

Update on Penicuik TH/CARS Project (2018-2023)

Report by Chief Officer - Place

Report for Noting

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 Council is asked to note for information the outcomes and achievements to date of the five year Penicuik Heritage Regeneration Project (2018-2023) being undertaken by the Council and its partners.

2 Purpose of Report/Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report, in the below order, updates Council on the work completed and expected through the Penicuik Heritage Regeneration Project:
- Background to the Penicuik TH/CARS project (paragraphs 3.1-3.7);
 - Delivery of Building Enhancement and Restoration Projects (paragraphs 3.8-3.18);
 - Building Enhancement and Restoration Projects in the Pipeline (paragraphs 3.19-3.21); and
 - Delivery of Training and Education Programmes (paragraphs 3.22-3.24).
- 2.2 Appendix B contains a plan showing the boundary of the Penicuik TH/CARS project area and identified projects for taking forward through the scheme

27 January 2022

Report Contact:

Grant Ballantine, Lead Officer Conservation and Environment, Planning,
Sustainable Growth - grant.ballantine@midlothian.gov.uk

3 Background/Main Body of Report

Background to the Penicuik TH/CARS Project

- 3.1 The Penicuik TH/CARS project follows on from the very successful, similar heritage based, Council run 2008-2013 Dalkeith THI/CARS (Townscape Heritage Initiative/Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme) and 2013-2018 Gorebridge CARS projects.
- 3.2 At its meeting of 30 August 2016 Cabinet approved the simultaneous submission of applications to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) for a Townscape Heritage (TH) grant and to Historic Environment Scotland (HES) for a Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) grant towards a heritage regeneration project for Penicuik. This scheme is called the Penicuik Heritage Regeneration Project but is often referred to as the Penicuik TH/CARS project. Grants were awarded towards the project; £1,692,000 from the NLHF in July 2018 and £980,000 from HES in August 2018.
- 3.3 The aim of the Penicuik Heritage Regeneration Project is to regenerate the historic core of Penicuik town centre by:
 - Providing grant aid to repair and restore key historic buildings in the centre of the Penicuik Conservation Area. Building owners are required to provide a level of funding for improvement projects to their buildings in order to claim grant funding from the project;
 - Providing grant aid to improve the public realm in the High Street, the top end of Bridge Street and The Square.
 - Developing a training plan to encourage contractors, owners of historic buildings, schools and others to understand and appreciate the methods and techniques of traditional building construction, and
 - Developing wide-ranging community engagement activities to enable local people, organisations and schools to actively get involved in history and heritage projects and thereby gain a greater understanding of Penicuik's unique heritage.

Penicuik TH/CARS Project Team

- 3.4 The five-year 2018-2023 Penicuik TH/CARS project is led by Midlothian Council. However, it is a collaboration between the Council, Penicuik Community Development Trust, Penicuik Community Alliance Storehouse Ltd, Penicuik and district Community Council, and Penicuik First (BIDs), when they were operational. These bodies form the Project Team which assesses and decides on grant applications for individual projects. The priority projects and parameters for approving grant applications were agreed with the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Historic Environment Scotland.
- 3.5 The project has been providing grant funding to support the restoration of key buildings in the project area in Penicuik's historic town centre. It has also been providing training and skills development for traditional building skills and for initiatives to promote the understanding of the heritage and history of Penicuik.

- 3.6 Covid 19 and the economic conditions in 2018 and 2019 initially significantly reduced the uptake of grants for the repair and restoration of buildings. Covid 19 has also altered the type, and amount, of training and development of traditional building skills that have been undertaken. The project has been working innovatively where it can to deliver output online.
- 3.7 The past two years have also witnessed a very significant increase in the cost of labour and materials, and a shortage of labour and materials. This has greatly affected the scope and speed at which projects have been able to come forward and be delivered. Despite this, the following parts of this report set out what has been delivered. Momentum in taking up grants, and interest in getting grants, has significantly picked up since late summer 2021.

