

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE - 29 JUNE 2004

MAIN STREET, NEWMILNS OUTSTANDING CONSERVATION AREA –TOWN SCHEME

Report by the Executive Director of Development and Property Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The report seeks to re-establish a Town Scheme for the Main Street, Newmilns Outstanding Conservation Area in partnership with Historic Scotland. The report also seeks the necessary authority for the Council to offer grants to, and to enter into legally binding agreements with, owners of private residential and commercial property for the purpose of implementing improvements to their property.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 As a part of the Newmilns Townscape Heritage Initiative (NTHI), the Council as lead partner has been running a small grants scheme for the repair and reinstatement of architectural detail, within the NTHI boundary, from 1999/2000 to 2003/04. This has been jointly funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), Historic Scotland (HS), Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire and the Council. The HLF funding has now been fully committed and the contract with the HLF did not permit the offer of grants beyond 31st October 2003. Historic Scotland are however keen to continue funding the grant scheme as a Town Scheme for Main Street, Newmilns Outstanding Conservation Area with a contribution up to a value of £15,000 for 2004/05.
- 2.2 The Development Services Committee of the 4th May 2004 agreed an allocation of £30,000 to the NTHI and the Newmilns Town Scheme Improvement Grants, with the intention that £15,000 of this allocation match the funding offered by Historic Scotland, to enable further properties to be repaired and restored in keeping with the Outstanding Conservation Area designation.

3. NEWMILNS TOWN SCHEME – 2004/2005

- 3.1 It is proposed that the Newmilns Town Scheme will include private residential and commercial property, and as there is no longer the limitation of meeting HLF's requirements the scheme can be widened out to include the entire Main Street, Newmilns Outstanding Conservation Area.
- 3.2 The eligible works will be:-
- Repair & restoration of roofs, dormers, rooflights, chimneys, rones & downpipes;
 - Repair & restoration of external doors, traditional windows & shopfronts;
 - Repair & restoration of external stone, brickwork, render and other external finishes.
 - Elimination of woodrot and insect infestation from external walls and roof structures.
 - Reinstatement of traditional features which have been lost from the buildings

The Planning, Development and Building Standards Division will provide detailed guidelines for acceptable improvements. Cost factors and best value shall be borne in mind throughout the assessment and implementation of the scheme.

3.3 The NTHI Project Officer will be responsible for the promotion and implementation of this scheme. However, professional assistance will still be required to assess the following :-

- The appropriateness of the works proposed,
- The cost of the works proposed, and
- The quality of the works once completed prior to payment of any grant assistance.

3.4 The Town Scheme will be available to property owners within Main Street, Newmilns Outstanding Conservation Area. The funds are limited and there will be no guarantee of a grant in any particular case. The maximum grant for any individual property is unlikely to exceed £5,000. Grants will be awarded based on date order of completed valid applications. **The maximum grant available under the Town Scheme is 50% of the cost of the eligible works.**

3.4.1 Grants will be offered subject to certain conditions including the following:-

- i) that the offer is accepted within two months and the work is started within 6 months of acceptance,
- ii) that the owner must obtain all necessary consents such as planning permission, listed building consent and building warrants as required,
- iii) that a minimum of 2 competitive tenders are required for the work and are submitted with the completed application form. Applicants may carry out the work on a self help basis in which case two tenders for the supply of materials should be submitted,
- iv) that no work is commenced until a legal agreement confirming the terms and conditions of grant is entered into with the Council,
- v) that notification of the actual starting date is sent to the Head of Planning, Development and Building Standards, East Ayrshire Council,
- vi) that any amendment to the agreed works is submitted to the Council for prior approval,
- vii) that the Council's supervising officer(s) may at any time inspect the works in progress,
- viii) that the work is completed to the satisfaction of the Council's supervising officer(s),
- ix) that the grant may be reduced if the grant eligible costs prove to be less than estimated or if the work is not carried out to a satisfactory standard,
- x) payment of grant will be made in arrears on receipt of invoices either for the requisite materials if the work is to be carried out on a self help basis, or for the completed agreed works, subject to the work having been carried out to a satisfactory standard, and
- xi) any detailed conditions specific to the individual application.

The procedure for the submission, assessment and approval of Town Scheme grant applications are detailed in Appendix 1 to this report.

4. FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The grant scheme will be jointly funded by Historic Scotland and the Development and Property Services Capital Programme.
- 4.2 The Council's Legal Services will require to draw up legal agreements between EAC and each property owner receiving a grant within the scheme.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Newmilns Town Scheme contributes to the "Improving the Environment" Action Plan within the East Ayrshire Community Plan under Aim 1 the protection and improvement of the natural and built environment.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-
 - i) agree to the setting up of the Newmilns Town Scheme,
 - ii) delegate the determination of grant applications under the Newmilns Town Scheme to the Head of Planning, Development and Building Standards based on the process and criteria set out in section 3 and Appendix 1 of this report; and
 - iii) authorise the Solicitor to the Council to enter into any legal agreements necessary for the implementation of the scheme.

James Lavery

Executive Director of Development and Property Services Department

4 June 2004

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Report to Development Services Committee "Newmilns Townscape Heritage Initiative : Study Update" – 4 May 2004.
2. Report to Development Services Committee "Planning and Building Control Division's Capital Programme 2004-2005." – 4 May 2004

For further information on the content of the report contact Colin McKee, Principal Planning Officer Policy and Projects, on 01563 576769

Implementation Officer: Alan Neish

THE NEWMILNS TOWN SCHEME GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS

1. The applicant contacts the NTHI Project Officer and is advised of the requirements to submit a completed valid grant application ie:
 - applicant obtains all necessary consents, planning permission, building warrant etc.
 - applicant obtains two competitive tenders for proposed works/materials.
 - Applicant completes the Newmilns Town Scheme grant application form.
2. Grant application received by NTHI Project Officer.
3. NTHI Project Officer checks applications are complete,
 - a) if incomplete, contacts applicant to detail and assist with whatever is required.
 - b) If complete, acknowledge with date received.
4. NTHI Project Officer seeks professional advice on the appropriateness/need for the works proposed and the acceptability of the lowest tender in terms of value for money.
5. NTHI Project Officer prepares a report on the application for the Head of Planning, Development and Building Standards Division. The decision to award a grant is delegated to the Head of Planning Development and Building Standards Division, on the basis of the NTHI Project Officers' report.
6. If approved Legal Services send out an offer of a grant to the applicant. Otherwise a letter explaining the circumstances will be issued by the Head of Planning, Development and Building Standards Division.
7. The applicant must provide proof of ownership of the property prior to acceptance of the grant.
8. The payment of grant will only be made in arrears on receipt of invoices and only after the NTHI Project Officer has received professional advice that the agreed works have been completed to a satisfactory standard.
9. The Council reserves the right to reclaim part of the grant in the event that the property is sold or leased to another party within 10 years of the work being completed.