

Report of the Executive Manager (Regeneration)

Report to the Director of City Development

Date: September 2016

Subject: 93 Kirkgate

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. At the end of 2011 Leeds City Council submitted a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) for the Lower Kirkgate area of the city centre. Lower Kirkgate is in a particularly poor condition with buildings in need of repair and also improvements to the wider environment. The bid was successful and on 16th April 2013, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) awarded the Council a Stage 2 pass and permission to start the scheme.
2. 93 Kirkgate is the second scheme to successfully apply for planning permission and subsequently apply for grant funding in the THI scheme. Awarding of grant would help to raise the profile of the scheme and possibly help encourage other owners to apply.

Recommendations

3. The Director of City Development is asked to approve an award of THI grant funding amounting to £110,000 from the common fund to 93 Kirkgate.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The owners of 93 Kirkgate have applied for THI funding for works to their property. These works are of an appropriate conservation specification including repairs to the existing fabric and reinstatement of traditional details.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to award THI funding of £110,000 from the common fund to the owners to reduce the conservation deficit of carrying out these higher specification works through the scheme.

2 Background information

- 2.1 The council's vision is to address the conservation deficit for reuse of buildings within the wider Lower Kirkgate area of Leeds city centre. This will be achieved by utilising grants and other levers to encourage the creation of new businesses within existing spaces.
- 2.2 Specifically, the THI funds bringing vacant historic floorspace back into use through repair and restoration. This includes the use of traditional materials such as lime mortars and renders and the repair of valuable historic elements such as sash windows.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 The property is eligible as an identified Target Property within the Lower Kirkgate THI grant programme.
- 3.2 The scheme will see a comprehensive and sympathetic repair and refurbishment of the property to a conservation specification. The works that are included are:
 - Reroofing with traditional natural blue slate
 - Rebuilding chimney to original profile
 - Repairing and reinstating traditional sash windows
 - Reinstatement of traditional shopfront and removal of external shutter
 - Removal of cement render and paint
 - Installation of rear boundary treatment
 - Basement conversion
 - Basic internal alterations such as replastering, lighting and electrical services to enable the reuse of the vacant building.
- 3.3 The property has an empty retail unit at ground floor and empty first and second floors. The basement is not currently useable. The scheme will see a new restaurant/café over the ground, first and second floors. The basement will be converted to a useable space for storage will be located here.

- 3.4 Internally the works will see the basement waterproofed using an appropriate conservation specification, thus ensuring the fabric of the building does not deteriorate. This will enable a currently unusable space to be brought into active use as part of the proposed café. Throughout the rest of the building replastering using lime is taking place along with limited internal alterations such as installation of ceilings, partitions, doors and skirting. The existing stair case currently in a poor condition and refurbishment will allow access to the second floor.
- 3.5 Basic lighting is to be provided and a full electrical rewiring of the property is required. Other works such as heating, alarms, drainage and sanitary ware and full café/restaurant fit out are to be undertaken by the tenant.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 The Executive Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning has been consulted on the proposal and has raised no objection.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 Grants are available to all owners of Target Properties within the Lower Kirkgate THI area and as such there are no implications for equality and diversity or cohesion and integration arising from this report.

4.3 Council policies and Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 Awarding of the grant would help Leeds economy will be prosperous and sustainable which is part of a 'Vision for Leeds 2011 to 2030' the cities
- 4.3.2 It would also help to achieve the City Priority of becoming the best city for business by:
- Creating new jobs
 - Supporting the sustainable growth

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 The council's contribution to the Common Fund has previously been agreed as part of the bid to secure the £1.505 THI funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The Council match funded this with £668,000 to form the common fund for the project. This funding will help to draw in private investment for improvement works to this area which has suffered long term market failure.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.6.1 The decision to approve this award of grant is not eligible for Call-In as it is not a Key Decision.

4.6.2 The decision to award THI grant funding is a Significant Operational Decision and will therefore be recorded on a Delegated Decision Notification, and will be published on the Council's website.

4.6.3 There are no specific legal implications of deciding to award the grant.

4.7 Risk Management

4.7.1 The Lower Kirkgate THI has a risk log which identifies risk to the project and seeks to reduce and remove them.

4.7.2 Not awarding grant to identified target properties would not meet the objectives of the scheme and is therefore identified as a specific risk.

5 Conclusions

5.1 The owners of 93 Kirkgate have submitted an appropriate scheme for THI funding.

5.2 The awarding of THI grant to 93 Kirkgate would help to bring about substantial economic and aesthetic benefits. This is particularly important given the long term market failure evident in the area and the location of the building in the city centre conservation area.

6 Background documents¹

6.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.