

Subject:	Maintenance of Historic Buildings		
Date of Meeting:	23 January 2014		
Report of:	Executive Director Environment Development and Housing		
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This report provides the annual update on the pro-active programme to ensure the re-use, repair and restoration of historic buildings in the city, including the enforcement of works where necessary. It includes an updated register of those listed buildings considered to be 'at risk' (Appendix 1) and an updated list of other historic buildings where significant action is ongoing to secure repair and redecoration works to improve their appearance (Appendix 2).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Committee endorse the updated register of listed buildings that are considered to be 'at risk' (Appendix 1).

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 The adopted Conservation Strategy (2003) describes the council's approach to dealing with the maintenance of historic buildings. That approach and the priorities for future action were updated and approved at the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Environment on 4 July 2008. The Conservation Strategy is currently being reviewed.
- 3.2 The highest priority has been given to maintaining the register of listed buildings at risk, identified in accordance with criteria set down by English Heritage. Officers have worked corporately to seek the repair and/or re-use of these buildings where appropriate.
- 3.3 Since the last annual report no buildings have been removed from the 'at risk' part of the register but no further buildings have been added. However, significant and positive progress has been made in respect of a number of the buildings at risk and details are as follows:

- **53 Brunswick Square** – an Urgent Works Notice was served on the owner of the building requiring significant works to be carried out to make it weathertight whilst its long term future is resolved. As a result of the Notice the owner carried out all of the works satisfactorily. The building has been marketed during 2013 and some interest has been shown, which the owner is following up.
- **Saltdean Lido** – the council invited bids for a new lease in 2013 and following that process the local Community Interest Company has been appointed as the preferred bidder for the building. Its repair and restoration will be subject to a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund.
- **The Hippodrome, Middle Street** – extensive pre-application discussions have been carried out during 2013 on proposals to convert the building and adjoining land to a multi-screen cinema and supporting uses and a planning application is expected to be submitted shortly.
- **51 Ship Street, former Post Office** – following the eviction of squatters a comprehensive programme of repair works has now commenced on the building. Planning consents have also been granted for the conversion of the ground floor frontage into restaurant use and conversion works are expected to commence once the external repairs have been carried out.
- **13A and 14 Stone Street** – planning applications have been submitted for the retention and restoration of these recently listed buildings and the redevelopment of adjoining land and buildings.
- **19 and 20 The Square, Patcham** – following intervention by officers planning applications have been submitted for the retention and repair of these buildings and the development of some adjoining land.

3.4 Further details of all properties are given in the updated register of Buildings at Risk at Appendix 1. For existing entries the previous year's priority rating is shown in brackets (where A is the highest priority and F the lowest).

3.5 In accordance with the strategy set out in originally agreed report (of 4 July 2008), the second priority for pro-active action is those other historic buildings (usually listed) that are in significant need of maintenance. Action is most typically taken under Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, where buildings are considered to be adversely affecting the amenity of the area by virtue of their poor and deteriorating appearance.

3.6 Over the last year the following twelve historic buildings in conservation areas have been successfully repaired and/or redecorated following such action, or the threat of such action. This includes seven out of the 14 properties on last year's list: The successfully restored properties are:

- 38 Adelaide Crescent, Hove
- 22 Bloomsbury Place, Brighton
- 11 Dean Court Road, Rottingdean (Flint boundary wall to front)
- 3 Lansdowne Square, Hove
- 1 Marine Parade, Brighton (facing Steine Street)
- 70 Montpelier Road, Brighton
- 71 Montpelier Road, Brighton
- 30 Old Steine, Brighton

- 8 Powis Square, Brighton
- 22 Powis Square, Brighton
- 23 Powis Square, Brighton
- 1 Steine Street, Brighton

3.7 In another three cases repair and redecoration works are currently in progress. Five properties have been identified where such action may now be necessary and an updated list of current cases is given at Appendix 2, with the new cases shown in bold type.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

4.1 The Head of Property Services has been consulted on the report in respect of council owned properties. The subject of this report does not represent matters of new policy or introduce any new schemes. Therefore it is not considered that external consultation would be appropriate in this case. Consultation is taking place on the review of the Conservation Strategy.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

5.1 Any enforcement action arising from this report can usually be covered within existing revenue budgets. In cases where exceptional costs may be incurred due to the council having to undertake repair work in default, and/or to compulsorily acquire a property, a separate report may be presented to the relevant Committee for consideration.

Finance Officer Consulted: Steven Bedford Date: 05/12/13

Legal Implications:

5.2 In the case of listed buildings at risk, action may be taken, where necessary, under section 47 (compulsory purchase), section 48 (repairs notice) and section 54 (urgent works of preservation) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. In the case of necessary repair and redecoration works to other historic buildings, whose condition adversely affects the amenity of the area, action may be taken under section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. It is not considered that any adverse human rights implications arise from this report.

Lawyer Consulted: Hilary Woodward Date: 9/12/13

Equalities Implications:

5.3 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) of the Conservation service was undertaken in 2010 and covers work on the pro-active enforcement of the maintenance of historic buildings.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 The proposals in this report have no substantial impact upon the four priorities of the UK's Sustainable Development Strategy. But in terms of Sustainable Consumption and Production, the retention and timely repair of existing buildings reduces construction and demolition waste.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 The good repair and maintenance of publicly visible buildings and structures can help to discourage anti-social behaviour and graffiti.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 This report identifies buildings which are considered to be 'at risk' and where priority pro active action is considered justified to secure heritage assets. The failure to retain and maintain listed buildings could lead to significant adverse publicity for the council.

Public Health Implications:

- 5.7 The repair of residential buildings in poor condition can improve the health and/or well-being of existing and/or future occupants.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.8 The Sustainable Community Strategy contains a commitment to implement the Conservation Strategy (which will be reviewed in 2013). The repair and reuse of historic buildings contributes towards the Corporate Plan 2011-15 priority of creating a more sustainable city and particularly the outcome of a healthier and higher quality built environment. The Corporate Plan includes a performance indicator that seeks a reduction in the number of listed buildings at risk.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 The only alternative option would be to no longer maintain a Buildings at Risk register and to take a reactive rather than proactive approach to listed buildings that are vacant and/or in poor condition. The consequent failure to retain and maintain listed buildings could lead to the eventual loss of heritage assets and could result in significant adverse publicity for the council.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The report recommendation will result in resources being directed to those historic buildings that are most in need of repair and to ensure a consistent and transparent approach to the prioritisation of any future enforcement action.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Register of Buildings at Risk 2013
2. Historic buildings in significant need of maintenance – current cases

Documents in Members' Rooms

None.

Background Documents

1. The Conservation Strategy (2003)