

## **Bishopwearmouth Townscape Heritage Scheme Guidance Notes for Applicants**

Sunderland City Council will deliver a Townscape Heritage (TH) Scheme within the northern part of the Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area from September 2018 to August 2023.

The TH will help turn the fortunes of the area around by providing grant aid for building works, public realm improvements and delivering public activities and education. Grants to historic buildings and spaces will address the area's physical heritage needs which along with complimentary strategic investment will underpin its new economic direction.

Financial assistance is only available towards works to eligible properties highlighted in the Bishopwearmouth Detailed Scheme Plan approved by the City Council and the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Grants will only be awarded to projects that preserve or enhance the historic fabric or features of a historic building of townscape value.

Within each building project a range of repair and reinstatement works have been previously identified, with priority given to listed buildings, works that aid wind and water tightness and works that support the long term economic use of the historic buildings. The retention of surviving elements of historic shopfronts and the reinstatement of traditional style shopfronts is a fundamental element of the TH scheme, informed by historic photographs and evidence wherever possible.



## GENERAL INFORMATION

- All grants and the level of such grants are offered at the discretion of the City Council. Eligibility of works for grant assistance does not bind the Council to make an award.
- The proposed works must form part of an overall scheme that complies with the Council's and HLF's policies and objectives. The applicant must satisfy the Council in all relevant aspects prior to consideration of an application. A good standard of design and workmanship that respects and safeguards the building's special appearance and character will be expected.
- Works must not commence on a scheme for which grant assistance is sought until the applicant has received the Council's written confirmation of an award of grant. Undertaking works without the appropriate authorisation may render the whole scheme ineligible.
- The applicant must obtain all other necessary approvals for the scheme prior to commencement of works. Such consents may include Planning Permission, Advertisement Consent, Listed Building Consent and Building Regulations Approval. Applications for such consents can be submitted at the same time as the grant application but all approvals must be granted before works commence on site. An award of funding does not give or imply any other approval required from the City Council.
- Only one grant per property will normally be approved, which can be implemented in phases of work.
- The grant may be paid in the form of a lump sum payment upon practical completion or in monthly or quarterly instalments by prior agreement, but will always be paid retrospectively after the contractor has been paid.
- Grant applicants must either be the freeholder, or have a lease with an unexpired term of at least 10 years at the point of completion of the grant aided works. The lease should not have a break clause. If the lease is less than 10 years the freeholder must be a joint grant applicant with the tenant, or apply for the grant directly.
- The applicant must insure the property during the course of the work and following completion of the work for its full reinstatement value. In the event of loss, theft or damage, the property must be made good. The contractor will also be expected to hold an appropriate level of public liability insurance.

## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

### **Stage One: Pre-application advice**

If you are interested in receiving a grant please contact the TH Project Officer, for initial advice or to arrange a site meeting to establish the scope of the works that would be likely to be eligible for grant. A range of works which could potentially be undertaken has already been prepared as part of the Heritage Lottery Fund application by the City Council.

### **Stage Two: Define the works**

Depending on the complexity of the proposed work, the next stage would be for the applicant to arrange for the preparation of a specification and schedules of work, together with any drawings that may be necessary. The TH Project Officer would welcome the opportunity to discuss the specification and schedules of work in draft form to ensure that they meet with the TH requirements.

Please note the specifications and schedules of work must be prepared by a registered architect/chartered surveyor with appropriate conservation accreditation, who must also be retained to administer the building contract. Fees for this professional help would be grant eligible at the same rate as the rest of the grant aided works.

### **Stage Three: Tenders**

The required number of tenders should be sought from suitably experienced building companies. A minimum of 3 competitive tenders will be required. The tenders must have each of the items priced separately to allow the grant assessment to be made. A tender report summarising the quotes received will be required for projects over £10,000.

### **Stage Four: Grant Application**

An application for TH funding must be made using the correct application form and all relevant parts must be completed. The application must be made by the person(s) or company whose name appears on either the title deeds or the lease agreement for the property.

Grant application checklist:

- Completed application form
- Schedule of Works
- Method Statement for Repairs
- Elevation Plans
- Floor Plans (if applicable)
- Costs breakdown
- Summary of professional fees

Tender report for works over £10,000  
Copy of Title Register or Lease  
Consent from landlord and/or mortgage provider  
De Minimus Declaration  
Bank/Building Society authorisation

We estimate that a completed grant application will be assessed within 6 weeks of submission. This allows time for the Council's Quantity Surveyor to verify the proposed costs, and authorisation of a grant award by the Council's Project Team and the National Lottery Heritage Fund case manager.