Delivery of Building Enhancement and Restoration Projects

- 3.8 Tables 1-4 below set out the status of building restoration projects in the Penicuik TH/CARS project. Namely:
- five projects are completed, including the Town Hall, Pilkington Buildings and Pen-y-Coe press building;
 - five projects have received a HES/NLHF grant and/or are on site; and
 - eight projects are in the pipeline/expected to come forward.
- 3.9 Table 1 shows that through the Penicuik TH/CARS project there has been completion and grant approval towards a total of £2,291,467 of construction projects, and that HES and NLHF grants of £1,045,849 have been secured towards meeting these construction costs. Table 1 also highlights that an additional eight projects, totalling an approximate construction value of £1,547,868, are still expected to come forward through the project and that £835,488 of grant funding would be expected from HES and NLHF to help meet that £1,547,868 cost. Tables 2-4 provide more details on which individual projects make up the content of table 1.
- 3.10 Without the Penicuik TH/CARS project it is very doubtful, if any at all, of these projects would have come forward in the short to medium term. In this respect alone the project has been successful. The project is also now taking forward shop improvements in the project area, namely nos. 25, 27 and 28 The Square. Thereby further improving the attractiveness of the shops and buildings as places to visit.
- 3.11 In addition to this the Penicuik TH/CARS project has already in 2018 and 2019 invested £792,958 in public realm works in the historic core of Penicuik town centre. Further details of this are provided in paragraph 3.18 of this report.

Table 1: Penicuik TH/CARS - Summary of Construction Projects – High and Medium priority Projects

(Showing projects completed, received a grant or expected to come forward)

| Project Status | Total project construction value | HES/NLHF grant contribution |
|--|---|------------------------------------|
| -Completed Projects (5 nos.) -Projects in Receipt of a HES/NLHF grant and/or are on site (5 nos.) | £2,291,467 (includes approximately £350,000 of non-grant eligible work undertaken at Penicuik Town Hall - Table 2) | £1,045,849 |
| Projects in the pipeline/expected to come forward (8 nos.) | £1,547,868 (estimate) | £835,488 |
| Total | £3,839,335 | £1,881,337 |

- 3.12 Tables 2-4 provide more details on which individual projects make up the content of table 1.

Table 2: Live/Complete High Priority Projects - Current Status

| Property | Total Project Cost (for all projects) | Grant from HES and NLHF (total) | Project Status |
|--|--|--|--|
| *33 High Street (Town Hall) | £1,663,005 | £826,913 | Complete |
| 22 High Street (The Storehouse) | | | Started but not on site (Grant approved) |
| 2-3 The Square | | | Grant approved |
| 1, 5, 7, 9 Bridge Street (Pen-y-Coe Press) 5 owners | | | Complete |
| Pilkington Buildings, Bridge Street - 9 owners | | | Complete |
| | £1,663,005* | £826,913 | |

*This figure excludes approximately £350,000 of spend on the Penicuik Town Hall project (33 High Street) that was not grant eligible.

Table 3: Live/Complete Medium Priority Projects and Small Grants - Current Status

| Property | Total Project Cost (for all projects) | Grant from HES and NLHF (total) | Project Status |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|
| 10 The Square | £278,46 | £218,936 | Complete |
| 4-6A Bridge Street | | | Complete |
| 28-30 High Street | | | On site |
| 2 John Street | | | On site |
| 4-6 John Street | | | On site |
| | £278,462 | £218,936 | |

Penicuik Town Hall

- 3.13 The Penicuik TH/CARS project's scope of works for the Penicuik Town Hall project has been completed. The final spend of the project has not yet been calculated. The work on the building was delivered due to the Penicuik TH/CARS project. The project:
- replaced the building's boiler system;
 - installed solar photo voltaic panels on the roof of the building;
 - installed publicly accessible Wifi in the building; and
 - undertook extensive stone and roof refurbishments.
- 3.14 This project was a priority of the Penicuik TH/CARS project. The project was awarded £601,180 of funding from the Scottish Government (TCCF). Of that total, £35,411 was used as match funding to access further grant funding of £106,233 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Historic Environment Scotland. The total budget for the project was £707,413.

| Penicuik Town Hall - Funding Sources | Funds Provided |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Scottish Government - TCCF | 601,180 |
| National Lottery Heritage Fund | 70,822 |
| Historic Environment Scotland | 35,411 |
| Total | £707,413 |

- 3.15 The Town Hall project undertook work on a building which the Council maintains. All of the works are saving the Council money in the long term as they would have been required eventually. In all likelihood the costs would have been higher the longer the work was left undone. The project's consulting engineers highlighted that the building's two boilers were past their lifespan and that one of them was broken and no longer

in use. As set out, the project has secured £707,413 of external funds for this work.

- 3.16 The Penicuik TH/CARS project considers the Town Hall an ideal location to potentially help foster touch-down working for Council and other staff in the centre of one of Midlothian's largest towns. The building pre Covid was already very well used and cherished by the local community. Publicly accessible Wifi has been installed in the Town Hall through this project. As a meeting-up/touch-down space, the Town Hall is well placed to help support local businesses through maintaining and increasing staff and visitor spend in the local economy.
- 3.17 With the assistance of additional TCCF grant funding from the Scottish Government, the Penicuik TH/CARS project undertook much greater enhancement work on the Town Hall than had originally been anticipated.

