

WHITEHAVEN TOWNSCAPE HERITAGE INITIATIVE

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Deputy Leader, Councillor Cath Giel

LEAD OFFICER: Julie Betteridge, Head of Development Strategy

REPORT AUTHOR: Julie Betteridge, Head of Development Strategy

SUMMARY: This report outlines our case in submitting a bid to the Heritage Lottery for a 5 year Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) funding.

Members are requested to support the Stage 1 bid and its core elements. A further report will be presented to a future meeting following the result of this first stage application.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Specialist consultants, Paul Butler and Associates, working with OMI Architects and Landscapes Projects, have been appointed to undertake a two stage study. The first phase is a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Whitehaven Town Centre and High Street Conservation Areas. Phase 2 is a submission for Heritage Lottery funding for a Townscape Heritage Initiative in the town centre. A Conservation Area Appraisal is a prerequisite for applying for a Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) project through the Heritage Lottery. The final reports will be made available in the Members' Room and will be presented by the consultants to Copeland members and Whitehaven regeneration partners on Tuesday, 4th November, 2008.
- 1.2 A pre-application has been made to the Heritage Lottery and we have been encouraged to proceed with a Stage 1 Application. The consultants are leading on this and the application will need to be submitted by the end of November.

2. ARGUMENT

- 2.1 An unsuccessful THI application was made for Whitehaven in 2004. A preliminary form submission to the Heritage Lottery has received positive pre-application advice in July/August 2008. This THI application has drawn on the Town conservation area study concerns regarding the deterioration of historic fabric which is discouraging investment and placing at risk the unique character of the town and its historic frontages.
- 2.2 The Whitehaven THI vision is "To recreate the lost Georgian splendour of Market Street, King Street and Tangier Street, thus re-establishing the retail core as a characterful heritage area with attractive buildings,

streets and public spaces.” This is located within the Conservation Area vision which is focused on facilitating heritage led regeneration as an integral part of the wider regeneration framework and programme for the Town and its communities. A strong element of the THI is to strengthen Whitehaven as a visitor destination.

3. OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

- 3.1 Paul Butler Associates have recommended a specific area of the Conservation Area, shown in Appendix 1, as the THI focus.
- 3.2 A list of projects for the THI has been identified as part of the Conservation Study. These capital projects are categorised as critical, priority and reserve and listed at Appendix 2.
- 3.3 The Stage 1 bid details a THI programme of £5.9m. This assumes a £1.5m Heritage Lottery grant with the remainder from public and private sources. 70% of the total programme will be in supporting grants to properties. See Appendix 3 for the total 5 year programme budget proposed.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The opportunity of a Whitehaven Townscape Heritage Initiative is well supported by all local stakeholders.
- 4.2 As identified by the Conservation study, ‘full visitor potential will not be realised whilst key heritage buildings are decaying’. A THI focused on Whitehaven’s historic centre will offer additional capacity to assist property owners to undertake repairs, restore architectural features and bring vacant historic floor space back into use. It will also enable public realm interventions in the heart of the town, thereby continuing the focus on improving public realm as part of the Whitehaven regeneration programme.

5. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOURCES OF FINANCE)

- 5.1 The Stage 1 application has been resourced through the Conservation Area review commission. A successful Stage 1 application will release a £25k development grant from the Heritage Lottery to assist with a 12 month activity programme to develop a Stage 2 detailed bid. Additional resources needed to assist with Stage 2 work has yet to be formally scoped.
- 5.2 Planning Development Grant is resourcing a fixed 3 year term Conservation and Heritage Officer currently being recruited. This post holder will be a key resource to the development and implementation of a Whitehaven Townscape Heritage Initiative.
- 5.3 Copeland Borough Council will be the accountable body for the THI and will directly manage and administer the grants element of the initiative.

6. PROJECT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 The Townscape Heritage Initiative bidding process is a competitive one.
- 6.2 The emerging Conservation Area Management Plan includes a risk assessment which supports this initiative at this stage. The Stage 2 bidding development process will be subject to a designed project management framework including a risk assessment.
- 6.3 Copeland Borough Council will lead and manage the THI ensuring an integrated approach.

7. IMPACT ON CORPORATE PLAN

- 7.1 This initiative delivers to our prosperity agenda in the borough through enabling physical improvements to the historical buildings of Whitehaven and contributing a heritage led approach to regeneration of the town.

