

Application for Financial Assistance (Historic Buildings Grants) from the Conservation and Heritage Fund – St Thomas’s Church, Butterton Road, (Ref: 13/14013/HBG)

RECOMMENDATION:

That Planning Committee approves a grant £10,000 for the stone repair and replacements, re-roofing of part of the building, subject to the appropriate standard conditions.

Purpose of report

To consider an application for financial assistance towards the cost of the repair of this church which is a Grade II* Listed Building.

Introduction

An application has been received for a grant for works of repair to high level stone work with some replacement, re-roofing of the south transept, chancel and north transept, lime mortar repair and French drain installation to solve water penetration problems. The specification has been drawn up by conservation architects. The method of construction of this church has inherent problems.

In 2005 the church were awarded £8,000 towards the cost of restoration work, (costing £233,000) for mainly high level work to the spire, parapet wall and gutters replacing timbers affected by dry rot. At the time, in 2005, due to constraints in the HBG Fund and competing requests for support the Council did not award the maximum possible grant of £10,000. Once on site at the church costs increased to £600,000 and the church applied for a further £2,000 in 2007 to help meet their shortfall and this was awarded.

The church is again in need of repairs, this time for high level repairs to stone work and re-roofing of the north and south transept, chancel and stone window repairs with selective repointing. The same conservation architects have specified the work. The total of eligible work including fees and VAT is £171,000. English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund are both supporting the continuing repair of this church.

This church is an important Grade II* church and therefore one of the Boroughs most important heritage assets. Only 18 buildings are Grade II*, just 5% of the total number of Listed Buildings in the Borough.

As a listed building, works eligible for grant funding would normally be the subject of a 20% grant offer or up to a maximum of £10,000.

Financial Implications

There is sufficient funding to meet this grant application with approximately £22,000 in the Fund, which allows for commitments.

Conclusions

The Historic Building Grant Fund has approved 10 grants this financial year of which 6 have been claimed and work satisfactorily completed. Three others are part implemented and on site, successfully repairing and helping to refurbish the Borough’s historic buildings.

The views of the Conservation Advisory Working Party will be reported to the Planning Committee.