

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE – 20 MAY 2003

PROPOSED MONUMENT AT THE GALSTON ROUNDABOUT

Report by the Director of Development Services

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To seek the Committee's view on the proposal by the Rotary Club of Galston for a monument on the roundabout adjacent to Galston at the intersection of the A719 and A71.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The Rotary Club of Galston put forward a proposal two years ago for a monument on the roundabout adjacent to Galston at the intersection of the A719 and the A71. The monument was to take the form of a small tower representing the historic castles of the Irvine Valley. It would mark the gateway to the Irvine Valley and draw the attention of visitors that they were entering a historic area. The Rotary Club believe that the monument is "a must to kickstart" the regeneration of the area by bringing back tourism and business.
- 2.2** The monument is to be built of stone requiring relatively little maintenance. They have subsequently proposed also that it would be surrounded by thorny shrubs forming a deterrent to anyone trying to access the monument. They have indicated that they would take full responsibility for supervision of construction and subsequent maintenance and take out full insurance cover including public liability..
- 2.3** It was the subject of a planning application which was assessed in relation to standard guidelines relating to road safety. It was concluded that it would not interfere with any sightlines or itself represent a danger to road users. There were no objections or other representations to the planning application at the time and it was approved under officer delegation.
- 2.4** The Rotary Club subsequently applied for financial assistance from East Ayrshire Council through the Irvine Valley Local Committee. By this time concern had emerged about the potential for the monument to distract young people walking to and from Loudoun Academy with the potential that they could place themselves at risk by attempting to cross the busy main roads running around the roundabout. The grant was refused by the Local Committee. It is understood, however, that the Rotary Club have raised sufficient funds from alternative sources.

- 2.5** In addition to requiring planning permission the Rotary Club will also require the permission of the Council as the Roads Authority and as the owners of the land on which the monument is to be located. This matter was brought to the Development Services Committee for consideration on 5 June 2001. It also reported to the Committee that some members of the School Board of Loudoun Academy shared the general concerns about the potential hazard which the proposed monument could form, as a distraction to young people. The location is particularly sensitive in this respect since it is directly in the pedestrian path from Loudoun Academy to the nearby Co-op, bus stops on the A71 and the town of Galston. The Committee agreed, at the suggestion of both the School Board and the Rotary Club to re-visit the issue once the improved safety measures planned at the time for the A719 and the roundabout itself had been completed and had been assessed.

3 IMPROVED SAFETY MEASURES

- 3.1** The safety measures at Loudoun Academy include a pelican crossing on the A71 adjacent to the Co-op, a new footpath round the north-east section of the roundabout with a continuous pedestrian barrier from the pelican crossing to the school. Traffic calming in the form of raised platforms has been introduced onto the A71 and a 30mph zone has been introduced stretching to the north of the Academy on the A719 and to the east of the Co-op on the A71.
- 3.2** These measures have been successful in achieving their objectives. The new footpath is heavily used and as a result the inappropriate use of the verge on the north-east corner of the roundabout and spill-over of pedestrians onto the carriageways has been eliminated. Traffic speeds on the A719 have been greatly reduced from an average of 50mph to 30mph. A small number of young people continue to walk down the verge and cross the A71 to the west of the roundabout instead of using the pedestrian overbridge. There has been one reported accident since the road safety measures were introduced. This accident occurred at the pelican crossing and did not relate to pedestrians straying onto the carriageway at inappropriate locations.

4 REVIEW OF PROPOSED MONUMENT

- 4.1** The Rotary Club has continued to promote its proposal for the monument as a feature at the entrance to the Loudoun Valley. The new road safety measures, in particular the fence on the north-east corner of the roundabout, make it less attractive for young people to take the shortcut across the roundabout itself. But they do not represent a complete physical barrier, and the potential of the monument as a distraction remains.
- 4.2** When asked to consider alternative locations in 2001 the Rotary Club declined. They have, however, made more recent enquiries about Council land holdings and may be willing to visit the possibility of finding a different location on the verges surrounding the roundabout.

4.3 It is understood that the matter has not been further considered formally by the School Board.

4.4 As landowner and roads authority the Council is under no obligation to permit the monument to be erected. It is not equivalent to public utility installations which may be located within a public road under specific statutory provisions. It would, further, be reasonable for the Council to apply a more exacting standard in relation to a perceived road safety risk than might be sustainable in considering a planning application. Given that the proposed monument is directly within the main pedestrian path from Loudoun Academy to Galston, and given the continued concern locally that the monument could attract young people to put themselves at risk crossing over to the central reservation it is considered that the Council could reasonably refuse to permit the monument to be constructed within the central area of the roundabout.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendation of this report.

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 In order to construct the proposed monument on the roundabout the Rotary Club requires the permission of the Council as Roads Authority and site owners. If the Council were to agree to permit the Rotary Club to proceed they would be required to enter into a lease with the Council incorporating undertakings in relation to the management of site works, maintenance and public liability insurance.

7 RECOMMENDATION

7.1 It is recommended that the Rotary Club should be advised that the Council will not permit them to construct the monument proposed on the roundabout central reservation at the intersection of the A719 and the A71 on land owned by the Council or falling within the public road.

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SC/JR
12 May 2003

BACKGROUND PAPER

1 Assessment of road safety improvements at Loudoun Academy

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