

Sneath's Mill, Lutton Gowt, near Long Sutton, Lincolnshire

Application for Listed Building Consent to Undertake Urgent works

Justification Statement

Introduction

Sneath's Mill is a Grade I listed building that is currently on the English Heritage List of Grade I and grade II* listed buildings at risk. In the East Midlands detailed schedule of buildings at risk it is given a Category A which signifies 'Immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric, no solution agreed.' It is also described as having a poor condition and noted that 'the whole building is deteriorating rapidly.'

The building has been empty and deteriorating for a considerable number of years and was last recorded as working in 1923. By 1953 it was derelict. It is thought that some temporary works were undertaken in the 1980s with a grant from English Heritage. At that time a temporary ply cap to the roof was installed. (Plate 1) There are now only fragmentary remains of the cap and the mill and its important machinery are suffering rapid decay as a result.

The mill structure is the last Grade I mill in the county of Lincolnshire to remain in a derelict condition. It is one of the earliest surviving mills in the county and of considerable interest not only because of its age and unusual form but also because of its surviving machinery. It is imperative that urgent works are undertaken both to ensure that this rapid deterioration is halted and to enable safe access to the interior of the structure so that the fabric of the mill and its machinery can be studied, assessed, understood and recorded. The presence of pigeon guano on floors at all levels (Plate 2) and evidence that high level brickwork is loose and liable to fall (Plate 3) means that no internal survey work can be carried out until these works are undertaken.

Ownership

The mill and its site is now owned by the Sneath's Mill Trust. The objectives of the Trust are simple – they basically wish to save this important structure and also make it accessible to the public.

The Trust has already carried out works to tidy the site and secure the area. They are anxious to proceed with the main project of finding a way forward of using the mill and the site to ensure its survival. However this cannot be done until the urgent works to the mill are undertaken.

Summary of the Proposed Urgent Enabling Works

1. Create safe access to raised mound.

2. Provide external support scaffolding.
3. Provide internal support scaffolding which will also give access to enable the interior structure and machinery to be studied and recorded.
4. Prop and support loose machinery and remains of floors.
5. Clear away guano from floors and machinery etc.
6. Clear out any rubbish and debris.
7. Cut back ivy and vegetation.
8. Stabilise loose brickwork and remove any individual bricks for which support cannot be found.
9. Provide new temporary roof to make the interior weatherproof and pigeon proof.
10. Remove temporary ply door which is not very substantial and replace with new door and frame.
11. Prop timber lintels to openings and replace ply boarding.
12. Prop brick panel on north face.

English Heritage first recommended that an enabling contract to undertake these works be undertaken in February 2009. The Trust has now been informed that a grant will be made available by English Heritage in order to undertake these works.

The urgent works will be fully specified by a team of conservation professionals including a conservation accredited architect (Mary Anderson, of Anderson and Glenn) and structural engineer (Ed Morton, of the Morton Partnership). The work will be carried out under a JCT Minor Works Contract, using only building firms with proven track records of historic building work. The works will be competitively tendered. As the works are receiving an English Heritage grant, the tender documentation will require to be approved in advance by the English Heritage inspecting architect or surveyor. The team will also include the building archaeologist Dr Jonathan Clark of York, and a mill wright/mill expert from the Lincolnshire Mills Group.

DRAFT SCHEDULE OF ESSENTIAL ENABLING WORKS

(Note this schedule will be scrutinised by English Heritage and thus may vary slightly. The LPA will be able to request by condition that a copy of the finally approved schedule is lodged with the Authority)

This schedule allows for the minimum work necessary to ensure the structural stability of the building and prevent water or pigeon ingress to enable a through survey and record of the existing structure and fittings/machinery to be made. It does not constitute a full list of all urgent works.

The works scheduled are considered to be the minimum works necessary to achieve these requirements.

