

Apply to the levelling up fund round 2

Submission details

Submission reference	LUF20571
Created time	Wed, 10 Aug 2022 09:21
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What is the legal name of the lead applicant organisation?

St Helens Borough Council

Where is your bid being delivered?

England

Select your local authority

St. Helens

Enter the name of your bid

Earlestown: Regeneration through Culture, Community and Heritage

Does your bid contain any projects previously submitted in round 1?

No

Bid manager contact details

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Position	Leader
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Enter the name of any consultancy companies involved in the preparation of the bid

Hatch Associates Limited
BE Group
WSP
DWF Law LLP
English Cities Fund
Matt Brook Architects

Enter the total grant requested from the Levelling Up Fund

£20000000

Investment themes

Regeneration and town centre	71%
Cultural	29%
Transport	0%

Which bid allowance are you using?

Full constituency allowance

How many component projects are there in your bid?

3

Are you submitting a joint bid?

No

Grant value declaration

I am submitting a bid as a single applicant and can confirm that the bid overall does not exceed £20 million grant value

Tick to confirm

Gateway criteria: costings, planning and defrayment

I confirm that some LUF grant funding will be defrayed in the 2022/23 financial year

Tick to confirm

Costings and Planning Workbook

LUF_Package_Bid_Costings_Planning_Workbook_V2.00.xlsx

Provide bid name

Earlestown: Regeneration through Culture, Community and Heritage

Provide a short description of your bid

This £20m package bid will deliver three bold and transformative interventions within Earlestown's town centre, in line with the ambitious vision of St Helens Council and its partner the English Cities Fund (ECF) articulated within the Earlestown Masterplan Development Framework (MDF).

Investment will revitalise Earlestown's historic market square and surrounding public realm; reimagine its Grade-II listed derelict Town Hall as a community and workspace hub; and improve safety and amenity at its rail station. Supported by secured match funding, these complementary projects will drive substantial regeneration and reinvigorate Earlestown as a place in which to live, work and invest.

Provide a more detailed overview of your bid proposal

The objectives of the bid are to:

- Create a sustainable, accessible and connected town centre
- Deliver a diverse, vibrant and animated town centre to encourage footfall, spend and improved quality of life
- Bring redundant historic buildings back into economic use
- Positively change perceptions of the town and develop pride in place

This package bid will comprehensively regenerate Earlestown through three spatially-connected and strategically-aligned projects: transformation of Earlestown Market Square and Public Realm; reinvention of Earlestown Town Hall as a community and workspace hub; and safety and amenity enhancements at Earlestown Rail Station.

With a total requested grant value of £20m, this significant allocation of LUF funds will be matched by £8.24m of funding from St Helens Borough Council (29% of total project value). This has been approved in principle within the funds committed to Earlestown in St Helens' Medium-Term Financial Strategy and other associated capital funds. LUF funding will support further outlay by the Council including £11m of linked projects in Earlestown, while also acting to catalyse broader private sector investment in the area. Project delivery will be led jointly by the Council and the English Cities Fund (ECF).

Earlestown Market Square and Public Realm

This £11.36m project will renew the commercial core of Earlestown through:

- A comprehensive redesign of Earlestown's historic Market Square incorporating seating and landscaping and new kiosk micro-tenancies to promote activation outside of market trading times, anchored by an iconic architect-designed market canopy structure, providing 1,087 sqm of weather-protected trading space for market trading and community events.
- Significant public realm enhancements to the town centre's high streets including paving replacement, street furniture installation and tree planting to improve pedestrian connectivity and enhance amenity, thereby attracting visitation and spend; and
- The project will be complemented by £3.6m in investment allocated by St Helens Borough Council towards restoring and enhancing shopfronts, with the support of the High Streets Task Force.

Earlestown Town Hall

This £7.41m project will restore Earlestown's civic heart by reinstating a derelict but iconic Grade II-listed building, which hosted one of the Beatles early performances circa 60 years ago, as a modern cultural and commercial hub, including:

- New lettable commercial workspace to grow town centre employment within a restored and remodelled ground floor, alongside hireable community rooms to accommodate cultural activity and service delivery;
- A restored upper-floor multifunctional hall with dedicated function and community space capable of hosting a range of visitor-attracting public events and private functions; and
- A new landscaped courtyard garden and architecturally-designed café extension to the rear of the building, extending the town centre's hospitality offer and creating an appealing gathering space for the wider community.

Investment will complement an existing £0.9m investment in restoring the exterior of this historic structure (contractor works underway) and ongoing funding to operate and maintain the facility which will be cost neutral.

Earlestown Rail Station

This £7.9m (£9.46m inc. VAT) project will create a new arrival hub for Earlestown, supported by improvements to lighting, safety, wayfinding and a new visitor attraction which brings to life the region's rich railway history. Investment will deliver:

- Restoration of the c1830s railway building (the world's oldest station building still in passenger service) into a café and heritage interpretation centre;
- Public realm connectivity enhancements to better link the station to the historic Market Square and the surrounding town centre; and
- Safety and connectivity enhancements within the triangular area of the station (originally named Newton Junction – the oldest junction in the world

between two passenger railways), including widened paths, planting and lighting, to improve the visitor experience and support wayfinding.

The project will be supported by a linked project delivered by St Helens Borough Council or via a future government Access for All project that will provide functional station improvements including new elevators and footbridges to ensure step-free access to all platforms.

Provide a short description of the area where the investment will take place

The Borough of St Helens borders Cheshire, Greater Manchester and Lancashire and is a vital part of the Liverpool City Region (LCR) and North West economies. Earlestown is a historic market town home to around 12,000 residents. It forms part of the Newton-le-Willows urban area within the Borough of St Helens.

The Borough has significant prospects for future growth and Earlestown is well placed to benefit from these opportunities given its location on the strategic road network at the intersection of the M6/M62 motorways, strong rail connections and a good network of public transport.

The St Helens Borough Strategy identifies Earlestown town centre as having the potential to create jobs, attract new businesses and generate a vibrant high street to attract visitors.

Earlestown has a strong and proud community, but it suffers from severe social and economic challenges and sustained deprivation in employment, skills, health, crime and income. The town centre has been in a state of decline for many years which has been exacerbated further by the Covid-19 pandemic. There is a strong need to improve the physical layout and appeal of the town centre, and create a more prosperous cultural, commercial, leisure and retail destination which attracts residents, workers and visitors.

Key local challenges impacting upon Earlestown include concentrated and rising crime with risk of victimisation and growth in crimes committed above the England average; elevated deprivation with the majority of Earlestown classified as being in the 20% most deprived places in England; high commercial vacancy rates of 19% and persistently lower rates of business growth compared to wider England; declining visitation numbers and a Grade-II listed heritage asset which has lain vacant for many years and may be considered to be at risk.

With direct transport connections to Liverpool and Manchester and a rich industrial heritage, there is opportunity for Earlestown to restore its historic market town attraction and capture a greater share of regional tourism through improvements to the amenity and diversity of its town centre. Key opportunities include the traditional market, which provides a distinctive offer to the town centre. The town benefits from key heritage assets and a designated Conservation Area which provides a platform to 'showcase' these assets through securing investment in the public realm, improved accessibility, wayfinding and gateways.

The three spatially-connected and strategically-aligned projects have a tightly defined geography within Earlestown between (and including) its Rail Station and Town Hall, encompassing intervening High Street public realm and Market Square. A GIS file defining the area is appended G and a context map is attached below.

Optional Map Upload

Context_Map_inc_Legend.pdf

Does your bid include any transport projects?

No

Provide location information

Location 1

Enter location postcode	WA12 9BN
Enter location grid reference	SJ 57478 95331
Percentage of bid invested at the location	40%
Optional GIS file upload for the location	

Location 2

Enter location postcode	WA12 9BN
Enter location grid reference	SJ 57357 95339
Percentage of bid invested at the location	26%
Optional GIS file upload for the location	Earlestown LUF projects GIS.zip

Location 3

Enter location postcode	WA12 8LU
Enter location grid reference	SJ 57888 95122
Percentage of bid invested at the location	34%
Optional GIS file upload for the location	

Select the constituencies covered in the bid

Constituency 1

Constituency name	St Helens North
Estimate the percentage of the bid invested in this constituency	100%

Select the local authorities covered in the bid

Local Authority 1

Local authority name	St. Helens
Estimate the percentage of the bid invested in this local authority	100%

Sub-categories that are relevant to your investment

Select one or more regeneration sub-categories that are relevant to your investment

Commercial
Civic

Select one or more cultural sub-categories that are relevant to your investment

Arts and Culture
Creative Industries
Visitor Economy
Heritage buildings and sites

Provide details of any applications made to other funding schemes for this same bid that are currently pending an outcome

No other application has been made to other funding schemes for this bid.

Provide VAT number if applicable to your organisation

152 8153 74

Bidders are invited to outline how their bid will promote good community relations, help reduce disparities amongst different groups, or strengthen integration across the local community

One of our key ambitions driving the project is our desire to bring together residents from different communities and backgrounds back to our town centre in community assets like the wonderful Town Hall and the open spaces around the Market Square.

The vision is for a Town Hall which will be a hub for a broad range of community uses, a Market Square which will provide a safe, social heart to the town centre for local people to gather in and an improved rail station -the oldest in the world, with improved pedestrian areas and facilities which will encourage greater community participation in active travel and to improve health and wellbeing.

St Helens Borough Council's vision for the town centre has been designed in consultation and collaboration with a range of stakeholders, organisations and community groups. This has included specific consultation with respect to the Town Hall, where 202 feedback responses were received on future uses following two consultation events in 2019, and a community wide, 6 week consultation exercise which took place in November/December 2021 to secure input and buy-in to the vision for the town centre Masterplan Development Framework. This event identified 78% community support for the plans for the town centre.

Most recent engagement has taken place through support by the High Streets Task Force, with two workshop events taking place in May and July 2022. This engagement, which has brought together local business and resident representatives is developing the concept of a new Town Team, with the opportunity to build on the recently established, community led "Earlestown Thrive" group. The group is holding its first community event in August 2022 and could adopt a more formal constitution in due course.

The engagement is designed to ensure that the design and environment of these indoor and outdoor spaces and facilities are accessible, safe and

inclusive for all members of our diverse community. Earlestown Town Hall will both reflect and represent our modern cultural diversity while building on the foundations of our local heritage – reaching, engaging and connecting with people and communities from right across the borough.

We recognise that we will need to work in a specific and targeted way in order to reach, engage and welcome certain sectors of our local community – for example, deprived residents, disabled people and young people. We will seek to continue to build partnerships with third sector organisations, community groups and cultural providers in order to broaden the reach of this vital new amenity.

The programme of activities, events and uses that will be generated and facilitated in the Town Centre will range from free family events to creative and cultural activities to learning and training initiatives which will bring together different sectors of the local community to collaborate on projects that celebrate diversity and value togetherness. The opportunity for The Town Hall and Market Square area is that they should be resources for everyone in our borough, and that idea includes presenting and hosting events aimed at promoting greater inclusivity and access to cultural engagement for a wider range of people – proactively offering a warm, respectful, accessible and inclusive welcome to all.

The facilities and activities created will also help to reduce the disparities that exist within the borough – for instance, by providing spaces for targeted training and learning opportunities for some of our society's more disadvantaged individuals and creating accessible and safe areas which encourage health and wellbeing for local residents.

Is the support provided by a 'public authority' and does the support constitute a financial (or in kind) contribution such as a grant, loan or guarantee?

Yes

Does the support measure confer an economic advantage on one or more economic actors?

Yes

Provide further information supporting your answer

This relates to the Outdoor Market and Town Hall elements of the project.

Market - it provides commercially hired retail space which is an economic activity making the Council an economic actor (enterprise) for the purposes of intervention.

Town Hall - although there is significant free and open access community activity, there is also provision of managed workspace at commercial rates to SMEs and some cultural event space for hire.

In these areas the public funding appears to confer an economic advantage on an enterprise.

Is the support measure specific insofar as it benefits, as a matter of law or fact, certain economic actors over others in relation to the production of certain goods or services?

Yes

Provide further information supporting your answer

Yes in relation to the Outdoor Market and Town Hall elements of the project.

Outdoor Market - involves commercial retail space provision as a gratuity which is an enterprise (economic actor). The public support would therefore arguably benefit certain enterprises (economic actors) over others in the production of certain services.

Town Hall - Council will support commercial managed workspace provision as a gratuity thus making the Council and enterprise (economic actor).

Does the support measure have the potential to cause a distortion in or harm to competition, trade or investment?

Yes

Provide further information supporting your answer

Yes in relation to the Outdoor Market and Town Hall elements of the project.

Outdoor Market - there is potential impact on other providers of commercial managed retail workspace and related services.

Town Hall - There is potential impact on other providers of commercial managed workspace and related services.

Public policy objective principle

Demonstrate below how your bid meets this principle

The overall purpose is to encourage further economic growth in Earlestown Town Centre.

The general objective is equity rationale based on levelling up of a regional disadvantaged area.

The project objectives have been set through public and stakeholder consultation/feasibility survey within the wider masterplan to address identified market failure:

Public goods: all three projects contain features of public goods. As shown on the spatial plan (see project summary documents) the proposed public realm improvements connect the Town Hall, Market Square and Station to improve the accessibility / connectivity of the town and make it a more attractive to residents and visitors. Although potentially subject to congestion at busy times, these areas are typically non-rivalrous as when they are used by others, they will not dwindle in supply for other people to consume and are non-excludable (for instance there is a market charter that ensures a regular market square is held on the square) and it would be difficult to prevent people who have not paid from using them. This suggests the private sector will underfund schemes of this nature as there is no way to capture any direct financial returns which is why Government intervention is needed to help offset this market failure.

Co-ordination failure: there is coordination failure between the current businesses, residents and community groups in Earlestown which means the activities taking place in the town centre do not represent a coherent, attractive visitor offer. This is characterised by the absence of an attractive public realm to key sites and businesses in Earlestown and a station and road layout that creates significant 'severance' between the town centre and residential areas to the south. Despite the potential benefits to the different owners and tenants in the proposed intervention area, it is difficult to coordinate a single response or generate collective action from a diverse group of private sector actors. The possibility of 'free-riding' by other businesses and the scale of investment required, which is larger than private sector entities alone can provide at a given point in time, means suboptimal welfare efficiency is expected and this prevents Earlestown from addressing the identified need and drivers of change.

Positive externalities: Earlestown is home to various heritage and cultural assets which will be enhanced by LUF. Investment in the Town Hall and station building will bring back into use dilapidated, heritage buildings which creates

value for residents and visitors and builds pride in place. This, along with the improved market offer, will also generate footfall and increase visitation to Earlestown, creating opportunities for local businesses (and ultimately value to landowners) in the town centre. The public realm improvements will also drive positive externalities for businesses and local residents through improved amenity value and greater pride in place which in turn will lead to greater usage and appeal. However, the individual retailers, landlords and residents in and around the Town Centre are unlikely to internalise these externalities without public sector coordination.

The market engagement that has informed this bid identified demand for the type of managed workspace and community/cultural event space proposed for the Town Hall and Market. However, on the basis of the rental values projected from this level of demand, the revenue generated from the refurbished space would be insufficient to meet the capital cost of refurbishment and there is a significant viability gap. Although it is projected the new facilities will be operationally self-sufficient (revenues will cover costs) no market provider would be willing to generate the positive externalities identified above by funding this refurbishment themselves on a commercial basis due to this viability gap.

Proportionate and limited principle

Demonstrate below how your bid meets this principle

The Council has provisionally ascertained viability gaps with external consultants showing the operating profits over the reasonably estimated useful life of the intervention do not cover the capital build costs.

The viability gaps arise because of the significant non income generating aspects of each intervention including public realm and social community use which is free and open access. The revenue generating from commercial spaces is simply to match on-going operating costs hence leaving the entire capital cost of development in each intervention as the viability gap to be funded.

It also arises as a result of the significant site abnormalities in each, ie. renovation of derelict and outdated Outdoor Market and conservation deficit in works on a Grade II listed heritage asset (also derelict and of limited use) being the Town Hall.

When finalised, the viability gap will show that the public funding covers no more than that viability gap without which the intervention cannot occur.

Change of economic behaviour principle

Demonstrate below how your bid meets this principle

The behaviour changing impacts of each subsidy are linked to addressing the viability gap/site abnormalities which are preventing the projects from proceeding absent subsidy.

The Council has also analysed "do nothing" scenarios which will lead to continued inaction and nothing changing.

The Council is satisfied that without the subsidy the objectives set out previously will not be achieved.

Compensation of costs otherwise funded by beneficiary principle

Demonstrate below how your bid meets this principle

There is no legal commitment to proceed with the project at this time so the funding will not go to things that the beneficiary would necessarily have funded absent the subsidy.

The DBEIS Draft Guidance of 1 July 2022 seeks to discourage subsidies

towards operating costs (like lease rental) as they are generally expected to be funded by operating revenues.

The subsidy here is not towards on-going operating costs but the one off capital costs. These capital costs have been itemised and assessed as reasonable by RICS and QS valuations.

Appropriate policy instrument principle

Demonstrate below how your bid meets this principle

Given the significant viability gaps (themselves arising as a result of the significant site abnormalities and non-revenue generating activities also to be carried out) it is not considered possible to seek any other form of intervention.

Any further commercial return based funding source like debt or equity would exacerbate the viability gap to unacceptable levels.

The Projects are Council led so as to maximise value for money with wider benefits of regeneration but is too specific for the Council to deliver through regulatory act rather than subsidy.

Competition and investment principle

Demonstrate below how your bid meets this principle

The Council is provisionally satisfied that the Project will create negligible negative effects on competition but will seek to confirm this by further analysis prior to award.

In the case of the Market Square the Council recognises that the investment will not significantly increase trading space and the traders are already there hence any negative effect is considered most unlikely.

For the Town Hall the Council similarly notes that some managed workspace is already there and the additional capacity to be created will be insignificant in the broader scale of demand. The Council is also satisfied that there is a shortage of supply for this in the locality and that the sort of SMEs it wishes to encourage are not likely to wish to go elsewhere anyway hence the negligible negative effects.

In terms of event space in the Town Hall this will primarily be used for community events which are not typically competing on the open market.

The Council will seek to confirm that negative effects above are likely to be minimal given the uniqueness of both facilities in terms of their significant social, community and public benefit use which are not economic activities in themselves.

In the event that further study would yield any concerns about negative effects on competition then the Council will seek to minimise the same in accordance with the requirement.

Net positive effects principle

Demonstrate below how your bid meets this principle

As per the answer in the previous section, the Council is provisionally satisfied that the Project will lead to negligible negative effects and that the positive effects of achieving the objectives will easily outweigh the same.

This will be confirmed in due course in particular once further study on competition effects has been carried out.

This is a balancing test and the Council provisionally confirms that a list of positive (better facilities for existing demand, social, community and heritage/culture) and negative effects (minor SME/community/social

displacement from surrounding area managed and workspace facilities) has been compiled and the positives clearly outweigh the negatives (particularly when the wider benefits of regeneration of a chronically deprived area are taken into account).

Will you be disbursing the funds as a potential subsidy to third parties?

No

Has an MP given formal priority support for this bid?

Yes

Full name of MP	Conor McGinn
MP's constituency	St Helens North
Upload pro forma 6	Signed LUF Round 2 Pro formas V6 - Conor McGinn MP (002).pdf

Describe what engagement you have undertaken with local relevant stakeholders. How has this informed your bid and what support do you have from them?

