

Tourism and Visitor Economy Scrutiny

DATE	26/01/2023
REPORT OF	Carolina Borgstrom, Director of Environment, Economy and Infrastructure
SUBJECT	Discover Cleethorpes Townscape Heritage Programme Update January 2023
STATUS	Open

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

Heritage-led regeneration offers an opportunity to deliver high quality restoration, using traditional materials, and thus improve the built environment in North East Lincolnshire (NEL). Fundamental in its contribution to place-making and achieving a Stronger Economy and Stronger Community, place-making is one of the four cornerstones of NEL's Economic Strategy 2021, and at the heart of the council's commitment to ensuring that our towns are great places to live, work, visit and stay. The restored shop fronts/facades bring the opportunity for new jobs, and improvements to the pavements on the landward side of Alexandra Road will enhance the quality and aesthetics of the area for businesses and the local community. The project offers the opportunity to engage with the local community, volunteers and schools and colleges, and through Heritage Open Days, provide heritage-led education about Cleethorpes, and the wider borough. The project also works closely with Heritage Lincolnshire, offering wider engagement and support for heritage and cultural funding opportunities across the borough.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an update on the Discover Cleethorpes Townscape Heritage (TH) programme, detailing the progress and impact that it has made since its launch in 2018.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

This report is presented to Scrutiny to provide an update on the TH project, with 'before and after' images provided, and an opportunity for panel members to provide feedback.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. Background

The TH programme, which launched in 2018, is supported by £1.9m from the National Heritage Lottery Fund (NLHF) and £1m from North East Lincolnshire Council (The Council).

The TH programme aims to conserve and enhance historic buildings and balconies along Alexandra Road (AR) and buildings in Sea View Street, which are located within the Cleethorpes Central Seafront Conservation Area. The 78 buildings within the focus area were assessed and categorised as high, medium,

reserve, and low, as part of the funding application detail to the NLHF. The project also includes funding to support activities and engagement associated with heritage within the focus area.

The following sections of this report provide an update regarding the properties completed to the end of 2022, the properties in progress during 2023-2024, the forthcoming public realm works, and the heritage-led activities.

1.2. Property – completed to the end of 2022.

Table 1 outlines the properties that have been completed to the end of 2022. Please see Appendix One for ‘before and after’ images.

Table 1

Property	Detail	Year Completed
5 Alexandra Road RAFA	This was the first project, and it consisted of a full front façade restoration.	2020/21
21/22 Alexandra Road	Two properties restored by a single freeholder. The grant funded the front façade restoration, and the freeholder fully funded a total reconfiguration on the internal layout of the ground, first and second floors. The ground floor business unit is yet to be leased, but the high-end residential units above, are in occupation. This restoration will bring at least 6 new jobs in due course. The property was previously vacant and fire damaged, prior to TH funding.	2022
21 – 24 Victorian Balcony	Full restoration of the Victorian cast iron, returning the structure to the original colour of Ruby Red. Replacement structural metal decking frame, wooden decking and soffits. This was a single delivery project, using one professional advisor and one contractor, with the TH Project Manager offering support and being the conduit for communication between the 3 freeholders.	2022
33 Alexandra Road	Full restoration of the front façade, replacing the 1970's shop front with the original design. A new business has opened on the ground floor offering 3+ new jobs.	2022
41 Alexandra Road	Full restoration of the front façade, and single balcony. This is a listed building, and one of the earliest along	2022

	the road. The freeholder is still considering options for the retail unit, but it will offer more new jobs as the premises had been closed, prior to the TH project investment.	
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1.3. Property - Projects in progress 2023/24

Table 2 provides an updated regarding projects that are currently in progress between now and 2024.

Table 2

Property	Detail	Year
24 Alexandra Road	Grant contract was signed December 2022 for full front façade restoration, as per the architectural detailing of 21/22 AR.	2023
39/40 Alexandra Road	This project has planning permission and the tender review is due early January 2023. The return of lost architectural detail of such an imposing property will bring great benefit to the area.	2023, subject to freeholder commitment
25 – 27 Alexandra Road Balcony	Engagement with the three freeholders is ongoing. They have mutually agreed to one professional advisor, but it is yet to move to financial commitment.	2023/24 subject to freeholder commitment
30 – 35 Alexandra Road Balcony	Engagement with the 6 freeholders is ongoing. They have mutually agreed to one professional advisor, but it is still in the early stages of engagement.	2023/24 subject to freeholder commitment

It is important to note that the TH project is a programme of individual projects, each with an estimated cost of delivery. It is only when a freeholder commits to a project that a tender exercise can be undertaken by their nominated professional advisor (working closely with the TH Project Manager) and a fixed cost known. Therefore, potential projects are subject to change within the guidelines of the project and dependent on freeholder commitment and final cost of delivery of each individual project.

1.4 Public Realm

There is ringfenced funding within the TH budget to complete 50% of the remaining paving on the landward side of Alexandra Road. This work is being separated into two phases.

- Phase One – Baptist Church to Yarra Road, and Albert Street to Dolphin Street. This work is due to be completed early February 2023.
- Phase Two – In planning for post 2023 summer season.

1.5 Heritage Activities

The focus of heritage-led activities is via the national Heritage Open Day events in September of each year. The TH project supports the Trustees of Cleethorpes Town Hall, who host a different type of heritage-led event each year. This event offers opportunities for the GIFHE Hospitality students to gain work experience, and in 2022, the event was held over two days for the first time, offering 5 local schools the opportunity to visit the event, and learn about their local heritage.

Although in the early stages of planning the 2023 Heritage Open Days will be focussing on The Pier's 150th anniversary, the railway and Edward Watkins, etc.

