

RESTORATION OF THE VALLEY SITE ALLOTMENTS.

The Moor Pool Allotment Association (MAA) has submitted vigorous objections to the Grainger Planning Application, particularly the Valley Site (Site A). The MAA support the refurbishment and proper management of the existing garages on this site, as the removal of cars from the local roads will have an overall beneficial effect for the Moor Pool Estate, for which we all have a collective responsibility. The effects of local roads struggling to cope with the increased volume of cars are only too apparent elsewhere in Harborne. This has reached a point where residents parking permits are under consideration off the High street. The Moor Pool off street parking facilities, whilst not ideal in such an important conservation area can make a great contribution both now and in the future.

It should be noted that in the Harborne Tenants planning application for garages on the Valley Site, this parking problem was cited as justification for the destruction and loss of allotments. Since then the problem has become considerably worse.

We believe that the proposal to build houses is being presented as the only way to overcome the eyesore of derelict garages as a result of what most residents would consider bad management. Grainger themselves have admitted "It is true that in some cases the garages could have been maintained better...".

There is another option.

If the Moor Pool Estate's parking requirements is able to be met by a rationalisation of the existing garage layout on the valley site and this loss of allotments is no longer justified, then let us restore them. The National Trust's recent decision to offer some of their land for new allotments reflects the increasing national and local demand for allotments.

Many of the garages on the Valley Site are still in use. Those in the centre section are still fully usable and in our proposal we would retain these and carry out minor repairs such as removal of graffiti. We would propose that the garages in the rear section are accessed by gates giving security to garage users but also preventing potential activities which can be annoying to Moor Pool Avenue residents.

The older garages on the north (Margaret Grove) side of the Valley site would be removed and former allotments restored as per our design. The culverted stream which is just a trickle in normal times would be reopened as a landscaped feature and located on the allotment side of new beech hedging. Most importantly, the allotments too would be landscaped/tiered to form natural water collection basins in flash flood conditions with controlled water dissipation. Allotments are a more natural form of water absorption and the area of tarmac on Site A would be reduced as a result. Facing to the south these would be prime allotments. The MAA has over 30 applications pending for allotments. We are confident that with a cooperative landlord (or a new one) all these allotments and those forgotten ones behind the garages can be fully utilised.

How will this be achieved?

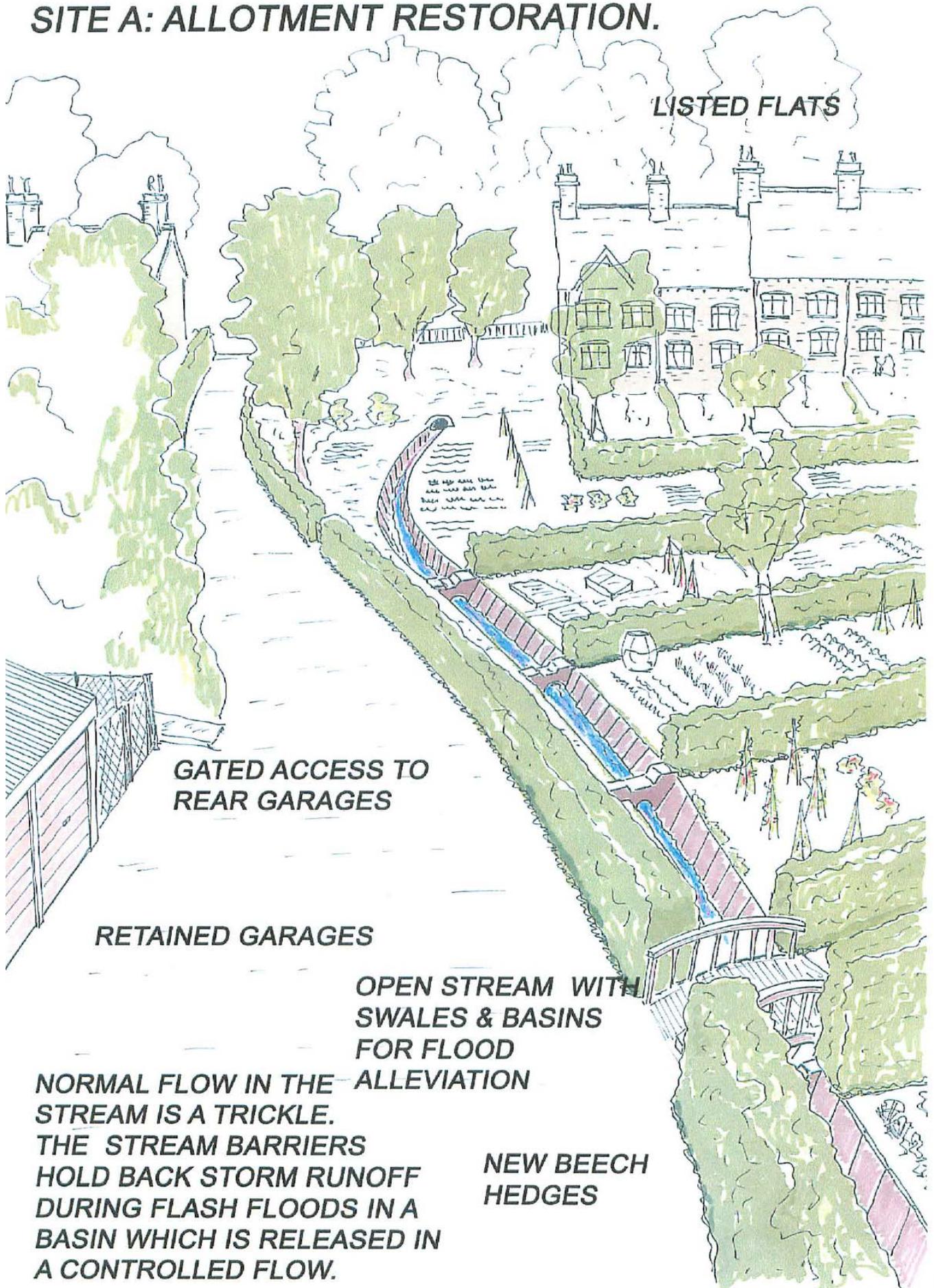
The MAA Committee fully support this project. There are many examples of allotments now being restored around the country and opportunities for funding. The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has awarded a total grant of almost £2.5 million to preserve and restore Britain's largest and oldest surviving allotments at St. Ann's Allotments, in Nottingham. We may not have that pedigree, but Moor Pool is a very important architectural experiment in Birmingham's planning history. Allotments were integral to that design vision and restoration would be a step forward in returning Moor Pool to its former glory.

We hope you will consider our ideas carefully. Please ask questions or make comments. Our ideas are some way from being finalised and need much more work to do so. If you like or support this idea, make your views known. Write to us, your Councillors, the Planning Department (Steven King) and Grainger.

WE CAN DO IT. IT JUST REQUIRES THE WILL TO DO SO.

Rob Sutton. Chair. The Moor Pool Allotment Association. 64 Margaret Grove, B17 9JL

SITE A: ALLOTMENT RESTORATION.



LISTED FLATS

GATED ACCESS TO REAR GARAGES

RETAINED GARAGES

OPEN STREAM WITH SWALES & BASINS FOR FLOOD ALLEVIATION

NORMAL FLOW IN THE STREAM IS A TRICKLE. THE STREAM BARRIERS HOLD BACK STORM RUNOFF DURING FLASH FLOODS IN A BASIN WHICH IS RELEASED IN A CONTROLLED FLOW.

NEW BEECH HEDGES