



Report of the North East Area Manager

North East (Inner) Area Committee

Date: 15th October 2007

Subject: Chapeltown Townscape Heritage Initiative

Electoral Wards Affected:

Chapel Allerton

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

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 describes progress over the last 7 months on the development of the Chapeltown Townscape Heritage Initiative application to the Heritage Lottery Fund. Members of the Area Committee are asked to note the contents of the report and support the submission of the bid.

Background

1. In March 2007, the Area Committee received a report about the development of the application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for £802,000 to repair and renovate Victorian and Edwardian buildings on Chapeltown Road. The two stage application process means that this sum was set aside by the HLF in October last year whilst a Stage 2 bid is prepared for submission at the end of October 2007.

Preparation of Stage 2 Bid

Grants

2. The Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) works by offering grants to owners of eligible buildings and runs for 5 years. As part of the Stage 2 Bid development, properties which could be eligible for the grants have been identified. Owners of the buildings have given permission for specialist heritage architects, building surveyors and valuers to examine the buildings and assess the cost of repairs and restoration that would be needed in each case.

Conservation Area

3. It is a requirement of the HLF that all the properties which are eligible for the grants should be in a designated Conservation Area. The existing Chapeltown Conservation Area is to the north of the neighbourhood, centred on the historic St Mary's estate. The Bid therefore includes proposals to extend the Conservation Area to take in buildings which front on to Chapeltown Road between Newton Parade and the Mandela Centre. Several consultation events have taken place and have indicated considerable support in the community for the extension.

Consultation

4. Consultation was initially conducted as part of the Chapeltown Road Development Plan public engagement events in 2006, followed by a stand at the Chapeltown Community Unity Fun Day at Space@Hillcrest in June 2007 and the week long exhibitions at the Chapeltown Enterprise Centre and Leeds Media Centre in September. The North East District Partnership and the IMPaCT group have both given their full endorsement for the Bid, as did the Area Committee in March with a Well Being Fund contribution to the Bid development costs.

Training Plan

5. When the Townscape Heritage Initiative was discussed at IMPaCT, feedback centred on the desire to give local builders the opportunities to 'skill up' in time to be able to bid for THI contracts which will require specialist heritage building skills. Members of the partnership also wanted local construction trainees to be able to take up placements with the firms carrying out the work in Chapeltown. This feedback has helped shape the THI Project Team's work to develop a Training Plan for the local community to access heritage construction skills training.
6. The 5 year Training Plan sets out how opportunities in traditional building crafts skills will be made available, including:
 - targets for recruitment and training on-site placements for the traditional building crafts sectors;
 - assessment of on-site work experience for a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Standard or relevant nationally recognized qualification via Construction Skills;

- development of contracting procedures that maximise local community benefit from heritage construction projects and encourage the use of local builders when subcontracting smaller building project work through Construction Leeds;
- heritage workshops and events relating to key heritage repair projects and maintenance work to old buildings, particularly targeted at property owners;
- engaging and encouraging participation of BME communities and women in the THI building projects.

Match Funding for Public Area Improvements

7. As match funding towards the project, an application is being prepared to the Council's Town & District Centre Regeneration budget for £409,000. This would provide additional improvements to the public realm areas along Chapeltown Road. Surveyors are currently costing out options for consultation which include:
 - Repairing existing, and providing new, stone boundary walls;
 - Repairing paving on the footpaths;
 - Providing heritage style litter bins;
 - Providing heritage style bench seating;
 - Public art at the gable end of the Unity Housing terrace;
 - Supporting the Bi-centenary Transformation Project's ideas for a lasting landmark at Buslingthorpe Recreation Area with a complementary entrance structure;
 - Bus stop shelter improvements.
- Current and Future Involvement by the IMPaCT Partnership**
8. The Townscape Heritage Initiative bid has been greatly enhanced by the support and involvement of individual members of the IMPaCT partnership, including the Libraries Service, Groundwork Leeds, the Feel Good Factor and the Bi-centenary Transformation Project, through the consultation events and sharing information about their own heritage related projects.
 9. IMPaCT members have now given their support to continue to be involved once the scheme starts in 2008. The current proposal is to set up a local conservation area and heritage group which would have representation at the IMPaCT meetings. The group could include membership from local residents' associations as well as community, voluntary or statutory groups involved with heritage projects and/or the built environment. The exact role and remit of the group will be agreed before the project begins, but examples are: to run joint activities to encourage the community to take an interest in the history of their neighbourhood or to advise planners on the local factors that could impact on developments in the Conservation Area.
 10. Final preparation of the Bid documents are being carried out throughout September and October with checks being made by the English Heritage appointed 'Monitors' who act as critical friends for the THI Project Team. As the full Bid will be a very large document with many appendices, including confidential financial information about individual properties, it is proposed to keep the numbers printed as small as possible. Once a final version, excluding confidential information, is available this will be posted on the IMPaCT web-site so Area Committee Members can view the Bid. Future reports on the progress of the THI will be provided to update the Committee.

Recommendations

11. Members of the Area Committee are requested to support the bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the Chapeltown Townscape Heritage Initiative, including:

- the extension of the Chapeltown Conservation Area;
- the bid for funds from Leeds City Council's capital budget for public area improvements.