
**Bromsgrove Town Centre Townscape Heritage Initiative
Draft Second Round Submission**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr D Booth / Cllr CB Taylor
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Director	John Staniland
Wards Affected	St Johns
Ward Councillor Consulted	No
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 In April 2010 the Council was provisionally awarded £1.2 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), to operate a Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) in Bromsgrove Town Centre Conservation Area. In order to release the full funding the Council is required to prepare a second round submission which provides much clearer detail on the Conservation area, the issues facing it and how they will be managed, and most importantly how the money will be spent which adds lasting improvements and historic value to the area.
- 1.2 The key elements of the second round bid are the bid document itself and the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan; it is these documents which are the focus of this report. An essential part of the THI is that it has community buy in and therefore it is proposed that the draft bid document and the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management plan are published for a period of public consultation, the results of which are then fed in to the final bid due to be submitted in April 2012.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Bromsgrove Town Centre THI draft second round submission, and the Bromsgrove Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan is published for public consultation for a period of 6 weeks beginning 2nd February 2012**

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no immediate financial implications of carrying out this consultation. Although without adequate consultation on the THI second round bid and the associated Conservation Area Appraisal and

Management Plan the success of the overall £1.2 million bid would be put in jeopardy. This funding is an essential part of the Town Centre regeneration without it many projects could fail and or have to be funded solely by the Council.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 There are no immediate legal implications of carrying out this consultation.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.3 As stated in 1.1 the Council have been provisionally awarded £1.2 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund to undertake a THI in Bromsgrove Town Centre Conservation Area. £400,000 match funding has also been secured from Worcestershire County Council, bringing the total amount of funding available to £1.6 million. The purpose of this £1.6 million is to improve the look, feel and vitality of a key section of the Conservation Area. The money will be available for a selection of eligible properties in the form of grants to reinstate historic elements such as shop fronts, the grant rates offered will depend on the type of work being undertaken. A significant element of the THI will be focussed on the public realm. Alongside the wider scheme being developed for the Town Centre, new more traditional and high quality public realm will be a key element of the ongoing regeneration of the Town Centre. Full details of how the funding will be allocated can be seen in section 5 of the draft bid document at appendix 1.
- 3.4 The initial HLF award of £50,000 in April 2011 was to enable the Council to work up a full bid confirming to the HLF that Council can and will be able to spend the money on projects which THI's are designed for. Since April we have recruited a THI project officer who has then been responsible for the development of the bid into its current form. The development of the bid has focussed on those elements specified by the HLF in the first bidding round. Two key studies have been completed, an accessibility audit and a building condition survey. The building condition survey has provided more precise costs for renovating the key historic buildings in the high street. The accessibility audit has informed the development of the public realm scheme part of which will be funded by the THI. These studies were key pieces of evidence used to develop the funding structure as seen in section 5 of appendix 1.
- 3.5 Alongside the work done on developing the bid itself further work has been done on both the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management

Plan. The Management Plan is a significant document which will ensure that measures can be taken to ensure that current problems within the conservation area are properly dealt with such as the enforcement of unauthorised development. The Management Plan is also important because it will help to ensure that the improvements which are a result of the THI are permanent and not overshadowed by the return unauthorised or poor quality development.

- 3.6 It is an essential part of the process that the public are involved in the development of the bid, the Appraisal, and the Management Plan. The aim of this consultation is to ensure the issues which we are looking to address are also important to the people who use the Town Centre. Once this consultation has taken place the outcomes will be reflected as much as possible in the final bid document. It is also hoped that at the same time as approving the final bid the Council will also adopt the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan as a material consideration, therefore allowing it to be used more formally in the planning process.
- 3.7 As well as consulting on the specifics of the THI the council will also be able to consult on detailed proposals for the new public realm design. Combining these consultations will not only allow both projects to progress quicker but will also reduce duplicated consultation in the Town Centre.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.8 The Equalities Officer is a key member of the project team, and has and will continue to ensure that equalities and diversity issues are successfully incorporated in the THI bid and subject to HLF approval the THI implementation. The Worcestershire Association of Service Users who carried out the accessibility audit were procured with the help of the Equalities Officer.
- 3.9 In order for the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan to be adopted as a material planning consideration, consultation will be carried out inline with the councils adopted statement of community involvement. It is envisaged that publicity material will be produced for display in the customer service centre, and all the material will be placed on the councils website. Focussed consultation will take place with key stakeholders, and the views of people who use the area of the high street which form the THI will also be sought.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 The most significant risk associated with this stage of the THI process is failure to meet the requirements of the HLF and not being awarded the funding. By ensuring that the consultation is carried out successfully, and that the views of Town Centre users are fed into the final bid and the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, the risks of failing on this part of the process are minimised.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Bromsgrove Town Centre THI: Draft Second Round Bid
Appendix 2 - Bromsgrove Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Mike Dunphy
E Mail: m.dunphy@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Tel:01527 881325