
Subject:	RESTORATION OF MAISON DIEU, DOVER
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 7 November 2016 Council – 30 November 2016
Report of:	Roger Walton, Director of Environment and Corporate Assets
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Trevor Bartlett, Portfolio Holder for Property Management and Public Protection
Decision Type:	Non-Key Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted

Purpose of the report: To seek the endorsement of Cabinet for the proposed bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for Maison Dieu, Dover (Dover Town Hall) and seek agreement to the inclusion of the sum of £3m within the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) as the Council's financial contribution to the project.

Recommendation:

CABINET

Cabinet is asked to:

1. Confirm their support for the submission of a Round One Application to Heritage Lottery (HLF) for a Heritage Grant for Maison Dieu, Dover (Dover Town Hall);
2. Request that the Council amends the budget and policy framework to increase the monies allocated to this project from £2m to £3m in the capital programme.

COUNCIL

3. To amend the budget and policy framework and increase the monies allocated to this project from £2m to £3m in the capital programme.
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1. Summary

- 1.1 The Maison Dieu, Dover is a substantial DDC owned asset which is not currently being used to its full potential and the condition of the building is progressively deteriorating. As a consequence Cabinet agreed in November 2015, to allocate funds to support the development of a bid for funding support from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).
- 1.2 Work on the bid is well advanced and the report seeks to brief members on the work undertaken to date and seek the endorsement of Cabinet for the bid.
- 1.3 The report also seeks agreement to increase the monies allocated to this project from £2m to £3m in the capital programme.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 As members will be aware, the Maison Dieu is situated within the Dover Town Centre Conservation Area and is a Grade II* Listed Building and a Scheduled Ancient Monument. It has a long history dating back to 1203, originating as a mediaeval hospital (Maison Dieu). The building is an extensive and complex property

that has been extended several times throughout its life encompassing many architectural periods.

- 2.2 Following Cabinet agreement in July 2014, consultants Ingham Pinnock Associates were commissioned to prepare a sustainable business plan for the future refurbishment and redevelopment of Dover Town Hall.
- 2.3 On completion of this work, a detailed report was presented to Cabinet at the meeting held on 3 November 2015 and Cabinet agreed to allocate funds from the Regeneration Reserve within the Earmarked General Reserves to enable the project to move forward to the next stage and to support the development of a bid for grant support to HLF.
- 2.4 It was further agreed at the meeting in October 2016, to allocated £30k from the Special Projects Reserve support the preparation of the bid and also to draw down £150k from the capital programme to enable urgent repair works identified during the condition survey to be undertaken.

3. **HLF Bid**

- 3.1 The HLF application process for Heritage Grants above £5m requires First Round applications to be made by 1st December each year, with a decision in April. Such applications are decided on by the HLF Board of Trustees and compete against other applications from across the UK.
- 3.2 If successful at this stage, then the Council would receive some financial support to develop a Second Round application over the next two years for further consideration by HLF. This is the same process followed by the recent successful Parks for People application for Kearsney and Russel gardens.
- 3.3 Officers have therefore been working for several months now with the consultancy team and also with the Steering Group established several years ago, which includes Dover Town Council and the Dover Society on the preparation of the Council's application for a Heritage Grant for the Maison Dieu project,
- 3.4 The development of the bid has involved wide ranging stakeholder engagement and public consultation to help shape the proposed bid and associated activity plan.
- 3.5 In developing the Heritage Grant application the Council's vision and objectives for the project has been set out as follows:

Vision and objectives

The vision for the project is to reawaken the gothic fantasy that is the Maison Dieu by creating a thriving cultural venue and opening the building for the first time to visitors and the community. The project will place the Maison Dieu back at the heart of the Dover community, restore its position as an international stepping stone and act as an anchor for Dover's regeneration.

The project will achieve this by delivering five objectives below that underpin the capital project and Activity Plan.

Objective 1: Regeneration

The restoration of the Maison Dieu will act as an engine and anchor the regeneration of Dover's Mid-Town; it will become the go-to destination in the town.

The project will deliver this by bringing new land uses into the building that will create unprecedented levels of footfall in Mid-Town, by becoming a major cultural venue attracting residents, tourists and complimentary activity and delivering skills training for neighbouring landlords and tenants to repair and restore their own properties.

Objective 2: Conservation

The restoration of the Maison Dieu will reveal, restore, conserve and secure a safe future for the internationally significant heritage embodied in the building.

The project will ensure that the building is brought back into full use and open to visitors and the community for the first time in generations. It will deliver a comprehensive package of uncovering, repairs and conservation work that will reveal the hidden beauty and true significance of the Maison Dieu. It will undo the damage caused by previous interventions and guarantee more appropriate future management and maintenance.

Objective 3: Resilience

The restoration of the Maison Dieu will result in a building that is financially sustainable so that regardless of future public sector funding regimes, the building will remain active and maintained to a high standard.

