REPORT NO 1408/04

ANGUS COUNCIL
INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE
25 NOVEMBER 2004

PROVOST’S LAMP
10 HILL STREET, MONIFIETH

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF ROADS

ABSTRACT
This report details the situation in respect of requests received from Monifieth Community Council and Monifieth Local History Society to relocate a Provost’s lamp in Monifieth.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 It is recommended that the Committee agree to submit a formal application to Historic Scotland seeking their approval to move the Monifieth Provost’s lamp from its present location outside 10 Hill Street, Monifieth to a new location outside Monifieth Library.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The Director of Roads has received requests from Monifieth Community Council and Monifieth Local History Society to relocate a Provost’s lamp from its present location outside 10 Hill Street, Monifieth to a new location outside Monifieth Library.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 The lamp at 10 Hill Street, Monifieth is associated with Provost A Cameron Watt who was Provost of Monifieth 1967 – 1973. He received the Freedom of the Burgh on 29 March 1972 and stood down on 10 April 1973.

3.2 Monifieth Town Council purchased the lamp together with a second identical lamp which is sited at 5 Panmuirfield Road. The lamps originated from the Queen’s Hotel, Nethergate, Dundee (architects John Young and Andrew Meldrum 1878) and were later erected at the Majestic Cinema, Seagate, Dundee. They were bought by Monifieth Burgh along with another pair (one still located at 50 Hill Street and the other now destroyed) following a fire at the cinema during the Second World War.

3.3 The lamp was designated a listed structure (Category B) on 15 December 1989 and therefore any refurbishment/relocation will require consent from Historic Scotland.

3.4 The lamp has been subject to malicious damage and is now in a state of disrepair.
3.5 The Director of Law and Administration has written to Historic Scotland in advance of submitting a formal application to relocate the column. Historic Scotland have advised that provost’s lamps serve as an indication of the democratisation of society, a meaning which, by definition, would be lost if they are uprooted and placed in front of a public building. Therefore a good case would have to be made on the basis of physical danger to the lamps where they stand and an appropriate new location that would offer an equal or enhanced environment for them. Historic Scotland’s letter is attached as Appendix 1.

3.6 Given the history of damage which the lamp has suffered in its current location and the benefit which would be gained in terms of its future security as a result of the proposed relocation it would appear that a good case could indeed be made to Historic Scotland for its relocation.

3.7 However while Historic Scotland may be amenable to the lamp being refurbished they may not, in the light of their comments about provost’s lamps being symbols of democratisation, be willing to approve its relocation to the proposed site outside a public building (the public library).

4 PROPOSALS

4.1 In these circumstances the following options have been considered to deal with the situation:

Option 1

- Submit full application to Historic Scotland to remove the lamp, have it refurbished and resited outside the library. If the application were to be successful (notwithstanding Historic Scotland’s initial response) this option would cost approximately £1700.

Option 2

- Submit full application to Historic Scotland to remove the lamp, have it refurbished and kept in store until a suitable location can be agreed on. If Historic Scotland were willing to agree to this arrangement, this option would carry costs of £1250.

Option 3

- Submit full application to Historic Scotland to remove the lamp, have it refurbished and then put back in its present location. This option would cost approximately £1500.

Option 4

- Do nothing. Although the column is in a state of disrepair it is safe and does not pose any danger to the public. This option would not attract any cost to the Council.

4.7 The Director of Roads recommends Option 1. Option 1 would clearly be the preferred outcome for the Monifieth Community Council and the Monifieth Local History Society. The Council would therefore be seen to be representing the interests
of the local community. The decision will however ultimately rest with Historic Scotland.

4.8 Option 2 may result in expenditure being incurred with no benefit to the Council or the residents of Monifieth if a suitable location cannot be found.

4.9 Option 3 would have some temporary benefit for the street scene and heritage infrastructure in Monifieth, but given the history of malicious damage to the lamp in its present location these benefits might be relatively short-lived. This option would however appear to accord most closely with Historic Scotland’s preference that the lamp should remain in its present location. It would however be unlikely to be a best value sustainable solution in the long term given the history of malicious damage to the lamp at this location.

4.10 Option 4, apart from being the lowest (no) cost solution, does not address the wishes of the local community and would appear to be contrary to the benefits of retaining an item of interesting street furniture of historic importance.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

If Option 1 is approved the costs would require to be contained in the Roads Department’s Revenue Budget for Street Lighting.

6 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no human rights implications arising from the proposals in this report.

7 CONSULTATION

7.1 The Chief Executive, the Director of Law and Administration, the Director of Finance, the Director of Planning and Transport and the Director of Leisure Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

8 CONCLUSION

8.1 The ability to relocate the lamp as requested is critically dependent upon Historic Scotland’s approval in view of the lamp’s status as a designated listed structure. It is therefore recommended that application be made to Historic Scotland to relocate the lamp as proposed.

Ronnie McNeil
DIRECTOR OF ROADS

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.

PG/JSG
27 September 2004
REPORTS/provost.lamp
Dear Sir,

PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997
BUILDINGS OF SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC INTEREST/UNLISTED BUILDINGS WITHIN CONSERVATION AREAS
10 HILL STREET, PROVOST'S LAMP, MONIFIETH.

I refer to your letter of 19 Mar 2004 seeking informal comments on an application in respect of the proposed refurbishment of the lighting column and lamp and relocation of the lamp to a new location at the above property.

The Historic Buildings Inspectorate offers the following informal comments on this proposal.

PROVOSTS LAMPS IN MONIFIETH

We refer to the telephone conversation between our Mr Watson and your Mr Ingram on 24 March. We understand that the full application will be forwarded shortly.

Location plans alone are insufficient methods of carrying out meaningful notifications to the Scottish Ministers. In this case we require to see a method statement for the refurbishment and repainting of the lamp. It could perhaps be modelled on those for the ironwork currently being restored at Mid Link’s Monroose.

3 out of 4 of the Provosts lamps that existed in Monifieth Burgh, marking a burgural status that lasted less than a century, were statutorily listed in 1989. They are to be found in front of 3 Pannarefield Road and numbers 10 and 50 Hill Street. The latter house is also listed, with a lamp from the MacFarlane Foundry catalogue that is different to the other two of more local origin. The fourth has been destroyed. Their function was to highlight the homes of the past and present provosts of the burgh and therefore indirectly allude to Monifieth’s civic status. Since 1975 Monifieth has had no provost so there has been no need to either provide new lamps or relocate the old ones. Provost and Mrs Alexander C Watt were still resident at the time of the listed building resurvey in 1989.
When they stand in front of not especially grand houses they serve as an indication of ongoing democratization in society, a meaning which of course is lost when it is uprooted and placed in front of a public building.

An informal discussion took place in April 2002 with Angus planning department. Our Inspector of Historic Buildings advised informally that a good case would have to be made on the basis of physical danger to the lamps where they stand and an appropriate new location that would offer an equal or enhanced environment for them. They appear to be gas lamps, and may require modification if to be lit by electricity. It would be advisable if specialist advice were obtained on the repair needs of the lamp. This would be likely to form a condition of consent should listed building consent be granted by the Scottish Ministers, as was the case with for example Dean’s Lamp in Mid Links (see attached letter), Montrose. We have sent information on appropriate sources of advice to Morayth Community Council and enclose similar information for you.

The relevant documents are returned

Yours faithfully

Simon Turner