

## The Highland Council

City of Inverness Area Committee – 4 March 2014

Agenda Item	9b
Report No	CIA/08/14

### Town House Works Programme, High Street, Inverness

### Joint Report by the Director of Planning and Development and the Acting Head of Community and Democratic Engagement

#### Summary

This report seeks approval to proceed to tender to carry out comprehensive fabric works to the Town House, following frequent emergency repairs and a detailed condition survey. The works will include: full stone repairs and replacement, mortar re-pointing, roof repairs, rainwater goods renewal, window repairs and replacements. Approval is also sought to investigate further third party funding.

#### 1. Background

- 1.1 The Common Good Fund owns the Town House and has a responsibility to maintain the structure in a good and safe condition.
- 1.2 The last major repairs to the stonework were undertaken in 1956. These were necessitated by the problems of undue deterioration of the ashlar stonework, which continues to this day. Since 1956 small localised repairs have been carried out. Although some repairs have proved to be long lasting, others have unfortunately caused some further long term damage. Over the last few years more repair works than anticipated have had to be carried out and loose stone work has had to be removed to prevent danger to the general public from falling masonry. This has caused concern about the safety of the building. In 2009 an inspection of the Town House reported deterioration at a greater rate than expected which prompted the commissioning of a full condition survey.

#### 2. Condition Survey

- 2.1 The condition survey undertaken in October 2009 found that the Town House was generally in a structurally sound condition given its age. However it was also agreed that a more detailed survey was required.
- 2.2 In May 2013, after the appointment of a Design Team, a fully detailed survey was undertaken. This found that, due mainly to the natural ageing process over the past 130 years, repairs were required to the stonework, roof and windows of the building, together with miscellaneous associated works.
- 2.4 The total estimated cost for the works was £8,800,000 including fees, client risk contingency and miscellaneous costs. It should be noted that 80% of this estimated cost is for conservation works to the original part of the Town House. The rise in the estimated cost is due to excessive wearing of the stone and degrading of detailed carvings on the upper levels of the south and west elevations.

### 3. Phasing Options

- 3.1 A briefing session was held for Members, and after careful consideration and discussion it was recommended that works should initially be carried out on the original and most important part of the Town House, shown as Building 1 in **Appendix A**. After this work has been completed, the works to remaining parts of the Town House will be commissioned as a separate contract.
- 3.2 The estimated cost for these initial works is £7,250,000. It is recommended that these works be carried out over five phases as illustrated in **Appendix B**.
- 3.3 The Town House is a fully working office and public building and a certain amount of disruption will be caused. Access to the Chamber, Main Hall, Committee Rooms and all offices will be required at various stages, so that window repairs and replacements can be undertaken. This work will need to be carefully programmed to avoid any clash with public occasions and civil ceremonies, although it must be noted that some re-scheduling of events may be required.
- 3.4 As lime works (pointing, grouting and stone replacement and repairs) must be carried out in temperatures above 5°C, it is proposed that this work is scheduled for April to September 2015. Window repairs and replacements, along with roof and miscellaneous repairs, can be carried out at any time and will be programmed accordingly.
- 3.5 Once the project is complete, the Town House will continue to serve as a vital and key structure in the centre of Inverness. Following completion of the contract, it is recommended that annual inspections are carried out, which can be followed up by maintenance and repair works, to agreed and recognised specifications, where necessary.

### 4. Financial

- 4.1 The table below gives an expenditure profile for the Town House contract including fees. This is based on a 6 year programme divided into five phases.

Expenditure Profile	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	Total
Total Project Cost Inclusive of fees, client risk contingency and miscellaneous costs	100	990	1,452	2,046	1,177	1,485	7,250,000
<b>Total Project Cost £</b>							7,250,000

- 4.2 If approved, this will require to be financed from cash investments. This is considered separately in the report on the Common Good Fund Investment Strategy.

### 5. Third Party Funding

- 5.1 Contact has been made with several third party funders. Historic Scotland has committed to the project, initially agreeing to provide £500,000 of funding. Further investigation with alternative funders will be undertaken once a tendered project is in place.

## 6. Implications

- 6.1 **Resources:** these are outlined in the present report.
- 6.2 **Climate Change/Carbon Clever:** All reasonable action will be taken to use sustainable materials and methods that reduce carbon emissions.
- 6.3 **Legal:** There are no known legal implications.
- 6.4 **Equalities:** The project will be managed so as to comply with the Council's Equalities Policies.
- 6.5 **Risk:** Further deterioration of the fabric of this important building and possible danger to the public is a risk if these works are not carried out.

## 7. Governance

- 7.1 This project is a Common Good Project and, under the governance regulations, monthly reports will be issued to the Inverness City Manager and copied to Ward Members.
- 7.2 Further reports will be issued to the City of Inverness Area Committee during the contract.

## 8. Conclusion

- 8.1 The proposed investment of an estimated £7,250,000 to repair the fabric of the Town House will bring this building back to a good standard and alleviate safety concerns to the general public. It is estimated that these works will give the Town House a further 100 years life span.

