of more than 17 years has failed to gain even one brown sign for the town. Separate brown signs for each attraction are both unnecessary and unsightly, but a main sign listing the attractions and directing them to use the main car parks would be a service to the visitor to Dorset.
- 7.4 AA and RAC signs for events at attractions in the town are effected in a similar way.
- 7.5 If and when there are brown signs for the town, the Town House should be signed as it is a Roman site of national importance.
- 7.6 The majority of the town's museums and tourist attractions lie in a line east west along the high street. Examination of the visitor figures of the town indicate that the position of the Town House from the centre, in mid South Street, may have a direct bearing on the number of visitors that the attraction may receive. In other words, one of the factors governing numbers is directly proportionate to the distance the people have to walk. This effect can be severe.
- 7.7 The Town House suffers from three major problems, each directly connected with its location in the town.
  - 1 The walking distance from the centre. The Town House is located in the far north-west corner of the old Roman town, within the north-west boundary of County Hall. This distance is a

deterrent to any would be visitors especially in inclement weather.

- 2 Lack of any parking facilities. *See 8.11, car parking.*
- 3 Bad signage. *See 14, Signing.*

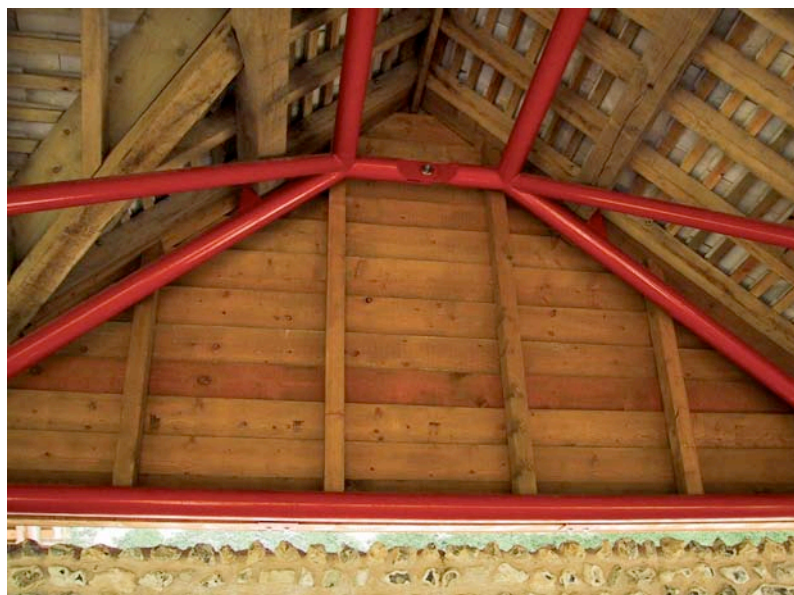
## 8 Site Proposals and Options

Before anything can be done about improvements to the site as a whole, attention must be directed to the immediate remedial work necessary to the building and its mosaics. The work undertaken in the improvement of the cover structure will not only benefit the Roman building but also aid its future presentation. All the proposals below assume that these measures will be introduced.

### 8.1 Remedial Measures

*These measures, together with our interpretation and site proposals were discussed with Carol Edwards on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2003.*

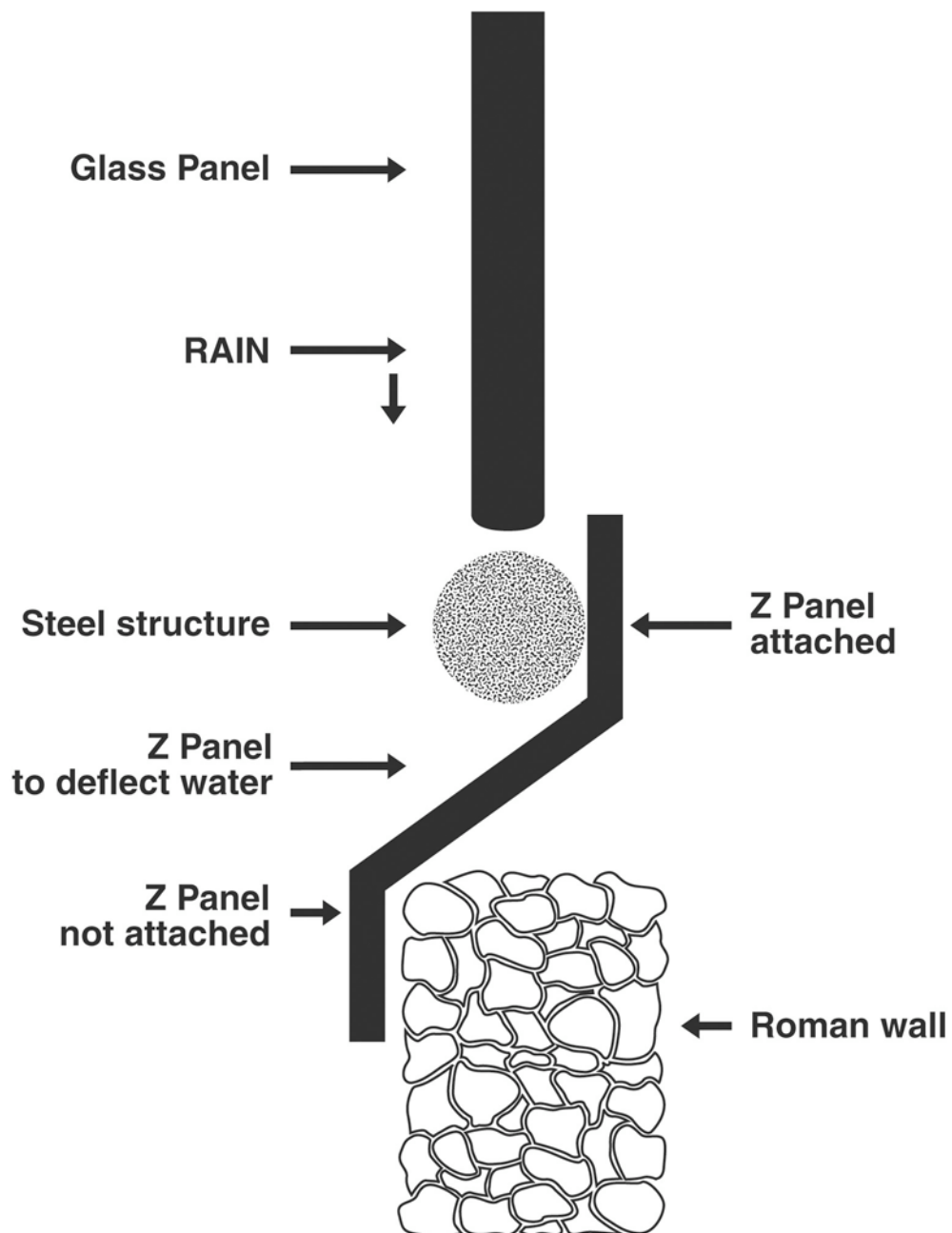
- 8.1.1 After carrying out additional drainage due to be started on 12th May 2003, and initiating a conservation program for the mosaics, work should be carried out to close the exposed gable ends of the cover structure. This closure should, if possible match the wooden gable end erected in Room 10. *See plate below.*



Room 10 – gable wooden infill

- 8.1.2 The steel structure should be rust treated and painted in those areas where the paint has flaked off and it is rusting.
- 8.1.3 If the drainage is improved, the mosaics will still be at risk if water lies on their surface, especially in the winter when it may freeze causing frost damage. Any physical measures taken to protect the mosaics from frost should not impede or restrict internal display.

- 8.1.4 Wind blown rain into the interior is a danger to the mosaics in the building. It is accentuated on the site due to the position of the Roman Town House which is in a depression surrounded by banks, wall, trees and the building of County Hall. This makes the wind behave in an unpredictable way as the normal prevailing winds are twisted into swirls or vortices.
- 8.1.5 Suitable guttering should also be fixed to the building, as at present there is an ingress of water from rain running down the tiles and running back under the tiles.
- 8.1.6 Depending on the options adopted, measures should be taken to make the covering structure weather proof. To this end either a new panel system should be installed, i.e. the existing glass panels removed and replaced by new wall panels designed to fit in such a way as not to leave gaps. These can, in places, be solid and finished to represent the walls, both exterior and interior. Other panels can be glazed at fixed viewing points. Care should be taken to insure there are screened ventilation channels.
- 8.1.7 A cheaper alternative scheme would be to adapt the existing panels by filling the gaps between the steel structure and the glass. This could be done using metal, Perspex or wood fillers. The gaps between the wall and the lower section of the steel framework could be closed with Z sections. *See diagram below.* Alternatively a skirting could be attached to the framework, which will not only act as a rain and draft excluder but will filter dirt and debris.
- 8.1.8 The reproduction Roman window in Room 10 should remain glazed as without glazing it too could admit debris and damp in the same manner as the aforementioned gaps.  
*See plate below.*



Z Panels - suggested weather panels to deflect rain and decrease water penetration to the inside of the building.



Room 10 – restored window

- 8.1.9 Site visits and surveys have shown that parts of the site are unsafe, and that before the site is made accessible to the public a full health and safety risk assessment should be made.
- 8.1.10 Areas of concern are the roof overhang to Rooms 17, 16, 18 on the western side and Room 8 on the southern side also presents a safety hazard. Visitors must be restricted from these areas until suitable viewing conditions can be established. *See plates in 5.3.3.* Serious inclines and depressions on the southern side of the building (the slope-down to Room 13) also pose potential safety hazards as do the protruding top of the steps leading down into 17a the hypocaust stoke hole to Room 17. *See plates below.*



Room 10 – exterior showing steep incline which is a hazard to the disabled. Small children tend to run down this bank. It is however a good exterior viewing point.

Room 17 – exterior steps at 17a. The tops of these steps pose a possible safety hazard to visitors as they protrude above ground level. Thought should be given to the provision of a safety rail.





Room 17 – exterior hypocaust stoke hole (17a). This open hole is used by both animals and humans to gain unauthorized entrance to the building. It should be closed with fine metal mesh.

## 8.2 Proposals for the Future of the Roman Town House

- 8.2.1 Once remedial measures have been successfully carried out, the site can be safely re-opened to the public, taking into consideration the need to restrict the public from the majority of the interior of the building. Admission can either be free of charge as at present or on payment of an admission fee that could offset running costs.
- 8.2.2 The following proposals outline six possible schemes. All of them, for environmental, security and presentation reasons, require the introduction of electricity.

All require site management and continued conservation programmes – *see 11, Management* and all require varying types of general management – *see 11, Management*.

### 8.3 Proposal 1:

Low cost option. Unmanned without charge. Improved access to the site with the provision of a pathway suitable for the disabled. *See 26, Plans*. This pathway should lead around the building in a clockwise direction. Levels should be improved and safety barriers placed at certain danger points. *See 5, Present Situation*.

- 8.3.1 The site would open very much as it is at present but with the public viewing from the exterior of the building. Improvement should be made in interpretation and presentation methods by the introduction of user-

friendly information boards placed at strategic positions, both around the building and the site in general, including the southern range. The use of vandal proof audio information points should also be considered.

8.3.2 Signposting to the site should be improved. *See 14, Signing.*

8.3.3 A space for disabled parking should be provided near the furniture store to the east of the site.

8.4 **Proposal 2:**

Low cost option. Unmanned, with charge. As Proposal 1 but with the introduction of a pay perimeter, as follows:

8.4.1 The perimeter will create a new enclosed area. It should encompass and area from the north part of the wall abutting the car parking running southwards along the edge of the tarmac area turning eastwards along the edge of the tarmac road parallel to County Hall and returning northwards to the existing entrance from Colliton Walk. *See 26, Plans.*

8.4.2 Improved access to the site with the provision of a pathway suitable for the disabled. *See 26, Plans.* Entry to the site could be by way of a full body turnstile controlled by a variable charge pay collection point. This can be situated either near the Colliton Walk pathway entrance or at a point near to the present furniture store and garages. *See 26, Plans.* A guide vending station can be incorporated at this point. Both measures will generate income to offset costs.

8.4.3 This pathway should lead around the building in a clockwise direction. Levels should be improved and safety barriers placed at certain points. *See 26, Plans.*

8.4.4 The site would open very much as it is at present but with visitors viewing from the exterior of the building. Improvement should be made in interpretation and presentation methods by the introduction of user friendly information boards placed at strategic positions, both around the covered building as well as the southern range and the site in general and by provision of vandal proof audio information points.

8.4.5 Interpretation of the southern range should be integrated with the presentation as a whole.

8.4.6 Environmental improvements should be considered such as the removal or screening of the buildings and associated skips etc. The enclosure should also be landscaped and trees and shrubs planted to improve the long-term visual aspect, and possibly screen parts of County Hall which are intrusive when viewed from the Town House.

8.4.7 Sign posting should include the Roman Walk (Colliton Walk). *See 14, Signing.*

8.4.8 A space for disabled parking should be provided near the furniture store to the east of the site.

*Note: For the comfort of visitors the provision of toilets should be considered.*

**8.5 Proposal 3:**

Mid-range cost. Manned, with charge. As Proposal 1&2 with the introduction of a pay perimeter and improved site access as in Proposal 2. Consideration should however be made to making the pathway and viewing platforms covered as protection from inclement weather. This will make the site more user-friendly and potentially increase visitor numbers – as the lack of weatherproof facilities will clearly be seen from the perimeter.

8.5.1 The garage, motorcycle park, skips and rubbish collection points should be moved. The existing furniture store could be renovated and visually improved to provide a basic visitor centre, with shop and admission control. Toilets should either be incorporated in the building or erected separately. *See 26, Plans.* A space for disabled parking should be provided.

