Britain's unique 8-sail windmill on the verge of an exciting new chapter

21/01/2013

The grant will enable the Heckington Windmill Trust to restore the wider mill site and create a world-class visitor attraction around the mill and its Victorian industrial complex.

Trust Chairman, Charles Pinchbeck, is naturally delighted: "This grant truly recognises the significance of Heckington's Windmill. It is a huge vote of confidence in the commitment and hard work that has been put in, not just by the members, but by the project's many supporters - Lincolnshire County Council, North Kesteven District Council, Heckington Parish Council, the Charles Haywood Foundation, Bicker Trust, local businesses and the many individuals who have played a part in our success."

The grant is subject to finalising terms for the acquisition of the building and yard. The plan is to use the Lottery funding to purchase and restore the whole mill complex. The buildings include the former cart-shed and granary and the one-time sawmill as well as the Mill House. In temporary use as a tea room, the house has already helped to improve the visitor experience. Ownership of the site by the Windmill Trust will immediately secure it as a heritage landmark for future generations.

It will then be transformed into a superb visitor centre. Nowhere else will a working mill be seen in such context - a vision very dear to Head Miller Jim Bailey. Jim has done fantastic outreach work and visiting schools already love his interactive mill tours. He is certainly relishing the prospect of a step change in the scope and quality of the visitor experience. "I know" said Jim "the prospect of educational visits where we can demonstrate the Field to Fork chain through harvesting, milling, baking and even the eating will have a real impact both in terms of excitement and understanding". Jim also highlighted how the mill will also mill barley for the on-site brewery and the concept of 'Field to Flagon' is sure to be an added (and not always educational) attraction for many. Being located in the heart of rural Lincolnshire seems only fitting as the nearby A17 is packed today with lorries taking Lincolnshire produce to our supermarkets.

Heckington already has a unique place in the windmill lexicon. It was the only village in Britain and probably the world to have boasted 4,5,6 and 8-sailed mills and still has the only 8-sailed mill in North West Europe, which already makes it a must visit location for mill enthusiasts. The power of eight has been enough to draw out literally thousands of volunteer hours as well as generous donations from organisations such as the Heckington Players, Henpeckers, Ladybirds, local businesses and many individuals.

The HLF bid weighed in at 477 pages and 6lb which reflected the attention to detail by the project group, managed in Heckington by Penny Ward from Heritage Lincolnshire. The design work was carried out by architects Cowper Griffith (who designed the Flatford Mill Visitors facility) to use the buildings in an empathetic way to allow the community to use and 'own' the future of the site.

Further information

To learn more and keep up to date with progress, visit the Heckington Windmill website. You can also sign up as member and volunteer to support and be part of this brilliant project. Or why not visit the windmill which is open on

Sundays until Easter when the more intensive summer programme starts. It's a great chance to get in at the beginning and see the site before work stats. The Mill House tea room is open Wednesdays to Sundays.