

SWADLINCOTE HERITAGE ECONOMIC
REGENERATION SCHEME SUB-COMMITTEE

6th September 2001

PRESENT:-

District Council Representatives

Labour Group

Councillors Brooks, Lauro (substitute for Councillor Southerd) and Sherratt (substitute for Councillor Dunn).

Conservative Group

Councillor Hood.

Sharpe's Pottery Heritage and Arts Trust

Mr. J. Oake.

Made In Swadlincote Partnership

Mr. T. Freeman.

SHS/1. **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

RESOLVED:-

That Councillor Brooks be appointed Chair of the Sub-Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

SHS/2. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from District Councillors Dunn and Southerd (Labour Group) and from Mr. S. Nelson (English Heritage).

SHS/3. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**

RESOLVED:-

That Councillor Dunn be appointed Vice-Chair of the Sub-Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

SHS/4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Mr. T. Freeman declared a general interest in the Swadlincote Facelift Scheme.

MATTERS DELEGATED TO SUB-COMMITTEE

SHS/5. **SWADLINCOTE HERITAGE ECONOMIC REGENERATION SCHEME.**

It was reported that Heritage Economic Regeneration Schemes (HERS) were three year partnerships established and part-funded by English Heritage for historic areas in need of economic regeneration. Under such schemes, grants were awarded for the repair and restoration of historic buildings in commercial use and to encourage the use of under-used upper floors for both commercial and residential purposes. HERS were designed to ensure

that the regeneration of historic towns focused on making the most of heritage assets. This was undertaken by encouraging investment in the older buildings of merit that gave towns and cities their special character. The use of good quality traditional repair techniques and authentic restoration of missing and damaged architectural features was promoted. The grants were set at realistic levels to ensure take-up and thus a significant impact on a specific conservation area or part of a conservation area at the end of the project.

Members of the Sub-Committee received a copy of the Swadlincote HERS implementation programme, which set out the importance of the conservation area, defined its conservation problems and the need for grants. It also outlined the authority's conservation policies, the regeneration aims of the Swadlincote scheme, the eligible buildings, the grant levels (80% for authentic restoration and 50% for repairs and improved signs, variable for residential conversions) and the administration and decision-making process. In line with the Civic Trust's recommendations for the Swadlincote Town Centre Vision and Strategy adopted in 2000, priority would be given to the restoration of shop fronts.

The authority was only able to offer such match funding as could be identified from existing budgets. The contribution from English Heritage was therefore set at its minimum level of £20,000 per annum. The budget for year 1 was £52,000 and budgets for years two and three would be set as part of the review process. The budget for year one comprised of £20,000 from English Heritage together with match funding from this Council of £20,000 for Housing Grants, £2,000 for Historic Building Grants and £10,000 for SRB Facelift Grants. The SRB Facelift and Housing Grants would continue to be awarded under established environmental health processes and would not be considered by this Sub-Committee, although it would be advised of applications and outcomes. Inter-departmental consultation was already in place to ensure that match funding was allocated for works that did not conflict with the aims of the HERS. The remaining £22,000 would be allocated by the Sub-Committee.

The Sub-Committee received copies of guidance issued by English Heritage on eligibility and standards of workmanship, together with standard conditions.

SHS/6. **GRANT APPLICATIONS**

(a) No. 8 Church Street

It was reported that this property was a late 19th century, previously vacant two-storey shop with accommodation above. It had recently been purchased by the applicants, Mr. and Mrs. S. Bonser, for use as a 'Tanning, Toning and Beauty Salon' and all of the accommodation would be occupied by the new use.

The eligible works included the restoration of two sash windows to the rear and the shop front at the front to their original appearance and the repair and overhauling of four surviving original sash windows. Three estimates had been obtained, ranging from £4,580 to £7,770 plus VAT. However, the lowest estimate had caused some concern as this was substantially lower than the other two estimates. Accordingly, the applicant had been advised

to obtain a fourth estimate, which was reported to the Meeting. All items were eligible for a grant of up to 80%. The application also included the provision of a fascia sign, which had been passed for consideration for a Facelift Grant.

The project would result in several benefits. A vacant shop would be brought back into use with employment for three to five full-time workers. The architectural character of the building would be enhanced to a substantial degree and the works would have a significant impact on the character of the Conservation Area, both to the front and the rear.

RESOLVED:-

That Mr. and Mrs. S. Bonser be offered an 80% grant of £6,428 towards eligible costs of £8,035.23 for joinery repairs at No.8 Church Street, as set out in the estimate from 'The Professional Builders' dated 2nd August 2001 subject to the standard conditions and to the following additional conditions:-

- (i) Before work starts, the precise pattern of replacement windows shall be approved by the Council.***
- (ii) The restored shop front shall be a replica of the existing shop fronts at Nos. 13 and 15 Church Street.***
- (iii) The external colour scheme and sign shall be approved by the Council.***

(b) No. 75 High Street

It was reported that this property was a late 19th century two-storey brick building with a shop on the ground floor and living accommodation above, which had been vacant for several years. The current owner intended to re-open the property as a Chinese takeaway with living accommodation above.

The eligible works included the restoration of the shop front, the repair of a surviving original window and door to the rear, the replacement of a surviving sash window at the front to the same pattern, the replacement of two further modern windows to the rear to a traditional pattern, re-roofing in slate and chimney repairs. Updated estimates for the works were provided and all of the joinery items were eligible for a grant of up to 80% and the remaining works were eligible for a grant of up to 50%. A 50% Facelift Grant of £5,000 had been offered for this project but it was proposed that the eligible items be dealt with under this scheme. This would enable Facelift funds to be used for other works, which may not be possible to grant aid under the HERS Scheme.

The project would result in several benefits. A vacant shop would be brought back into use and the vacant upper floor would be returned to use for residential purposes, thereby improving town centre security. Employment would be provided for two full-time workers and the architectural character of the building would be enhanced to a substantial degree by the restoration of the shop front. The works would have a significant impact on the character of the conservation area.

RESOLVED:-

That the applicant, Mr. S. Wan, be offered an 80% grant of £8,549 towards eligible costs of £10,686.62 for joinery and guttering works at No. 75 High Street, as set out in the estimate from J&T Kavanagh dated 5th September 2001 subject to the standard conditions and to the following additional conditions:-

- (i) Before work starts, the precise pattern of the replacement windows shall be approved by the Council.*
- (ii) A lime mortar shall be used no stronger than 1:1:6 (cement, lime, sharp yellow sand) and a pointing sample shall be approved by the Council before the work is generally executed.*
- (iii) The existing slates and ridge tiles shall be re-used and made up with new or second-hand slates and ridge tiles to match.*
- (iv) All lead work shall be carried out in accordance with the Lead Sheet Association's Guide to Good Practice.*
- (v) The guttering shall be painted before fixing.*
- (vi) The external colour scheme and sign shall be approved by the Council.*
- (vii) The applicant shall accept the withdrawal of the £5,000 Facelift Grant offer previously made.*

SHS/7. **FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

It was reported that following the above decisions, the outstanding balance was in the sum of £7,023.

It was noted that no Housing Grant offers had yet been made and the outstanding balance was therefore £20,000. With regard to Facelift Grants, £2,117.60 had been paid to date together with £5,000 offered, leaving an outstanding balance of £2,882.60.

L.J. BROOKS

CHAIR

The Meeting terminated at 3.30 p.m.