

"EXEMPT
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Report No. 939/97

ANGUS COUNCIL**DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE****9 SEPTEMBER 1997****SUBJECT: LINDSAY AISLE, EDZELL - OBJECTIVE 5B APPLICATION****REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, TRANSPORT & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Abstract: Angus Council is taking the lead role in an Objective 5b application in partnership with Historic Scotland to repair the Lindsay Aisle, Edzell and provide interpretative material on site. For a net contribution of £2,000 Angus Council can help facilitate a project worth over £35,000.

1 RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee agrees to allow £2,000 from this year's Conservation Budget to be paid towards the cost of the restoring and interpreting the Lindsay Aisle, Edzell.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Lindsay Aisle is all that remains of a pre-Reformation church. It is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and a Listed Building. The structure is deteriorating and the owners are unable to fund the necessary repairs. Historic Scotland are willing to take the monument into their ownership as an addition to Edzell Castle, provided that the acquisition is preceded by a programme of archaeological investigation, repair and interpretation. The funding package from Angus Council (£2,000), Historic Scotland (approximately £15,000) and the Dalhousie Estates (£1,000) can meet the cost of the repairs but not the archaeological analysis and subsequent interpretation.
- 2.2 The project could attract Objective 5b Structural Funds under the "Environmental Stewardship and Rural Development" Priority. Consequently, the additional costs to fund the archaeological investigation and subsequent interpretation could be met from EU sources.
- 2.3 Given the short timescale for submission of Objective 5b applications, the application has already been submitted. This was necessary because if the application had not been submitted then Historic Scotland would not have been able to participate in the project.

3 BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING IN THE PROJECT

- 3.1 Historic Scotland have indicated that the visitor numbers at Edzell Castle (approximately 11,000 to 12,000 per annum) are down by 11-12% on the previous year. This decrease is probably attributable to the closure of USAF Edzell because the decrease is not reflected nationally. A decrease in visitor numbers to the Castle will also affect business in the village of Edzell. Economically, the repaired and interpreted monument will strengthen the visitor attraction of the Historic Scotland-owned Edzell Castle; there is a historical relationship between the two buildings. In the event that the project proceeds on the basis of repairing the monument only, there will not be a significant economic benefit given the lack of prior archaeological investigation and subsequent interpretation. Because the site is within a burial ground the archaeology will be carried out using non-destructive techniques including ground penetrating radar.
- 3.2 The local community, through the Community Council, have been pressing for repair of the monument for several years. Participating in this project would, therefore, meet a stated desire of the local people for a very small financial contribution from the Council. The money would be taken from the Conservation Grants budget. The gross outlay will be £4,000, although it is anticipated that £2,000 of that will be reclaimable from the Objective 5b grant. This contribution of £2,000 accords with normal grant assistance for stone slating work; the Lindsay Aisle has a stone slated roof.
- 3.3 Participating in the project would also help to further the Council's Key Themes. In particular, the small contribution of £2,000 would maximise the use of available resources to meet local needs through developing a partnership with Historic Scotland and the European Union. The project would also have an economic benefit and would improve the built cultural environment.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The financial implications are in accordance with normal levels of grant for stone slating work. The money would be taken out of the 1997/98 Conservation Grants budget. There are sufficient funds in the budget to allow the project to proceed on the basis of a net contribution of £2,000.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Chief Executive and the Directors of Cultural Services, Finance, and Law & Administration have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 This project is an ideal opportunity to develop a bottom-up community driven approach to preserving and enhancing the built cultural heritage, meet a stated desire of the local community and strengthen the visitor attraction of Edzell Castle. For a net outlay of £2,000 the Council will be able to secure a project worth over £35,000. Working with Historic Scotland and the European Union furthers the Council's Key Themes of developing partnerships and maximising the use of available resources to meet local needs.

NOTE

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

AA/PM/MR/KW
2 September 1997

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