8.5.2 The existing pathway from the Colliton Walk entrance should be forked, so that passing pedestrians could be diverted eastwards around the museum/visitor centre.

8.5.3 The vehicular service access to the site would be by way of the gate from the northern end of the existing western tarmac parking area. *See 26, Plans.*

8.5.4 Unlike in Proposals 1 and 2 manned supervision of the site will allow controlled entry to the Town House. A raised viewing platform should be erected over the mortar floor area of Room 10. This should be constructed in such a way as to prevent unauthorised access to other parts of the building. The provision of a viewing platform is a solution of access that will still allow visitors to experience the volume and spatial aspect of the Roman building. Care must be taken when assessing the size of this platform to allow room for small groups such as school parties and to allow the free flow of visitors including the disabled, both in and out of the building.

8.5.5 The provision of a covered portico entrance to the building should be considered providing protection from inclement weather.

- 8.5.6 A CCTV system should be installed in the building allowing it to be monitored from the site museum/centre.
- 8.5.7 Apart from the provision of user-friendly information boards placed at strategic positions, both around the building and the site in general and by provision of vandal proof audio information points as in Proposals 1 and 2. There should be a new and exciting interpretation and presentation of the interior of the building. This should include (a) interpretative presentation for use at the internal viewing platform, and (b) interactive displays around the exterior of the building.
- 8.5.8 Interpretation of the southern range should be integrated with the presentation as a whole.
- 8.5.9 Environmental improvements should be made with landscaping and the planting of trees and shrubs to improve the long-term visual aspect, screening parts of County Hall, that are intrusive when viewed from the Town House. Seating could be provided. *See Copson, 2001.*
- 8.5.10 Scheduled Monument approval should be obtained for placing temporary structures, such as tents or marquees, on the raised ground to the north of the site for use during temporary events. *See plate below.*

Northern bank looking west



- 8.5.11 Sign posting should include the Roman Walk (Colliton Walk). *See 14, Signing.*

*Note: Visitor load on site. School visits will occur during term time and the bulk of tourists will mainly visit during the summer months. Generally they will not coincide too much but care will have to be taken not cause such undue stress to the site.*

**8.6 Proposal 4:**

Mid-range cost. As in Proposal 3 but with the following changes:

- 8.6.1 All the buildings to the east including the furniture store should be demolished. The skips and rubbish collection points should be re-sited. The area should then be levelled, surfaced and landscaped incorporating it in the overall perimeter. *See 26, Plans.*
- 8.6.2 A purpose designed temporary exhibition centre could be hired and placed on the site incorporating a shop, admissions and reception area toilets should either be provided within this building or in a separate adjacent building. The size of this building must be able to accommodate group of up to 40 adults or children.
- 8.6.3 This option would be an interim measure between Proposal 3 (which for structural reasons may turn out to be impracticable) and Proposal 5, which incorporates a specially designed, purpose built site museum/interpretative centre.

**8.7 Proposal 5:**

Full cost. As in Proposal 3 but with a purpose built Site Interpretative Museum and facilities including education, retailing and catering facilities. *See 26, Plans.* Plans for this were originally drawn up by architects John Stark and Crickmay Partnership. This plan however, though pleasing and attractive, needs a number of modifications. Experience of running museums and exhibition centres has shown that the interior arrangement is not practicable, both from the point of view of managing visitors but also in generating income. Consideration should also be given to changing the circular design to at least an octagonal structure. This would allow the walls to be used more effectively.

**8.8 Proposal 6:**

Full Cost. As Proposal 5 but with a total change of design of the building. A rectangular structure in sympathy with Roman architecture that would allow the recreation of either the whole or part of the Roman Town house, giving visitors a taste of Roman Britain. Other facilities are as in Proposal 5.

- 8.9 **Proposal 6** is certainly the most exciting of the proposals and will not only excite the public but with this as a 'pull', visitor numbers and revenue will undoubtedly be greater than with any of the other proposals. Costs need not be a great deal different to those of Proposal 5.
- 8.10 **Proposal 5** can also provide an anchor and nucleus for Roman re-enactment societies and other associated organisations and individuals. An active home-based Friends organisation could also find a home here. All these activities not only increase awareness of the site over quite a wide geographical area but will also generate increased income.

*See views of English Heritage, Appendix V.*

#### 8.11 **Car Parking**

Car parking is fundamental to the viability of the site. Lack of adequate parking will seriously hamper all development of the site as a viable visitor attraction. While it is understood that parking within the grounds of County Hall is at a premium, serious consideration should be given to designating the present parking facilities on the north-western edge of the County Hall site as a Roman Town House Car Park.

- 8.11.1 While it is appreciated that car-parking may be able to be provided in County Hall car park, at weekends, for the use of visitors to the Roman Town House, and possible other attractions and museums in the town. This will only be of benefit at weekends and is not the answer to the problem. *See 14, Signing.*

## **9 Site Interpretation and Presentation**

*See 8, Site Proposals and Options, for proposals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6*

### **9.1 Under Proposal 1**

Site interpretation and presentation improvements would be restricted as follows:

Improvement in presentation should be restricted to the provision of new user-friendly information display panels, incorporating photographs and graphics, placed at strategic positions relating to the interior of the west range of the House. These panels should also be placed both around the building and site in general, including the exposed southern range.

The use of vandal-proof audio information points should also be considered.

### **9.2 Under Proposal 2**

Similar presentation methods to Proposal 1 but including the provision of vandal-proof audio information panels, and ambient lighting to compensate for the reduction of sunlight from the filled-in gable ends.

### **9.3 Under Proposal 3**

Similar presentation methods to Proposal 1 & 2 but including the provision of vandal-proof audio information panels.

9.3.1 There should be new and exciting interpretation and presentation of the interior of the building, incorporating user-friendly display panels combining photographs and graphics, three dimensional characterisations, ambient sound, and personal audio points.

9.3.2 Displays within the building should also include replicas of some of the objects found on the site together with reproductions of objects found in other domestic Romano-British buildings. These should be arranged in such a way that they are angled for viewing from the exterior viewing points.

9.3.3 Lighting should be arranged in such a way that there is sufficient low general ambient light, with particular displays lit by controlled non-spreading light beams. Focussed lights should be fixed to various parts of the roof and aimed at particular features within the interior of the building. These should be wired to be activated from external vandal-proof push-in short duration light activators. These will act as light pointers and tie in with the information boards and audio information points.

#### 9.4 **Under Proposal 4**

Presentation will be similar to that used in Proposal 3.

- 9.5 Under Proposals 3 & 4 provision will have to be made for an innovative presentation using all available modern multi-media techniques to give preliminary information about the Roman Town House, its relationship with the history of the Roman town and the site's importance in Britain as the only fully exposed town house of the period. To attract visitors, more needs to be made of the site and its individual story; how it reflects the lifestyle of its owners; what their lives were like, what was Britain like when the house was occupied; what the rest of Dorchester was like etc.

- 9.5.1 Subject to space restrictions, some reproductions of objects excavated from the site could be displayed as part of the overall presentation. Due to the lack of space no provision for a classroom or small auditorium will be able to be included if Proposal 3 & 4 are chosen.

- 9.5.2 Extra mural displays could include the Roman Walk. *See 14, Signing.*

#### 9.6 **Under Proposal 5**

Space limitation will not be so acute, and the displays can be more elaborate. It is not envisaged that any of the actual finds would be displayed, only replicas. The originals have their part to play in the story of Roman Dorset in the County Museum. A small section of the interior or the Roman Town House could be reconstructed to give an idea how the decoration of the interior may have looked.

- 9.6.1 A classroom or auditorium will be able to be included which could show specially produced video/multimedia programmes.

#### 9.7 **The most exciting possibilities occur under Proposal 6**

This invites the reconstruction of whole plastered and painted rooms and the mosaic floors of the Roman House furnished in the manner of the time. When smells and domestic items are included together with realistic Roman characters, a time-link will be created with Romano-British Dorchester. To interpret an archaeological site on this scale requires a great deal of thought, planning and ingenuity and of course adequate funding. See Fishbourne Roman Palace.

#### 9.8 **Foreign visitors**

As a service to foreign visitors provision should be made for small multilingual labels and foreign language guides.

## 9.9 Southern Range

In the presentation of the southern range, consideration should be given to re-instating the columns. Missing columns could perhaps be moulded and cast in resin from the existing specimen. (*see Drew, First Interim Report, 1927-38*). The finish could be exactly matched to the example at present on site.

## 9.10 Heritage Tourism

Care should be taken in the interpretation of the site to ensure that it relates and communicates to the modern visitor. Archaeological sites do not produce remains that are readily understood by the average visitor. It is the interpretation that visitors come to see, and without this *it is just another 'old' site* (visitor comment).

9.10.1 Heritage tourism is based on interpretation and the ability to persuade people that there is something unique for them to see. It is also important to maximise the local community and the visitor perception of the site and its value to them. Good interpretation and an imaginative approach will motivate people to travel to the site to experience its uniqueness. This is one of the secrets of the success of such projects as Jorvik, in York, and The Tutankhamun Exhibition, in Dorchester.

## 9.11 Events

In addition to the everyday presentation of the site, the Town House could be used to hold a number of events, re-enactments, plays such as Shakespeare's Roman plays, actual Roman drama, Roman music, gladiatorial demonstrations, legionary life, Roman food, Roman crafts, Roman festivals etc. Roman events and activities illuminate how peoples of the period lived their everyday lives.

9.11.1 In the summer evenings Son et Lumiere events could be presented.

## 9.12 Roman Garden

Careful landscaping of the site could be done in the Roman manner, but care has to be taken not to take up too much space by a formal Roman garden as this would reduce visitor space making it difficult to manage site visitors. It would also limit the possibility of holding site events. Landscaping may be able to be done in partnership with Kingston Maurward horticultural department.

### 9.13 **Site Guide**

New user friendly guide with good design, graphics and photographs designed to appeal to the target market. A carefully priced, well designed guide will generate regular substantial revenue if handled correctly.

## 10 Site Appraisal

*See 8, Site Proposals and Options*

- 10.1 There is no option for inaction. As has been outlined in this report, remedial work needs to be undertaken on the site. However, a choice should be made from the available proposals on site presentation, interpretation and facilities.
- 10.2 It is recommended that a long-term strategy should be defined at the outset with emphasis on the provision of a proper maintenance/conservation programme a priority. Whatever proposals are adopted in the short to medium term, these should be flexible and cost effective enough to eventually be incorporated, adapted or extended, to fulfil the long term strategy. Most of the proposals in this report, bar numbers 5 and 6, can be progressive, i.e. each can be upgraded.
- 10.3 **Proposal 1**  
Low cost option. Unmanned. On the one hand this option may appear attractive as it does not require much expenditure, but it does not make full use of the site and continues the status quo.

The advantages can be summarised as follows:

- Low cost.
- It is relatively quick to initiate.
- It is easily upgraded later.

Disadvantages are:

- No income from site.
- DCC will have to manage the site.
- DCC will have to market the site or place it in the hands of an agency specialised in tourism marketing.
- External funding is unlikely.

- 10.4 **Proposal 2**  
Low cost option. Unmanned with a full body turnstile. Although this is an improvement on Proposal 1 and may appear more attractive, it still does not make full use of the site. However, on the positive side, it will generate income and some general awareness of the site.

The advantages can be summarised as follows:

- The site is perimetered and more secure.
- It is relatively low cost.
- It is quick to initiate.
- It can easily be upgraded later.

Income should be generated from the site to offset some running costs

Disadvantages are:

DCC will have to manage the site.

DCC will have to market the site or place it in the hands of an agency specialised in tourism marketing.

External funding is unlikely.

#### 10.5 **Proposal 3**

Medium cost option. The first manned option.

This is definitely more attractive than Proposals 1 and 2. However there may be problems inherent in obtaining and converting the furniture store. Costs may be relatively high for a non-purpose built centre. Limitation of space will restrict the development of the site. This option may have short-term use only.

The advantages can be summarised as follows:

Medium cost.

More marketable than options 1 and 2.

The building already exists.

Staffed site.

It should generate a reasonable income to offset running costs.

It can be upgraded later, perhaps when suitable grant funding is obtained.

DCC can choose to manage the site or enter into a public private partnership with a suitable operator, museum or organisation that may also be able to design and create the project.

Disadvantages are:

If it is to be managed by DCC the project will need to be placed in the hands of museum or exhibition designers.

If a decision is taken by the DCC to manage the site in house it will probably result in high management costs – *see 11, Management Proposals and Options.*

External funding is unlikely.

#### 10.6 **Proposal 4**

Medium cost option. Manned option.

This is probably more practicable than Proposals 1, 2, and 3. The site is likely to look more attractive than Proposal 3. Costs may be relative high, as the portable museum/exhibition centre will have to be hired. Limitation of space will restrict the development of the site and restrict income. This option may have short-term use only.

The advantages can be summarised as follows:

- Medium cost.

- Probably visually more attractive than option 3.

- Staffed site.

- It should generate a reasonable income to offset running costs

- It can be upgraded later, perhaps when suitable grant funding is obtained.

- DCC can choose to manage the site or enter into a public private partnership with a suitable operator, museum or organisation that may also be able to design and create and the project.

Disadvantages are:

- If it is to be managed by DCC the interpretation and presentation will need to be placed in the hands of museum or exhibition designers.

- If a decision is taken by DCC to manage the site in house it will probably result in high management costs – *see 11, Management Proposals and Options.*

- It is a short term solution.