There is significant support for the project from the stakeholder community as evidenced by letters of support appended to this bid.

Stakeholder engagement on the regeneration of Earlestown Town Centre is well-established, ongoing and embedded into the Council's approach to project delivery. Wide-ranging engagement with key stakeholders was undertaken between 2019-21 to develop the Earlestown Town Centre Masterplan Development Framework (MDF), a comprehensive regeneration strategy from which bid projects have been directly drawn.

Stakeholders engaged in the preparation of the MDF included residents, workers, visitors, strategic partners, Council stakeholders and businesses including market tenants. The consultation approach was mixed method including one-to-one consultation, public events, online surveys, street surveys and focus groups.

Formal consultation on the Draft MDF ran for 6 weeks in November and December 2021, resulting in 126 completed feedback forms, 49 other feedback submissions and 12,988 website views. Key resulting evidence included:

- 78% strongly support and 16% support the MDF and its vision for Earlestown Town Centre
- 84% support prioritisation of market square within phase 1 of regeneration efforts
- 80% support improving public realm, pedestrian and cycling links
- 82% support improved sense of arrival at Earlestown Rail Station

Separate consultation has been undertaken specifically in relation to Earlestown Town Hall from October to December 2019, with 202 community surveys completed, 60 community members engaged in pop-events and 30 attendees to a visioning workshop. Key outcomes of this include:

- 89% support for reuse and reopening of the town hall
- Strong support for the proposed mix of uses including community and

coworking spaces

More recently, supplementary consultation to further inform this bid has engaged a broad range of stakeholders to confirm alignment and support. Council's delivery partner the English Cities Fund (ECF) has been closely consulted in the development of all three projects, while a wide cross-section of town centre business operators have been engaged through a series of workshops delivered in partnership with the High Streets Task Force. Additional consultation has also been undertaken with key advisory groups and expert bodies to seek advice, guidance and input regarding specific project proposals. Such consultees include Historic England, National Transport Trust, Arts Council, National Heritage Lottery Fund, Network Rail, Northern Rail, Liverpool City Region Metro Mayor and the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Prospective tenant outreach and market sounding has also been undertaken with a range of community groups and commercial parties to understand local demand for space and accommodation requirements. This includes the Newton Amateur Dramatic and Operatic Society, LGN Community Choir, Newton and Earlestown Community Group, Business for Youth, RW Dance, Stagecoach St Helens, Start Inspiring Minds and others. This has confirmed strong support for all proposed projects and demand for use of resulting community and commercial spaces.

Outline planning consent, which helps support delivery of several components of this submission, was secured on 26 July 2022 for the Phase 1 Earlestown MDF proposals. No objections were received in response to consultations on this planning application, which demonstrates the level of support from communities.

Findings of consultation indicate strong support for all elements of the bid and have directly informed the scope and design of the proposed interventions. Further details relating to consultation are appended to this bid.

Has your proposal faced any opposition?

Consultation has not revealed any controversy or material opposition to any aspect of the bid, with positive sentiment and support clearly evidenced in the appendix to this bid.

Through consultation, some concerns were raised about particular elements by a minority of consultees, largely relating to operations of Earlestown Market. These comments informed refinements to proposals in order to resolve concerns and ensure broad stakeholder support. Key changes made in response to feedback include:

Car Parking Provision

A common feedback theme raised related to car parking provision and access throughout the town centre. Further transport analysis and design development has been undertaken to confirm that all projects maintain adequate parking supply whilst consolidating parking to make efficient use of space and promotion of walking and cycling as sustainable transport alternatives.

Impact on Market Traders

Some respondents expressed concern regarding the future size, functionality and accessibility of the market. Council undertook further consultation to refine the Market Square design, including increased provision of truck-based trader space and development of a staging strategy to allow continued market operations during construction.

Prioritisation of Heritage

Stakeholders sought to see the Town Hall project given greater priority. Accordingly, it has been brought forward as part of this bid in response.

Additionally, some feedback opposed relocation of the market square Obelisk, which was initially proposed to improve flexibility and access. Following further design development to confirm suitability, revised plans now maintain the Obelisk in its current position.

Outline planning consent, which helps support delivery of several components of this submission, was secured on 26 July 2022 for the Phase 1 Earlestown MDF proposals. No objections were received in response to consultations on this planning application, which demonstrates the level of support from communities.

Do you have statutory responsibility for the delivery of all aspects of the bid?

No

Which parts of the project do you not have statutory responsibility for?

St Helens Borough Council has statutory responsibility for delivery of the Earlestown Town Hall, Market Square and public realm components of the proposals. Network Rail have statutory responsibility for Earlestown Rail Station component and St Helens Borough Council has the support and consent of Network Rail to deliver this project. Network Rail's letter of support for the scheme is appended to the bid.

St Helens Borough Council has statutory responsibility for highways, planning and building control and for regulatory and licensing services. The Council also consulted with the relevant utility providers who have not raised any objections to the proposals.

Who is the relevant responsible authority?

Network Rail

Support/consent of the relevant responsible authority

Do you have the support/consent of the relevant responsible authority? Yes

Pro forma upload (if required) LUF Round 2 Pro formas V6.1 Proforma 1_Network_Rail.pdf

Provide evidence of the local challenges / barriers to growth and context that the bid is seeking to respond to

St Helens faces significant challenges that are rooted in long-lasting issues with unemployment, skills, health, crime and income deprivation.

St Helens is the 26th most deprived of the 317 local authorities in England (IMD, 2019), and the DLUHC classes St Helens as a Category 1 local authority in its Index of Priority Places. The Borough is below average for five of the seven Levelling Up Missions with measurable metrics (living standards, transport infrastructure, education, health, wellbeing).

The three proposed interventions are located in the St Helens 013A LSOA,

which is characterised by the following challenges and opportunities for the investment to address:

Significant Deprivation: St Helens 013A is in the lowest IMD decile in England driven by employment, skills, health, crime and income deprivation. Earlestown has a high Community Needs Score according to the Local Insight Report at 92.2 compared to 68.4 nationally illustrating barriers to civic participation and engagement. Regenerating the town centre will support pride in place and the development of employment opportunities and an improved culture and leisure offer will enhance quality of life in Earlestown.

High vacancy rates and low business growth: 19% of town centre commercial property is vacant compared to 14.5% in England. There are high vacancy rates in leisure spaces (29%) and retail (13%) which is notably above the wider St Helens authority (4% and 12% respectively).

With retail use classes comprising a third of all businesses in Earlestown, declining occupancy in this sector has created a visually unattractive streetscape with limited business activity outside of market days. Investment in the historic Market Square and bringing vacant prominent buildings back into use will stimulate footfall, spend and investor confidence in Earlestown. The provision of workspace in the reimagined Town Hall will stimulate entrepreneurship and business growth.

Crime and Anti-social behaviour: 30% of residents are currently at risk of victimisation compared to 20% nationally. This creates a heightened feeling of anxiety and poor safety which contributes to lower visitation and avoidance of the town. Central to this is addressing the limited open space and enclosed exit around the railway station where 31% of local crime in a 400m radius currently occurs due to poor natural surveillance¹. Improved public realm, wayfinding, lighting and green space will improve community safety.

Lack of cultural offer: Despite its historic character, Earlestown lacks a cultural offer to its visitors which discourages people from spending time, with dwell time falling from 100 minutes in 2017 to 65 minutes in 2021. Since 2017, visitor numbers have been declining from -1% between 2018-2019 to -27% between 2019-2020. Post-Covid, this pattern has continued at -34% between 2020-2021. With little sign of this pattern reversing, the absence of a strong visitor offer is a barrier to town centre recovery. Improving the historic market will drive footfall as market days serve a positive impetus for visitation with a rise of 3% (+4,600 people) since 2016. An enhanced cultural offer through bringing iconic Town Hall and Rail Station heritage buildings back into reimagined use in will complement the historic Market and encourage visitors to the town.

Heritage assets at risk: St Helens ranks poorly on the RSA Heritage Index 2020, ranking 313th out of 316 local authority areas. Whilst there are listed buildings of historic merit in Earlestown, these heritage assets are in disrepair and unoccupied prohibiting them from serving their function of uniting the community and generating pride of place.

Investment in heritage assets will bring them back into sustainable use and support a more active and engaged community.

Explain why Government investment is needed (what is the market failure)

The Earlestown Levelling Up Fund package responds to a number of market failures which have led to an underinvestment by the private sector across the town centre. The challenges and opportunities outlined above are symptoms of these market failures and result in an unsatisfactory level of welfare efficiency. In short, the returns to the private sector of delivering improved outcomes are not sufficient to offset the upfront capital cost of remedying these issues to maximise welfare and these problems will persist without public sector intervention.

The market failures primarily affecting Earlestown are:

- Public goods: all three projects contain features of public goods. As shown on

the spatial plan (see project summary documents as appended) the proposed public realm improvements connect the Town Hall, Market Square and Station to improve the accessibility / connectivity of the town and make it a more attractive to residents and visitors. Although potentially subject to congestion at busy times, these areas are typically non-rivalrous as when they are used by others, they will not dwindle in supply for other people to consume and are non-excludable (for instance there is a market charter that ensures a regular market square is held on the square) and it would be difficult to prevent people who have not paid from using them. This suggests the private sector will underfund schemes of this nature as there is no way to capture any direct financial returns which is why Government intervention is needed to help offset this market failure.

- Co-ordination failure: there is coordination failure between the current businesses, residents and community groups in Earlestown which means the activities taking place in the town centre do not represent a coherent, attractive visitor offer. This is characterised by the absence of an attractive public realm to key sites and businesses in Earlestown and a station and road layout that creates significant 'severance' between the town centre and residential areas to the south. Despite the potential benefits to the different owners and tenants in the proposed intervention area, it is difficult to coordinate a single response or generate collective action from a diverse group of private sector actors. The possibility of 'free-riding' by other businesses and the scale of investment required, which is larger than private sector entities alone can provide at a given point in time, means suboptimal welfare efficiency is expected and this prevents Earlestown from addressing the identified need and drivers of change.

- Positive externalities: Earlestown is home to various heritage and cultural assets which will be enhanced by LUF. Investment in the Town Hall and station building will bring back into use dilapidated, heritage buildings which creates value for residents and visitors and builds pride in place. This, along with the improved historic market offer, will also generate footfall and increase visitation to Earlestown, creating opportunities for local businesses (and ultimately value to landowners) in the town centre. The public realm improvements will also drive positive externalities for businesses and local residents through improved amenity value and greater pride in place which in turn will lead to greater usage and appeal. However, the individual retailers, landlords and residents in and around the Town Centre are unlikely to internalise these externalities without public sector coordination.

Explain what you are proposing to invest in and why the proposed interventions in the bid will address those challenges and barriers

Earlestown Town Centre has been struggling for years, and the impact of the pandemic has accelerated the decline. The bid targets the most deprived areas of Earlestown and will drive substantial regeneration into the heart of the town centre.

The Masterplan Development Framework (MDF) for Earlestown was developed by St Helens Borough Council and the English Cities Fund (ECF). The MDF focuses primarily on the heart of the town centre, including the historic Market Square, the Town Hall, the rail station, bus station, high street, and opportunity sites for development. The proposals in the MDF will be phased in recognition that transformation of this scale takes time. Six priority projects in the MDF formed a long list for the LUF bid and were assessed against a set of scoring criteria including ownership, cost and match funding; business case readiness; delivery in funding period; strength of support; operation of scheme; market failure; strategic alignment, deliverability; and value for money. A shortlist of three projects demonstrating the strongest alignment against these critical success factors were derived to form the preferred option for the LUF bid. These include Earlestown Market Square and Public Realm; Earlestown Town Hall; and Earlestown Rail Station.

The key evidenced challenges which Earlestown faces include significant deprivation, high commercial vacancy rates and low business growth, crime and anti-social behaviour, lack of cultural offer, and heritage assets at risk.

The shortlisted interventions will address these challenges through delivering visible and tangible change in a significantly deprived area. Central to future town centre viability is creating centres which provide an experiential offer, recreational spaces and attractive streetscape which encourage people to spend time and money and enjoy a high quality of life:

- the provision of commercial floorspace in the Market Square, Town Hall and Station building will stimulate enterprise and reactivate demand, creating direct and indirect jobs.

- improving the streetscape and condition of heritage buildings will improve the commercial trading performance of units as people are more likely to spend time in places with a strong feeling of heritage and local identity which, in turn, will improve visitor spend and lead to further investment from independent and high-end occupiers.

- the Station building and Town Hall will facilitate volunteer and training activity, supporting confidence and skills development in the local community

- public realm improvements will help design out crime by creating a more attractive public space, improved lighting and providing better connectivity between the station and Market Square. This will reduce the opportunity for criminal activity and improve perceptions of safety. This investment will also improve the appearance and vitality of the town centre, generating pride and an improved sense of belonging whilst accessibility improvements to cycling and walking will better connect people to the town centre, creating a gateway with the railway station and provide a higher quality environment

- LUF funding will be a catalyst for bringing vacant properties and assets back into use, generating footfall and improving Earlestown's visitor appeal. Supporting evidence includes:

- Streetscape and heritage improvements can increase property prices and values: research has suggested this can be as high as 40% for commercial trade (Towers and Hamlins, Highly Valued, Hard to Value, 2016).

- Public realm improvements can to a degree design out crime, reducing opportunity for criminal activity, and improving feelings of safety and friendliness (Pedestrian Pound, 2018)

- Of the 25 key factors for town centre viability, the Institute of Place Management (2016) ranked providing experiences, recreational spaces, and attractive streetscapes as integral priorities for town centres.

- Improvements to public spaces can improve retail sales by 30% and retail footfall by 10-25% (Living Streets, 2018).

Upload Option Assessment report (optional)

How will you deliver the outputs and confirm how results are likely to flow from the interventions?

The Earlestown Levelling Up Fund package has been designed to deliver a range of outputs and outcomes that are aligned with local priorities (the Earlestown Masterplan Development Framework) and the Levelling Up White Paper Missions.

The package responds to the identified challenges and barriers to growth through capital investment across three spatially and thematically coherent town centre projects with the aim of making Earlestown more vibrant and safer; its local economy more productive; and improving the health and wellbeing of its residents.

Earlestown Market Square: this project will deliver:

- 18,431 sqm of improved public realm in the square and surrounding streets
- 1,206 sqm retail space created / improved - a 1,087 sqm market hall canopy; 5 new retail kiosks on the market square at 23.76sqm each

These outputs will activate the town centre by revitalising the historic market with longer and more frequent trading days and a more diverse range of traders, supported by activity to establish a Earlestown 'Partnership or Town Team' to coordinate activities and interventions across local stakeholders and businesses. A more active public realm and better attended market will support the objectives of making Earlestown more of a desirable destination for visitors and residents, deterring crime and ultimately lead to the following outcomes:

- Change in perceptions of place
- Change in footfall
- Change in vacancy rates

The Town Hall is a Grade II Listed building which stakeholder engagement has highlighted as holding significant local importance. The outputs of this project included:

- 1 dilapidated heritage building restored and improved – the Town Hall itself
- Cultural space created – 225 sqm of performance space within the Town Hall
- Community centre space created – 89 sqm of meeting / rehearsal space
- Retail space created – 146 sqm café / bistro
- Office space created – 196 sqm of shared / co-working office space
- Volunteering opportunities supported – 50 regular volunteers and more frequent volunteering opportunities expected within the refurbished Town Hall each year

Earlestown lacks cultural amenities, has limited variety in terms of the night-time economy and very little good quality office space. Returning this building to life, opening it up to the community and protecting the town's heritage will improve the wellbeing of Earlestown's residents and deliver the following outcomes:

- Change in productivity and pay
- Change in employment rate
- Change in perceptions of place
- Change in number of cultural events
- Change in visitor / audience numbers for cultural venues and events

While transport connectivity into larger employment centres is good, a lack of accessibility and security at the station and the world's first rail junction reduces the travel experience and take up of these connections by residents. The improvements to the station will deliver the following outputs:

- Transport nodes with new multimodal connection points – by creating better active travel/cycle links
- Public transport improvements - improved facilities for rail passengers such as better lighting, CCTV
- Improved pedestrian paths
- 1 dilapidated building improved – the world's oldest passenger station building itself
- These changes will lead to the following outcomes:

- Change in cycle and pedestrian flow – with improved wayfinding and entrances increasing use of the right of way across station
- Change in passenger numbers for rail
- Mode shift - as local people choose to walk / cycle a bit more and some car to train mode shift
- Change in passenger experience / satisfaction – as the outdated station entrances and platform buildings are improved
- Change in air quality – due to mode shift
- Change in residents' health

Further detail regarding the Theory of Change for Earlestown is appended below.

Theory of change upload (optional)

Annex D - Earlestown Theory of Change.pdf

Explain how the component projects in your package bid are aligned with each other and represent a coherent set of interventions

Our proposal will deliver a coherent package of schemes designed in accordance with the adopted MDF to transform the heart of Earlestown through investment in high profile public assets and surrounding public realm, creation of a visitor gateway and diversification of the town centre's cultural, retail and employment offer. The three projects are spatially connected within a tightly defined geographic area and act in a complimentary fashion to maximise individual project benefits.

The Earlestown Market Square and Public Realm project will enhance the attractiveness and appeal of the Town's existing core retail services and increase the capacity and frequency of its longstanding and successful market.

Complementary to these broader improvements, targeted investment in the Earlestown Town Hall project will create a new cultural attraction and employment hub in the heart of the Town, broadening the benefits of the Market Square and Public Realm project by driving additional footfall outside of market days through added commercial floorspace, increased cultural and community activity and growth in local employment.

Finally, enhancements to Earlestown Rail Station will build on investment in Earlestown's public realm, market and town hall by improving convenience and safety for station users, enabling broader visitation to the town centre and promoting sustainable travel behaviour to realise broader benefits such as cleaner air and improved public health.

Collectively, these improvements will produce sustained and far-reaching improvements to Earlestown's economy, community wellbeing and reputation as a place in which to live, work and invest.

Set out how other public and private funding will be leveraged as part of the intervention

St Helens Borough Council is committed to the regeneration of Earlestown town centre. It has approved significant sums of capital monies which are allocated in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy to help supplement other public and private sector investment in the town to see their regeneration plans realised.

The Council has approved a number of capital allocations that are relevant to this bid as match funding (please refer to appended match funding document):

- A capital allocation for £17.185m was approved in principle in January 2022 for works to support the Levelling Up of Earlestown. This allocation includes significant match funding for proposed LUF projects alongside further complementary investment. This allows for:

- A programme of works to improve up to 100 shopfronts aligned to the LUF public realm improvement area - anticipated budget of £3.6m.

- Accessibility investment in Earlestown Rail Station that sits outside of this bid – also earmarked by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority for funding applications within a future Access for All programme – St Helens Borough Council has provisionally allocated £6.68 million towards these additional station improvements.

- The remaining £6.9m is approved and available for match funding to support this bid.

A bid for £2m of capital finding was approved for the Town Hall in January 2021, inclusive funds committed for the scheme of external works currently underway on the Town Hall building. This existing programme includes a series of repairs and renovations to the external fabric of the building in preparation for the proposed LUF-funded works which will secure the future of this important heritage building and see it brought back into use.

There is a total of £926,000 remaining from this commitment already allocated as match funding for remaining the restoration and refit for the Town Hall to bring it back into use.

There is also £408,465 of section 106 planning obligation funding available to the Earlestown Rail Station project as match funding.

