

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**FROM: Fiona Bruce MP for Congleton Constituency**

**DATE: 26<sup>th</sup> August 2010**



### **Fiona Bruce MP meets Sandbach Old Hall developer**

Fiona Bruce MP has met with the developer of Sandbach Old Hall and an English Heritage representative after receiving a request to help move forward the development of the Old Hall from Sandbach Old Hall Action Group.

The long awaited refurbishment of this black and white timber framed building – dated 1656 – has been delayed due to a requirement that possible bats lodging in the building are monitored during restoration work. The proposed procedure for monitoring bats has to be approved before work can start and a licence granted.

*Fiona said “These licences can take six weeks to obtain – that is too long and the process is ridiculously bureaucratic; particularly as there might not even be any bats! The developer wants to begin work without delay and local residents are also keen to see this iconic building brought back to life. After receiving a letter from the Old Hall Action Group asking for my support in moving this forward, it was good to have a face to face meeting to press for this directly on resident’s behalf”.*

At the meeting, Fiona Bruce urged English Heritage’s North West Regional Director, Henry Owen-John, to treat the matter as urgent and do all he can to expedite the issue of the licence quickly – so work can start.

Fiona Bruce toured the building with the developer, Graham Price, who explained that whilst some later additions will be removed, the Original Old Hall building will remain, subject only to necessary alterations – such as access for disabled visitors, a new kitchen and car park area.

The front aspect of the Old Hall will remain much as at present. At the back there will be a garden room area connected to a courtyard by a glass covered link providing a walk way keeping the rear of the original Tudor building in open view. Assuming the work can start soon, developer, Graham Price, assured Fiona Bruce the Old Hall should be open by next Spring.

NOTE TO EDITOR

Photos show Fiona Bruce MP with developer, Graham Price, and English Heritage North West Regional Director, Henry Owen-John.

ENDS