The Picture House in Campbletown announces award

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The Heritage Lottery Fund also awarded the project a first-round pass* for a further £804,900.

During the past three to four years the board has been working on plans to conserve the fragile and precious picture house building to celebrate its centenary which was on 26 May this year. The proposed development of the cinema will further enhance the current rejuvenation of the town centre and surrounding areas.It is interesting to note that the prosperity of the town has historically been at its highest during the periods of high harbour usage and activity.This year the new ferry service to Ardrossan is a welcome further addition. Indeed some recent visitors to The Picture House had come over on the ferry from Ayrshire especially to see a film in our historic cinema.

The Picture House is one of the first purpose built cinemas in Scotland. The design is unique, Glasgow School Art Nouveau with an unusual 'atmospheric style' interior.The auditorium remains undivided, still with stalls and balcony. Even on the international stage The Picture House stands tall amongst other survivors.The oldest cinema, the Lumiere in Pisa, opened just seven years earlier in December 1905.

The Centenary Project will conserve the interior and bring the annex back into use by joining the two buildings together. The cinema-going experience of the visiting public will be enhanced with a new kiosk and café bar. Also within this new space an historical interpretative exhibition will be created, using the iconic MacGrory Photographic collection which portrays the social history of Campbeltown and Kintyre during the 1890s and early 1900s. An exciting programme of activities will be created in consultation with other local heritage attractions like the museum next door and other groups such as the two local camera clubs. Activities with schools will also play an important part.The board has the vision for the cinema to become a high performing and sustainable social enterprise with a good reputation for partnership working, quality services and diverse audiences, based in a well known, fully restored and safeguarded heritage building.

Colin McLean, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund Scotland, said: "The Picture House has provided Campbeltown with a centre for entertainment for the last 100 years. The Heritage Lottery Fund is delighted to give its initial support to a project which will not only conserve this well-loved building but will expand its cultural role in the community through activities, interpretation and events".

During the next year detailed work will be carried out on architectural plans, the use of the unique photographs of the MacGrory brothers, and a detailed business plan will be compiled. The business cases for a second screen in the back courtyard and the use of renewable energy will also be investigated. It is then intended that a second-round application for further funds will be submitted to HLF by September next year.

The final project has been provisionally costed at £2,307,148 subject to the outcome of the development work. If success is achieved; in the second-round, the HLF will cover 35% of the costs.Already Historic Scotland, Creative Scotland, Argyll; Bute Council, HIE and other trusts and foundations have pledged support. A Picture House Centenary Fund account has been opened at the Bank of Scotland in Campbeltown and donations can also be made through the website. A Seat Sponsorship Scheme has been launched and the board hopes both individuals, organisations and

businesses will support this project and see their names on an Honour Board in perpetuity.

Notes to editors

*A first-round pass means the project meets HLF's 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.

Heritage Lottery Fund further information
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