Dartford Townscape Heritage Initiative
Stage 2 Bid
Section 1- Managing the Scheme

1.1 The Partnership

The partners in the scheme are those proposed in the Stage One submission. See Table 1.

1.2 The THI Project Team

The THI will be run by the THI Steering Group (Figure 1). It includes representation from the Town Centre Forum (a group that represents a range of local public and private organisations in the town centre), can call on groups for specialist advice such as the Dartford District Archaeological Group and coordinate with SEEDA and the Kent Thameside Delivery Board through the Council.

The THI Steering Group will meet to monitor performance and take necessary actions and decisions to guide the progress of the scheme. The Group will ensure that the objectives of the scheme are being met.

The scheme will be managed day-to-day by the Project Manager at Dartford Borough Council, Tony Phillips, being the Designated Contact Officer to the HLF. He is a qualified architect and has worked as the Conservation Officer in the borough for the last 16 years, having been employed by the authority since 1988. He has been involved in major private conservation schemes such as Ingress Abbey refurbishment (£5m). He also advises the development control team on planning and listed building applications, covering technical, architectural and urban design advice. He has run large and small conservation and construction projects for the authority from inception to completion.

He holds the following major qualifications: B.A. (Hons) Architecture; Dip. Arch. (Hons) Architecture and is a Corporate Member of the Royal Institute of British Architects. He has worked in Dartford for over 20 years and is very familiar with the town centre and the listed buildings in the borough. He has undertaken conservation area appraisals and written briefs for conservation work.

A THI Project Officer and Part-time THI Administration Assistant will be appointed to progress the scheme, both will be based at Dartford Borough Council. Further details of these posts are provided in Appendix 1. There will also be a wide-ranging project team working on the initiative, including the following key personnel:

- **Rob Scott, Director of Regeneration, Dartford Borough Council**

  Rob will be the spending officer for intermediate grants up to £10,001- £50,000. The Regeneration Director is responsible for a multitude of activities related to the built environment within the borough, including planning policy and the Local Development Framework, Development Control and Building Control Services. The Directorate also includes the Policy Team, which amongst other priorities develops the Council's Corporate Plan and corporate policies. The Directorate also includes Project Delivery Team that develops, implements and manages a wide range of projects including the THI.
- **Alfredo Mendes, Project Delivery Manager, Dartford Borough Council**
  Alfredo will be the spending officer for grants up to £10,000. He is the manager of the Project Delivery Team which is responsible for the progress of the THI scheme. The Project Delivery Team has been responsible for a number of large-scale projects, managing complex capital and revenue budgets.

- **Lewis Kirnon, Town Centre Co-ordinator, Dartford Borough Council**
  The Town Centre Co-ordinator is responsible for the development and promotion of Dartford Town Centre through a range of initiatives. Lewis has developed a Town Centre Partnership that is made up of a broad cross-section of town centre stakeholders. Lewis and the partnership will play an important role in cultivating relations during the length of the scheme. Lewis will also be a member of the THI Steering Group.

- **Chris Baker, Dartford Museum Manager, Dartford Borough Council**
  The Museum section falls within the remit of the Project Delivery Team and over the years have been integral to maintaining the culture and heritage of the town centre and borough as a whole. Chris has an in depth knowledge of the history of Dartford and is also the Director of Dartford District Archaeological Group.

- **Katherine Talbot, Graduate Project Delivery Officer, Dartford Borough Council**
  Katherine is a member of the Project Delivery team. She has been working with the Project Manager as part of the Stage 2 application. Previous experience of working on projects including Dartford Heritage Open days.

- **Alec Lauder, Control Manager, Development Control, Dartford Borough Council**
  The development control team ensures that land and buildings are properly used, that planning objectives are fulfilled and that environmental interests are protected. The planning enforcement team forms part of the development control team and close liaison procedures already exist with the Project Manager on planning, listed building and enforcement matters.

- **Sarah Cotton, Assistant Solicitor (Conveyancing), Dartford Borough Council**
  Solicitor- LLB (Hons). Legal Services would be involved in putting into place the contract documentation for grant offers between the applicant and DBC for the THI over £50,000. Legal Services have a wide range of experience in contract documentation, from minor building works to large scale construction projects.

- **Liz Dobinson, Deputy Accountant, Dartford Borough Council**
  Professionally qualified accountant with the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants. Liz will be providing financial monitoring and advice as set out in 1.3.
Appendix A

- **Councillor Patsy Thurlow, Cabinet Member, Portfolio Holder for Town Centre, Dartford Borough Council**
- **Councillor Conrad Broadley, Built Heritage Champion, Dartford Borough Council**

Members of Dartford Borough Council are enthusiastic about this project and the role that the Council can have in delivery – Councillor Thurlow is the Portfolio Holder for Heritage and the Town Centre. Councillor Broadley as the Council’s Built Heritage Champion has been instrumental in bringing forward building conservation matters in the borough.

- **District Valuer South East, Tunbridge Wells Office**

The development of the Stage 2 application involved the district valuation office and their services will continue subsequent to the approval of the bid. The office has extensive experience and an understanding of the character of Dartford.

