

**Report To:** Economic Development Portfolio Holder  
**Lead Officer:** Director of Planning & New Communities

15 March 2016

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

**Purpose**

1. To present and an updated draft project plan for Landbeach Tithe Barn, and details of Tithe Barn Trust trustees and their commitment.
2. To monitor progress on the Sawston Tannery Drying Shed Project and the Transfer of St Denis Church at East Hatley.
3. This is not a key decision

**Recommendations**

4. It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder:
  - (a) Endorse the updated Landbeach Tithe Barn project plan and the list of trustees and their commitment.
  - (b) Notes the progress of the works at the Sawston Drying Shed and that legal work to enable the transfer of St Denis Church, East Hatley to the Friends of Friendless Churches is close to completion.

**Reasons for Recommendations**

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

**Background**

*Landbeach Tithe Barn*

6. Landbeach Tithe Barn is a Grade II listed building owned by the council since 1986. It had been leased to the Landbeach Society in 1975
7. In 2014, Cllr James Hockney with input from Cambridge Past Present and Future commenced work to establish a Trust to take n responsibility for the barn and the lease was surrendered by the Landbeach Society.

8. In 2015, a shadow Landbeach Tithe Barn Trust has been created, and several community events have been organised at the barn. A structural survey report has been provided to the Council. The structural survey 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. Therefore, the council arranged works to safeguard the barn from further deterioration, through the use of tarpaulin, which was completed on 23 October 2015. The Shadow Trustees are keep a watching brief over the tarpaulin particularly in times of heavy winds.
9. In January 2016, the Portfolio Holder gave approval, in principle for:
  - For the revised Heads of Terms for the lease.
  - requested information from the shadow trust regarding members and their commitment, which is outlined in appendix 1
  - amendments to the project plan timescales appendix 2

#### *Sawston Tannery Drying Shed*

10. A tannery has existed continuously on the site in Sawston for nearly 400 years. The Drying Shed was constructed during a period of rapid expansion of the tannery complex and survives relatively unaltered. The drying shed is an exceptional example of a tannery drying shed on account of its extraordinary scale. This is recognised with its Grade II\* listing status. It has regionally and national importance because it is the only drying shed known to be build on three floors and was also the largest shed identified in the search by Pre-Construct Archaeology. It was constructed with an arcaded brick ground floor, and three timber framed upper floors with louvered external walls below a hipped slate roof. The ground floor would have housed steeping tanks, with the upper floors used fro skin drying. It is currently n the Historic England heritage at risk register and has been given a category 'A' rating, which means 'it is at immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric: no solution agreed'. Historic England has asked the Council to work in partnership to protect the Drying Shed and also to find a long-term future use.
11. The drying shed sits to the rear of the still active tanning site and is no longer in use as it does not meet the current needs of the business. There are a few other listed buildings on the tannery site.
12. The drying shed suffers from a weakness in the timber frame where a combination of decay and loss of bracing members has reduced the lateral strength. There are existing temporary supports comprising of timber raking, shores and steel ties bolted to channels, roof slates, and timbered louvers are missing. The shed is extremely vulnerable to collapse and may not survive another heavy winter.
13. In January 2016, the Portfolio Holder noted that scaffolding had begun to be erected and monthly meetings are being held to progress the project.

## Considerations

### *Landbeach Tithe Barn*

14. Following the Portfolio Holder meeting in January, the draft Heads of Terms was amended as discussed and sent to the shadow trust for comment. The Shadow Trust has formal submitted its application for Charitable Incorporated Organisation status and has provided its list of Shadow Trustees and length of their commitment to the project to the Council and planned several more open days ( April and June).
15. Focus has been on securing a clear access to the Barn to service the repair works and provide for any emergency access if required. The Council has rights of access over adjacent land which is currently obstructed. On 24<sup>th</sup> February a letter was sent to the owner of the adjacent site with a copy of the title deeds, giving a 14 day deadline to clear the access to the Tithe Barn.
16. In parallel Legal advice has been sought regarding the next legal steps to be taken if the actions required by the letter are not carried out within the outlined timescale. Officers are also looking to work with the Shadow Trustees and SCDC Drainage Manager to discuss improvements to the other access from Waterbeach Road. Which is within SCDC Ownership.
17. Monthly meeting are being held between Officers and the Shadow Trust Board to oversee the project plan and track progress. The meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> February agreed to undertake the following:
  - (a) Finalise the Heads of Terms, and produce the draft lease by the end of March
  - (b) Aim to have the access cleared (following any necessary Legal action) - by the end of April.
  - (c) Sign the lease by the end of April (recognising this is dependent on the Shadow Trust receiving CIO ( Charitable Incorporated Organisation) status.
18. An update from the Tithe Barn Trust is included in Appendix 3