Across these capital allocations, St Helens Borough Council has available direct match funding of £8.24m for bid projects and complementary investment in linked projects totalling £11.6m demonstrating a firm and serious commitment to the wholesale transformational regeneration of Earlestown.

The council has a capital gateway process in place. The values outlined above are within the pipeline capital programme which has been approved as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy at the Cabinet meeting on 23rd February 2022. Once all grant funding is confirmed and the business cases are finalised, the scheme will be formalised into the capital programme through the gateway process.

Explain how your bid aligns to and supports relevant local strategies and local objectives for investment, improving infrastructure and levelling up

The projects in this bid are also strongly aligned with the local and regional priorities.

Earlestown Draft Masterplan Development Framework 2021. This document presents a vision for a thriving, vibrant high street and marketplace:

- Encouraging new uses and increasing activity
- Improving accessibility
- Changing perceptions

The Town Hall will bring a heritage building back into use whilst the new market will increase activity and footfall in the town centre. Improving the station's access will support walking, cycling and wider connectivity. All three projects together will improve perceptions of Earlestown and promote its unique heritage.

- St Helen's Borough Strategy 2021-2030. Aims to create a thriving local economy, grow the business ecosystem, enhance people's skills and create a vibrant, well-connected town centre. Within Earlestown, the Town Hall will create new, high-quality serviced office space and provide a hub for business activity and collaboration.

- St Helens Borough Local Plan 2022-2037. Presents the need to safeguard and enhance Earlestown as secondary centre, reduce deprivation by driving development and investment, and protect its built heritage. All three projects will drive investment in one of the most deprived areas in England, creating new jobs and enhancing Earlestown as a retail and leisure destination. The investment will also prevent two key heritages asset from falling into disrepair and becoming permanently disused through restoration of the Grade-II listed Town Hall and Station Building.

- St Helens Borough Heritage Opportunities 2019. Sets out the strategy for preserving high quality heritage assets, including:

- Protecting and enhancing the historic environment
- Developing first class heritage attractions and facilities
- Celebrating the Borough's different identities

The LUF projects will directly support St Helen's heritage strategy by bringing the Town Hall from a decaying heritage building into a functioning facility. Improvements to the market square will help enhance surrounding historic buildings and shopfronts in Earlestown, generating pride of place and connections with Earlestown's history.

- St Helens Borough Arts Strategy 2021 sets out an ambitious direction for the arts over 5 years and Priority 5 is to maximise the physical and other assets available for arts provision, to which Earlestown Town Hall project will make a significant contribution.

- Liverpool City Region Plan for Prosperity 2021. Aims to create thriving, sustainable and resilient places which have town centres and community hubs as renewed focal points for social infrastructure, communities, and businesses. The Market Square and Town Hall will offer spaces for communities to come together. Repurposing the town hall will act as the main hub for business activity, cultural and community events, and provide the social infrastructure for skills and educational development.

- Liverpool City Region, Building Back Better: Our Economic Recovery Plan. St Helen's main centres are identified as a key action for a town-centre led recovery, creating places of distinction through people-based heritage and cultural rejuvenation. All three projects will create a place of distinction by improving the wider streetscape and public realm in Earlestown, and will restore a major site of heritage value and cultural quality through the town hall.

- Liverpool City Sustainable Transport Settlement Investment Prospectus 2022-2027. Targeted transport investment can support transformational regeneration, new housing and employment in Earlestown. The station will drive improvements in connectivity to the wider town centre, improving access and perceptions of safety. Providing a more walkable environment will drive dwell time and support business growth and activity.

- Liverpool City Region Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) and Plan for Prosperity. The Earlestown proposals are directly aligned with these plans, which seek to "Revitalise town centres so that they are renewed focal points for communities and businesses". Both plans recognise that town centres across the LCR require a renewed sense of purpose.

- Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership Visitor Economy Strategy & Destination Management Plan. This vision for cultural regeneration also aligns with the vision to promote creative and distinct visitor quarters with a strong sense of identity and individual market appeal – establishing the region as a major visitor destination

Explain how the bid aligns to and supports the UK Government policy objectives

The LUF project will support wider national policy objectives for a greener, healthier, more economically prosperous United Kingdom:

- Levelling Up White Paper 2022. The Levelling Up White Paper offers 12 missions, including missions related to crime, pride in place, and well-being. The White paper sets out two relevant objectives for public policy to "restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging" and to "boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging".

Collectively, all three projects in this package will work towards these goals by creating a more welcoming town centre which will restore historic buildings, improve walking and cycling opportunities, offer a safer environment for entering the town and create new job opportunities. Reducing opportunities for crime, activating the market square as a town centre hub and bringing the town hall back into community use will help strengthen local pride and create a town centre everyone in the community can use.

- Build Back Better High Streets, 2021. Support the evolution of high streets into thriving places to work, visit and live. Including breathing new life into empty buildings and creating safe and clean spaces. All three projects will generate new uses for empty buildings, with public realm improvements around the station improving perceptions of safety and reducing opportunity for anti-social behaviour. Creating new uses in the centre will encourage visitation and places for people to live and work.

- Pride in Place

Local heritage is a key source of pride for two-thirds of adults in England, and of particular importance to many residents of St Helens Borough. The proposed projects will fulfil a key Levelling Up Mission to bring residents greater pride in place by regenerating a historic market town and its heritage assets – strengthening local pride while contributing to the regeneration of the town centre and wider region.

- Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener, 2021. For a green economic recovery from Covid-19, there needs to be a focus on increasing cycling and walking journeys. Public realm and street upgrades will improve ability to walk and cycle through Earlestown.

The repair and reuse of two historic buildings to accommodate cultural and community uses also aligns with this policy objectives to meet net zero carbon targets by 2050 – avoiding emitting carbon, as embodied carbon accounts for up to a third of the carbon emissions of a new building. The retrofit of the buildings will ensure limited loss of the embodied carbon and the opportunity to install zero carbon technologies to support the efficient running of these assets.

- Crime. The projects are also aligned with the Beating Crime Plan. The proposed cultural regeneration programme will make a major contribution to creating safer streets in Earlestown via enhanced natural surveillance and enhanced footfall, with public realm improvements improving perceptions of safety and reducing opportunity for anti-social behaviour. Creating new uses in the centre will encourage visitation and places for people to live and work.

- Gear Change: A Bold Vision for Cycling and Walking 2021. The vision sets out for a view for:

- Healthier, happier and greener communities

- Safer streets

- Convenient and accessible travel

As part of this, improving the public right of way across Earlestown station will improve ability to walk and cycle around the town centre without obstruction,

creating a more accessible public realm and grant greater priority to active travel.

- The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, 2020; Clean Growth Strategy (2017) and Clean Air Strategy (2019). These strategies all set out the requirement for the public sector to support the transition to net zero and improving environmental outcomes. Relevant priorities include:

- Green economic recovery from Covid-19
- Decarbonisation & Net zero by 2050
- Reduce emissions from transport
- Increase the share of journeys taken by public transport, cycling and walking

Public realm enhancements and improvements to Earlestown Rail Station will facilitate an increased share of journeys taken by public transport, cycling and walking, reducing transport emissions

Health and Wellbeing. The proposed projects will both improve residents' ability to walk through and to Earlestown town centre, delivering numerous health and wellbeing benefits in the process. They are aligned with one of the main guiding principles of Public Health England (now replaced by the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities), which is to "work to prevent poor health" – by aiming for people to live longer in good health, and to rely less on the NHS and social care, enhanced walking will help meet these national policy aims.

Alignment and support for existing investments

Where applicable explain how the bid complements or aligns to and supports existing and/or planned investments in the same locality

There are several ongoing and completed initiatives that are complementary to the interventions proposed by the Levelling Up Fund.

The LUF package bid will make significant progress in delivering on the ambitions of the Earlestown Masterplan Development Framework.

- Earlestown Town Hall Restoration External Fabric Repairs: The circa £1m contract is underway, wholly funded by St Helens Borough Council through its Medium-Term Financial Plan, and on completion in Autumn 2022 will ensure that the external fabric of the iconic Grade II listed building is fully restored and fit for repurposing as part of the LUF proposals.

- Shopfront Enhancement Programme: The planned £3.6 million allocation, wholly funded by St Helens Borough Council through its Medium-Term Financial Plan, will improve the appearance and restore heritage attributes of up to 100 shopfronts within Earlestown Town Centre, in partnership with the High Streets Task Force.

- Earlestown Rail Station Access for All Enhancements: Although these proposals are considered eligible for Access for All programme funding, this would impose a delay in starting these works. Instead, a planned £6.68 million allocation (wholly funded by St Helens Borough Council is being considered through its existing Medium-Term Financial Strategy provisions) aims to deliver access improvements to the Rail Station including replacement pedestrian footbridges and elevators to allow step-free access.

There are several other planned investments in St Helens that would be complemented by LUF investment. They include:

- Parkside Freeport: The 350-acre Parkside site's proximity to the M6, the M62 and the West Coast Main Line give it particular significance as a strategically located employment site that will benefit from Freeport status, offering customs and tax benefits for businesses located on it. The development will generate significant investment in St Helens, with the creation of over 3.5m square feet of high-quality B2 and B8 employment space and plentiful employment opportunities aiding the transformation of the town. The council has a shared

ownership interest in the joint venture company running this regeneration project.

- Parkside Link Road: This project will construct a new road from the entrance of the former Parkside Colliery to Junction 22 of the M6. The project's objective is to deliver enhanced highway access between Parkside and the strategic local networks, improving the connectivity and efficiency of freight movements to and from the site, as well as unlocking the development potential of the Parkside East site. The council has a direct budget to develop and construct the Link Road by investing £44m over 2022/23 and 2023/24 approved in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (borrowing £13m, and with other funding totalling £31m (this latter figure includes £24m from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Single Investment Fund)).

St Helens' technological infrastructure is currently being upgraded:

- CR CONNECT (2021-2023, £30m investment): A new 212km full-fibre broadband and Ethernet network called LCR Connect is being built as part of a £30m project backed by the LCRCA, ITS Technology and NGE. The joint venture is transforming the digital infrastructure of the LCR's six local authority areas, including Knowsley and St Helens. Work began in early 2021 and is expected to complete by the end of 2023.

- CITYFIBRE FULL FIBRE (2022 onwards, part of commercial £30m investment): This investment in full-fibre broadband is being delivered commercially by O'Connor Utilities on behalf of CityFibre as part of its £4bn Gigabit City Investment Programme. The team are using a range of construction methods while working in close partnership with St Helens Borough Council and local communities to deliver the £30m investment. Work began in June 2022.

- City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS): 2022/23 represents the first year of the five-year CRSTS and St Helens Borough Council have secured a considerably increased funding allocation over the next five years, with levels of investment due to double. In addition to the increased capital funding allocation, officers have also successfully secured funding to resource and project-manage the programme of works detailed below. A further benefit is the securing of development funding to design and develop transport-related schemes that will be ready to be delivered in 1-3 years' time.

- £6.2m for CRSTS Highway Maintenance (HM)/Non-Highway Maintenance (NHM) schemes

- £0.554m ringfenced for the LCRCA KRN

- £0.76m HM resource funding for CRSTS – HM/NHM schemes to facilitate programme development and delivery

- £1.230m resource and pre-development funding for continued design of the St Helens Multimodal Interchange/Connected Places project

- £0.180m resource and pre-development funding for continued design of the St Helens North Housing Access (Routes to Regeneration) project

- £0.240m resource funding to support the council's input to LCRCA sustainable transport projects

- Department for Transport's Active Travel Capital Fund: Separately to CRSTS, the LCRCA has secured £11.7m from the to deliver high-quality cycling and walking routes, as set out in the LCRCA Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan – including £2.329m for network improvements within St Helens borough. The schemes have been chosen to compliment regeneration priorities, maximise deliverability within the funding deadlines and address local demand

Confirm which Levelling Up White Paper Missions your project contributes to

Write a short sentence to demonstrate how your bid contributes to the Mission(s)

The Earlestown Regeneration bid will drive investment in Physical Capital, Human Capital, Social Capital and Institutional Capital.

The project will contribute to the following Levelling Up Missions:

Mission 1, Living Standards – by creating jobs in the café and workspace within the Town Hall; boosting footfall and spend in the town centre, supporting the vitality of local businesses

Mission 4, Digital Connectivity – the reimagined Earlestown Town Hall will feature fully equipped high-tech community facilities, offering the people of Earlestown much-improved access to our increasingly digital society.

Mission 7, Health – reducing severance caused by the Railway station will allow easier access by active modes between the town centre and the Wargrave neighbourhood, encouraging more people to walk and cycle, improving individual health outcomes

Mission 8, Wellbeing – culture and leisure activities in the reimagined Town Hall and events in the historic Market Square will improve sense of community, mental health and well-being. They will also provide tremendous social value to Earlestown, providing a tangible improvement to the happiness and quality of life experienced and enjoyed by citizens.

Mission 9, Pride in Place – The Town Hall is an iconic heritage building but now sits vacant in the centre of town, the Conservation Area is at risk, Market Square undervalued and the world's oldest rail passenger building is vacant. The regeneration of cherished but neglected heritage assets in any given place is a proven source of pride for its citizens – and there is no doubt that the revitalisation of Earlestown's much-loved heritage assets, will bring tremendous pleasure and pride to its people.

Mission 11, Crime – investment in public realm, wayfinding and lighting in the town centre and around the Railway Station will improve perceptions of community safety. The reimagined Earlestown Town Hall and the improved market square will offer young people venues in which to dwell and engage with the community, reducing the risk of crime and antisocial behaviour in the area.

Provide up to date evidence to demonstrate the scale and significance of local problems and issues

St Helens is assigned as a Priority 1 area through the Index of Priority Places and the scale and significance of local problems the borough is well documented. Many of the main drivers of the need for levelling up in the borough are particularly prevalent within Earlestown and this is recognised by St Helens as a local priority area for intervention. Particularly relevant to the analysis of need are:

- Regeneration: vacancy rates are double the England average

In 2021, commercial vacancy rates in Earlestown (15.5%) exceeded St. Helens (14%) and was double England's (8.1%)

In 2021, St. Helens had the same residential vacancy rate as England (1% of dwelling stock). However, average house price in Earlestown O13A (£108,000) and St. Helens (£154,000) was notably below the national average (£280,000). This suggests that despite low house prices and proximities to major economic centres in the North West, there is a lack of market demand to live in Earlestown despite its strategic positioning.

- Economic recovery and growth

St. Helens North has a higher unemployment rate (5%) compared to the Greater Liverpool region (3.9%) and England (4.5%).

This is exacerbated by lack of skills with 7.2% of working age residents without qualifications, higher than the England average (6.4%).

Poor productivity deters investment and implicates residents' quality of life, with hourly productivity in St. Helens North (£26) lagging behind the Liverpool City Region (£31) and the national average (£34).

There is a strong desire to gain employment in Earlestown and St. Helens, with 24% of those economically inactive within St. Helens wanting a job compared to 19% nationally. Despite this, there are a lack of job opportunities available to residents within both Earlestown and St. Helens which restricts residents' progression from economic inactivity into work. With a jobs density of 0.32 in Earlestown compared to St. Helens (0.63) and the national average (0.85), this means there are only enough jobs available for 32% and 63% of residents respectively compared to 85% nationally. Lack of job opportunities implicates the long-term quality of life for residents and deters people from wanting to live, work and visit both Earlestown and St. Helens.

The scale and significance of these challenges can be viewed by the individual deprivation domains which make up St. Helens overall deprivation picture which shows the percentage and number of LSOAs which fall in the top 20% most deprived when compared to the national average:

Employment: nearly two-thirds (69%) of people in Earlestown live in neighbourhoods ranked as the most 20% employment deprived compared to 20% nationally, further strengthening the need for investment and highlighting the extent to which Earlestown suffers as a borough. When looking at people who live in Earlestown (St. Helens 013A) individually, this area falls within the top 10% most employment deprived LSOAs in England and is ranked as the 1,600th most deprived (out of 32,844 LSOAs).

Income: even for those who do have access to employment, 69% of people in Earlestown live in an area which suffers from low income deprivation compared to 20% nationally meaning there are even fewer opportunities for high paid employment. Earlestown (St. Helens 013A) falls within the top 20% most employment deprived, ranking as the 3,498th most deprived in the country.

Health: poor health prospects in Earlestown has long-term implications for the quality of its economy. 78% of people in Earlestown live in an area which suffers from the risk of premature death and poor physical or mental health (versus 20% nationally), with St. Helens 013A ranked as the 498th most deprived LSOA for health outcomes in England. This not only has impacts on residents' health but also the economy as it weakens residents' ability to enter and remain in the labour market.

Demonstrate the quality assurance of data analysis and evidence for explaining the scale and significance of local problems and issues

Our full appreciation of the local economic needs is informed by a matrix of national statistics, local research and comprehensive engagement. This provides a detailed understanding of the needs in the immediate investment area and wider impact area.

Specific evidence highlighted in section 5.1.1 is based on data from high quality, nationally recognised statistics wherever possible. The statistics, source and date of any estimates are described below.

- Regeneration:

Proportion of retail, industrial, office and leisure units that are vacant – CoStar

data were used for national comparability and validated using St Helens town centre survey

Median house prices for administrative geographies and Lower Super Output Areas – ONS, Official Statistics

Proportion of dwellings chargeable for council tax that are classed as long-term empty (empty for more than 6 months) - DLUHC, Official Statistics

- Economic recovery and growth:

Unemployment rate - Local Insight Profile for Earlestown. Data relates to February 2022. Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion (2021), using Government recognised statistical data

Proportion of the 16-64 population without NVQs or other formal qualifications – Annual Population Survey, Official Statistics

GVA per head of population, May 2022 (ONS) - Balanced measure of GVA is a National Statistic – ONS, Official Statistics

Economically inactive who want a job - Annual Population Survey, Official Statistics

Job Density, June 2022 - ONS, Official Statistics

Economic Activity, June 2022 - Annual Population Survey, Official Statistics

Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2019 – DLUHC, Official Statistics

Demonstrate that the data and evidence supplied is appropriate to the area of influence of the interventions

Earlestown is a ward of 12,220 population located to the east of St Helens borough between Liverpool and Manchester. The target area for funding is at the centre of Earlestown, focussed on a disordered historic market square, dilapidated town hall and disconnected rail station. Whilst the impact of this project is expected to be felt across Earlestown, and those who commute into Earlestown for work, education and leisure, the most immediate impact will be to occupants and owners of commercial and residential properties in the immediate vicinity of the intervention area.

The strongest impacts will be felt by residents and owners of the 6 LSOAs in an approximate 500m radius of the intervention area:

- St Helens 10B
- St Helens 10D
- St Helens 13A
- St Helens 13B
- St Helens 13C
- St Helens 15E

These areas represent the main catchment for people entering Earlestown for work, shopping and leisure. The local problems presented above are of relevance to the area of impact for this proposal. In later analysis of value for money, the number of homes in these LSOAs is used in the analysis of land value impacts and to proxy for the number of impacted households. Analysis of commercial property was confined to impacts in St Helens 013A.

Where possible the data presented above focus on the Earlestown area. Where data is not available at a sufficient level of granularity, we have also used data for St Helens Borough.

Provide analysis and evidence to demonstrate how the proposal will address existing or anticipated future problems

Creating pride in place, reducing crime and raising productivity, employment and pay are Levelling Up Missions targeted for Earlestown.

