
St Margaret's Townscape Heritage Initiative

2014-2019

Application Guidance Notes

1. Introduction

The Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk has been successful in securing funding from the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant scheme to help to improve the shopping streets in St Margaret's Conservation Area.

We have a total of £2 million to spend in this area. Over £1.5m of this is available to give as grants to individual property owners (or long-term leaseholders) to repair historic buildings and bring empty properties back into full use. The remaining £500,000 will go towards other projects and activities, such as the resurfacing of Saturday Market Place, skills training for young people, and events for the local community to get involved and learn about the area.

The scheme began in summer 2014 and will run for 5 years, until June 2019 (or until all the money is allocated, if this is earlier). All works funded by the scheme have to be completed and all grants paid by this date.

Important note: Grants will not, under any circumstances, be offered for any works which have already started, or which start prior to a formal grant offer being made by us and accepted by the owner, in writing.

2. Eligible properties

The grant scheme covers Tower Street, St James' Street, Saturday Market Place, the south end of the High Street and a few properties in Blackfriars Street. A list of eligible properties and a map showing the boundary of the eligible area are at the end of this guidance.

We have identified around 20 properties in the area which, because of their condition, heritage importance or prominent location, we consider to be priorities for repair, reuse or enhancement, and we will contact the owners of these properties individually to encourage their participation. However, smaller scale repairs and the reinstatement of lost historic features would also contribute greatly to restoring the character, appearance and vitality of the conservation area, so we are keen to talk to the owners of any of the buildings listed at the end of this guidance.

3. Who can apply?

If you are the owner, or long-term leaseholder (with an unexpired term of at least 10 years) of any of the historic properties on the list at the end of this guidance, you are eligible to apply for grant. If you have a shorter lease on one of the eligible properties, you can apply providing you are responsible for repairing the property and the owner also agrees to be bound into the grant contract.

4. Grant-eligible works

The scheme is a heritage-led regeneration scheme, which aims to “preserve and enhance” the character or appearance of the conservation area. All works must therefore respect the special character of the building or structure concerned and the conservation area of which it forms a part. This means that all works must meet the highest conservation standards and be carried out by suitably-qualified contractors using appropriate traditional materials.

If you want us to, we can help you discuss the works with professional agents or building contractors, to ensure that the works will meet the standards required.

Eligible works fall into three categories:

- Repairs
- Restoring or reinstating architectural features
- Works to bring empty historic floorspace back into use

a) Repairs

The objective of this category is to put into good repair the structure and external fabric (or envelope) of the building. Repairs should be comprehensive in scope, tackling all elements of the building which require work. All works must be carried out using traditional techniques or methods of construction, with natural or traditional materials, usually on a like-for-like basis.

Eligible repairs include:

- Consolidation or reinforcement of the existing structure with the minimum intervention necessary
- Repairs to timber frames, roof structures, beams, floor joists and other structural timbers.
- Re-roofing in natural materials to match the historic covering, usually with clay tiles, pantiles or slate, as appropriate. Sound existing materials should be reused as far as possible, and mixed in with new materials to match. The use of artificial alternatives such as concrete tiles, reconstituted or artificial slate is not eligible. The use of roofing felt for flat roofs or relining gutters is also not eligible.
- Repairs to chimneys, including lining (or rebuilding if structurally necessary) providing that the chimney is reinstated accurately to its historic height and profile. The replacement or reinstatement of the historic chimney pots is also eligible, providing there is evidence of their former appearance.
- Repair or renewal of existing leadwork, including flashings and the re-forming of gutters to adequate falls, in line with details and codes recommended by the Lead Sheet Association in “The Lead Sheet Manual”.
- The repair or replacement of rainwater goods or a rainwater disposal system to match historic material and sections, usually in cast iron, but occasionally in lead or timber. Aluminium, plastic, PVC or GRP rainwater goods are not eligible. The provision of rodding access for maintenance is important and can also be eligible.
- The repair of external stonework and brickwork, including decorative elements. Plastic or in-situ resin-based mortar repairs are not normally acceptable or eligible.
- Selective rebuilding of existing brickwork or stonework, if structurally necessary, using salvaged existing materials or new material to match.
- Repointing, where structurally necessary (not for cosmetic reasons), to an agreed specification, using lime mortar.