Public realm works undertaken in 2018/2019 at Penicuik High Street/Bridge Street

- 3.18 The Penicuik TH/CARS project has also already involved undertaking significant public realm improvements in the historic core of Penicuik town centre. In total £792,958 was spent on public realm improvements between autumn 2018 and spring 2019. This included road resurfacing and new yorkstone paving on Penicuik High Street outside the Town Hall and parts of the northern end of Bridge Street. The pavements were widened on the southern side of the High Street to make the area more attractive and a user friendly environment for pedestrians and visitors. This work was funded through developer contributions, grant funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Historic Environment Scotland and Midlothian Council's Road's Capital Budget.

Building Enhancement and Restoration Projects in the Pipeline

- 3.19 This report has referred to delays to up take of project grants due to the 2018 and 2019 economic climate and of Covid. However, as also stated since late summer there has been very significant interest and take up of grants for building restoration and shop front improvements.
- 3.20 In this take up of building grants, of particular note are two large scale projects coming forward at nos. 2-3 and 4 The Square. Nos. 2-3 The Square is the old grain warehouse with attached red corrugated iron and no. 4 is the now mostly demolished building facing on Bridge Street. These are key buildings for the project to improve this part of the town centre and visually improve the arrival and departure points of the town centre.
- 3.21 Table 4 highlights eight building restoration projects in currently in the pipeline. It shows that the total construction value is an estimated approximate £1,547,868 and of that £835,488 would be funded by grants from the NLHF and HES. They exclude shopfront improvement grants, including those at 25, 27 and 28 The Square. These will make a significant improvement to the town centre and quality of the built environment.

Table 4: Project Schemes in the pipeline/expected to come forward

| Properties | Total Project Cost (for all projects) | Expected Grant from HES and NLHF (total) |
|---|--|---|
| 4 The Square 19-20 The Square (Grant approved) 25-28 The Square (has planning permission and at tender stage, not at grant award stage) 2-4 West Street (Belgian Consulate building – tenders to be issued early 2022) 2-4 High Street (has planning permission and at tender stage, not at grant award stage) 14-16 High Street (has planning permission and at tender stage, not at grant award stage) 18-20 High Street 26 High Street | £1,547,868 | £835,488 |
| | £1,547,868 | £835,488 |

Delivery of Training and Education Programmes

- 3.22 Providing training and education programmes has been a very important part of the project. Prior to Covid the project had established and begun to deliver a programme of seminars on building preservation for building owners, engagement in schools and training. The traditional building skills workshops were unable to take place. Online engagement sessions, including provision of material for heritage walks, history of the town, storytelling for schools and paper craft based sessions, have occurred.
- 3.23 Training and awareness of traditional building skills and building care is due to restart this year, as are hopeful heritage based drama productions. On site building skills, with a heritage base, very successfully restarted in January with Penicuik secondary schools in January 2022. The project's archivist continues to work with the Penicuik History Society on recording and digitising their extensive material.

- 3.24 Below is a summary of the training and engagement work undertaken through the Penicuik TH/CARS project. It highlights the extensive nature and scope of the whole project and that it is not just focused on buildings but also education and involvement:

Traditional Construction Skills Training

- seminars and workshops in the primary schools, coupled with the contractor involved in the public realm works facilitating construction workshops;
- seminars delivered, with the help of professionals, to professionals, home owners and apprentices/students on the repair and restoration of traditional buildings, one in partnership with Changeworks on home energy efficiency;
- shopfront design seminars and workshops with exhibitions and handouts/guidance documents, bringing in sign writers and specialists to help deliver them;
- three Career Ready students have been placed on month long internships on construction and heritage related projects;
- the training plan - delivered the first phase to schools with Edinburgh College, one of the project's training providers. Over 90 pupils over 2 days being able to do hands on stone carving, slating work and plastering and sign writing;
- delivered two workshops with schools on repurposing buildings. Involved 24 Penicuik secondary schools pupils taking part over the two days;
- next phases of the training plan will be delivered before spring 2022 - two workshop sessions delivered by Edinburgh College at their Granton campus on stone repair and repointing, roofing and joinery. It will involve 24 Penicuik secondary schools.
- later in spring 2022 hands on training for 30 Penicuik secondary school pupils on repairing and repointing sections of the stone boundary walls in St Mungo's churchyard, Penicuik will be delivered by training provider Craig Frew;

