



PRCC.06 16/17

Prosperous Communities
Committee

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Subject: Gainsborough Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) Bid

Report by:

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Purpose of the Report

This report is intended to brief members on the
proposed Townscape Heritage Initiative Bid for
Gainsborough Town Centre.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1. To proceed with the submission of a Stage I THI Bid.**
- 2. That the Corporate and Policy and Resources Committee be recommended to approve the release of the capital programme and revenue funding allocated to delivering this initiative.**

IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

Any works carried out under the THI scheme will require the owners consent and statutory consent (in the form of Listed Building Consent). All works will need to be state aid compliant.

Financial: FIN/25/17

£1m has already been approved in principle in the existing council capital programme, the Growth team are currently auctioning spend on this now in advance of the bid to address pressing issues within the town centre and show capacity.

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.

The council will be required to provide the remaining 25% of the cost, which has already been identified within existing budgets.

Should the Stage 2 bid be successful it is proposed that the THI would run for five years beginning in 2017 and ending in 2022. The amount of funding required is in the region of £3million, made up of a 75% contribution from the Heritage Lottery Fund, and 25% from West Lindsey District Council.

Staffing:

This project will be led by Graeme Moore (Major Projects and LDO Officer) supported by the Growth Team as part of the agreed work plan.

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.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :

The report recommendations do not affect the Council's policy, provision of any service or its statutory functions. It is not required to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment.

Risk Assessment :

There is a risk that the council may not be awarded the full amount of £2m that it intends to bid for, in which case there will be a need to re-assess which projects are to be prioritised in order to make the biggest impact on the regeneration of the town centre and riverside area.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :

Any new development will ensure that current building regulation standards on sustainability can be achieved and include provision for cyclists.

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

1. Introduction

1.1. As reported to committee in January the regeneration of Gainsborough has been considered in past master plans (Invest Gainsborough and Gainsborough Regained) in tandem with its Growth Point status over the last 10 years. Despite this analysis, the success of Marshalls Yard (in raising the towns ranking in the retail hierarchy) and Growth Point status, the pace of change has been slow. Gainsborough and its existing heritage assets have been placed on the “Heritage at Risk” Register by Historic England and repeated interventions in the built environment have resulted in the loss of a significant amount of heritage assets to the point where HE suggest that there is just enough ‘critical mass’ left in the town centre to work up a Townscape Heritage Initiative bid, in conjunction with the wider heritage-led regeneration of the town centre.

1.2. The heritage-led approach that has been promoted for Gainsborough is culminating in the development of a “Heritage Masterplan” for Gainsborough which has been compiled by Lathams; a specialist

heritage architectural and urban design firm based in Derby & Nottingham. The work carried out to date is attached in Appendix I, and shows the extent of the proposed THI works, existing listed buildings and their quality etc.

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

2. Background Information

2.1. The Council's regeneration plans for Gainsborough are predicated on housing led economic growth which is formalised through our statutory obligations to seek to deliver the local plan. The scale of growth required is very ambitious but is supported by an economic evidence base and a sustainable spatial plan.

2.2. Past master plan analysis has been updated in the last 6 months through:

- Central Lincolnshire Local Plan – specifically the Gainsborough chapter and supporting retail study (White Young Green) reveals the need for circa 5000 square meters of new convenience and 8000 square meters of new comparison goods retail floor space, along with a deficit in existing leisure including food and drink and hotel accommodation floor space (note half of the national average)
- Heritage master plan for Gainsborough town centre in discussion with Historic England, which will formulate a bid for Townscape Heritage Initiative funding to the Heritage Lottery Fund to enable the repair and refurbishment of the twins historic fabric;
- Place Marketing work (Thinking Place September 2015) which highlighted Gainsborough strengths and potential to be a strong location capable of attracting a critical mass of new population;
- Planning and Infra-structure Strategy (Mouchel/Nexus April 2016) to advise on interventions and prioritising interventions to improve the towns infra-structure;
- Housing Viability – How to Build a Viable and Differentiated Housing Market in Gainsborough (Lambert Smith Hampton April 2016)

2.3. All of these studies/plans emphasis the need to repair, rejuvenate and develop the town centre and its connection with the riverfront as the most important initiative to re-position Gainsborough has a significant and new housing location, integral to the achievement of the wider

Growth agenda. Note these reports with exception of the Local Plan have been funded by the Homes and Communities Agency as part of support to WLDC to deliver the Housing Zone objectives. In summary these reports provide the evidence base to support the Council's intervention in the town centre to seek address:

- Under occupied and underutilised town centre
- Poor state repair of the urban environment
- Predominance of derelict brownfield land (legacy of de-industrialisation)
- Lack of connection to the riverfront
- Lack of strong identity
- Overt pockets of social deprivation
- Market stigma.
- Prosperous Communities Committee have already agreed a regeneration programme for Gainsborough to address these negative themes as a precursor to building development confidence in the town.

2.4. The Local Plan retail study does reveal the potential and level of new retails and leisure floor space required in the town to support the required/planned housing growth.

3. What is the Townscape Heritage Initiative?

3.1. Townscape Heritage Initiative is a grant programme administered by the Heritage Lottery Fund 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.

3.2. Heritage Lottery Fund supports about twenty THI schemes per year, previously one was carried out in Caistor in West Lindsey. Gainsborough has been identified due to fact that the Conservation Areas that cover the town centre (Britannia Works and Town Centre) are on the Historic England "Heritage at Risk" register, this coupled with the underlying need for regeneration of the town centre means that the THI bid is a significant part of the heritage led regeneration of the town centre.

3.3. A long list of projects with indicative costings has been drawn up which includes:

- **Frontage Enhancements and Fabric Repairs (including Shop Front Replacement)** on Silver Street, Lord Street, Market Place, Church Street (north), Parnell Street, Bridge Street, Gooden Street, Morley Street, Gladstone Street;
- **Living Above the Shop** on Silver Street, Lord Street, Market Place and Church Street (north);
- **Boundary Improvements** to All Saints Church, Gainsborough Old Hall, residential streets surrounding the Old Hall, Gladstone Street (south) and the United Reformed Church;
- **Public Realm Improvements** of varying quality, to be agreed under a Streetscape Guide for Church Street (south), Church Street (north), Gladstone Street, Parnell Street, Bright Street, Gooden Street, Morley Street and Caskgate Street
- **Interpretive Signage** - on Parish Church (All Saints) - Pilgrim Fathers, Old Hall - Richard III, Market Place, Waterfront - Canute and Elswitha Hall;
- **Sculpture (by subscription)** - low priority but in the long term, produce a sculpture of King Canute.

3.4. The pre-eminent project for the THI is Market Place, this is of strategic important to the success of the project and will be the focus of attention in the first year of the THI. Grant aid will play a crucial part in ensuring that the restoration of this important area of Gainsborough is carried out to a standard which befits its location and the various buildings within it and their architectural interest.

3.5. Harmonising the facades of the shop premises on Silver Street and Lord Street would also 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 the late Victorian and Edwardian shops on Silver Street and Lord Street.

3.6. 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 will be high, probably 80% or more, to give sufficient incentive to shopkeepers. In order to have the most enduring effect, it should be the aim for the works to be delivered by enveloping parades en block rather than piecemeal works to individual premises, however it is acknowledged that this may not be possible, particularly as it is the intention to target seven specific properties located along Silver Street and Market Place which are most in need of repair and restoration

4. Conclusion

4.1. A bid for THI funding forms an important part of the Gainsborough Growth agenda and the heritage-led regeneration of the town centre, this list of projects is extensive and due to the nature of the work, it is not possible for the council to fund all of the works itself.