

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

EXPENDITURE JUSTIFICATION

1. Title

Kindrochit Castle

2. Expenditure Category

Project		Grant	Yes	Consultancy	
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3. Description

- Brief overview of project/activity
- Specific elements for which support is sought (if not whole project/activity)

The aim of the project is to protect, and enhance the ruins of Kindrochit Castle in the centre of Braemar and secure its long-term potential as a visitor attraction. The site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and is in the ownership of Aberdeenshire Council. Some of the walls are still standing, the rest have over time been used for other buildings or removed to build roads. Aberdeenshire Council are the lead partner on the project with support from CNPA and Historic Scotland.

Kindrochit Castle was built between 1057 and 1093 by King Malcolm III, King of Scotland. In the 17th Century the plague struck occupants of the castle. In order to prevent them from leaving the confines of the castle and spreading the deadly disease, the occupants and the Castle were destroyed by cannon. It was unoccupied after that and by 1628, the castle was in ruins. The building was taken over by Kincardine and Deeside District Council from the local estate as part of a land transaction in the 1970's and has subsequently transferred into the ownership of Aberdeenshire Council.

Despite the significance of the structure (Scheduled Ancient Monument) it has suffered from a minimal ad-hoc maintenance regime since around 2003. Following an approach from the local community and the local councillor the property has been inspected with a view to carrying out some remedial works including access improvements and interpretation. During the inspection, parts of the structure were found to be unstable and the site has now been fenced off on Health and Safety grounds whilst a proposed schedule of remedial works is considered.

The main proposals include:

- Fence Repair
- Improving overall access to the site including all-abilities access
- Removal of old concrete repairs and replacement with lime-mortar for sections of the site
- Appropriate archaeological mitigations for the works with associated community involvement
- Interpretation

This expenditure justification is for a £60,000 grant to support Aberdeenshire Council in delivering the project, total cost £140k. Historic Scotland has also been approached for additional funding. Aberdeenshire Council is seeking £60,000 from CNPA toward the project (43% of total project).

4. Rationale and Strategic Fit

- Objectives/intended beneficiaries
- Evidence of need and demand
- Fit with National Park Plan/Corporate Plan/other relevant strategies
- Linkages to other activities/projects

The objectives of the project are to stabilise the ruin in order to protect it from further degradation and to enhance the site through improved interpretation and access to secure its long-term potential as a visitor attraction. There is interest from the community to be involved in the project and archaeological work. This will be of benefit to the local community and businesses in terms of protecting a key aspect of the cultural heritage of the village, engaging the local community, and adding to the visitor offering in the area.

Aberdeenshire Council have undertaken an inspection of the site which has found parts of the structure to be unstable. The site has subsequently been fenced off. The Structure is a Scheduled Ancient Monument which demonstrates the historic importance of the site. The importance of the site to the community has also been identified through the Braemar Community Action Plan. The plan lists 'Visitor Strategy, Attractions & Services' as a priority theme and within this the desire for improvements to Kindrochit Castle.

This project fits well with both first and third aims of the Park in terms of conserving and enhancing the cultural heritage of the area and in promoting understanding and enjoyment of its special qualities.

National Park Partnership Plan long-term outcomes:

1. A sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities
 - Enhancement of the site will add to the visitor offering in the village and therefore help to support the local economy. It will provide a new visitor attraction which fits well with the existing visitor audience, many of whom will visit a number of castles in the local area. This addition to the visitor offering may help to encourage more visitors to the village and encourage them to spend more time in the village centre. The involvement of the community in the project will also contribute to the community empowerment programme of work (Programme 4).
2. A special place for people and nature with natural and cultural heritage enhanced
 - The archaeological evidence and material records of previous generations will be well recorded, cared for and safeguarded in the most appropriate ways. It will be easy for communities and visitors to discover the significance and importance of past ways of life in the Park. The project will also contribute to Townscape enhancement (Programme 5e) to enhance the sense of place, public space and amenity of the village.

3. People enjoying the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences
- There will be opportunities for volunteering, learning and community involvement in the archaeology of the site and associated history. Interpretation on the site and associated improvements to access will help to develop the site as a visitor attraction, helping people to understand and enjoy the area and its special qualities.

CNP Local Plan - Cultural Heritage and the Historic Environment

- 3.5.4 The conservation and enhancement of all the elements which contribute to the cultural heritage of the Park, form an intrinsic part of the first aim of the National Park. The Cairngorms National Park Plan recognises that physical records of the Park's cultural heritage are important to the Park, stating: 'This cultural record is one of the most valued qualities of the Park. The physical heritage needs greater repair and maintenance to secure its long-term conservation and enhancement of both sites and their settings'.

5. Option Analysis

- Are there other ways in which the above objectives could be achieved?
- If so, why is this the preferred option?

Option 1 - do nothing

- The Council have been unable to secure funding from other partners to date and as such it is unlikely any works would go ahead. This option would result in the site remaining fenced off as a hazard and further degradation of this important Scheduled Ancient Monument would occur. It would also present a lost opportunity in terms of community engagement in their cultural heritage, in terms of a potential visitor attraction, and in terms of townscape enhancement.

