

**Project Initiation Document**

**Version: Final**  
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**Document Control**

<b>Project: EEDA Funded Capital Project delivered through the Economic Participation (EP)</b>
<b>Programme: Station Development: Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC)</b>
<b>Document: PID</b>
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**Change History**

The document is to be submitted to the relevant Strategic Board (e.g. CAMG/ LTB) for approval and signoff.  
Thereafter amendments are to be approved by the appropriate change control procedures.

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Date of Issue</b>	<b>Comments/Reason for change</b>

**Distribution**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Organisation</b>

**Abbreviations**

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**1.Introduction to Economic Participation**

The East of England Development Agency (EEDA) is the driving force behind sustainable economic growth and regeneration in the East of England. EEDA's task is to improve the region's economic performance and ensure the East of England remains one of the UK's top performing regions.

EEDA has three key roles:

- setting and shaping the direction of economic development in the East of England

- persuading and influencing others to bring resources together to find innovative ways to solve challenging economic issues
- investing in imaginative projects that challenge the norm and will have a significant impact on economic development in the East of England.

Through the Economic Participation programme, EEDA is working to improve employability and increase economic opportunities for individuals to participate fully in the region's economy. Economic Participation replaces the Investing in Communities Programme (IiC) and is EEDA's primary mechanism for delivering the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) economic participation goal. It is to be delivered from 2009, aligned closely to the Local Area Agreements (LAA's) and the Investment Plan that has been produced based on the Central Bedfordshire LAA.

EEDA will provide grant in aid to Central Bedfordshire Council, totalling £1,075,583 consisting of £674,493 capital and £401,090 revenue towards the delivery of the Programme of Activity described in the Approved Investment Template.

Central Bedfordshire Council is accountable for the delivery of the overall Programme of Activity and as part of this agreement undertakes to maintain appropriate systems of internal financial and procedural controls.

The Economic Participation programme for Central Bedfordshire is designed to increase prosperity by raising levels of economic participation and to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate fully in the economy. The Economic Participation Capital Project described in this PID has been approved by both the Local Strategic Partnership's Economy and Environment Thematic Partnership (membership see section 8) and EEDA. The project has been awarded through the correct procurement methods and by using guidelines set out by the Procurement Process Rules 2009.

Following this partnership approval it is now appropriate to gain the necessary approvals through the Council as the Accountable Body. It is worth noting that this is the first and only year we will receive capital funding through Economic Participation which in 2010/11 becomes a smaller and revenue only programme. As such it is a window of opportunity to invest in much needed community infrastructure especially benefiting residents in the Priority estates of Tithe Farm, Parkside and Downside as well the rural areas to overcome barriers to learning and employment through poor transport.

### **Why Economic Participation is important to Central Bedfordshire**

The current recession has led to rising unemployment and a more competitive labour market, heightening the need to support people facing additional barriers and difficulties such as low skill levels; poor access, generational worklessness, care responsibilities and inequalities to be economically active.

There is a pressing need to provide support in order to harness the time and skills of people who aren't currently able to participate in the economy and to be part of the economic recovery because:

- Economic growth is dependent on a growing workforce
- The economy can't reach its full potential if skilled workers are not participating
- Non-participation often results in costs to the economy such as benefit payments
- Increasing participation raises the quality of life for individuals and communities.

### **Why some people are unable to participate fully**

This could be due to:

- Lack of suitable skills, confidence or aspiration
- Lack of access to appropriate support and training

- Lack of capital for starting their own business
- Long-term health problems
- Employers' perceptions or practices

#### **How will economic participation be achieved?**

Economic participation will assist in enabling individuals to access jobs or start their own business.

This will involve:

Raising skill levels and addressing employment barriers

Stimulating enterprise - for example, helping business start-ups access funding

Building capacity in the third sector - such as charities and the voluntary sector

Developing regional intelligence and influencing policy

#### **Partnership and EEDA support**

The EP programme has been developed and designed to meet the economic and needs of Central Bedfordshire and in support of the Strategic Vision, it has the full support of the LSP, EEDA and other supporting partnerships such as the Strategic Enterprise Group, the NI 152 group and Learning Partnership.

#### **Ward Members and Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration**

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration is supportive of the EP scheme; following consideration by CAMG, the relevant ward Members will be further consulted and appraised of the planned investments.

