

## AGENDA ITEM NO 5

### KIRRIEMUIR CONSERVATION AREA REGENERATION SCHEME -

#### STEERING GROUP – 19 AUGUST 2014

#### CARS PROJECT OFFICER'S REPORT

##### Priority Projects

##### Glengate Hall

As Members will have noted, the scaffolding has now been removed from the Glengate Hall, revealing the completed repairs and reinstatement of the building fabric. Some remedial stonework repairs and re-pointing works still have to be carried out but the masonry repairs are due to be completed once the holiday period is over. The Applicants have advised that all internal works will be completed by 20<sup>th</sup> August with the first tenants moving in on the 1<sup>st</sup> September.

The Open Day held on 24<sup>th</sup> June was well attended by those involved in the project and by members of the general public. The Minister for Housing and Welfare, Margaret Burgess MSP made a formal visit to inspect the completed works and enjoyed a guided tour around the building. The Ministerial visit featured in the local press capturing headlines such as "Minister hails 'phenomenal transformation of Glengate Hall', on TV news and in specialist construction news, with good publicity for the project all round.



Glengate Hall - July 2014

The Council's Lighting Manager has finally been able to provide a price for the installation of 2no. heritage style lanterns onto the building and for the removal of the 2no. existing lighting columns. The price per lighting unit is £1200 each, the overall cost for removing the existing columns and installing the new units would be about

£4,200. Ideally, it would have been preferable for this work to be carried out before any external re-surfacing works around the building however there is a delivery time of around 8 - 10 weeks on the fittings alone. This would take us up to the Christmas period and the installation of the Christmas lights so it is likely to be after the Festive period before the Council would have manpower resources to carry out the works. This would have to be fully funded through CARS, as the Council have no budget to carry out such works but that in turn would have to be with the agreement of Historic Scotland. The installation of appropriate (not always "heritage") street lighting or other environmental improvements to enhance an area would not normally be Eligible Works for grant assistance but may be agreed by Historic Scotland. They may only be included as Eligible Works where Historic Scotland has been consulted on their design and where such schemes are demonstrated to be in keeping with the historic character of the area as defined in the Conservation Area Appraisal. With the agreement of the Steering Group Members, the Project Officer will approach Historic Scotland for a definitive response on funding to move this final element of the Glengate project forward.

To date, a total of £243,514.61 has been paid out to Redford Homes from CARS, some 95% of the total grant of £255,000 awarded from CARS. Final invoices have just been received for the remainder of the grant payment.

As a separate Agenda item, there follows a paper on a proposal by the Developer to create a new company for the management of the building (Item 10).

### 1 - 3 Roods

Two tender returns have now been received for the above project and have been forwarded to the Council's Quantity Surveyors to assess the costs of the grant eligible work. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to get a definitive response to the eligible costs in time to present at this meeting. The grant application for this next Priority Project will come forward at the September meeting of the Steering Group.

### Warehouse/ Store, Ogilvy's Close

As Members will be aware, the owner has now instructed the sale of the building through Blackadders in Forfar, at an attractive selling price of offers over £10,000. The Agent has advised that there has been a significant amount of interest to date, with an offer having already been rejected by the owner. There are a number of notes of interest so depending on any further offers, a closing date may be set in due course. Some interested parties have also been in touch with the Project Officer to discuss the details of the CARS grant associated with the building and depending on any sale and planning permissions required, it is hoped that this project will move forward in the very near future.

### Former Airlie Arms, St. Malcolm's Wynd

No progress to date on any prospective works.

As requested by the Steering Group at their last meeting, the Project Officer has been in contact with Historic Scotland to obtain their view on re-allocating the Priority Project funding into the Small Grants budget. Whilst they are content to go with any decision that Angus Council make on this matter, they have advised that if the small grants scheme has not proved to be in great demand, then it may be better to keep the grant allocated to the Airlie Arms in place to attract any local or outside interest.

They also intimate that as Kirriemuir CARS is only just into its second year, then there is sufficient time to reallocate this funding to the small grants scheme should nothing more happen with the building. The decision rests with Angus Council.