The once thriving historic market in Earlestown has been in decline for some time and the high street is suffering with declining footfall, high levels of commercial vacancy and crime. These proposals respond to these issues to regenerate the town centre and restore pride in Earlestown as a place. The outputs of the project will deliver the following quantifiable impacts (see BCR method note for further details):

- Wider Land Value Uplift: Research highlights that public realm improvements tend to have spill-over effects to adjacent commercial and residential properties. Earlestown's public realm will improve residents and visitors' enjoyment of the town centre and create reasons to visit e.g. additional market days. This will create more opportunities for local businesses as footfall increases and visitors to the town have additional and higher quality spaces in which to dwell.

- Vacant property: 18 long term vacant properties were identified by SHBC within the defined impact area. Increased footfall and reduced negative externalities (unattractive public realm/crime) due to the project are expected stimulate the private sector to bring these properties back into productive use.

- Crime Reduction: In 2019 and 2020 around 500 crimes were recorded in the town centre, many of which were violent, sexual and public order offences. Serious crimes against individuals causes significant social and economic costs. A 10% reduction in the baseline crime rate is expected to follow the activation of the town centre and associated improvements in surveillance.

- Amenity Value: the improvements to public space in the town centre will cover almost two hectares (18,413 sqm) and is expected generate wellbeing benefits to town centre users. This amenity value is created as a direct result of being able to enjoy better quality open space and/or public realm. A willingness to pay per household per year is applied to quantify the benefit.

- Gross Value Added: the town centre lacks good quality jobs, with a current offer including dilapidated retail and a market in decline. Commercial advisers BE Group have estimated the number of jobs supported in the Town Hall project on the basis of floorspace outputs and job densities. Through provision of quality office space, 15 jobs will be supported in higher productivity sectors. This will provide opportunities for local businesses to start or scale-up, and to support population growth by offering a broader range of local employment opportunities. A further 14 jobs will be supported in the café / bistro and community uses.

- Earlestown lacks space for community use and local cultural groups are forced to hold events outside of Earlestown and even outside of St Helens. The Town Hall project includes community space that offers residents new sources of subjective wellbeing. These benefits are forecast on a per beneficiary / per year basis:

- Volunteering: A wide range of consultees have expressed an interest in use the community space at the town hall. Most of these organisations would be at least partly run by volunteer and the project team's commercial advisers BE Group have estimated that at least 50 regular volunteer opportunities per year could be supported at the site as an outcome of the project.

- Arts participation / audience engagement: The Town Hall project will provide space which can be hired for classes, rehearsals and performances. Local participation and audience engagement will increase as barriers to attendance (travel time / cost) decline. Market testing suggests that conservatively 50 unique participants per year can be expected to use the Town Hall for dance classes once operational.

- Heritage Protected: DCMS research highlights the value of heritage i) to residents' wellbeing and ii) as part of local area's competitive advantage. The Town Hall is a Grade II Listed building which stakeholder engagement shows has significant importance to the area. The project will bring a dilapidated heritage building back into use, opening it up to the community and protecting the town's heritage will all improve the wellbeing of residents.

A better station will make a better first impression of Earlestown to visitors which supports the aims of the town centre regeneration above. Additionally, a range of transport related outputs will create other benefits:

- Public transport improvements: the improvements to the station will generate benefits to station users in the form of station and journey ambience. This will shift users onto rail leading to associated wider benefits such as reduced congestion.

- Active travel: the station improvements will include the public right of way across the unusual triangular, three-platform configuration of the station. The existing pathway between platforms towards the town centre feels enclosed with poor visibility and is associated with recorded instances of crime. Encouraging more walking and cycling trips through this area will have a wide range of active travel benefits including improvements to resident's health.

Describe the robustness of the analysis and evidence supplied such as the forecasting assumptions, methodology and model outputs

The assumptions are based on a range of forecasts, baseline evidence, expert advice and consultations, all of which have informed quality assured modelling by independent specialists.

The analysis described below is conducted in compliance with the principles outlined in the Green Book (2022) and associated supplementary guidance including:

1. The DCLG Appraisal Guide
2. The Economic and Social costs of crime
3. Wellbeing guidance for appraisal
4. DCMS guidance on Valuing culture and heritage capital

Within each project benefits were categorised into initial or adjusted BCR calculations on the basis of the robustness of the methodology and/or levels of uncertainty associated with inputs or assumptions (See planning and costing workbook).

- Wider land value uplift - this methodology has been endorsed by DLUHC in the context of the Future High Streets Fund, Towns Fund and Levelling Up Fund schemes. Although the methodology is relatively simple it is well understood and inputs are clearly sourced. Sensitivity testing has been undertaken to reflect the lack of clear empirical evidence from which to draw parameter estimates to quantify the link between specific public realm enhancements and the scale of residential land value uplift.

- Gross Value Added (GVA) through job creation has been quantified for the Town Hall project schemes using HM Treasury's guidance on place-based approach. As mentioned previously, GVA is a more appropriate measure of quantifying the impacts of the scheme rather than Direct Land Value Uplift as the scheme as it meets the following criteria stated in Green Book Box 25 (page 100):

Proposals have a focus on a specific part of the UK.

The analysis is proportionate to the scale of the effects on the affected area in relation to their existing situation.

The forecast GVA benefits are based on typical projections of floorspace ratios, in line with architect's drawings for the project and sector specific GVA/FTE estimates for St Helens.

Reduction in crime analysis relies on an assumed percentage level of crime reduction. This has been tested as part of sensitivity analysis to reflect uncertainty over the specific parameters linking improvements in the built environment to reduced incidence of crime. The rest of the analysis draws directly on Home Office guidance around valuing the social and economic cost of crime.

Modelling of subjective wellbeing benefits to resident households all draws on VOA data for the relevant number of beneficiary households. Specific wellbeing valuations per household were sourced as follows:

protection of local heritage – Historic England research, referenced in Towns Fund guidance for Town Halls

willingness to pay for improved public realm amenity - drawn from DCLG research (2010).

The wellbeing values associated with volunteering and audience engagement with the arts are drawn from the HACT social value bank and DCMS research respectively. These values are determined in line with Green Book supplementary guidance and applied to conservative estimates of the beneficiary numbers estimated by commercial advisers BE Group and drawn from stakeholder engagement with likely users and the floorspace/capacity for these uses set out in architect's drawings.

Transport related benefits have been estimates in compliance with TAG Unit A5-3 and A5-4 or assessed using the DfT approved Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit.

Explain how the economic costs of the bid have been calculated, including the whole life costs

The costs of the proposed scheme have been estimated and align with those set out in the financial case. This covers all capital costs including, construction, design, professional fees, risk/contingency and an adjustment for inflation. In line with HM Treasury Guidance, the scheme costs use the following methodology:

- Estimation of outturn costs
- Adjustment for optimism bias
- Adjustment to real prices
- Discounting costs to 2022 values

The BCR explanatory note provides a detailed breakdown of each step in the process of determining the economic case.

- Outturn Prices

A breakdown of outturn prices by project is shown below. Subject to securing the LUF grant monies, all costs for the three projects are to be funded by St Helens Borough Council and in line with Green Book guidance no VAT is included in the outturn cost estimates used for the economic case.

- Optimism Bias

Market square: The public realm and market hall canopy are not especially innovative or controversial in their design, materials or proposed construction. Likewise, the site is relatively well known to the project team. Given the above factors and current stage of design the OB factor could conceivably have been

reduced from the standard buildings upper bound however, in the absence of a full survey of existing services it was considered prudent to leave this at 24%.

Earlestown Town Hall: The Town Hall project involves the restoration of a heritage building, with a single story 150 sqm extension. While refurbishment projects are typically characterised as non-standard buildings projects the upper bound standard building projects value has been adopted for this scheme (24%). This choice was made on the basis of the combination of a non-intrusive design, which beyond a small extension is largely a fit-out of the existing building involving no planned structural alterations, alongside a number of quantified risk costs e.g. a £1 million allowance in the cost plan for works to ensure the structural integrity of the building.

Earlestown Station: There is no standard OB factor for a mixed scheme of this nature. However, an active travel scheme at this stage of development (FBC) would typically use an OB at 20%, a rail project at GRIP stage 4 (single option development) would use an OB of 9%. These are values for transport appraisal from DfT's Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG).

The latest GDP deflator published by HM Treasury (31 March 2022) have been used to estimate in real 2022/23 prices.

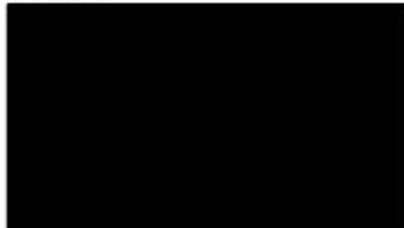
- Inflation

The base cost estimates does not consider the real increases in costs over time and needs to be adjusted to account for the effects of the general level of inflation in the economy. The latest GDP deflator published by HM Treasury (31 March 2022) have been used to estimate the costs in 2022/23 prices.

- Discounting

The projects have been appraised over determined using a 30 year appraisal period. In line with the Green Book guidance the standard discount factor of 3.5% per annum has been applied to all scheme costs incurred across this period to generate the present value of costs.

The present value of costs, including optimism bias is calculated by project as follows:



Describe how the economic benefits have been estimated

Wider Land Value Uplift was estimated on the basis of a 2% uplift on property prices, compared to the counterfactual case. The uplift was assumed to compound over 5 years from 2025/26. Deadweight is accounted for by construction in this methodology i.e. the benefit is an uplift assumed above the counterfactual.

- Residential Wider land value uplift a total of 5,440 homes are identified in the impact area with a weighted average house price of £161,000 (ONS House Price for Statistics for Small Areas). Additionality of 12.5% was applied to reflect i) the weaker impact on prices for residents further from the interventions (25%) and ii) the potential for displacement (50%).

Initial BCR – PV £9.57m

- Commercial Wider land value uplift excluding long term vacant property, there were 31,000 sqm of commercial property in St Helens 013A (VOA), with an average rateable value of £75.7 / sqm. This was taken as a proxy for rent and an assumed capitalisation yield of 10% was applied to generate the baseline

property values. Displacement of 25% is applied.

Initial BCR, PV £1.57m

- Vacant property: The total value of long term vacant property in the impact area, if it were brought back into use, was estimated at £1.49 million (rateable value on the current rating list of £149,100 / capitalisation yield of 10%). The uplift in land values i.e. occupied property value less refurbishment cost less existing use value is estimated assuming:

- long term empty their existing use value is assumed to be nil.

- refurbishment costs were assumed to be 25% of the capital value.

-Displacement/deadweight was assumed to be low, at 25% considering the significant market failures surrounding the town centre.

Adjusted BCR, PV £0.76m

- Crime Reduction: Home Office multipliers and costs per crime were applied to the average recorded incidents of crime by category over 2020 and 2021 across the impact area. An estimated 968 crimes committed (492 recorded) with a weighted average value per incident of (£7,650 in 2022 prices) due to the significant levels of violence and sexual offences recorded. A 10% reduction over the baseline levels is assumed to persist for 10 years from 2025/26 with 25% displacement into other areas and 10% leakage.

Initial BCR, PV £3.93m

- GVA from employment: FTE jobs supported in the refurbished Town Hall were estimated by commercial advisers BE group. These were assigned sector specific GVA / FTE estimates from ONS datasets for St Helens:

- Office: 15 FTE (£44,800/FTE)

- Community: 3 FTE (£29,100/FTE)

- Café: 9 FTE (£31,400/FTE)

- Reception/management: 1.5 FTE (£30,700/FTE)

- Indirect employment: The new office jobs are assumed to be in tradable sectors and support indirect employment and associated GVA. The standard multipliers of 1.9 and 1.4 were used to estimate the local impact on tradeable and non-tradeable jobs. The average GVA/FTE for St Helens was used to estimate the monetised benefit.

- Employment benefit monetised over 10 years from 2025/26. Additionality of 56.25% - leakage (25%) and displacement (25%).

Initial BCR Direct GVA, PV £4.8m, Indirect GVA PV £3.4m.

- Wellbeing:

The historic England WTP estimate of £5.73 (£,2021) to maintain the historic character of town halls in good condition per household per year was updated to 2022 prices and applied to the 5,440 households within the impact area of Earlestown for the Town Hall. Adjusted for incomes in line with guidance (adjusted unit transfer).

Initial BCR: PV £0.59m

The same methodology was applied for the equivalent benefit of salvaging the derelict station building. No obvious value was available for benefit transfer so a conservative proxy of £4 per household per year was applied.

Adjusted BCR: PV £0.105m

Amenity WTP of 2.28 (£, 2022) per household per hectare of improved public realm applied to 5,440 households.

Adjusted BCR: PV £0.37m.

Values for regular participation in Dance / volunteering (HACT social value bank - £3,650 / £3,543, £2022) per person per year. Both assume benefit across 50 unique individuals.

Audience engagement value (DCMS, £1,102, £2022) was applied to 300 unique individuals.

Additionality of 56.25% is applied to all of the above Dance participation / Volunteering / Arts audience engagement valuations.

Initial BCR: PV £1.67m / £1.62m / £3.03m.

Active Travel: Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit has been used to assess the benefits from this in terms of MECs from mode shift including congestion, infrastructure maintenance, accident, local air quality, noise, greenhouse gases, reduced risk of premature death, absenteeism, journey ambience and (a disbenefit) indirect taxation.

Initial BCR, PV £1.936 million

The Passenger Demand Forecasting Handbook elasticities of demand related to station ambience improvements were used to forecast an increase in rail passenger numbers used to estimate increased revenue for the rail industry and mode shift benefits.

Initial BCR: PV Revenue benefits: £1.376m / Mode shift benefits: £3.204m

In the absence of monetised values of soft factors for existing rail users the TAG Databook monetised values of journey ambience for bus users applied to existing and new users.

Initial BCR: PV £2.223 million

Provide a summary of the overall Value for Money of the proposal

The Value for Money statement has been summarised in accordance with the Levelling Up Fund FAQ's and Technical Guidance. On the basis of the scheme's monetised costs and benefits the BCR for the whole package has been estimated at 1.35 which demonstrates modest but acceptable Value for Money in its own right.

The present value of the total monetised benefits included within the initial BCR across the whole package are £39.06 m. These increase to £40.3m in the adjusted BCR and can be broken down by project as follows:

- Market Square: Initial - £15.07m, adjusted - £16.2m.

- Town Hall: Initial - £15.17m, adjusted - £15.17m.

- Station: Initial - £8.83m, adjusted - £8.93m.

The present value of costs including optimism bias are £29.79m and can be broken down by project as follows:

- Market Square: £13.09m.

- Town Hall: £8.48m.

-Station: £8.22m.

The initial and adjusted project BCRs can be broken down as follows:

- Market Square: Initial – 1.15, adjusted – 1.24

- Town Hall: Initial – 1.79, adjusted – 1.79

- Station: Initial – 1.07, adjusted - 1.09

While this package bid, and all of its component parts meets the benchmark value for money criteria on the basis of monetised costs and benefits alone, a more rounded value for money assessment presents a stronger picture than a simple 1.35:1 BCR. In line with the clear steer set out within the Green Book 2020 key additional factors in assessing the overall value for money of the bid are:

The strength of the projects' alignment with the strategic objectives of the Levelling Up Fund and the level of overlap with the challenges faced by Earlestown

The extent of the market failures affecting Earlestown and the locally transformational effects that overcoming these could have on the performance of labour and property markets.

The issues inherent in valuing marginal changes in metrics such as property values to monetise benefits in significantly deprived areas such as Earlestown, given the level of path dependency e.g. using historically depressed property values as baseline inputs to land value uplift estimates.

The non-monetised impacts that further support the case made in the BCR calculation.

These factors and the combination of strong strategic fit with the levelling up agenda, a clear theory of change and widespread benefits as described above demonstrate the overall project Value for Money for the Earlestown Levelling Up Fund bid to be strong.

Upload explanatory note (optional)

Annex M - Earlestown BCR methodology note.pdf

Have you estimated a Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR)?

Yes

Estimated Benefit Cost Ratios

Initial BCR 1.31

Adjusted BCR 1.35

Describe the non-monetised impacts the bid will have and provide a summary of how these have been assessed

As part of the assessment of the economic case, non-monetised impacts were assessed against the scalability set out in the LUF "Preparing an Economic Case" document published. The proposed investments will result in a range of important wider impacts, which cannot be monetised and therefore are not included in the BCR. However, they should be given equal weight in the assessment process:

Market hall / public realm:

Direct land value uplift associated with new market canopy and kiosks - new commercial space will in effect be created in the market square which will improve the value of the market as a commercial entity. As this commercial gain to the landowner/council as leaseholder is not a project objective, the end

use value has not been valued by an appropriately qualified surveyor. However, there will clearly be an uplift in the value of the market as a result of these physical improvements to the space that enhances the overall economic benefit of the project.

Job creation - the longer opening hours and more varied market offer will potentially help create employment for residents of Earlestown that are at present economically inactive or unemployed. At this early stage the scale of this outcome was considered too uncertain to monetise within the appraisal.

Trees planted - a number of trees will be planted as part of the landscaping work to enhance the town centre public realm. Trees/greenery do carry economic value in their own right beyond their additional value to the look and feel of the area. This is relatively small on a unit basis and it was therefore considered disproportionate to value these benefits explicitly.

Town Hall:

Residual values - the GVA method was chosen to interrogate the place-based impacts of the Levelling Up Fund programme, however, this does not account fully for the lifetime value of the refurbishment. The Green Book does allow for residual values for assets to be captured at the end of an appraisal period and in the case of the town hall, the useable life of the building will extend beyond 2034/35 when the GVA and jobs benefits are no longer being captured. This will add value over and above the value of the uninhabitable building that would stand in its place in the counterfactual scenario.

Rail Station:

The visitor economy will benefit from a modest increase in footfall, both from improved access at the station, and from the restoration of a unique piece of railway architecture and heritage. No quantified assessment of potential visitor numbers specifically attributable to the station project has been completed at the risk of double counting benefits of this nature which are attributed to other projects within the bid.

Provide an assessment of the risks and uncertainties that could affect the overall Value for Money of the bid

To ensure robustness of the analysis sensitivity tests were undertaken with the impact on the adjusted BCR shown below. These tests targeted the assumptions underpinning the most significant benefits streams to highlight the robustness of the overall benefit cost ratio to changes in those major drivers of value.

Sensitivity test 1: reduced GVA persistence

The core scenario captures 10 years of benefits from project completion and the sensitivity test reduces this period by 50%, to five years. This change reduces the total monetised benefits of the package by £3.77m. This reduces the total benefits of the package to £36.53m - an adjusted BCR at 1.23.

Sensitivity test 2: slower wider land value growth

Reducing the compound growth rate used in the wider land value uplift analysis by half (to 1%) reduces the total monetised benefit by £4.88m to £35.42m – an adjusted BCR of 1.19.

Sensitivity test 3: reduce optimism bias to 12%

Halving the optimism bias factor for the Market Square and Town Hall projects would reduce the total economic costs to £27.7 and increase the adjusted BCR to 1.45.

These key sensitivity tests show that the monetised BCR is above 1 before considering non-monetised impacts associated with the scheme.

Changing the Adjusted BCR to 1:1

The adjusted BCR would fall to the threshold 1:1 ratio of costs to benefits if the total level of benefits were to fall / costs were to rise by £9.27m. This would represent a 20% decline in benefits or a 24% increase in costs.

