

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**CABINET – 8 JULY 09**

### **REDEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE FLORAL CLOCK AT KILMARNOCK RAILWAY STATION**

**Report by Depute Chief Executive/ Executive Director of Corporate Support**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1** To update Cabinet on the progress with developing an improvement project for the floral clock in the foreground of Kilmarnock Railway Station and to seek authority to (i) appoint a contractor to carry out the work and (ii) enter into a licence agreement with Network Rail to safeguard the Council's investment in the site.

#### **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** As part of the 2008/09 budget, the Leader proposed a set of initiatives including a comprehensive redevelopment of the floral clock at Kilmarnock Railway Station. The clock maintains a prominent position within Kilmarnock town centre and the Outstanding Conservation Area and its redevelopment will create a high profile local landmark.

#### **3. THE PROPOSED SCHEME**

- 3.1** In order to take forward the project, Landscape Architects were appointed in February 2009, following a successful tender process. The architects have now developed a preferred design for the site, incorporating a new clock face, new lighting, planting and water features. The scheme is considered to be imaginative and eye catching and will bring significant improvements to the setting of the Railway Station. Appendix 1 shows the proposed scheme.
- 3.2** In addition to replacing the clock face itself and its immediate setting, the originally costed project (estimated at approximately £200,000) has been extended to also include the Garden Street area to the right of the clock, which is currently overgrown and of poor visual quality. The extended scheme includes for this area to be replanted, primarily with low maintenance species and a small seating area will be created to the top of the area adjacent to the station access road.
- 3.3** Furthermore, in order to fully maximise the investment in the site, it was considered important to include the repointing, repair and cleaning of the retaining stone wall, which frames the whole site, within the scheme.

- 3.4 Given the significant scale of the project, it has been determined that planning permission is necessary in order for the project to proceed. Planning permission has now been applied for and is pending a decision.
- 3.5 Subject to planning consent, it is anticipated that work should commence on site during July/ August, with a completion date of September/October.
- 3.6 As an extension to the proposed floral clock project, a bid has been made to the Scottish Government's Town Centre Regeneration Fund to carry out significant public realm improvements throughout the town centre, including the area to the front of the floral clock. If this bid is successful, this will result in further improvements to this prominent location.

#### **4 APPOINTMENT OF LANDSCAPE CONTRACTORS**

- 4.1 Following the production of a detailed design, the landscape architects have prepared the appropriate tender documentation and bills of quantities in order to allow a suitably qualified contractor to be employed. The tender process has now been carried out and cabinet approval is required to allow the preferred contractor to be appointed.

#### **5. LICENCE AGREEMENT WITH NETWORK RAIL**

- 5.1 The floral clock site and retaining wall is owned by Network Rail and leased to Scotrail by way of a franchise agreement. Network Rail has been fully consulted on the proposal and has, in principle, given their consent for the project to proceed. The cost of the project and the cost of maintenance will, however, require to be met by the Council.
- 5.2 In order to safeguard the Council's investment in the site, it is considered essential that a formal agreement is put in place with Network Rail. This is especially crucial given that the franchise that Scotrail holds currently is to be renewed in 2014, which could mean a new operator in the station, with potentially new plans for the station and its foreground. Network Rail has provided the Council with a draft licence agreement, which would ensure the works are retained on site for at least 20 years. The Council's Legal Services are now amending this agreement to ensure it is worded appropriately to reflect the Council's requirements.
- 5.3 The detail of the licence agreement will stipulate that all necessary maintenance works and the costs incurred will be the responsibility of the Council. The maintenance costs are estimated to be in the region of £15,000 per annum.

#### **6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Within the Leader's Initiative budget a sum of £209,030 has been allocated for the floral clock project. However, the current cost projection is anticipated to be in the region of £350,000; therefore, additional funds will require to be secured if the project is to be completed in its proposed form. Additional

funds may become available later in the year as a result of the redistribution of projected underspend in other leaders initiatives. In addition, the outcome of the bid under the Town Centre Regeneration Fund will be known by 31 July 2009. To allow early progress to be made, site work could be commenced in July/August on the Floral Clock and the wall to the front as phase 1. The subsequent works to Garden Street could take place as a phase 2 of the overall project subject to additional funding becoming available.

