



**Report To:** Planning Portfolio Holder

25 August 2017

**Lead Officer:** Joint Director Planning and Economic Development

---

**Heritage Guardianship Sites:  
Landbeach Tithe Barn, East Hatley Church and Sawston Tannery Drying Shed**

**Purpose**

1. To update on the progress of the Landbeach Tithe Barn and Sawston Tannery Drying Shed Projects and report on the transfer of East Hatley Church.
2. This is not a key decision.

**Recommendations**

3. It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder notes the progress made.

**Reasons for Recommendations**

4. To keep the Portfolio Holder informed regarding Heritage sites, and enable related activities to continue.

**Background**

*Landbeach Tithe Barn*

5. Landbeach Tithe Barn is a Grade II thatched listed building owned by the Council since 1986. It was leased to the Landbeach Society in 1975. The society surrendered the lease in 2014. Since that time the Council has been working with local residents to find a local solution to support the future of the barn.
6. In 2014, local residents lead by the then Local Member and supported by Cambridge Past Present and Future commenced work to establish a Trust to take on responsibility for the barn.
7. In 2015, a shadow Landbeach Tithe Barn Trust was created, and several community events have been organised at the barn. A structural survey report, commissioned by the Council, estimated the cost of the urgent works at £80,000 and a further £40,000 of other work were recommended. The survey confirmed that the barn is not watertight, and there is some water damage to timbers. The Council arranged for a tarpaulin to be put over the thatch roof of the barn as an interim measure to safeguard the barn from further deterioration. The Shadow Trustees are keeping a watching brief over the tarpaulin particularly in times of heavy winds. It was renewed in Spring 2016.
8. In March 2016, the Economic Development Portfolio Holder endorsed a summary project timeline, noted the list of Shadow Trust members and length of the tenure, by

way of commitment to the project and agreed heads of terms for a long lease for the barn.

*Sawston Tannery Drying Shed*

9. A tannery has existed continuously on the site in Sawston for nearly 400 years.
10. The Drying Shed was constructed during a period of rapid expansion of the tannery complex comprising an arcaded brick ground floor, and three timber framed upper floors with louvered external walls below a hipped slate roof. Whilst it is in a very poor condition, the drying shed is considered to be an exceptional example of a tannery drying shed on account of its extraordinary scale. It has regional and national importance because it is the only drying shed known to be built on three floors. This is recognised with its Grade II\* listing status. In 2015 the building was on the Historic England heritage at risk register rated category 'A', which meant it was 'at immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric.
11. In November 2015 the Council, supported by Historic England, served an Urgent Works Notice setting out the immediate works that were necessary. The Council supported by grant funding from Historic England has since procured scaffolding and the building is now fully supported.
12. A project team has been established comprising the Owners, Historic England, Council Officer and Local members. It has a 3-year project in place to oversee a building survey, basic repairs and feasibility studies for alternative uses. The Project Team has met with the Parish Council who own a potential alternative access to the building and with the Trustees of Joh Huntingdon's Charity, a local charity which has a children's nursery adjacent the site which it is looking to expand.

### 13. **Considerations and update**

#### *Landbeach Tithe Barn*

14. The Tithe Barn Trust has a number of workstreams underway.
15. Financially it has banked all its charitable pledges and now has funds of £60,000, it was successful in getting a grant of £2,100 as match funding for project viability work and has received over £20,000 'pro-bono' work. This has included architectural work for surveys to inform its business case, and legal work to review the lease.
16. Unfortunately, the Trust was not successful in its bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund. It has since had a feedback meeting and is acting on the advice given so it can prepare a revised bid. It continues to look to other areas of support including exploring whether a joint project with the Farmland Museum is possible, in which both might establish strong links with, and benefit from, the Waterbeach New Town development.
17. The tarpaulin renewed in Spring 2017.
18. A pre-application submission has been made seeking advice on proposals for an access and small service building (WC/ small kitchen area).
19. The Lease has been drawn up but is yet to be finalised pending discussions with the Diocese of Ely regarding a covenant on the freehold preventing the sale of liquor. This need to be addressed given the potential future uses of the barn for community use including weddings. Discussions will also include the possibility of agreeing use of additional land to widen the existing access to the south of the barn.

