

Urgent Works Notice for the conservatory at Madeley Manor Nursing Home

Purpose of the Report

To request approval for the use of the Historic Buildings Grant fund to assist with the preparation of a schedule of work which could form the basis of an Urgent Works Notice on the conservatory at Madeley Manor, a Listed Building on the Council's Buildings at Risk Register, and the execution of such works.

Recommendations

That members agree to the use of the Historic Buildings Grant fund to

- (1) assist with the preparation of a Schedule of work which could form the basis for an Urgent Works Notice with respect the conservatory attached to Madeley Manor Care Home if the Executive Director (Regeneration and Development) considers such Notice should be served, and
- (2) to execute the works referred to in that Notice if required.

Reasons

To conserve the Borough's important heritage assets as well as ensuring their survival for the enjoyment of future generations.

1.0 Context and Background

- 1.1 The Borough Council carried out a Buildings at Risk survey of all of its Listed Buildings in August 2009 and published a report in October 2011.
- 1.2 The survey identified 19 Listed Buildings or 5.2% that were found to be 'at risk'. Since then some buildings have either been repaired or partially repaired or a change in circumstances has happened since the individual survey and they are no longer at risk. Overall 11 buildings are currently judged to be 'at risk'.
- 1.3 In a report in June 2012 the Planning Committee agreed that the Council's Historic Building Grants could be used to support the serving of an Urgent Works Notice or a Repairs Notice for Listed Buildings.

2.0 Current position and next steps

- 2.1 The conservatory attached to Madeley Manor Care Home is one of those Listed Buildings still considered 'at risk'. It is Grade 2. No work has been undertaken to the structure since the survey and it is in a severe state of deterioration. The Planning Service was working a few years ago with the owner and their architects on proposals for a comprehensive development that would have included the repair and reinstatement of the conservatory but the proposals did not come to fruition. To date this year various letters and emails have been sent to the owner with regard to progress on the repair of the conservatory and no response has been received.
- 2.2 There are various ways of dealing with these problem buildings and the Council is committed to working with owners to secure lasting repairs and productive re-use of the Buildings at Risk within the Borough.

3.0 The proposal

- 3.1 Where a Listed Building is not fully occupied, notice can be served under Section 54 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This enables the Local Authority to undertake urgent works to those parts of the property that are not in use. The conservatory is not in use. Work under this type of Notice can only ensure that the structure is weatherproof, safe from collapse and secure from or theft. The Notice must describe the proposed works and be served to give a minimum of seven days written warning of the intention to carry out these works. The owner can respond by undertaking the specified works. If the Authority has to undertake the works themselves the costs can be recovered from the owner. Costs are

recovered under Section 55 of the above Act. The owner has 28 days to object to the Secretary of State that the works were unreasonable or will cause hardship. It is important therefore to only carry out work which is temporary to halt the deterioration of the building.

- 3.2 It is proposed that the Council engages a specialist architect to specify the minimum works to prevent any further deterioration which will then be used to engage a contractor to carry out the work if the owner does not do the works himself. The decision on whether to use the power under Section 54 is one that is delegated to the Executive Director (Regeneration and Development). In this case there is considered to be a good prospect of recovering any costs incurred in the execution of the works. The work is only likely to include some propping, security measures and a temporary roof covering which could be tarpaulin, probably costing in the region of £2,000 - £3,000. The cost of the specialist architect will be under £1,000.

4.0 **Conclusions**

- 4.1 The Council can target its limited grant aid funds towards the Buildings at Risk and it is proposed that funding is directed towards the serving of an Urgent Works notice which may encourage the owner to carry out the works before the Council has to step in and do the work.
- 4.2 It is important to note that a Notice to carry out urgent works cannot ensure the full restoration of a building or structure but it can prevent short term deterioration. .
- 4.3 The views of the Conservation Advisory Working Party are being sought and will be reported to the Committee.