

COMMITTEE:	CABINET
DATE:	6 FEBRUARY 2002
SUBJECT:	EASTBOURNE HERITAGE ECONOMIC REGENERATION SCHEME (HERS) – PROPOSED GRANT OFFER – 13 SEASIDE ROAD/1 ELMS ROAD, EASTBOURNE
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, REGENERATION AND AMENITIES
Ward(s):	Devonshire
Purpose:	To seek members' agreement to offer a grant under the Eastbourne Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS) for roof and structural repairs at 13 Seaside Road/ 1 Elms Road, Eastbourne.
Contact:	Jane Stephen, Assistant Historic Buildings Advisor, Telephone 01323 415253 or internally on extension 5253.
Recommendations:	That a Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme grant of up to £35,000 is offered on this scheme.

1.0	<u>Introduction</u>
1.1	The Eastbourne Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS) was launched in July 2001. The scheme offers grants for the repair and enhancement of historic buildings within a defined area of Eastbourne, around Seaside Road. The grants are jointly funded by Eastbourne Borough Council and English Heritage. A total of £248,000 has been made available for building repair grants over the 3 year scheme, which will end in 2004.

1.2	Grant offers in excess of £25,000 per property in any one financial year are not delegated to officers to determine, and specific member approval for the release of these larger grant sums is required. The proposed grant offer for 13 Seaside Road/ 1 Elms Road is being referred to Cabinet for final approval because it exceeds the delegation threshold of £25,000.
2.0	<u>Background information on 13 Seaside Road/ 1 Elms Road</u>
2.1	The building at 13 Seaside Road/ 1 Elms Road is within the Town Centre and Seafront Conservation Area. It occupies a prominent corner site on Seaside Road. It is the first building of the substantial terrace of Edwardian properties on the southern side of Seaside Road called “Elms Buildings”. The architectural and historic importance of the terrace has been recognised and the whole terrace of buildings has been designated as Buildings of Local Interest. The corner property at 13 Seaside Road has a corner turret and decorative dome, which increases its townscape importance.
2.2	The property at 13 Seaside Road has been deteriorating over a number of years. It changed ownership in March 2001 and the new owner became aware that the structural problems to the corner turret were becoming serious. The supporting steels in the turret appear to have failed and the brickwork is now bowing out significantly. A decision was made some months ago to erect a protective scaffold around the property to protect passers-by from falling masonry. Considerable water ingress has also been experienced through the roof of the building and this is further damaging the structure. The degree of damp penetration has now made the accommodation on the upper three floors of the building uninhabitable.
2.3	The new owners are keen to overcome the structural problems and get the building weather tight again. The grant aid will enable the owner to protect the building from further deterioration and also to take a conservation-based approach to the repair of the historic structure.
3.0	<u>Details of the grant application</u>

3.1	The new owner submitted an application for a grant under the new Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS) in late November 2001. A “without prejudice” start was issued on 14 January 2002, to allow work on the repair of the leaking roof to commence.
3.2	<p>The agreed grant eligible repairs on the property include the following key elements :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - complete renewal of the roof in natural Welsh slate, - chimney repairs, - new cast iron rainwater goods, - the structural repair and recovering of the decorative corner dome, - major structural repairs to the corner turret, - structural re-pointing and brickwork repair to the front and side elevations, - Reinstatement of original architectural features to the ground floor of the building.
3.3	It is considered that the proposed scheme will deal with the essential repairs for the building and will also ensure that the architecturally important corner turret and dome remains in tact and continues to make a positive enhancement to the townscape of Seaside Road.
4.0	<u>The proposed grant offer</u>
4.1	The grant calculation is normally based on a combination of the two grant rates available. A 50% grant rate is offered on items of general repair, whilst a 75% grant rate is available for repair or reinstatement works to architectural features. Based on the above rates, the amount of grant that could potentially be paid on the scheme at 13 Seaside Road /1 Elms Road is £52,741.

4.2	Grant levels per property are normally limited to a maximum grant of £25,000. However, this scheme is regarded as exceptional because of the major scale of the problems with the building and its importance to the townscape. This building was identified as priority 1 (highest) for action in the HERS Implementation Programme, which sets out the Council's aims for the grant scheme.
4.3	The property has been empty for some time. The new owner intends to convert the building into 3 self contained flats and a self-contained maisonette. The 4 new housing units will then be available for private rental. It is proposed that the ground floor of the property will remain in commercial use (it is currently occupied by Fordette Bookmakers). In addition to carrying out the external repairs to the building the owner will also be investing significantly in the fitting out and decoration of the new flats. It is estimated that his total expenditure on renovating the building will be in excess of £130,000.
4.4	It is, therefore, recommended that a higher than normal HERS grant is offered on this building. However, there is a limited amount of grant money still available in the budget to offer as grants for this year (£76,500 in total) and there is a further major scheme that still requires funding out of this year's grant allocation (proposed major renovation works at 78-86 Seaside Road). It is normal practice, in these circumstances, to offer a flat rate grant contribution on the scheme. The recommended grant for the scheme at 13 Seaside Road/ 1 Elms Road is £35,000 . The total value of grant eligible works on this scheme is £94,803. This represents a grant contribution of 37% the total eligible works. The amount remaining in the grant budget to offer in 2001-2 will be £41,500.
4.5	The Council are co-funding the Eastbourne HERS grants with English Heritage. If a grant of £35,000 is offered, the two project partners will each fund 50% of the cost. The cost of the grant to the Council will, therefore, be £17,500 . English Heritage will meet the cost of the remaining grant (£17,500).
5.0	<u>Consultation with English Heritage</u>

5.1	In cases where less than £40,000 is offered in grant, English Heritage has delegated the management of the grant scheme, and the allocation of their share of the funding, to the Council. English Heritage have been made aware of this scheme, in quarterly progress meetings with the Council, but there is no requirement to formally consult them on this grant offer.
6.0	<u>Human Resource Implications</u>
6.1	The Assistant Historic Buildings Advisor will oversee the implementation of the grant works, and the grant payment, as part of her role. There is no other human resource implication.
7.0	<u>Environmental Implications</u>
7.1	The scheme will result in the repair of a prominent and attractive historic building within the Seaside Road regeneration area.
8.0	<u>Financial Implications</u>
8.1	If a flat rate grant of up to £35,000 is offered, a Council contribution of £17,500 is required. The Council's contribution will be taken from the Capital allocation for HERS held within the Council's existing budgets for this financial year.
8.2	In exchange for this Council contribution, a further £17,500 will be drawn down from English Heritage.
8.3	As the HERS grants are relatively new there is still £188,000 worth of grant money available to offer in building repair grants over the next 2.5 years of the project.
9.0	<u>Youth / Anti-Poverty / Community Safety/ Human Rights Implications</u>

9.1	None.
10.0	<u>Summary</u>
10.1	Members are asked to support the proposed HERS grant offer of £35,000 towards the cost of repairs to 13 Seaside Road /1 Elm Road, Eastbourne.
<p>Norman Kinnish</p> <p>Director of Planning, Regeneration & Amenities</p>	
<p>Background Papers:</p> <p>The Background Papers used in compiling this report were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) HERS grant application. b) Eastbourne Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme contract. c) Eastbourne Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme Implementation Programme, dated April 2001. d) Delegation criteria for administering the Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme grants, agreed May 2001. <p>To inspect or obtain copies of background papers please refer to the contact officer listed above.</p>	