

Brackley Town Hall restoration project secures Lottery support

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The project aims to deliver the comprehensive restoration of the Grade II* Listed building which is currently identified as being in a vulnerable condition.

Development funding of around £100,000 has also been awarded to help Brackley Town Council progress their plans to apply for a full grant at a later date.

The project aims to become an exemplar for how restoring a prominent heritage building can drive town centre regeneration by increasing footfall, business confidence, delivering community activities and new public spaces. It is hoped that the project can deliver the sensitive conservation and restoration of the building whilst introducing exciting new uses that can support the town centre economy.

Alongside the restoration of the building the project will bring together existing and future residents of the town through a programme of interpretation and education activities as Brackley expands over the coming years. Activities will include events for local school children, advice and training for volunteers, building owners and local businesses as well as the creation of a new archive and web resources.

Brackley Town Hall was built from 1704-07 by Scroop Egerton, 4th Earl of Bridgewater, Lord of the Manor of Brackley. The Town Hall was built in its present location half-way up a long incline as a deliberate device to bring together two separate communities ('lower' and 'upper' Brackley) which were developing as un-related villages at the bottom and top of what is now the High Street. This theme of using the building as way of generating community cohesion and economic development is central to the restoration project in the 21st century.

The successful stage one application to the HLF is the culmination of a year's hard work led by Brackley Town Council involving South Northamptonshire Council and countless local stakeholders, overseen by consultants Ingham Pinnock Associates.

Cllr Peter Rawlinson, Mayor of Brackley said: "I am delighted with the HLF's decision to fund the next stage in the proposed refurbishment of the Town Hall. The fact that our bid has been successful in a highly competitive national process is a testament to the value placed on our iconic, Wren-inspired building.

"I would like to thank all those who have put a huge amount of effort into this project over a considerable period of time: the Town Councillors, the Town CEO and our advisors Ross Ingham and Kate Pinnock from Ingham Pinnock Associates. The Council looks forward to engaging with the Brackley community to take the project forward."

Vanessa Harbar, Head of HLF East Midlands, said: "Brackley Town Hall is a picture-perfect historic building found at the heart of this Northamptonshire market town. We found the council's application to restore and put it back into full use as a community facility both compelling and inspiring. Brackley residents are rightly proud of their town's history, particularly its role in the signing of the Magna Carta, and are keen to have the opportunity to tell the full story. This is the first positive step to securing a full Heritage Lottery Fund grant; we will be following developments closely as plans start to take shape."

Notes to editors

A first-round pass means the project meets HLF criteria for funding and HLF believes the project has potential to deliver high-quality benefits and value for Lottery money. The application was in competition with other supportable projects, so a first-round pass is an endorsement of outline proposals. Having been awarded a first-round pass, the project now has up to two years to submit fully developed proposals to compete for a firm award.

On occasion, an applicant with a first-round pass will also be awarded development funding towards the development of their scheme.

Further information

For more information please contact Katie Owen, HLF Press Office, on 020 7591 6036 / 07973 613820.

For further information, images and interviews, please contact Linda Carter, Council Executive Officer, email: town.clerk@brackleynorthants-tc.gov.uk.