### *Sawston Tannery Drying Shed*

19. Since the Portfolio Holder meeting in January, the scaffolding has been completed and has been signed off. This been completed sooner than planned and given the slight delay at the start means that the project remains on programme.
20. The contractors, Landmark Scaffolding, are now carrying out the required weekly safety inspections to ensure the scaffolding stays within a good and safe condition.
21. Invoices have been sent to Historic England claiming the remaining amount of the grant to cover the cost of the scaffolding and initial weekly safety checks of the scaffolding, and for the additional costs SCDC have been invited by Historic England to submit a further grant application to cover any additional costs.

22. Monthly project meetings continue to be held. Now that the building is stable, the next areas of focus for the project team are:
  - (a) future uses for the building through an feasibility and options appraisals
  - (b) a structural survey of the building ( following a grant application by SCDC to Historic England).
  - (c) alternative accesses to the building.
  - (d) to develop a communications plan
23. The owners are giving consideration to how they would separate the building from their current operations and land to be given over as part of it curtilage.
24. A meeting with the parish council is being organised, to discuss how the community would like to be involved in the Project.

### ***St Denis Church, East Hatley***

25. This project has been slowed down considerably by the need to have several legal agreements in place in parallel.
26. Over recent weeks progress has been made.
27. The variation of the covenant by The Church Commissioners is now complete and back with the Council.
28. The Grant Agreement between SCDC and FODC has been finalised which provides funds for capital works and SCDC are in the process of raising the monies via the Finance Department to be transferred to the FOFC when required.
29. The final piece of the jigsaw is the Easement to provide access across adjacent land to the building. The Council has received confirmation that agreement of the principles of the easement has been agreed between all parties, which will now allow for the final drafting and completion of the associated documentation.
30. SCDC are providing information regarding the insurance policies and passing this onto the FOFC to allow for the group to continue insuring the building.

### **Options**

#### *Landbeach Tithe Barn*

31. The recommended option is to continue to proceed with work with the Landbeach Tithe Barn Trust, to agree and sign the lease within the timescale outlined in the project plan and securing access along the Old Rectory's drive and improvements to the Waterbeach Road access to enable future repair work to take place.
32. 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*

33. 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 and in particular the sustainable re-use of the Drying Shed. It is only by finding an appropriate use for the building that its future will be secure.
34. An alternative would be to do nothing and let the building deteriorate and eventually collapse, or for the owners to apply to demolish the building.

### **Implications**

35. 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 Drying Shed*

36. A further grant application to Historic England will be made to look to the next stages of the project including a structural survey of the building, now that it has been stabilised as well as a feasibility study to unlock the potential of the site and explore alternative uses of the building/site.

### ***Legal***

#### *Landbeach Tithe Barn and St Denis Church*

37. Legal Officers will need to continue in assisting to progress a lease for Landbeach Tithe Barn, providing advice and guidance regarding clearing access and to coordinate and finalise agreements in respect of the transfer of the St Denis Church.

### ***Staffing***

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

38. 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*

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

## **Equality and Diversity**

40. None

## ***Climate Change***

41. None

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

### **Effect on Strategic Aims**

**Aim 1 – We will listen to and engage with residents, parishes and businesses to ensure we deliver first class services and value for money.**

42. This report is following discussions with owner and Historic England regarding the future management of the heritage asset in their neighbourhoods.

**Aim 2 – We will make sure that South Cambridgeshire continues to offer an outstanding quality of life for our residents**

43. This report outlines proposals to secure the future of an historic asset, thereby contributing to the quality of life of residents.

**Aim 3: Work with partners to create opportunities for employment, enterprise, education and world-leading innovation.**

44. This report outlines the immediate works that would provide the time to work with partners to secure the long-term future of the listed building.

## **Background Papers**

### **Appendices::**

Appendix 1 : Updated Draft Project Plan Summary Landbeach Tithe Barn

Appendix 2 - Names and Length of Tenure of Landbeach Tithe Barn Trustees.

Appendix 3 – Update from Landbeach Tithe Barn Trust.

**Report Author:** Juliette Wilson – Historic Buildings Consultancy Officer  
Telephone: (01954) 712907