- **Education Partners as set out in Table 1.**

Dedicated staff from the three partners will form part of the Project Team. Letters of support can be found in Appendix 11. A representative from one of the education partners will sit on the THI Steering Group.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Organisation</th>
<th>Registered Address</th>
<th>Brief description of the organisation</th>
<th>Role within the partnership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dartford Borough Council</td>
<td>Civic Centre, Home Gardens, Dartford, Kent, DA1 1DR</td>
<td>The Council aims to make Dartford the place of choice for living, working and enjoying leisure time and is committed to improving facilities and creating opportunities for existing residents.</td>
<td>Lead Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dartford Town Centre Forum (TCF)</td>
<td>The Vicarage, High Street, Dartford, Kent, DA1 1RX</td>
<td>The Dartford TCF is made up of Dartford Borough Council and businesses from the town. The Partnership is committed to making Dartford a first choice town for businesses and the local community.</td>
<td>Representation on THI Steering Group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West Kent College (NWKC) &amp; Gravesend Campus, Dering Way, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 2JJ</td>
<td>North West Kent College serves the community from campuses in Dartford and Gravesend with its wide range of full-time and part-time, further education and higher education programmes.</td>
<td>Education Provider</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Learning Shop (TLS) and The Retail Academy (TRA)</td>
<td>The Learning Shop is a partner of NWKC providing learning opportunities largely directed at the retail sector. There are close links with the Retail Academy. The Retail Academy provides resources for retailers to deliver these education opportunities.</td>
<td>Education Provider</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Greenwich (UoG)</td>
<td>Avery Hill Campus, Mansion Site, Bexley Road, Eltham, London, SE9 2PQ.</td>
<td>The University of Greenwich is a major modern UK university. Its three campuses extend from Maritime Greenwich to Medway, serving South East London, Kent Thames-side and West Kent.</td>
<td>Education Provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent Adult Education (KAES)</td>
<td>College Road, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 1LF</td>
<td>Education provider</td>
<td>Education Provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dartford District Archaeological Group (DDAG)</td>
<td>Dartford Museum, Market Street, Dartford, Kent, DA1 1EU</td>
<td>The group has always used the information revealed by its excavations as a means of promoting the long history of the Borough of Dartford.</td>
<td>Advise THI Steering Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dartford and Gravesend Building Preservation Trust (DGBPT)</td>
<td>80 Dover Road, Northfleet, Kent, DA9 9QD</td>
<td>The Dartford &amp; Gravesend Building Preservation Trust is a revolving fund building preservation trust set up to help preserve and protect our local architectural heritage.</td>
<td>Representation on THI Steering Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dartford Historical and Antiquarian Society (DHAS)</td>
<td>28 Lowfield Street, Dartford, Kent, DA1 1HD</td>
<td>The society seek to record, preserve and maintain the character of Dartford as technical, economic and social changes rain down on us at a much greater rate then ever before.</td>
<td>Advise THI Steering Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East England Development Agency (SEEDA)</td>
<td>The Observatory, Brunel, Chatham Maritime, Kent, ME4 4NT</td>
<td>Regional Development Agency for the South East, is responsible for the sustainable economic development and regeneration of the South East of England.</td>
<td>Overarching role to assist in coordination with other initiatives. Potential funder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent Thameside Delivery Board (KTDB)</td>
<td>Old Rectory, Springhead Road, Northfleet, Kent, DA11 8HN</td>
<td>The KTDB were established to oversee all regeneration projects in Dartford and Gravesend and they will have the role of oversight within Thames Gateway, enabling coordination this project via DBC with others initiatives.</td>
<td>Overarching role to assist in coordination with other initiatives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 1: Dartford Steering Group

**THI STEERING GROUP**
*Guide and administer the scheme, recommend grants > £10,000*

DBC Members
(Cllr Thurlow/ Broadley)
1x representative from education partners
Project Manager (Tony Phillips)
Town Centre Coordinator (Lewis Kirnon)
Reverend Martin Henwood (Chair of Town Centre Forum)

**Coordinating Bodies**
*Liaison with other initiatives*
South East England Development Agency
Kent Thameside Delivery Board
Town Centre Partnership

**Advisory Groups**
*Specialist advice*
Dartford District Archaeological Group
Dartford Historical and Antiquarian Society
D&G Building Preservation Trust

**Director of Regeneration**
*Approval of grants > £50,000*

**Cabinet**
*Approval of grants > £50,000*

**Other DBC Teams**

**Project Manager**
*(Designated HLF contact)*
*Day to day scheme management, recommend grants up to £10,000*

**Project Officer**
*(Delivery of scheme)*

**Project Delivery Manager**
*(Team Leader)*
*Approval of grants up to £10,000*

**Admin Support**

**Via DBC**
The THI Steering Group will meet quarterly. The Project Officer will present monitoring reports to the Group on the THI. These reports will convey progress, expenditure and programming regarding the scheme. It is envisaged that the quarterly reports will include:

- Number of buildings repaired
- Number of buildings with reinstated details
- Reduction in number of vacant units
- Number of people trained
- Number of site visits by students
- Number of new shop fronts affected by the Shopfront Design Guide
- Number of planning applications approved under new guidance
- Regularly review the content and impact of the Conservation Area Management Plan
- Obtain feedback on the quality and accessibility of the information provided by the information boards

See Section 4.8 for more details of how these will be delivered.

1.3 Financial Management and Accounting Principles

Dartford Borough Council are making this application to HLF and are fully supportive of the THI scheme. We will continue to support the scheme by providing day to day management of the scheme both through existing staff and through the employment of an experienced officer to help administer the scheme, together with administrative support.

The Partnership is being led by Dartford Borough Council, who have appropriate organisational, financial and management structures to deliver the day-to-day needs of the project. The steering group will be established with an appropriate structure so that decisions can be made effectively and the progress of the project can be monitored and actions taken where appropriate.

Dartford Borough Council will be the accountable body for the Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme. The overarching accounting and auditing principles to be applied in managing the financial aspects of the scheme will be governed by the Council’s Financial Regulations and Standing Orders. The Financial Guidance Manual produced by Financial Services provides the necessary guidance to ensure the Project Team manage the Scheme in accordance with approved practice. The Council has a written fraud policy which will be sent to all members of the Project Team.

