North Yorkshire eco-mill restoration wins support from HLF

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The community-led project, to be run by registered charity the Renewable Heritage Trust, will see the building saved for future generations and put to use as an education and community centre. It has been lying derelict since the mill closed in 1947 and is currently on the English Heritage ‘At Risk’ Register.

Howsham Mill is situated on a small island in the middle of the River Derwent near Malton and provides a focal point for the rich agricultural, industrial and social history of the area. With a mill on the site since medieval times, this one was designed by John Carr of York and dates to around 1755. It served all the farms on and around the Howsham Estate and its island position acted as a social hub for surrounding villages for hundreds of years.

The project, which has a decidedly environmental twist, has already seen Phase 1 of works completed. This has reinstated the waterwheel together with an Archimedean screw turbine to harness once more the power of the river - this time not grinding corn, but producing electricity.

Phase 2, which can now go ahead with the award of this grant, will see the magnificent main building restored externally, whilst inside it will be developed into a permanent state-of-the-art classroom/meeting space. An Education and Events Officer will be appointed to oversee all future activities at the mill which will include an exciting and varied programme of education activities for all ages exploring the areas’ industrial and agricultural heritage as well as focussing on topics such as the natural environment, sustainability and renewable energy.

Fiona Spiers, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund Yorkshire and Humber, said: “This project demonstrates some really innovative thinking in bringing alive a wonderful heritage asset while developing a working legacy for its future. We’re extremely pleased that Howsham Mill can now move on to the next capital phase which will return the building to its former glory – and far more.”

Mo Macleod, for the Renewable Heritage Trust, said: “After seven years of hard work and hoping, it’s hard to describe just how excited we are that we will soon be able to open the doors of a fully restored Howsham Mill, thanks to this grant from the HLF.”

Anne McIntosh, MP for Thirsk, Malton and Filey, is delighted that Howsham Mill has been granted funding for the second part of a restoration project. She said: “I am pleased that the second phase of restoration work on this project can now go ahead. This Grade II listed 18th century watermill is a real gem and all those involved in its restoration should be very proud of their hard work and dedication. I understand that once up and running, the waterwheel will be put to good use with the revenue from power sales to fund future restoration and conservation work.”

Notes to editors

* The HLF grant to the project Howsham Mill Project is for £643,100 (82% of project costs) and is a second-round pass, which means it is a confirmed award.

Howsham Mill

Howsham Mill became known nationally when in 2006 it reached the finals of popular BBC programme Restoration Village as Northern winner.

Further information

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