

KIRRIEMUIR CONSERVATION AREA REGENERATION SCHEME -

STEERING GROUP - 28 APRIL 2015

CARS PROJECT OFFICER'S REPORT

Priority Projects

1 - 7 Roods

Internal works are still ongoing at the property. The Applicant has confirmed that the chosen contractor Ardle Construction Ltd. is about to be appointed, with external works expected to commence within the next few weeks.

Warehouse/ Store, Ogilvy's Close

A meeting was held on 2 April with the developer and appointed Architect at William Wallace House in Forfar to discuss proposals for the re-development of the Warehouse, and the adjacent Hooks building. Drawings were presented to Council Officers showing the proposed conversion of Hooks to retail and flatted domestic use, including partial demolition at the rear and the erection of a three storey wing; two x two storey townhouses adjoining the existing buildings at 1 - 3 St. Colmes Close; and the conversion of the former warehouse to residential use. Some concern was expressed by Council officers over the proposed profile of the roof on the three storey extension and the Architect has been asked to alter the roof configuration thereby reducing the overall density of development. The proposed alterations to the former warehouse building indicated a conversion to residential use in a contemporary design. It was explained to the developer and his Agent that it would not be possible at this stage to confirm the likely amount of grant assistance which would be available until a more detailed specification of works was drawn up. Further amended plans are to be drawn up and submitted for comment prior to any application being lodged for planning permission/ listed building consent. To date, no amended drawings have been submitted.

Former Airlie Arms, St. Malcolm's Wynd

The grant offer for the above Priority Project was sent out to the Applicant on Friday 17 April 2015. To date, internal refurbishment works are underway and it is hoped to get started on the external works shortly, before the planned re-opening in late May.

Small Grants Scheme

A number of Small Grant applications have recently been submitted for the consideration of the Steering Group by Agents, Project Management (Scotland) Ltd. and are detailed under the next Agenda item. Planning permission and listed building consent have been approved, where applicable.

There are also a number of other planning/ listed building consent applications currently being assessed by the Planning Officer for building repair works, with a view to submitting grant applications under the Small Grants Scheme, when permissions are granted. This includes a replacement shopfront and façade

enhancement pending for Visocchi's at 37 High Street, stone repairs at 11 High Street and 22 Glengate, replacement windows at 14E High Street and re-roofing works at Thrums Hotel.

An interim payment has been made for completed works at 16 Glengate although repair works are still on-going. No additional payments have been made for other completed grant works to date.

Interest in the Small Grants Scheme is still strong with further grant applications expected. A recent press article (Kirriemuir Herald Friday 10 April 2015) has highlighted the need to submit grant applications timeously due to the demand for funding and prospective grant applicants are being advised that, due to budget limitations, there is no ultimate guarantee of CARS grant funding being available for their repair project. In terms of the budget (as discussed at our last meeting), a request made to Historic Scotland to re-allocate some of the existing funding into the Small Grants budget was met with some enthusiasm. Subject to Steering Group approval, HS are content with funding being moved from other budget headings. They would prefer not to reduce their £30,000 contribution towards training and education (presently unspent at £50K: £30K HS/ £20K AC) as this is already on the low side at just under 5% of the total grant award. It is anticipated that the proposed training package could be accommodated within a budget figure of £30,000. However, some £50,000 of HS CARS funding for the public realm could be moved along with AC's £20,000 contribution towards training and education into the Small Grants Scheme. This would still leave HS's £30,000 for a training and education programme, reduce their contribution to £0 for the public realm (Angus Council contributing only to the enhancement of the Square) and allow an increase of £70,000 towards small grant repair works. Given the known interest and expected number of grant applications, it is recommended that the Steering Group approve this course of action.

Public Realm Works

Design work with the schools for the Square project is still ongoing. The first draft design of the tree guard for the Square has been submitted to Landscape Services and looks promising. This will feature a weaving design but some more work is required on the detailing and this is currently in progress. Mike Loftus, Landscape Services Officer is currently in contact with Bruce Walker as well as a number of other companies who can carry out engraving works to the granite stones. The finalised art work designs will come before the CARS Steering Group for agreement prior to production of the tree guard and engraved granite slabs.

Other Matters

Following on from the Swift and Bats Awareness Training Workshop which was held in Kirriemuir in February 2014 (partly organised and sponsored by Kirriemuir CARS), a further free workshop will be held in the Lesser Town Hall on the afternoon of Wednesday 27th May 2015 entitled "Kirriemuir Town Centre Swift Conservation Project - Working with the Local Authority, Housing Associations and Local Community to Save our Swifts".

Kirriemuir is extremely fortunate in having a good population of swifts and the Kirriemuir Town Centre Swift Conservation Project is working with householders and businesses in the town centre to conserve existing nest sites and find the best locations for new swift nestboxes. The workshop will include a walk around the town centre to look at existing nest sites and discuss possible sites for new nestboxes. A

visit to Glengate Hall will also show what can be achieved at little or no cost. With Angus Environment Trust funding, free nestboxes and advice are available to tie in not just with the Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme, but the town centre as a whole. The project is already working with the local schools and Hillcrest Housing Association, but there are many more opportunities to involve local businesses and property owners.

This time the Workshop is being organised by Tayside Swifts and the Tayside Biodiversity Partnership however other Council Officers in Planning and the Countryside Ranger Service are also involved in the running of the Swift Conservation Project. As part of the CARS training and awareness programme, it is hoped that we can help Tayside Swifts to carry out a survey of grant assisted buildings/properties for the presence of swift nests and possibly incorporate some type of swift conservation training session within our own traditional skills training sessions later this year.