- External funding is unlikely.

#### 10.7 **Proposal 5**

High cost option. Manned purpose built site.

This is probably the most practicable of all the proposals. As a visitor attraction is should be successful but still does not allow the site to maximise its full appeal and potential. The site is however likely to look attractive. Capital costs may be high but the increase in visitor satisfaction will be reflected in income generation. Spatial design will have to be carefully thought out and should preferably be carried out by an organisation with experience in the field of heritage tourism. This option should allow the long-term growth and development of the site.

The advantages can be summarised as follows:

- Cost effective.

- Visually attractive.

- Staffed site.

- It should generate enough income to offset running costs.

- Grant funding should be obtainable for a suitably imaginative scheme.

- DCC can choose to manage the site or enter into a public private partnership with a suitable operator, museum or organisation that may also be able to design and create and the project.

- Long-term solution

Disadvantages are:

If it is to be managed by DCC the interpretation and presentation will need to be placed in the hands of museum or exhibition designers.

If a decision is taken by DCC to manage the site in house it will probably result in high management costs – *see 11, Management Proposals and Options.*

#### 10.8 **Proposal 6**

High cost option. Manned purpose built all singing all dancing high profile visitor attraction with long-term growth potential.

This is probably the most exciting of all the proposals allowing the site to maximise its full potential as a visitor attraction. Capital costs may be high but the possibility of instant visitor appeal will increase dividends in visitor satisfaction and be reflected in income generation. Additional income could be potentially generated by expanded activities and events. The site is also likely to generate a noticeable income from use by television and film companies.

The design and concept would have to be carefully thought out and should preferably be carried out by an organisation with experience in the field of heritage tourism. This option should allow the maximum long term growth and use of the site.

The advantages can be summarised as follows:

It would give the site a national profile.

It is cost effective.

It is visually appealing

Staffed site.

It should have the ability to generate substantial income in the long term to offset running costs.

Grant funding should be obtainable for this imaginative scheme.

DCC can choose to manage the site or enter into a public private partnership with a suitable operator, museum or organisation that may also be able to design and create and the project.

Long-term solution

Disadvantages are:

Capital costs will be relatively high.

If a decision is taken by the DCC to manage the site in house it will probably result in high management costs – *see 11, Management Proposals and Options*

It will have higher marketing costs than other options.

Note I: Each proposal in ascending order will have the potential to generate and accommodate proportionally higher visitor numbers.

Note II: See Appendix V discussion with English Heritage.

Roman event at the Town House

Courtesy John Lowe



## 11 Management Proposals and Options

### Executive Management

Managing a heritage site as an effective tourist attraction is a labour intensive activity requiring experience in the tourism market place. If carried out by organisations without the necessary infrastructure, costs will inevitably be high because services will have to be bought in.

- 11.1 A number of disciplines are necessary to make an attraction a financially viable entity. Using the Town House as an example: these can be defined as follows.

- Advertising
- Concept, Design and Creation
- Design and Graphics
- Display and Construction
- Financial Management
- IT and Media Management
- Leaflet Distribution
- Marketing
- Photography
- Publicity and Public Relations
- Purchasing
- Retail Management
- Site Maintenance
- Staff Management

- 11.2 Staff will be needed to carry out the above functions. Obviously a small to medium attraction will not be able to employ dedicated staff to carry out all these functions. Either staff will have to be multifunctional, which is rarely effective, or work will have to be contracted out.

11.3 **Management by a specialist Heritage Tourism Management Organisation**

To contract out the entire executive management. This can be the most cost effective solution.

It can be done in a number of ways:

Each individual function as listed above is costed and invoiced monthly *or*

An annual management fee is negotiated, after the operation of the attraction is costed. In some case there is a partnership arrangement whereby the income is dedicated to the management company as a fee to offset the cost of running the attraction. Where the costs exceed

projected income the income is dedicated to the management company as a fee to offset the cost of running the attraction together with a subsidy from the site owner. The latter can still cost very much less than if the operation was set up and staffed by the owner of the site or attraction.

In rare cases the management company will tender for the opportunity of managing the attraction.

- 11.4 In the case of the Town House which is owned by local government, it is impossible for a hypothetical study to estimate the cost of staffing and managing the operation and the associated ancillary costs. Comparative costings can only be made when the specifics of the project are clearer. It can then be costed in house and put out to the private sector for a competitive quote.

**11.5 Management by a charity and/or a voluntary body**

A charity has some advantages in being able to obtain many sources of funding. *See 17, Funding Opportunities.* However, a charity that chooses to directly manage a heritage tourist attraction will inevitably run into difficulties. Although, on the face of it, labour is low cost or free, it is often unskilled in the disciplines necessary to run the attraction. There are usually many conflicting interests amongst the volunteers. All the essential services and skills will still have to be purchased or the end result could be unprofessional and unprofitable.

**11.6 Options for the Executive Management of the Town House**

**11.6.1 Proposal 1**

Unmanned. Management should be as at present directly under the day to day management of the DCC. Marketing can either be low key and under the day by day control of the DCC or for a higher profile and greater public awareness the marketing should be contracted out for the following services:

Advertising  
Leaflet Design and Distribution  
Publicity and Public Awareness

*Responsibility for site management, and for the financing, care and well being of the cover structure and conservation of the building must remain with the DCC.*

#### 11.6.2 **Proposal 2**

Unmanned with charge. Management should be as at present directly under the day to day management of the DCC. Marketing can either be low key and under the day by day control of the DCC or for a higher profile and greater public awareness the marketing should be contracted out for the following services:

Advertising  
Leaflet Design and Distribution  
Publicity and Public Awareness

Consideration should be given to the production of a new colour guide for sale on site in a guide vending machine. In this event the following additional services should be contracted out:

Design, Copywriting and Production of a guide  
External Marketing the guide (to raise awareness locally)

*Responsibility for site management, and for the financing, care and well being of the cover structure and conservation of the building must remain with the DCC.*

#### 11.6.3 **Proposal 3**

Manned option. Management can be as at present, directly under the day to day management of the DCC, or contracted out for any of the services listed under 11.1, or for complete executive management including site management.

#### 11.6.4 **Proposal 4**

Manned option. Management can be as at present, directly under the day to day management of the DCC, or contracted out for the any of the services listed under 11.1, or for complete executive management including site management.

#### 11.6.5 **Proposal 5**

Manned option. Management can be as at present, directly under the day to day management of the DCC, or contracted out for any of the services listed under 11.1, or for complete executive management including site management.

#### 11.6.6 **Proposal 6**

Manned option. Management can be as at present, directly under the day to day management of the DCC, or contracted out for any of the services listed under 11.1, or for complete executive management including site management.

*In all cases the responsibility for the Roman building, the continued conservation of the mosaics, and maintenance of the steel cover structure must remain with the DCC.*

#### **11.7 Site Management**

To manage public access and monitor, conserve, maintain, clean and tidy the Roman Town House.

*Note: Great care must be taken when allowing commercial contractors to clean the windows and maintain the site, as without responsible supervision this result in damage to the mosaics and walls.*

**11.7.1 Proposal 1 & 2** Site Management by the DCC.

**11.7.2 Proposal 3, 4, 5, 6** Site Management could be by the DCC with executive services contracted out by complete external management.

## 12 Education

- 12.1 Education is one of the primary functions of the Roman Town House both of the public in general and of children in particular. A recommendation in The Dorset Heritage Strategy, 2003, states “ The educational use, interpretation and wider appreciation of the archaeological resource should be promoted”.
- 12.2 Study of the Romans is part of the National Curriculum.
- 12.3 Prior to the experimental opening of the Town House in 2000 and 2001, the site received visits from approximately 1800 school children in organised groups from Dorset and elsewhere. This figure represented just under 25% of the total number of school students visiting the Dorset County Museum. *See DCC, Business Plan, 1997.*
- 12.4 During the experimental opening in association with the Dorset County Museum of 2001, a total 1399 individuals in organised educational groups from 47 schools, universities etc visited the site. Out of these 1107 were pupils and staff from 38 groups of year 3/4 children studying the QCA History Unit – Invaders and Settlers. This unit deals with the Roman Conquest of Britain up to the Boudiccan Revolt introducing concepts such as the differences between Romans and Celts and the Romanisation of Britain.
- 12.5 Most of the visits were the result of marketing via the Dorset County Museum to schools in Dorset and the surrounding counties. The subsequent visits to the site therefore usually began in the Museum where the finds from Colliton Park are displayed. Once on site the groups were divided into two. One half exploring outside and investigating the exposed monument, while the other entered the building. This arrangement was then reversed. Question and answer sessions were combined with worksheets.
- 12.6 In our discussion with Linda Poulsen, who handles education at the Dorset County Museum, she expressed an interest to continue the Museum’s association with the site. The view was expressed that the Museum’s contribution was important to the student’s understanding of the Roman Town House.
- 12.7 The Museum’s contribution was principally by way of handling specimens and by visiting the archaeological galleries. All teaching had been carried out in school, prior to the visit, while experience of the Town House was through the on-site visit. Some school visits did not visit the Museum first.

- 12.8 Any future educational development of the site should be carried out in association with The Dorset County Museum. However it is perfectly feasible, providing the appropriate facilities and professional staff are available on site, for the Town House to carry out its own educational programme.

*See 13, Marketing and 20, Viability.*

## **13 Marketing Proposal and Options – Strategy**

- 13.1 At present the Town House has only limited publicity, and is listed in a limited number of publications. These include, *All About Dorchester*, West Dorset District Council, 1999, and *Welcome to Dorchester – Town Map*, West Dorset District Council. Approximately 40,000 of these are printed every two years, available from the Tourist Information Centre (TIC).
- 13.2 The publicity campaign for the experimental opening of 2001 (*Copson*), indicates that 300 posters and 2000 flyers were printed. In professional marketing terms this kind of approach is totally inadequate. With professional marketing, the Town House, should be able to attract its fair share of visitors, and special interest groups.
- 13.3 In today's highly competitive world, a concentrated and well-aimed marketing campaign is essential if any degree of success is to be achieved. Apart from expertise, marketing also costs money, but the rewards are in visitor numbers. Part of the success of local attractions like the Dinosaur Museum and the Tutankhamun Exhibition has been achieved through marketing. The other factors are in international appeal of the subjects, and the position of the attractions within the town.
- 13.4 Apart from inadequate marketing and onsite facilities, the Town House suffers from its position. It is in probably the most remote part of the town, hidden within a large office conurbation. Lack of onsite parking compounds its problems. All these points must be borne in mind when accessing the extent and manner of marketing and the success that can be expected from it.
- 13.5 Public awareness is all important. This can be achieved through good PR and a continual public relations campaign. Advertising needs to be selective and targeted. Advertisements and advertising literature needs to be modern and professionally designed. Literature distribution needs to be carried out professionally – this is a very important sector of the marketing of a visitor attraction, and can be responsible for over 30% of visits. The number of leaflets printed needs to be in the hundreds of thousands rather than a few thousand.
- 13.6 Schools are an important group to reach, especially as the Romans are part of the national curriculum. Providing such groups with high quality educational material would help in boosting the reputation and profile of the site. There are certain costs in providing this service, such as having trained staff.
- 13.7 Other Roman sites such as Fishbourne and Bignor emphasise their unique features as selling points i.e. Fishbourne being a Romano-

British Palace; having the largest collection of in-situ mosaics; having a particularly famous mosaic; being situated in an important Roman town; gardens, wall paintings, museums, etc. etc.

13.8 Any future basic advertising campaigns should be founded on the following:

Advertising and listing in tourist publications, magazines and newspapers.

Membership of tourist marketing organisations such as South West Tourism

Membership of the Association for Roman Archaeology

Promotional literature distributed through tourist literature distribution agencies

Listing on the 24 Hour Museum website and other similar sites

Entry in *Dorset Museums* leaflet

Exhibit at Great Days Out Fairs & other tourism promotional fairs

Refer to publications such as: Veverka, J, *Marketing Heritage Tourism & Interpretive Sites, Agencies and Attractions*

13.9 **Internet**

The internet has become a very important factor in marketing visitor attractions – a high profile is necessary with links to many sites. At the moment there are few references to the Roman Town House on the internet. Even on the DCC site the Town House is not well featured. There are some internet searches that bring up sites about Dorchester that include a mention of the Town House, but the Town House will need a dedicated website. Many other Roman sites such as Fishbourne, and Bignor have their own sites. Websites dealing with Roman Dorchester are not impressive, they are not eye-catching and are not even very informative.

### 13.10 Special Events

Special events at the Town House are a very good idea as they draw people in and raise the profile of the site. Activities such as living history days and workshops seem popular at other Roman attractions in the country, and as long as they are accurate and of a high standard they will attract. Visitors are generally willing to pay for a high quality experience.

Roman event at the Town House April 2003



### 13.11 Educational Market

Organised visits from schools within Dorset and elsewhere are a potentially important market and should be pursued. *See 12, Education.*

### 13.12 Marketing – In House

In today's world of professionalism, in-house marketing is generally not cost effective in terms of visitor numbers.

### 13.13 Specialist Heritage Tourism Marketing

This can be placed in the hands of a number of specialists in the field, either for a complete package or for individual commissions.

## 14        **Signing**

There is a lack of signposting to the Roman Town House at present within or around Dorchester. There are only a very few signs, all black & white finger-posts, near County Hall itself. Other than these there are none in the town itself. There are no other directional aids except for the new Discover Dorchester town trail, and West Dorset District Council maps.