20. The Council has an 'easement for repairs' across a neighbouring property which until recently has been blocked, preventing access to the barn to make necessary repairs. Following correspondence and meetings, this has now been cleared. The owner of that property has recently died and the Council will be working with the Trustees to explore the implications of this and whether there are any opportunities to slightly extend the curtilage of the barn, as it is currently severely restrained along that boundary.
21. A project team meet regularly to review progress.
22. An update from The Tithe Barn Trust is attached as **Appendix 1**.

*Sawston Tannery Drying Shed.*

23. The building recording survey and repair schedule commissioned by Historic England has taken longer than initially anticipated. This has now been received and is being reviewed initially by English Heritage, to start to understand and consider the implications of the information. The project team will be meeting in September to receive the report. This will allow the team to fully understand the condition of the building. It will inform feasibility and options appraisals, based on which the owners will be able to decide what they wish to do with their building.
24. With the receipt of this report, the project has now reached a significant milestone. The forthcoming project meetings will be important in determining what happens next to this building.
25. Earlier this year, the building was suffering from unwanted attention and visits from children, in particular. Additional measures were taken to deter this. Solid sheeting added along one corner, warning notices added to the fence and the scaffolding is now alarm and linked to the owners' security should the alarm go off. So far, these measures seem to have proved successful.

*St Denis Church, East Hatley*

26. Since the last report, all legal agreements have been completed, and the Church and endowment have been transferred to the Friends of Friendless Churches (FOFC).
27. A celebratory handover event was held last month in recognition of the hard work all parties involved.
28. The FOFC has already submitted planning and listed building applications for works to restore the floor and windows. It intends to seek grant to restore stained glass in the chancellery. The aim is to carry out the work as soon as possible so that the building can be back in community use, hopefully in 2018.

**Options**

*Landbeach Tithe Barn*

29. The recommended option is to continue to proceed with work with the Landbeach Tithe Barn Trust, to agree and sign the lease.
30. An alternative is for the barn to be sold with residential planning consent; this is being seen as a fall-back position should the transfer to the Trust not be achieved.

### *Sawston Drying Shed*

31. All parties (SCDC, Historic England and the Owners) have committed to work together over a three year period to explore options and develop a plan for the site.
32. Alternative would be to do nothing and allow the building to deteriorate and eventually collapse, or for the owners to apply to demolish the building.

### **Implications**

33. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

### **Financial**

#### *Sawston Tannery Drying Shed*

34. A further grant application for £50K Historic England was successful to cover the cost of the weekly scaffolding inspections, insurance costs and any initial repairs. Replacing the tarpaulin came from existing budgets.

### **Legal**

#### *Landbeach Tithe Barn*

36. Legal Officers will continue in assisting to progress a lease for Landbeach Tithe Barn.

### **Staffing**

#### *Landbeach Tithe Barn and Sawston Drying Shed*

38. 31. Officer time from the consultancy team has, and continues to be recorded against these specific projects. In the case of the Sawston Drying Shed project SCDC Officer time forms an 'in kind' contribution towards the grant funding provided by Historic England.

### **Risk Management**

#### *Sawston Drying Shed*

40. Works in progress' insurance has been taken for the scaffolding. The scaffolding contract also includes the weekly safety checks of the scaffolding to ensure that it is safe and correctly fixed. In addition, advice has also been taken regarding ensuring the scaffolding is protected against intruders.

### **Equality and Diversity**

41. None

### **Climate Change**

42. None

### **Consultation responses (including from the Youth Council)**

43. 35. None

### **Effect on Strategic Aims**

This report sets out the steps being taken to secure the future of an historic assets and work with the local community and owners of a local business within the district.

**Appendix I – Update from Landbeach Tithebarn Trust (July 2017)**

**Report Author:** Jane Green – Head of New Communities Telephone: (01954) 713164