



**Report To:** Planning Portfolio Holder

8 November 2016

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

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

**Purpose**

1. To update on the progress of the Landbeach Tithe Barn and Sawston Tannery Drying Shed Projects and the planned 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.
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.

### **Considerations**

#### *Landbeach Tithe Barn*

13. The Tithe Barn Trust has been granted charitable status, and as such can now convert the financial pledges they have received into donations. It is also able to apply for grant funding and is in the process of preparing grant applications to the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Architectural Heritage Fund.
14. The Heads of Terms is being finalised which allows the Lease to be drawn up. There is a covenant on the freehold preventing the sale of liquor which given the potential future uses of the barn for community use including weddings will need to be addressed. Discussions are underway with the Diocese of Ely to seek to remove this.
15. 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. A site meeting was recently held with the Land Agent for the Ely Diocese Board of Finance to open initial discussions regarding emergency vehicular access and the possibility of agreeing use of additional land to widen the existing access to the south of the barn.
16. A Project Team meetings regularly to review progress.
17. An update from The Tithe Barn Trust is attached as **Appendix 1**.

### *Sawston Tannery Drying Shed*

18. In accordance with agreed project plan and programme, a building recording survey has been commissioned by Historic England and is underway. Drawings will be received soon, with a repair schedule to follow. The building recording will allow the project team to fully understand the condition of the building and will inform feasibility and options appraisals.

### *St Denis Church, East Hatley*

19. This project has been slowed down considerably by the need to have several legal agreements in place in parallel.
20. The variation of the covenant by The Church Commissioners is now complete and back with the Council
21. The Grant Agreement between SCDC and Friends of Friendless Churches (FOFC) has been finalised which provides funds for capital works and SCDC are in the process of raising the monies.
22. The final piece of the jigsaw was the Easement to provide access across adjacent land to the building. The Council has received confirmation that this is now in place.
23. The transfer and release of the grant monies will happen this month.

### **Options**

#### *Landbeach Tithe Barn*

24. The recommended option is to continue to proceed with work with the Landbeach Tithe Barn Trust, to agree and sign the lease and securing the maintenance of the access along the Old Rectory's drive.
25. 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*

26. 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 secured.
27. An 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**

28. 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*

29. A further grant application ( £50K) to Historic England has been submitted for funds to cover the cost of the weekly scaffolding inspections, insurance costs and Initial repairs. In light of the next steps for the project including the need for a feasibility study, Historic England has also budgeted accordingly and will be invited further grant applications to cover ongoing costs as the project progresses.

## **Legal**

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

30. Legal Officers will 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*

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*

32. '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 is also been taken regarding ensuring the scaffolding is protected against intruders.

## **Equality and Diversity**

33. None

## **Climate Change**

34. None

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

35. None

## **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.**

36. 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**

37. 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.**

38. 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**

None

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