Financial transactions will be monitored by the use of a separate set of accounts within the Council’s computerised accounting system, and authorisation of payments will be made by the authorised person/body in strict accordance with the scheme criteria. Financial monitoring and advice will be provided by a
professionally qualified Accountant from the Council’s Financial Services Division, who will be a member of the Project Team, see 1.2.

The Council’s external auditors, Baker Tilly, will be requested to audit the scheme in accordance with the required timescales.

Although Dartford Borough Council has not been involved in this type of project before, the Council is involved in productive partnerships and is also the accountable body for a number of Urban Thames Gateway Kent projects (ERDF funded), that have a value of between £30,000 and £400,000.

1.4 THI Project Officer

The job specification for the THI Project Officer can be found in Appendix 1. It is anticipated that the delivery structure, shown in Figure 1 will provide the co-ordinating mechanism and the drive to push forward various projects and initiatives in and around the town. The Project Officer will be expected to play a vital role in building community capacity so that many more local people are enabled to contribute to the scheme.

Following Stage 1 approval, the Council has re-assessed this post in relation to the local job market and it is now considered that an 18-hour (2½ day) post over the life of the scheme would attract the calibre of candidate required, rather than the previously structured offer of a full time post reducing to one-day a week at the end of the scheme. Costs have risen slightly due to potential increases in National Insurance and pension contributions as set out in section 1.5.

The Project Manager will manage the THI Project Officer and the THI Administration Assistant.

The recruitment for this post will begin after acceptance of the bid has been received from HLF and funding is secured as part of the Council’s budget setting process.

1.5 Management Overheads

Management overheads will be jointly funded by HLF and Dartford Borough Council. The £92,822 running costs stated in the Stage 1 application will be sought to be funded by HLF. A full breakdown of costs can be found in Table 2.

Updated projections for the cost of the two officers for the THI have seen an increase in the staff costs and overheads since the Stage 1 bid. This now stands at £184,591 instead of £162,038. This is due to an increase in staff wages and re-adjustments to pension and National Insurance contributions. The additional cost of £22,553 will be met by DBC.
Table 2: Dartford THI Cost Breakdown

(UNDER REVIEW WITH HLF- FINAL DBC CONTRIBUTION AS PER CABINET REPORT- Proportions of Repair/ reinstatement/ floorspace under review)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A: Category</th>
<th>B: Total Eligible cost</th>
<th>C: Grants proposed from common fund</th>
<th>Grant rate (i.e. C as % of B)</th>
<th>D: HLF contribution sought</th>
<th>HLF proportion of the common fund (i.e. D as % of C)</th>
<th>Allocation of HLF contribution between categories (i.e. D as % of total HLF contribution)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building Repairs</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>£279,813</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reinstatement of architectural detail</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>£217,755</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bringing vacant historic floorspace</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infilling gap sites in key frontages</td>
<td>£0</td>
<td>£0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>£0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public realm works</td>
<td>£50,000</td>
<td>£50,000</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>£12,500</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff costs and overheads</td>
<td>£208,198</td>
<td>£208,198</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>£92,822</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing, training, educational and community initiatives</td>
<td>£94,200</td>
<td>£94,200</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>£47,100</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,366,492</td>
<td></td>
<td>£649,990*</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Rounded down to £649,500 as per HLF grant award guidance
1.6 Making decisions

Applications made to the Dartford THI will be processed by the amount that is applied for. The likely payment authorisation structure will be delegated to the appropriate level. The THI Project Officer will initially assess all applications and provide further information to the appropriate assessor as set out in Figure 2.

The approval decision on the applications below £10,000 will be delegated to the Project Delivery Manager as the spending officer. For applications between £10,000 and £50,000 the THI Steering Group will assess and recommendations for the Director of Regeneration to approve them. For grants in excess of £50,000 the THI Steering Group will put forward a recommendation to Cabinet for approval. This approach links directly into the Council’s Standing Orders and maintains probity throughout.

Figure 2: Decision making process

Criteria for applications will be set out as per the THI guidance.

1.7 Applications for THI grant
The procedure for applications is set out in Figure 3. At the end of Stage One in the process, the application pack is sent out if the proposal is eligible; this will be assessed by the Project Officer. The proposed Dartford THI application form can be found in Appendix 2. When an application is received it will be given a unique reference number, the date of receipt recorded and a letter of receipt issued. It will then be assessed by the relevant person/body. The application pack will include:

- An introductory leaflet/letter
- A grant application form
- Details of the operation of the scheme and conditions
- A guide to eligible work

**Figure 3: Grant Application Procedure**

**STAGE ONE: PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS**

Owner/Tenant contacts the Council → Enquiry Registered → Preliminary site visit to discuss proposals → If scheme is eligible → Application pack sent

**STAGE TWO: GRANT ASSESSMENT/OFFER**

Formal application for grant submitted → Application is assessed by relevant decision-making body → Formal letter of grant offer

**STAGE THREE: BUILDING WORKS UNDERTAKEN**

Work starts on site → Project Officer monitors progress → Completed works and invoices checked by Council → Grant paid to applicant

At the end of Stage Two, a formal letter will be sent to the applicant. This will inform them if they have been successful or not. The date of this will be recorded and award status also noted; the information will be fed into a document consistent for all applications. Offer letters will reiterate the conditions of the scheme and include expected standards of work.
Throughout the process of the grant application conditions will be monitored so that they are consistent and in line with the aims of the Dartford THI. These checks include the preliminary site visit in Stage One to check that work is eligible for a grant in the first instance.

