



WHITEHAVEN TOWNSCAPE HERITAGE INITIATIVE

Whitehaven Townscape Heritage Initiative

Guidance Notes

YOU MUST DISCUSS YOUR APPLICATION WITH THE THI OFFICER AND READ THESE NOTES CAREFULLY BEFORE COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM.

To discuss any aspect of the grant process and for guidance and advice, please contact the THI Officer, Copeland Borough Council, The Copeland Centre, Catherine Street, Whitehaven, Cumbria. CA28 7SJ **Email:** jane.taylor@copeland.gov.uk **Tel:** 01946 598351

The Whitehaven Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) is a grant scheme funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Copeland Borough Council, Britain's Energy Coast and Cumbria County Council. Copeland Borough Council is administering the scheme. The purpose of a THI scheme is to achieve comprehensive repair and re-use of eligible historic buildings within a Conservation Area, by conservation-led means and so support the regeneration of the area. Grants are available for exterior repairs and reinstatement using high quality natural materials and traditional methods, and for works to bring vacant floorspace back into economic use. Works must be carried out in a way which protects and enhances the fabric and character of historic buildings, and which preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the THI area.

1.0 GRANTS are available towards:

1.1 Repairs to Historic Buildings and Restoration of Architectural Details – up to 90% grant

- repair or restoration of historic openings patterns, designs, details and materials to windows, doors and shopfronts

1.2 Repairs to Historic Buildings and Restoration of Architectural Details – up to 75% grant

- consolidation and reinforcement of the existing structure
- selective dry rot removal, timber preservation and damp proofing to conservation standards
- repair or restoration of roof structures, eaves, verges and ridges
- repair of roof coverings using natural materials and traditional methods
- repair or restoration of chimneys and pots to historic heights and profiles
- repair or restoration of leadwork and weatherings
- repair or restoration of rainwater goods / dispersal systems in suitable traditional materials
- repair of external stonework and brickwork using traditional materials and methods
- repair of external render, stucco or harling using traditional materials and methods
- selective rebuilding of stonework and brickwork
- selective renewal of render using traditional methods and materials
- selective removal of render and masonry paint
- repair or restoration of historic dormer windows and other external joinery
- repair or restoration of applied details eg. cornices, string courses, architraves, etc
- repair or restoration of decorative features eg. ironwork, railings, tiling, timber signs, etc
- repair or reinstatement of traditional boundary walls, railings, gates, steps and surface

1.4 Repairs to Historic Buildings and Restoration of Architectural Details – 50% grant

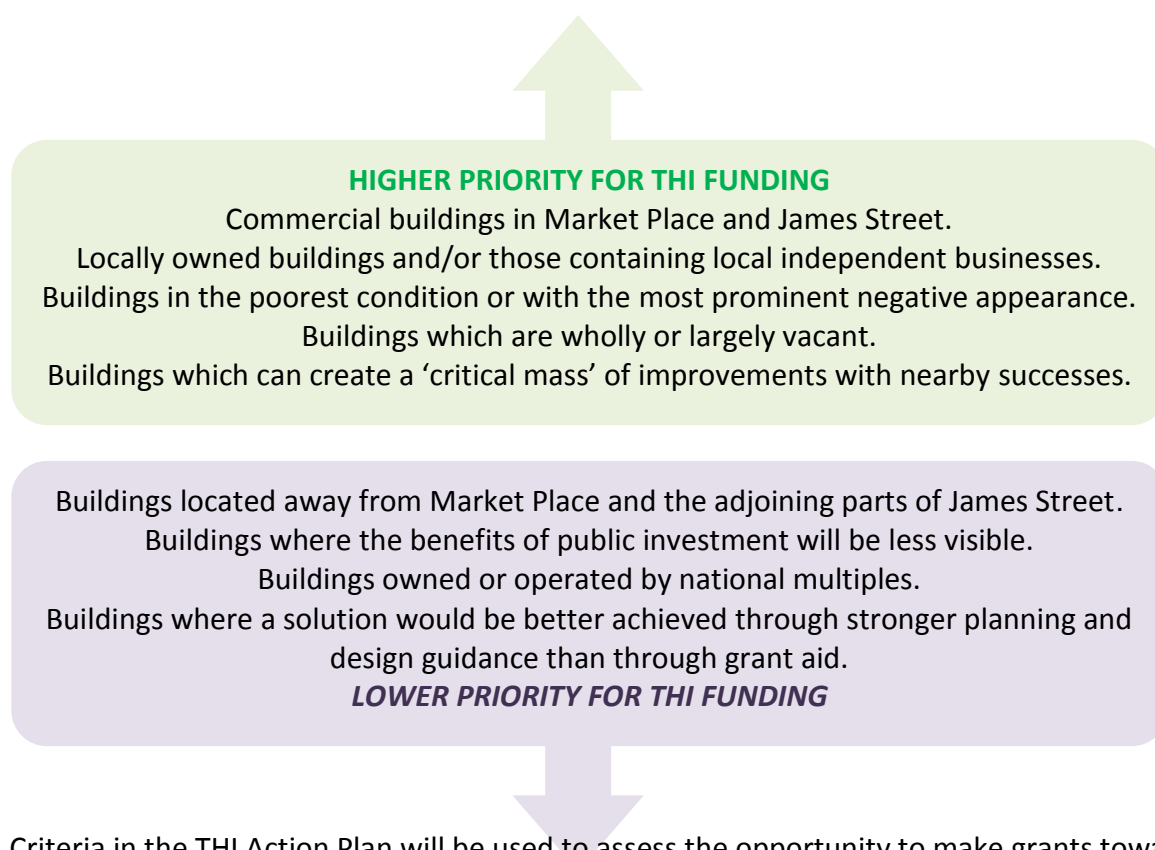
- re-roofing using natural materials and traditional methods
- repairs to non re-usable upper floors