- The repair of windows, doors and external joinery to the historic pattern and detail, in historic materials. Where there is sufficient space internally without compromising other historic details, the provision of secondary glazing may be considered.
- Repairs to external render or stucco, and limited areas of renewal, using lime-based render. (There is a presumption against total renewal unless an existing cement render is causing structural problems and renewal is considered the best option).
- Dry rot eradication and conservation-based timber preservative treatments in accordance with the advice of an independent specialist with conservation expertise.
- Damp-proofing or improved drainage by traditional methods, where damp is causing structural damage. External water-proofing treatments and proprietary damp-proofing systems are not eligible.
- The repair or reinstatement of retaining walls, boundary walls, railings and gates that contribute to the stability of a building, enhance its setting or contribute to the character of the conservation area.

Ineligible works include:

- Routine maintenance
- Redecoration (unless consequent upon essential repairs)
- Internal repairs

b) Restoring architectural features

The restoration of architectural features is only eligible where the building is otherwise in good repair, or will be repaired as part of the project and there is evidence for an authentic restoration. The reinstatement of missing details is also eligible, but there must be clear documentary evidence of the historic form and design, as conjectural restoration is not eligible. All works must be carried out carefully and accurately to the historic form or profile or pattern, using materials as close as possible to the original.

Eligible works include:

- The repair of applied and decorative details such as string courses, dentils, corbels, window and door architraves, columns, pilasters; decorative shopfronts and fascias; rusticated render
- Decorative ironwork such as roof finials, balconies, lanterns, canopies, hanging signs, gates and railings
- Decorative surfaces, tiling and other finishes
- Original features such as flagpoles and signage

Ineligible works:

- GRP or similar replacement mouldings, or proprietary in-situ resin-based repairs
- Conjectural restoration
- The reversal of earlier alterations which are themselves of quality and interest

c) Bringing historic floorspace back into use

The scheme can fund the conversion of empty properties, or the empty part of a property, such as upper floors over shops, to make it suitable for a new use. The property must be vacant or partly vacant because of its poor condition, lack of access to an upper floor, or because it fails to meet the needs of modern users.

Eligible works include:

- All physical works of conversion including necessary internal and external alterations, basic

provision of heat, light and power and basic decoration.

- Elements of new build necessary to achieve the reuse of the historic building.

Ineligible works:

- Furnishings and bespoke fittings specific to a particular use.
- Services beyond the basic provision of heat, light and power and water.

5. Other eligible costs

Building projects can have a number of associated costs, many of which are also eligible for grant, such as:

a) Archaeology

Where works will involve ground disturbance, an archaeological evaluation may be required prior to work beginning. If this is considered necessary, we will work with you to agree the scope of works prior to making a grant offer. The cost of the archaeological work will be eligible for grant.

In some projects, early building fabric may be revealed during the course of the works. This may require the work to halt for a short time, to allow for the building to be recorded and analysed, before work can continue. In some cases, some alteration to the scope of the works might be required. This is rare, but if it occurs, the costs will be eligible for grant.

b) Professional Fees

The fees incurred in employing qualified professional advisers to design, specify and oversee a programme of works, are eligible for grant, providing the advisers belong to a recognised institution (eg. architects should be members of the Architects Registration Board (ARB) and surveyors should be members of RICS).

If you are applying for a grant in excess of £30,000, you must employ a suitably qualified professional adviser with conservation expertise to design and oversee the works on site. Their fees will be eligible for grant.

c) Planning Fees

Fees for applying for planning permission, listed building consent and building regulations are all eligible for grant providing they clearly relate to the project and conservation works for which the grant will be used.

d) Preliminaries

Larger projects often involve preliminary costs. These are an essential part of the project and are therefore eligible for grant. Eligible preliminary costs include:

- Contractors setting up the site before work starts
- Site security, eg fencing
- Meeting health and safety requirements, including appointment of a CDM co-ordinator
- Erecting scaffolding
- Portalos
- Erecting temporary site huts

e) Value Added Tax

VAT may be payable on eligible repair costs and fees. Where it cannot be recovered, it is eligible for grant. It is advisable to obtain advice at an early stage from HMRC on whether or not VAT will be payable /recoverable on all or part of the project.

