

Mandate Proposal
Chilworth Gunpowder Mills

Introduction and background

Chilworth Gunpowder Mills is a 27 acre site on the edge of the village of Chilworth in the Tillingbourne Ward. Spread across the site are the ruins of numerous features that comprised gunpowder mills from the 17th century until its closure in 1920. It is one of the best remaining examples of this type of industry and has been designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument by Historic England.

During 2019 and 2020 we undertook substantial renovation and repair work to various structures and features across the site. During that work, a significant defect was discovered with a stone culvert and spillway beneath the main access path into the site.

1. Why should a project be started, or growth bid considered now?

The problem identified by this proposal is a health and safety risk to members of the public and our own staff. It has the potential to prevent access to a site which is both an important local amenity and of national significance.

2. What is the good idea or problem to be solved?

A significant defect has been identified with a stone culvert and spillway beneath the main access path into the site. Both features have failed structurally with the potential for the path above to collapse. As well as being used by members of the public walking into the site, this path is the only point of vehicular access and is used in that capacity by our Parks team when undertaking general site maintenance.

Because of the scale of the work that will be required to affect a repair and the need to obtain the permission of Historic England for that work, temporary measures have been put in place to reduce the burden on the structure and protect users of the site. These include a sandbag dam to divert water away from the structure and prevent further soil erosion, Heras fencing to prevent public access to the spillway and roadway matting to better spread vehicular loads when crossing the structure.

3. What will be delivered? What are the success criteria? What is the purpose of the project?

The purpose of this project is to design an appropriate repair to the failed structures, seek approval to do so from Historic England, engage a suitably experienced specialist contractor and implement the repair work to return the structures to a safe condition.

4. What priority, corporate objective or strategy is fulfilled by this project?

The proposed work does not specifically address a corporate objective or strategy. It does, however, resolve a potential health and safety concern and meet our legal obligation to maintain historic structures that are in our care.

5. What are the strategic options available to GBC to deliver a solution?

As a project designed to repair and maintain an existing asset, there are few alternatives to affecting an approved repair in the manner described.

Whilst the option of doing nothing always exists, in this case there are significant risks to both health and safety and to the Council's legal position as it has an obligation to maintain its historic assets. Not undertaking this work will ultimately lead to compromising access to the site and as it is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, may leave the Council open to legal challenge.

The Council is also open to criticism where it fails to protect its assets that have historic value.

<p>6. Who are the lead Director and Service Manager and portfolio Holder (CIr) who will lead and direct the project and use the products in live service</p>
<p>Whilst the asset forms part of the Culture, Heritage & Leisure Services portfolio, the work will be managed and undertaken by building surveyors of the Asset Management team. As such, the relevant leads for that team are as follows:</p> <p>Dawn Hudd –Strategic Services Director Marieke van der Reijden –Head of Asset Management</p>
<p>7. What impact assessments have been undertaken? What are the impacts on other service leaders or projects?</p>
<p>Not applicable.</p>
<p>8. What general approach will be taken to deliver?</p>
<p>As with the earlier work on the site, the proposal is to employ a structural engineer that specialises in work to ancient structures to design the necessary repair work. That will also include submission of a Scheduled Ancient Monument application to gain the required approval of Historic England.</p> <p>The unpredictable nature of the work also requires the services of a suitably experienced Quantity Surveyor.</p> <p>Project management will be dealt with in-house by a member of the Building Surveying team.</p>
<p>9. When and why must the work/project start?</p>
<p>We are monitoring the site for signs of deterioration, but it is impossible to predict when the structures may fail. There are ongoing influences from the weather, particularly the significant rainfall instances that we have experienced over the last few years. In that context, we can only recommend that the work is undertaken as soon as possible.</p> <p>The nature of the work and the materials involved dictates that it must be undertaken in the spring and summer months. It is not yet known how long the work itself will take but we know from experience that the design work and obtaining approval from Historic England can be a lengthy process. To that end, we are proposing to procure the specialist consultants in the new year so that the design work can commence.</p>
<p>10. What stakeholders will need to be involved?</p>
<p>We will co-ordinate the work our Parks colleagues.</p> <p>As undertaking the work will severely restrict access to the site, we will have to arrange for the public to be advised of the restriction and likely duration once the construction plan has been developed.</p>
<p>11. What resources (internal and external) are needed to consider this mandate and to develop the business case or progress this request?</p>
<p>The work will be managed by a building surveyor in the Asset Management team.</p> <p>Input will be required from our colleagues in Procurement to assist with tendering for the work and our Legal colleagues for putting the necessary contracts in place.</p> <p>Externally, we will require the input of a specialist structural engineer and a quantity surveyor in connection with the design and management of the project. We will also require the services of an external CDM coordinator to oversee compliance with the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015.</p>

12. What are your best estimates for the Whole Life Costs of this request or investment proposed? Split by capital, revenue and income stream/savings for this and future years.

The following breakdown represents the design of the repair work, undertaking the work itself and release of retention 12 months after completion.

Year	Capital Total (£)	Revenue Total (£)	Income Total (£)
2022/23	175,000		
2023/24	5,000		
Choose an item.			
Choose an item.			

12a. For projects, what are the potential resource costs to progress to the next stage/gate?

Subject to financial approval, the next stage of this project is to design the repair works and seek the necessary approval to proceed. For that we will require the input of external consultants together with officer time to manage the process. We estimate the cost of this exercise to be in the region of £15-£20k.

13. What are the strategic Issues, Assumptions, Constraints, Dependencies, Opportunities, Risks

Assumptions –

It is assumed that GBC wishes to maintain the site as a public amenity and fulfill its obligations to maintain its historic assets.

Constraints –

Undertaking work of this nature is very weather dependent. This is partly because of the materials to be used but mainly because it involves excavations in a low-lying area adjacent to a river. Significant rainfall or very low temperatures will have a detrimental impact on the ability to complete the work and it is for this reason that it must be undertaken during the spring and summer months.

Risks –

There are a number of broad risks associated with the project beyond those normally attributed to construction work:

- The failed structures may deteriorate to the point that they become unsafe, which will in turn, severely restrict access to the site. If this occurs before work can commence then it may result in premature closure of the site.
- It is extremely difficult to determine the exact extent of the work until the failed structures have been exposed by excavation. This is mitigated by contingency allowances in this proposal and the engagement of a QS to accurately assess to costs associated with any variations.
- The work is very susceptible to the effects of poor weather. This is mitigated by project planning to take advantage of the typically drier months but also by contingency allowances in this proposal.

14. Reviewer List:

Involved or sighted so far and to be updated on changes:

- Marieke van der Reijden, Head of Asset Management

Next to be consulted:

- Vicky Worsfold, Lead Specialist (Finance) & Deputy s151 Officer
- Jonathan Sewell, Head of Culture, Heritage & Leisure Services

15. CMT Direction

Next steps: Not applicable