### 14.1        **Black & White Finger-Posts.**

- 14.1.1        At present the black & white finger-posts for the Roman Town House are sited in Glyde Path Road and Colliton Walk, within the immediate proximity of the Town House, and are inadequate. This leads to confusion and difficulty in finding the site. *See Appendix III.*
- 14.1.2        Some signs do not point in the correct direction. The one at the entrance to Colliton Park, from the Grove, appears to be pointing towards County Hall when presumably it should be pointing along Colliton Walk.
- 14.1.3        There are no signs within the town centre, or from the Tourist Information Centre, to the Roman Town House. New signs need to be added to make a comprehensive finger-post signing scheme for visitors to, and residents of, the county town.

### 14.2        **Proposed DCC Schedule of signs to the Town House for Colliton Park.**

- 14.2.1        The Proposed Schedule of Signing has some problems. Visitors would not be looking for signposts to the Roman Town House under the Dorset County Council corporate identity. This could lead to many of the signs being unnoticed, and not achieving their aim.
- 14.2.2        Signs for the Town House can be located with existing Dorset County Council signs as long as they have their own identity. This should preferably reflect either the black & white finger-post style, the brown tourism signing style, or a 'brand image' sign specially for the Roman Town House. All of which visitors would be familiar with and easily relate to. *See 7.2, Location Analysis.*
- 14.2.3        The proposed signs themselves are far from clear for someone that is unfamiliar with the town:
  - a.    Signs 1, 2, 4, and 14 – the arrow could be pointing to the Town House or to Reception.

- b. Signs 3 and 5 – wording could be seen as confusing, should be: *The Roman Town House is the only fully exposed example of such a building in this country. For entrance to site follow signs. Guide books are available from County Hall Reception.*
- c. A map sited in conjunction with signs 3 and 5 could show relative positions of Town House, County Hall, entrance point, and 'you are here'.
- d. Sign 4 – wording is confusing, should say: *RECEPTION from where Roman Town House guide books are available.*
- e. Sign 8 – Visitors could turn left inside boundary wall and head down through County Hall. A finger-post sign on building opposite exit to County Hall into Glyde Path Road pointing to the left would emphasis correct route.
- f. No sign at lower end of Glyde Path Road where it turns left into Northernhay. Visitors could easily continue down steps to river.
- g. Sign 10 –Town House and County Hall should be on separate signs.
- h. Sign 11 – Suggested change to wording: *Welcome to the site of the Roman Town House, the only fully exposed example of a Roman Town House in the country. A guide book to the site is available from the main reception desk of County Hall. Please beware etc etc.*

14.2.4 The proposed scheme of directing people down Glyde Path Road is in direct contravention to the new Discover Dorchester town trail. This leads people via Colliton Walk to the Roman Town House. It would be sensible for the two to correlate.

14.2.5 The idea of signing people into County Hall reception to obtain their guide and then on to the Roman Town House has several problems:

- a. County Hall is closed for two days of the week – Saturday and Sunday, plus on Bank Holidays and Public Employee days. All of these are important visitor days on which no guide would be available, rendering much of the signposting irrelevant.
- b. The signing is confusing and takes people away from the natural routes to the Town House by directing them to County Hall reception.

- 14.2.6 It would be advisable to sign people directly to the Roman Town House, missing out County Hall altogether. The guides could then be sold through a dispensing machine onsite. It would benefit the Town House if the guide was more readily available throughout the town. The Tourist Information Centre did not have any supplies of the guide and had not had any for some time. Other attractions in Dorchester and Ottakars could all be encouraged to sell the guide.
- 14.2.7 The most advisable route to sign the majority of people is along Colliton Walk. This should be made into a 'Roman Walk', starting at the Roman Wall and continuing down Colliton Walk. As visitors progress along the walk information boards could introduce various topics about Roman Britain and Roman Dorchester. When the visitor reaches the site of the Roman Town House they will be informed and enthused about the Romans and can then view the Town House in the wider context.
- 14.3 **Brown Signing of Roman Town House from outside Dorchester.**
- 14.3 The Roman Town House is of national importance being the only fully exposed example of a Roman Town House in this country. It is situated in a town of Roman origin with other Roman sites such as the Roman Wall, Maumbury Rings, The Aqueduct and the Roman battle site at Maiden Castle. The Roman Town House, together with other attractions in Dorchester should be brown tourism signposted. *See 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, Location Analysis.*
- 14.4 **Roman Dorchester Leaflet.**
- 14.4.1 Although there is the Discover Dorchester town trail, there is a need for a leaflet on Roman Dorchester that would show all the Roman sites in the town, visible and invisible, and their relative positions and relationships to one another. A leaflet on Roman Dorchester would promote the site and aid visitors in visualising the town in Roman times putting things in context.
- 14.4.2 The leaflet would be helpful to visitors who have little or no idea about the town. Many of those questioned about Dorchester had little idea of Roman Dorchester and its origins. The leaflet would also be valuable to residents, as many are in a similar position. *See Appendix IV.*

## **15 Market Context**

The tourism industry in the UK is a key economic driver, worth some £64 billion per annum. It represents approximately 7% of GDP. Since 1990 it has created a quarter of all new jobs in the UK economy.

- 15.1 An indicator of the tourism industry's importance was shown in 2001 when millions of pounds were lost to the industry during the Foot and Mouth epidemic, which devastated some sections of the industry.
- 15.2 World events also have an effect on the industry, in particular the September 11 attack in New York, and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.
- 15.3 The role that attractions play within this picture is important and in the last ten years (1989-99) the number of visits to attractions in England has grown at a rate of 14% per annum. In 1999 the UK's 6,200 attractions (4,500 in England) earned £1.4 billion gross income from 404 million visits. During the year an estimated £470 million was invested in capital expenditure and £20 million was spent on advertising. The sector provides 56,000 full-time equivalent paid jobs and benefits from the services of 72,400 volunteers.

### **15.4 Consumer Spending on Attractions**

- 15.4.1 Consumer research over the past few years suggests that a leisure attraction outing is regarded as expensive and that care has been taken over the choice of venue. As a result paid entry Visitor Attractions have been forced to create a value-for-money image and consider increased investment in their core products.
- 15.4.2 The solution would appear to be increased investment, in such projects as the Roman Town House, to increase visitor numbers. It is a volatile and competitive market more than ever before.
- 15.4.3 However, it is encouraging to note that leisure spending is growing in the UK, expressed as a percentage of household income.

### **15.5 Spending**

- 15.5.1 63% of English Attractions of all types charge an admission fee.

49% of museums charge.

The average admission charge to attractions is £3.53 (2001)

The income of English tourist attractions, which include museums and historic sites for 2001 was:

Admissions	49%
Retailing	25%
Catering	17%
Others	7%
Donations	2%

## **15.6 Area Figures**

- 15.6.1 The south has 7% of English tourist attractions and accounts for 7% of the visits.
- 15.6.2 The south west has 10% of English tourist attractions and accounts for 9% of the visits.
- 15.6.3 The north west has 4% of the attractions and 9% of the visits.
- 15.6.4 The north has less attractions for the same number of visits and possibly indicates a greater tendency of the public to visit attractions, or, that there are a similar number of visitors with a lesser choice of attractions. In either case these figure should be borne in mind when assessing the visitor numbers and relative success of Roman sites in the north of England, and in making comparisons with other areas.
- 15.6.5 There are 247 museums in the south of England, which is the biggest concentration of museums in the country.
- 15.6.6 Dorset has 40 registered museums.
- 15.6.7 A recent study suggests that Dorset can expect an increase in visitor numbers to rural and countryside locations of some 2.5 million visitors over the next 5 years.
- 15.6.8 Dorchester is a popular tourist centre in its own right. Located on the main A35 trunk road which takes traffic from London and the Home Counties to the south west. It is also well situated in relation to the holiday resorts of Bournemouth, Poole, Swanage, Weymouth, Bridport and West Bay and Lyme Regis.
- 15.6.9 Dorchester does not have a good stock of quality hotels and guesthouses and draws the majority of its visitor from holiday centres outside the town.

## 16 Study Methods and Data Sources

To fulfil this brief, the following work has been undertaken and sources of data deployed:

Meetings with John Lowe, Historic Environment Manager, Dorset County Council and other parties.

Conversation and communications, with amongst others:

- *Sophie Bartlett, Mosaic Conservator*
- *Carol Edwards, Mosaic Conservator, Southampton City Council Archaeology Unit*
- *Duncan Coe, English Heritage*
- *Linda Poulsen, Education Officer, Dorset County Museum*
- *John Grantham, acting Director, Dorset County Museum*
- *Bill Putnam, Archaeologist and Lecturer*
- *Sue Clark, Tourism Department, West Dorset District Council*
- *Roman Baths, Bath*
- *Members of staff at numerous Roman Sites throughout England and Wales*
- *Members of staff at TICs throughout England and Wales*

Research into the history of The Roman Town House and Roman Dorchester, involving secondary research from printed sources. □

Statistical information supplied by :

Regional Tourist Boards and Departments, including figures for regional tourism in the region together with figures for the performance of attractions in that region

Dorset Data Project

Dorset & New Forest Partnership

Tourism Liaison Group of UK

Mintel

Key Note Market Research

Bournemouth University International Centre of Tourism

Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research

Office for National Statistics

Deloitte & Touche UK

Information from publications listed in the bibliography.

Regional information derived from the 2001 census.

Visits to attractions and museums.

Visits to Roman Sites and attractions both before and during the period of the study.

Numerous Visits to the Roman Town House both before and during the period of the study.

Experience of World Heritage in developing a range of relevant visitor attractions and providing consultancy in Britain, Europe and the Far East as listed in 'World Heritage', *see section 22*, and from experience derived from operating visitor attractions.

From this data and the experience built up over many years in treating historical stories and sites, come the recommendations embodied in this report.

III

## **17 Funding Opportunities**

### **The National Context**

#### **17.1 Tourism**

- 17.1.1 Following a government review of national tourism structures and policy, in 1999 a new national strategy for tourism - 'Tomorrow's Tourism' was launched together with the establishment of a new national strategic body for tourism in England – 'The English Tourism Council'.

#### **17.2 Department of Culture, Media and Sport**

- 17.2.1 The Department of Culture, Media and Sport has ultimate responsibility for tourism in the (DCMS).□Current government policy as set out in Tomorrow's Tourism. establishes a comprehensive framework, which seeks to maximise tourism's contribution to the economy, working in partnership with industry.□The strategy outlines government's commitment to a joined up approach for tourism.
- 17.2.2 Fifteen action points are at the core of Tomorrow's Tourism which seek to improve the quality of information services, to widen access for various sectors of the community, develop innovative and sustainable initiatives, and to provide more integrated and central government support for regions and raise the profile of the industry.
- 17.2.3 A groundbreaking tourism summit was held in Spring 2000, which brought together eight government departments and agreed priorities for government action on tourism in the year ahead.□□

#### **17.3 English Tourism Council**

- 17.3.1 Delivery and implementation of Tomorrow's Tourism is the responsibility of the English Tourism Council (ETC), the strategic tourism body for England, charged with development of sustainable tourism in the domestic market

#### **17.4 National Funding**

- 17.4.1 DCMS has responsibility for the co-ordination of the National Lottery.□Since their launch in 1994 National Lottery funds have provided a valuable additional source of finance for tourism related projects.□□

## 17.5 Lottery Grants - Heritage Lottery Fund

- 17.5.1 There are a number of sources of Lottery funding to consider, including; Heritage, Sports and the New Opportunities Fund.□ Funding for tourism related projects is currently available via the National Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), the Arts Council and Sport England.□The majority of grants awarded to projects which directly or indirectly supported tourism projects or improved facilities for visitors have been awarded under the Millennium and Heritage Lottery Funds.□However, the addition of other lottery good causes has reduced the overall proportion of funds available for tourism bids.□
- 17.5.2 With specific regard to HLF, recent indications suggest that added weight in the project assessment criteria will be given to projects relating to the countryside.□Previously, heritage bids related, in the main, to supporting the ‘bricks and mortar’ of built heritage and cultural heritage such as museums and galleries etc. Grants have been made for site museums, interpretative centres etc. The Trebah gardens in Cornwall recently received a £1.39 million grant against the cost of providing educational facilities and interpretive centre. Funding was also received from the European Development Fund.
- 17.5.3 Funding may be available from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Grants have been made to other Roman sites and projects including Brading on the Isle of Wight which received a grant in excess of £1 million and Corinium which received a grant of £2.725 million.
- 17.5.4 Corinium - Heritage Lottery Funding
- ‘...about access for all, education and collections care...’
- ‘...relocating and rationalising the museums storage area. The project will increase the public areas of the museum by approximately 50 %. This will enable the museums service to create new galleries and put more of the collections on display. Differing levels of interpretation will provide a source of enjoyment for everyone...’
- enlarged Roman galleries (three times as many objects will be on display)
- provide new Anglo-Saxon gallery
- reconstructions, hands - on exhibits & interactive touch screens
- fully equipped ‘life long learning centre’

new shop

## **17.6 Local Heritage Initiative**

- 17.6.1 Other Lottery Funds of relevance include the Local Heritage Initiative (LHI), which is run by HLF on behalf of the Countryside Agency and Nationwide Building Society. □ LHI is a new national grant scheme to help community groups investigate, explain and care for details that make places special, including the natural, built, archaeological and industrial heritage, customs and traditions. □ Grants to rural and small town communities are likely to be in the region of £3,000 to £25,000. □ The Countryside Agency assesses projects, with a final decision by HLF. □

## **17.7 New Opportunities Fund (NOF)**

- 17.7.1 The New Opportunities Fund (NOF) distributes grants to health, environmental and education projects across the UK. □ The Fund supports projects that will improve the quality of life for people; that encourage greater community participation and that complement relevant local and national strategies and programmes. □ The initial guidance for the Fund is that projects that offer a diverse range of activities will be favoured over those that are focussed upon a single activity.