- 6.2 The total maintenance costs are estimated to be £15,000 per annum. It is proposed that we seek to reduce the maintenance costs. The Department of Neighbourhood Services currently hold £7,500 and the balance will be met from existing maintenance budgets held in the Department of Corporate Support.
- 6.3 The Railway Heritage Trust has indicated that it will be willing to grant fund a proportion of the cost of the repair and repointing of the retaining wall. It is anticipated that the Trust may also be in a position to offer some assistance to the wider redevelopment scheme.
- 6.4 In terms of regeneration and value for money the benefits of the project are both direct and indirect, they have a direct benefit for those employed in the construction and for potential trainees given the opportunity to develop new traditional skills such as the repointing of the sandstone wall. Also with the appropriate publicity the clock and its jumping jets of water could become an attraction that would encourage visitors. The public investment in the urban environment within the area conjoined with the significant investment through THI and CARS in John Finnie Street is also likely to have an indirect benefit creating a better place in which to live, work and therefore invest.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no personnel implications directly associated with this report.

## **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 As discussed in section 4 above, a formal agreement with Network Rail is required in order to ensure that the Council's substantial investment in this site is maintained in the long term.
- 8.2 Any contract entered into by the Council will be in accordance with Standing Orders Relating to Contracts and Tendering.

## **9. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The implementation of this project is in accordance with the Environmental Policies within the East Ayrshire Local Plan and the East Ayrshire Local Plan Alteration (Finalised Version with Modifications). The project also contributes towards meeting the aims of the Kilmarnock Town Centre Strategy and the Conservation Area Management Plan.

## **10. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1** The floral clock improvement project directly links to the Community Planning theme 'delivering community regeneration' which aims to regenerate our town centres and villages, and deal with run down areas

## **11. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1** Due to the nature of the site with its steep slope and its location at a key road junction, the project carries significant risks in terms of health and safety issues. These risks have, however, been taken on board in the design of the scheme and the appointment of contractors. The contractors appointed to carry out the project will be required to complete the Council's standard insurance questionnaire and to have all appropriate insurance cover in place, including public liability cover of £5million.
- 11.2** The proposed design represents risks arising from the installation of a water feature in terms of deliberate attempts to disrupt the flow of water, potential damage from prevailing weather conditions and attempts by members of the public, especially minors, to access the water. Whilst the design of the scheme attempts to mitigate these risks, specifically with the inclusion of a safety fence at the foot of the scheme, the risks will nevertheless still be present.
- 11.3** As the site is owned by Network Rail, liability of the site currently remains with Network Rail. However, the licence agreement will largely transfer responsibility and liability for the site to the Council. In addition, the Council will be responsible for any loss or damage to third party property that may come about as a result of the proposed improvement scheme.

## **12. RECOMMENDATION**

- 12.1** It is recommended that Cabinet:-
- (i) Note the contents of this report, with specific regard to the proposed scheme for the redevelopment of the floral clock site and the financial implications and the benefits of the scheme and agree to proceed with the project on a phased basis including a reduction in maintenance costs detailed in section 6 above;
  - (ii) Agrees to give authority to the Head of Planning and Economic Development to appoint a contractor to carry out the work on site, on the basis of the outcome of the tender process, subject to the necessary funding becoming available; and
  - (iii) Agrees that the Council enter into a licence agreement with Network Rail to safeguard the Council's investment in the project.

Elizabeth Morton  
Depute Chief Executive / Executive Director of Corporate Support

