

LOCHGILPHEAD CARS – RECOMMENDATION OF GRANT AWARDS

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask Members to agree grant awards for three shopfront improvement projects using Lochgilphead Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) funding as follows:

- Up to £48,981.25 to the shopfront at 4 Argyll Street, Lochgilphead.
- Up to £24,214.80 to the shopfront at 10 Argyll Street, Lochgilphead.
- Up to £49,999.00 to the shopfront at 23-25 Argyll Street, Lochgilphead.

1.2 The grants will support the comprehensive reinstatement of two existing shopfronts and the repair and improvement of one shopfront. The works will complement the on-going repairs to Priority Buildings and will enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Committee approve the following shopfront improvement grant offers:

- Up to £48,981.25 to the shopfront at 4 Argyll Street, Lochgilphead.
- Up to £24,214.80 to the shopfront at 10 Argyll Street, Lochgilphead.
- Up to £49,999.00 to the shopfront at 23-25 Argyll Street, Lochgilphead.

LOCHGILPHEAD CARS – RECOMMENDATION OF GRANT AWARDS

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The purpose of this report is to ask Members to agree grant awards for three shopfront improvement projects using Lochgilphead Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) funding as follow:

- Up to £48,981.25 to the shopfront at 4 Argyll Street, Lochgilphead.
- Up to £24,214.80 to the shopfront at 10 Argyll Street, Lochgilphead.
- Up to £49,999.00 to the shopfront at 23-25 Argyll Street, Lochgilphead.

2.2 The grants will support the comprehensive reinstatement of two existing shopfronts and the repair and improvement of one shopfront. The works will complement the on-going repairs to Priority Buildings and will enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Committee approve the following shopfront improvement grant offers:

- Up to £48,981.25 to the shopfront at 4 Argyll Street, Lochgilphead.
- Up to £24,214.80 to the shopfront at 10 Argyll Street, Lochgilphead.
- Up to £49,999.00 to the shopfront at 23-25 Argyll Street, Lochgilphead.

4.0 DETAIL

4.1 The Lochgilphead Conservation Area Regeneration (CARS) is a grant programme focussing on the regeneration of historical buildings as well as traditional skills training and community engagement jointly funded by Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and Argyll and Bute Council. The total grant fund

available is £1,538,589.70. This figure includes additional monies approved via the Place Based Investment fund for 2022/23. The PBI funding was approved at a meeting of the Policy and Resources committee on the 10th August 2023 to support further improvement works and tenement property maintenance works. All PBI funding must be committed by 31st March 2024.

- 4.2 Lochgilphead CARS started in April 2020 and was due to conclude in March 2025. Due to the pandemic HES offered a one-year extension. This offer was accepted and the scheme is now running to March 2026.
- 4.3 A full funding package is in place, with expenditure monitored on a monthly basis. The project seeks to safeguard Lochgilphead's heritage by supporting property owners to return their buildings and shopfronts to a good state of repair, which in turn increases the attractiveness of Lochgilphead's town centre and encourages further investment.
- 4.4 This report seeks to outline grant awards from the Lochgilphead CARS budget to deliver improvements to three prominent shopfronts in Lochgilphead town centre. The proposed grant awards all include an element of the 2023-24 PBI funding.
- 4.5 Due to the time constraints with the PBI funding and the requirement to obtain MAKI approval for individual CARS grants over £10,000, we have taken forward the grant approval request to the February Area Committee meeting. Project costs are based on cost plans produced by a Conservation Accredited Design Team. The works are however subject to tender. Should the tenders be returned at a higher level than indicated by the cost plan, the grants will not increase and a value engineering exercise will be undertaken to meet the available budget if necessary. However, should the tender be returned at a lower level than indicated by the cost plan, the grants will reduce.
- 4.6 4 Argyll Street occupies the ground floor of 2-4 Argyll Street, Lochgilphead, which is a Priority Building project for Lochgilphead CARS. Work is due to start on the main repair project in March 2024 and last up to six months. Following the completion of the communal repair project, the plan is start work on the shopfront reinstatement at No. 4. The total projected cost as per the latest Cost Plan is £57,625.00. The proposed CARS grant amount is £48,981.25. The business owner will meet the balance.
- 4.7 10 Argyll Street occupies part of the ground floor of 6-10 Argyll Street, Lochgilphead, which is a Priority Building project for Lochgilphead CARS. Work is due to start on the main repair project in March 2024 and last up to six months. Following completion of the communal repair project, the plan is start work on the shopfront improvement work at No. 10. The total projected cost as per the latest Cost Plan is £28,488.00. The proposed CARS grant amount is £24,214.80. The business owner will meet the balance.
- 4.8 23-25 Argyll Street is located on the opposite side of Argyll Street to No. 4 and No. 10. The proposal includes the reinstatement of traditional features to improve the appearance of the property. In addition to this, some high level

works will be carried out including painting the upper floors. The total projected cost as per the latest Cost Plan is £59,309.23. The proposed CARS grant amount is £49,999.00. The business owner will meet the balance.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The grant awards will support the repair and reinstatement of three prominent town centre shopfronts, complementing the improvements being delivered via the CARS Priority Building projects.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Policy – The Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) and Argyll and Bute Outcome Improvement Plan 2013-2023 support town centre Regeneration and a diverse and thriving economy.
- 6.2 Financial – To satisfy audit requirements we provide an update on the overall financial position of the scheme to the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee on six-monthly basis. All grant funding is in place as part of the Lochgilphead CARS budget including the Historic Environment Scotland grant and Council match funding which includes an element of Private Sector Housing Grant.

The scheme also relies on contributions from private building owners.

The total common fund is £2,200,781.70.

The total grant funding to be committed is £1,538,589.70.

To date £1,204,149.52 has been committed.

- 6.3 Legal – Third party grant contracts are issued to all recipients of CARS grant funding.
- 6.4 HR – A project officer is employed to deliver the scheme for its duration. Staff Salaries are included within the project budget.
- 6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty:
 - 6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – None.
 - 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – The grant funding will support local economies through place based regeneration activity.
 - 6.5.3 Islands - None
- 6.6 Climate Change – The grants will help retain the use of three prominent shopfronts of historic buildings using traditional methods and materials and located in the town centre helping to retain the embedded carbon. The

importance of this subject is also communicated to contractors to ensure that where possible climate adaptation and mitigation is considered to help create a thriving, sustainable local economy and a healthier, happier place fostering carbon lifestyles.

- 6.7 Risk - That the grant schemes are undersubscribed or that projects run over time or budget. These risks will be carefully monitored and mitigated by the CARS project officer as the scheme progresses.
- 6.8 Customer Service – The Council is responsible for administering the CARS grants on behalf of Historic Environment Scotland and for ensuring due diligence in the performance of duties.
- 6.9 The Rights of the Child (UNCRC) - None

Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth -

Kirsty Flanagan

Councillor Liz McCabe, Policy Lead for Islands and Business Development

22 January 2024

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Appendix 1