High professional standards will be achieved in the physical works through the procurement regime that will be attached to the grant giving. This will ensure that contracted work is from traders with relevant evidenced experience and that work is carried out to the appropriate high professional standard. The THI Project Officer employed to administer the scheme will have an important role in approving works and recommending release of grant monies.

Decisions on applications will be based on the following criteria:
- Inclusion within the Conservation Area
- Listed Buildings
- Priority Buildings as stated in 4.3
- Buildings with visible options to restore original/local distinct features
- Buildings identified as eligible for the scheme

The Conditions for the Dartford THI are:
- Checking that the works or costs THI grant has been applied for are eligible;
- Checking that the project meets high technical standards and respects the historic building’s conservation value;
- Checking that the cost of the project is reasonable;
- Checking that suitably qualified people will be working on the project
- Assessing the project’s benefits against the priorities for the THI
- Assessing the project’s value for money

1.8 Publicity for the THI scheme

During the Stage 2 application period two information leaflets were produced. These were sent to the potential targeted properties in Dartford town centre. Individual letters and personal contacts have been made to engender support for the scheme. A ‘business breakfast’ meeting was held in July 2006, covering many projects the Council is promoting and the THI was included.

There have been significant levels of formal public consultation as part of the development of the Stage 2 application. Businesses and properties in the town have been informed by letter of the consultation on Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and the Shopfront Design Guide. Public notices were also placed in local press and all consultation documents have been available on the Council’s website, local libraries and parish council offices.

A total of £94,200 has been allocated for marketing, training, educational and community initiatives to build on the development work to date.
The scheme will be officially launched prior to the commencement date and further publicity will be planned for educational events as they develop as part of the action plan.

The scheme will also be publicised through a newsletter. As the scheme will be taking place in the town centre it is anticipated that interest will also be generated naturally, and efforts will be made to capitalise upon this. This could be through activities at Dartford Museum, the Dartford Markets, the Shopping Centres and One Bell Corner. There is also support from the local press.
Section 2- Identifying the Area’s needs

2.1 The Area’s Social and Economic Conditions

Dartford Town Centre has been recognised by the Borough Council, the Kent Thameside Delivery Board and Dartford Town Centre Partnership as an area in need of regeneration due to the diminishing viability and prosperity of the town centre over recent decades. Retail rents were lower in 2004 than in 1987 – the town centre experienced a general fall in retail rents from £700/m² to £300/m² per month over the last decade settling to their current average of £400/m². Dartford Town Centre has a high retail yield when compared to the rest of Kent, which for a long time has made it unattractive to investors.¹ Unemployment and low wages are not significant problems for Dartford Town Centre and the economy of Dartford due to proximity to London. However, low skills levels and generally low aspirations are an issue, and one issue that the regeneration of the town centre is hoping to address.

The Conservation Area spans five wards and six Super Output Areas (SOAs). The SOAs below in Table 3 are among the most deprived in the country. The SOA of which the majority of the eligible buildings are located is in the 30% most deprived SOAs in the country.

Table 3: Indices of Deprivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOA</th>
<th>LA CODE</th>
<th>LA NAME</th>
<th>IMD SCORE (where the bigger the score the more deprived the SOA)</th>
<th>RANK OF IMD (where 1 is most deprived, out of 32482)</th>
<th>Rank of IMD (most deprived, out of 32482)</th>
<th>Percentile of most deprived</th>
<th>Urban ward?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E01024137</td>
<td>29UD</td>
<td>Dartford</td>
<td>12.94</td>
<td>20894</td>
<td>20894</td>
<td>46.48%</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E01024164</td>
<td>29UD</td>
<td>Dartford</td>
<td>18.58</td>
<td>15097</td>
<td>15097</td>
<td>46.48%</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E01024176</td>
<td>29UD</td>
<td>Dartford</td>
<td>21.78</td>
<td>12534</td>
<td>12534</td>
<td>38.59%</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E01024182</td>
<td>29UD</td>
<td>Dartford</td>
<td>27.99</td>
<td>8882</td>
<td>8882</td>
<td>27.34%</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E01024184</td>
<td>29UD</td>
<td>Dartford</td>
<td>17.08</td>
<td>23944</td>
<td>23944</td>
<td>27.34%</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E01024185</td>
<td>29UD</td>
<td>Dartford</td>
<td>11.75</td>
<td>22433</td>
<td>22433</td>
<td>27.34%</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Deprivation levels in the Borough can be seen in relation to the Town Centre Conservation Area in Appendix 4.

Previous consultation and consensus building exercises held with the Dartford Town Centre Forum and The Town Centre Partnership suggest that local stakeholders want their town to provide a good retail offer whilst retaining a sense of place and character. One reason for a perceived lack of character is that

¹ Statistics taken from Dartford Town Centre Health Indicators 20022005/6 that are produced by Kent County Council Strategic Planning Analysis and Information Team. See Appendix 3.
buildings within the conservation area in the town have not been kept to a high standard and some inappropriate shop fronts have meant that the heritage of the area is being eroded. These views have been reiterates in the public consultation process for the CAA. The social and economic conditions have contributed to this decline in visible heritage. Lower value retailers have been attracted to the secondary shopping areas, who are unable to promote the heritage of the town as an asset.

Public sector intervention is necessary to ensure that the historic character of Dartford is enhanced at the same time as other parts of the town centre redevelop. Significant physical change, including infrastructure changes, will be taking place over the next few years. Unless concentrated public investment is put into the existing heritage, these new developments may prove more attractive than the remaining historic core, leaving it to further decline.

The authority will be increasing its use of statutory powers to produce positive change but these actions need to be balanced with the THI grant scheme to encourage building owners to improve their buildings.