6. Grant Rates

Most grant offers will be made at fixed percentages of the costs of the work, and the following rates will apply:

- Repairs to buildings in use - 75% of the costs of agreed eligible works
- Reinstating architectural features - 85% of the costs of the agreed eligible works

Grants to enable empty historic floorspace to be brought back into use will be calculated individually in each case and will cover the “conservation deficit” on the project.

7. Grants for empty or partially empty buildings

If you own an eligible property which is empty, or partially empty, due to its condition, access limitations/difficulties or because it is unsuitable for modern use, we may consider offering a grant towards the costs of its repair and conversion to bring it into use. These types of grant are not offered at a fixed percentage: we assess the amount of grant required on an individual basis.

We are making grants available in this area because we expect that, in many cases, the cost of the works required to bring an empty building back into use will be greater than the increase in the market value of the building as a result of those works, making it uneconomic for owners to invest in the property. The grant offered is therefore usually limited to the amount required to bridge the funding gap (the difference between the cost of the eligible works and the increase in the value of the property once completed), which we call the “conservation deficit”.

In order to work out the conservation deficit figure in each case, we will need to know the total cost of all the necessary works, inclusive of fees, non-recoverable VAT, and the projected difference in the value of the property as a result of the works. If you intend to carry out the work yourself, we will allow for developer’s profit in calculating the conservation deficit.

If your property will be assessed for grant on this basis, we will work with you to establish and agree the figures on which the grant will be based. We will obtain independent valuations, while you will need to appoint professional advisers to draw up the proposals and obtain competitive tenders for the works. In most cases, we will expect the existing value to be minimal, since empty property which costs more to repair than it will be worth when back in use, ought to be regarded as a liability rather than an asset and should therefore to have a nil or negative value. We will start from this presumption. However, in some cases, particularly where part of the building remains in use (for example, a shop trading on the ground floor), we may accept a small positive valuation for the property at the outset.

When we have both costs and valuations, we can carry out a development appraisal and work out the funding deficit on the project.

For clarification, below is a simple example of a conservation deficit calculation:

Total costs of repair and conversion works including fees, VAT and developer's profit, if appropriate		£200,000
Current value of the property		£10,000
Estimated end value of property		£140,000
Increase in value of property		£130,000
Conservation deficit	£200,000 - £130,000 =	£70,000
Grant (100% of conservation deficit)		£70,000

In this example, grant of £70,000 would be offered towards works costing £200,000, so the grant would be paid out at 35% of the costs.

8. How to apply

If you wish to apply for a grant, you should first complete a Project Enquiry Form and return it to the THI Project Officer who will arrange a site visit with you to discuss the project. Depending on the scope of works, further advice from other council officers can be provided as necessary.

Following those discussions, you will need to complete a full THI Grant Application Form and return it to the THI Project Officer, along with all the supporting information required.

For larger projects, you will need to appoint a professional adviser to draw up proposals for the works. The drawings, detailed schedule of works and specification will need to be submitted with your application. Depending on the complexity of the project, you may also wish to obtain estimated costs from a quantity surveyor at this stage. You will then need to obtain at least 3 competitive tenders for the works from suitably experienced contractors. However, as builders may not hold their price while your application is assessed, we will discuss and agree with you the timing of your application, and a suitable point to go out to tender.

If other consents are required, such as planning permission and/or listed building consent, you will need to apply for these at the same time.

If the proposals are to be assessed on a "conservation deficit" basis, we will obtain valuations of the property before work begins and a projected value on completion of the works, and agree these with you as a basis for calculating grant.

For smaller projects, you may not need to employ a professional agent. Instead, following discussions with us, you will need to obtain at least 2 competitive quotes (for grants up to £10,000) or 3 competitive quotes (for grants over £10,000) for the works from suitably experienced building contractors. We will need to approve the contractors you invite to tender and we expect you to appoint the cheapest tenderer to carry out the work, unless there are good reasons for not doing so (which we will need to agree).

The costs should be broken down to show individual costs for each element of the work, and if other works which are not eligible for grant are being carried out at the same time, these must be clearly identified and costed separately.

9. The assessment process

Once you have submitted your application to the THI Project Officer, with all the necessary supporting information, we will carry out a full assessment. Larger, more complex projects will take longer to assess than smaller, more straightforward ones.

We will check that the design, schedule of works and specification are in line with our pre-application discussions, that they provide the best possible solution for the property and will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.

We will check that you have all the necessary consents for the proposed works, or are in the process of obtaining them.