### **Stage 5: Grant Offer**

The grant offer letter will contain a number of conditions that the applicants must take full account of, as well as a written contract which must be signed by the grant applicant and Sunderland City Council. This contract will lay out the respective commitments of the City Council and the grantee. A specimen copy of this with the standard terms can be provided on request before the application is made. The grant offer is non-transferable.

Once a grant has been offered, the offer must be formally accepted within 3 months and work must start within 6 months of the offer being made.

The grant offered will be subject to a clawback condition. Should the recipient sell or otherwise dispose of the Property or terminate my lease within a period of 10 (ten) years from the date of successful completion of the works, the Recipient must immediately notify the Council, and on completion of the sale or other disposal of the Property or lease termination shall repay to the Council such proportion of the Grant as the Council may determine, up to the maximum amounts as follows:

<b>Years following successful completion of the Works</b>	<b>Proportion of Grant to be reclaimed</b>
0-6	Up to 100%
6-7	Up to 80%
7-8	Up to 60%
8-9	Up to 40%
9-10	Up to 20%

A land charge will be placed on the property on completion of the grant payments to ensure that public funds can be recovered in the event of change of ownership. This will also advise potential new owners and tenants of the liability to retain the grant aided works.

Contractors whose estimates are submitted with the application for grant must carry out the works. The use of alternative contractors must be approved in advance and in writing by the City Council. Such requests will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. If the applicant wishes the level of grant assistance to be reconsidered due to the use of an alternative contractor revised quotes must be submitted for consideration and works must not

commence until the applicant receives the Council's written decision. Any reduction in costs will result in a revised award letter being issued.

On larger grant aided schemes with a value of over £50,000, a requirement to provide training and education opportunities will be added as a grant condition, to be negotiated with the lead contractor.

You will also be required to maintain your property adequately for the foreseeable future once works have been completed. A maintenance guidance document will be prepared as part of the TH scheme, a copy of which will be available from the TH Project Officer.

### **Stage 6: Commencement**

No works may proceed before the specification and schedules of work (and any drawings if appropriate) have been approved in writing. Any changes in specification subsequent to this approval must also be approved in writing.

The applicant must obtain all other necessary approvals for the scheme prior to commencement of works. Such consents may include Planning Permission, Advertisement Consent, Listed Building Consent and Building Regulations Approval. Applications for consent can be submitted at the same time as the grant application but all approvals must be granted before works commence. An award of funding does not give or imply any other approval required from the City Council. Evidence of such permissions must be provided to the TH Project Officer upon request, and any pre-commencement conditions on such permissions fully complied with.

Sunderland City Council must be formally notified in writing of the date on which it is proposed that works will commence. Whilst the works are in progress, the TH Project Officer and colleagues will need to visit the site to carry out inspections and progress checks and the applicant should arrange with the contractors that access be made available whenever this is requested.

Grant applicants are required to advertise the HLF investment in the works during and after the project. Promotional materials such as banners and window stickers will be provided free of charge from the TH Project Officer.

The TH scheme includes digital media projects in association with Sunderland College. Access to active building projects to record and promote the grant aided works will be sought during implementation, dates and times to be agreed with the lead contractor.

## **CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT OF GRANT**

- All elements of the project, including any non-eligible works which form part of the scheme, must be completed to the Council's satisfaction before a grant will be paid
- Once works have been completed an applicant should request an inspection of the property by the TH Project Officer
- The Council's TH Project Officer must be satisfied that the works have been carried out in accordance with the approved specifications, plans and by the contractor whose estimates have formed part of the application for a grant. Any unsatisfactory works, omissions, etc. must be rectified to the TH Project Officer's satisfaction before payment of grant can be authorised
- The TH Project Officer may ask for further financial information that is reasonably required to verify the grant claim
- To claim a payment of grant the applicant must submit receipted invoices from all relevant contractors. If the applicant is the contractor the claim for payment must be accompanied by an itemised final evaluation of works, based on an independent professional evaluation
- The grant may be given in the form of a lump sum payment or in monthly or quarterly instalments, but will always be paid retrospectively. A payment schedule should be negotiated with the TH Project Officer
- VAT will only be reimbursed where the applicant is not VAT registered and therefore unable to request a refund from HMRC. The applicant must inform Sunderland City Council if their VAT status changes during the application process or undertaking of works
- We will aim to process payments within 2 weeks of the required documentation being received. Payments will be made by BACS and applicants should provide details of bank accounts when these are requested

### **For further advice and information please contact:**

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