

# PEOPLE (CHILDREN) SCRUTINY PANEL

21 February 2013

## HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND BID SUBMISSION

Report of the Strategic Director for People

STRATEGIC AIM:	<b>Creating a Brighter Future for All</b>
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### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide feedback on the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) application to provide funding for the restoration of Oakham Castle.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 **That Scrutiny Panel considers the contents of this report with regard to the application process, project proposals and anticipated benefits for the community of Rutland and wider geographical area.**

### 3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 RCC had the opportunity to put forward a stage one application for Heritage Lottery Funding through the Heritage Grant Scheme. The Local Authority received confirmation that the pre-application had been successful and received an invitation to apply for significant funding.

3.2 Oakham Castle is a site of local, regional, national and international importance. The Local Authority has tried within the constraints of limited budgets to promote the building. As a result the Castle has increased in popularity for wedding and other ceremonies. In 2008, Heritage Lottery funding granted RCC £50,000 towards a £68,000 project to undertake project planning work to better understand the site and ensure that Oakham Castle is restored to the centre of life in Rutland. This work has now been completed.

### 4. PROJECT PROPOSALS

4.1 Heritage Lottery Fund provided advice to RCC on the major areas for investment. These were:

- a) Repair and consolidation of the curtain wall
- b) Repair and conservation of the Great Hall
- c) Resolution of existing site drainage issues
- d) Construction of site toilet facilities
- e) Installation of site interpretation

f) Activity and community engagement programme.

The scope of the works identified were calculated to be in the region of up to £2 million in order to provide the significant investment required to preserve and improve this historic building.

**4.2** The requirements for the Heritage Lottery Fund were clearly specified. The HLF confirmed that the archaeological and site works already completed demonstrated the value of the site and the need for the works. Appendix A consists of the Oakham Castle Restoration Plan 2012. HLF has confirmed that RCC has already met the requirements of the application for this area.

**4.3** The main requirement of outstanding project work to be completed related to the development of and contribution to a suitable activity plan and Rutland needed to demonstrate that the community fully engaged with the project development. A significant amount of community involvement underpinned the bid. The stage 1 application was submitted by the deadline of 19<sup>th</sup> December 2012.

The whole emphasis of the proposal submission involved the following elements:

- a) Cultural centre
- b) History and Heritage
- c) Community events
- d) Improvements to accessibility
- e) Conserve Castle walls
- f) Tourist destination
- g) Increased sustainability.

**4.4** In order to consider and develop the whole project a project board was put in place with membership from a range of interested parties. Terms of reference were agreed to provide a framework for the future restoration work of Oakham Castle (Appendix B).

The Project Board referred to the HLF guidance: 'We are expecting your activity plan to reflect where you want to be and the difference your project will make, based on a good understanding of where you are now.'

The Project Board led on this work and oversaw the submission. A timetable was followed, identifying clearly the milestones to be met in order to meet the requirement and lead to a successful outcome.

**4.5** A planned programme of activities has been implemented, providing the community of Rutland and the neighbouring areas through consultation both face to face and on line to inform the future work planning.

The completed consultation demonstrated a clear commitment to Oakham Castle and provided valuable information in relation to school involvement, family visits, interpretation, the horseshoes, signage, development of volunteering opportunities, catering provision, the Law Courts, events and activities, Community Archaeology digs, the castle grounds, the castle walls, weddings, links with visitors and tourism and access to the facilities.

This wealth of information has been collated and was included as part of the Stage 1 HLF application.

**4.6** The purpose of the plan will be:

- a) To help visitors better understand the history of the Oakham Castle complex whenever they visit, even if the Great Hall is closed.
- b) Help visitors appreciate what is special and unique about the site.
- c) Highlight and develop interpretative themes that will inspire and engage visitors to the site.
- d) Present the multi-phase history of the Castle in the most accessible manner possible.
- e) Present a hierarchy of information, both inside the Great Hall and outside in the Castle grounds to engage visitors of all ages and with varying levels of interest and education, and that would appeal to a range of audiences.
- f) Encourage visitors to explore and understand all of the Castle grounds and physically experience the terrain for themselves.
- g) Increase the dwell time of visitors to the site whether the Great Hall is open or not.
- h) While acknowledging the physical limitations imposed by the historic site and building, encourage as much access and interaction as possible with the site's heritage and information about it.
- i) Identify the most appropriate means for presenting this information to visitors.
- j) Support activities to enable the Castle to be sustainable for the future.

**4.7** Should HLF approve the application to proceed to Stage 2 a planned programme of activities will be implemented with the community of Rutland being invited to contribute through a variety of mediums. The Castle has a number of special interest features:

- a) The horseshoes
- b) The oldest Norman Hall in England
- c) The Court and legal history

**4.8** Should the application prove to be successful at Stage 1, a development grant will be awarded to enable the local authority to recruit a project officer to take the bid to Stage 2 and final award stage (a process which is likely to take approximately 12 months).

## **5. FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

**5.1** The deadline for the HLF application was 19<sup>th</sup> December 2012 and the outcome for the first stage will be known at the end of March 2013.

**5.2** 10% match funding is a requirement of the Heritage Lottery funding. £10,000 has already been secured by a donation from the Friends of the Museum and the Castle. A request to Cabinet will be sought for a contribution of

£200,000 should the application be successful. In addition, other avenues of funding will continue to be explored.

- 5.3** The £2 million grant funding will be of great benefit to the county in terms of preserving heritage, increasing sustainability and supporting tourism activities and transport development in Rutland.

## 6. RISK MANAGEMENT

RISK	IMPACT	COMMENTS
<b>Time</b>	<b>Medium</b>	The preparation for the submission of the application requires Project Board and officer time and if successful at Stage 1 will continue.
<b>Viability</b>	<b>High</b>	Restoration work at Oakham Castle is required to stem the deterioration and secure the building for future years, and in order to be able to offer viable income generating opportunities in the future.
<b>Finance</b>	<b>High</b>	Applications to the Heritage Lottery Fund are competitive, and it is not possible to predict success, although HLF are strongly supportive of the project. Match funding will need to be secured. The application can include a project officer as part of the fund requested from HLF at Stage 2. We will report any significant pressures/savings on the budget when they become clear.
<b>Profile</b>	<b>High</b>	Oakham Castle is of local, regional and national importance. The Hall is unique in Northern Europe as the finest known example of Norman domestic architecture, and in England as being the oldest court building which has remained in continuous use. The people of Rutland are likely to support work that will preserve this building.
<b>Equality and Diversity</b>	<b>Medium</b>	There is a requirement to complete works in order to improve access. Failure to do this could result in restricted access to the building for members of the community.

**Background Papers**  
 HLF Guidance  
 HLF Application Process

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**A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.**