Upload an Appraisal Summary Table to enable a full range of impacts to be considered

Appraisal Summary Table 1

Upload appraisal summary table	Annex M - Earlestown BCR methodology note.pdf
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Additional evidence for economic case

None selected

Confirm the total value of your bid

Total value of bid	£28235346
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Confirm the value of the capital grant you are requesting from LUF

Value of capital grant	£20000000
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Confirm the value of match funding secured

£8235346

Evidence of match funding (optional)

Where match funding is still to be secured please set out details below

To support the £20 million of requested LUF grant funding, Council has committed up to £8,235,345 in direct project match funding from its full committed allocation to Earlestown within its approved Medium-Term Financial Strategy, section 106 developer obligation contributions available for spending within the rail station project and other funding approved for the refurbishment of the Town Hall. This is equivalent to up to 29% of total project costs directly matched by Council. The maximum value of match funding has been determined in part by the level of unrecoverable VAT incurred on the train station project.

A breakdown of the matched funding per project is summarised below.

Earlestown Market Square and Public Realm: £2,837,083

Earlestown Town Hall: £1,731,564

Earlestown Rail Station: £2,089,490 (exc. VAT), £3,666,699 (inc. VAT)

St Helens Borough Council match funding largely accounts for professional fees and preliminary design work to ensure projects maintain momentum prior to the allocation of LUF funding. Further match has been allocated to ensure project delivery for all unrecoverable VAT on the rail station project. These costs are further detailed in the appended Planning and Costing Workbook.

Land contribution

If you are intending to make a land contribution (via the use of existing owned land), provide further details below

No land contribution is proposed.

Upload letter from an independent valuer

Confirm if your budget includes unrecoverable VAT costs and describe what these are, providing further details below

All development costs on the Market Square and Town Hall projects are VAT recoverable.

The budget for the rail station project does include unrecoverable VAT costs. This is due to the ownership of the asset being with Network Rail. If the Council is not the recipient of the supply (the station works on its own asset), the VAT charged on the construction/ repair services cannot be reclaimed by the Council on its VAT return and must be absorbed as a gross cost.

Match funding has been allocated up to the maximum potential VAT liability i.e. 20% of all identified project costs, inclusive of inflation (£1,577,209). Mitigation options are being reviewed to minimise this cost to the Council, alongside obtaining specialist advice to clarify the breakdown of the costs into specific areas that may be recoverable such as the fees associated with arranging the scheme and any work to areas classed as public realm which will be under council ownership.

Describe what benchmarking or research activity you have undertaken to help you determine the costs you have proposed in your budget

Qualified cost consultants at Abacus and Connor Christmas Consulting have developed the cost plan for the delivery of the bid projects. The costings reflect extensive experience in the specific field of works planned for the scheme to establish costs for each item of the development programme on a £ / m² rate of the likely construction. This cost plan has formed the basis on the financial modelling with the base year being June 2022.

Project consultants have relied on accurate and current information in order to provide relevant benchmark advice and solutions including capturing information on emerging trends and new approaches to delivery.

The following key assumptions and rationale have informed the development of cost estimates for Earlestown Town Hall, Earlestown Market Square and Public Realm, and Earlestown Train Station.

Market Square / Town Hall

Cost rates and allowances included in the cost plans are based on benchmark

data received through work package tenders on various projects containing similar types of work. Adjustments have been made, where appropriate, to take account of price fluctuations, location, quantity (economies of scale).

Measured quantities had been prepared based on the designers' drawings, associated information and discussions, and by using experience from past and current projects to make informed allowances for works that have not yet been detailed. Assumptions have been made regarding matters that cannot be seen from the drawings and/or a visual inspection of the site such as ground conditions, underground obstructions, utility services, again allowances based on experience and discussions with the designers have helped inform those allowances.

Earlestown Rail Station

Experience and knowledge gained from working on similar projects has been drawn upon to calculate rates and prices either on a first principles basis, i.e. labour, plant and materials or by referencing historic rates and prices for similar works with adjustments made as maybe required to reflect the timing and constraints of the proposed works. With regards to the direct works, although the design is at an early stage and the full scope and specification of works may not be detailed within the drawings, in preparing the estimates consideration has been given to what work may be reasonably assumed as necessary to complete the proposed works. This would include activities such as site clearance / enabling works, excavation, disposal, concrete works, etc.

With each estimate a bill of quantities reflecting those reasonable assumptions of what may be necessary to complete the project has been prepared. In addition to the quantity of work and overall size of the project, access constraints have a significant impact on the cost of working on the rail infrastructure. For example, the works to the Central Pedestrian Walkway are surrounded by railway tracks on all sides, access to this area to bring materials in and out requires crossing these tracks and will have an impact on when the works can progress and rate of production. When calculating rates from first principles or when adjusting historic prices consideration has been given to such issues. Details of any assumption, inclusions and exclusions have been provided within the notes accompanying each estimate.

Provide information on margins and contingencies that have been allowed for and the rationale behind them

Each cost item has been reviewed to assess the risk of cost increases depending on the design stage. Project specific contingency allowances have been included to cover any unforeseen costs based on the following rationale:

Earlestown Rail Station:

In the absence of a 'Quantitative Cost Risk Assessment' (QCRA) the risk allowance has been determined following Network Rail's Guidance Note 'Calculation of the contingency uplift for early-stage cost guidance'. This methodology was developed collaboratively between the Network Rail's Cost Planning and Risk & Value professions and combines industry principles as laid out in the Green Book (2018) with existing Network Rail Cost Planning practises and recognised industry best practise for risk and contingency management on programmes. Following these guidelines, a 26% contingency allowance was applied to the Station works.

Market Square:

A £100K allowance has been included for the demolition of an existing building in the market square/car park which is based on an approximate area measurement of the building and rates from recent demolition tenders including potential asbestos removal & disposal.

It is anticipated that the town centre location will contain extensive mains utilities, records of which may not fully represent actual location of the same, an allowance has, therefore, been included for service diversions (£250K). The

allowance has been informed by costs from previous public realm and town centre redevelopment projects undertaken by the professional team.

An allowance of £25K has been included to cover potential protection during construction and cleaning works to the existing monument in the market square.

A 10% design development allowance was included as contingency with a further 2% contractor risk allowance included to cover retained risks into the final design stages.

Town Hall:

In the absence of a formal structural survey a £1.0 million allowance for structural repairs has been made following the advice of structural engineers AKT which were based on:

two building condition reports from 2021

A visual inspection of the site (2022)

A 10% design development allowance was included as contingency with a further 2% contractor risk allowance included to cover retained risks into the final design stages.

Regarding indirect costs, such as contractor's preliminaries, Overheads & Profit, and professional fees percentage uplifts have been applied based on historic benchmark data and in the case of the Station project, with reference to Network Rail's cost planning procedures.

Preliminaries:

Market Square - 12% of the construction cost, benchmarked against previous similar projects.

Town Hall – 52 weeks at £15,000 per week

Station - 30% of direct construction costs.

Contractor's Overheads & Profit margin:

Market Square - 7.5% which is a typical rate we are seeing coming through in market tested bids/tenders.

Town Hall – 6% (as above)

Station – 8% (Network rail guidance)

Professional fees:

Market Square – 8% to cover architectural (including landscape), structural, MEP design fees.

Town Hall – 8% (as above)

Station – 8%-12% (dependent on project element, Network Rail guidance)

The preferred delivery model is for the Council to directly develop the project using an experienced multi-disciplinary development management team led by English Cities Fund (ECF). The delivery team project management fee (10%) has been specified by agreement between the project managers (ECF) and the Council.

Describe the main financial risks and how they will be mitigated

The most significant financial risks in the Earlestown Levelling Up package bid relate to the potential for cost overruns due to unforeseen capital costs. Full

surveys have not been completed and as such there is a level of risk built into the scheme such as:

- Heritage property – unanticipated structural works
- Service diversions / ground conditions
- Network Rail design conditions

Capital cost risks have been identified and anticipated in the cost plans used to develop this bid and have included contingency sums for both general design development contingency and specific allowances for identified risk items.

In order to manage any residual risk St Helens Borough Council have identified the following mitigations to ensure the projects are able to reach completion and deliver the proposed outputs despite these risks:

- The cost plan includes a development management fee for ECF – this partnership includes regeneration specialists Muse and Homes England that have extensive experience in managing these types of projects to tight budgets.
- Wider Earlestown funding allocations from St Helens Borough Council – the Medium-Term Financial Strategy capital pipeline has over £10m remaining potential allocation to Earlestown projects that could, subject to governance, be prioritised toward completing these projects in line with the original designs.
- Value engineering – some costs can be designed out as budget limits are reached through choices regarding materials and functionality to deliver the highest priority elements of the scheme
- New funding requests – St Helens Borough Council are in regular consultation with other funding bodies and could seek additional gap funding in support of e.g. cultural or heritage activities at the station and Town Hall or private investment within the town centre as further match funding.

While any additional funding or reduction in project scale may affect either the cost or benefit side of the benefit cost ratio determined in section 5.4.1 the Value for Money estimates were inclusive of contingency sums and further optimism bias (15-24%) across all three projects.

As described in section 6.3.6 ongoing operational costs are expected to be covered by new commercial revenues or existing revenue funding streams e.g. market operational costs. The projects could conceivably create new liabilities to THE Council as the leaseholder of the market and Town Hall due to:

- Lower than expected occupancy levels at the Town Hall and Market Hall / market pitches / kiosks
- Failure to secure final agreement with the station operator regarding the station improvement works

Mitigations for these risks have been identified in the Risk Register (Annex P) and include:

- Market Square: Flexibility in approach to operation of markets to reflect local demand, including changes in operating days/hours
- Town Hall: Market evidence on future income has been incorporated into modelling. Consultation has shown strong interest in the property already.
- Station Buildings: management will fall under Northern Rails current operating expenditure with the exception of any space leased to third parties in the platform building.

If you are intending to award a share of your LUF grant to a partner via a contract or sub-grant, please advise below

This section is not applicable. St Helens Borough Council will manage and invest the grant themselves using ECF as development manager appointed under contract via the adopted partnership agreement and project delivery framework.

What legal / governance structure do you intend to put in place with any bid partners who have a financial interest in the project?

Legal and governance structures for bid partners will be straightforward as the Council will be directly developing the project through support provided by ECF as part of an established 20-year Overarching Development Agreement.

The Council and ECF will enter industry standard fixed price contracts with the contractors. The Council and ECF will carry out extensive due diligence on its prospective construction partners. A robust financial standing check will be undertaken on suppliers at the pre-qualification stage and prior to contract signing. The financial standing check will be supported by credit reports and backed up by financial analysis covering the most recent set of accounts and the previous two years. Key metrics that will be tested include business performance, financial strength and liquidity.

A pre-qualification process will also be implemented to assess the contractors track record and experience in delivering similar schemes.

Summarise your commercial structure, risk allocation and procurement strategy which sets out the rationale for the strategy selected and other options considered and discounted

The procurement strategy for the LUF will provide a blended approach to ensure compliance while allowing pace where required to meet project delivery timescales. Using established methods, it will deliver value for money while selecting an approach that is most appropriate to the level of technical and operational risk for each work package. We have already used the blended approach to identify suitable delivery mechanisms for a range of projects and time-sensitive approach given the LUF funding conditions and have largely discounted in-house provision due to limited resources and the specific nature of the work packages. Therefore, the approach will continue to incorporate:

- use of our development partner (ECF),
- open competitive tendering; and
- use of appropriate existing national and regional frameworks (e.g. SCAPE or CCS).

Procurement will be delivered in line with Public Procurement Regulations and other relevant legislation, with activity that is undertaken by St Helens Borough Council being undertaken in line with published Contract Procedure Rules, and activity undertaken by our partners ensuring competitive, transparent, and fair processes and procedures. This will use existing best practice approaches to:

- review the suitability of potential suppliers,
- undertake due diligence on suppliers, incorporating legislative checks such as Modern Slavery,
- review the financial position of the suppliers, and,
- review the risks of the contract and incorporating into contract management

where needed.

A procurement pipeline is being developed that will help plan procurement activity throughout the programme, and ensure proactive and resourced procurement activity with technical leads being supported by the CIPS qualified procurement team throughout the procurement cycle, including;

- undertaking market engagement activity;
- creating appropriate evaluation criteria with the right balance of quality, social value, and price;
- sourcing goods, services, and works;
- supporting value engineering discussions and negotiations where identified; and
- agreeing contractual terms, performance criteria, and quality measures, and management of the contract.

The Council and its partners have the capability to deliver, with a breadth of experience and strong track record of successfully delivering construction, regeneration, and infrastructure schemes. The requirements of the work packages will use established, mature markets of which the Council and its partners, have significant experience.

Market Engagement has been undertaken to prepare supply chains with national suppliers engaged through dialogue with ECF and local engagement through meet the buyer events held with the local Chambers of Commerce to prepare local suppliers for the potential for direct or sub-contracting opportunities.

Social, Economic, and Environmental (NET Zero) outcomes will be central to procurement, with the Council driving optimal Social Value by applying its Social Value Policy, and utilising newly implemented processes and systems to;

- invite innovation through tender opportunities through better use of outcome specifications where possible, which would allow us to;
- seek the use of clean and emerging technology to support delivery;
- support the growth of education and skills, especially related to the growth in the green sector
- create and maintain sustainable supply chains, particularly locally or regionally;
- agree social value outcomes and measures with suppliers;
- monitor delivery of these outcomes through robust contract management;
- measure quantitative outcomes through the Social Value Portal (and other appropriate tools);
- capture qualitative outcomes through case studies; and
- report on social value outcomes throughout and at the end of the project to who social return on investment.

Risk allocation

A detailed risk register has been produced for the bid which is attached. Appropriate mitigation measures have been identified, together with the individuals responsible for managing each risk. The main risks and their mitigation measures are as follows:

- Failure to secure occupancy targets for the Town Hall - Consultation already undertaken to identify community organisations and other occupiers of building. Strong community support already expressed.

- Network Rail agreement not secured to carry out works – Network Rail support to project given, agreements and delivery programme will be prepared in line with project timetable.

- Overall cost of bid proposals exceed allocated project budget - Budget management with Finance Officer input will be a dedicated workstream reporting regularly to the Steering Group, Board and senior management at the Council. Design and cost solutions through programme will be agreed by the Board in order to deliver to budget.

- Market - insufficient occupier demand to support expansion of market operations - Market demand advice provided by specialist consultant, Quarterbridge. Flexibility to amend market operation (days/times) to meet current and future demand opportunities and to meet customer expectations.

- Difficulties and/or delays in acquiring key development opportunity sites - Acquisition plan in place with English Cities Fund. Land registry information already assembled. Initial CPO approval in place.

- Failure to secure Statutory Officer (Section 151 officer) agreement on funding strategy – Ongoing engagement with S151 Officer and finance team throughout the development process to explain funding options and present robust modelling. Specialist support including from Keppie Massie to provide independent assessment of the development appraisals to support St Helens Borough Council in understanding the financial implications of the project, and risks versus reward.

There is currently market volatility in the supply of labour and materials, due to a number of factors which include Brexit, the War in Ukraine, the increase in UK Construction output following the pandemic, etc. Advice on potential current year on year inflation allowances of 4-5% has come from multiple cost consultants and also aligns with the industry standard BCIS assessment on inflation. All costs and appraisals (for both construction and values) have been based on present day, this would always be the case at this stage of any major regeneration scheme due to the difficult ability to accurately forecast inflation. However, as design progresses, it is intended to make an assessment on inflation opposite the programme to inform the collective decision making moving forward. This will be made at the end of each design stage/gateway before progressing with the next stage.

Earlestown Town Centre

The Council has worked with ECF to procure and deliver all preparatory work required for this bid and incorporated sites, including the current work being undertaken to remediate the exterior of the Grade II Listed Earlestown Town Hall.

ECF have procured a full design team to support the LUF bid and will work alongside the Council's Procurement Team to procure additional services to deliver a robust detailed planning application. Site surveys and investigations will be required during the next design phase of the project to de-risk the design and ensure a fixed price lump sum building contract is achieved.

A main contractor will be required to deliver the construction phase of the project. The main contract will be competitively tendered, and assessed on a basis of quality, cost and social value to ensure we achieve the most economically advantageous tender.

Earlestown Rail Station

The Council has previously delivered key infrastructure projects with Liverpool

City Region, Network Rail, and Mersey Travel partners, and so understands the specific requirements of working on land and property owned by Network Rail.

ECF have procured a full design team to support the LUF bid including specialist station and rail architect Seed Architects and will work alongside the Councils Procurement Team to procure additional services to deliver a robust detailed planning application. Site surveys and investigations will be required during the next design phase of the project to meet the statutory requirements of working adjacent a railway line.

A main contractor will be required to deliver the construction phase of the project. The main contract will be competitively tendered to contractors who hold experience of delivering this type of works adjacent to a railway station, and assessed on a basis of quality, cost and social value to ensure we achieve the most economically advantageous tender.

ECF have strong local knowledge and understand the market well enough to have confidence in the range of suppliers suitable for the proposed work package. However, for both the town centre and station elements of the package a period of soft-market testing has been programmed to run in parallel with the next phase of design work. This will allow ECF to tailor the form of procurement for a main contractor to the level of market interest.

Who will lead on the procurement and contractor management on this bid and explain what expertise and skills do they have in managing procurements and contracts of this nature?

The Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) responsible for delivery of bid projects on behalf of St Helens Council is Sean Traynor (Director of Strategic Growth).

English Cities Fund (ECF) will take responsibility and lead on the procurement, contractor management and delivery of the bid projects on behalf of the Council. The Council will be supporting the procurement to ensure compliance with relevant legislation, and that the core team will incorporate skills and professionally qualified procurement staff along with building surveyors, who have undertaken a large number of similar services and work procurements for the Council.

ECF is a partnership formed in 2000 between Muse Developments, Legal & General and Homes England. It is chaired by Sir Michael Lyons, a former Chair of the BBC Trust and author of the Review of Public Sector Relocation and the Lyons Housing Review, both undertaken on behalf of Government. ECF has 6 board directors, who have unrivalled experience and influence in the property industry.

ECF's success is built on many years of open and honest partnership working on complicated, mixed use regeneration schemes. All of these successful, and in many cases ongoing long-term relationships are based on team working, and above all trust and transparency.

Muse will be responsible for the day-to-day development management of Earlestown. Muse will deploy its own in-house development and project management team to manage the development ensuring a seamless delivery mechanism is in place. Leon Guyett (Development Director) and Stuart Rogers (Project Director) will lead on the overall management of the projects reporting directly to Phil Mayall (Regional Director) who will be actively involved in the project.

The availability of highly experienced development and project management resources that can be called upon immediately will be critical to the quick and effective delivery of this development.

Council and ECF have collaborated with an experienced design team in the development of a town centre masterplan at Earlestown and the further development of projects contained within this bid. It is intended that the same team will play an integral role in the delivery of the projects at Earlestown, enabling recent site knowledge and complexities to be retained in the delivery team to ensure successful delivery of the projects.

In addition to the governance for the Earlestown Levelling Up Fund Programme, the ECF Partnership already have twice monthly Steering Group meetings and monthly Executive Board meetings which bring together the senior Directors and Leadership of the Council and Muse Developments to track delivery progress and address any issues raised each month.

Are you intending to outsource or sub-contract any other work on this bid to third parties?

The Council plans to use a blended approach to delivering the proposals, including the use of outsourcing or sub-contracting, which is due to limited in-house experience and capacity. While a significant element of this will be delivered through use of our Development Partner, most of the activity will be delivered through sourcing suppliers through procurement activity.

