

**MANOR HOUSE HOTEL 2-4 FORE STREET CULLOMPTON**

**Cabinet Member** Cllr Richard Chesterton  
**Responsible Officer** Head of Planning and Regeneration

**Reason for Report:** To obtain authorisation for the service of a Repairs Notice to secure the preservation of The Manor House Hotel 2-4 Fore Street Cullompton

**RECOMMENDATION(S):** That authority be granted for the service of a Repairs Notice under Section 48 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 in relation to The Manor House Hotel, 2-4 Fore Street Cullompton.

**Relationship to Corporate Plan:**

Thriving economy- regeneration and improvement of market towns

**Financial Implications:** As set out in Section 3

**Legal Implications:** As set out in Section 2

**Risk Assessment:** None.



## 1.0 Background information

- 1.1 The Manor House Hotel comprises two linked buildings; the first a four gabled Grade II\* listed medieval building dating from 1603 and extended in 1718; the second a Grade II listed 19<sup>th</sup> century building which may retain some earlier fabric. The Hotel is located in the Cullompton conservation area in a prominent position in the town centre.
- 1.2 The Manor House Hotel is part of a row of high grade listed buildings on the west side of Fore Street, including the recently restored listed Grade I The Walronds and Grade II\* The Merchants House.
- 1.3 The Manor House Hotel was until recently in use as a pub and hotel with at least one flat. Having been closed since the last landlord left in mid August, it has now been put up for sale.
- 1.4 The condition of the building has been deteriorating for some time with minimal maintenance and repairs carried out in a manner inappropriate to the age, construction and status of the building.
- 1.5 Earlier this year some ineffective repointing was carried out to the corbelling on the corner of the medieval building. Following ongoing concern Building Control inspected the stonework and confirmed that the cracks in the stone corbelling at the junction of Fore Street with Tiverton Road were reopening. Further cracks were also noted along the Tiverton Road wall.
- 1.6 The dilapidated condition of the building is currently making a negative visual impact on the conservation area. The evidence of structural problems is also of concern with the potential for further deterioration and consequent danger to the public. The long term decline in the quality of the decorative plaster work is detrimental to the significance of the building.

## 2.0 The need to serve a Repairs Notice

- 2.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 under Section 48 provides a specific power to serve a Repairs Notice. Such notices are used in cases where protracted failure by an owner and / or management company to keep a listed building in reasonable repair places the building at risk. In the case of The Manor house Hotel it is considered that the failure to properly repair and maintain this high grade listed building places the building at risk. Given its status as a Grade II\* listed building and its very prominent position in the heart of the conservation area it is considered that action is needed to prompt its repair.
- 2.2 A report was commissioned from a specialist structural engineer as it was clear that there were underlying structural issues that needed to be investigated. That report identified several areas where there was evidence of structural movement and advised that in order to accurately define the causes of structural movement these areas would need opening up. The opening up work would then enable appropriate remedial works to be specified.
- 2.3 A copy of the initial report was provided to the owner. This was followed up by a meeting between council officers and owner

accompanied by his agent to set out what was required in order to address the problems identified. The required actions were set out in a letter. A draft of the proposed Repairs Notice was subsequently sent to the owner asking for comments. No comments have been received.

- 2.4 The owner has done some external opening up works but to date has not engaged the services of a conservation structural engineer to carry out the assessment of the causes of structural movement that is required in order to specify the repairs required.
- 2.5 The Repairs Notice must specify the works which the Authority considers reasonably necessary for the proper preservation of the building. These powers are not confined to urgent works and therefore provide an opportunity to specify comprehensive works that are reasonably necessary for the preservation of the building. The draft Repairs Notice has been based on the initial report from the structural engineer and requires remedial works to be specified by the structural engineer in response to the causes of movement. A copy of the draft Repairs Notice is attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.6 In addition to the repairs set out in section 3 of the draft repairs notice it is also recommended that a further requirement is added to provide a painted finish to the external walls on completion of the required repairs and re-rendering.
- 2.7 In the event of the need for more extensive works being identified then a further Repairs Notice or an Urgent Works Notice could be served.

### 3.0 **Financial Implications**

- 3.1 There is no appeal against a Repairs Notice. If after a period of two months it appears that reasonable steps are not being taken for the proper preservation of the building the local authority can begin compulsory purchase proceedings under Section 47 of the Act. However this would only be necessary if the Owner/Management Company fails to co-operate.
- 3.2 English Heritage advises that nationally only 2% of buildings where repairs notices are served ultimately proceed to compulsory purchase. So far none of the repairs notices served by Mid Devon District Council on other listed buildings in the district have led to a CPO.
- 3.3 Members should note that serving a repairs notice does not commit the Council to purchasing the building and members would need to specifically approve such action.
- 3.4 The aim of the Repairs Notice is to compel the owner to undertake appropriate repairs to ensure the proper preservation of the building or to sell the building.