Members will be interested to note that the building has now been sold on by the Administrator to a Property Company, Hawthorn Leisure based in London, as part of a much larger portfolio of commercial properties. It is understood from speaking to their Company Secretary that whilst they would look to re-let the business in the first instance they consider the location to be too remote for their interests and are more likely to be placing it back on the market in due course. He has advised that the company is “actively looking at solutions” for the property and is aware of the CARS grant assistance which may be available and the grant clawback arrangements should the building be sold on. In the meantime, the company has been asked to ensure that the building is made wind and watertight and to that end, the Property Company has engaged a Surveyors firm from Glasgow to carry out a detailed site inspection and any necessary remedial works.

In considering options for the building, at this stage the grant allocation acts as a funding incentive to anyone interested in taking this project on. Without it, there is no incentive for anyone to carry out essential repair and restoration works to external fabric, which alone is estimated by the current owners as around £200,000 to £250,000. If the Council decide to force the issue by serving formal notices to repair the building, then any grant application would be rendered null and void. In view of the recent sale, it is recommended that the Steering Group go with the views of Historic Scotland and retain the building on the list of Priority Projects meantime with a further review of the position in 6 months or possibly 12 months time (August 2015) when the small grants scheme will again be reviewed.

### **Small Grants Scheme**

A new Grant application been submitted for re-roofing works and renewal of rainwater goods at 10 St. Malcolm's Wynd however the Project Officer is waiting on a revised estimate being submitted from one of the contractors to ensure that all estimates are for identical works. The grant application for this project will come forward at the September meeting of the Steering Group.

Grant aided works have now been completed at Bridges, 42 - 44 Bank Street. The stonework has been re-pointed and repaired where necessary, chimney consolidated and cast iron gutters/downpipes repaired or replaced on the two public elevations



Bridges - July 2014

on Bank Street and Kirkwynd. The front elevation is to be finished off with new signage, although this did not form part of their grant application. The proposed work to replace the stone step at the front entrance has not gone ahead due to cost issues so the grant payment may have to be adjusted accordingly. To date, a staged payment of £5,950 has been paid to the Applicants (this being 85% of the eligible cost of the £7,000 invoice) for works relating to the erection of scaffolding, raking out cement from the joints in the stonework and re-pointing work in lime mortar.

At the Jeweller's Workshop also in Bank Street, the Applicants are still waiting for the installation of the new shopfront but the contractor has been in touch with the Project Officer and advised that this will be carried out by the end of this month. Grant aided works at Joshua Plumtree have also just recently been completed. The re-instatement of the leaded art deco design on the glazing has been finished and the leaded strips now blackened. The work was completed by a local stained glass artist/ art teacher and carried out to a high standard to restore the original appearance of the shopfront.



Joshua Plumtree - August 2014

The shop premises at Bookworms in Glengate has regrettably been vacated with the replacement door yet to be installed. The owner has however advised that a new tenant will be moving in shortly and he intends to proceed with the replacement door in accordance with the grant awarded.

As agreed in the minutes of the previous Steering Group meeting on 17 June, the Project Officer has undertaken an assessment of all enquiries to date for the Small Grants Scheme in order to conduct a review of the Priority Area. This follows a number of enquiries from property owners who are keen to carry out repair works but whose buildings are within the Conservation Area boundary but currently outwith the priority town centre area. This boundary review will be discussed as a separate paper, Agenda Item 8 (attached).

### **Public Realm Works**

As agreed in the minutes of the previous Steering Group meeting on 17 June, there follows a separate paper, Agenda Item 7 (attached) to update Members on the revised design for enhancements to The Square, following the recent public consultation exercise.

### **Other Matters**

Angus Heritage Week incorporating Doors Open Days will take place over the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> of September. As part of the Angus-wide events planned for that week, Kirriemuir CARS is organising and sponsoring an evening talk to be held in the Museum by Paul Mitchell, former Conservation Officer to Angus Council. Paul's talk, entitled "The Development of Kirriemuir's Street Pattern and Historic Buildings" will take place at 7pm on Tuesday 9 September followed by a guided walk, to link in with the subject matter at 7pm on Thursday 11 September. Publicity arrangements for this event will be organised by the Project Officer in association with Kirriemuir Museum and the AHW Marketing Officer.