## **2. Project Brief and Project Objectives**

### **Ridgmont Station 'Back on Track' Development - Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC)**

**£50,000** is required to assist in the completion of the project. Expiry date for funding is 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010.

This project will bring a redundant, Grade II listed, railway station building back into use as a multi-functional social enterprise, heritage and voluntary resource centre. Ridgmont station sits at the mid-point on the Marston Vale Line that runs from Bedford to Bletchley. This line once formed the middle section of a longer rail link – The Varsity Line - between Oxford and Cambridge and many of the stations along the Bedfordshire. The BRCC has secured a long-term lease of the premises.

This project will provide much needed enterprise space and increase access to services for local rural communities. The BRCC intend to refurbish the whole building to provide office accommodation, local meeting rooms and tea room and also preserve the original Victorian booking hall, which will become the focus of the heritage display area and will house exhibitions relative to both the line and to the brickworks industry.

Additional facilities envisaged include cycle hire and links from the railway to the Marston Vale "Hidden Britain Centre" walks and the proposed Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway towpath walks.

The main elements of this proposal are to create:

- 2 ground-floor rooms available for community activities
- 50 m<sup>2</sup> of office space across three first-floor rooms for small-scale / start-up social enterprises

- A heritage & visitor centre
- An office for the Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership Officer (including the operation of the Bedfordshire Community Transport Brokerage Scheme)
- A tea room and kitchen

### **Benefits to the Community**

Increase access to services in the locality while supporting the growth of small social and community enterprises. This will contribute to retaining skilled people in the county, reviving the local rural economy and reducing out-commuting.

The Ridgmont Station Rural Social Enterprise Centre will increase the viability of micro-enterprises (either private or community-run) by clustering them under one roof, thereby raising local profile and increasing footfall as well as offering low rental costs.

The BRCC have worked closely with the local communities, consulting with them on their proposals and ensuring that they are fully supportive of their plans. They were heavily involved with the Ridgmont Parish Plan open day consultation event in November 2008.

Letters of support have been received so far from Ridgmont Village Hall Committee, Ridgmont Parish Plan Steering Group, Ridgmont Parish Council, Bedfordshire County Council, The Learning and Skills Council, Network Rail, Lidlington Parish Council, The Bedford to Bletchley Rail Users Association, London Midland Trains, Bedfordshire Association of Town & Parish Councils, Bedford Borough Council and Milton Keynes Borough Council.

They have also conducted a survey at fixed points in Ridgmont Village to collect signatures in support of the project.

### **Added Value**

The project will provide approximately 50m<sup>2</sup> of office space across three first-floor rooms, which will be available for rent by small-scale / start-up social enterprises. The creation of the enterprise facility will provide accommodation for a maximum of 6 individuals. In addition to this, the tea room/kitchen would create a further 2 opportunities.

### **Sustainability**

Once the renovation of the building has been completed, there will be at least 23 years left on the tenancy. Income from the tea room, community room lettings and rental of office space will be ring fenced so that the project becomes self financing. The centre will operate on a social enterprise model. The running costs will be covered by rental income from the meeting room, office space and service areas. Costs will be kept reasonably low due to the offer of the site by Network Rail on a peppercorn rent. Any surpluses will be re-invested in the centre.

### **Spending Breakdown**

£40,000.00 contribution towards building construction and refurbishment.

They have also received additional funding from:

Railway Heritage Trust of £125,000 to cover the costs of refurbishing the outside fabric of the building and the Heritage Centre.

A bid is with the Waste Recycling Environmental Limited (WREN) for £50,000 towards the cost of the community facilities with match funding secured from the Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership (MVCRP).