The project will achieve this by opening the building up to the community and visitors and recreating broken linkages. It will improve its performance as a cultural venue and introduce revenue generating uses into un-used spaces. It will result in larger and more diverse audience for the building and income streams that are not reliant upon one another and that allow for future change.

Objective 4: Engagement

The restoration of the Maison Dieu will seek to engage every resident of Dover in the history and culture of the Maison Dieu and capture a share of the 19 million international visitors passing through the town each year.

The project will achieve this through delivering new and improved uses for the building that the visitors and the community will use. It will deliver a far-reaching activity plan that targets all groups regardless of age or education so that the building regains its place at the community heart of the town.

Objective 5: Celebration

The restoration of the Maison Dieu will celebrate history, architecture, culture and the building and the local community. Its history is the history of Dover and its future is symbolic of the wider story of the resurgence of this iconic English coastal town.

The project will achieve this through housing information and exhibitions that help to raise aspirations and create a sense of positivity in the town and by becoming once more, the place for the community to come together and celebrate.

- 3.6 The main elements of the work proposed to the fabric of the building will be developed as part of the Second Round application, but in summary are:

- The creation of a new entrance to the Connaught Hall at street level;
- Provision of 'green room' space and reconfiguration of the entire basement area;
- Conversion of the former Visitor Information Centre and Cell Area for use as a catering outlet;
- Renovation and/or recreation of the William Burges decoration to the Mayor's parlour and Connaught Hall.
- Improved interpretation and access to the Stone Hall to enable it to be open to the public daily;
- Conversion of the rooms in the north east section of the building for use as holiday lets;
- General Repairs and refurbishment to the fabric and services within the building.

3.7 Detailed costing for the project will also be developed as part of the Second Round application but at this stage the overall project cost is estimated at £13.2m.

3.8 HLF require that for grant applications of £1million or more, a contribution is made of at least 10% of the costs of the development phase and 10% of the costs of the delivery phase. In practice, many applications offer a far higher percentage of match funding and the Steering Group has agreed to seek a Heritage Grant of £8.5m from HLF, with the balance of funding required being sourced from the partners and other funding sources.

3.9 The timetable for the project if successful is as set out below:

Activity	Date
Submit Round One Application	November 2016
HLF Determine Round One Application	April 2017
Develop Round Two Application	2017-2018
Submit Round Two Application	November 2018
HLF Determine Round Two Application	Spring 2019
Develop Design	2019-2020
Appoint Contractor for works	August 2020
Works on site	2020-2022
Complete Construction Works	August 2022
Complete delivery of Activity Plan	Late 2024

3.10 As noted in the table above the projected timetable would not see significant construction work commencing until 2020/21 at the earliest. The Council agreed as part of the 2016/17 budget round to include the sum of £2m in the MTFP as a contribution to the major refurbishment works with £1m allocated for 2017/18 and the remaining £1m for future years. It is now clear that significant Council funding will not now be required until much later in the process, setting aside the more modest contribution of c£225k required as match funding to support the preparation of the Second Round application.

3.11 Cabinet are asked to confirm their support for the HLF bid for Maison Dieu, Dover (Dover Town Hall) and, noting that many grant applications offer a higher percentage of match funding than 10%, to Request that the Council amends the budget and policy framework to increase the monies allocated to this project from £2m to £3m in the capital programme.

4. Identification of Options

4.1 Option 1: To do nothing.

This is not considered to be a viable option. The Council has already allocated significant financial resources to enable the preparation of the bid and the property is likely to prove to be a continuing and increasing drain on future maintenance expenditure if the asset is to be maintained.

4.2 Option 2: To endorse the bid and allocate additional monies within the MTFP.

The bid seeks to restore a building, which research has shown to be of national if not international significance, support the Council's regeneration plans for this area of the Town and open up the building for greater community use.

5. Resource Implications

5.1 The proposal, if agreed, would increase the allocation within the MTFP from £2m to £3m. Subject to approval by HLF, the expenditure profile for the coming years would be as follows:

2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
£75k	£150k	£600k	£700k	£900k	£300k	£175k	£100k

5.2 The District Regeneration and Economic Development Reserve currently has a balance of £12.5m, with provisional commitments of £10m for leisure centre provision, improvements to Dover Town Hall and Dover Priory car park.

5.3 It is the Council's policy not to approve a capital project without all funding in place from the outset. Since approval of the 2016/17 budget further potential commitments of £1.5m for a spa attached to the leisure centre and the proposed additional £1m for Dover Town Hall will mean that the £12.5m District Regeneration and Economic Development Reserve has been fully committed.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Comment from the Section 151 Officer: The Section 151 Officer has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no further comment to make (MD).

6.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: The Solicitor to the Council has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no further comments to make. (HR)

6.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: This report does not specifically highlight any equalities implications however, in discharging their responsibilities, Members are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15>. (KM)

7. Appendices

None.

8. Background Papers

None.

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