

KIRRIEMUIR CONSERVATION AREA REGENERATION SCHEME -

STEERING GROUP – 12 JANUARY 2016

CARS PROJECT OFFICER'S REPORT

PRIORITY PROJECTS

1 - 7 Roods

Grant works are almost completed on site, other than the replacement shopfront at the corner of Roods and the replacement entrance doors. The contractor has advised that this should be fully completed by mid-January. Four staged payments have been made to the Applicant totalling £63,424 for grant eligible works valuing £70,471. This includes a 10% retention sum.

Warehouse/ Store, Ogilvy's Close

Further to our discussions at the last meeting, the Applicant (and Developer, Kilburn Developments Ltd.) has been informed of the revised grant amount and the views of the Steering Group in relation to the proposed grant eligible works. Title Deeds for the property have now been received by Legal Services and these are currently being assessed.

It was noted that a "For Sale" sign has recently been displayed on the Hooks building in Bank Street, advertising the sale of 2 bedroom apartments and houses "coming soon". Whilst much of the overall development does not benefit from grant assistance, it was pointed out to the Agent and Applicant that there is a claw back arrangement in the Small Grant contract, whereby should any of the grant aided properties be sold within 5 years from the date of payment, a % rate of grant will be recovered. For the Priority Project, the time period for recoverability is increased to 10 years.

The Applicant has responded (4 January) to confirm that he is fully aware of the grant issues and that the Warehouse/ Store is not for sale. He has confirmed "they are intending to rent the retail unit and the "for sale" signs are displayed predominantly for the 3 new build flats and 2 new build cottages which are for sale (*at the rear*). The flat above the retail unit is potentially for sale however this will depend on the price it attracts as we are aware there may be a small claw back from the grant allocated for the work on the front elevation. Obviously this will have to be negotiated as the retail unit also shares the front elevation being worked on. We obviously require to advertise as part of obtaining the funding to undertake the development. I would point out that Thorntons have already received interest in the development".

The grant contract will be issued for signature in due course. Meanwhile, our Legal Services are progressing a standard security for the Hooks building, awarded grant under the Small Grants Scheme.

SMALL GRANTS SCHEME – GRANT UPDATE

There are no new grant applications for consideration under the Small Grants Scheme.

Grant aided works have recently been completed to the front elevation at 14E High Street and receipted invoices submitted for payment. Grant aided works are also well underway at 25 Marywell Brae, 28 Marywell Brae and 22 High Street with just remedial works to be completed. Works have also started at 2 – 8 Reform Street just before Xmas and are due to commence shortly at two properties in Bank Street.

Public Realm Works

At the time of writing, no update was available on progress with works to the Square however it was noted that the Forfar Dispatch picked up on the story for their front page on 31st December. The article highlighted that pupils from Websters High School have been lucky enough to have an input into the design for the rejuvenation of the Square. Whilst there was no mention of the CARS/ Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme, it was stated that the works are being funded by Angus Council with the school being involved through the designs for the five paving slabs being created by the S3-S6 support for learning class. The article stated that over the past few months, the pupils have been researching specific historical links to Kirriemuir such as the weaving industry, agriculture, the countryside, old place names and Pictish art to incorporate into their designs. Six of the SFL pupils have been working with Andy McFetters from Leith to create their own carvings over four sessions. He will be carving the final five designs into the slabs that will go into the Square.

The article concluded by saying that the new square enhancement will improve the look of the town centre as well as it being a great way to get Webster's involved in the community.

Other Matters

Training Update

The first training session took place on Saturday 28 November 2015 in the Parish Church Hall. This was to be an introductory, drop-in style event for home/property owners entitled "Traditional Buildings Advice and Information Day". On the day, the weather was awful and we had competition from Santa and the switching-on of the Christmas lights but we still managed around 20 people over the three hours. All three of us in attendance (Craig Frew, Paul Fretwell and the Project Officer) were engaged most of the time speaking to people who had dropped in out of interest and Paul and Craig had around 10 people in total who stayed for their talks.

Craig's post-event comments were that *"the day was well enough organised and the turnout respectable given the limited notice - the only things we could have done better are those we have discussed for the next one, i.e. the craft skills demonstrations and 'have-a-go' which is much more engaging for members of the public. Would be good to try and attract a wider audience – maybe some activities for kids to encourage families along, rather than lone husbands avoiding the shopping! I think most visitors saw it as very much a 'Council' event where they could come along and complain about the Council (generally) and its planning policies/enforcement! Need to put a more positive spin on the appropriate repair, maintenance and upgrading of traditional buildings – make it fun!*

There was certainly interest shown in CARS funding but most were not eligible for various reasons. A number were interested in carrying out repair works in general to their property but were outwith the priority area, some even outwith Kirriemuir. A number of people also left

their contact details for further information on the dates for the finalised training programme later this year.

CARS legacy

Following on from my recent meeting with the Council's Community Engagement Officer Rachel Green to consider ways in which we can further the CARS project legacy, Rachel has prepared the attached Evaluation Framework for the information of the Steering Group (See attached Appendix). This will enable us to collect evidence that will show how the project has achieved its outcomes at the end of its 5 year timescale as well as highlighting positive impacts of the project.

Based on work previously carried out for Brechin Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI), Rachel will continue to work on a whole logic model and a number of different types of surveys, relating to Kirriemuir CARS but these had not been completed by the deadline for this meeting. This will also involve engaging Frew Conservation as the training provider. More information to follow.