

The Bell Hotel, Curry Rivel

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Purpose of the Report

To update members on the Bell Hotel, Curry Rivel.

Public Interest

Listed buildings maybe neglected and fall into disrepair for many reasons. These buildings are included on South Somerset's Register of Buildings at Risk. Their condition is monitored and sometimes the planning authority will use its powers to require repairs to be carried out by an owner who is unwilling to take proper responsibility for their upkeep, or to allow them to become detrimental to amenity.

Recommendation

That members note the update.

Report

Members will recall that they received a report on the listed buildings in Area North that are at risk in November 2015. Members were particularly concerned regarding the condition of the Bell Hotel in Curry Rivel, and options were discussed in confidential session at the meeting.

Update

In early December, the Conservation Manager wrote to the owners to highlight the concerns raised by members at the November meeting of Area North Committee.

The letter requested that works be carried out to remedy the poor external condition of the former hotel buildings in the very near future, and that if prompt progress is not made to remedy the poor external condition of the buildings, the Council intends to take enforcement action under Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The Council wishes to avoid doing this if possible, but failure to comply with the request will leave the Council with no option.

A draft schedule of the works considered necessary to improve the external appearance of the buildings was included with the letter.

A positive response has been received from the owners, indicating they intend to carry out the works as requested in the Conservation Manager's letter. However as yet the exact date for completion of the works is unknown, the owner indicating on the 5th of January *"Our project manager is currently seeking quotes for the works. He will get these as soon as possible. We won't be able to confirm exact timeframes for any repair work until we get the quotes back so we will be in touch asap."*

At this time they have not indicated how we might arrange for an internal inspection, but they have not been obstructive in the past.

A brief verbal update will be provided by the Area Development Manager (North) at the meeting.

Financial Implications

If the owner of the building fails to carry out the works as required by a section 215 notice, the enforcement of the notice by the Council is either prosecution in the Magistrates court, or to carry out the works itself and recharge the owner. Both have financial implications. It is most likely that we would seek the latter approach as this does ensure the works take place. Non-payment of an invoice for the works would be pursued as any other debt to the Council, and could result in a charge being placed on the property. There remains a risk that we would not recover the costs in whole or in part.

Council Plan Implications

Focus 2 – Environment
Focus 3 - Homes

Carbon Emissions Climate Change Implications

No adverse implications. Repairing and reusing buildings is inherently sustainable.

Equality and Diversity Implications

None