## 9. Recommendation

Committee is invited to agree that work is done to:

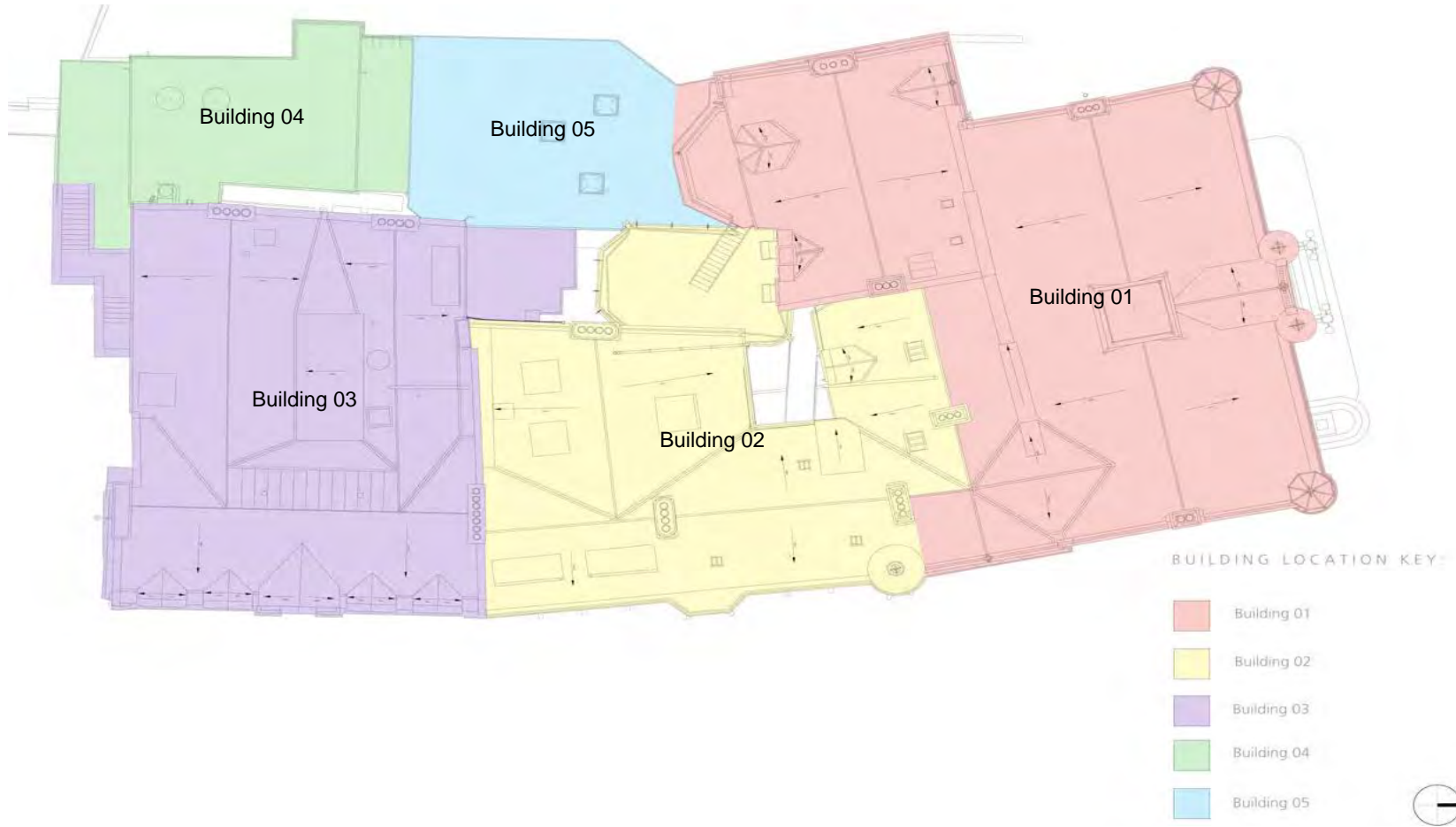
- proceed to tender for the repairs outlined in this report at a total estimated project cost of £7,250,000 over five phases; and
- carry out further investigation into third party funding.

Designation: Director of Planning and Development  
Acting Head of Community and Democratic Engagement

Date: 19 February 2014

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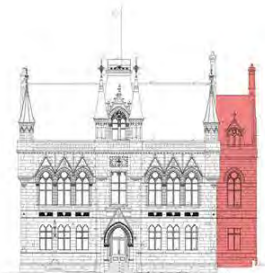
APPENDIX A



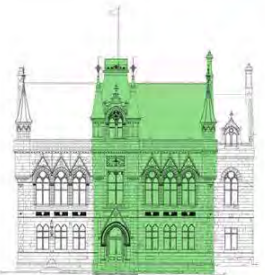
APPENDIX B



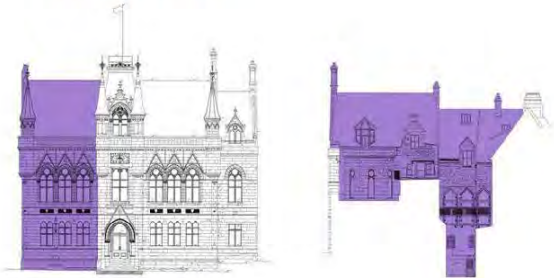
PHASE ONE



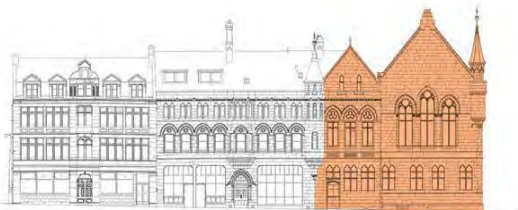
PHASE TWO



PHASE THREE



PHASE FOUR



PHASE FIVE