

CABINET

DATE	7 th April 2021
REPORT OF	Councillor Stan Shreeve, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Resources and Assets
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Sharon Wroot, Executive Director, Environment, Economy and Resources
SUBJECT	Heritage Assets 'At Risk'- Scartho Cemetery Lodge & Waiting Rooms (including toilets)
STATUS	Open
FORWARD PLAN REF NO.	CB 04/21/01

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

The recommendations within this report contribute to the strategic priorities of the Council to promote a 'Stronger Economy' and 'Stronger Communities' and are directly linked to the priority interventions within the Outcomes Framework, namely that all people in North East Lincolnshire:

- Benefit from Sustainable Communities by addressing condition associated with vacant properties which will enhance and improve the street scene.
- Enjoy and benefit from a Strong Economy by utilising the local work force to implement investment in the refurbishment of the properties and to utilise the venues for improved Bereavement Services.

The Council, as a responsible public authority, has duties to preserve the heritage of North East Lincolnshire and by ensuring their own heritage assets are in a suitable condition and not listed on the Heritage 'At Risk' Register.

It is important to have effective and robust arrangements in place to tackle privately owned heritage areas and buildings 'At Risk' and it would be unreasonable for the Council to insist on the improvement of and to pursue enforcement on privately owned buildings listed on the Register without also having a coherent and achievable plan for its own assets.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is seeking approval to spend the final phase of capital funding on investment works to remove the last of the Council owned heritage property assets from the 'At Risk' Register.

In 2018, the Council committed circa £5m from the capital programme over 5 years to invest in the repair and restoration of eight (8) Council owned heritage assets listed on the Register. This was approved on the proviso that as the schemes came forward, in year, a further Business Case Service Statement (BCSS) would be produced to seek approval to release the funding.

This scheme forms the final part of the programme and requires agreement from Cabinet to release the funding to move the schemes forward to completion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Approves the release of capital funding to the value of £673,000 to enable investment works at the Scartho Cemetery Lodge, Waiting Rooms and Toilets.
2. Delegates to the Executive Director for Environment, Economy and Resources, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Resources and Assets, authority to ensure that all necessary actions are carried out in relation to completing recommendation 1 above.

REASONS FOR DECISION

The importance of cultural heritage in North East Lincolnshire as a key component of achieving economic, social and environmental regeneration is widely accepted. The removal of Council owned heritage assets 'At Risk' supports improved relationships between the Council and heritage professionals and is essential to the success of wider proactive intervention by the Council relating to assets in private ownership.

These buildings are Listed and as such are of national importance This report is seeking approval to spend the last phase of capital funding on investment works to remove the last of the Council owned heritage property assets from the 'At Risk' Register.

1 BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

- 1.1 Scartho Cemetery Lodge (as per the plan shown at Appendix One) is a Grade II Listed building, constructed in 1888 with later additions and alterations agreed by Twentieth Century Society (C20).
- 1.2 The Lodge was built using red brick in English bond with ashlar dressings; stuccoed (rendered) upper storey with imitation half-timbering, green slate roof, and is Gothic Revival in style.
- 1.3 The Lodge has many distinguishing features and is located just inside the Cemetery boundary, adjacent to the recently restored iron gates, off Scartho Road.
- 1.4 The Lodge was leased in 2010 to an organisation who planned to use the property as a yoga retreat. Consents for building works were granted but no conditions discharged and works carried out exceeded consent granted. The tenants, believed to have been inexperienced with the level and type of works being proposed to a heritage property caused widespread damage to the Lodge and the tenancy was suspended. Since then the property has been vacant and boarded up.
- 1.5 As owners of the Lodge, the Council are responsible for reinstatement works to replace the original features that were removed without consent as failure to do so could lead to prosecution.
- 1.6 The Lodge is currently effectively a bare shell, with no floors, plastered walls or utilities remaining as well as having no staircase and evidence of some inappropriate works that were carried out which do not fall within conservation guidelines.
- 1.7 The cost of the proposed works to reinstate the Lodge to an acceptable condition have been estimated at £467,000. The intended future use of the

Lodge, once restoration works have been completed, will be to support the enhancement of Bereavement Services offered to the public and visitors to the cemetery.

