

Application for Financial Assistance (Historic Buildings Grants) from the Conservation and Heritage Fund – 181 Holloway Lane, Aston (Ref: 17/18004/HBG) and Bradwall House, 16-18 King Street, Newcastle (Ref: 17/18005/HBG)

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Working Party indicate its views on proposals going to the Planning Committee that:-

- 1. £5,000 for structural repair of the Listed cowhouse at 181 Holloway Lane, subject to the appropriate standard conditions and a specific condition relating to the repayment of the grant if the recipient disposes of the interest held in the property within 2 years of the payment of the final instalment of the grant.**
- 2. £5,000 for window reinstatement to the front elevation of the building at Bradwall House, 16-18 King Street, subject to the appropriate standard conditions**

Purpose of report

To inform the Working Party of applications for financial assistance towards the cost of repairs and reinstatement at the above properties and give the Working Party an opportunity to express its views on the applications.

1. 181 Holloway Lane, Aston

The farmhouse at 181 Holloway Lane is a Grade II Listed farmhouse and the attached cowhouse is also separately Grade II Listed. The owners have planning and listed building consent to change the use of the cowhouse into accommodation for the adjacent farmhouse (15/00972/FUL and 15/00973/FUL). These applications came before the Working Party for comment at its meeting on the 1st December 2015. Costs have prevented implementation of this scheme and the conversion of the building into accommodation will have to be put on hold and implemented as finances permit.

The barn is structurally vulnerable and on the Council's Building at Risk Register. The method of repairing the building has varied with contractors – more recently the preferred approach being taking the building down and rebuilding it using the stone where possible or new stone. The owners take the custodianship of the farmhouse and barn seriously and have decided to only undertake repairs to stabilise the building to get it weatherproof and safe. They have found a contractor who can stabilise and repair the structural elements of the building without demolishing the walls and have got two competitive quotations for this work. This will stabilise the building and will be treated as a stand-alone contract.

It is not general practice of this Council to offer a grant when a scheme for a change of use is in place, however this aspect of the scheme is not likely to be implemented in the near future but the owners are keen to secure repairs and remove the building from the Building at Risk Register whilst they consider the cost of the conversion. A condition will be included with the grant offer which enables the Council to claim back the grant if the owners decide to sell the building within two years of the payment of the grant.

Crucially the building will be removed from the At risk Register by the end of the year. An ecologist has been appointed to supervise the bat situation, and they are undertaking new surveys in May, so the first phase building repair work will not start until June and will last until December.

The total cost of the works is estimated at £100,000 (VAT not applicable). The works are eligible for a grant up to 20% of the total cost or up to a maximum of £5,000.

2. Bradwall House, 16-18 King Street, Newcastle

Bradwall House is a Grade II Listed Building within the Newcastle town centre Conservation Area. The building externally makes a significant contribution to the character of the area. However much special interest has been lost internally on inspection and it was last in use as offices. The new owner has taken on the building and also plans to run a business with some minor internal changes which now have Listed Building Consent (17/00932/LBC, that application coming before the Working Party for comment at its meeting on 19th December 2017). Poor quality fixed casement timber windows (double glazed) were installed some years ago. Other windows to the rear and on the front second floor have been replaced with upvc windows. These are unauthorised. The current owner's intention is to put back more appropriate windows and this first phase proposal is to replace all of the front windows with sliding sash windows which will improve the appearance of the front elevation with a more authentic style of window. The number of windows being replaced is 10 which include the two large bay windows on the ground floor which each have 3 sash casements.

The total cost of the works including scaffolding is estimated at £34,494 including fees and VAT. The works are eligible for a grant of up to 20% or up to a maximum of £5,000.

Financial Implications

There is sufficient funding to meet these grant applications with £32,000 in the Fund allowing for commitments.