1.0 Preparatory

- 1.1 Take a photographic schedule of the condition of all areas around the proposed works including the interior etc. all prior to commencement on site. Allow for a minimum of 72 photographs. Provide two hard copies (minimum size 100mm x 150mm) and two digital sets on CD's in Jpeg format to the Contract Administrator.
- 1.2 Create safe access to the raised mound around the Mill as necessary. One option may be to locally re-grade or import fill to create a ramp up to the top of the mound. Reinststate to former profile on completion.
- 1.3 Provide all external access scaffolding, platforms and means of vertical access, ladders, mobile towers, safety and weather enclosures where appropriate for the execution of the works. The scaffold is not permitted to take any fixings into the structure. [If the external scaffolding is to remain in situ for any longer than the urgent works and recording it will require to be fully hoarded in ply or metal sheeting up to a height of at least 3m]
- 1.4 Internally provide suitable lighting to allow work to be carried out safely.
- 1.5 Provide internal access scaffold, which is allow the pigeon guano to be cleaned off the high level elements. The scaffold will also provide support to the internal floor structure at all levels, in place of timber props currently insitu.
- 1.6 Clear away all guano internally from floor and off all higher level floor levels, (Plate 2) once internal scaffold in place and using appropriate PPE. Ensure all existing timber props remain fully supported as work proceeds. Ensure that any loose fabric or objects found on the floors, which may appear to be part of the

mill fabric or mill machinery, are set aside for examination and not discarded as part of the detritus. If in doubt, set aside.

- 1.7 Cut back all live vegetation growth growing out of the fabric of the building and kill with appropriate vegetation killer such as Garlon 4, available from Nomix-Chipman Ltd, Portland Building, Portland Street, Staple Hill, Bristol BS16 4PS or similar approved. Allow to remove all dead vegetation on Mill currently. Do not pull off any vegetation or ivy which is rooted into the fabric and where doing so might cause damage to the fabric.
- 1.8 Once high level access is in place externally and internally allow time for Architect, accompanied by Engineer, Millwright or Industrial Archaeologist as necessary to visit, inspect and advise on high level details. The opportunity is also to be provided to the Local Authority officer to inspect if required. Time must be allowed for one week's notice of this inspection to be provided so that this can be arranged.

2.0 The works

- 2.1 Carefully set aside any loose elements of building fabric, or especially vulnerable items which have been agreed should be removed at the high level inspection. These should be stored within the building or taken to a safe store which has been agreed in advance with the Trust and the Local Planning Authority. Any building fabric items, including boards, timbers etc., which it is agreed should be moved, shall be itemised, photographed and a record provided to the Employer/CA including the position which they have been removed from.
- 2.2 When full high level access is available allow to remove remains of temporary roof and dispose of from site. Provisionally allow to carefully take down and rebuild 4 courses of brickwork at the head of the tower to create a stable base to support new temporary roof. Note: when the access is available the exact extent or removal/rebuilding will require to be agreed with the CA and with the Local Planning Authority. The emphasis will be on keeping as much as possible of the existing. Photographs are to be taken prior to work commencing on this element and provided to the CA/Employer as part of the record. The rebuilt work must precisely match the details found at high level in terms of corbelling or dog tothing of brickwork. [An alternative approach will be to record the brick detailing and set all or some of the removed bricks aside for later reuse, leaving a fully consolidated level base from which to build up the temporary roof.]
- 2.2 A new temporary roof is to be constructed as per drawing 10245/A3/SK01. Ensure that gaps are galvanised wire meshed to prevent pigeon etc access.
- 2.3 Provide 2 No Acrow props with timber head plate and wedges to support first floor timber extending out from north wall over second blocked door opening.

Provide 2 No diagonal raked Acrow props extending up to support lintel over door in north wall where partially collapsed and to prevent brickwork over collapsing into the Mill. These props will be purchased by the Trust so that they can remain in position until the full repair works can commence.

- 2.4 Remove the existing temporary ply door. Provide new 20mm thick ply door and new frame with substantial non lift off galvanised hinges to form more secure temporary door. Provide stout secure padlock and hasp.