1.5 Bringing Vacant Properties Back Into Use

Grants can be made for internal and external works to bring vacant floorspace back into economic use, such as an un-used floor over a shop. Grants could cover works to walls, ceilings, floors, stairs, basic services, and consequent decoration. Grants may be offered to bridge the ‘conservation deficit’, ie. the gap between the cost of works and the market value of the property when works are complete. Applications under this heading must be supported by before and after valuations and a development appraisal.

2.0 Priorities

Grants are available for eligible buildings using the criteria set out in the THI Action Plan. However, as THI funding is limited it will not be possible to provide a grant to every property owner and therefore priorities have been set, as summarised below:



Criteria in the THI Action Plan will be used to assess the opportunity to make grants towards lower priority buildings as the THI progresses.

3.0 General Information and Conditions

- 3.1 The property must be registered with the Land Registry and the Applicant must own the freehold of the property or hold a lease on it with an unexpired term of at least 10 years without a break clause. If the property is held on a lease for less than ten years or if it contains a break clause which may terminate the lease within ten years, the landlord must join in the grant application and agree to be bound by the grant conditions if a grant is awarded.
- 3.2 Grant aid is not available for installation of fittings (eg. shop counters), decoration (unless as a direct result of eligible repair), or routine maintenance. Eligible and non-eligible works can be undertaken in the same programme of work, but costs must be identified separately.
- 3.3 Professional fees are eligible for grant support provided advisors belong to a recognised institute and that, for architectural fees, the advisor inspects on-going works and is responsible for its certification on completion. Fees should be detailed in the application form and schedule of costs. These will be subject to grant support based on the average grant for capital work.
- 3.4 Fees for planning and other applications required as a result of THI-funded works are eligible.
- 3.5 Archaeological works required as a result of THI-funded works are eligible.
- 3.6 Grant can only be paid towards VAT where the applicant cannot recover VAT. VAT should be shown as a separate item in the schedule of costs.
- 3.7 Grant aid is subject to works being to high quality standards following recognised conservation principles such as minimum intervention and repair rather than replacement. Details of architectural features should be closely informed by appropriate authentic historic survivals in the conservation area or elsewhere, or from suitable documentary sources. For works to shopfronts, the design guidance within the *Whitehaven Town Centre and Harbourside SPD* should be used.
- 3.8 The inclusion of some works in a scheme may be a condition of a grant offer to ensure a comprehensive outcome to the investment. Grants for restoration of architectural features will only be considered together with works for any necessary repairs to make the property sound. The use of inappropriate non-traditional methods and materials is unacceptable on grant-aided projects.
- 3.9 Works for which grant aid is sought must not commence until the applicant has received the Council's written permission. To do so would render the application ineligible.
- 3.10 Depending on the works proposed, you are advised to engage an accredited conservation architect, building surveyor, or other suitably qualified person to help prepare your scheme. Experience in heritage-led work should be a criterion when selecting your professional advisor.
- 3.11 Contractors/sub-contractors and/or agents whose estimates are submitted with the application must carry out the works. The use of alternative contractors /sub-contractors and/or agents must be approved in writing in advance and will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

- 3.12 Grant aid does not replace the requirement for the applicant to obtain building regulations approval or, where necessary, planning permission, listed building consent, conservation area consent, or any other consents needed. Please seek the necessary consents before submitting a grant application. The applicant must obtain and provide evidence for all approvals necessary.
- 3.13 While works are in progress, the property must be adequately insured.
- 3.14 Successful applicants will be required to submit an appropriate maintenance plan for the property to sustain its condition after the public investment in it.
- 3.15 Only one grant per self-contained property will be approved.
- 3.16 Grants are discretionary; there is no automatic entitlement. Eligibility of works for grant aid does not bind the Council to making a grant award.
- 3.17 Some grants may need the approval of the Heritage Lottery Fund.
- 3.18 Any grant made will be subject to terms and conditions derived from the agreement between the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Council.

