



## Design Brief: Conservation Architect and Multidisciplinary Design Team

Project: 'Benton End Revived' – Renewal and Reimagination of a Historic Arts and Horticultural Site

Client: The Garden Museum

Location: Benton End, Hadleigh, Suffolk

Funded by: The National Lottery Heritage Fund (the Heritage Fund) thanks to National Lottery players

Project Budget: £4.9 million (target), including £2.9 million from the Heritage Fund

Contract Period: Development Phase, with potential for extension into Delivery Phase

### 1. Project Summary

The Garden Museum is seeking an experienced, conservation-accredited architect (AABC Register: Architects should be listed at category A. RIBA: Architects should be listed as Specialist Conservation Architect. RIAS: Architects should be listed as Advanced) and multidisciplinary design team to lead the renewal and redevelopment of Benton End, a Grade II\* listed Tudor property with significant artistic, horticultural, and social heritage. The goal is to transform Benton End into a vibrant, accessible, and sustainable arts and learning centre, reimagining the radical spirit of Sir Cedric Morris and Arthur Lett-Haines's art school and garden legacy.

This commission covers both the Development Phase and, subject to funding and performance, the Delivery Phase of a National Lottery Heritage Fund-supported capital project. The architect and multidisciplinary design team will collaborate closely with the client, project manager, and wider consultant team throughout.

### 2. Project Vision and Objectives

The redevelopment of Benton End seeks to:

- Conserve and restore the Grade II\* listed house and associated gardens structures
- Create inclusive and accessible facilities for learning, exhibitions, and residencies
- Respect and celebrate the site's layered heritage, including its significance in queer history
- Embed sustainability and environmental responsibility in all design choices

- Enable operational and financial sustainability through a mixed-use business model

### 3. Scope of Work

#### A. Conservation and Restoration

- Undertake detailed condition assessments and prepare conservation-led proposals for the Tudor house, including roof, brickwork, and timber frame repairs using traditional materials
- Integrate and sensitively adapt spaces created by The East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing (1940 – c1970)

#### B. New Interventions and Adaptations

- Design new or adapted spaces to include:
  - Learning and workshop rooms
  - Museum standard exhibition and interpretive space for Cedric Morris and Arthur Lett-Haines's story
  - A Museum GIS standard permanent display room showing high-value artworks including long-term loans from private and public collections
  - Five or six en-suite bedrooms for residential courses and commercial hire
  - Provision for accessibility throughout to include installation of a lift and level flooring
  - Accessible visitor, staff and volunteer welfare facilities & offices
  - Provision for commercial aspects for visitors such as food, beverage & retail
- Enhance accessibility across the house and grounds, including on-site parking provision, in collaboration with the Landscape Architect
- Ensure adequate storage to support the needs of the business

#### C. Infrastructure and Sustainability

- Improve building performance and reduce environmental impact, with sympathy to the age of the building yet looking forward to ensure sustainability
- Ensure full compliance with fire safety, building regs, CDM, DDA, and planning requirements

#### D. Collaboration and Documentation

- Lead on client and stakeholder engagement to refine the brief for and coordinate the input of the specialist disciplines
- Support the client (Garden Museum) with selection and management of key construction contractors during the delivery phase
- Lead on engagement with the Planning authority and Historic England, undertaking Pre-Application engagement with both

- Prepare and lead on production and implementation of:
  - Technical design drawings and specifications (RIBA Stages 1–7)
  - Planning, Listed Building Consent applications and other statutory approvals
  - Management & Maintenance Plan
  - Operational Manuals & handover to site team once the project is complete
  - Design team meetings, progress meetings other onsite meetings as required
  - Stakeholder and community consultation meetings as required
  - Meeting legal requirements: CDM and Building Regs sign off – related to residential as well as commercial needs
  - IT systems compatibility

N.B The Conservation Management Plan is being delivered separately by a heritage consultant and will be provided to the Buildings Architect and MDT to refer to throughout the design process. There will be opportunities for face-to-face collaboration with the Conservation Management Planner in the early months of the project.

#### 4. Project Constraints and Opportunities

##### Heritage Constraints:

- Grade II\* listed designation (c.1520s timber-framed clothiers' house)
- Protection of Cedric Morris's interventions and preserved garden elements
- High significance in queer history, arts, education, and horticulture

##### Opportunities:

- Integration with a live Garden Museum and regional heritage network
- Co-location with creative and learning programmes
- Reinvigoration of artistic legacy through modern residencies and exhibitions

#### 5. Design Considerations

- Sensitivity to context: All interventions must enhance and not detract from the character of the historic fabric and landscape; adherence to the Conservation Management Plan is crucial
- Accessibility: Universal access must be embedded in every area, while maintaining the historic integrity of the site
- Sustainability: Design should minimise environmental impact with a long-term view on energy usage, materials, and water
- Flexibility: Spaces should support a wide range of uses—community engagement, learning, exhibitions, residencies, and income generation

## 6. Key Deliverables

### Development Phase

- Production of surveys, drawings, schedules, and reports for RIBA Stages 1–3
- Production of costed Management & Maintenance Plan
- Appointment and sub-contracting of individual specialist disciplines such as fire engineer, acoustics specialist and environmental specialist
- Assess need for, and if needed procure additional specialist consultants to support the planning application such as ecologists (bat specialists already engaged) archaeologists and transport consultants
- Liaison with Planning authority and Historic England, undertaking Pre-Application engagement with both
- Liaison with Amenity Societies where applicable
- Lead on, prepare and submit all documents required for Planning and Listed Building Consent applications and other statutory approvals
- Design risk assessments and Health & Safety plans
- Cost estimates (in collaboration with QS) as well as value engineering options as required
- Hold fortnightly design team meetings, and attend monthly project progress meetings
- Attend stakeholder and community consultation meetings as required
- Attendance at Development phase mid-stage review meeting with the Heritage Fund
- Production of CGI renderings for planning and client use
- Alongside QS, advise on procurement and delivery construction management planning
- Plan for the physical infrastructure around the interpretation elements of the project (e.g. museum displays, graphics and wayfinding) and integrate this into the building design