### **Outputs to be achieved by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010**

200 sq metres converted  
10 individuals supported to start a business  
4 voluntary organisations supported

A long-term lease has been secured and a planning application has been submitted. They anticipate building work to start in October.  
Preliminary costings provided by a Quantity Surveyor show that renovation costs will be around £260,000

### **3. Description of Work**

The projects will involve as follows:

Procurement Review  
Tendering/Commissioning Rounds  
Evaluating project proposals  
Funding approval  
Signed agreement with providers  
Legal Agreement  
Monitoring Performance  
Evaluation Strategy

### **Summary of project plan**

<b>Key stages</b>	<b>Deliverables/outcomes and environment</b>
Achieving necessary approvals	Shadow LSP, approval of investment template EEDA funding agreement in place Project sign off by Economy Thematic Partnership and EEDA
Tendering	Appointments of most suitable providers ensuring the Councils obtain best value for money. Completed through e-procurement. Appraisal Panel to award contract against criteria and specification.
Full Funding Approval	Compliant tenders received and verified Summary report submitted for approval
Prospective Providers	Consultation with providers and stakeholders Providers signed up to agreed service plan
Design and Construction	To deliver a high quality scheme on time and within budget. Ensure delivery of the project completely and successfully
Post Construction	Update the Council's stock of assets. Scheme evaluation

### **4. Financial Issues**

Funding source – EEDA  
Allocated Capital: **£45,000.00**

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

The project will be led by the Project Manager. The full project team is:

Name	Location	Responsibility
Roy Sinfield	BRCC	Project Leader
Sarah Hughes	Central Bedfordshire Council	Budget Control
Garth Mckenzie	Central Bedfordshire Council	Project Manager

## 6. Timescale

The key dates for the project are:

Activity	Targeted Completion date
Bids submitted	June 2009
Bid scored/approved	July 2009
Project plan completed	July 2009
LSP approval	Sept 09
Executive Approval	Nov 09
Contract signed	Nov2009
Projects started	Nov 2009
Project review	Dec 2009
Project finished	Mar 2010
Evaluation	Mar 2010

## 7. Conditions / Constraints / Risks

The key factors that will impact the success of the project are:

Specify any assumptions made	Main assumption is that the scheme will be granted all necessary permission and taken forward.
Specify any constraints that may affect the project	Staffing, organisational capacity, funding from other sources
Specify any risks affecting the entire project	Building complications, late completion of building work
Specify quality control standards and procedure	The project will be undertaken in accordance with all relevant legislation. Disability Discrimination Act Statement of compliance Building Research Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) /Eco Homes/ Civil Engineering Environmental Quality Assessment and Award Scheme (CEEQUAL) "Excellent". Design and Procurement and Post Construction Review Certificates required. Timber from recognised sustainable source, Green Travel Plan, Modern Methods of Construction & 10% recycled content, Renewable On Site Energy Source Target 15%, Design Quality Assessment (14 of the 20 criteria must be satisfied to have passed)

## 8. Central Bedfordshire Environment and Economy Theme Group Membership List

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Liz Wade (Thematic Lead and Chair of Group)	AD Economic Growth & Regeneration	Central Bedfordshire Council
Peter Fraser	Partnership Manager	Central Bedfordshire Council
<b>Strategic Partners</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Basil Jackson	AD Highways	Central Bedfordshire Council
Richard Sarraff	Executive Director	Renaissance Bedford
Judith Grice	Regional Director	Groundworks East of England
Jim Gledhill		Bedford Climate Change Forum
Jane Markham	BRAF Co-ordinator	Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC)
Janet Ridge	Stronger Communities Thematic Lead	Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC)
Tony Talbot	Managing Director	Forest of Marston Vale
Jacqui Blake	Local Partnership Manager	DWP/Job Centre Plus
Anna Graves	Interim Executive Director	Luton Gateway
Chris Vesey	Principal	Dunstable College
John Brown	Team Leader Team Development	GO-East
Malcolm Tilling	Infrastructure Division Regional Productivity Team	GO-East
Thinley Topden	Places, Partnership & Performance Team	GO-East
Sarah Wordingham	Policy Lead	GO-East
Cheryl Smart		The Chamber
Alison Hunt	Senior External Relations Manager	Beds and Herts Jobcentre Plus
Sue Walsh	Relationship Manager	EEDA
Geoff Keeble		Highways Agency
Alan Kirkdale		Highways Agency
Sally Holloway	Planning Liaison Team Leader	Environment Agency
Cc		
Gary Alderson	Community Safety Thematic Lead	Central Bedfordshire Council
Andrew Street	Stronger Communities Thematic Lead	Chief Superintendent Police/Community Safety Bedfordshire Police
Muriel Scott	Healthy & Older People	NHS Bedfordshire

Karen Oellerman

Thematic Lead  
Children & Family  
Thematic Lead

Central Bedfordshire Council