



Leeds
CITY COUNCIL

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Report of the West Leeds Area Manager

To: Inner West Area Committee

Date: 22 June 2006

Subject: Armley Townscape Heritage bid

Electoral Wards Affected:

Armley

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 provides members with information about the bid to Heritage Lottery Fund for a Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme for Armley. Should the stage 1 bid be approved, further work will then be undertaken to prepare a detailed bid for stage 2 of the process which will cost in the region of £30,000. 75% of the cost of this work will be granted from Heritage Lottery and an application will be made to the Area Committee for the remaining 25%.

If successful the scheme will be focused on Armley Town Street and will provide funding for improvements to buildings and public spaces of historic value.

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

1.1 This report provides members with an update on progress on the bid to Heritage Lottery for Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) Funding for Armley.

2.0 Background Information

Townscape Heritage Initiative is a grant programme administered by Heritage Lottery which supports schemes that aim to regenerate the historic environment in

towns and cities across the United Kingdom. It is one of Heritage Lottery's ways of achieving their strategic priority to promote conservation as an essential part of urban regeneration.

3.0 Main Issues

Heritage Lottery fund about twenty THI schemes per year, but to date there are none in Leeds. Two areas of Leeds have been identified as having the potential to attract funding for a THI scheme, these are Armley and Chapeltown.

- 3.1 Should the bid be successful it will contribute to the regeneration of the West Leeds Gateway Area by providing funding for the preservation and enhancement of the historic character of the area. The funding would be focused on Armley Town Street. There are a number of significant features which would benefit.
- 3.2 The pre-eminent project in the THI is Mike's Carpets. This is of strategic importance to the success of the project and will be the focus of attention in the first year of the THI. Grant aid can play a crucial part in ensuring that the conversion of this important listed building is carried out to a standard which befits its location and architectural interest.
- 3.4 Harmonising the facades of the shop premises on Town Street and its extension, Crab Lane, would have a great impact on the perceptions of the area, correcting impressions of decline, poor quality and lack of pride. The focus of the grants will be late Victorian and Edwardian shops on the Crab Lane - the entrance to the commercial centre from the city centre adjacent to Mike's Carpets - and Town Street west of the 1960s shopping parade.

The general scope of works will be repairing and reinstating original shop fronts and sash windows, and it is anticipated that the proportion of grant aid to total cost of will be high, probably 80%, to give sufficient incentive to shopkeepers. These works will be delivered by enveloping parades en block rather than piecemeal works to individual premises.

At the western side of the commercial area is Armley Moor which is also in need of enhancement and improvement. There will be scope for a small proportion of the Common Fund to be used for this purpose.

4.0 Implications For Council Policy And Governance

- 4.1 If successful, this scheme will contribute to the regeneration of Armley, and meet key actions in Armley Town Centre Plan. It will contribute to aims of the West Leeds Gateway Regeneration Programme to make Armley a place where people choose to live and work. In assisting in achieving these local aims, the scheme will contribute to the council's overarching priority to narrow the gap.
- 4.2 Consultation has taken place with local ward members, the West Leeds Gateway Board, West Leeds District Partnership and Armley Forum.

5.0 Legal And Resource Implications

An expression of interest (stage 1 bid) has been submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund. Should the bid be approved at Stage 1, a grant will offered from Heritage

Lottery towards the cost of getting qualified professionals to help produce the Stage 2 submission. This grant can be up to 75% of the cost of this work, up to £25,000. The council will be required to provide the remaining 25% of the cost. An application to the Well-being fund will be submitted to a future meeting of the Area Committee for this.

Should the Stage 2 bid be successful it is proposed that the THI would run for five years beginning in 2007 and ending in 2012. The amount of funding required is in the region of £1.5million, made up of a 75% contribution from the Heritage Lottery Fund, and 25% from Leeds City Council.

The THI will be overseen by Neighbourhood and Housing's Major Projects Team. Locally the THI scheme will have the full support of the District Partnership, and the Area Management Team. The Area Management Team has a role in coordinating local service delivery, and provides the local infrastructure for delivery projects. The Area Management Team will provide staff resources to liaise with the Council's Development Department and with Armley Forum and other local groups to ensure that the scheme is administered effectively and efficiently. A steering group will be established to act as a coordinating and monitoring body involving local residents, businesses, council representatives, and representatives from the community and voluntary sector.

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 The THI will support the regeneration of Armley, by providing an opportunity to conserve and enhance the historic character of Armley Town Street. It would strengthen the heart of the town by repairing and refronting commercial properties and reviving public spaces. It complements existing and emerging strategies for the area which recognizes the importance of the historic environment.

7.0 Recommendations

- 7.1 That members note progress on the THI bid, and note that a bid will be submitted for match funding to the Area Committee should the Stage 1 application be successful.