### Delivery Phase

- Production of surveys, drawings, schedules, and reports for RIBA Stages 4–7
- Lead as contract administrator
- Lead on, prepare and submit conditions as per Planning and Listed Building Consents and other statutory approvals
- Design risk assessments and Health & Safety plans
- Hold fortnightly design team meetings during the design development phase, and monthly site meetings during works on site including additional meetings for conservation matters on site as required during works
- Attendance at stakeholder and community meetings as required
- Attendance at Delivery phase review meetings with the Heritage Fund as required
- Contribute to acknowledgement and celebration of project success
- Alongside QS advise on procurement and delivery of construction management planning

All of the above to contribute to reporting and evaluation of the project

## 7. Project Team, Collaboration and Interfaces

The appointed conservation-accredited architect will lead a multidisciplinary team including (but not limited to):

- Structural / Drainage Engineer
  - Mechanical & Electrical Building Services Engineer
  - Accessibility Consultant
  - Construction Design Management and Buildings Regulations Principal Designer
  - Lighting designer, including specialist exhibition lighting
  - AV and IT designer, including installations for the exhibition displays
  - Fire engineer
  - Acoustics specialist
  - Environmental specialist
- In partnership with the Landscape Architect; assess the need for, and if needed procure, additional specialist consultants to support the planning application such as ecologists (but specialists already engaged) archaeologists and transport consultants

And collaborate with the following consultants appointed by the client (Garden Museum):

- Conservation Management Plan Consultancy
- Project Manager
- Quantity Surveyor
- Landscape Architect
- Builder and surveyors
- Interpretation Design Consultancy
- Activity Planner
- Business Planner
- Evaluation Consultant
- Fundraising Consultant
- Client staff, volunteers and community groups
- Any other heritage advisors to ensure consistency with listed status

## 8. Timeline

**Development Phase: April 2026 – August 2027**

Milestones:

- By end July 2026: Lead Architect and MDT appointed
- August 2026: All consultants recruited and begin work on project
- December 2026: Client review and sign-off for RIBA stage 2
- March 2027: Development Phase Review with the Heritage Fund
- May 2027: Client review and sign-off for RIBA stage 3

- August 2027: Delivery phase application submitted
- December 2027: Decision from Heritage Fund

## Delivery Phase: 2028 – 2031

### 9. Budget

The overall project cost is £4.9 million (including capital works, activity programme, fees, and contingency). Design fees should align with appropriate benchmarks for projects of this scale and complexity.

- The budget for capital works is £2,015,560 exclusive of VAT
- The budget available for the repair and new build works package is £1,501,660 excl VAT
- The contract will contain a break clause between the two phases, if required

### 10. Submission Requirements

Please send the following (in no more than **30 pages**) to [bentonend@gardenmuseum.org.uk](mailto:bentonend@gardenmuseum.org.uk) by **5pm on Monday 22 June 2026**:

- Company profile and relevant conservation credentials (AABC Register: Architects should be listed at category A. RIBA: Architects should be listed as Specialist Conservation Architect. RIAS: Architects should be listed as Advanced)
- At least three recent examples of comparable projects (preferably Grade II\* or equivalent/higher)
- Proposed team structure and sub-consultants; including evidence of team members' experience working in sensitive/listed settings
- CVs of key personnel with their relevant Heritage Fund project delivery experience, and conservation credentials made clear
- Understanding of the brief
- Methodology and approach to delivering the scope of work
- Timeline and availability
- Fee proposal for RIBA Stages 1–3 (set out in section 9), inc. attendance at design team, stakeholder, and community meetings and to cover Management & Maintenance Plan (to Heritage Fund Guidance)
- Fee proposal for RIBA Stages 4–7 (set out in section 9), inc. attendance at design team, stakeholder, and community meetings
- Confirmation of insurance. Professional Indemnity cover at least £5million. Public Liability cover at least £5million. Employer Liability Insurance at least £5million. Or please confirm that you would be eligible and willing to obtain this level of cover upon appointment.

Clarifying questions should be submitted to [bentonend@gardenmuseum.org.uk](mailto:bentonend@gardenmuseum.org.uk) by **5pm on Monday 8 June 2026**.

## 11. Tender evaluation / weighting

Selection of the successful architectural practice will be based on:

- a) Proven experience of similar work at an equivalent level of complexity, heritage significance and conservation status **(25%)**. Please note this will represent the first sift and tenderers not meeting this requirement will not progress further.
- b) Details of the individuals within the proposed Consultant Team (including all sub-consultants), including their roles and responsibilities, and relevant Heritage Fund experience. The structure of the proposed team is to be shown in a team organogram **(15%)**. (CVs can be provided in a separate appendix).
- c) Timed and costed methodology, including any commentary on the proposed Development Stage programme **(20%)**.
- d) Understanding of the brief, assessment of key issues and how objectives will be met according to the timeline and budget allowed **(10%)**.
- e) Value for money/tender price **(30%)**.

## 12. Decision making process

Tenders will be assessed and moderated by members of the Garden Museum Senior Management Team and at least one trustee.

Shortlisted candidates may be invited to interview.

A final evaluation report with a recommended appointee will be submitted to The National Lottery Heritage Fund for approval.

## 13. Appendix

'Benton End Revived' Procurement Guidelines; containing further information and appendices relevant to the project

This opportunity is made possible thanks to The National Lottery Heritage Fund and National Lottery players.