



Report of the Director, Neighbourhoods and Housing Department

Outer South Area Committee

Date: Monday 3rd July 2006

Subject: Town & District Centre Regeneration Scheme – Morley Bottoms
Regeneration Scheme.

Electoral Wards Affected:
Morley North
Morley South

Specific Implications For:

Ethnic minorities

Women

Disabled people

Narrowing the Gap

Council Function

Delegated Executive Function available for Call In

Delegated Executive Function not available for Call In Details set out in the report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks Area Committee approval for funding to carry out works in the Morley Bottoms Regeneration Scheme as part of Leeds City Council's Town & District Centre Regeneration (T&DC) Scheme.

The outline business plan for this project has been given an 'amber light' by Asset Management Group (AMG). A figure of £450,000, plus £10,000 for feasibility funding has been provisionally allocated to the scheme.

A project team has been established and is in the process of developing a full business plan for the scheme. AMG have approved funding to begin this work, which will entail a traffic study, property valuation of dilapidated buildings and an option appraisal for each site and the drawing up a public realm improvement scheme.

While this longer term work is put in place the project team have identified a site on Chapel Hill which would benefit from some immediate capital works to deliver public realm and car parking improvements for the area.

Pending a detailed design with costs it is expected that funding in the region of £10,000 revenue for design and £30,000 capital will be required.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Leeds City Council Capital Programme 2004/08 made provision for £ 5m for the regeneration of town, village and district centres.
- 1.2 Executive Board delegated responsibility for the approval of bids to this fund to the Directors of Corporate Services and Development following assessment of the bids by Asset Management Group and in consultation with the Executive Member (Development).
- 1.3 Bids in the form of outline business cases were invited by the end of June 2005. The business cases were scored using the matrix approved by the Executive Board by staff in Corporate Services who score all capital injections.
- 1.4 In August 2005, Asset Management Group gave “amber light” approval to a number of schemes to proceed to the development and submission of a full business plan. The regeneration proposal for Morley Bottoms was one such scheme. The sum of £450,000 and £10,000 feasibility funding has been provisionally allocated to this scheme.
- 1.5 This project aims to bring about higher level of occupancy of all residential and commercial properties, improve overall appearance, quality and value of the properties and enhance the surrounding environment and public realm.
- 1.6 With this in mind, a project team consisting of officers from Asset Management, Area Management, Planning and Highways have been meeting on a regular basis to draw up the scope and details of an achievable scheme for the area.
- 1.7 The team has also briefed local Councillors and sought their views on various regeneration issues pertinent to the proposed Morley Bottoms scheme. Some of the issues were site specific and others were more public realm type. The Morley Members have confirmed their support and commitment to the scheme.
- 1.8 The key issues for the regeneration of Morley Bottoms area have been identified by the project team as:
 - 1.8.1 An absolute lack of car parking for the occupiers of both residential and commercial units in the area.
 - 1.8.2 Traffic congestion in the main roads i.e. Chapel Hill, Queen Street and Station Road, makes it impossible for increased footfall along the retail frontages.
 - 1.8.3 Chronic shortage of investment in the privately owned properties resulting in a poor quality run down built environment. In many cases, properties appear to have been purchased as low value investment opportunities, whereby the flats above the retail units have been let and the ground floor retail element has been left vacant and allowed to deteriorate.
 - 1.8.4 Inappropriate and poorly maintained hoardings contributing to signs of dereliction in the area.
- 1.9 The project team has determined that certain studies need to be commissioned in order to investigate the various options available both for the immediate and longer term sustainable regeneration of the area.

2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 The project team have agreed that in order to bring about the sustainable regeneration of this area, some actions will be long term e.g. the traffic study is looking at the possibility of changing traffic flow in the area to improve the environment, reduce traffic flow by introducing a one way system, provision of pedestrian crossings and alterations to the junction.
- 2.2 However, the project team believe that the implementation of short term measures is also required. This would enable the local community to experience more immediate improvements in the area.
- 2.3 It is understood that the removal of the unsightly advertising hoardings on Chapel Hill and delivery of some public realm works can be achieved in a relatively short period of time. It is expected that the advertising hoardings can be removed in an 8 month timescale and that the implementation of a Road Traffic Order within the same period would allow the development of a lay by with the provision of much needed additional car parking and public realm works.
- 2.4 This approach which is supported by AMG enables some actions to be delivered relatively quickly while protecting the £450k which is required for the longer term proposals, e.g. the project team is currently investigating the possibility of acquiring and demolishing semi derelict buildings to provide parking facilities and remove an eyesore.

3.0 Costs

- 3.1 It is estimated that the design fees for this work will be in the region of £10,000 revenue and £30,000 capital funding to develop the lay by and implement public realm work around the site.
- 3.2 The Area Committee has previously agreed to allocate its £373,573 capital funding by Ward which gave each Ward £93,393. The spend to date for Morley North is £56,060 (£37,333 balance) and the spend for Morley South is £66,400 (£26,993 balance). Please note that these figures each include half of the £27,000 agreed for projects for the whole of Morley.
- 3.3 If this project was to be agreed its £30,000 capital cost would be split between Morley North and Morley South Wards. This would leave the revised totals as £71,060 spend for Morley North (£22,333 balance) and £81,400 spend for Morley South (£11,993 balance).

4.0 Priority Themes

- 4.1 This proposal addresses the Area Committee Priorities of cleaner neighbourhoods which the Area Delivery Plan describes as focusing on developing a better quality street environment, green and open spaces

5.0 Recommendations

- 5.1 Members are asked to note the progress made on the Morley Bottoms Regeneration Scheme.

5.2 The Area Committee is asked to agree the allocation of £10,000 revenue to fund the design brief and £30,000 capital to fund the lay by development and associated public realm works.