

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

5 August 2015

AUTHOR/S: Planning and New Communities Director

Planning (Listed buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 as amended: Section 54 Urgent Works Notice

Application Type:	Urgent Works Notice
Parish(es):	Sawston
Proposal:	Carry out enforcement using Section 54, urgent works notice, to Great Eastern drying shed, Grade II* Listed. These works are considered important to preserve the building before this winter.
Site address:	Great Eastern Drying Shed High Street Sawston
Key material considerations:	The building is at considerable risk of collapse if no action is taken to make it secure and weather tight
Recommendation	Authority to issue Urgent Works Notice

Background

1. The drying shed, which has a Grade II* listing, is an exceptional example of a tannery drying shed on account of its extraordinary scale. The building is located in an active tannery, which includes other listed buildings.
2. It is currently on 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.
3. The building was constructed during a period of rapid expansion of the tannery complex and survives relatively unaltered. It has local significance adding to the social and economic history of Sawston, particularly in relation to the extensive tanning industry in the town. It also has regional and national importance because it is the only 19th century tannery drying shed found that was built on three floors and was also the largest shed identified in the search by Pre-Construct Archaeology.
4. 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.

5. Due to the building being a long-standing case and there seems to be no repair scheme in progress or potential use, Historic England have identified this building as a national priority.
6. The owner is a local business that has a great part in the history and development of Sawston. Due to changes in tanning practices, the building has not had a relevant use for some time. Due to this the condition of the building has deteriorated and is at risk of being completely lost.
7. Due to the form of the building (low floor to ceiling heights), it is not easy to find a new use. Therefore working with the owners to find a new use will be a long and complicated project. This makes stabilising the condition of the building by making it weather tight even more important.
8. Serving an urgent works notice on the property will ensure that the building is made weather tight by this winter. This will give the consultancy team and Historic England the time to work with the owner to find a sustainable new use for the building.

Recommendation

9. Officers recommend that the Committee authorises the issue of an Urgent Works Notice in respect of the Great Eastern Drying Shed, High Street, Sawston under Section 54 of the Planning (Listed buildings and Conservation Areas) Act as amended

Background Papers:

- None

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