Option 2 - basic 'protection' works

- This option would still require a high level of funding to deliver basic works to stabilise the ruins which would remain fenced off to the public to protect them from further degradation. As in option 1 above this would present a lost opportunity in terms of community engagement in their cultural heritage, in terms of a potential visitor attraction, and in terms of townscape enhancement. Without a funding contribution from CNPA it is unlikely that this option could be realised.

Option 3 - Protection & enhancement works - PREFERRED OPTION

- This option would result in the stabilisation and protection of the ruins as well as providing managed public access to the site with associated visitor information and interpretation. This option would ensure that community and economic benefits are realised. It would also benefit 'Townscape Enhancement' in terms of an opportunity to enhance the sense of place, public space and amenity in the village. Without a funding contribution from CNPA it is unlikely that this option could be realised.

6. Risk Assessment

- Are there risks to the CNPA in funding this project/activity?
- Are there risks in the project/activity not being delivered to required timescale/quality?
- Comment on the likelihood of such risks occurring, their potential impact, and (where appropriate) any action that would be taken to mitigate the risks.

The works to be undertaken are due to be complete by end of March 2013 and could be delayed by adverse weather conditions on site. Weather dependent on-site works are planned for spring with all preparation being done Autumn/Winter and potential weather windows maximised where the opportunity arises.

There are potential risks related to legal issues and also timescales in terms of getting permissions in place with Historic Scotland to undertake works to this Scheduled Ancient Monument. To this end, Aberdeenshire Council are already in discussion with Historic Scotland to agree a Design Brief, required Archaeological Works and have applied for consent to carry out the works.

There is potential for the project to run over the estimated budget as an accurate assessment of costs cannot be made until the site has been cleared of undergrowth and an expert has assessed the walls. If this occurs and additional funding cannot be obtained a scaled down version of the project will be considered.

7. Costs and Funding

- Detail the financial costs of the project/activity
- Detail the sources of funding
- Detail any non-monetary costs to the CNPA (such as Member or staff input)

An accurate assessment of costs cannot be made until the site has been cleared of undergrowth and an expert has assessed the walls, the anticipated costs are outlined below. There is no staff time required of CNPA.

Activity	Estimated Cost
Picking out, lime mortar pointing and stabilisation of the remaining walls	£90 – 100K
Site fencing and vegetation	£10K
Ancillary access/interpretation/lighting/fencing and surfacing works	£30K
Anticipated total cost	£140K

Proposed Funding Package	Estimated Cost
Aberdeenshire Council	£60K (agreed in principle)
Cairngorms National Park Authority	£60K
Historic Scotland	£20K (under discussion)
Anticipated total cost	£140K

8. Deliverables/ Impact Assessment

- What end products/outputs will be delivered?
- How will success be measured?
- How will the project be monitored and what will be the feedback to the CNPA?

End products will include a stabilised, enhanced and protected structure, new access and interpretation as indicated. The principle gain is ensuring the long term protection of the structure.

Success will be measured in terms of the halt in degradation of the structure and this will be monitored by Aberdeenshire Council as part of its ongoing maintenance regime. Success will also be monitored in terms of the number of people in the community becoming involved in the project through talks/volunteering, this information will be provided to CNPA by Aberdeenshire Council. There are no current proposals to monitor numbers of visitors to the site, however, pro-active promotion of the site through local marketing and websites will be an indicator of success.

9. Value for Money

- In view of the costs, do the deliverables appear to offer value for money? (consider cost of comparable projects, where available).

CNPA are providing funding specifically for capital works along with partners Aberdeenshire Council and potentially Historic Scotland. No staff time will be required from CNPA with all work being managed and contracted by Aberdeenshire Council and Historic Scotland. The staff time and expertise offered through Aberdeenshire Council is substantial and ensures that there is no additional fee for project management.

10. Exit or Continuation Arrangements (where applicable)

- If this is not a discrete, time-limited, project or piece of work, what are the exit/continuation arrangements for when CNPA support ceases?

Discrete project with £60,000 grant allocated for 2013/14

11. Additionality

- Does this work/project substitute for or duplicate work being carried out or proposed by others?
- What would be the effects of the CNPA not supporting the project? Would it proceed without CNPA support?

CNPA contributions are 43% of the total and are needed if the project is to be realised in full.

12. Stakeholder Support

- Have the organisations and/or communities that would have an interest in this work/project been involved, and are they supportive?

Kindrochit Castle has very strong support from the local community, local businesses, Aberdeenshire Council and Historic Scotland.

13. Recommendation

It is recommended that CNPA grant Aberdeenshire Council £60,000 for works to protect and enhance Kindrochit Castle in Braemar as outlined in this justification.

Name: Sandra Middleton Signature: _____ Date: _____

14. Decision to Approve or Reject

Director

Murray Ferguson
Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Finance Committee

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Board

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____