

Maybole Castle

Options Appraisal

Executive Summary



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Executive Summary

This report represents the findings of an Options Appraisal by Maybole Castle Community Trust (MCCT) under the guidance of Strathclyde Building Preservation Trust (SBPT) working with a team of consultants comprising:

Robert Potter & Partners Architects,
Doug Wheeler and Associates Business and Regeneration Consultants,
Hodgins Smith Partnership Engineers,
Morham and Brochie Quantity Surveyor,
The District Valuer's Office, Glasgow

This Options Appraisal was undertaken between November 2009 and April 2010 with the aim of exploring potential options for the repair and reuse of Maybole Castle and its associated land by following the pattern established by the Architectural Heritage Fund. Funding for this project was provided by Ayrshire LEADER, the Architectural Heritage Fund, South Ayrshire Council and the RIAS Community Projects Fund with time in kind provided by the MCCT and Cassillis Estate.

Maybole Castle is a Category 'A' listed building built by the Kennedy family in approximately 1560 and has been in their continual use ever since. In recent times the castle has been partially used as a residence and office for the Cassillis Estate factor, an occasional community meeting space and MAYTAG adult education training centre. Since 2005, when MAYTAG moved to new premises, the community have been working with the Cassillis Estate to establish a new community use for the building. A draft 175 lease has been prepared for when the community have found a feasible use to take over the running of the Castle.

Through a process of focused community consultation, the team established a short list of desirable uses for the building. The appraisal analysed how these might be combined to provide a sustained viability for the building through a community run social enterprise.

The shortlisted revenue drivers were suggested as being Events, Heritage, Business, Unusual Holiday Accommodation, and Community Enterprise. How each of these uses can work within the building has been shown within the three visionary schemes prepared by the architect.

The appraisal has illustrated that this will be costly project to complete in the entirety as set out in the three shortlisted schemes and that funding a full package for the capital works is by no means certain. In addition it was felt by the MCCT that there was a need for the project to evolve gradually allowing them to find their feet as a group managing such a facility. For these reasons the most sensible recommendation that this appraisal can make is that an evolving phased project is carried out with aspirations towards a fully occupied building as set out in the options. It is proposed that within the first phase of this project the building is fully repaired in accordance to the architect's repair schedule and the group refit and reuse the accessible lower ground and upper ground floor space to provide revenue. This would form part of a long term vision for the development of the Castle as a community facility.

Expenditure	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Heat /Light/Telecoms	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000
Water/Drainage	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000
Rates & Insurance	£4,500	£4,500	£4,500
Caretaking/Maintenance	£5,500	£5,500	£5,500
Total Expenditure	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000
Income			
History shop and Visitor centre	£7,140	£9,520	£11,900
Events and Conferences	£6,120	£7,480	£8,500
Total Income	£13,260	£17,000	£20,400

The running costs of the Castle without staffing overheads are currently £15,000 per annum. The findings of this appraisal suggest that this cost could be met by using the hall to provide space for events and community space while also setting up a small history shop and visitor centre which focuses on the Castle, Kennedy Clan and the Carrick region. It is unlikely that the castle would cover these costs within the first year of operation but has the potential to by year 2. The £1,740 deficit in the first year revenue could be met by a modest revenue grant or through local fundraising.

The overall cost of bringing the building back to one of the full schemes proposed will be in excess of £3,500,000. Of this total cost the QS has apportioned £2,180,000 to

repair the building to a wind, watertight and usable condition. Carrying out a phased project focussing first on the accessible ground floor space will reduce the initial cost to approximately £3,000,000 which is achievable based on the funding predictions shown on page 93 of the report (which is available on request to the Strathclyde Building Preservation Trust for a small fee).

From this point forward the key recommendation is that Maybole Castle Community Trust chooses the uses they wish to set up within the castle following its repair. There has been strong support for the building to be used as a community events space and heritage centre. We have shown with income predictions that this would be a viable option and would recommend they take these forward and develop them into a business plan with the assistance of a third sector/ social enterprise advisor. With a sound business case made the community can then proceed with developing the capital project.