



# Titchmarsh Village Shop Project

## **Report of the Vice Chair on the Management of the Engine House premises.**

**AGM 26th July 2007**

This report sets out the work which has been and is being undertaken on the Engine House to refurbish it as a village shop. It covers:

- The lease with the Parish Council
- Obtaining permissions
- The contract with the builder
- Other ancillary works and utility connections.

### **Lease with the Parish Council**

Last autumn a sub-committee of the Management Committee was set up to liaise with the Engine House Working Group - a sub-committee of the Parish Council. The task of both these sub-committees was to negotiate the lease from the Parish Council to Titchmarsh Village Shop Association Ltd of the Engine House.

After several long meetings and numerous draft documents from solicitors a lease was signed on Monday 7th May at a short ceremony held at the Engine House. The lease runs from 1st May 2007 for 10 years at a peppercorn rent. There is an option to renew at the end of the 10 year period.

The lease comprises the building, a small to be screened area in the Village Pound for bins and also use of the Pound for the serving of teas and coffees.

The lease is rather unusual in that it provides for the refurbishment of the building by the tenant and thus contains details of the building works and how they will be carried out.

### **Obtaining permissions**

On 1st August 2006 East Northants District Council granted planning permission for the Old Engine House in Titchmarsh to be converted into a Village Shop. The next stage was to undertake surveys and have detailed buildings regulations drawings made. Involving both an architect (Tony Fitzjohn) and a structural engineer (Stanza Consulting) these drawings were submitted to Building Control and were passed in March this year.

## **Refurbishment**

Following a tendering process in which 4 builders were invited to tender for the contract to refurbish the Engine House, Firm Construction were appointed and started work on Thursday 10th May 2007. The building programme was for 10 weeks and this should be completed by mid-August. There have been some delays partly caused by problems with the delivery of materials and also by swallows nesting in the rafters.

Stephen Barber has been acting as project manager for the works which have involved:

- Roof works - stripping the roof to allow refurbishment and strengthening of the existing timber construction;
- Removal and replacement of certain roof trusses to open up the ceiling of the shop;
- Dry lining of the walls with stud and plaster finish;
- Putting in a new concrete floor;
- Creation of a disabled loo and lobby;
- Creation of an office with a door to the Pound;
- Creating a new glazed facade for the shop; and
- Electrical and plumbing works.

The cost of these works was contracted at £35,416.50 which included a contingency of 5%.

There have been a number of minor variations to the contracted works one from the Structural Engineer, one from the Building Inspector and the rest from changes to the specification required by the Committee. The changes to specification have been:

- Creation of a mezzanine storage area over the toilet and lobby
- Additional electrical works - lighting, service and cable runs.

## **Other ancillary works and utilities connections**

One of the conditions of the planning permission for the refurbishment of the Engine House, was a requirement to undertake some pavement works to improve pedestrian access to ensure the safety and convenience of pedestrians visiting or passing the site. These works need to be completed before the shop will be allowed to open. A proposal was drawn up with the help of John Greig and submitted to the Highways Authority to obtain a section 278 agreement which was obtained in May. Since then it has emerged that the plan needs to be revised as the varying levels will make it difficult to make a disabled access to the Pound from the north through the gap in the wall. The new proposal will involve extending the proposed pavement works on High Street so that level access to the Pound can be obtained from the south via the gate to the Pound. The entrance from the north will involve two or three steps. These plans are being discussed with the Highways Agency who have raised some queries but hopefully authority to progress will be received shortly.

Harvey Smith has been appointed to undertake the pavement works. The original cost was £7000 but this is expected to rise following the variation and a new estimate is awaited. Harvey Smith has also been appointed to carry out the sewerage connection on behalf of Anglian Water. Once a Section 50 Highways Notice has been obtained which is expected within the next week or two the sewerage connection will be made. This should take two or three days and following this the pavement works will be started and these should take around two weeks.

The Engine House needed to be supplied with water and sewerage connections, electricity and telephone lines. These have all been arranged with the various utilities.

The status and cost of the utility connections has been as follows:

Utility	Cost (£)	Status
Electricity	826.08	Road dug up on 8th August to excavate the main distribution cable and run a feed cable, the permanent connection will be made on 16th August and a meter installed either the following day or following Monday.
Water	736.00	Connected
Sewerage	4147.00	Work to commence end of July
Telephone	Invoice awaited	Connected via underground cable.

Everything at the moment is on schedule for a mid-August completion date.

### **Stopping up order**

The land in front of the Engine House is currently under the control of Northamptonshire County Council's Highways Agency who will not permit the use of that land for any activity associated with the Shop. The Parish Council are applying for a Stopping Up Order under section 247 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 to take control over this piece of land. If this is obtained then the Parish Council will lease the land to the Shop and it can then be used both to display produce and also as an area to serve teas & coffees.

### **In Conclusion**

The Committee would like to thank the Parish Council and friends in the community who have given the Committee so much practical help and support over the last 12 months which has enabled the building project to reach this advanced stage of completion.

Jackie Rowe  
Vice Chair  
26/7/07