24 June 2009

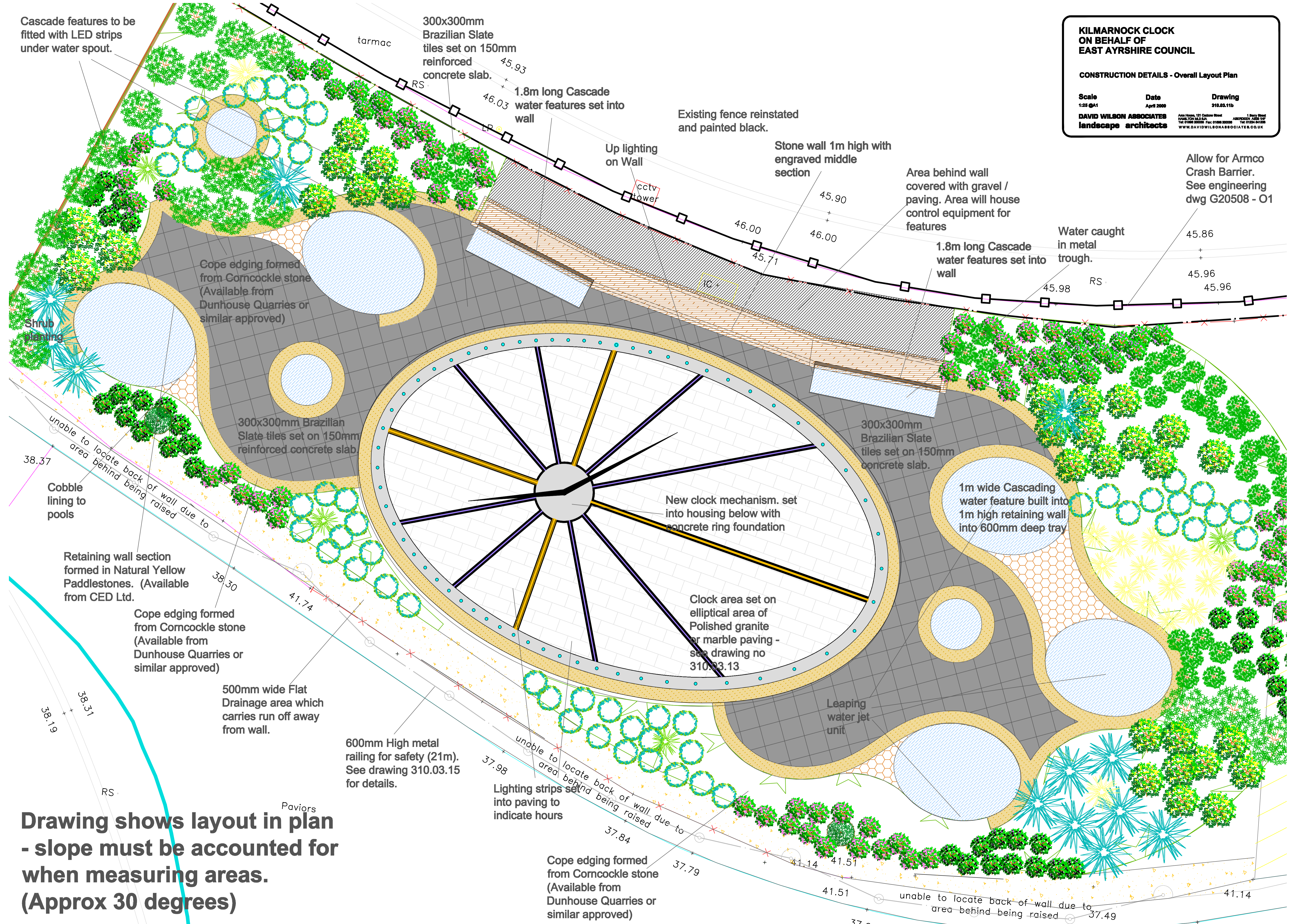
**Implementation Officer: Alan Neish, Head of Planning & Economic Development**

**KILMARNOCK CLOCK  
ON BEHALF OF  
EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**CONSTRUCTION DETAILS - Overall Layout Plan**

<b>Scale</b> 1:25 @A1	<b>Date</b> April 2009	<b>Drawing</b> 310.03.11b
<b>DAVID WILSON ASSOCIATES</b> landscape architects		

Area House, 121 Colinton Street, HAMILTON, ML3 8BA, ABERDEEN, AB9 7TF, THE FORTH BRIDGE, Fife, G108 2DQW, THE FORTH BRIDGE, WWW.DAVIDWILSONASSOCIATES.CO.UK



Cascade features to be fitted with LED strips under water spout.

300x300mm Brazilian Slate tiles set on 150mm reinforced concrete slab.

1.8m long Cascade water features set into wall

Existing fence reinstated and painted black.

Stone wall 1m high with engraved middle section

Area behind wall covered with gravel / paving. Area will house control equipment for features

1.8m long Cascade water features set into wall

Water caught in metal trough.

Allow for Armco Crash Barrier. See engineering dwg G20508 - O1

Cope edging formed from Corncockle stone (Available from Dunhouse Quarries or similar approved)

300x300mm Brazilian Slate tiles set on 150mm reinforced concrete slab

New clock mechanism. set into housing below with concrete ring foundation

300x300mm Brazilian Slate tiles set on 150mm concrete slab.

1m wide Cascading water feature built into 1m high retaining wall into 600mm deep tray

Clock area set on elliptical area of Polished granite or marble paving - see drawing no 310.03.13

Leaping water jet unit

unable to locate back of wall due to area behind being raised

Cobble lining to pools

Retaining wall section formed in Natural Yellow Paddlestones. (Available from CED Ltd.)

Cope edging formed from Corncockle stone (Available from Dunhouse Quarries or similar approved)

500mm wide Flat Drainage area which carries run off away from wall.

600mm High metal railing for safety (21m). See drawing 310.03.15 for details.

unable to locate back of wall due to area behind being raised

Lighting strips set into paving to indicate hours

Cope edging formed from Corncockle stone (Available from Dunhouse Quarries or similar approved)

unable to locate back of wall due to area behind being raised

**Drawing shows layout in plan - slope must be accounted for when measuring areas. (Approx 30 degrees)**