

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

RECOMMENDATION:

That the following grant is approved:-

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

Purpose of report

To enable members to consider the application for financial assistance.

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 by gift in 1985.

Following the Buildings at Risk 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 identify 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.

The Conservation Advisory Working Party supports this application and they recommend that Planning Committee accepts the application for financial aid.

Financial Implications

There is sufficient funding to meet the grant applications with £30,000 in the Fund allowing for commitments.