List of Appendices

- Appendix 1 THI map
- Appendix 2 List of proposed THI projects
- Appendix 3 Total 5 year THI budget proposed

List of Consultees

- Deputy Leader – Cllr Cath Giel.
- Portfolio Holder – Cllr Hugh Branney.
- Corporate Team.

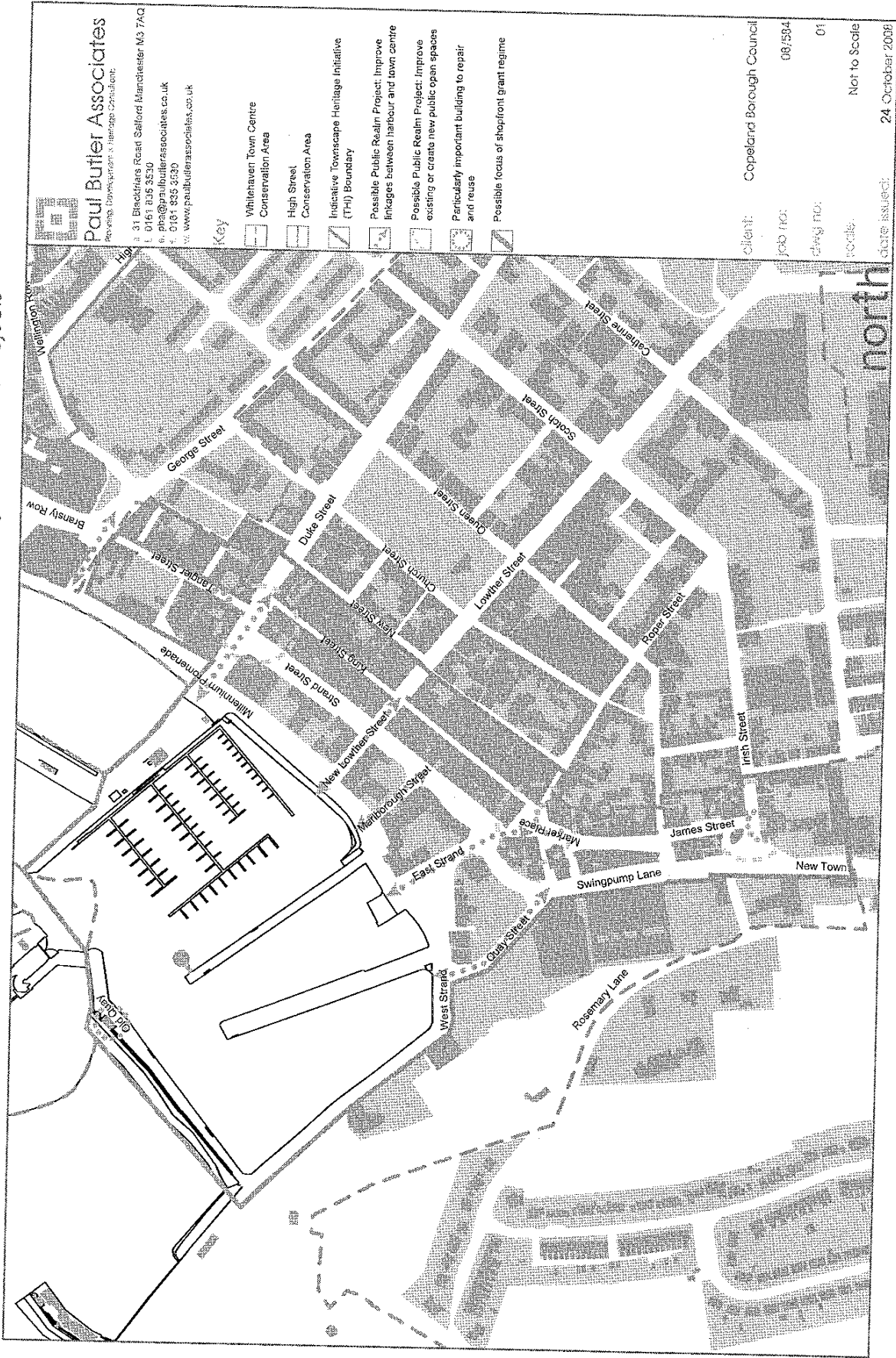
CHECKLIST FOR DEALING WITH KEY ISSUES

Please confirm against the issue if the key issues below have been addressed. This can be by either a short narrative or quoting the paragraph number in the report in which it has been covered.