- 1.8 Scartho Cemetery Waiting Room & Toilets is not nationally Listed but forms a group of premises and structures with the adjacent Cemetery Gates, Lodge and Cemetery Chapels, also built in 1888.
- 1.9 The building comprises of red brick in English bond with sandstone dressings, green slate roof and is of a Gothic Revival style.
- 1.10 The building is in a poor state of repair, with missing/ ineffective rainwater goods, slipped slates and damaged areas to the roof and obvious (cracks and spalling) damage to masonry. The Toilets have also been subjected to vandalism.
- 1.11 The Local Planning Authority (LPA) or Secretary of State could serve Notice(s) to require the repair of this building and by not carrying out the works the building will continue to deteriorate in condition.
- 1.12 The cost of the proposed works to reinstate the building to an acceptable condition have been estimated at £206,000. The intention for this building, once restoration works are completed, will be to support the enhancement of the Bereavement Services offer and in addition a managed W.C facility will be created which will be accessible to the public and visitors to the cemetery.

2 RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Heritage and Culture in North East Lincolnshire is hugely important to Place Making, Communities, Wellbeing and the Economy. In recent years, a full assessment of the Boroughs designated built heritage has been completed to identify buildings and areas 'At Risk'. Typically buildings at risk are concentrated in specific areas, namely the main areas of focus include: The Kasbah, Grimsby Town Centre, Cleethorpes Town Centre, Holme Hill and Scartho Road Cemetery.

There is the potential that the Secretary of State takes formal enforcement action against the Council to regularise breaches, damaging reputation and presenting an increased risk of substantial budget to rectify the breaches.

The completion of the improvement works will remove the properties from the Heritage 'At Risk' Register, minimising these risks and providing the opportunity for the properties to be brought back into use and support the wider enhancement and expansion of the Bereavement Service.

3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Option 1 - The Council commit to the full programme of works to remove these properties from the Heritage 'At Risk' Register. This is the recommended option.

Option 2 - Do nothing - the buildings continue to deteriorate, and costs continue to escalate, increasing the Council's liability. This would affect the Council's heritage buildings and would negatively impact on privately owned heritage, as it would be unreasonable for the Council to pursue enforcement with private owners without also having a coherent and achievable plan for its own assets. Inaction would also affect the likelihood of returning these buildings back into use. This is not considered a viable option.

Option 3 - Pause until grant funding is available. There is no guarantee funding will be

achieved with any degree of certainty as the Council has already secured funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for other projects in the Borough and to wait to secure further funding will only see the buildings deteriorate further which will see the overall cost of repair escalate. This is not considered a viable option.

4 REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

There are potential negative reputational implications should the Council not seek to address the condition of its own heritage assets listed on the Heritage 'At Risk' Register. This has the potential to impact on the Council who wish to address privately owned heritage areas and buildings which are at risk. Removing the Council's own properties from the Register would be a positive move reputationally and assist to promote the heritage importance of North East Lincolnshire.

5 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Cabinet approved the principle of funding in 2018 to support removal of the Council's eight (8) assets from the Heritage 'At Risk' Register to the value of circa £5m. The works estimated are a combined value of £673,000 for investment works at the Scartho Cemetery Lodge, Waiting Rooms and Toilets which has been agreed based on a full Business Case Service Statement as part of the Business Development Framework.

6 CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The recommendations outlined within this report have been considered so far as their impact of the proposal on climate change and the environment. In reference to the Council's environmental policy, the proposal supports the Council's environmental priorities:

- By recognising and realising the economic and social benefits of a high-quality environment.
- By working towards a low carbon North East Lincolnshire that is prepared for, and resilient to, the impacts of climate change.

7 CONSULTATION WITH SCRUTINY

7.1 There has been no consultation with Scrutiny to date.

8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The cost of the works will be met from a budget approved within the Council's Capital Investment Programme.

9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 This report marks the final stages of a five-year plan to bring the Council's heritage assets up to a reasonable state of repair and preservation. Whilst there is no legal obligation for a property owner to adequately maintain property, it was recognised that to enable the Council to actively pursue At Risk heritage assets in private ownership, its own assets should be attended to.

9.2 The wider benefits of ensuring reasonable repair of heritage assets are articulated in the above report.

10 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct HR implications within this report.

11 WARD IMPLICATIONS

This proposal directly impacts on the Scartho Ward.

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are no background papers to this report.

13 CONTACT OFFICERS

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COUNCILLOR STAN SHREEVE
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Appendix One – Site Location Plan

