

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE - 29 JUNE 2004

DESIGNATION OF CONSERVATION AREAS IN KILMAURS AND CATRINE AS OUTSTANDING

Report by Director of Development and Property Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Committee of the Planning, Development and Building Standards Division's intention to seek approval to designate the Conservation Areas in Kilmaurs and Catrine as Outstanding.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In terms of Section 61 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997, Planning Authorities are under a duty to designate Conservation Areas where an area 'is of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Planning Authorities may also vary or cancel such designations.
- 2.2 The granting of outstanding status allows grants to be made available to owners of property for the promotion, preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of the Conservation Area (Section 69). The granting of outstanding status also allows unlisted properties to attract grant funding, although listed buildings will be given higher priority.
- 2.3 Historic Scotland is responsible for the distribution of grant funding for Historic Buildings. Rates of grant are assessed on an individual basis but are not normally less than 25% of eligible costs.
- 2.4 Kilmaurs and Catrine have been identified as Conservation Areas that would particularly benefit from the additional grant funding opportunities that outstanding status confers. It is considered that both have merit in architectural and historic terms. Kilmaurs is a medieval town with a high concentration of listed buildings. The village retains a distinctive character in terms of its urban morphology and many buildings are relatively unchanged from its days as a weaving centre in the 19 century. Catrine is in many ways unique in Scotland with the Weir, Voes and Tunnels that served a huge mill (now demolished) scheduled as an Ancient Monument. It also has a good collection of listed buildings.
- 2.5 As well as their architectural and historic interest, the granting of outstanding status can be justified to support current project priorities as follows:
- Funding has been allocated from the Development and Property Services Capital Programme to implement environmental improvements to the townscape of Kilmaurs. The granting of outstanding status would potentially enable additional funds to be levered in.

- In Catrine, the Planning and Building Standards Division are developing the Catrine Environmental Heritage Project. The project is centred on the Catrine Waterworks Scheduled Ancient Monument although it also seeks to harness additional benefits for the central area of the town. Project development funding has already been secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund, and it is intended that a Heritage Grant application be submitted later this year. Outstanding conservation area status will enhance the likelihood of a successful funding bid.

3. NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 To formally designate the Conservation Areas as Outstanding, the Planning, Development and Building Standards Division will need to prepare a submission to the Scottish Executive and Historic Scotland with a justification for the granting of outstanding status. If approval is granted, the change in status will require to be advertised in the Edinburgh Gazette and local newspapers.
- 3.2 Interested parties would be able to view the justification and detailed maps of the areas at the offices of the Planning and Building Standards Division at 6 Croft Street, Kilmarnock.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None.

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None.

6. LEGAL AUTHORITY

- 6.1 The duty to designate Conservation Areas is contained within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997. Authority to designate a conservation area outstanding is retained by Scottish Ministers on the recommendation of Historic Scotland.

7. RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- i) Agree that the Division approach the Scottish Executive and Historic Scotland to seek the designation of the Conservation Areas in Kilmaurs and Catrine as Outstanding.

James Lavery
Director of Development and Property Services
1 June 2004

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

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