We will check that the costs are reasonable for the works proposed, and represent good value for money.

In some cases (usually the larger projects), we will need to submit all the details to the Heritage Lottery Fund for their approval, before we can offer any grant, and in these cases, it will take longer to complete the assessment process.

If we have queries, or require further information, we will contact you to request it.

10. Grant offers

If you are awarded a grant for your building, we will write to you setting out how much grant we are offering, the works we are contributing to, the anticipated cost of those works and the grant payment percentage. The letter will be accompanied by two copies of a grant contract, containing all the terms and conditions of the grant. You will need to sign both copies and return one to us. We will each keep a copy. You must not start work until this contract has been signed by both parties.

We will calculate the grant as a percentage of the costs of the eligible works and we will pay the grant in arrears, at agreed intervals as the work proceeds. You will therefore normally need sufficient funds to pay for the work as it proceeds, before claiming payment of the grant. For larger projects, we can make payments monthly if required, based on paid contractors' invoices, or certificates issued by the professional agent supervising the works. For smaller projects, we will agree at the outset how many payment claims will be made. If requested, we may agree in certain circumstances to pay the grant instalments direct to contractors.

The final 10% of the grant will not be paid until practical completion, when we are satisfied that all the works are complete and meet the standards required.

11. If you sell the property

If we offer a grant of £30,000 or less, the contract life will be 5 years and there will be no requirement to repay the grant if you sell the property.

If we offer you a grant in excess of £30,000, the contract life will be 10 years and will include a clause requiring the repayment of the grant if the property is sold within that time.

For grants of over £30,000 offered on a fixed-percentage basis, we will need to agree the value of the property at the time of the grant award. This will require a local independent estate agent to assess the open market value of the property at that time and we will record this in the contract. If you sell the property within 10 years, you must do so at the open market value and you will need to inform us of the sale and the price achieved. If the grant has contributed to an increase in the value of the property, we may require you to repay all or part of the grant. The maximum we would require you to repay would be:

Year of contract	Amount to be reclaimed
Up to year 6	Up to 100% of the grant
Year 6-7	Up to 80% of the grant
Year 7-8	Up to 60% of the grant
Year 8-9	Up to 40% of the grant
Year 9-10	Up to 20% of the grant

If your grant was offered towards the conservation deficit (as explained above), and you are selling the property for more than the anticipated value which we used to calculate the grant, we will take into account the actual final cost of the works and the actual sale price achieved in deciding how much grant, if any, is to be repaid. Usually, the most we would require to be repaid would be the same % of the additional increase in value as the grant bore to the cost of the works.

For example:

Using the figures from the example above, grant of £70,000 would have been paid out towards works costing £200,000, ie 35% of the costs. The anticipated value of the property on completion of the works was £140,000. However, if the owner went on to sell the building for £160,000, they would have realised a profit of £20,000, to which the grant would have been a contributing factor. We would therefore require repayment of up to 35% of the profit achieved, ie £7,000.

Note: We will always take into account the individual circumstances in each case and may not always require any grant to be repaid.

THI Project Officer

Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk

Tel: 01553 616892

Appendix

Grant-Eligible Properties:

High Street	Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 107,108, 111, 112-113, 114, 119, 120, 121, 122
Saturday Mkt Place	Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8-10 (Wenns), 11
St James Street	Odds nos. 1, 3-5, 7, 9-11, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27,29, 31, Greyfriars Chambers, 33-39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49, 51-55. Evens nos 2, 4, 6, 8, 10-12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32-38, Theatre Royal
Tower Street	Odds nos. 1-3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 21, 23-27, 29 (Whincop House), 31 Evens nos. 4A, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 32, 34, 36, Majestic Cinema and rear boundaries only of 30 and 30A
Blackfriars St	Evens nos 6, 8 and 10



- Grant Eligible Properties
- THI Area
- Key Access Route

King's Lynn St Margaret's Conservation Area East THI Scheme

<p>Project Details</p> <p>Project Name: King's Lynn & West Norfolk</p> <p>Project Number: 22092914</p> <p>Client: (to be confirmed)</p> <p>Contract Reference: 20160327 F&C Grant Project</p>	<p>Map</p> <p>Scale: 1:1,500</p> <p>Date: 22/09/24</p> <p>Author: (to be confirmed)</p> <p>Project Manager: (to be confirmed)</p>
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