4.0 Submitting an Application

An application for a THI grant must be made on the Grant Application Form. Only the person(s) or body whose name appears on the title deed / tenancy agreement to the property can make an application.

A detailed scheme of the works proposed should be prepared in order to obtain comparable estimates for the works.

The application must be accompanied by comparable estimates from at least three contractors for all the works to be carried out, including those not eligible for grant aid. Estimates must be independent quotations, ie. genuine competitive quotations independent of one another and of you. The Council reserves the right to approach contractors for verification.

Details of the scheme must be sufficient to enable the THI Officer to identify the nature and scope of the proposed works and to make a detailed comparison of the individual quotations. All estimates must be broken down into individual elements which are easily identifiable and preferably based on a schedule of works / bill of quantities prepared by an architect or surveyor.

Two copies of all supporting information are required including drawings, specifications, consents, permissions, photographs, etc.

Applicants must satisfy the Council regarding their financial capacity to carry out the proposed works. The Council may seek proof of match-funding before a grant is offered.

Please ensure all relevant sections of the application form are completed, sign the declaration and then return the form together with all the relevant information to the THI Officer.

If your application is successful, a grant offer letter will be released, together with an agreement and contract which must be signed and returned before written permission to start is released.

5.0 Grant Claims

All works must be completed to the THI Officer's satisfaction before any grant can be paid. Once all works are completed, they will be subject to inspection by the THI Officer or a nominated professional. The THI Officer must be satisfied that the works have been carried out in accordance with the estimates, specifications and plans submitted. Any unsatisfactory work or omissions must be rectified to the THI Officer's satisfaction before any payment can be made.

Grants are paid retrospectively. To claim a grant, all original receipts from contractors must be submitted, alongside proof of payment (eg. a bank statement showing the invoice payment). If the applicant is the contractor, the claim for payment must be accompanied by an itemised final valuation of works, carried out by an independent professional valuer/ QS.

The amount of grant paid will be at the relevant percentage rate for the type of work undertaken, as agreed in the grant offer letter. The grant paid will be calculated on the lower of either the estimated cost or receipted cost of grant eligible works. For example, if the estimated cost was £1000 with a grant rate of 50%, but receipted costs were £900, the grant paid would be £450 (not £500). Where grants are capped, this is the maximum amount payable regardless of any increase in receipted costs. If, in the same example, receipted costs were £1100, the grant would be £500 (not £550).

You will be given a grant claim schedule with your offer letter should your application be successful. Interim claims can be made.

6.0 Repayment of Grant

The THI normally requires that, on completion of a disposal of the property, the applicant repays a share of any increase in value in the property beyond that which was expected when the grant was worked out. For grants over £15,000 the clawback will operate for a period of 10 years.

Where a grant is offered on a conservation deficit basis, clawback will apply regardless of the amount of grant. In this arrangement, increases in value as a result of public investment are shared between the THI and the owner in proportion to their original investments. There is no liability to pay back anything on sale or disposal if the property value remains static or falls.

Refer to Clause 13 in the grant contract for further details.

7.0 Fraud

The Council is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers and, to this end, may use the information you provide for the prevention and detection of fraud. It may also share this information with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds for these purposes. All cases of suspected fraud or corruption will be thoroughly investigated and dealt with appropriately. The following will be viewed as fraudulent in relation to grant applications:

- inventing an organisation or individual,
- providing false information on an organisation or individual (eg. to ensure eligibility or to improve the chances of receiving a grant),
- an application made in the name of a bona fide organisation but made by an individual within the organisation for personal gain.

8.0 Final Checklist

- You must seek the advice of the THI Officer before you submit your application
- consider engaging a suitably qualified and experienced accredited conservation professional advisor
- prepare drawings, specifications, schedule of works and detailed schedule of costs for eligible and non-eligible works, and photographs of the relevant parts of the building
- get at least three independent competitive tenders for the works
- get all relevant consents for the property (eg. landlord) and works (eg. planning consent)
- prepare a development appraisal, valuations and business plan where relevant
- complete and sign the Grant Application Form and submit it together with two copies of all necessary attachments, plus the signed Bank Reference Form, to the address below.

Return Address and Further Information

Mrs Jane Taylor
 THI Officer
 Copeland Borough Council
 The Copeland Centre
 Catherine Street
 Whitehaven
 Cumbria
 CA28 7SJ
 Tel: 01946 598351
 Email: jane.taylor@copeland.gov.uk

