



Regeneration and Enterprise Scrutiny Committee

Date: 15th September 2008
Open Report

Report of: Simon Roper-Pressdee
(Conservation Officer)

Bridge Street Partnership Scheme in Conservation Areas Grant Applications

1. Purpose of Briefing Paper

- 1.1 To inform Members of two applications for grant funding under the Bridge Street Partnership Scheme in Conservation Areas, and to seek support for their approval.

2. Introduction/ Background Information

- 2.1 Conservation Areas are designated by Local Authorities under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and comprise “areas of special architectural and/or historic interest the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.”
- 2.2 The Heritage objectives contained within the Adopted Wyre Forest District Local Plan are to preserve and enhance conservation areas, and the District’s Listed Buildings, to safeguard the particular characteristics of the District’s urban and rural environments and to promote appropriate development which secures the beneficial re-use of historic buildings and environments. Further to this, the Adopted Local Plan states that the District and County Councils will undertake such schemes as resources permit
- 2.3 In 2007, English Heritage approved a three-year grant scheme, the Partnership Scheme in Conservation Areas (PSiCA), to assist in the regeneration of Bridge Street in Stourport, through providing grants for repair and reinstatement of architectural detail to historic buildings within the Bridge Street area, including the junction with New Street, York Street and High Street, with a budget of £38,000 for 2007/08, and a further £48,000 for 2008/09, equally match-funded by the District Council. Due to complications, no spend was committed during 2007/08, and the budget allocated has been rolled through to this financial year.

- 2.4 Two levels of grant funding are available through this scheme. Firstly, the repair of the built fabric, such as roof repairs, which attracts a grant rate of 60%; and secondly the reinstatement of architectural detail, including the replacement of shop-fronts with historic style shop-fronts, and the replacement of modern fake sash windows with proper weighted sash windows, which attracts a grant rate of 80%.
- 2.5 In a report to Cabinet on the 28th June 2007, a protocol for approving grants under the Bridge Street Scheme was approved (Appendix 1).

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 In order to be able to assess grant applications, bid details with a recommendation by the Head of Planning, Health and Environment are forwarded to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise on a summary sheet. Applications are also considered by the Community and Regeneration Committee. The Recommendation of the Community and Regeneration Committee will inform the decision of the Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration and Prosperity.
- 3.2 The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise has delegated authority from Cabinet to make decisions on the allocation of financial support for grants under the PSiCA, following the consideration of the Committee's recommendation. Should the Cabinet Member disagree with the Committee's recommendation, the matter will be referred to the Cabinet for a decision.
- 3.3 Two complete grant applications have been submitted under the PSiCA for works to 22 York Street, and for works to 13 Bridge Street. Appendix 2 shows the proposed works, the estimated costs, the recommended grant rate and the total amount of grant proposed.
- 3.4 The application for 22 York Street seeks funding to assist in the repair of the roof, rainwater goods, and replacement of windows, with a total estimated scheme cost of £16,754.89. Whilst most of this work is considered to be repair, and as such will attract a grant rate of 60%, the replacement windows in this instance is considered to be reinstatement and as such will attract a grant rate of 80%. Therefore a grant total of £12,582.60 is proposed.
- 3.5 The application for 13 Bridge Street seeks funding to replace the existing sash windows to first floor, and the sash window to second floor, and two windows to the rear elevation, all of which is considered to be repair, attracting a grant rate of 60%. The estimated cost of work is £7,453.02, and the proposed grant of £4,471.82 is proposed.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 Funding for any approved grants will arise from a 50/50 split between English Heritage Capital funding and the Conservation budget within the approved Capital Programme.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 Two grant applications have been received for funding under the Bridge Street Partnership Scheme in Conservation Areas, for repair and reinstatement of architectural detail and fabric. It is proposed that a grant of £12,582. for works to be undertaken to 22 York Street, and a grant of £4,471. for works to 13 Bridge Street, be offered to the applicants.

6. Options for the Panel

- 6.1 Officers are of the opinion that there are two potential courses of action that could be recommended to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise to agree, as set out below.
- 6.2 The first course of action is to agree to support the proposed grants;
- 6.3 The second course of action is to not support the proposed grants;

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 There are no background papers

8. Consultees

- 8.1 Head of Legal and Democratic Services
8.2 Head of Financial Services

9. Appendices

Appendix 1: Protocol for Approval of Grants under Partnership Scheme in Conservation Areas;

Appendix 2: Details of Proposed Works, and Grant Rates

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