

## ANGUS COUNCIL

## PLANNING AND TRANSPORT POLICY COMMITTEE

14 OCTOBER 1999

## SUBJECT: ARBROATH ABBEY DEVELOPMENT - UPDATE

## REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

**Abstract:** This report updates the Committee on progress made in the development of visitor facilities at Arbroath Abbey and recommends how the project can be taken forward.

**1 RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Committee:-

- (a) agrees to seek competitive tenders for the development of the visitor facilities at Arbroath Abbey with a view to the tender report being submitted to the meeting of Angus Council on 16 December 1999;
- (b) agrees to meet 50% of a possible funding shortfall up to a maximum of £110,000, subject to Scottish Enterprise Tayside meeting the balance; and
- (c) agrees to meet the third stage of the consultancy team's fees amounting to £45,000.

**2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 Members will be aware that, at a meeting of a Special Committee of the Council in July 1999, the revised proposals for the Abbey were approved. The Special Committee also agreed to instigate Notice of Intention to Develop procedures, to apply for Scheduled Monument Consent and to promote Orders in respect of the stopping-up and conversion of Abbey Street and the alteration of one-way streets etc. Consideration of alterations to the traffic priority in Abbey Path was referred to the Roads Committee.

**3 CURRENT POSITION**

- 3.1 The Notice of Intention to Develop was lodged and duly advertised on 12 August 1999. Two objections were received and, although one was outwith the objection period, the other was valid. Because of the objection, the Notice has now been submitted to the Scottish Executive as required, with the request that a decision be taken as a matter of urgency. The Committee will be updated at the meeting if possible.
- 3.2 An application for Scheduled Monument Consent has been submitted to Historic Scotland but as they are part of the client team, no problems are envisaged. The Traffic Orders in respect of Abbey Street will be instigated once the Notice of Intention to Develop has been determined.

- 3.3 The consultancy team has been progressing the detailed designs taking on board the feedback from the public consultation exercise. In order to meet the deadline set by ERDF funding for a contract to be let by 31 December 1999 at the latest, tenders will have to be issued by the beginning of November and the tender report submitted to the meeting of Angus Council on 16 December 1999 at the latest. This timescale is very tight but achievable barring any unforeseen delays. The approved fees to date cover the period up to the end of September 1999 and a third stage of fees will be required for the period up to mid-December (see Financial Implications).

#### 4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Members will recall that an application for Heritage Lottery Funding was submitted to make up the funding shortfall caused by the withdrawal of Historic Scotland's capital funding. However, the Heritage Lottery Fund has now confirmed that, due to the nature and scale of the project, they are unable to meet the timescale requested of them; namely a decision on the application for funding by 15 October 1999. This date is crucial as it is the final meeting of the Objective 2 PMC when the ERDF funding will be considered. If the total funding package cannot be confirmed by then, the offer of ERDF funding may be at risk.
- 4.2 The Heritage Lottery Funding has recommended that the application for funding be withdrawn. As the ERDF funding is crucial to the project, being almost double the amount being sought from HLF and cannot be jeopardised, there seems to be no option but to withdraw the application.
- 4.3 The withdrawal of HLF funding will necessitate a reduction in the overall cost of the project. This would have the knock-on effect of reducing the ERDF funding (limited to 40%), resulting in a total project budget of approximately £1,370,000 (£1,170,000 capital cost). A detailed cost assessment would have to be undertaken but it is questionable if the envisaged increase in visitor numbers and associated economic benefit could be achieved by this level of investment. There is also concern that the PMC may question if the anticipated outputs can be achieved with the possibility of ERDF funding being withdrawn if they had such concerns.
- 4.4 Under the circumstances, it is recommended that the project proceeds broadly as previously agreed and that the funding partners make up some of the funding shortfall caused by the withdrawal of HLF funding. It is possible to reduce the total cost of the project to approximately £1,750,000 (inclusive of fees) by deleting certain elements e.g. the elevated walkway to the Regality Tower without having any significant impact on the project and without jeopardising ERDF grant. It may however be possible as part of a future review to look at reinstating these elements. The revised funding breakdown would be as follows:-

|                                     |                  |                         |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Total Project Cost (including fees) |                  | 1,750,000               |
| Funding Breakdown:                  |                  |                         |
| Angus Council                       | £ 500,000        |                         |
| Scottish Enterprise Tayside         | £ 320,000        |                         |
| Historic Scotland                   | £ 13,000         |                         |
| ERDF (40%)                          | <u>£ 700,000</u> |                         |
|                                     | £1,533,000       | £1,533,000              |
| <b>Funding Shortfall</b>            |                  | <b><u>£ 217,000</u></b> |

- 4.5 Scottish Enterprise Tayside has now confirmed that a contribution of £320,000 has been approved. It has also confirmed that it is willing to meet 50% of the above funding shortfall subject to Angus Council meeting the balance. The Council's contribution could if necessary be met by the Local Capital Funding which was approved for Arbroath Harbour but is unlikely to be called on during the current financial year. The previously agreed funding breakdown and the revised breakdown are appended to this report.
- 4.6 As stated earlier, a third stage payment of consultant's fees is required to cover the period from the end of September to mid-December i.e. up to preparation of the tender report. The cost of this stage is £45,000, this being £5,000 less than originally quoted to reflect the anticipated reduction in the cost of the project. This cost can be met from the Local Capital Fund in the 1999/2000 financial year. This would bring the total approved expenditure on fees to £165,000, from a total revised fee budget of £264,346.

## **5 CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Finance, Director of Law & Administration and Director of Property Services have been consulted during the preparation of this report.

### **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/RM/KW  
6 October 1999

Alex Anderson  
Director of Planning and Transport

## APPENDIX 1

**PREVIOUSLY AGREED FUNDING BREAKDOWN (Report No. 682/99)**

|  |                  |                   |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Total Project Cost (including fees)</b> |                  | <b>£2,023,000</b> |
| Angus Council                              | £ 500,000        |                   |
| Scottish Enterprise Tayside                | £ 280,000        |                   |
| Historic Scotland                          | £ 13,000         |                   |
| E.R.D.F.                                   | £ 772,000        |                   |
| H.L.F.                                     | <u>£ 458,000</u> |                   |
|  | £2,023,000       | <b>£2,023,000</b> |

**PROPOSED REVISED FUNDING BREAKDOWN**

|  |                  |                   |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Total Project Cost (including fees)</b> |                  | <b>£1,750,000</b> |
| Angus Council                              | £ 607,000        |                   |
| Scottish Enterprise Tayside                | £ 430,000        |                   |
| Historic Scotland                          | £ 13,000         |                   |
| E.R.D.F.                                   | <u>£ 700,000</u> |                   |
|  | £1,750,000       | <b>£1,750,000</b> |