

EGREMONT MARKET TOWN INITIATIVE/REGENERATION – TOWN GATEWAYS AND CAR PARK PROJECT

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Cllr Cath Geil
LEAD OFFICER: Mike Tichford
REPORT AUTHOR: Brian Kirkbride/Julian Smith/Simon Walker

Summary: To support the regeneration of Egremont through the Council acting as accountable body for a West Lakes Renaissance and European Regional Development Fund funded project to improve the town's gateways and car parks

Recommendation:	That the following be agreed: 1. To support funding applications to West Lakes Renaissance (North West Regional Development Agency) and Rural Regeneration Cumbria (ERDF) and the Councils role as accountable body.
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Impact on delivering the Corporate Plan: The Market Town Initiative is a Regional Programme focusing on the Regeneration of Market Towns. The principle aim of the programme is to stimulate Economic Regeneration principally focusing on creating jobs, Enterprise Development Business Growth, Built Environment Improvements and skills development, all of which complement the Council's Regeneration Strategies.

Impact on other statutory objectives (e.g. crime & disorder, LA21): The Project Meets objectives within the adopted Local Plan, in particular : 3.1.26 which states "Efforts will continue to defend the vitality and viability of the town centres aided by the SRB programme at Cleator Moor and the Market Towns Initiative at Egremont and Millom". The Project also helps to deliver improvements to key Action Areas within the Economic Strategy, "Gearing up for Change", including promoting the area's tourism potential, diversifying the local economy and refreshing and renewing the built environment, providing attractive town centres and residential areas.

Financial and human resource implications: The project will be fully funded by West Lakes Renaissance, ERDF and a number of other funding sources outlined in the table below. Officer time will be serviced through the Community Renewal Team and Market Town Manager, with support from West Lakes Renaissance's project managers.
Within the MTI programme, CBC has committed £20,000 over two years to public realm enhancement.
The funding application to the ERDF is for £400,000.
The funding application to West Lakes Renaissance is for £639,000.
£195,000 of Market Town Initiative funding from North West Regional Development Agency will be unlocked through the project.
The full funding package is anticipated to be agreed by funders by the end of August 2006.
The Council as applicant is also entering into agreement to act as accountable body and support bankrolling of the scheme, details of which will follow in a further detailed report to August 2006 Executive.

Project & Risk Management:

The project falls into three phases, with planting work at the town's gateways the most advanced in design and planning terms, and design work on the car parking proposals to follow. Plans for later phases can be scaled to match funding available. Phase one of the work must be tendered and let by the end of December 2008 to qualify for ERDF funding. A timetable to achieve this is in place and the design team is signed up to meeting the timescale. All funders require risk assessments and these will be undertaken as part of the appraisal process.

Key Decision Status

- **Financial:** N/A
- **Ward:** N/A

Other Ward Implications: None

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership, supported by Copeland Borough Council, is leading on the implementation the Mini-Masterplan.
- 1.2 Primary funding for the projects in the Mini-Masterplan is from the Northwest Regional Development Agency funded Market Town Initiative Programme (£1 million) and West Lakes Renaissance (£3 million), with match funding to be found from a number of public and private sources. NWRDA and WLR funding cannot be matched against the other.
- 1.3 The project currently being put together brings together several of the priority projects from the Mini-Masterplan, which together will lead to a step change in the experience of visiting Egremont for regular local users and for visitors from outside the area.
- 1.4 These projects put in place the basic foundations on which Egremont can build its niche retail and tourism potential as highlighted in two further action plan studies that inform the project.
- 1.5 The projects brought together under this scheme are designed also to maximise the use of available match funding to unlock the MTI and WLR funding in various areas. The scheme will unlock around 20% of both the MTI funding and the West Lakes Renaissance funding.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Mini-Masterplan identified that Egremont has very limited visibility from the by-pass and highlighted the need to create a distinctive presence and to improve signposting of the town.
- 2.2 An Egremont Gateway Baseline Study was commissioned by the Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership and West Lakes Renaissance in order to address this.
- 2.3 The report recommendations make up the first phase of the Gateways project, using a theme of crab apple trees to emphasise Egremont's heritage and tie in with the annual Crab Fair. Other recommendations include the rationalisation of the signage, lighting of the castle to emphasise the town's most significant landmark, and enhancement of a small park area alongside the castle.
- 2.4 The opportunity to bid for further ERDF funding has enabled further associated works to be included in subsequent phases. The additional work will focus on car parking within the town. This will develop recommendations that have arisen from the MTI funded Town Centre Action Plan, carried out by King Sturge. This has analysed current and future economic factors affecting the use of the town centre and proposed a parking strategy for this.

