

REPORT TO CABINET

DATE 15th FEBRUARY 2007

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF STRATEGY & REGENERATION

Portfolio: Social Regeneration & Partnership

REGENERATION MAINSTREAM CAPITAL PROGRAMME

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 An underspend is predicted within the Regeneration Mainstream Capital Programme 2006/07. This report seeks approval to reallocate resources to three reserve projects.
- 1.2 The report provides details of areas of expenditure for a proposed series of environmental improvements in Aycliffe Village, Half Moon Lane - General Improvement Area Spennymoor, and works within the grounds of St. Edmunds Church, Sedgefield.

2. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Cabinet consider the report and...

- 2.1 Approve the further development and implementation of the projects as outlined in the report.

3. Background

- 3.1 In May 2006 Cabinet agreed a Regeneration Mainstream Capital Programme that included an allocation of funding towards a series of project proposals.
- 3.2 Currently approximately £97,000 remains uncommitted within the approved budget due to a number of projects not being able to be progressed. As such, a series of reserve projects are being brought forward for further development and implementation.
- 3.3 The reserve projects being brought forward for approval have been assessed against the regeneration priorities for the Borough. All three schemes are of an environmental nature and will enhance the public realm in Conservation Areas as well as in response to public concern.

Project Proposals

- 3.4 The reserve schemes to be funded from the Regeneration Mainstream Capital Programme are outlined as follows;

Scheme	Funding Requested
Aycliffe Village Env. Improvements	£63,690
Half Moon Lane Enhancement	£21,000
Grounds of St. Edmunds Church	£12,499
Total	£97,189

An overview of the key aspects of the project proposals is outlined below.

Environmental Improvements to Aycliffe Village

- 3.5 This is a package of works aimed at improving the main A167 corridor through Aycliffe Village. The scheme would see a series of works designed to improve this important gateway village to both the Borough and County Durham. The works proposed have been developed in relation to the status of Aycliffe Village as a Conservation Area, and will take account of the Borough Council's duty to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 3.6 Given the highways nature of the project, the proposal has been initially developed by Durham County Council with input from Great Aycliffe Town Council. Due to partnership funding now being available to the County Council a proposal is being put forward to make a series of improvements to include resurfacing of the footpath along the A167 in a conservation paving together with more appropriate street furniture and lighting columns that reflect the Conservation Area status of the village.
- 3.7 Sedgefield Borough Council's Technical Services Division have carried out a cost comparison exercise of the project costs to ensure that value for money would be demonstrated by providing financial support to a scheme of this nature.
- 3.8 The total project cost is £119,290. Durham County Council have committed £55,600 to the proposal. A contribution of £63,690 is therefore sought from the Borough Council towards the implementation of the project.
- 3.9 By supporting the scheme to the value outlined above, the scheme will be able to be extended to a logical extent within the village, and additional benefit secured from the investment planned by Durham County Council. Durham County Council have highlighted that without Sedgefield Borough Council support, the scheme would be reduced in scale covering a smaller area of the village as well as lower grade materials being used. Detailed discussions are being entered into with the County Council to consider the

material options available given the need to achieve a balance between high quality design, whilst meeting the necessary highway standards.

Environmental Improvement – Half Moon Lane Area, Spennymoor

- 3.10 This project involves the environmental enhancement of the former General Improvement Area surrounding the Half Moon Lane, Salvin Street and Pearson Street area of Spennymoor.
- 3.11 Following discussions with local residents and the local Councillors for the area, an initial proposal has been developed by the Planning & Technical Services Section of the Council in order to improve the surrounding environment and streetscape.
- 3.12 The current environment is characterised by the existence of a number of raised planters that have fallen into a poor state of repair. The proposal involves remedial work to the planters and improvements to the street furniture and paving.
- 3.13 A phased approach is being considered for the work with an initial contribution being requested of £21,000. Further detailed work will be undertaken by Planning & Technical Services to develop this scheme and start work within this financial year.

St. Edmunds Church, Sedgefield Village

- 3.14 Following work with a range of partners within Sedgefield Village, a proposal has been developed to carry out a series of enhancements to the public realm, footpath, steps, lighting columns and railings within the grounds of St. Edmunds Church. The footpaths within the church yard provided a pedestrian thoroughfare through the village for the whole community to use.
- 3.15 The proposed works within the grounds of St Edmund's Church take account of the Borough Council's duty to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of this important Conservation Area. The Church is one of only two Grade 1 listed buildings in the Borough.
- 3.16 The scheme cost is £44,966. Additional funding has been secured from Durham County Council, Sedgefield Town Council, Sedgefield Charities and Friends of St. Edmunds Church. An allocation of £12,499 is therefore requested from the Mainstream Capital Regeneration Budget towards the project.

4. CORPORATE POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Detailed involvement has been sought from Planning & Technical Services Division of the Council in the development of these projects. This

will continue, as the proposals are further developed to ensure that any planned Borough Council investment is protected and spent accordingly.

- 4.2 The corporate policy implications of future maintenance will be further explored, particularly in relation to the Half Moon Lane enhancement scheme, as currently the Borough Council has the duty of maintenance to the raised planters and street furniture within the area.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The finance requested for the proposals as outlined above is being sought from within existing budget provision allocated to the Regeneration Mainstream Capital Programme as part of the budget setting process for 2006/07. This request relates to refocusing of the above budget to take account of changing circumstances and opportunities.
- 5.2 Due to the highway nature of the Aycliffe Village scheme, Durham County Council have committed to any future maintenance of the scheme, and are currently considering the material options available to ensure that the budget price is adhered to and the final choice meets appropriate standards.

6. CONSULTATIONS

- 6.1 In bringing these projects to this stage, a series of local consultation has been undertaken with local partners.
- 6.2 It is recognised that subject to Cabinet approval to consider the funding request, that further local consultation occur with key partners to ensure that the design solutions put forward meet with local aspirations for the area.

7. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 Risk Management – The initial project proposals received have highlighted the risks associated with implementation of the projects and steps are being taken to mitigate against them. With the Aycliffe Village schemes close supervision of the Durham County Council contract of works will be requested in order to protect the Borough Council intended investment.
- 7.2 Procurement – Any future procurement will follow the Council's agreed procurement policy in order to satisfy value for money criteria. Work has been undertaken on the Aycliffe Village proposal by Technical Services to ensure that the costs proposed are appropriate. Given the highway nature of the works, these will be undertaken by Durham County Council and tendered accordingly. Given the Grade 1 status of St. Edmunds Church the works will be lead by Planning and Technical Services Department of the Borough Council.

- 7.3 Sustainability – This has been considered in terms of enhancing the environmental quality of the Borough and also in terms of the materials that have been considered for use on both projects.

8. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There has been no previous consultation or engagement with the Overview and Scrutiny Committees on this particular project.

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Key Decision Validation: N/A

Background Papers:

- Internal**
 1 Regeneration Mainstream Capital Programme
 2006/07

May 2006
 Cabinet Report

Examination by Statutory Officers

	Yes	Not Applicable
1. The report has been examined by the Councils Head of the Paid Service or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The content has been examined by the Councils S.151 Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The content has been examined by the Council's Monitoring Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The report has been approved by Management Team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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