**Contact for more Information: Sue Warren 01884 234391**

**Circulation of the Report: Cllr Richard Chesterton, Members of Planning Committee, Legal Services and Head of Planning and Regeneration**

**List of Background Papers: Draft Repairs Notice**

## **SECOND SCHEDULE**

### **1 Access safety and security**

- 1.1 Provide and maintain while works are being carried out all boarding, screens and barriers necessary to keep the building secure. Erect access scaffolding to Fore Street frontage and Tiverton Road frontage.
- 1.2 Clear out all rubbish from internal spaces so that all areas are open to inspection and free from bird nesting places.
- 1.3 Install temporary propping of any unstable areas in order to stabilise the structure generally where required in accordance with directions of the structural engineer.

### **2. Opening up and assesment**

- 2.1 Remove external render to Tiverton Road frontage. As a minimum a strip of render at least 2 meters wide should be removed for the full height of the building immediately adjacent to the north east corner at junction with Fore Street, and in areas of cracking highlighted in the structural engineer's preliminary report dated 8 July 2014, namely the area below the easternmost window, at the junction with the wall forming the north side of the northwest range and below second from east window, immediately adjacent to the step in the wall line and to the east of the central down pipe, and in the area at the western end of the wall where the render appears to be coming away from the cob and brickwork forming the corner. The condition of the wall and any structural defects shall be noted and if necessary additional render removed sufficient to assess the extent and causes of structural movement.
- 2.2 Remove internal lining to the kitchen wall at the west end of the north wall to check for the presence of a shear plane within the cob if this cannot be ascertained from the removal of external render required at 2 above.
- 2.3 Remove external render on the Fore Street frontage at the northern end of the east wall where it conceals the timber framing adjacent to the stonework, including the area of projecting pediment at first and second floor level and the area of render between the second floor window and the stonework in order to expose and assess the relationship between and the condition of the timber frame and stonework.
- 2.4 Internal plaster should be removed from the lintels above the blocked window at first floor level towards the east end of the north wall to assess the condition of the lintels. Similarly the lintels and sills of blocked openings at second floor/ attic level need to be exposed sufficiently to assess their condition.

- 2.5 Remove internal linings on all floors to the eastern end of the north wall and the north east corner to allow inspection and assessment of the underlying construction and its condition.
- 2.6 Floor boards should be lifted on all floors adjacent to the north east corner so that the construction and the connections between the stonework north wall and the timber frame east wall can be identified and assessed.

### **3 Repairs**

- 3.1 Repair the stonework forming the eastern end of the north wall and the stonework at the south west corner of the north-west range. The repairs shall include including stitching and insertion of ties to link the inner and outer facing stones. All voids between the inner and outer walls shall be grouted using lime mortar in accordance with the structural engineer's recommendations. The stonework shall be repointed using lime mortar with a flush joint.
- 3.2 Where opening up work reveals cob and there are cracks or shear planes these shall be stitched and repaired in accordance with the structural engineer's recommendations.
- 3.3 Carry out repairs to window lintels in accordance with the structural engineers recommendations.
- 3.4 Carry out repairs to timber floor structures in accordance with the structural engineer's recommendations. Prior to this work being carried out appropriate protection of any decorative plaster ceilings below shall be put in place and left in situ until completion of the floor structure repairs.
- 3.5 Treat retained structural timbers affected by insect attack or rot in accordance with the standards of the British Wood Preservation and Damp Proofing Association.
- 3.6 Repair and reinstate internal plasterwork which has been lost or damaged at walls and ceilings. Repairs shall be carried out in accordance with *Decorative Plasterwork: Its Repair and Restoration* by Don Stagg and Ron Masters (Attic Books 1986) The internal plasterwork shall then be decorated with good quality paint in accordance with the manufacturers recommendations.
- 3.7 Repair the plaster shell to the external door hood and repair the roof hood. The repair to the plaster shell shall be carried out in accordance with *Decorative Plasterwork: Its Repair and Restoration* by Don Stagg and Ron Masters (Attic Books 1986).
- 3.8 Assess the condition of the box gutter on the northern eaves and the related down pipe in order to specify remedial works. Overhaul and reinstate all salvageable rainwater goods. Reinstate missing and irreparable parts of the

system. Clean rainwater goods through to inspection chambers and generally ensure that all rainwater run off is conducted to drains.

3.9 Where render has been removed and repairs completed to the underlying stone brick or cob the walls shall be rendered using lime render.

3.10 Replace any cracked or missing panes of glass and leadwork to windows.

#### **4 Implementation**

4.1 Implementation of the required **remedial works** shall commence within 2 months of the date of this notice being served and it must be clear that reasonable steps are being taken for the proper preservation of the building.

4.2 All works shall be carried out by suitably qualified and experienced contractors.

#### **INFORMATIVE**

All new and external works and making good to the existing fabric should match the existing adjacent fabric with regard to materials and methods used unless otherwise specified in the above schedule or as otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.