

FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

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Assurances over derelict Wisbech building destroyed by fire

Fenland District Council officers have met with advisors from Historic England as efforts continue to ensure a derelict Wisbech building is restored by its owners as soon as possible.

The authority is working closely with the owners of the former Cashino building at 5 Market Place which was destroyed by fire in April last year.

Planning applications for demolition works at the Listed building are now being considered by the Council which, if approved, will pave the way for a proposal to rebuild the property and bring it back into use.

However, the Council has received objections to the planning applications from a number of amenity societies, and importantly Historic England.

Officers met with representatives from the public body that looks after England's historic environment in an effort to push the matter forward.

Wisbech town and district councillor Steve Tierney, who submitted a [Motion to Full Council](#) regarding the matter in February, said: "We are very much aware of the detrimental impact 5 Market Place is having on the town centre. The Council is doing everything in its power to resolve this matter as soon as possible, however, as it is a private property the influence the Council has directly is limited.

"Unfortunately, progress has been slow due to the circumstances of the building and the site itself. The building is Listed and in a conservation area and, as such, must be restored in accordance with legislation and national policy and guidance in relation to Listed Buildings which can take time. It is a frustrating situation, but the Council is bound by the law and cannot act outside the law.

"Whilst the Council does have powers to deal with buildings in poor condition and appearance, the Council would still have to commission the exact same technical reports and evidence and go through the same process that the building owner is currently taking.

"We want to assure residents that we are working as quickly as we can to resolve this matter with the owner, given the current restraints, to ensure the preservation of historical features and sympathetic reinstatement of those that were destroyed by the fire. The public often tell councillors it is an eyesore and that is something I agree with. We want this resolved as soon as possible as well."

Cllr Dee Laws, Fenland's portfolio holder for planning, said: "Our residents can be assured that we understand how important this issue is to them and that we're doing everything possible to support the restoration of this building."

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