## **17.8 Charitable Trusts**

- 17.8.1 Charitable Trusts are also useful sources of support. A register of local sources is available from libraries. □ Trusts have the potential to provide small donations to meet specific objectives.
- 17.8.2 Contributions from landowner/manager are generally on project-by-project basis. □ Forest Enterprise recognise recreational value but have a restricted remit. □ Contributions are usually one off rather than revenue based.

## **17.9 The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation**

- 17.9.1 This Foundation makes grants to heritage and arts projects. It will consider grants for capital funding and will give priority to heritage projects outside London and those that are solely for preservation, on architectural or historic merit. □

## **17.10 Educational Grants**

- 17.10.1 There are a wide range of Educational grants available from a variety of sources but they are not necessarily easy to access. □

## 17.11 **European Funding**

- 17.11.1 Region-wide, perhaps the single biggest EU influence has been on developing and promoting tourism. Some funding may be available. Funding may also be available for heritage related projects.

## 17.12 **Summary**

- 17.12.1 The above is intended to identify a range of potential funding sources. □ Clearly, there are a plethora of grant and funding sources that could be investigated. □ On a European scale there are many opportunities to look for funding co-operation with other cities, which also have amphitheatre sites as trans-national projects. □ Whilst funding is often limited, these projects can act as a springboard for applications for the Heritage Lottery Fund.

## 17.13 **Local Heritage Initiative**

- 17.13.1 LHI can fund a range of heritage projects, but all must demonstrate the following characteristics:

*Local* - be started, supported and carried out by local people;

*Heritage* - be about the richness and distinctiveness of the locally important heritage assets and involve investigating, explaining and caring for them;

*Initiative* - offer clear public benefits and include proposals for the long-term care of the local heritage assets or future actions after the project has finished

### 17.13.2 *What costs are eligible for a grant?*

Local groups can apply for a grant towards costs associated with:

- investigation of their local heritage, leading to an explanation and presentation of information discovered;
- materials and labour for a programme of community-led action, based on any previous investigation and explanation work, eg conservation or restoration of heritage assets;
- work to help public access, enjoyment and appreciation of heritage assets and their cultural or historic associations;
- specialist advisers to help with the project;
- charges such as archive costs;

- activities to involve the wider community, especially young people;
- production of information;
- essential equipment to make projects efficient and effective (max 50% costs);
- training for volunteers;
- provision for long-term care of the project and assets e.g. securing a legal management agreement;
- legal advice and volunteer insurance costs specifically associated with LHI projects.

*What is not eligible ?*

- work carried out prior to receiving and accepting any offer of grant;
- provision of expert advice or management skills by the applicant or group members (although this can count as in-kind contributions);
- items that only benefit an individual;
- routine maintenance or one-off repair project.

## **18 Projected Visitor Numbers**

### **18.1 Introduction**

- 18.1.1 There are a number of ways of projecting visitor numbers for any given attraction. None are very reliable, but they are principally as follows:
- a. Capacity analysis: examining how many visitors an attraction can physically accommodate.
  - b. Comparative analysis: examining how comparable heritage sites and attractions in the same region perform.
  - c. Penetration analysis: considering what the markets are and what percentage of those markets the visitor attraction could reasonably draw.
- 18.1.2 Capacity analysis merely establishes the theoretical upper limit in terms of visitor numbers, i.e. the level at which it would simply not be possible to cram more people through. Comparative analysis is comparing like with like, but attractions are rarely alike and there are many variables. Penetration analysis is also a weak tool, in the sense that the statistical base for the analysis is weak, but it can provide the basis for a reasonably accurate projection when corrected by other data.
- ### **18.2 Capacity Analysis**
- 18.2.1 This method of calculation merely establishes the theoretical upper limit in terms of visitor numbers, to the point where it would simply not be possible to cram more people onto the site.
- 18.2.2 There is virtually no internal capacity. If and when a viewing platform is erected within the House 20 individuals should be able to be accommodated. The grass area to the front of the Town House and the viewing paths will accommodate approximately 120 visitors. The visitor centre and shop should accommodate 50 visitors. The maximum total number of visitors on the site at any one time would thus be in the region of 190.
- 18.2.3 The above figures are for able-bodied persons. Allowances must be made for the disabled and children in buggies. This would reduce the numbers by about 12%. The adjusted total number for visitors on the site at any one time, allowing for disabled people and buggies, could be in the region of 168.

- 18.2.4 The above figures are for a manned site with a visitor centre. The total number of visitors per day depends on the number of hours open. Therefore on an average day of 7 hours in the summer the maximum achievable visitors would be 1,176. On an unmanned site the number would be less. This is purely a theoretical figure and cannot be used for any real projection of potential annual visitor numbers.

### 18.3 **Comparative Analysis**

- 18.3.1 The visitor figures of other Roman sites in Britain are presented in *Appendix VI - Visitor Figures for Roman Sites in England & Wales*. There is an enormous range of figures, with the lowest being King's Weston Roman Villa, Bristol, with 770 and the highest being The Roman Baths Museum, at Bath, with 838,883. Regionally there are few Roman sites, the closest being Rockbourne Roman Villa (9,928 visitors), in Hampshire, The Roman Baths Museum, in Bath, and Kings Weston Roman Villa, in Bristol. In our view there is no directly comparable attraction.

- 18.3.2 *Appendix VII - Visitor Figures for Dorchester Attractions, and Appendix VIII - Visitor Figures for some Dorset Attractions*, both give some interesting comparisons for local attractions. However again in our view there is no attraction that can be said to be exactly comparable.

### 18.4 **Penetration Analysis**

- 18.4.1 Having demonstrated the above methods are inappropriate for the Roman Town House, Penetration Analysis has been used as a basis for further calculations. The following projected attendance forecasts for the Roman Town House are therefore based on applying market penetration or 'capture' rates to the market catchment populations. The penetration rate is the annual percentage of the market segment likely to be converted into visitors.
- 18.4.2 Initially it is necessary to consider the penetration rates of other UK attractions, which provide a useful guide and show clear trends. 1999 figures of Market Penetration at Types of UK Attractions indicate that for an Open-air Museum the following penetration levels could be expected:
- a. Primary Market 1-5%
  - b. Secondary Market 1-5%
  - c. Tertiary Market 1-6%

18.4.3 Our experience shows that these percentages need to be narrowed and we have therefore adapted the process, introduced further analysis and attempted to identify a realistic and prudent likely visitor total for the Roman Town House.

18.5 **Projected Visitor Figures for the Roman Town House based on corrected penetration levels:**

18.5.1 The Primary Market.

This comprises an area of approximately 15 miles radius from Dorchester and its residential population.

Approximate population - 120,000 residents

	Low	Medium	High
Percentage rates	0.75%	1%	1.25%
Projected Attendance	900	1,200	1,500

18.5.2 The Secondary Market.

This comprises an area of approximately 32 miles radius from Dorchester, excluding the Primary Market area, and its residential population.

Approximate population - 471,000 residents

	Low	Medium	High
Percentage rates	0.5%	0.75%	1%
Projected Attendance	2,355	3,533	4,710
Total Residential:	3,255	4,733	6,210

18.5.3 The Tertiary Market.

The Tertiary Market consists of staying visitors to the area. These have been split into a Principal Market and a Subsidiary Market. Total visitor figures have been taken from local government statistics.

#### 18.5.4 Principal Market:

This has been based on staying visitors to West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland local government areas.

Approximately 1,500,100 staying visitors

	Low	Medium	High
Percentage rates	0.75%	1%	1.25%
Projected Attendance	11,250	15,000	18,750

#### 18.5.5 Subsidiary Market:

This has been based on staying visitors to the rest of Dorset, including Bournemouth and Poole, and 20% of East Devon.

Approximately 3,290,200 staying visitors.

	Low	Medium	High
Percentage rates	0.5%	0.75%	1%
Projected Attendance	16,450	24,675	32,900
Total Tourists:	27,700	39,675	51,650
Total Visitors:	30,955	44,408	57,860

- 18.5.6.1 These figures could be achieved if all facilities and amenities were developed at the site as in Proposal 6. For a more conservative development, such as in Proposals 4 and 5, visitor figures of 15,477 to 22,204 are more realistic. For an unmanned site, such as in proposal 2, visitor figures of 7,738 to 11,102 are more realistic.

- 18.5.7 We therefore conclude that an attraction based at the Roman Town House in Dorchester using imaginative and bold interpretation techniques could be viable from the point of view of visitor numbers.

#### 18.6 **These figures are dependant on a number of factors listed below**

- What visitor experience is being offered – the level of interpretation and visitor amenities.
- When it is open – ie. days, months of the year and opening times.
- The marketing – advertising and publicity – management and budget.
- Signposting within Dorchester – including brown signs on the bypass.
- Management of the attraction – i.e. public or private.

- f. The infrastructure of the town and its ability to take additional visitors – this has a direct bearing on the potential number of visitors that can be attracted to the town by intensive marketing of the attraction.
- g. The proportion of visitors already in Dorchester – see number of visitors to Tourist Information Centre and other attractions in the town.
- h. The proportion of potential local visitors – this is usually a difficult market to penetrate and is at the best of times uncertain and should not be relied upon to generate high visitor numbers.
- i. Its location in Dorchester.
- j. Provision of car parking – car parking is severely limited in Dorchester a fact that will undoubtedly limit the potential number of visitors not already visiting the town (*see f. above*). Most visitors to West Dorset arrive or travel around by car (West Dorset Tourism Facts 2002).
- k. These points to be taken with reference to existing visitors to the site – *see Appendix III*. Roughly 15 a day, but there is no charge.

## **19 Estimated Costs**

### **19.1 Capital Costs**

- 19.1.1 The costs in the various proposals in 8, *Site Proposals and Options*, are impossible to project as there are so many variables. Once a detailed scheme is chosen, individual costing will be available. All costing will be relative to the proposal number. The lowest costing proposal will be Proposal 1 and the highest, Proposal 6.
- 19.1.2 Costings will have to be obtained for the modifications needed to the cover structure.
- 19.1.3 Outline capital costs for Proposal 5 and parts of other options already exist. *See DCC Costed Options* for the Roman Town House.

### **19.2 Estimated Costs - Proposals 2 – 6**

- 19.2.1 Estimated Cost for external and internal presentation of Proposals 2 - 6, displays for the Roman Town House west and south ranges, including all equipment as listed in Proposals 2 - 6.  
£107,500 +/- 10%
- 19.2.2 Estimated Cost for the internal presentation displays of Museum/Interpretation Centre Proposals 3 - 5, including all display and electronic presentation equipment. £117,000 +/- 10%
- 19.2.3 Estimated Cost for the internal presentation displays of Museum/Interpretation Centre with reconstructed Town House, Proposal 6, including all display and electronic presentation equipment. £176,000 +/- 10%

### **19.3 Running Costs**

- 19.3.1 The running costs of the various proposals 3 - 6 in 8, *Site Proposals and Options*, are impossible to project as there are at the present too many variables. Once a detailed scheme is chosen, individual costings will be able to be made.
- 19.3.2 Apart from the cost of conservation (*see Edwards 2003*) of Roman Town House itself, allowance for the cost of general cleaning and for cleaning, on a regular basis, both of the interior and the glass should be made. These costs could be significant. Mention of the regularity of cleaning is made in the maintenance document.

19.3.3 If the site is displayed as a “showcase site” then the frequency of cleaning of the glazing will have to be noticeably increased to at least once a week. Interview with contractors indicated that it takes six man-hours to clean the glass. If the site is managed by the County Council then this must be part of the running costs, however, allowances should be made for these costs if the site is placed in the hands of the private sector.

#### 19.4 **Finance**

19.4.1 The 2000/1 opening of the Town House was by way of a grant of £10000 made to the County Museum to operate the site. Copson was paid by the County Museum. This covered a relatively short period.

## 20 Viability

The following projection of income from all of the proposals in this report is given in order to give a broad overview.

At this stage, without defined specifications of any of the proposals, allocated space for the exhibition, displays or type of design (low technology, medium technology or high technology) these figures can only be indicative and should be refined once key decisions are made.

### 20.1 Income Generation

The figures below are derived from those identified in the Penetration Analysis for the Roman Town House, *see 18, Projected Visitor Numbers*. Income generation figures have been developed for three proposal types, giving a high and low projection per annum.

### 20.2 Proposal 6

20.2.1 Proposal 6 comprises of a purpose built visitor centre with full amenities and facilities. Admission charges of £5.00 and children £2.00 have been suggested, and an average visitor retail spend of £0.50 per person.

20.2.2	Admission:		
	Visitors	Income	Income excl. Vat
	Low 30,955	£108,342	£92,206
	High 57,860	£202,510	£172,349

20.2.3	Retail:		
	Total	Total excl. Vat	Total excl. purchase costs
	Low £15,477	£13,172	£6,586
	High £28,930	£24,622	£12,311

20.2.4	Total Income:		
	Entrance	+ Sales	= Total
	Low £92,206	+ £6,586	= £98,792
	High £172,349	+ £12,311	= £184,660

### 20.3 Proposals 3, 4 or 5

20.3.1 Proposals 3, 4 & 5 comprise of either a manned conversion, manned temporary visitor centre or a purpose built one. Admission charges of £3.95 and children £1.50 have been suggested, and an average visitor retail spend of £0.50 per person.

