

Application for Financial Assistance (Historic Buildings Grants) from the Conservation and Heritage Fund – Tower, Millrise, Kidsgrove (Ref: 18/19003/HBG)

RECOMMENDATION:

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

- 1. £138 is provided towards a structural engineers inspection and report of the tower, subject to the appropriate standard conditions**

Purpose of report

To inform the Working Party of an application for financial assistance towards the cost of a report by a structural engineer to assess the state of repair of the tower, and give the Working Party an opportunity to express its views on the application.

The tower is a Grade II Listed Building. It is in a ruinous state and is on the Council's Building at Risk Register. The building is thought to be a former late 18th century windmill (although the listing description was amended from Old Windmill to say Tower) and further research would certainly reveal more about its history. It has dressed stonework and the structure reveals 2 internal fireplaces. The Council acquired the structure from the former owner which was gifted in 1985.

Following the Survey in 2016, the Council's Conservation Officer approached the Facilities Management Section of the Council to see if a survey could be instigated to deal with any structural and safety issues the structure may have, to at least consolidate it until more significant repairs, if necessary, could be dealt with. There are numerous vertical cracks within the tower and the stone work at the top of the tower appears vulnerable not least due to the lack of mortar in the joints.

Two competitive quotations have been received from structural engineers to undertake an initial survey of the building to assess what is necessary to ensure the future stability of the structure. It may be necessary for a more thorough survey to be undertaken once the initial investigation has been undertaken but this will be done following the outcome of the first survey. Any repair work can then be costed and quoted for at a later stage.

The total cost of the initial survey is quoted at £690 including 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 approximately £30,000 in the Fund allowing for commitments.