Impact on Crime and Disorder	Supports
Impact on Sustainability	Supports
Impact on Rural Proofing	Supports
Health and Safety Implications	None
Impact on Equality and Diversity Issues	None
Children and Young Persons Implications	Supports
Human Rights Act Implications	None
Section 151 Officer Comments	Expect further discussion and detail of finances for stage 2 development if successful.
Monitoring Officer Comments	Nothing to add

Please say if this report will require the making of a Key Decision NO

Whitehaven Town Centre Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI): Indicative Boundary and Possible Projects



APPENDIX 1 **Map attached separately**

APPENDIX 2 **Priority buildings for inclusion in the THI**

Building Repair, Regeneration and Reuse

Particularly important buildings to repair and reuse

Four buildings have been identified as warranting intervention

- 44 – 45 Irish Street “YMCA”
- 6 Market Place, “Kinsella’s”
- Taylors Tavern, Irish Street
- Former Pier Master’s House, Old Quay

Possible Focus of Shop Front Grant and Building Repair Regime

The Shop front grant regime would aim to repair, restore and reinstate historic shop frontages within the town centre’s principal commercial area. Whilst this regime would initially focus on James Street, Market Place, King Street and Tangier Street, it would be extended to the entire THI if resources allow. Exemplar buildings to tackle in the early stages might include:

- Heron Foods, 20 – 21 King Street
- Card Factory, 30 King Street
- Shoe Zone, 68 King Street
- H Samuel, 74 King Street
- 50 Market Place

Restoring Architectural Features

Grants should principally focus on restoring architectural features on building elevations which are adjacent to the public realm to ensure the greatest possible visible impact. Possible projects could include:

- Clinton Cards, 31 King Street
- Thomas Cook, 46 – 47 King Street
- Food, 54 King Street
- Timpson Shoe Repair, 79a King Street
- Klick Photopoint, 5 Market Place
- Tangier Buildings, Tangier Street

Bringing vacant historic floorspace back into use

Any vacant historic floorspace within the THI area could be eligible for grant assistance. Possible projects could include:

- 4 King Street
- 9 King Street
- 69 King Street
- 79 King Street
- 57 King Street
- 11 Tangier Street

Possible Public Realm Projects

Improve linkage between the town centre and harbour

Visual and physical linkages between the town centre and the harbour/marina must be improved to encourage harbour visitors to explore the town centre and the town's shoppers and residents to visit the harbour. Public realm works could link Millennium Promenade and West Strand to Swingpump Lane, Market Place, Strand Street, King Street and Tangier Street along Quay Street, East Strand, Marlborough Street, New Lowther Street, Duke Street and George Street.

Improve existing or create new public open spaces

A new space could be created at the junction of Strand Street, Duke Street and Tangier Street. This space would reduce vehicular dominance and create a gateway into the eastern end of King Street – whereby drawing the harbour's visitors into the town's commercial centre.

Improvements could be made to Market Place at its junction with Roper Street, King Street and Strand Street. This would create a gateway into the western end of King Street and have the potential to revitalise the town's historic core.

A new space could be created at the junction of James Street and Irish Street. This new space would help to reduce the dominance vehicular traffic on Irish Street and would visually and physically re-link 44 – 45 Irish Street (YMCA) back into the streetscape of the town's historic core.

New public realm works could also link into the existing town's existing heritage trails. These heritage trails could be reconfigured so that they include all or a least a sizable proportion of the THI area. Heritage trail markers, such as unique paving slabs or distinctive signage, could also be introduced.

APPENDIX 3

Whitehaven THI Total Projected Budget 2011 - 2016

Categories of work	Total estimated eligible costs (£)	Proposed common fund (£)	Heritage Lottery Contribution (£)
Building repairs	3,000,000	50	900,000
Restoring architectural features	714,285	70	300,000
Bringing vacant historic floor space back into use	1,500,000	33	200,000
Public realm work (up to 25% of the common fund)	500,000	100	100,000
New buildings for gap sites (up to 25% of the common fund)	0	0	0
Complementary initiatives (training, evaluation, community consultation)	100,000	50	50,000
Staff costs and overheads	100,000	50	50,000
TOTAL	5,914,285		1,600,000