Recommendations include upgrading of the most central of CBC's car parks and introduction of further parking in the Ehen Court Road area.

- 2.5 The Mini-Masterplan also highlighted the opportunity to improve Egremont's cycling and walking facilities for locals and visitors by opening up the adjoining countryside with signposting, environmental improvements and promotion. This element of the project completes the step change for the visitor to Egremont and the platform on which Egremont's tourism offer can be advanced, by providing information and signposting of a choice of activities to keep the visitor within the town. It also paves the way for development of a key niche market identified within the MTI funded Tourism Study, for development of mountain biking routes from the town.
- 2.6 The Town Centre Action Plan also proposes the introduction of more town centre employment through development of surplus car parking space and the current proposals for enhancing the car parking through the Gateways project will facilitate this should the CBC wish to pursue this option.
- 2.7 The Gateway Project links closely with EARP and WLR led proposals for improvements and expansion at the Bridge End Industrial Estate. A programme of screen planting is proposed that will draw on WLR and private finance and will further enhance the approaches to Egremont.
- 2.8 A further detailed report on delivery of the scheme will be presented to the August Executive giving detail of the delivery structure and cashflow.

3. RISKS AND MITIGATIONS

- 3.1 The risk at this point to the Council is minimal, in that the Council does not accept liability over any funding until acceptance of an offer. A detailed report will come forward to the August Executive and prior to any acceptance.

4. COSTS

- 4.1 The summary table below shows the outline costs and funding sources:

Egremont Gateways	Total Costs	WLR	MTI	ERDF	CBC	ACE	Other	Total Funding
North Roundabout	114	76		38				114
Northern Approach	30	20		10				30
Central Roundabout	214	143		71				214
Southern Roundabout	162	108		53				161
Pocket Park	117	10	68	39	0		0	117
Sub Total	637	357	68	210	0	0	0	635
Castle Lighting	60	30		20		10		60
Cemetery Lighting	40	30				10		40
Sub Total	100	60	0	20	0	20	0	100
Lamb Lane Car Park	170	74		56			40	170
Sub Total	170	74	0	56	40	0	0	170
Ehen Court Road	170	114		56				170
Sub Total	170	114	0	56	0	0	0	170
Gateway Signage	50	34		16				50
Town Centre Signage	110		55	36	20			111
Sub Total	160	34	55	53	20	0	0	162
Rural Corridors Projects	137		72	45			20	137
Sub Total	137	0	72	45	10	0	10	137
Total	1374	639	195	440	70	20	10	1374

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Supporting the development and submission of these applications at this time, will lever in £440,000 of European Funding, with potential to increase leverage with private sources and further public funding bids. This will allow targets to be met within the MTI programme, which the Council is committed to as Accountable Body and will draw down just over one fifth of the West Lakes Renaissance funding allocation.
- 5.2 Supporting this project will allow the building blocks to be put in place to move Egremont forward through diversification of the economy, in line with the Council's Economic Strategy.

List of Appendices

[Appendix A – Plan showing project areas](#)

List of Background Documents:

List of Consultees:

Corporate Team; Paul Robson; Toni Mageen; Ruth Walsh;
Steve Bishop