Community Engagement Work

- Heritage Heroes project with Archaeology Scotland involving 6 pupils from Beeslack School over three years;
- heritage craft workshops take place each year of the project over a number of months and average 8 people per session;
- joint projects with the Penicuik Community Development Trust including workshops, guided tours at the Penicuik Press on heritage issues and paper making, weekend events in Penicuik Town Hall with talks and exhibitions on Penicuik's history and heritage;
- assisting community groups with bids for grants for heritage projects, including joint projects with the Penicuik Alliance and their application to the Scottish Government Climate Challenge Fund;
- community arts project under way, three workshops undertaken with the local community;
- Joint projects with Penicuik Arts Association, including built environment drawing classes;
- having events at the Penicuik Hunter and Lass;

- hosting Doors Open Day events each year with talks, workshops and exhibitions;
- appointing storey tellers to work with Penicuik primary schools on heritage based themes – with films being to the schools;
- projects with Edinburgh School of Architecture and students coming out over the first two years (2018 and 2019) doing projects on buildings in Penicuik town centre;
- facilitating the “Town Hall for All” project, with all Penicuik primary schools and pupils coming up with ideas for the future of the Town Hall. The ideas were showcased at the 2018 Venice Biennale.
-

Project Archivist Work

- working with the Penicuik Historical Society to digitise and make their collection more accessible. Training volunteers and working with Duke of Edinburgh Award students;
- working with the storey tellers to digitise their work for the schools and others;
- producing comic booklets for younger people to stimulate interest in history and heritage stories;
- facilitating heritage days and events, such as in St Mungo’s Church Yard and being involved in the annual Hunter and Lass; and
- putting together exhibitions with the Penicuik Historical Society about the history and heritage of the town.

4 Report Implications (Resource, Digital and Risk)

4.1 Resource

There are no Capital or Revenue implications from this report.

The report is for information purposes only and not for decision making.

4.2 Digital

There are no IT implications from this report.

4.3 Risk

There are no risks associated this report. The report is for information purposes only and not for decision making.

4.4 Ensuring Equalities (if required a separate IIA must be completed)

The report is for information purposes only and not for decision making.

This report does not relate to a new / revised policy / service change / budget change. It is therefore considered that undertaking an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) in relation to this report is unnecessary. An EqIA for the Penicuik Heritage Regeneration project was undertaken to accompany the report to Cabinet on 30 August 2016 that sought approval for submission of the bid the application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for a Townscape Heritage (TH) project and Historic Environment Scotland for a Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) in Penicuik town centre.

4.4 Additional Report Implications (See Appendix A)

See Appendix A

Appendices

Appendix A – Additional Report Implications

Appendix B – Background information/Links

APPENDIX A – Report Implications

A.1 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

The Single Midlothian Plan promotes economic growth and support for town centres. Investment in town centre public realm helps increase their attractiveness which help support their vitality and vibrancy.

A.2 Key Drivers for Change

Key drivers addressed in this report:

- ☒ Holistic Working
- ☒ Hub and Spoke
- ☒ Modern
- ☒ Sustainable
- ☒ Transformational
- ☒ Preventative
- ☒ Asset-based
- ☒ Continuous Improvement
- ☐ One size fits one
- ☐ None of the above

A.3 Key Delivery Streams

Key delivery streams addressed in this report:

- ☒ One Council Working with you, for you
- ☒ Preventative and Sustainable
- ☒ Efficient and Modern
- ☒ Innovative and Ambitious
- ☐ None of the above

A.4 Delivering Best Value

All works and financial spend undertaken through the Penicuik TH/CARS project has been secured following Council procurement rules. The project has had to justify grant allocations to external project funders, the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Historic Environment Scotland.

A.5 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

The decision making of The Penicuik TH/CARS project is governed by a project team. The project team is made up of the Penicuik Alliance, Penicuik Community Development Trust, Penicuik and district Community Council, local elected Midlothian Council Councillors and Council officers. When it was operational Penicuik First (BIDs) were on the project team. Some former members of Penicuik First are still involved in the project.

A.6 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

Town centre improvements can assist in promoting economic development and in meeting specific objectives of the Single Midlothian Plan.

A.7 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Investment in town centres can arrest and reverse their decline. Investment in old buildings can reduce future maintenance costs.

A.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

Vibrant and vital town centres which are well connected by public transport are contributors to a more sustainable economic and physical environment. Improving the public realm in Penicuik town centre will help increase the attractiveness of the town centre and help encourage people to visit and spend time and money in the town centre. This will help improve the sustainability of Penicuik town centre.

This report does not relate to the adoption by the Council of a strategic document and “Strategic Environmental Assessment” (“SEA”) legislation does not apply to this report.

APPENDIX B

Background Papers/Resource Links

Plan showing the boundary of the Penicuik TH/CARS project area and identified projects for taking forward through the scheme.