

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Urgent repairs to the Octagon building, St Ives

Meeting/Date: Cabinet – 22 October 2015

Executive Portfolio: Resources: Councillor J A Gray

Report by: Strategic Assessment of Estates / Estates Management Surveyor

Ward(s) affected: St Ives

Executive Summary:

The Octagon is a building owned by Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) and is located within the Cattle Market Car Park in St Ives. It is the historic cattle market sale ring and along with the old railings is the only evidence left of the former usage, as such is a significant local structure. The building is not listed but does have protection against demolition as it is in the Conservation Area.

The building's condition is such that repairs are now required to ensure that the structure is made safe, is able to be securely locked and to improve the use of the internal space.

From the visible conditions survey complete, the repairs noted below in 2.5 have been identified with an estimate of £40,629 for the cost of repairs. However this does not include any potential wood rot or infestation and improving the security to the building by reinforcing the doors, frames or improved locks.

It would be prudent to budget for this additional cladding, electrical work and security provisions and a budget of £50,000 is considered more appropriate.

Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- i. Approve a capital allocation of £50,000 to repair and preserve the historic Octagon building in St Ives.

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1. WHAT IS THIS REPORT ABOUT/PURPOSE?

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the business case for the required repairs to the Octagon building in St Ives.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Octagon is a building owned by Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) and is located within the Cattle Market Car Park in St Ives. It is the historic cattle market sale ring and along with the old railings is the only evidence left of the former usage, as such is a significant local structure. The building is not listed but does have protection against demolition as it is in the Conservation Area.

- 2.2 The building's condition is such that repairs are now required to ensure that the structure is made safe, is able to be securely locked and to improve the use of the internal space.

- 2.3 From the visible conditions survey complete, the repairs noted below in para. 2.5 have been identified with an estimate of £40,629 for the cost of repairs. However this does not include any potential wood rot or infestation and improving the security to the building by reinforcing the doors, frames or improved locks.

- 2.4 It would be prudent to budget for this additional cladding, electrical work and security provisions and a budget of £50,000 is considered more appropriate.

- 2.5 The repairs identified in the visible condition survey are:

1. The building is a steel frame building with timber tongue and groove cladding with further timber lining to some areas. The paint to the timber cladding has peeled off on the majority of the area and there are large areas of wood missing, damaged or rotting. Two of the walls are covered in ivy which would need to be removed and the wood repaired underneath. The full extent of the damaged to these faces is not known until this is removed.
2. The roof is not watertight and there are areas of missing and damaged asbestos sheeting, which are difficult to repair in isolation. In addition the roof light has old glass which also needs replacing to ensure the building is sound.
3. Doors are timber and again in poor condition. Although the building is lockable the overall security is low without strengthening of the doors.
4. The internal structure is steel columns with steel truss beams. These appear sound, but require painting to improve their appearance and lengthen their life.
5. There is an old concrete bund in the building which would require removing and the floor reinstating to make more room usable.
6. The electric supply to the building is basic with old lighting internally and externally. No test has been carried out on this installation to date.

3. OPTIONS CONSIDERED/ANALYSIS

- 3.1 One option is to do nothing and accept the continual decline in the buildings condition and fund a more extensive repair in the future. This would impact on the use of the building as it may become unsafe for the public to use and may damage the reputation of the Council.
- 3.2 The preferred option would be to secure the funding for the necessary repairs and carry out the essential works to preserve the building for future generations.

4. KEY IMPACTS/RISKS? HOW WILL THEY BE ADDRESSED?

- 4.1 The higher than normal health & safety risk to the public and building users will need regular assessment ahead of repair works.
- 4.2 Repair works will be subject to a risk assessment and standard operating procedures.

5. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 5.1 Upon funding approval, the works will be procured in line with the Code of Procurement.

6. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN

- 6.1 Undertaking the essential capital works to the Octagon building links to:
- To enhance our built and green environment
 - To create safer, stronger and more resilient communities

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 No consultation has been undertaken in respect of these repairs.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Octagon needs to be maintained in a state of repair that does not pose a unnecessary liability to the Council. All such procurement will be undertaken in line with the Council's Code of Procurement.

9. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The repairs will extend the life of the asset and improve the facility for the St Ives community and the Council, which may have commercial advantages, i.e. increased rent. The requested budget of £50,000 can be accommodated from the 2015/16 capital programme underspend.

10. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The repairs to the building will help to preserve an important historical building in a conservation zone and the preservation of the building is noted of interest to several local community groups and to the local Town Council.
- 10.2 The removal of the asbestos roof and regulated disposal will be a positive contribution to the local environment.

- 10.3 The preservation of the building will allow future community and/or commercial uses of the unit to be considered.
- 10.4 The Octagon is currently in a state of disrepair and if remedial works are not taken there is an increased risk due to reductions in health and safety standards; this could then negate our public liability insurance cover. Considering the building is in a public space, it is of paramount importance that the building meets the required standards.

11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

11.1 Cabinet are asked to:

- Approve a capital allocation of £50,000 to repair and preserve the Octagon building in St Ives.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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