

Application for Financial Assistance (Historic Buildings Grants) from the Conservation and Heritage Fund – Newcastle Congregational Church, King Street (Ref: 13/15001/HBG)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Working Party indicate its views on proposals going to the Planning Committee that a grant of £5,000 be approved for the repair and repointing of the spire and tower at Newcastle Congregational Church, subject to the appropriate standard conditions.

Purpose of report

To inform the Working Party of an application for financial assistance towards the cost of the repair of the tower and spire at the Congregational Church and give the Working Party an opportunity to express its views on that application.

The Church is a Grade II Listed Building within the Newcastle Town Centre Conservation Area and was built in 1859 in a buff coloured brick with blue brick dressings. The colour of the brick, its tower, spire and dominating rose window give the building a distinctive presence within the streetscene. The Church was awarded a grant of £1,700 under the Conservation and Heritage Fund in 2009 towards the cost of repairs to the rose window.

Following the recent bad weather a survey indicated that some works were required to the building. The grant application is for the repair of the spire and tower and includes scaffolding. Some brick replacement may be necessary and these bricks need to be specially ordered. All repointing will be undertaken with a lime mortar.

Three competitive tenders have been obtained and the lowest quotation for the works, including VAT is £27,162. The sum allowed for this type of building/structure under the grant scheme is 20% which equates to £5,432. The maximum grant which can be offered under the Conservation and Heritage Fund is £5,000.

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

Financial Implications

There is sufficient funding to meet this grant application with approximately £23,000 in the Fund, allowing for commitments and the Council's contribution from 2013/14.