20.3.2	Admission:		
	Visitors	Income	Income excl. Vat
	Low 15,477	£42,097	£35,828
	High 22,204	£60,395	£51,400

20.3.3	Retail:		
	Total	Total excl. Vat	Total excl. purchase costs
	Low £7,738	£6,586	£3,293
	High £11,400	£9,449	£4,724

20.3.4	Total Income:		
	Entrance	+ Sales	= Total
	Low £35,828	+ £3,293	= £39,121
	High £51,400	+ £4,724	= £56,124

## 20.4 **Proposal 2**

20.4.1 Proposal 2 comprises of an unmanned site. Admission charge of £2.00 per entrance on the turnstile have been suggested. With no visitor centre there would be no spend except for any guide books sold through an on site dispenser.

20.4.2	Admission:		
	Visitors	Income	Income excl. Vat
	Low 7,738	£15,476	£13,172
	High 11,102	£22,204	£18,898

20.4.3 Retail:  
It is estimated that 2,000 Guide Books could be sold through a dispenser on site at a price of £1.00 each making £2,000. Minus production cost to give a profit of £1,000.

20.4.4	Total Income:		
	Entrance	+ Sales	= Total
	Low £13,172	+ £1,000	= £14,172
	High £18,898	+ £1,000	= £19,898

## 20.5 **Educational**

It is estimated that the site could attract 9,000 school children if properly marketed and manned. These could produce a further income of £9,000 at a charge of £1.00 per pupil. Excluding vat this would give an income of £7,660

## 20.6 **Summary**

Whilst income generated from running the site as a tourist attraction may well be self supporting in terms of staffing and some other costs, it is unlikely to generate sufficient income to cover capital costs of any of the proposals listed in this study.

## 21 SWOT

## SWOT Analysis

Every site has strengths and weaknesses, and as a prelude to any development process, it is important to be clear what they are. It may be helpful to look at these in the context of a SWOT analysis.

## 21.1 Strengths

The strengths of the site can be summarised as follows:

- Archaeologically important monument
- Interesting and important building
- Relatively flexible layout
- Some surrounding space and grounds
- No major Roman sites of this nature within a ninety minute driving radius
- The project is in a successful, growing and established tourist area
- The heritage visitor market is one of the fastest growing and most financially lucrative areas of tourism

## 21.2 Weaknesses

The weaknesses of the site can be summarised as follows:

- Location remote from the centre of town, main shopping area and parking
- Archaeologically sensitive through continued need to conserve mosaics
- Little interpretation of the site at present
- No focus in presentation of the site
- No parking at site
- Bad signposting and public awareness of the Town House

### 21.3 Opportunities

There are a range of opportunities for the site:

- To create a flagship of some kind
- To create unique performance space
- To promote vibrant mixed use
- To increase public access to the monument
- To generate income to offset cost of preservation and maintenance
- To develop the site and manage it in archaeological and presentation terms to the highest possible standards
- To provide a possible long-term solution to the structural conservation and maintenance of the Roman Town House and exciting prospects for its presentation and display

### 21.4 Threats

- The site becomes a charge on the public purse

21.5 From the above it is fairly clear that strengths and opportunities outweigh weaknesses and threats.

## 22 World Heritage

World Heritage was formed in 1983 and is an independent organisation with the following primary aims and functions:

### 22.1 **To design, develop, and manage interpretive museums, exhibitions and tourist attractions**

#### 22.1.1 The Dinosaur Museum

Since its opening in 1984 this award winning museum has been nominated for the European Museum of the Year Award, voted Dorset's Top Family Attraction, and has twice been acclaimed as one of Britain's Top Ten Hands On Museums. The Dinosaur Museum cleverly combines fossils, skeletons and life-size dinosaur reconstructions with hands on, video and computer displays to inform and entertain the visitor.

#### 22.1.2 The Tutankhamun Exhibition

Opened in 1987, this permanent exhibition has become internationally renowned for its innovative approach. Tutankhamun's tomb, treasures and mummy have been superbly recreated winning the highest commendation from Egyptologists, educationalists, and visitors alike.

#### 22.1.3 The ExpoCentre

This multi-functional exhibition centre showcased a variety of museological exhibitions since its opening in 1989.

#### 22.1.4 The Dorset Teddy Bear Museum

Opened in 1995 the first part of the Museum is the fantasy world of Edward Bear and his family of human sized teddy bears living in their 'Edwardian' house. Downstairs the second and more traditional part of the museum traces the history of the teddy bear from its birth at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to today.

#### 22.1.5 The Terracotta Warriors Museum

This new museum in Dorchester, opened in 2002, is the only museum outside of China devoted to the terracotta warriors – now regarded as the 8<sup>th</sup> wonder of the Ancient World.

**22.2 To act as a consultancy for the development, marketing, and management of heritage and museum sites throughout the world**

Some past and present organisations who have consulted World Heritage.

- a. The Beijing Natural History Museum, China
- b. The Valcidacos Project, Spain
- c. The Ulster Museum, Northern Ireland
- d. Dr Nicholas Reeves on behalf of the Museum of Egyptology, in Japan
- e. The Dinosaur Project, Thailand
- f. Eureka! Children's Museum, Halifax, England
- g. Dudley Museum & Art Gallery, England

**22.3 To organise Tourism & Heritage related Fairs**

22.3.1 The Great Days Out Fairs: three fairs, in different locations throughout the south and west, for tourist attractions and people involved with group travel. The Fairs are now in their tenth year.

22.3.2 The Teddy Bear Fairs: annual fairs held in Dorchester, Southampton and Wimborne for teddy bear collectors.

**22.4 To manage a Tourism Literature Distribution Service throughout southern England**

Some past and present clients include:

- a. The Best of Dorset, for The Best of Dorset Consortium
- b. Exploring West Dorset, for West Dorset District Council
- c. Abbotsbury Swannery, for Abbotsbury Tourism
- d. Abbotsbury Sub-tropical Gardens, for Abbotsbury Tourism
- e. Abbotsbury Tithe Barn, for Abbotsbury Tourism
- f. Kingston Maurward Gardens, for Kingston Maurward College

- g. The Blue Pool
- h. The Wessex Top Ten, for a consortium of 10 attractions
- i. Tolpuddle Martyrs Museum, for the Trades Union Congress
- j. Dorset County Museum
- k. The Great Dorset Maize
- l. World Heritage's own museum and attractions

**22.5 To deliver a Portfolio of Travelling and Temporary Heritage based Exhibitions**

Mummies of the Pharaohs

The Turin Shroud

Prehistoric World

Dinosaur Discovery

Terracotta Warriors

Within These Walls (for Abbotsbury Tourism)

These have been shown in a number of locations in Britain, including Hampton Court, and Fort Regent, Jersey where The Terracotta Warriors Exhibition ran for three year.

This Report has been researched, written and compiled by World Heritage.

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Fiona Wilson, English Heritage, Tourism & Information Manager

Jewry Wall Museum, Leicester

Julie Williams, Segontium Roman Fort, Caernarfon

Linda Poulsen, Dorset County Museum, Dorchester

Lindsay Allason-Jones, Museum of Antiquities, Newcastle on Tyne

Past Forward

Pat Dunlop, Roman Baths Museum, Bath

Philip Bethell, Property Manager, Cedworth Roman Villa

Robin Birley, Vindolanda

Rockbourne Roman Villa, Hampshire

Segedunum Roman Fort, Bath & Museum, Tyne & Wear

Sue Clarke, West Dorset Tourism, West Dorset District Council

The Keep Military Museum, Dorchester

The staff at Tourist Information Centres, Cardiff, Cheltenham, Cirencester, Dorchester, Hemel Hempstead, Hertford, Leicester, Newcastle, Warwickshire.

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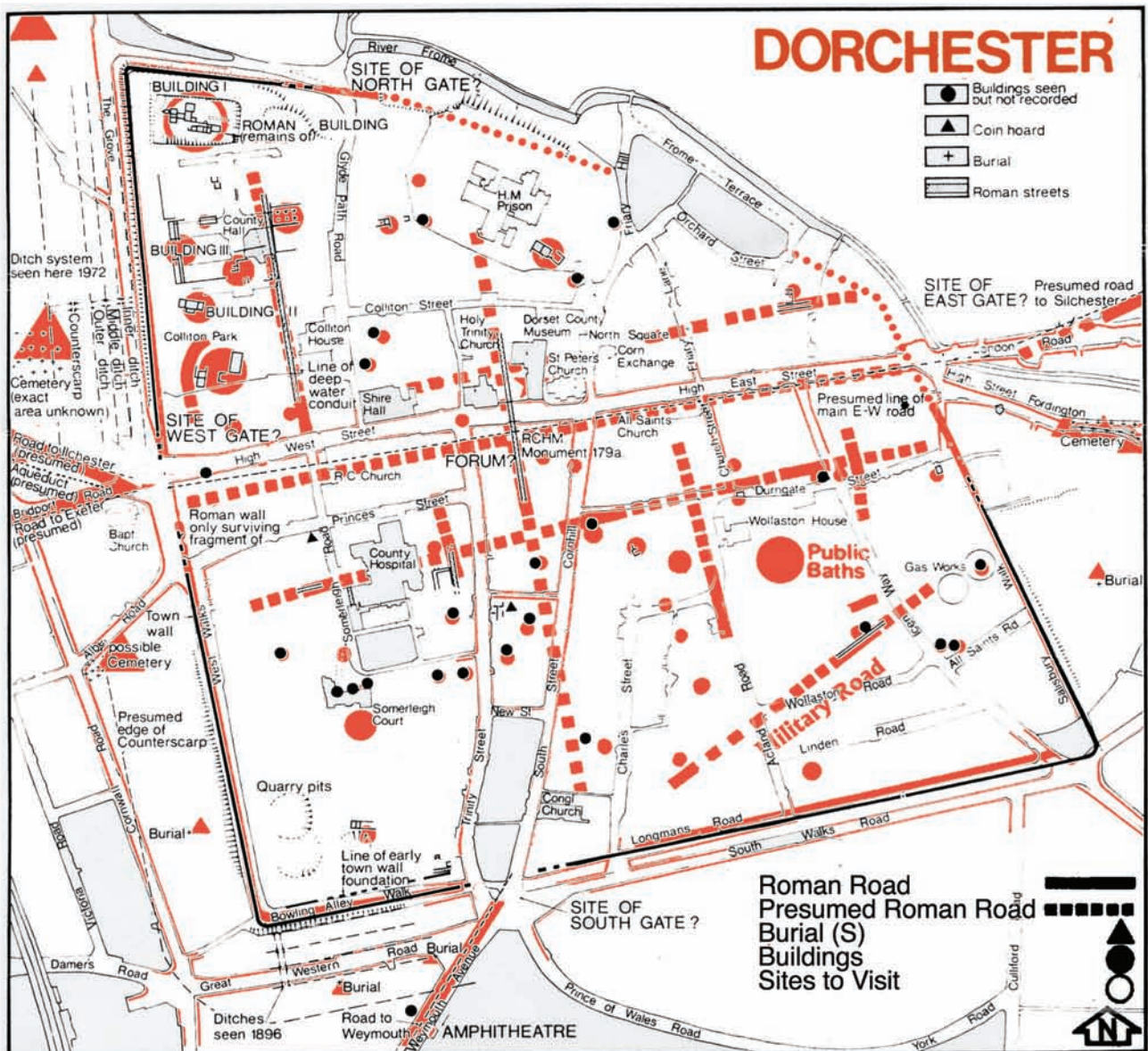
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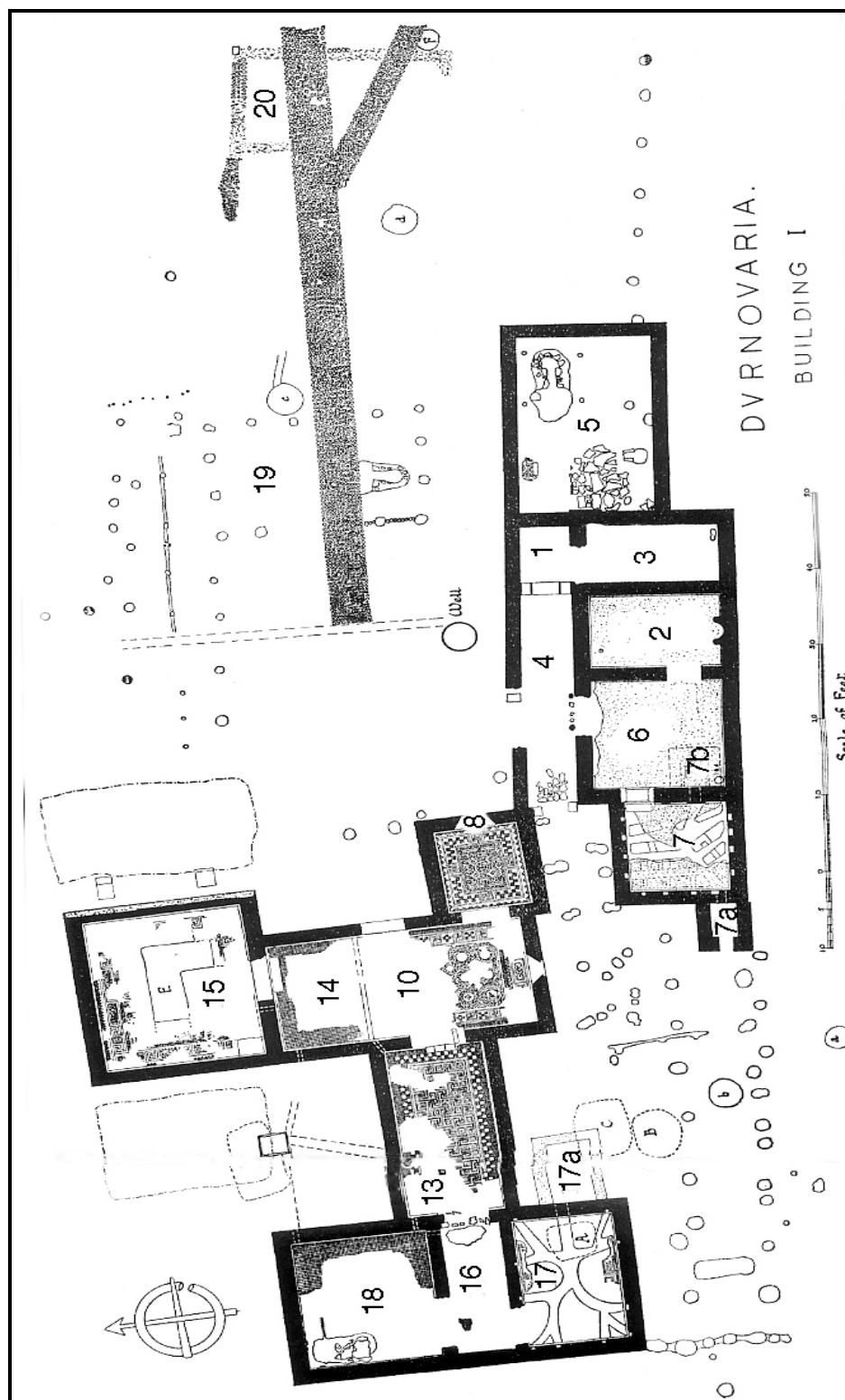