2.2 The Conservation Area

The Town Centre Conservation Area has been reviewed in the Stage 2 preparation period and a new Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan has been produced. This highly detailed document has researched the development of the town, investigated the spatial aspects of the town centre and recommended small changes to the conservation area boundary to enhance the heritage asset. The document was subject to a public notice in the local press, six weeks public consultation, copies placed in every library and parish council office and was placed on the DBC website. In addition over 700 businesses and private addresses received a letter to inform them of the document.

The Appraisal and Management Plan were recommended by Cabinet on 21 September 2006 and adopted by Full Council on 16 October 2006. A copy of the completed document is enclosed in Appendix 5 (This will be desk-top published in due course). The Conservation Area incorporates the wards of West Hill, Princes, Town (majority), Newtown and Brent.

A small allowance was made for some minor public realm works in Stage 1 and this is continued into Stage 2, but we are not intending to incorporate major works as the development of the Public Realm Design Guide is still under preparation. However, the principals of the emerging Public Realm Design Guide have been incorporated in a £1.4m DCLG- funded environmental improvement project linking the High Street to Home Gardens, to act as a test-bed prior to roll out as part of the wider strategy.

Policy links have also been made in the draft LDF to enable the Public Realm Design Guide to be implemented as sites come forward, thus enabling the
potential Section 106 agreements to be put in place to help fund environmental improvements.

2.3 **Assessing the Heritage need**

Some of the most prominent and visually important townscape buildings in the centre of town suffer from lack of repair. This has been reflected in the surveys of the priority buildings. This is considered to be mainly due to low rental values and the type of retail offer currently trading in the town. Trading confidence and general morale is low and most major retailers have left the town over the last ten years. The Council has seen this bid as an opportunity to work with traders and residents to manage change in the trading situation, improve the general perception of Dartford town centre to one of a thriving local centre once more, and improve the potential retail offer.

In light of the recent Lowfield Street development planning refusal, it is even more important to emphasise the character of the local area and assist the current trading situation. The opportunity of the THI scheme to improve the town’s character in the interim period before the Lowfield Street scheme can come forward in a revised guise is critical.

A number of the proposed THI scheme buildings are in the secondary shopping areas, such as East and West Hill and Lowfield Street. These are also the main buildings on the major routes into the town and currently present a very poor image at the town centre gateways. These have suffered from low maintenance and inappropriate change more than those in the town centre, increasing the perceived dowdiness of the town.

General repair standards are not high, and often new traders are concentrating on the ground floor and shopfront, and not taking a more holistic approach to their building when undertaking alterations and repairs. The character of the town is seriously threatened by the decline in the quality of the fabric, because the characteristics that help to provide the town with its identity are being lost. The newly adopted Shopfront Design Guide will help address these issues in the longer term.

We will not address gap or identified development sites as part of this project as these have been incorporated into the wider town centre framework undertaken with SEEDA and incorporated into the LDF and site specific briefs.

The surveys of the buildings were carried out by Thomas Ford & Partners and are included. The priority building valuations were carried out by the District Valuer. A table summarising the reports is included in Appendix 6.
2.4 Vacant and Empty Properties

Following guidance from the HLF monitor, additional work has been undertaken to establish heritage need relating to vacant historic floor-space. Our proposed workload includes elements of this that were not part of the Stage 1 bid. This aspect will help address the under-occupied buildings in the town and increase the vitality.

The current rate of vacant properties within the town centre can be summarised as follows:

Table 4: Vacant Properties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vacant retail units (KCC Town Centre Health Indicators)</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key building with vacant upper floors (DBC local survey)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.5 Assessing the Financial need for THI grant

As set out in 2.3 DBC has commissioned experienced consultants to carry out detailed building surveys to targeted buildings, established the value of the unimproved and improved properties with the assistance of the District Valuer to establish the heritage need. Other eligible properties were established in the Stage 1 application. At this point the financial need is only estimated, not fully determined as these are of a lower priority. By using the targeted buildings data as a measure, the table in Appendix 6 averages the uplift of building values and establishes the notional heritage need for these properties. The actual financial and heritage need will be established as part of the grant application process in due course.

2.6 Justification of Grant Rates

A substantial amount of work has been undertaken to assess the impact of grant levels, looking both at individual building results and at the balance of the scheme as a whole. A view has also been taken on the potential take up of the scheme which also moderates the overall cost.

Grant rates have been set at 75% for reinstatement costs of architectural details which are lost or under threat. This is to act as an incentive to retain and restore these features, because they have no direct economic benefit to the property owners. Building repair costs will be set at a grant rate of 50%.

Both these values closely approximate the averages established through the survey work.
2.7 Clawback

A land charge will be placed on the property on completion of the grant payments to ensure that public funds can be recovered in the event of change of ownership. For THI grants towards property that is already in use involving up to £25,000 grant, a three-year clawback will be applied from payment of the grant. For larger grants, a 10 year period will apply.

Clawback is also applicable to grants to bring vacant floorspace back into use. This will be assessed either when the property is sold or leased, or within two years of work being completed whichever is sooner.

Appropriate clawback clauses will be included in all guidance notes and grant conditions. The clauses will be consistent with HLF guidance.

2.8 Schedule of Eligible Projects

The eligible properties are all historically or architecturally important buildings within the Conservation Area, although preference will be giving to the priority building groups. Identified buildings are shown in Appendix 7. It is anticipated that not all of the eligible buildings in the scheme will take up a grant offer. To resolve differences in the Stage 1 and Stage 2 bid finances, we have settled on around a 70% take-up to enable our Stage 2 projections of the scheme cost to approximate the Stage 1 figures.
Section 3- The Conservation Area Management Plan

3.1 The Area

The Conservation Area Management Plan (CAMP) underpins plans for the implementation of the THI scheme and other projects that will enhance the area’s amenity value, reconnect areas of the town that are currently isolated and improve the economy of the town.

