
**Grant Applications under the Townscape Heritage Initiative:
67 High Street, Bromsgrove and 1-3 New Road**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Rita Dent
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Director	Kevin Dicks
Wards Affected	St Johns
Ward Councillor Consulted	Yes
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

1.1 Under the Town Heritage Initiative (THI) scheme member approval is required to authorise the making of grants over the sum of £150,000. This report sets out two such proposals for members in relation to 67 High Street (Oswald Bailey), Bromsgrove and 1 – 3 New Road (the Tudor House), Bromsgrove, and officers are seeking members approval to proceed with making the grants.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That Cabinet approves the offer of a Townscape Heritage Initiative grant as set out in this report for 67 High Street

2.2 That Cabinet approves the offer of a Townscape Heritage Initiative grant as set out in this report for 1-3 New Road

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

3.1 The Townscape Heritage Initiative is a grant scheme of £1.6 million jointly funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (£1.2 M) and Worcestershire County Council (£400K) for the restoration of historic buildings on High Street, including parts of Worcester Road and New Road

3.2 In the Stage 2 Bid and Action Plan to the Heritage Lottery Fund dated 20 April 2012, the Council entered into an agreement with the Heritage Lottery Fund and Worcestershire County Council to set up and run the Townscape Heritage Initiative. The agreement requires that single grants of over £150,000 must be approved by Cabinet

3.3 An application for a grant from the fund has been received from Stephen Bailey who is the owner of 67 High Street, Bromsgrove. A photograph of the building is included for members' reference at Appendix 1.

The property is a grade 2 listed building that is currently used as a shop at ground floor level (Oswald Bailey) while the two upper floor levels are vacant. It is earmarked as a priority “plus” building which means that it clearly contributes to the enhancement of the conservation area and is eligible for funding through the Townscape Heritage Initiative. The proposal is to insert a new traditional-looking shop front, carry out window and front elevation repairs, and convert the two upper floor levels into two separate apartments

3.4 Pre - application advice has been received for this project and a planning application is expected by the end of February 2015. Support for the proposed grant has been received from the Heritage Lottery Fund Monitor for Bromsgrove Townscape Heritage Initiative

3.5 The proposed grant, based on a quantity surveyor’s professional estimate, is £195,500, and the owner of the grant-aided property has agreed to contribute the sum of £45,000 to the £240,500 renovation costs. If the renovation costs of the work increase, following the tender process, the proposed grant will not increase – it will be capped at £195,000

3.6 An application for a grant from the fund has also been received from Philip R. Amphlett who is the owner of 1-3 New Road, Bromsgrove. A photograph of the building is included for members’ reference at Appendix 2. The property is a grade 2 listed building of timber-frame construction with a modern single-storey extension on one side. It is currently leased by Your Move estate agents and is recognised as a priority building eligible for funding through the Townscape Heritage Initiative. The proposal is to carry out major repair and reinstatement works to the external fabric of the main historic building, including:-

- Repairing parts of the timber frame in New Green Oak
- Reinstating infill panels using lime plaster
- Reinstating cast iron gutters and downpipes
- Repairing windows
- Reinstating a dwarf boundary wall and cast iron railings
- Repairing roof coverings
- A dendochronological assessment to determine the exact age of the building

3.7 Pre - application advice has been received for this project and a planning application is expected by the end of February 2015. Support for the proposed grant has been received from the Heritage Lottery Fund Monitor for Bromsgrove Townscape Heritage Initiative

3.8 The works have been tendered and a grant proposal based on the successful tenderers’ costings has been calculated at £198,024

Legal Implications

3.9 The Heritage Lottery Fund deficit grant contract for 67 High Street stipulates that two years after the completion of the project, or on the sale of the property, whichever is the earlier, the deficit must be recalculated. If there is a reduction in the deficit, i.e. an increase in the value of the property, in accordance with Heritage Lottery Fund policy, the Worcestershire County Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund will claw back a percentage of that increase.

3.10 The Heritage Lottery Fund fixed-percentage grant contract for 1-3 New Road stipulates that if the owner intends to sell the property during a period of 10 years after completion of the project the owner must pay back to Worcestershire County Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund a proportion of the grant calculated according to a formula provided by the Heritage Lottery Fund

3.11 The grant applicant is committed, by way of the grant contract, to maintain the property to a standard commensurate with the character of the building upon restoration. The grant is repayable on breach of this condition for the length of the contract (10 years)

3.12 Although Bromsgrove District Council is responsible for project managing the THI grant scheme it is not a major funding partner and does not receive monies that may become due from claw-back

Service / Operational Implications

3.13 The final grant offers will be based on tendered renovation costs provided with the applications

3.14 THI grant payments are made to property owners in retrospect, and usually in instalments. In both instances grant payments will be made monthly for completed work

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

3.15 A THI Partnership Steering Group meets bi-monthly to receive regular updates on THI progress and provide feedback on the design and quality of implemented projects. Membership is drawn from local community and residents' groups (including religious, leisure and youth groups), local business and commercial concerns and the principal amenity groups - Victorian Society, Housman Society, English Heritage and Bromsgrove Society

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

4.1 Without grant-aid it is very unlikely that these two buildings will ever be economically viable to restore

4.2 Monies saved by not agreeing to offer grants for these particular projects would have to be relocated to other properties within the THI area meaning further delays to the delivery and effectiveness of this scheme

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Image of 67 High Street, Bromsgrove

Appendix 2 – image of 1 – 3 New Road, Bromsgrove

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

THI Stage 2 Bid and Action Plan

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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