**Dorchester** - with Roman remains or finds picked out in colour

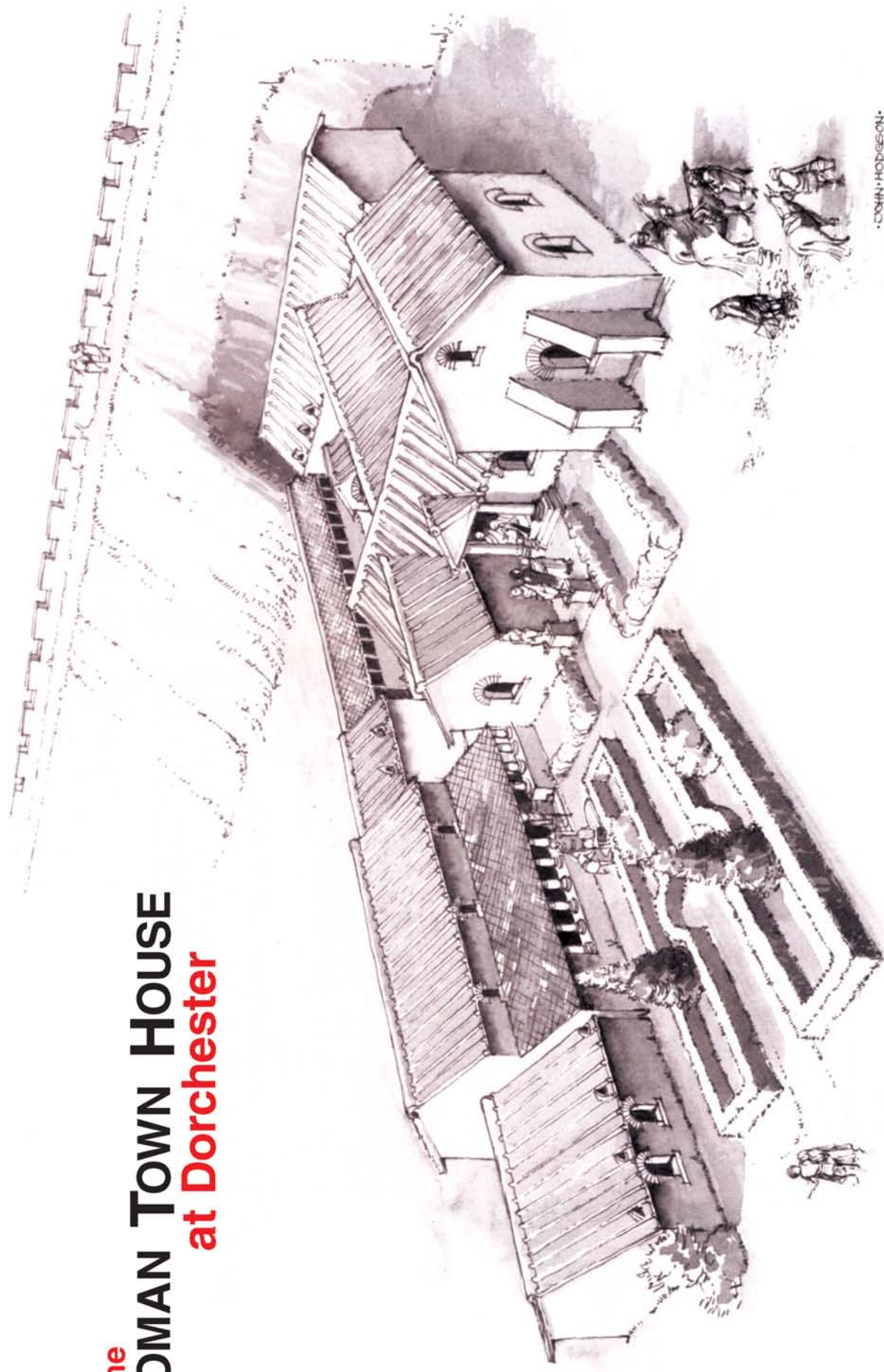


# Plan of the Roman Town House

Colliton Park, Dorchester  
After Selby (1938)



# The ROMAN TOWN HOUSE at Dorchester



RECONSTRUCTION DRAWING OF THE ROMAN TOWN HOUSE  
IN THE 4TH CENTURY AD AFTER HODGSON & PUTNAM

# Roman Sites in England and Wales



1. Roman Town House, Dorchester
2. Rockbourne Roman Villa, Hants
3. Newport Roman Villa, IOW
4. Brading Roman Villa, IOW
5. Fishbourne Roman Palace, Sussex
6. Bignor Roman Villa, Sussex
7. Barcombe Roman Villa, Lewes, E Sussex
8. Roman Painted Town House, Dover
9. Lullingstone Roman Villa, Dartford
10. Crofton Roman Villa, Orpington, Bromley, Kent
11. Silchester Roman Town Life Project, Silchester, Berks
12. Littlecote Park Roman Villa, Hungerford, Berks
13. Roman Baths, Bath
14. Kings Weston Roman Villa, Bristol
15. Caeleon Roman Legionary Fortress, Isca, Newport, Wales
16. Corinium Roman Town, Cirencester
17. Chedworth Roman Villa, Cirencester
18. Great Witcombe Roman Villa, Glos
19. Verulamium Roman Town, St Albans
20. Welwyn Roman Baths, Herts
21. Chesterton Roman Town/House, Warwickshire
22. Lunt Roman Fort, Coventry, Warwickshire
23. Jewry Wall - Roman wall, Leicester
24. Segontium Roman Fort, Caernarfon, Wales
25. Dewa Roman Fort, Chester
26. Binchester Roman fort, nr Bishop Auckland, Co Durham
27. Housteads Roman Fort, Haltwhistle, Cumberland
28. Chesters Roman Fort Museum, Hexham, Northumberland
29. Vindolanda Roman Fort, Hexham, Northumberland
30. Roman Army Museum, Hexham, Northumberland
31. Corbridge Roman Fort Museum, Northumberland
32. Segedunum Roman Forts, Bath & Museum, Tyne & Wear
33. Arbeia Fort Museum, South Shields, Tyne and Wear
34. Brigantium, Otterburn, Redesdale, Northumberland

Converted furniture store: interpretive museum/centre  
(Proposal 3)

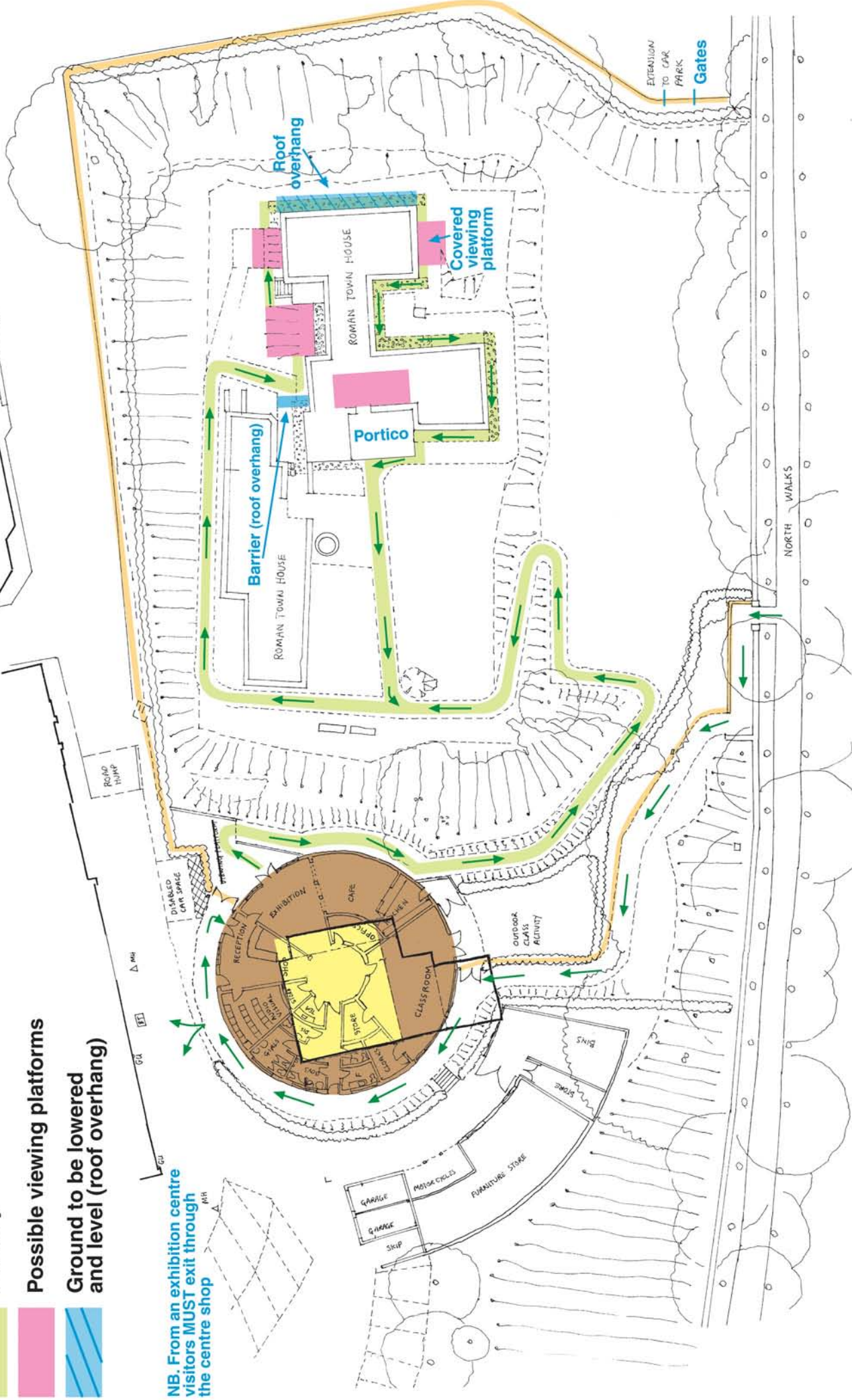
Interpretive museum/centre  
(Proposal 5)

Pay perimeter

Pathway

Possible viewing platforms

Ground to be lowered  
and level (roof overhang)



NB. From an exhibition centre  
visitors MUST exit through  
the centre shop

## Appendix I

### Roman Town House Site Assessment Visits 2002-2003

The follow points on the structure and site were made after observation over a period of months:

- 1 Present structure not vandal proof.
- 2 Need for structural changes that will not allow water, damp, animals or debris into the building.
- 3 Room 15 – mosaic is under the gable end and therefore is more exposed because rain comes in and lies on top of the mosaics and floors causing deterioration. It is no more protected than in the open. Similar problems can be observed to mosaics in other areas adjacent to open gable ends.
- 4 Leaves and organic debris including birds etc enter through the open gable ends and unglazed window in Room 10 in the building making the site look dirty and untidy. Also a threat to the preservation of the mosaics.
- 5 Gaps between glass panels and tops of walls need filling, taking care that a controlled flow of air is maintained.

Possible use of fibre brush draught excluder or fine netting under the main glass and steel panels. Alternatively a sloping Z plate could be inserted, which would seal the gaps and direct any rain flowing down the panels off the walls. The Z plate could also be adapted to take information and or control internal interactive information.

- 6 Gable ends need to be filled-in, in a similar way to the gable end in Room 10, thus excluding rain and wind blown debris. This would cut down light which would be beneficial to the preservation of mosaics, reducing strong sunlight and improve possibilities of internal interactive light indicators.
- 7 There is a need for a covered walkways around the building and observation platforms. The walkway could mainly follow the existing gravel area which covers the existing drainage trench.

