

Committee: Cabinet
Date: 27 March 2014
Title: Walden Castle
Portfolio Holder: Cllr Chambers

Agenda Item

13

Key decision: **No**

Summary

1. The Council owns the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Walden Castle and has responsibility for its maintenance.
2. Cabinet has provided a budget for repairs and improvements some of which have taken place.
3. A masterplan for the site has been prepared.

Recommendations

4. To approve the masterplan and vision for the Walden Castle site.

Financial Implications

5. Cabinet has provided a capital budget for repairs and improvements to the Walden castle site. Some of this budget has already been spent and committed. In addition a grant from English Heritage of £20,000 was obtained during 2013/14 for some of the emergency repair works.
6. The cost of the proposals can be met from the existing budget.
7. Further extensive consolidation work is required. Accurate costings are not yet available as they require decisions from English Heritage which can only be taken after the next phase of consolidation works. Cabinet will be advised of the outcome in due course.

Background Papers

8. None

Impact

- 9.

Communication/Consultation	Consultation has taken place with English Heritage, the Saffron Walden District Councillors and Saffron Walden Town Council.
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Community Safety	No impact.
Equalities	The requirement will improve access for disabled and less able visitor.
Health and Safety	No impact.
Human Rights/Legal Implications	No impact.
Sustainability	No impact.
Ward-specific impacts	Saffron Walden Castle
Workforce/Workplace	Limited officer resource is available. Use of external architects to oversee the project.

Situation

10. The Council is the owner of Walden Castle and has a duty to maintain the Scheduled Ancient Monument. Currently the Castle is on the Buildings at Risk Register of English Heritage, and as a consequence, the Council has started a programme of consolidation and repair of the ruins.
11. Consolidation work commenced last year and the next phase is due to start imminently (this will be works to the Semaphore Tower). The Council has applied to English Heritage for Scheduled Ancient Monument Consent for the improvements to the pedestrian access gate and is awaiting a decision – it is hoped that these works can be completed before the Tour de France in July.
12. As part of the planning works officers together with our architects, Purcell, have developed a masterplan for the site. This document sets out the end goal of creating a renovated Castle ruin sitting in an attractive, accessible and useable space.

Conclusion

13. Officers have created a masterplan for the Castle site to ensure the area is well used and that the important monument is preserved and is exploited as one of the Towns tourist attractions.

Risk Analysis

14.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
That there is insufficient finance to	2 – The works within the	1 – Some delay in completing the	Carefully consider priority of the work

fully complete the project.	masterplan are fully fundable from the capital budget. Depending on how extensive the repairs to the ruins are further fund may be required.	project	which can be phased. Ensure that as soon as robust costings are available Cabinet are updated.
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1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.