HLF announce grant to establish flagship museum for Scotland's ancient capital

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Dunfermline has one of the best surviving medieval townscapes in Scotland. The Abbey and Palace were founded in the 11th century when Malcolm III established it as a new seat for royal power while the nearby Abbey Church contains the tomb of Robert the Bruce. The city also has an important collection of industrial heritage from the 18th-20th century relating to its once thriving textile, pottery and coal industries. The new Dunfermline Museum and Art Gallery will bring together the architectural and social history for the first time to tell the story of this important Scottish city.

The facility will be developed across two historic buildings within the Outstanding Conservation Area: the Dunfermline Carnegie Library (the first of 2,600 libraries worldwide funded by the philanthropist Andrew Carnegie) and an adjacent B-listed former bank. The buildings will be redeveloped and a new extension added to create a flagship facility combining a museum, art gallery, archive, library and local history services. The new museum will be a focal point for visitors and residents with currently inaccessible collections displayed and interpreted for the first time, the ability to stage touring exhibitions and a new programme of activities and events for schools, students and the people of Dunfermline.

Commenting on the decision, Colin McLean, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in Scotland, said: "Museums, galleries and libraries are extremely valuable community assets. They make a great contribution to people's education, self-identity and enjoyment. They keep our history safe for future generations and they impact on the local economy, often as the cornerstone of an area's tourism industry. We are delighted to be able to give Dunfermline our support at this stage. By taking this new holistic approach and increasing and improving displays, new audiences will enjoy all that that this important medieval capital has to offer."

Jim Tolson MSP, said "I was overjoyed to hear this news! HLF's support for this project is crucial to the long-awaited addition of a Museum and Art Gallery in Dunfermline which will benefit both local people and visitors for generations to come. It is an addition that I'm sure our famous son, Andrew Carnegie, would be proud of.

"I offer my congratulations to the many Dunfermline groups and individuals who have worked together to bring us to the point where the provision of a much-needed Dunfermline Museum and Art Gallery in our historic quarter is now a distinct possibility."

Councillor Brian Goodall, Chair of Fife Council's Housing & Communities Committee, said: "The Heritage Lottery Fund's decision to support the development of Dunfermline's new flagship museum is a tremendous vote of confidence in the city. We are delighted with the news.

"Fife Council has itself made a major commitment of £6.8million to delivering this project as part of the Council's drive to improve leisure and cultural opportunities for all.

"This award has come towards the end of Celebrating Fife 2010 – Fife's Year of Culture. It's a fitting conclusion to a very successful year, and we now look forward to working with our partners to deliver the fantastic museum that Dunfermline and Fife deserve."

Notes to editors

*A first-round pass means the project meets our criteria for funding and we believe it has potential to deliver high-quality benefits and value for Lottery money. The application was in competition with other supportable projects, so a first-round pass is an endorsement of outline proposals. Having been awarded a first-round pass, the project now has up to two years to submit fully developed proposals to compete for a firm award.

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. To date it has invested over £500million in Scotland's heritage.

Further information

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