The issues relating to the Conservation Area are:

- Aspects that diminish or detract from the character of the Conservation Area that need to be addressed, relating to buildings, uses or the public realm
- Economic and social issues
- Problems relating to movement and connectivity

The CAMP sets out the area’s conservation value, deeper problems that pose a threat to it and objectives to be achieved. This is set out in Appendix 5.

The Management Plan Issues and recommendations are to be incorporated into the Council’s workload and implemented by the appropriate team. This will be achieved by engrossing these into individual team service plans. In this way each outcome can be set and monitored over time.

3.2 Planning Policies

As discussed above, the CAMP sets out the recommended policy approaches, planning measures and required interventions into the conservation area to enhance and improve it. Where appropriate, the policy approaches will be incorporated in the LDF Core Strategy and Dartford Town Centre Area Action Plan.

The Dartford Town Centre Area Action Plan Preferred Policy Approaches will be placed on public consultation towards the end of 2006/ early 2007.

The Council has already begun to incorporate the CAMP recommendations, particularly where site-specific guidance is being developed. The weight of these documents will increase when the Core Strategy and Area Action Plan are submitted to the Government Office for the South East in 2007.

The local list requires development of policies in the LDF to enable a measure of protection for locally listed buildings, and it is therefore likely to be incorporated in year one of the scheme. Development work to establish local list criteria will be undertaken in year one scheme with buildings assessments within the conservation area.
3.3 Planning Measures

A series of planning measures are recommended in the CAMP, including a local list, Article 4(a) Directions for advertisements and site specific actions.

Planning enforcement work has already improved in the town centre and will continue to do so. Successes such as the 9 High Street shopfront replacement and responsive enforcement (including planning condition resolution) remain a priority. Increased use of T&CPA Section 215 Notices is also an option.

Potential statutory listed buildings identified in the CAMP have been passed to English Heritage for consideration.

3.4 A Framework for Design Standards

As noted above, as part of the Local Development Framework, two Area Action Plans are being prepared for the ‘Northern Gateway’ north of Dartford station and for the town centre.

These set out the overarching principles for development in the town centre and were born out of the master planning process and the Issues and Options consultation carried out in 2005.

Further site specific design guidance will be developed as and when certain sites come forward within the town centre.

A Public Realm Design Guide has also been produced and this will be going through a public consultation exercise in due course with the intention of becoming a supplementary planning policy/development control advisory document linking to the Area Action Plans. This document sets out the required standards and preferred materials for the town as a whole, including the conservation area. It is also intended to link into the CAA to produce a cohesive strategy for the whole of the town’s public realm. Changes were made to the draft document to reflect the findings in the CAA. Any major development will have to take its guidance into account.

The new Shopfront Design Guide enclosed in Appendix 8 sets out clear design aspirations for the borough and more specifically for the town centre. This has been through an identical public consultation process as the CAA/ CAMP and was recommended for adoption at Cabinet on 21 September 2006 for planning purposes.

3.5 Education and Training

As set out in the CAMP, the heritage of the conservation area is rich and there is considerable underlying potential to educate residents and visitors on the history and development of the town and on other topics such as architectural or industrial
history. There is currently some interpretation of the heritage assets of the town within the public realm. A successful example is at One Bell Corner, on the High Street, where the intangible heritage of Dartford (local industry, people and inventions) is presented.

All training that will be delivered as part of the scheme will be developed and delivered by professional institutions (University of Greenwich, North West Kent College and The Learning Shop) or the Kent Adult Education Service in coordination with DBC. This will ensure that all training is to the correct standard and that outputs are effectively measured.

The training plan had been established so that it has four threads, each to be carried out by a different partner as set out in 4.5. Although not fully developed, the plan aims to address the issues and suggestions CAMP. The rationale behind developing the education and training plan is so a diverse number of people can benefit from the scheme at nominal cost.

3.6 Consultation and Involvement

The consultation for the scheme has been tailored to the individual building owners in the case of the priority buildings and more generally to the remaining properties. All have received letters setting out the ideas for the scheme and asking for support and letters expressing an interest are include in the appendices.

3.7 Putting the Management Plan into practice

The potential work programme/ timetable is set out in Section 4. This includes how the Management Plan will be adopted and put into practice.

3.8 Commitment to the Management Plan

The CAMP is supported by all the THI partners and helps to secure the long term quality of the area and will be incorporated into individual DBC team service plans as appropriate.

The Management Plan has been approved by Cabinet on 21 September. The Council therefore acknowledges its commitment and responsibility to review Conservation Areas and make allowances for their preservation and enhancement. The CAMP will be maintained for at least 10 years.
Appendix A

Section 4- The THI Action Plan

4.1 Introduction

The Action Plan describes how Dartford Borough Council will deliver the Dartford Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI). The Action Plan will cover the life of the THI scheme, which is intended to commence in April 2007 with funding and works being completed by March 2012. The THI will cover the Conservation Area as set out in 2.2. The plan sets out our current projection of priority work and timetable for the first year.

4.2 The Regeneration Strategy and Vision

As part of the wider regeneration strategy for the area, there are several initiatives still under way.

As a major town within the Thames Gateway and the Kent Thameside Growth Area, Dartford is part of a regional economic regeneration initiative. Dartford town centre was prioritised for funding and action by both the Borough Council and the Kent Thameside Delivery Board. As such, Dartford town centre has received funding from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) via the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA). This money came from an open bidding round to the Thames Gateway Sustainable Communities Fund. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) committed £6.5m for 2003-6. The purpose of this funding was to promote the continuing development of Dartford as a commercial, social and cultural centre thereby ensuring its long-term viability/vitality, promoting investor confidence and fostering integration with new developments. There are three key elements that have been addressed since the Stage 1 submission:

Project Framework Masterplan – The Masterplan is completed and site specific briefs have been produced. The Core Strategy Document for the Local Development Framework (LDF) and Site Specific Allocations- Third Policy Approaches Document have completed public consultation.