- 8 If walkways are not possible, then covered viewing stations should be considered for wet weather. One such covered area could be at the entrance to the covered building as this would provide an information area, almost as an entrance portico.
- 9 The internal area of the building available for the public to walk on is too small to allow free flow through – causing visitors to walk on and damage mosaics. Inadequate for disabled visitors.
- 10 Exciting possibilities have shown themselves in using the glazed-in building as large 'showcase' with explanations and displays which are viewed from the outside.
- 11 The iron structure is showing signs of deterioration. The paint has fallen off in some areas which are now rusting.
- 12 The floors are showing severe signs of damp with green algae forming on the surface. Small plants are also growing amongst the mosaic tesserae. Some tesserae have been removed as souvenirs by visitors. Cracks have also been observed in several places in the mortar floors.
- 13 There are signs of damp stains on the oak rafters indicating ingress of water into the building.
- 14 Observation of the building over a period of time has indicated the need for a rigorous maintenance programme, not only to the cover structure and interior but also of the surrounding ground and the exposed southern range.
- 15 The existing gravel drainage trench 'path' around parts of the building is used by visitors but is unsuitable for wheelchairs as is much of the site.
- 16 Parts of the southern and western roof overhangs are low and dangerous.
- 17 There is a need for levelled viewing platforms for southern and northern ends because of serious uneven ground levels.
- 18 Some timbers need treating.
- 19 The steps on the southern side down to the hypocaust stoke hole to Room 17 need attention and the hypocaust stoke hole needs closing. This hole allows access for children and animals.
- 20 There are small holes in the roof caused by the shifting of tiles.

- 21 Tiles in various parts of the roof, in particular the southern side, have large horizontal gaps which allow water to penetrate the building.
- 22 There is no weatherproofing of the roof.
- 23 Rain, dirt and debris etc enters the building through the gaps between glass and steel structure.
- 24 There is a need for internal environmental monitoring of the structure
- 25 Observation of the visitors indicates that although they find the site imposing, they are puzzled as to what the building actually is. They comment on lack of information and interpretation. Generally they know little about the Romans.
- 26 Children treat the banks and the walls as a playground.
- 27 It was observed that there was a need for lighting and security devices on site, and thus electricity.
- 28 Residents with dogs use the site as an exercise ground allowing their dogs to foul the site. This is not only unpleasant for visitors but a potential hazard to children.
- 29 With reference to the above there is no 'poop bin'.
- 30 There is a general lack of waste bins on the site.
- 31 Children and adults have been observed to have entered the building although the front door is 'locked'.
- 32 The front door is insecure and can be opened with a car key or blunt implement.
- 33 Visitors have occasionally hit their heads on the roof overhangs. As the building is at the moment, these areas need clear warning signs.

## Appendix II

### Light Survey – World Heritage

On 15<sup>th</sup> April 2003 a light survey was conducted in Rooms 10,13,14,15,16,17,18.

Readings were taken between 10.30am and 11.10am. Conditions were sunny with some haze. Readings were taken with the gable ends of Rooms 17 and 18 both covered and uncovered. The results are shown as both light values (lv.) and lux values.

The reading OUTSIDE the building both on the north and the south = lv. 20.5 or 122,000 lux.

The uncovered readings for the rooms were as follows:

Rooms 10 and 13 = lv. 14 or 1,400 lux.

Room 10 facing south towards existing closed gable = lv. 13 or 700 lux.

Room 10 facing inward to Room 8 = lv. 15 or 2,800 lux.

Room 17 facing south = lv. 15 or 2,800 lux.

Room 18 facing north = lv. 14.5 or 2,450 lux.

Room 15 facing north = lv. 16 or 5,500 lux.

Readings taken in rooms with one or more gable end covered:

In Room 18 with the gable end of Room 17 covered = lv. 13 or 700 lux.

In Room 18 with the gable end of Room 18 covered = lv. 12.75 or 590 lux.

In Room 18 with the gable ends of both Rooms 17 and 18 covered = lv. 11.5 or 237 lux.

For ease of appreciation of the relative differences between internal and external lighting and the blockages of light at the gable ends it might help to refer to the light values rather than the lux values.

Experiments were also conducted using a light beam to assess whether, with suitable covering over at the gable ends, light beams can be effectively used to direct visitors' attention to features within the building. The results proved positive and most effective. Light beams could not be employed with the gable ends open as present.

The blockage of light at the gable ends considerably reduces the effects of strong sunlight, though it must be noted that some strong sunlight penetrates through the glass panels themselves. This could be reduced by tinting the glass, or by the introduction of blinds either operated mechanically or by photo-electric cells.

*REFERENCE: Should be read in conjunction with Edwards' observations on the effect of sunlight on growth of algae on mosaics.*

## **Appendix III**

### **Visitor Survey conducted at the Roman Town House**

*This Visitor Survey was conducted in the week leading up to Good Friday (14<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> April 2003) with actual visitors to the Roman Town House.*

#### Place of Habitation:

75% of respondents were from outside Dorchester, with the remaining 25% from the town itself. *Comment: this is to be expected because of the timing of the survey in the Easter holidays.*

#### Prior visits to the Roman Town House:

20% of the respondents from Dorchester had visited before, those from outside Dorchester had not.

#### Where visitors found out about Roman Town House:

All those from Dorchester had known about the Town House for a 'long time'. Of those from outside Dorchester 60% had found out about the Town House from the Tourist Information Centre, 17% from relations & friends, and 12% from the Dorset County Museum. 11% were unsure.

#### Ease of finding Roman Town House:

40% found it easy to find – this includes all those from Dorchester who had visited previously. 60% had difficulty, commenting on poor signing and confusion in County Hall on how to get to the site. Comment was also made on the lack of brown signs on the roads approaching Dorchester.

#### Parking:

83% made their journey by car parking in the town centre car parks. 12% of visitors commented on the high parking charges. Nearly all commented on lack of parking on site.

#### Presentation of Roman Town House:

All liked the Town House in general and its setting. 75% of visitors mentioned lack of information. 12% mentioned the proximity of County Hall spoilt site.

#### Entrance Fee:

None of the visitors would pay an entrance fee for the Town House as it stands. It was felt a small charge of between £2 and £4 would be acceptable if the site was developed.

#### Roman Dorchester:

All visitors wanted to see Roman sites in Dorchester linked up in some way.

Friends of the Roman Town House:

67% would consider joining a 'friends' group.

The following methods of presentation were unanimously favoured in any future development:

Graphic Panels

Guided Walks

Guided walks around the site and to other Roman Sites in Dorchester

Development of Town House website, or Roman Dorchester website.

Events in Dorchester based on Roman & local history.

Ongoing archaeological research into the Roman Town House.

Development of visitor facilities at the Town House.

Development of a visitor centre with reconstructions in Dorchester.

Living History Days.

'A mobile resource and exhibition centre based in Dorchester' and

'Development of a virtual reality experience were less favoured.'

General comments:

Like to see an events programme.

Need for a Guide Book.

Information boards cannot be seen.

Would like to go inside Town House.

## **Appendix IV**

### **Visitor Survey conducted in Dorchester**

*Survey conducted in the centre of Dorchester in the week leading up to Good Friday (14<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> April 2003)*

#### Place of Habitation:

70% of those surveyed were from outside Dorchester, 30% were from the town itself.

#### Dorchester's Roman Name:

76% of those from Dorchester knew the town's Roman name, and 22% of those from outside Dorchester knew.

#### Knowledge of Roman Town House:

60% of those from Dorchester knew of the Roman Town House, plus 32% of those from outside.

#### Location of Roman Town House:

40% of those who had heard of the Town House knew roughly where it was.

#### Visits to the Roman Town House:

67% of those from Dorchester who had heard of the Town House had visited the site. Of those from outside of Dorchester who knew of the Town House 28% had visited.

#### Payment:

Most indicated they were prepared to pay for entrance to the site.

#### Roman Dorchester:

90% of those questioned would like more to be made of Roman Dorchester.

#### General comments:

Problems of parking in Dorchester.

Lack of Brown Tourist Signposts.

Town House needs Leaflets/promotion/advertising.

Town House is out of the way.

Town House is difficult to find.

Any development would need to be balanced with conservation concerns.

## Appendix V

### Site Proposals - Views of English Heritage

*The site proposals were discussed at a site meeting with Duncan Coe of English Heritage on the 8<sup>th</sup> April 2003.*

Duncan Coe for English Heritage, expressed a wish to see the problems of the site addressed in a 'proper manner'. He felt that any low-budget scheme would not be effective. Any changes to the structure should not be adaptation or made in an ad hoc manner, but grant aid should be sought from the Heritage Lottery Fund to cover all changes on grounds of environmental improvement and preservation/ conservation of the mosaics and structure of the Roman Building.

He (Duncan Coe, EH) felt that these changes should be incorporated with an exciting plan for interpretation and would include everything that needs doing together with the provision of suitable staffing. Interpretation, together with a site museum/interpretative centre, and a programme of conservation should be envisaged as part of a total scheme.

While preferring public access to the building he understood the danger to the mosaics. He would be pleased to support the idea of a raised viewing platform at the internal entrance to the building to still give visitors a 'feel' of the Roman building.

English Heritage also supported the original public access and disabled route be followed in a clockwise direction, *see 26, Plans*. He also agreed for the need for a barrier to be placed preventing movement in an anti-clockwise direction, near the south side of Room 8 and the south range, for safety regions. (roof overhang).

Duncan Coe (EH) also recognised the danger of the roof overhang on the western side of the building abutting the grass slope and the pit near Room 18 (which takes the surface water from County Hall). He thought that it may be possible to lower the gravel drainage 'path' and consequently the grass incline to make a level that would permit viewing without endangering visitors heads!

In the interpretation of the site, he stressed the need to tie in the south range with the west range.

As far as facilities were concerned, he did not favour any buildings, temporary or other on the northern terrace, although recognising that this area may primarily be rubble from the 1930's. His position was that it would be an intrusion to the landscape. *See plate below.*



Northern bank and terrace, including present steps to the site

He however preferred one of the three suggestions below, but felt that the most adventurous would be preferable:

- I To remove the garages and skips on the north-east edge of the perimeter of the site and adapt the furniture store to a visitor centre. *See 8, Site Proposals.*
- II Demolish all the above buildings and replace them with a specially designed portacabin exhibition centre. *See 8, Site Proposals.*
- III As part over the overall scheme – design a new exciting interpretative centre for which grant aid should be sought. *See 8, Site Proposals.*

As far the pay perimeter was concerned, EH approved the route that encompasses an area from the north part of the wall abutting the car parking running southwards along the edge of the tarmac area turning eastwards along the edge of the tarmac road parallel to County Hall and creating a new fenced area incorporating the site museum/visitor centre running northwards to the existing entrance from Colliton Walk.

The existing pathway from the Colliton Walk entrance should be forked, so that passing pedestrians could be diverted eastwards around the museum/visitor centre.

The vehicular service access to the site would be way the gate from the northern end of the existing western tarmac parking area. *See 8, Site Proposals.*

## Appendix VI

### Visitor Figures for Roman Sites from England and Wales

<u>Site</u>	<u>Annual Visitors</u>	<u>% school visits</u>
Arbeia	98,021	
Bignor Roman Villa	30,000	33%
Brading Roman Villa, Isle of Wight	14,000	50%
Caerleon Baths & Amphitheatre	44,793	
Caerleon Roman Legionary Museum(F)	64, 582	
Chedworth Roman Villa, Cirencester	60,000	15%
Chesters Museum	80,000	
Corbridge Museum	21,000	
Corinium Museum, Gloucestershire	52,529	
Crofton Park, Orpington	5,000	50%
Dover Painted House	10,000	40%
Fishbourne Roman Villa	80,000	30%
Housesteads Museum	130,000	
Jewry Walls Museum, Leicester	24,330	
King's Weston	770	6%
Lullingstone Roman Villa, Dartford	47,500	35%
Lunt Roman Fort	13,961	
Museum of Antiquities, Newcastle	20,000	
Newport	8,000	30%
Rockbourne Roman Villa	9,928	9%
Roman Baths Museum, Bath	838,883	

Segedunum	44,781 (2002)	60,000 (2001)
Segontium Roman Museum (F)	12,565	
Vindolandia	78,794	
Vindolandia Roman Army Museum	45,672	
Verulamium	100,000	
Welwyn Roman Baths	6,300	28%

F = free admission

It is estimated that in total 409.4 million visits were made to tourist attractions in 2000. The South of England has the biggest concentration of museums in the country. The South-west has 10% of the country's attractions and 9% of the visits. The North-west has 4% of the attractions and 9% of the visits. These statistics should be taken into account when comparing visitor figures for Roman sites in the North to those in the South.

## **Appendix VII**

### **Visitor Figures for Dorchester Attractions**

Dinosaur Museum	154,156 (2002/3)
Dorset Teddy Bear Museum	45,645 (2002/3)
Dorset County Museum	c 40,000 (2002)
Keep Military Museum	10,012
Old Crown Court & Cells	3,500 (2002)
Terracotta Warriors Museum	24,364 (2002/3)
Tutankhamun Exhibition	157,205 (2002/3)

Figures include visits of all kinds.

## **Appendix VIII**

### **Visitor Figures for some Dorset Attractions**

Athelhampton House & Gardens	35,937
Forde Abbey & Gardens	39,405
Nothe Fort, Weymouth	46,000
Philpot Museum, Lyme Regis	12,965
Portland Castle	27,227
Portland Museum	7,000
Sherborne Old Castle	21,477
Tolpuddle Martyrs Museum	18,000
Waterfront Museum, Poole	21,060
Weymouth Sea Life Park	200,000

Figures include visits of all kinds.