Working closely with tourism colleagues, the 'Love Exploring' Heritage Trails were launched in 2021.

2. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

2.1 The TH project is delivering heritage-led regeneration. The local community and visitors alike have an affection for the traditional seaside town setting that Cleethorpes is. Over the last four years of stakeholder engagement with freeholders, leaseholders, and volunteers, there is a clear desire to restore and retain that sense of identity.

2.2 The success of the TH Project may lead to further funding opportunities with the NLHF, for future heritage led regeneration projects within Cleethorpes.

2.3 Due to the current economic climate and the cost-of-living increases, together with the increased project costs due to supply and demand of building materials, there is a risk that the freeholders will not be able to afford to support the required match funding element of the project. This would put the delivery of the project at risk. Any new initiatives will face the same risk.

2.4 It is important to follow the technical guidelines of the project to ensure quality and attention to detail, and the TH Project Manager works closely with the freeholder architects and contractors to ensure good value, and to mitigate the risk of possible withdrawal by the freeholders. Costs are constantly being reviewed, and the architects are encouraged to challenge price. Once the grant contracts are signed, the price is fixed, mitigating risk to the council.

3. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

The TH project delivery requires regular stakeholder engagement with freeholders, and businesses. Press releases are provided at key points of the delivery, project by project. The regeneration and reinstatement of the built heritage has been received positively by the local community. As part of the required project evaluation,

the freeholders are interviewed on completion of their project. A recent comment commended the support and resilience of the TH Project Manager, without which the freeholder would never have been able to complete the project. At a recent NLHF regional meeting it was reported that the TH Project for Cleethorpes is the best performing TH in the Northern region.

4. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

As the balconies are a key part of the historic feel of the Alexandra Road, and are in a series of connecting blocks, and that the two focus buildings of The Dolphin Hotel and The Empire did not come to fruition for various reasons, it gave an opportunity to reprofile the budget in 2022.

As part of the reprofiling the NLHF agreed to increase their percentage contribution from 50% to 55%. The project end date has extended to December 2024.

The bottom-line budget remains the same for the council, but it has been redistributed over two further financial years. The Townscape Heritage Project Manager contract has been extended to December 2024.

The third-party contributions from the property freeholders remains on the same basis.

5. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct or material implications arising from this report for children and young people. However, the objective of Heritage led regeneration is to make Cleethorpes a more attractive place and as part of the activities programme, local schools are being encouraged to include teaching of local history into their curriculum. It is hoped that from this, local children and young people will come to understand how and why the town is what it is today, and that they gain a sense of pride and belonging, encouraging them to stay within the local community in adulthood.

6. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Within the Council's Plan, the vision is to lead to a greener future, and to use resources in the best way to have the greatest impact. The TH project offers just that. The 'before after' photos in Appendix One evidences how impactful the reinstatement of lost heritage and restoration of heritage structures (balconies) is, but the benefit is not just aesthetic.

Buildings in a poor state of repair have poor efficiency, so good maintenance and repair should be a first action. It is a known fact the heritage buildings have already spent their carbon footprint, and schemes like the TH programme offer an opportunity for the council to work with local freeholders to help reduce carbon emissions. The replacement of ill-fitting draughty windows, with new traditional timber windows with double glazing helps to reduce heat loss and provides energy saving opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This project uses sustainable traditional materials, and in some cases removes plastic windows and doors, which are known to have a high carbon footprint and challenges with disposal.

7. MONITORING COMMENTS

In the opinion of the author, this report does not contain recommended changes to policy or resources (people, finance, or physical assets). As a result, no monitoring comments have been sought from the council's Monitoring Officer (Chief Legal Officer), Section 151 Officer (Director of Finance) or Strategic Workforce Lead.

8. WARD IMPLICATIONS

The TH focus area is within Croft Baker, and directly improves this area, but in the wider sense it is encouraging new business and residential accommodation providing a place where people wish to work, live, visit and stay.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

10. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – 'Before and After' photographs showing progress to date

11. CONTACT OFFICER(S)

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NAME

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Appendix 1

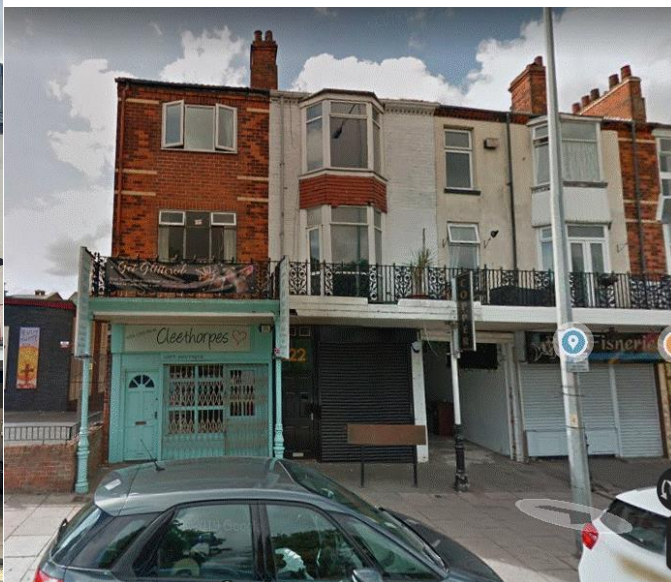
Townscape Heritage Project for Cleethorpes

Before and after restoration

5 Alexandra Road - RAFA



21 – 22 Alexandra Road



21 – 24 Alexandra Road Balcony



33 Alexandra Road



41 Alexandra Road



Townscape Heritage Project for Cleethorpes

Projects in Progress 2022/24

24 Alexandra Road



39/40 Alexandra Road



25 – 27 Alexandra Road Balcony



30 – 35 Alexandra Road Balcony



end