St Helens Borough Council and ECF will appoint a multi-disciplinary team to provide architectural, planning, cost consultancy, property expertise, M & E and utilities/energy services for example. The ECF Partnership will ensure best value through seeking competitive quotes, as well as considering the quality and experience of the respective discipline. The project team and structure is subject to regular review. A range of property experts has also been formally tendered and successful firms now form part of a framework agreement with ECF and are invited to prepare fee proposals for key elements of work. It is envisaged that this will remain the team and structure right through to post project completion.

Contractor procurement - given the status of the project, a confirmed contractor procurement strategy has yet to be formalised between St Helens Borough Council and ECF. Notwithstanding this, there is the intention to undertake soft market testing which will support and help to define the final preferred procurement strategy for the project.

ECF will lead on the procurement process on behalf of the partnership and will secure best value through a competitive tendering process with contractors, taking account of public sector accountability and probity. ECF will obtain no fewer than three quotes from reputable potential Building Contractors each of whom are:

suitably qualified to carry out the works or services that are the subject of the proposed Building Contract; and

approved in writing by the Council, such approval in each case not to be unreasonably withheld or delayed.

When appointing any such Building Contractor and/or Appointee, ECF shall have due regard to such proposed Building Contractor and/or Appointee's track record, experience and transparency of fees and whether the proposed Building Contractor and/or Appointee offers value for money in the context of the relevant Building Works and enter into contract with whoever provides the "most commercially advantageous tender" but is not required to appoint the party who provides the lowest price.

The Council and ECF have very clear processes in place to set clear performance measures and managing these through effective contract management practices, thereby ensuring quality. The procurement processes used will incorporate best practice to identify quality outcomes and relevant key performance indicators, that can be confirmed during the tender process

and confirmed during mobilisation. Effective contract management processes and practices will see regular contract management meetings take place where key performance measures and quality assurance reviewed, before agreeing mitigation activity where needed.

The Council are implementing a tool to measure, monitor, and report on Social Value which will be used on activity related to LUF activity, while suppliers will also be procured to focus on social value identification and delivery for each of the work packages, thereby maximising the outcomes and added value of this activity throughout development but also into operation.

Contract Terms and Conditions ensure legally robust arrangements with clarity on how to remediate issues in performance, these terms provide clear and timely processes to address issues in performance while also building in the ability to end contracts quickly, and reprocure where this is required.

Capability or capacity will be monitored through our application of sound project management arrangements and issues addressed, this will include the use of resources from within the partnership or through the procurement of necessary resources at pace through framework agreements or existing contracts. In addition, the Council has access to a neutral vendor facility to bring in interim or agency staff at speed.

Once the proposals are delivered, the Council will operate these facilities and has in-house capacity to do so, except the railway station which will be run by Network Rail or Northern Railway. Where there are any gaps in the capability or capacity to do this, then these will be identified early through our project management methodology, and will be solved through:

- the effective procurement of new suppliers;
- the extension of existing contracts; or
- the use of partner support (this could be a mechanism for using the award-winning St Helens Together Partnership with voluntary and community groups).

How will you engage with key suppliers to effectively manage their contracts so that they deliver your desired outcomes

Every supplier is checked when they register to do business with the Council and when they are awarded a contract, and the same is true of contracts that are to be procured through our development partners, ECF. The procurement process provides a number of opportunities for such checks to be done, including;

- the use of a suitability questionnaire to obtain essential information about a supplier,
- the use of references for similar work to be included as part of the tendering process,
- the use of interviews to test and challenge content within the tender proposals and suitability questionnaire,
- review levels of insurance and indemnity,
- the undertaking of due diligence upon contract award to check the financial and professional standing of suppliers

- Review of proposed project team member CV's prior to appointments being made to ensure individuals have the required skills, knowledge and experience to deliver successfully.

Risk management will form part of the project management and procurement activity, with risks being identified through our standard processes and captured in the relevant risk register. It is not anticipated the risks will be significant due to the nature of the anticipated procurement relationship being a standard contractor and client arrangement. However, where risks are identified as high during the procurement process, the ongoing management of the risk register is a required as part of contract management arrangements. Standard procurement risks include:

- the ease of replacement should a supplier fail,
- the ability to identify and address performance management issues, and,
- the financial and reputational impacts of the supplier or contract failing.

Delivery of quality outcomes and will be monitored through effective contract management, and include an element of quality assurance sign-off for all work delivered through the proposals. Our contract management methodology includes; regular meetings to review delivery of all outcomes, review and analysis of working practices and method statements, review of related and relevant documentation, and a quality assurance check to sign-off completion.

The approach to risk and quality management will also involve the following:

- RIBA Plan of Work process will be followed to provide structured design and approval process
- Designers Risk Assessment will be produced during Design Phase to document risks and mitigation measures incorporated
- Regular Design Team Meetings (DTM) and Progress Meetings to be scheduled from the outset to pace the design process, capture issues and manage project delivery
- Procurement strategy will be selected to ensure early Contractor engagement on design solution with value engineering and technical review meetings to de-risk / optimise
- Professional team appointments across full project delivery programme to provide technical assurance and quality management
- Regular interface meetings to be co-ordinated with key project stakeholders to communicate progress and retain open dialogue

There will be an approach to contract payment structures based on best practice and project deliverability, with payment schedules being adapted to the nature of the contract being entered into. Payment is normally through receipt of an invoice, and can include:

- payment terms of 30 days, or reduced to 10 days for local or SME suppliers;
- payment on completion for short-term contracts;
- monthly payments or management agreement;
- payment on phase delivery for phased schemes (or activity schedule);
- payment for cost reimbursement (or bill of quantities); and
- payment linked to quality or outcome delivery.

The Earlestown Levelling Up Fund package bid will be implemented by St Helens Borough Council working in partnership with the English Cities Fund (ECF) to deliver three highly coherent and integrated projects across Earlestown Town Centre.

Further details of the partnership between SHBC and ECF are set out in the Core Project Team section and the attached Delivery Plan.

The existence of the development partnership with ECF is allowing rapid progress across the three Earlestown projects and work has already started progressing on towards detailed design work and outline planning has been granted on 26 July 2022 for the Town Centre Masterplan Development Framework as appended. A large capital allocation has also been agreed in principle by the Council to support a range of projects in support of the regeneration of Earlestown. This allows the three projects to progress at pace and achieve the following key milestones:

Conclude RIBA 3 / GRIP3 design - January 2023

Submit reserved matters (Public Realm / Market Hall) - January 2023

Submit Planning / Listed Buildings Consent applications (Station / Town Hall) – July 2023

Start construction works – June-August 2023

All construction works complete – December 2024

These milestones are dependent on a number of dependencies – primarily:

Securing LUF investment, without which the projects will not proceed.

St Helens Council capital allocation approvals

Securing all necessary consents for surveys, demolition, refurbishment and construction.

Provision of a temporary location for the market and relocating traders throughout the construction period.

Land ownership

St Helens Council hold long leases on both the Town Hall and Market Square and manage the remainder of the public realm throughout the intervention area excluding the station. Consequently, there are no further constraints on the delivery of these projects due to land ownership.

Network Rail own the station land and buildings and Northern Railways are the station operator. Both organisations have offered their support to the Earlestown Levelling UP fund bid (please see attached letter of support).

Further details of land ownership are provided as appended.

Consents

The Market Square project requires planning consent (including consideration of the building's function with the Earlestown Conservation Area).

The Town Hall project requires planning consent and Listed Building Consent. The Town Hall and the war memorial in front of it are both grade II-listed.

The Station project requires:

Planning consent for those elements not covered by Network Rail's permitted development rights.

Listed Building Consent

Network Rail consents for the proposed designs and for access to the site for construction work. Site access, especially for the delivery of materials and

plant, may necessitate track possessions, when the track is closed. These are typically overnight or at weekends to minimise disruption to passengers. They need to be programmed months in advance.

Formal consent from Northern Railway to accept operational and maintenance responsibilities for the changes in station infrastructure and equipment.

As identified above, Outline Planning Approval has been granted on 26 July 2022 for the Town Centre Masterplan which sets out the core of the proposals in the Market Square project and detailed design work is already being procured to continue in advance of any LUF funding agreement. This will ensure reserved matters, planning and listed building consents can be secured in line with the milestones presented above and within the Planning and Costing Workbook as appended.

Risk management:

The proposed bid projects have been subject to a robust and detailed risk assessment, with the project team actively managing risk from the earliest inception to maximise opportunities and minimise any adverse effects. The outputs of these assessments are captured within the detailed Risk Register and Delivery Plan as appended.

Stakeholder management:

The projects are underpinned by extensive stakeholder engagement which has informed the project design and preferred option as set out in the LUF bid. This engagement will continue during the project's delivery phase and will include ongoing engagement with:

- General public, specifically Earlestown residents
- Market traders
- Potential tenants of the Town Hall
- Elected members
- Network Rail, Northern Railway, Merseytravel
- Bus operating companies

The Council is committed to meaningful consultation and engagement and will continue to keep our communities involved in the final design and implementation stages of these projects. Through work with the High Street Task Force we are in the early stages of developing a 'Town Team' in Earlestown - in addition to currently established consultation methods this will provide an additional direct means of community involvement in the ongoing regeneration of the town. The Council have already used innovative means to engage a wide range of stakeholders - will continue to use all these methods available to us whilst looking for new opportunities to build on our current engagement options. Further details of the consultation and stakeholder management associated with the projects are included in the Delivery Plan and summary of consultations as appended.

Ongoing asset management:

Once complete, the ongoing management of the market will continue (as now) to be the Council's responsibility. The rail station will continue to be managed by Northern (in liaison with Network Rail and Merseytravel). Over time an external management company may be sought to manage the Town Hall. The Council Highways Service will manage and maintain public realm and walking and cycling infrastructure which falls within the highway boundary.

Demonstrate that some bid activity can be delivered in 2022-23

Across the Levelling Up Fund package a total spend of £939,737 is projected

for 2022/23. This comprises of:

£673,896 of LUF grant

£265,841 of St Helens Borough Council match funding

The breakdown by project is as follows.

Market Square

For the Market Square project, it is projected that £413,598 will be spent in year 2022/23. This comprises of:

£310,298 of LUF grant

£103,300 of St Helens Borough Council match funding

Town Hall

It is projected that £268,530 will be spent in year 2022/23. This will comprise of professional fees, design fees and development management fees.

£205,804 of LUF grant

£62,726 of St Helens Borough Council match funding

Rail Station

It is projected that £257,609 will be spent in year 2022/23. This will comprise of professional fees, design fees and development management fees.

£157,794 of LUF grant

£99,815 of St Helens Borough Council match funding

The 2022/23 spend will be directed towards further design work and development management fees across all three projects. See appended Planning and Costing Workbook for further details.

Risk Management: Set out your detailed risk assessment

The proposed bid projects have been subject to a robust and detailed risk assessment. The output of these assessments are captured within the detailed Risk Register as attached.

The project team has been actively managing risk from project inception to maximise opportunities and minimise any adverse effects.

Key risks/barriers along with arrangements for managing and mitigating these risks and associated roles / responsibilities for risk mitigation are summarised below.

- Consents (Planning, Listed Building, Conservation Area) - early design work already complete takes account of relevant policies and standards; ongoing engagement with St Helens Council Planning team programmed in; ongoing stakeholder engagement to mitigate potential opposition

- Unforeseen design issues (structures, underground services, power upgrade requirements) - survey work (including intrusive surveys) is programmed in for early in the delivery phase

- Design agreement with Network Rail (and associated consents) - engagement already under way; architect with significant railway design experience appointed to the team

- Failure to secure access to station for construction works with Network Rail, including potential "possessions" (when the railway is closed) - engagement

already under way, including considerations of site access (especially to the triangle in the middle of the station, entirely enclosed by live running lines)

- Lack of public / stakeholder acceptability of proposals, including existing market traders – ongoing stakeholder engagement, with market specialist retained to facilitate

- Power upgrade may be required at station – early site investigation and load monitoring programmed in to verify requirements and current capacity

- Failure to secure tenants / occupants (Town Hall, market, station building) - specialist consultants retained to identify potential demand, constraints and opportunities; close working with market operations team to provide flexibility in response to local demand

- Rental income is insufficient to cover operating costs (Town Hall) - consultation with potential occupiers informed the early design work and rental income benchmarking and monitoring (Annex I) support the commercial viability of the proposed model.

The SRO is accountable for the identification and management of risk, with the Programme Manager holding responsibility risk across the three projects throughout the stages of the programme. An important part of this responsibility is ensuring that cross-cutting risks are identified and managed consistently across the three projects. Specific risks are then allocated to appropriate roles / team members for day-to-day management.

The Risk Register will be reviewed and updated by the Programme Manager in close liaison with project leads and design teams monthly and reported to the Place Board at each meeting.

Provide details of your core project team and provide evidence of their track record and experience of delivering schemes of this nature

The core project team brings together an established track record, broad range of disciplines and capacity to deliver the project. The Programme Lead for Town Centres within the Council's Growth Delivering Prosperity (GDP) Team will have overall responsibility for the projects being delivered as Programme Manager. The Programme Lead will be supported by two dedicated project support officers and finance officers. Support will also be brought in from the wider GDP Team as and when required.

The Council has invested significantly in creating the new GDP team which reports to the Assistant Director for Planning and Regeneration. The GDP Team brings together long-standing experience of programme and project management and delivery, community regeneration and engagement, partnership building and stakeholder management, member engagement, financial monitoring and management, legal services and quality assurance. The GDP Team also brings together wider corporate support in a St Helens together one team approach. The structure of the team is included in the appended Delivery Plan.

St Helens Borough Council has appointed English Cities Fund (ECF) (a joint venture between Muse Developments, Legal & General and Homes England) as its delivery partner for the Town Hall, Market and Earlestown Rail Station projects, and through this partnership approach, ECF will bring further development management resources of Muse Developments alongside a professional and technical team to support the design, planning and delivery of the projects.

Robust management and governance arrangements have been put in place to manage this partnership and will ensure that investment through LUF secures identified outputs and long-term benefits.

An experienced delivery team within ECF (with Muse Developments acting in a professional development management capacity) and St Helens Council has been formed to lead and manage the project, as shown by their track record of

regeneration and development projects. Under this arrangement, the partnership has procured a professional team which will deliver projects.

The ECF delivery team will procure the required contractors to deliver the projects following the Council's procurement regulations and contract procedure rules. The procurement strategy will ensure bids are assessed based on an appropriate balance between ensuring value for money alongside quality and experience of delivering similar complex mixed-use developments. Suitable contractor and management arrangements will be put in place including regular progress meetings between ECF, St Helens Borough Council and the contractor, reviewing programme milestones and managing risk. St Helens Borough Council and ECF partners have considerable experience in managing similar procurement exercises and contracts.

The projects will be managed in accordance with the Council's Project Management Toolkit. The toolkit is aligned to Association of Project Management (APM) and Prince 2 principles and has been adapted to suit the delivery of infrastructure projects within the Council's governance structure and addressing capacity and capability issues if they arise. It is used to deliver the Council's annual capital programme.

The LUF Project Team will meet monthly as a minimum to ensure progress is maintained and that all issues are resolved in a timely manner.

The LUF Programme Manager will prepare a report to present at the St Helens Place Board meetings. This report is the main source of documentation which summarises progress, performance and any change in the scheme. The report will set out the following:

- Progress on each workstream and status update on the scheme
- Key activities undertaken since the previous meeting
- Key activities to be undertaken before the next meeting
- Approvals required before the next meeting
- Programme and budget update.

This is also the route through which the Programme Manager will seek approval and authorisation from the St Helens Place Board for expenditure or any divergence from the approved scheme, which attracts extra cost or savings.

The track record of delivering similar and complex projects can be evidenced by the following examples:

Glass Futures

Delivered by St Helens Borough Council with Glass Futures, Network Space Developments, Liverpool City Region, UKRI and BEIS to create a Glass Futures Centre of Excellence, for medical glass production, research and development. Completion 2023, value £54m.

Town Deal

Delivered by St Helens Borough Council - investment for 8 major projects, with St Helens Borough Council as accountable body and project lead. Currently developing full business cases for submission to government to support town centre regeneration in St Helens. Ongoing programme with a value of £25m (Town Deal funding).

Newton-le-Willows Station Redevelopment

Led by St Helens Borough Council with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and NTL (formerly Arriva North West and Arriva Trains). Redevelopment of Newton-le-Willows station and extension of the station car park to provide bus interchange and step free access for passengers, with the provision of a re-designed booking office and new pedestrian access to both platforms. Completed 2019, value £18.9m.

Set out what governance procedures will be put in place to manage the grant and project

The governance and project management structures applied by St Helens Borough Council adhere to Association of Project Management (APM) and Prince2 principles to ensure that projects are developed and delivered in a controlled project environment. The LUF programme will be managed by SHBC, with individual projects delivered by the English Cities Fund (ECF) on our behalf.

The St Helens Place Board's purpose is to provide a coherent and collective voice for place-based activity in St Helens. It provides a strategic partnership forum to consider the borough's growth plan, accelerating its delivery and maximising local accountability. The Place Board will oversee our LUF programme.

St Helens Borough Council resources the administration and day-to-day functions of the Place Board, supported by the Council's Place Directorate management team, including our Directors of Strategic Growth, Operations, and Communities; and Assistant Directors (Property and Economy, Planning and Regeneration, Housing, Infrastructure, Environment).

The Council has created a Growth Delivering Prosperity (GDP) Team, reporting to the Assistant Director for Planning & Regeneration, with long-standing experience of programme and project management and delivery. The Programme Lead for Town Centres within the GDP Team will have overall responsibility for the LUF projects, supported by two dedicated project support officers and finance officers and inputs from across the team as required.

The responsibilities of the Programme Manager include:

- Overseeing the work of the delivery partners and LUF Project Team
- Management of the LUF projects throughout their life cycle
- Being the primary point of contact liaising with key stakeholders and DLUHC
- Overseeing all technical consultants providing advice on environmental, design and engineering and transport issues
- Reporting to the St Helens Place Board at each project stage gate for scrutiny of project resources, timescales and budgets. This provides the transparency and assurance that the scheme is being delivered as efficiently as possible and that objectives are being met. It also provides the route for authorising expenditure and any divergence from approved schemes.
- Coordinating and developing partnerships including the LUF delivery partnership and other complementary activity (e.g. ECF investment)
- Providing quarterly reviews to the St Helens Place Board which will be produced to the quality requirements agreed with the Government.

Each project will have an appropriate lead officer. The Programme Manager and the Project Leads will work closely as appropriate with the private sector, key stakeholders and delivery partners to support effective programme and project delivery.

The LUF Project Team will meet monthly as a minimum to ensure progress is maintained and that all issues are resolved in a timely manner. Council officers from a range of disciplines including Development Management, Building Control, Policy, Property Services, Finance and Legal services will advise and support the LUF Project Team at all stages.

This structure will allow us to maximise the use of best practice from within the Council and its key delivery partners in delivering regeneration/government funding programmes.

Project Management Framework

The project will be managed in accordance with the Council's Project Management Toolkit. The toolkit is aligned to Association of Project Management (APM) and Prince 2 principles and has been adapted to suit the delivery of infrastructure projects within the Council's governance structure and used to deliver the annual Capital Programme.

