

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

19TH SEPTEMBER 2017

TOWN CENTRE MAINTENANCE GRANT

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND PLANNING IN DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR R BEVAN

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The report provides details of a proposed Town Centre Maintenance Grant to be piloted for one year starting in the Mountain Ash and Tonypany Retail Areas, and seeks approval to commence delivery. The grant will provide support to traders / landlords to undertake maintenance works which will improve the external front elevation of town centre properties. The scheme will contribute to a positive impact on the street scene, creating a more attractive and vibrant town centre environment.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 2.1 The proposals for the Town Centre Maintenance Grant are approved and the scheme commences implementation.
- 2.2 A review is undertaken at the end of the pilot scheme to inform any future delivery.

3. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 To deliver on the Council's commitment to support the regeneration of town centres and encourage private sector investment in the high street economy.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2016-2020 "The Way Ahead" outlines that town centres need to benefit from further investment to ensure an attractive environment exists for local businesses, shoppers and traders. This proposal will build on a range of initiatives already underway in town centres to promote them as key locations to live, work and invest.
- 4.2 The Town Centre Maintenance Grant will provide financial support to town centre traders / landlords (including vacant properties) to undertake minor improvements and maintenance works which will improve the external front elevation of town centre properties. The scheme will contribute to a positive impact on the street scene, creating a more attractive and vibrant environment which will increase retail spend and stimulate further private sector investment.

5. TOWN CENTRE MAINTENANCE GRANT - CRITERIA

- 5.1 The pilot scheme will offer financial support to independent town centre traders and owners of vacant properties within the Mountain Ash and Tonypany Retail Areas. The maps at Appendix 1 and 2 show the eligible properties highlighted in blue, within the red line boundary of the retail area.
- 5.2 Eligible works to properties can include works such as;
- Painting (colour scheme to be agreed)
 - Repair, repointing and cleaning of stonework or render
 - Repairs to glazing, doors, shopfronts
 - Repair or reinstatement of rainwater goods
 - Repair or installation of signage (non illuminated)
 - Powder coating of roller shutter doors
- 5.3 Works must be undertaken by a recognised and reputable contractor and, where appropriate, in line with published Design Guidance.
- 5.4 The budget for the pilot scheme is £50,000. The grant will contribute a maximum of 75% towards the cost of eligible works up to a maximum grant of £1,000.
- 5.5 In cases where it will be necessary for the applicant to erect scaffold or hire a skip to undertake the work, the scheme can make an additional contribution towards such costs. This will also be a maximum of a 75% contribution up to a maximum grant of £300.

- 5.6 Where applicants are not registered for VAT and unable to reclaim this cost from HMRC, the VAT cost on works will be considered as eligible expenditure.

6. TOWN CENTRE MAINTENANCE GRANT - IMPLEMENTATION

- 6.1 There will be an open call for applications with no deadlines for submission. The application process will be simple and straightforward with proposals being assessed on a first come first served basis (subject to applications being eligible).
- 6.2 To maximise the benefit of the Fund, and the level of resources available, applications will be limited to one per property.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) screening form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. It has been found that a full report is not required at this time. The screening form can be accessed by contacting the author of the report or the Cabinet Business Officer.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The approach has been agreed with Corporate Finance.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 9.1 Funding is available to support this initiative through a earmarked reserve which was allocated as part of the year end review of balances for 2016/17 and forward commitments into 2017/18.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 10.1 There are no legal implications or legislation to be considered.

11. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN/OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 11.1 The Town Centre Maintenance Grant contributes to the Building a Strong Economy priority within the Corporate Plan.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee

Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

Contact Officer

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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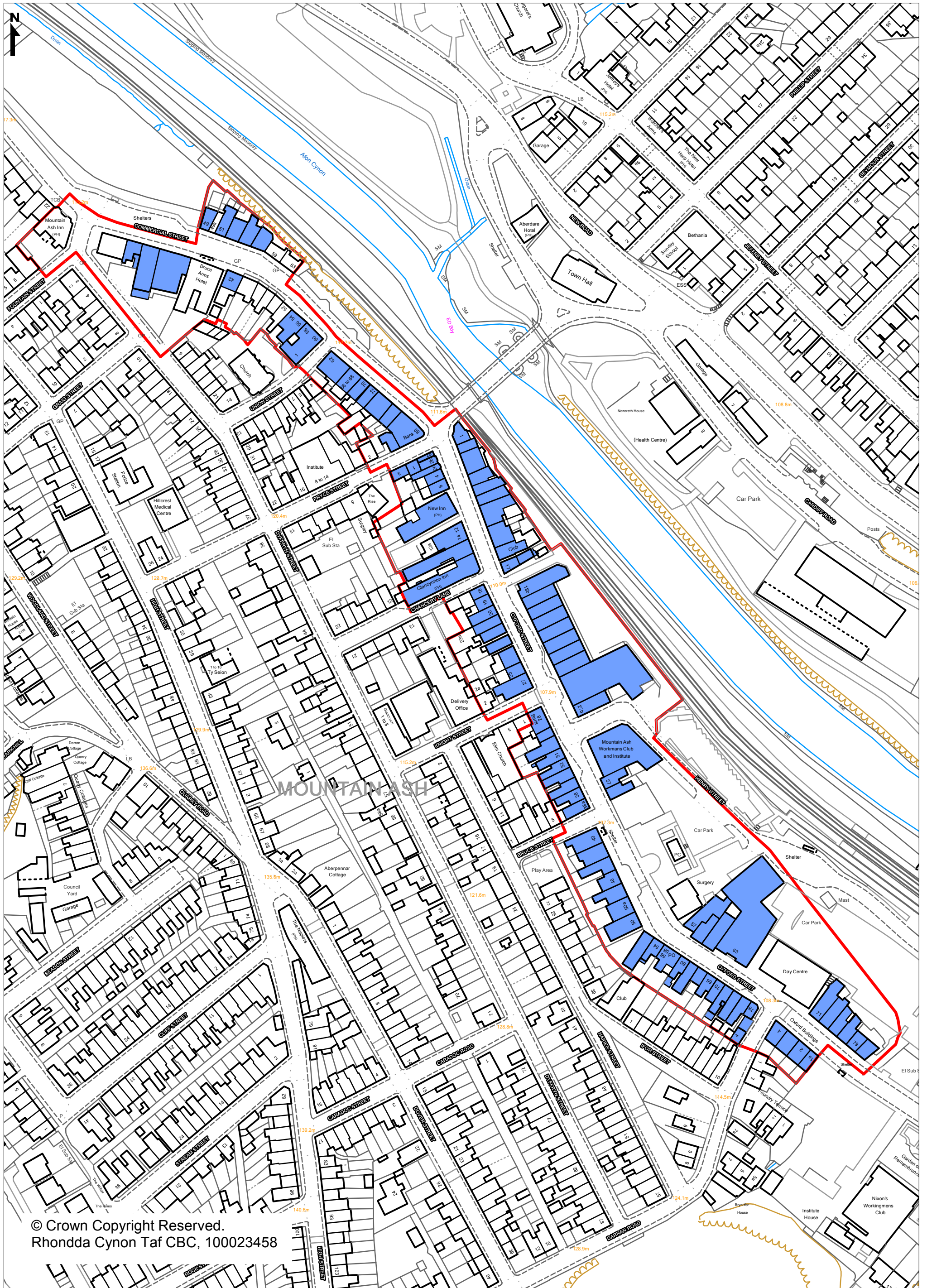
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Background Papers: None

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Retail Centre - Mountain Ash



Retail Centre - Tonypandy