Lowfield Street Regeneration – Under strategic review after planning permission was refused from Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). The negative decision on the outcome of the Lowfield Street planning permission means that Dartford Borough Council is currently re-evaluating its position and cannot comment on plans for the future as the decision was only so recently made.

Cultural improvements – Physical works to the town centre library and museum to widen access and broaden the appeal were part of the Tesco development and are currently under review.

Dartford Council has independently undertaken a museum service review to help further the services that are currently offered. This includes altering opening times so that they are more user-friendly to customers, encouraging a new audience to
visit the museum and learn about the heritage of Dartford, and this should be in place shortly.

The overall strategic aims for Dartford Town Centre were set out in the Regeneration Strategy which was appended in the Stage 1 application.

Dartford's Corporate Plan sets out the Council's vision 'To make Dartford the place of choice, a place where people choose to live, work and enjoy their leisure time. Dartford's Corporate Plan sets out a Vision for the Council, priority themes and key actions under each of these themes.

A questionnaire based on the key actions set out in the draft Corporate Plan was sent to all households in the Borough in early 2004. The results of this consultation provided useful snapshot of the priority attached to various aspects of the Council's role by members of the Community, and were used to inform the Council's process of finalising its key corporate targets for the year ahead.

The Council has seven key themes; those relevant to this bid are set out below:

■ Quality Services
The Council will provide high quality local services that reflect public aspirations.

■ Citizenship and Community
The Council will encourage a spirit of citizenship and foster pride in Dartford, its heritage and its future. The Council will consult, involve and listen to the views of local people.
The Council will work in partnership with residents, business, the voluntary sector and other relevant parties to build a stronger, safer, socially inclusive community.

■ Regeneration
The Council will promote the development of a strong, diverse and expanding local economy with an international outlook, leading to new employment opportunities and improved prosperity.
The Council will promote the interests of all local people by encouraging the sustainable growth and regeneration of the Borough.

■ Corporate Health
The Council will be inclusive and well managed, with an open and positive culture, making the best use of its Member, officer, financial and other resources.
4.3 Priorities for your THI scheme

The priorities for the scheme have evolved slightly from the Stage 1 application. We now have some potential commitments from priority building owners that should enable us to get off to a good start with the scheme. Some properties are still proving problematic in contacting owners and getting their engagement.

We have identified a series of buildings that form our priority workload to deliver the project. We have prior agreement that we will not have critical projects in terms of the HLF criteria. We will continue to action all the priority buildings we have identified. The following table sets out the buildings that have been designated as priorities:

Table 5: Priority Buildings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Building Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Royal Victoria and Bull Public House, 1 High Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Mitchells Carpets 4-8 Hythe Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cut Price Cards (etc), 1 Hythe Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bon Marche, 22-22a High Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Thomas Cook, 24 High Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Craft Frames, 21 West Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ellenor Hospice, 82 High Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>43 High Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>45 High Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Masa Guru, 12-12a Hythe Street</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In prioritising buildings for the Action Plan, it is anticipated that the following objectives will be achieved:

- Provide quality repairs to properties with in the Dartford Town Centre Conservation Area to enhance the overall value of the town and to act as a reference to promote similar quality works on building throughout the town centre and for development in future years beyond the THI scheme.
- Restore and upgrade historic shopfronts and promote quality replacement.
- Restore lost architectural feature on principal facades of historic buildings.
- Bring vacant and underused space, especially on upper storeys of central buildings, back into appropriate use.
- Implement comprehensive repair schemes to the town’s remaining eligible buildings.
- Promote culture and heritage within the town centre and the Borough as a whole.
- Provide current and future guidance on maintenance care of the historic nature of the town.

Letters of support/willingness to participate from the priority buildings can be found in Appendix 9.
4.4 **Critical Projects**

The priority buildings are set out in 4.3, these are important to target so that the scheme’s objectives can be delivered. There are no critical projects under the THI guidelines to enable a flexible approach for eligible buildings.

4.5 **Education and Training Initiatives**

In Table 6 an outline is provided of the projects that will be carried out by the education partners. Further details of the Education and Training Plan are set out in Appendix 10. The projects are to be carried out by the education partners and not directly by Dartford Borough Council; all initiatives will be monitored and coordinated by the THI Steering Group.

The aims of the educational aspect of the scheme have been discussed with the partners at length and these can be achieved by the proposed projects, each with their own anticipated benefactors and outcomes. The education and training plan incorporates both formal and informal methods of learning.