St Helens Borough Council has appointed English Cities Fund (ECF) (a joint venture between Muse Developments, Legal & General and Homes England) as its delivery partner for the Town Hall, Market and Earlestown Rail Station projects, and through this partnership approach, ECF will bring the development management resources of Muse Developments alongside a professional and technical team to support the design and planning of the projects.

To formalise this agreement, the Council and ECF have entered into an Overarching Development Agreement (ODA) which confirms a 20-year Borough-wide partnership. The initial priority and first phase of the partnership relates to the main town centres of the Borough – St Helens and Earlestown.

Robust management and governance arrangements have been put in place to manage this partnership and will ensure that investment through LUF secures identified outputs and long-term benefits.

An experienced delivery team within ECF (with Muse Developments acting in a professional development management capacity) and St Helens Borough Council has been formed to lead and manage the project, as shown by their track record of regeneration and development projects. Under this arrangement, the partnership has procured a professional team which will deliver projects.

Suitable contractor and management arrangements will be put in place including regular progress meetings between ECF, St Helens Council and the contractor, reviewing programme milestones and managing risk.

If applicable, explain how you will cover the operational costs for the day-to-day management of the new asset / facility once it is complete to ensure project benefits are realised

The three capital projects included in the Earlestown Levelling Up package bid are not expected to generate any new liabilities that will require any ongoing, unfunded revenue commitment from St Helens Borough Council or any other organisation to manage. There will be some management costs associated with the activities at all three sites once complete, however, these will either be met by projected commercial revenues or are expected to align with existing budgets for the management of operational costs.

Market Square:

The existing Earlestown Market is operating at a loss at present. Its dated facilities do not meet the expectations of market customers or operators, meaning occupancy rates have been declining. A report by market specialists Quarterbridge, forecast that without additional support to attract traders the market is likely to run at a deficit and this will have to be funded by St Helens Borough Council. The recommendations of the report have been implemented into the proposed market design. These will reverse the trend toward fewer market traders and allow for greater activity at the market, including more times that the market is operational and using the space for events/specialist markets throughout the year. A more diverse mix of tenants taking space is estimated in the Quarterbridge report:

- Traditional retail 30%
- Fresh food produce 25%

- Hot food 25%
- Service businesses 10%
- Specialty/boutique retail 10%

Property economists BE Group have critiqued the plans and advise that this more diverse range of interest, coupled with the improved quality of facilities, is expected to increase demand for market facilities at Earlestown such that the markets will operate at least 3 days/week from its current 2 days/week. Occupancy rates are forecast to increase to 80-90% once the rejuvenated Market gains momentum. The addition of events/specialist markets throughout the year has the potential to further increase revenues generated, though have not been accounted for in the income forecasts.

Operating costs include a significant budget for management and marketing of the Markets to ensure that operators and consumers are attracted to the redeveloped Market Square and to drive increased usage of the Market Square to at least 3days/week. This will increase rent incomes as the market increases occupancy, such that incomes are anticipated to marginally exceed costs in the fifth year of operation (around £5,000 on costs of £262,000 p.a.). If further events/specialist markets are introduced, the incomes would exceed costs at an earlier timeframe.

Town Hall:

BE Group developed costs and incomes based on proposed plans for the mix and scale of uses within the Town Hall.

The estimate of operating costs takes into account the proposed uses within the Town Hall and the assumed occupancy levels of the temporary spaces. The maintenance level is assumed to be relatively modest based on the fact that the Town Hall will have undergone a full refurbishment as part of this project, and thus it is expected that on-going maintenance in the early years of opening would be low (assumed at £10/sqm). Property costs, including utilities and cleaning, are assumed at £65/sqm. Management costs have been estimated as a fee percentage of income (10%) as well as costs for a staff presence on site.

Marketing/business support costs have been included in line with industry averages.

The anticipated incomes generated by the Hub would include rents from permanent occupiers and hiring of space. Market rents will be paid by commercial uses, whereas community uses would pay lower levels. Cultural space is assumed to be available on an hourly basis.

Occupancy levels are assumed to increase over the early years of operation as the redeveloped Town Hall establishes its market presence.

It is expected that the redeveloped Town Hall would have an operating loss in the first three years of operation, though as occupancy and usage increases it is expected that the increasing incomes from the Town Hall would cover costs from the fourth year (marginal), with modest incomes above operating costs in subsequent years (around £3,000 pa on costs of around £215,000 pa).

Earlestown Rail Station

The improvements to Earlestown Rail Station will take place on platforms and buildings owned by Network Rail and operated by Northern Rail. These improvements will not generate additional running costs that require external funding and these will be adopted by Northern Rail as the station operator should they arise. Northern Rail are supportive of the bid (please see letter of support) and no further action is required. The final use of the station building will potentially create operating costs e.g. as a café or local museum but these will be managed by the occupier.

Set out proportionate plans for monitoring and evaluation

A robust Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan has been developed to ensure successful delivery of the project.

Theory of Change

The objectives of the Earlestown Levelling Up Fund project are to:

- Create a sustainable, accessible and connected town centre
- Deliver a diverse, vibrant and animated town centre to encourage footfall, spend and improved quality of life
- Bring redundant historic buildings back into economic use
- Positively change perceptions of the town and develop pride in place

These objectives will be achieved by:

- Significant public realm enhancements to Earlestown's high streets to improve connectivity and enhance amenity, and comprehensive redevelopment of the historic Market Square to activate the space and extend usage
- Restoration of the iconic Grade II listed Town Hall as a modern cultural and commercial hub to meet community and business needs
- Creation of a new arrival hub for Earlestown at the Rail Station through the provision of lighting, safety, wayfinding and public realm improvements, including the restoration of the station building as a café and heritage interpretation centre

The project is underpinned by the Theory of Change (as appended)

M&E Plan Objectives

Our M&E Plan will contribute to successful delivery of the LUF investment and to maximise its lasting impacts by:

- Generating timely and insightful data enabling us to assess progress and establish whether project activities are delivered on time and on budget;
- Assess and provide reassurance that LUF bid objectives were met;
- Capture the economic and social impacts of the investments and the value for money they deliver;
- Understand any under or over-performance against our targets, identifying where we need to refine our management and maintenance of the LUF investments

Key Research Questions

Our approach to M&E is built around these research questions:

- Were the investments based on a sound rationale?
- Have they proved consistent with policy priorities?
- Did the projects meet their milestones? If not, why?
- Did project governance, management and delivery structures and processes work effectively? How could they be improved?
- What quantifiable outcomes are being achieved? To what extent are these

attributable to the projects?

- What was the total cost of the completed projects? Are the economic and social benefits justifying these costs?

Approach to M&E

Monitoring

St Helens Borough Council will be responsible for monitoring project performance and this will be led by the SRO and the Programme Manager. The process will involve:

Assembling baseline data

Tracking progress of project delivery against milestones, working with appointed contractors

Regularly monitoring of expenditure and output indicators

Collecting and analysing secondary data to track progress on outcomes and impacts.

All information will be stored in a single database enabling progress to be reported regularly to the Place Board (during the project) and St Helens Borough Council e.g. the Growth Delivering Prosperity (GDP) Team during the operational phase.

Evaluation

We will commission an independent evaluation to assess the impact and effectiveness of the project. We expect that this will be a single stage ex-post evaluation. The tasks will be determined by the independent evaluators but we expect this to include the following:

Review of policy documents and supporting evidence to assess whether the intervention was based on a sound rationale.

Analysis of all monitoring data to assess over or under performance against targets.

Consultations with the delivery team members and other stakeholders

Beneficiary surveys, which could include station users; town centre visitors; users of the Market and Town Hall

M&E Plan Schedule

The schedule set out in the appended Planning and Costing Workbook summarises each stage of the M&E Plan, provides an overview of the indicators which may be captured by the Project Team or external evaluators, relevant data sources and methods of data collection, and the indicative timing and frequency of data collection.

Resourcing/Management

Delivery of M&E will be led by the LUF Programme Management, supported by the Project Team. Monitoring systems will be developed and a framework for contractors to report on progress against milestones. Monitoring data will be collated in a data tool to enable consistent tracking against milestones and targets. The Project Manager will be responsible for reporting to the SRO, the St Helens Place Board and to government.

Senior Responsible Owner Declaration

Declaration

Chief Finance Officer Declaration

Upload pro forma 8 - Chief Finance Officer Declaration

LUF Round 2 Pro formas V6.1 Proforma 8 - Earlestown.pdf

Publishing

URL of website where this bid will be published

<https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/>

Additional attachments

Additional file attachment 1

Upload attachment

Earlestown Project Summaries.pdf

Additional file attachment 2

Upload attachment

Masterplan Development Framework.pdf

Additional file attachment 3

Upload attachment

SHBC ECF Partnership Delivery Particulars.pdf

Additional file attachment 4

Upload attachment

Earlestown Delivery Plan.pdf

Additional file attachment 5

Upload attachment

Earlestown Consultation Summary.pdf

Additional file attachment 6

Upload attachment

Earlestown LUF Market Square supporting information.pdf

Additional file attachment 7

Upload attachment

Earlestown LUF Town Hall supporting information.pdf

Additional file attachment 8

Upload attachment

Earlestown LUF Rail Station supporting information.pdf

Additional file attachment 9

Upload attachment

Earlestown LUF Evidence of match funding.pdf

Additional file attachment 10

Upload attachment

Earlestown consents and ownership.zip

Additional file attachment 11

Upload attachment

Earlestown LUF Letters of Support (1).pdf

Project 1 Name

Earlestown Market Square

Provide a short description of this project

The Earlestown Market Square and Public Realm project will renew the heart of Earlestown through comprehensive public realm upgrades and the transformation of the market square into a major visitor attraction. Investment will deliver:

Significant streetscape enhancements including paving replacement, street furniture installation and tree planting along key Town Centre streets to improve pedestrian connectivity and enhance amenity, thereby attracting visitation and promoting growth in land values

An iconic architect-designed market canopy structure, providing 1,087sqm of weather-protected trading space for market trading and community events, within a redesigned Market Square incorporating seating and landscaping and new kiosk micro-tenancies to promote activation outside of market trading times

Provide a more detailed overview of the project

This project will deliver far-reaching public realm enhancements throughout the town centre and evolve Earlestown's 700-year-old two-day market into a permanent civic space and exciting visitor attraction.

The centrepiece of the project is a 1,087 sqm architecturally-designed market canopy which represents the most significant change to the market since its inception in the year 1301. It will support a renewed market operating model with increased trading hours and consistent scheduling during wet weather to support regular attendance by traders and increase footfall, with the flexibility to host new cultural activities.

Analysis1 identifies that this intervention will ensure the market's long-term viability, returning it to a cost neutral position by Year 5 and generating £50,000 in profit by Year 10, against a forecast losses of £100,000 p.a. under a 'Do Nothing' scenario.

Project investment will also transform the market site, currently a dilapidated car park, into a new 5,815 sqm Market Square that will dramatically improve amenity and provide functional spaces for recreation and events. Replacement parking is provided to ensure accessibility.

In total the project will deliver 18,431 sqm of wider public realm enhancements, reconstructing key town centre streets with high quality materials while introducing trees, well considered street furniture, artwork and heritage interpretation to drive footfall, strengthen pride in place and encourage investment.

This project serves a vital role in connecting other projects put forward in this bid while also supporting English Cities Fund's efforts to develop significant

new housing schemes within the Town Centre by creating an 'investable destination'. It will be complemented by £3.6m in Council investment towards shopfront enhancement, supported by the High Streets Task Force.

Provide a short description of the area where the investment will take place for this project

Investment will occur throughout key streets and public spaces in the Town Centre. At present, Earlestown's public realm is highly degraded, with streets that are dominated by traffic with inadequate pedestrian connectivity, limited lighting and wayfinding and a lack of attractive and functional public gathering space. The town's longstanding market currently operates from a cluttered and unattractive car park which dominates the centre of town. This space includes dilapidated semi-permanent market infrastructure which is visually unattractive and attracts anti-social behaviour. The dual use of the space as a car park and a market is poorly managed and presents conflicts between market users and drivers.

In addition to transformation of the Market Square, broader public realm enhancements will occur throughout the town centre as illustrated at Figure 5, encompassing:

- Haydock St, Oxford St and Stanley St where they abut the Market Square
 - Key retail streets within the wider Town Centre, being Railway St, Queen St and Bridge St
 - The Market St and Tamworth St intersection, being the key connection from the Market Square to the Town Hall project area
 - Railway Street, being the key connection to the town centre from Earlestown Station
-

Further location details for this project

Project location 1

Postcode	WA12 9DJ
Grid reference	SJ 57478 95331
Upload GIS/map file (optional)	
% of project investment in this location	40%

Select the constituencies covered by this project

Project constituency 1

Select constituency	St Helens North
Estimate the percentage of this package project invested in this constituency	100%

Select the local authorities / NI councils covered by this project

Project local authority 1

Select local authority	St. Helens
------------------------	------------

Estimate the percentage of this package project invested in this Local Authority	100%
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What is the total grant requested from LUF for this project?

£8522152

What is the proportion of funding requested for each of the Fund's three investment themes?

Regeneration and Town Centre	100%
------------------------------	------

Cultural	0%
----------	----

Transport	0%
-----------	----

Confirm the value of match funding secured for the component project

£2837083

Provide details of all the sources of match funding within your bid for this component project

St Helens Borough Council has committed £2,837,083 in match funding for the Earlestown Market Square project out of its total £8,235,345 match commitment across the package. The Market Square project represents 40% of the total LUF package value and the allocated match funding represents 25% of Market Square project's value.

The match funding commitment allows St Helens Borough Council to front-load costs, ensuring the project maintains momentum through 2022-23 ahead of any final LUF grant funding decisions. The funding commitment is more than sufficient to cover professional fees and project management costs incurred throughout 2022-23.

Value for money

On the basis of the scheme's monetised costs and benefits the Initial BCR for the Town Hall project has been estimated at 1.15 which demonstrates modest but acceptable Value for Money.

The project will create impact through the delivery of the following LUF

standard outcomes:

Change in footfall

Change in Change in consumer spending

Change in vacancy rates

Change in perceptions of place

These outcomes are associated with the following quantifiable benefits:

Residential Wider Land Value Uplift was calculated on the basis of the change in resident perceptions of the area following the town centre improvements using the following method:

There are 5,440 dwellings recorded on the VOAs council tax stock of properties data within the impact area (LSOAs: St Helens 013A, 013B, 013C, 015C, 015E, 010B).

A 2% uplift in the weighted average house price (£161,000), above the counterfactual, compounded over 5 years from 2025/26. Additionality of 12.5% was applied to reflect i) the weaker impact on prices for residents further from the interventions (25%) and ii) the potential for displacement (50%).

This generated a present value of monetised benefit, after additionality, of £9.6m.

Commercial Wider Land Value Uplift was calculated on the basis of the change in footfall and consumer spending in the town centre using the following method:

31,000 sqm of commercial floorspace within St Helens 031A LSOA (excluding long term empties with an average rateable value of £75.7 sqm and an assumed capitalisation yield of 10%).

A 2% uplift in the capital value of affected commercial property, above the counterfactual, compounded over 5 years from 2025/26. Displacement of 25% was applied.

This generated a present value of monetised benefit, after additionality, of £1.57m.

Crime Reduction: The present value of the monetised benefit of a 10% reduction in baseline crime levels was estimated to be £3.9m.

The total present value of all monetised benefits is estimated to be £15.8m after discounting and additionality.

The present value of costs including £24% optimism bias is £13.09m. This generates an Initial BCR of 1.15. The following benefits were added to generate an alternative adjusted BCR of 1.24.

A further £0.76m present value of benefit was calculated for the value of vacant property that could be brought back into use following the intervention.

The present value of the additional amenity to households directly experiencing the improved public realm in Earlestown was estimated to be £0.37m.

BCR and value assessment

If it is not possible to provide an overall BCR for your package bid, explain why below

On the basis of the scheme's monetised costs and benefits the Initial BCR for the Town Hall project has been estimated at 1.15 which demonstrates modest but acceptable Value for Money.

The project will create impact through the delivery of the following LUF

estimate of increased revenue for the rail industry. This generates mode shift benefits where rail replaces car travel.

Revenue benefits: £1.376 million over 30 years

Mode shift benefits: £3.204 million over 30 years

(discounted, 2022 prices)

The principle of assessing benefits to public transport users from improvements in "soft factors" (journey ambience) is well established and PDFH) includes elasticities which can be used to estimate patronage increases for improvements in journey ambience, based on various research sources. The TAG Databook includes monetised values of soft factors for bus users which can be applied to existing and new users, again based on various research studies. In the absence of monetised values of soft factors for existing rail users, we have applied the bus factors to assess journey ambience benefits for this group.

Benefits: £2.223 million over 30 years

(discounted, 2022 prices)

The present value of costs including £15% optimism bias is £8.22m. This generates an Initial BCR of 1.07. No further benefits were added to generate an alternative adjusted BCR.

The following benefits were added to generate an alternative adjusted BCR of 1.09.

Using values for benefits from Historic England's 'Heritage and the Value of Place', assessed cautiously, we have assessed the value to local residents of the refurbishment of the original station building.: values are given for public buildings / town halls / libraries, but not for stations. We have assumed a value of £4 per household per year and assessed this for the number of households in Earlestown only.

Benefits: £0.105 million over 30 years

(discounted, 2022 prices)

BCR and value assessment

If it is not possible to provide an overall BCR for your package bid, explain why below

The improvement to the station as an active travel route will lead to an increase in walking and cycling trips in the immediate area. DfT's Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit has been used to assess the benefits from this in terms of MECs from mode shift including congestion, infrastructure maintenance, accident, local air quality, noise, greenhouse gases, reduced risk of premature death, absenteeism, journey ambience and (a disbenefit) indirect taxation.

standard outcomes:

Change in footfall

Change in Change in consumer spending

Change in vacancy rates

Change in perceptions of place

These outcomes are associated with the following quantifiable benefits:

Residential Wider Land Value Uplift was calculated on the basis of the change in resident perceptions of the area following the town centre improvements using the following method:

There are 5,440 dwellings recorded on the VOAs council tax stock of properties data within the impact area (LSOAs: St Helens 013A, 013B, 013C, 015C, 015E, 010B).

A 2% uplift in the weighted average house price (£161,000), above the counterfactual, compounded over 5 years from 2025/26. Additionality of 12.5% was applied to reflect i) the weaker impact on prices for residents further from the interventions (25%) and ii) the potential for displacement (50%).

This generated a present value of monetised benefit, after additionality, of £9.6m.

Commercial Wider Land Value Uplift was calculated on the basis of the change in footfall and consumer spending in the town centre using the following method:

31,000 sqm of commercial floorspace within St Helens 031A LSOA (excluding long term empties with an average rateable value of £75.7 sqm and an assumed capitalisation yield of 10%.

A 2% uplift in the capital value of affected commercial property, above the counterfactual, compounded over 5 years from 2025/26. Displacement of 25% was applied.

This generated a present value of monetised benefit, after additionality, of £1.57m.

Crime Reduction: The present value of the monetised benefit of a 10% reduction in baseline crime levels was estimated to be £3.9m.

The total present value of all monetised benefits is estimated to be £15.8m after discounting and additionality.

The present value of costs including £24% optimism bias is £13.09m. This generates an Initial BCR of 1.15. The following benefits were added to generate an alternative adjusted BCR of 1.24.

A further £0.76m present value of benefit was calculated for the value of vacant property that could be brought back into use following the intervention.

The present value of the additional amenity to households directly experiencing the improved public realm in Earlestown was estimated to be £0.37m.