[Alternatively, if on close examination it is found that a secure temporary door cannot be achieved due to the condition of the lintel with displaced iron flat under, and failed brickwork above, (Plate 4) allow to prop and remove the existing lintel and replace with a new oak lintel of matching section and to consolidate brickwork above, possibly replacing existing commons with new handmade bricks to match original brickwork. All to be reinstated as shown on Plate 5. Provide new treated softwood door frame of the same size as the existing, and supply and fit a substantial planked permanent door, with top, mid and bottom ledges, to match the door shown on earlier photograph, complete with two substantial strap blacksmith made plain black painted steel hinges. Provide stout secure padlock and hasp.]

- 2.5 Drill bearing ends of all window lintels to check for soundness. Where decay is identified allow to prop existing timber lintels with 2 No. vertical timbers and a timber head and sole plate. There are 2 windows at ground floor level and 4 windows at two further levels above, i.e. a total of 10 windows. Assume for tender that 4 No windows require propping.

- 2.6 Remove all existing window enclosures. Ensure that all window openings are secure at completion of works with new ply covering but allow for vent holes and bat exit holes. These must be no greater than 25 mm diameter to prevent bird access.

- 2.7 Ensure that ventilation is provided to all internal spaces in accordance with BSCP 5925:1980 at completion of works.

- 2.8 Allow to prop the blocking to the north doorway to prevent collapse. (Plate 6)

[If the brick blocking to the north doorway has become further detached and is now unstable, allow to dismantle, and take the bricks into agreed store for later rebuilding. Prop the masonry above using a temporary stout wooden frame clad both sides with 18mm ply and include also for raking struts and board to support the bulging brickwork above, if required by structural engineer]

- 2.9 The contractor may be required to provide lights and attendance to the survey team who will record the fabric and machinery of the mill once the enabling works have been completed.

3.0 Outline Specification

BRICKWORK: To match existing original brickwork in size, colour and texture and to approval of CA. The bricks shall either be reclaimed from this site, or new handmade bricks such as those manufactured by the York Handmade Brick Co. Reclaimed bricks from other sites are not allowed. Lay bricks/blocks on a full bed of mortar and fill all cross joints.

INCLEMENT WEATHER:

Do not use frozen materials and do not lay on frozen surfaces.

Do not lay bricks when air temperature is at or below 5°C unless mortar has a minimum temperature of 5°C when laid and walling is protected.

Maintain temperature of the work above freezing until mortar has fully hardened.

Adequately protect newly erected walling against rain and snow by covering when precipitation occurs and at the completion of each days work.

Rake out and replace mortar damaged by frost and where instructed, rebuild damage work.

JOINTING: When not specified otherwise, finish joints neatly as the work proceeds.

MORTAR: Use 1:3 hydraulic lime, sand mix. Sand to be clean washed very sharp pit sand free from loam and other impurities. Colour should be correct for mortar colour matching with existing, to be matched to approved sample insitu. Where loose work is to be rebedded remove all old mortar, earth, detritus etc and fully bed the bricks and fill all perpend. The mortar shall be finished flush and then stippled back to reveal the aggregate.

NATURAL HYDRAULIC LIME to be mixed in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. With hydraulic limes performance is variable because it gradually carbonates. Obtain fresh and do not store. Unless otherwise specified, to be obtained from:

Setra Marketing Ltd, 16 Cavendish Drive, Glaygate, Esher, Surrey, TK10 02E, (tel: 01372 465779).

Reference : St Astier natural hydraulic lime type NHL3.5.

Plates



Sneath's Mill in 1992 showing temporary ply cap in place



Plate 2: Interior showing pigeon guano on all surfaces



Plate 3: Fallen brickwork from high level showing risk to working internally



Plate 4: Displaced iron flat and poor brickwork over door may require rebuilding in order to achieve new secure door and frame



**Plate 5: The original door to the mill; note iron flat and original brickwork above.
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Plate 6: This panel may need propping or taking out and replacing with temporary panel to prop bulged brickwork above.