It is expected that each partner will monitor and evaluate the success of their projects. These will then be reported to and assessed by the THI Steering Group and the THI Project Officer.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heritage seminar series</td>
<td>University of Greenwich</td>
<td>10 lectures delivered to an estimated audience of 1000 people (c. 100 people per lecture). Collection of seminar series lectures made available at local resources (including library etc.)</td>
<td>The seminar series will link directly to PhD, MPhil, MA, MSc and BSc degree programmes in the School of Architecture and Training at the University.</td>
<td>The seminar series will be delivered by a series of academics from the University, each with areas of national and international expertise. Feedback forms will be provided at each lecture to improve the remainder of the series</td>
<td>£1,200 per seminar. £2,500 for seminar series lecture notes and Dartford Town Centre Heritage and Construction Legacy Series Document. £2,000 required contribution to University TRAC full-cost recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation work site-visit scheme (Details not finalised)</td>
<td>North West Kent College</td>
<td>Potentially up to approx 400 students visiting sites. Potentially 100 professionals visiting as Continuing Professional Development</td>
<td>This scheme will be available to students undertaking construction of courses. Students will be required to submit work as part of this scheme. It will contribute to the degree programmes and professional CPD</td>
<td>The site-visit scheme will be run by NWKC that has long experience in delivering projects of this kind. Student evaluation will be collected in order to inform future site-visit schemes organised through the THI.</td>
<td>To be advised.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix A

| Retail in a Conservation Environment module  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Details not finalised)</th>
<th>The Learning Shop and The Retail Academy</th>
<th>Delivery of conservation issues in a retail environment</th>
<th>Units of learning for potential accreditation onto NQF</th>
<th>Formative and summative assessments with potential for on-line tests.</th>
<th>To be advised</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Heritage trails and family learning packs | Kent Adult Education Service | Number of families / children undertaking family trails / activities.  
Number of classroom-based activities.  
Number of learning packs used through scheme.  
Number of completion certificates issued. | An achievement certificate will be given to all children competing heritage trails.  
It is hoped that families looking to undertake heritage trails etc. will be encouraged to participate in one of KAES’s other available courses. | The scheme has been created by Kent Adult Education Service, which is an expert in creating family-based learning options in the area. | £4,300 for learning packs, made up of tutor time to develop packs and materials.  
£1,150 anticipated cost for development of pilot scheme.  
£1,850 for themed Town Detective trail, including costs for classroom activity, library research, tutor costs and materials.  
£2,050 for school activities linked to curriculum and themed Town Detective trails.  
£850 for treasure hunt, family-based activities at weekends.  
£500 for 5 short trails, provided as twilight or after-school family activities | £10,700 |
4.6 Developing the Action’s plans outputs

The Action Plan is set out in Appendix 11.

4.7 Partnership Funding

During the build-up to our Stage 2 bid there has been some concern over match funding streams. Our Stage 1 bid outlined that funding would be forthcoming from the ODPM as part of the Sustainable Communities Fund. This funding stream is not clear at the point of writing this document.

Dartford Council have investigated alternative funding and approached the South East England Development Agency and there may be options for funding coming forward. Further work is being undertaken in conjunction with SEEDA to establish a potential funding stream.

Notwithstanding the potential funding from SEEDA, this scheme is a corporate priority and it has been decided that Dartford Borough Council will treat the project as a priority when the budget is considered in March 2007. By that time, the potential SEEDA funding should be resolved and the Council can take this into account when setting the budget.

4.8 Delivery Strategy and Programme

As part of the Stage 2 bid, we have been in contact with all the potential priority properties by letter, telephone and by face-to-face meetings where possible. We have also prepared information leaflets that have been passed to all potentially eligible properties.

At the point of this bid submission, there is heightened awareness of the scheme and general support from businesses and organisations in the town.

Our intention for the first year of the scheme is to enable these early supporters to carry out the eligible works to their buildings so they can act as beacon enablers, telling others of their experience. This does not preclude other identified buildings coming forward, but will enable the scheme to meet the priority building targets.

The educational projects will deliver several strands in the first year commencing with a high profile family based educational programme in the summer with more professionally orientated education events following on later in the year. The family learning packages will be designed to deliver by guided or self-guided means, potentially downloadable from the Council website and available as a legacy educational resource.
## Table 8: Measuring Success

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main aims of the scheme</th>
<th>Action will take</th>
<th>Measuring success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand and promote the heritage and conservation of the area</td>
<td><strong>Conservation Area Appraisal updated by August 2006</strong></td>
<td>Number of responses to the public consultation that will inform the updated Conservation Area Appraisal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand and promote the conservation and heritage of the area</td>
<td>Install <strong>information boards</strong> in the town</td>
<td>Obtain feedback on the quality and accessibility of the information provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand and promote the conservation and heritage of the area</td>
<td>Provide <strong>site visits</strong> for students and professionals with a focus on traditional building materials and skills</td>
<td>Number of site visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that the heritage of Dartford town centre is protected</td>
<td><strong>Shopfront Design Guide</strong> produced by August 2006 and adopted September 2006</td>
<td>Number of new Shopfronts affected by the guide and its enforcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that the heritage of Dartford town centre is protected</td>
<td><strong>Supplementary Planning Documents</strong> produced by late 2006</td>
<td>Number of planning applications approved under new guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrate the existing buildings with the new developments to promote a sense of place in Dartford town centre</td>
<td><strong>Repair buildings</strong> so that they are of the same standard as the new developments and are therefore able to compete</td>
<td>Number of buildings repaired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrate the existing buildings with the new developments to promote a sense of place in Dartford town centre</td>
<td><strong>Reinstate details</strong> to buildings so that the character of the town becomes more apparent</td>
<td>Number of buildings with reinstated details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that the impact of the THI is managed and maintained after the project has completed</td>
<td><strong>Conservation Management Plan</strong> agreed by September 2006</td>
<td>Regularly review the content and impact of the Conservation Management Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that the impact of the THI is managed and maintained after the project has completed</td>
<td>Provide <strong>training</strong> to traders/owners on management, leadership and conservation/heritage issues</td>
<td>Number of people trained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that the impact of the THI is managed and maintained after the project has completed</td>
<td>Provide <strong>training</strong> to officers and Members of the planning authority so that appropriate actions are taken</td>
<td>Number of people trained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that the impact of the THI is managed and maintained after the project has completed</td>
<td>Use the increased character of the town to <strong>attract new traders</strong></td>
<td>Reduction in number of vacant units</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>