Benefit Cost Ratios

Initial BCR	1.15
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Adjusted BCR	1.24
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Non-monetised benefits for this project

Direct land value uplift associated with new market canopy and kiosks - new commercial space will in effect be created in the market square which will improve the value of the market as a commercial entity. As this commercial gain to the landowner/council as leaseholder is not a project objective, the end use value has not been valued by an appropriately qualified surveyor. However, there will clearly be an uplift in the value of the market as a result of these physical improvements to the space that enhances the overall economic benefit of the project.

Job creation - the longer opening hours and more varied market offer will potentially help create employment for residents of Earlestown that are at present economically inactive or unemployed. At this early stage the scale of this outcome was considered too uncertain to monetise.

Trees planted - a number of trees will be planted as part of the landscaping work to enhance the town centre public realm. Trees/greenery do carry economic value in their own right beyond their additional value to the look and feel of the area. It was considered disproportionate to value these benefits explicitly given their scale relative to other benefits.

Does this project include plans for some LUF grant expenditure in 2022-23?

Yes

Could this project be delivered as a standalone project?

Yes - the project could be delivered as a standalone project

Demonstrate that activity for this project can be delivered in 2022-23

Following confirmation of funding the Design Team will be appointed in autumn 2022 and will take forward detailed design work in 2022-23, building on existing scheme designs.

The project schedule provides for Practical Completion by 31 December 2024.

Statutory Powers and Consents

List separately below each power/consents etc. obtained for this project

An Outline Planning Application for all works contemplated within this project inclusive of public realm enhancements, establishment of Market Square and construction of the Market Hall canopy was been submitted by English Cities Fund to St Helens Council. This was approved on 26 July 2022.

St Helens maintains all statutory powers required to deliver the project.

Upload content documents (optional)

Outstanding statutory powers/consents

Planning consent will be required for all elements of the project – outline approval has been granted.

Conservation Area consent – to be sought from St Helens Council in 2023

Project 2 Name

Earlestown Town Hall

Provide a short description of this project

The Earlestown Town Hall project will transform a derelict Grade II-listed civic building into a modern cultural and commercial hub. It will deliver:

New commercial workspace within a restored and remodelled interior ground floor, alongside hireable community rooms to accommodate cultural activity and service delivery;

A restored upper-floor multipurpose hall and function space capable of hosting a range of visitor-attracting public events and private functions; and

A new landscaped courtyard and architecturally-designed café extension to the rear of the building, extending the town centre's hospitality offer and creating an appealing public gathering space.

Provide a more detailed overview of the project

The Earlestown Town Hall project will transform a derelict Grade II listed heritage building into a modern cultural and commercial hub, catalysing wider renewal and increased footfall within the town centre. Funding constraints have seen the building gradually fall into disrepair since the 1970s, culminating in its complete closure in 2008 due to safety concerns.

Built in 1893 and situated adjacent to the town's popular Market Square, the 1,472 sqm hall is a two-storey red brick structure designed in the Queen Anne style. As the primary town hall for Newton-le-Willows over much of the 20th Century and a base for the Home Guard during the Second World War, the building is of significant value to the local community.

Funding is sought to rectify internal damage and refit the building for a varied mix of uses¹ including approx. 196 sqm of workspace, 89 sqm of lettable community rooms, a flexible 225 sqm multipurpose event hall and a 146 sqm café housed within an architecturally-designed extension connecting to a courtyard garden.

The facility is expected to generate net profit by Year 42, and will increase commercial and community floorspace, accommodate 28.5 additional FTE jobs, and expand cultural activity, civic events and volunteering. LUF funding will build on St Helens' existing £1m investment in restoring the exterior of the building, for which works are currently underway.

The project forms a core aspect of Earlestown's package bid, establishing a

landmark destination and regional visitor attraction within the heart of town, extracting maximum benefit from aligned investment in the surrounding public realm, train station enhancements and increased activity within the adjoining Town Square.

Provide a short description of the area where the investment will take place for this project

The investment will take place within the property containing the Earlestown Town Hall and associated yard.

The Town Hall is situated at the geographic centre of Earlestown and is well-positioned to leverage surrounding commercial activity and other civic assets. This includes hospitality and retail businesses fronting Market Street, a public car park immediately west of the Town Hall and the Earlestown Bus Interchange to the immediate south.

The site interfaces with the extent of works proposed by other projects contained in this package bid, specifically enhancements to Earlestown Town Square and public realm works proposed along Market Street and the intersection with Tamworth St and Stanley St.

These complementary works will act to further integrate the Town Hall with the surrounding area and promote footfall from surrounding assets.

Further location details for this project

Project location 1

Postcode	WA12 9BN
Grid reference	SJ 57357 95339

Upload GIS/map file (optional)

% of project investment in this location	26%
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Select the constituencies covered by this project

Project constituency 1

Select constituency	St Helens North
---------------------	-----------------

Estimate the percentage of this package project invested in this constituency	100%
---	------

Select the local authorities / NI councils covered by this project

Project local authority 1

Select local authority St. Helens

Estimate the percentage of this package project invested in this Local Authority 100%

What is the total grant requested from LUF for this project?

£5681295

What is the proportion of funding requested for each of the Fund's three investment themes?

Regeneration and Town Centre 50%

Cultural 50%

Transport 0%

Confirm the value of match funding secured for the component project

£1731564

Provide details of all the sources of match funding within your bid for this component project

St Helens Borough Council has committed £1,731,564 in match funding for the Earlestown Town Hall project out of its total £8,235,345 match commitment across the package. The Town Hall project represents 26% of the total LUF package value and the allocated match funding represents 23% of the Town Hall project's value.

The match funding commitment has been based around funding the front-loaded costs that will allow the project to maintain momentum through 2022-23 ahead of any LUF grant funding decisions. The funding commitment is specifically aligned to in year projections for professional fees such as design work and development management.

Value for money

On the basis of the scheme's monetised costs and benefits the Initial BCR for the Town Hall project has been estimated at 1.79 which demonstrates modest but acceptable Value for Money.

The project will create impact through the delivery of the following LUF standard outcomes:

Change in Employment rate

Change in Productivity and pay

Change in visits / audience numbers to cultural events

Change in perceptions of place

These outcomes are associated with the following quantifiable benefits:

Gross Value Added from new employment supported in the operational workspace at the Town Hall:

300 sqm office space (15 FTE)

450 sqm community performance / meeting space (3 FTE)

150 sqm café / bistro (9 FTE)

Plus 1.5 FTE in administration and management of the Town Hall building

The monetised benefit of the employment directly supported in the Town Hall was estimated to be £4.8m and the indirect GVA supported by the new employment in higher productivity tradeable sectors is £3.4m.

Wellbeing effects from the provision of new cultural / community / performance space. The present value monetised benefits of these effects after accounting for additionality are as follows:

£1.62m of wellbeing derived from volunteering opportunities supported

£1.67m of wellbeing derived from opportunities to participate in cultural activities e.g. Dance

£3.0m of wellbeing from additional opportunities to engage with the arts as an audience member

Wellbeing effects from the protection of local heritage. The estimate of the present value of local households' willingness to pay for preserving the condition of historic Town Hall building is £0.59m.

The total present value of all monetised benefits is estimated to be £15.17m after discounting and additionality.

The present value of costs including £24% optimism bias is £8.48m. This generates an Initial BCR of 1.79. No further benefits were added to generate an alternative adjusted BCR.

BCR and value assessment

If it is not possible to provide an overall BCR for your package bid, explain why below

On the basis of the scheme's monetised costs and benefits the Initial BCR for the Town Hall project has been estimated at 1.79 which demonstrates modest but acceptable Value for Money.

The project will create impact through the delivery of the following LUF standard outcomes:

Change in Employment rate

Change in Productivity and pay

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150 sqm café / bistro (9 FTE)

Plus 1.5 FTE in administration and management of the Town Hall building

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£1.62m of wellbeing derived from volunteering opportunities supported

£1.67m of wellbeing derived from opportunities to participate in cultural activities e.g. Dance

£3.0m of wellbeing from additional opportunities to engage with the arts as an audience member

Wellbeing effects from the protection of local heritage. The estimate of the present value of local households' willingness to pay for preserving the condition of historic Town Hall building is £0.59m.

The total present value of all monetised benefits is estimated to be £15.17m after discounting and additionality.

The present value of costs including £24% optimism bias is £8.48m. This generates an Initial BCR of 1.79. No further benefits were added to generate an alternative adjusted BCR.

Benefit Cost Ratios

Initial BCR	1.79
-------------	------

Adjusted BCR	1.79
--------------	------

Non-monetised benefits for this project

The GVA method was chosen to interrogate the place-based impacts of the Levelling Up Fund programme, however, this was only assumed to persist for 10 years and so does not account fully for the lifetime value of the refurbishment.

The Green Book does allow for residual values for assets to be captured at the end of an appraisal period and in the case of the town hall, the useable life of the building will extend beyond 2034/25 when the GVA and jobs benefits are no longer being captured.

This will add value over and above the value of the uninhabitable building that would stand in its place in the counterfactual scenario.

Does this project include plans for some LUF grant expenditure in 2022-23?

Yes

Could this project be delivered as a standalone project?

Yes - the project could be delivered as a standalone project

Demonstrate that activity for this project can be delivered in 2022-23

Following confirmation of funding the Design Team will be appointed in autumn 2022 and will take forward detailed design work in 2022-23, building on existing scheme designs.

The project schedule provides for Practical Completion by 31 December 2024.

Statutory Powers and Consents

List separately below each power/consents etc. obtained for this project

Listed Building Consent has been obtained for work on the exterior of the Town Hall.

St Helens maintains all statutory powers required to deliver the project.

Upload content documents (optional)

P_2022_0098_LBC-DECISION_NOTICE-1278535.pdf

Outstanding statutory powers/consents

Planning consent will be required for all elements – to be sought from St Helens Council in 2023

Additional Listed Building consent – to be sought from St Helens Council in 2023 for proposed internal works / extension.

Conservation Area consent – to be sought from St Helens Council in 2023

Project 3 Name

Earlestown Rail Station

Provide a short description of this project

The Earlestown Railway Station project will create a new arrival hub for

Earlestown, supported by improvements to lighting, safety, connectivity, and interpretation of the region's rich railway history. Investment will deliver:

Restoration and conversion of the c1830 railway building – the world's oldest rail passenger building still in service - into a café and heritage centre

Public realm connectivity enhancements to better link the station to Market Street and the surrounding town centre; and

Safety and connectivity enhancements within the central area, including widened paths, planting and lighting, to improve the visitor experience and support wayfinding.

Currently overgrown and in a state of significant disrepair, investment will bring valued heritage assets (at the site of the world's first rail junction) back to public use, provide a focal point for regional visitors and improve connectivity for the local community.

Provide a more detailed overview of the project

This project will improve the function and amenity of Earlestown Rail Station as a key public transport node, arrival hub for regional visitors to the town centre, and as a key active travel route between the town centre and the south-eastern Wargrave suburb.

A key focus is refurbishment of the derelict station building, the oldest remaining station buildings on any railway in the world. Investment will transform this vacant Grade II-listed asset into an attractive café and visitor hub which showcases the historical importance of Earlestown's rail junction which played a foundational role in the Industrial Revolution.

Other works include refurbishment of the station with a new canopy, new access ramps and stairs, CCTV and safety enhancements and improved landscaping and lighting within the triangular open space between the platforms to improve amenity and wayfinding.

Earlestown Station serves not only as a transport hub but as a key, long-standing pedestrian link between northern and southern Earlestown. These improvements will significantly improve safety and pedestrian connectivity for residents of wider Earlestown who seek access to the town centre, while also dramatically enhancing the arrival experience for visitors through improved urban design and heritage interpretation opportunities related to the rich industrial and rail heritage of the area.

The proposed investment will complement a significant £7 million commitment by St Helens Council to fund core station access enhancements including step-free access and elevator access to all platforms in accordance with the Earlestown Rail Station Master Plan prepared by Seed Architects.

Provide a short description of the area where the investment will take place for this project

Investment will be concentrated within the Earlestown Rail Station property maintained by Network Rail, including the central island and northern interface with Railway Street.

Earlestown Station serves not only as a transport hub but as a key, long-standing pedestrian link between northern and southern Earlestown. The condition of the area is currently poor, with overgrown vegetation within the connecting passage between platforms of significant concern in terms of safety and anti-social behaviour.

Earlestown Station currently lacks suitable step-free platform access, inhibiting access for many station users. St Helens Council has committed to securing funding for significant accessibility enhancements including new footbridges with elevator access to platforms, which will be delivered concurrent with the enhancements proposed as part of this bid.

The project forms a core aspect of Earlestown's package bid, creating a welcoming point of entry for regional visitors to other investments within the town centre. Proposed works will connect directly to the extent of public realm enhancements proposed as part of the Earlestown Market Square and Public Realm project.

Further location details for this project

Project location 1

Postcode	WA12 9QY
Grid reference	SJ 57888 95122

Upload GIS/map file (optional)

% of project investment in this location	34%
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Select the constituencies covered by this project

Project constituency 1

Select constituency	St Helens North
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Estimate the percentage of this package project invested in this constituency	100%
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Select the local authorities / NI councils covered by this project

Project local authority 1

Select local authority	St. Helens
------------------------	------------

Estimate the percentage of this package project invested in this Local Authority	100%
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What is the total grant requested from LUF for this project?

What is the proportion of funding requested for each of the Fund's three investment themes?

Regeneration and Town Centre	50%
Cultural	50%
Transport	0%

Confirm the value of match funding secured for the component project

£3666699

Provide details of all the sources of match funding within your bid for this component project

St Helens Borough Council has committed up to £3,666,699 in match funding for the Earlestown Rail Station project out of its total £8,235,345 match commitment. This value is inclusive of VAT of £1,577,209. On this basis, the Rail Station project represents 34% of the total LUF package value and the allocated match funding represents 39% of the Rail Station project's value.

The station project budget does include unrecoverable VAT costs. This is in relation to the rail station works due to the ownership of the asset being with Network Rail.

Mitigation options are being reviewed to minimise this cost to the council, including specialist advice to clarify the break down of the costs into specific areas that may be recoverable such as the fees associated with arranging the scheme and any work to areas classed as public realm which will be under council ownership.

Value for money

The improvement to the station as an active travel route will lead to an increase in walking and cycling trips in the immediate area. DfT's Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit has been used to assess the benefits from this in terms of MECs from mode shift including congestion, infrastructure maintenance, accident, local air quality, noise, greenhouse gases, reduced risk of premature death, absenteeism, journey ambience and (a disbenefit) indirect taxation.

Benefits: £1.936 million over 30 years
(discounted, 2022 prices)

The Passenger Demand Forecasting Handbook (PDFH) sets out elasticities of demand related to station ambience improvements. These have been used to forecast an increase in rail passenger numbers, which has in turn fed into an

estimate of increased revenue for the rail industry. This generates mode shift benefits where rail replaces car travel.

Revenue benefits: £1.376 million over 30 years

Mode shift benefits: £3.204 million over 30 years

(discounted, 2022 prices)

The principle of assessing benefits to public transport users from improvements in "soft factors" (journey ambience) is well established and PDFH) includes elasticities which can be used to estimate patronage increases for improvements in journey ambience, based on various research sources. The TAG Databook includes monetised values of soft factors for bus users which can be applied to existing and new users, again based on various research studies. In the absence of monetised values of soft factors for existing rail users, we have applied the bus factors to assess journey ambience benefits for this group.

Benefits: £2.223 million over 30 years

(discounted, 2022 prices)

The present value of costs including £15% optimism bias is £8.22m. This generates an Initial BCR of 1.07. No further benefits were added to generate an alternative adjusted BCR.

The following benefits were added to generate an alternative adjusted BCR of 1.09.

Using values for benefits from Historic England's 'Heritage and the Value of Place', assessed cautiously, we have assessed the value to local residents of the refurbishment of the original station building.: values are given for public buildings / town halls / libraries, but not for stations. We have assumed a value of £4 per household per year and assessed this for the number of households in Earlestown only.

Benefits: £0.105 million over 30 years

(discounted, 2022 prices)

BCR and value assessment

If it is not possible to provide an overall BCR for your package bid, explain why below

The improvement to the station as an active travel route will lead to an increase in walking and cycling trips in the immediate area. DfT's Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit has been used to assess the benefits from this in terms of MECs from mode shift including congestion, infrastructure maintenance, accident, local air quality, noise, greenhouse gases, reduced risk of premature death, absenteeism, journey ambience and (a disbenefit) indirect taxation.

Benefits: £1.936 million over 30 years

(discounted, 2022 prices)

The Passenger Demand Forecasting Handbook (PDFH) sets out elasticities of demand related to station ambience improvements. These have been used to forecast an increase in rail passenger numbers, which has in turn fed into an estimate of increased revenue for the rail industry. This generates mode shift benefits where rail replaces car travel.

Revenue benefits: £1.376 million over 30 years

Mode shift benefits: £3.204 million over 30 years

(discounted, 2022 prices)

The principle of assessing benefits to public transport users from improvements in "soft factors" (journey ambience) is well established and PDFH) includes elasticities which can be used to estimate patronage increases for improvements in journey ambience, based on various research sources. The TAG Databook includes monetised values of soft factors for bus users which can be applied to existing and new users, again based on various research studies. In the absence of monetised values of soft factors for existing rail users, we have applied the bus factors to assess journey ambience benefits for this group.

Benefits: £2.223 million over 30 years

(discounted, 2022 prices)

The present value of costs including £15% optimism bias is £8.22m. This generates an Initial BCR of 1.07. No further benefits were added to generate an alternative adjusted BCR.

The following benefits were added to generate an alternative adjusted BCR of 1.09.

Using values for benefits from Historic England's 'Heritage and the Value of Place', assessed cautiously, we have assessed the value to local residents of the refurbishment of the original station building.: values are given for public buildings / town halls / libraries, but not for stations. We have assumed a value of £4 per household per year and assessed this for the number of households in Earlestown only.

Benefits: £0.105 million over 30 years

(discounted, 2022 prices)

Benefit Cost Ratios

Initial BCR 1.07

Adjusted BCR 1.09

Non-monetised benefits for this project

The visitor economy will benefit from a modest increase in footfall, both from improved access at the station, and from the restoration of a unique piece of railway architecture and heritage. No quantified assessment of potential visitor numbers specifically attributable to the station project has been completed at the risk of double counting benefits of this nature which are attributed to other projects within the bid.

Does this project include plans for some LUF grant expenditure in 2022-23?

Yes

Could this project be delivered as a standalone project?

Yes - the project could be delivered as a standalone project

Demonstrate that activity for this project can be delivered in 2022-23

Following confirmation of funding the Design Team will be appointed in autumn 2022 and will take forward detailed design work in 2022-23, building on existing scheme designs.

The project schedule provides for Practical Completion by 31 December 2024.

Statutory Powers and Consents

List separately below each power/consents etc. obtained for this project

No consents obtained at this point although detailed discussions with Network Rail are ongoing, with their in-principle support recorded in their Letter of Support appended to this bid.

Upload content documents (optional)

220629 Network Rail LoS (1).pdf

Outstanding statutory powers/consents

Planning consent will be required for those elements of the station frontage improvements which are not covered by Network Rail's permitted development rights – to be sought from St Helens Council in 2023

Listed Building consent – to be sought from St Helens Council in 2023

Conservation Area consent – to be sought from St Helens Council in 2023

Network Rail consent – the scheme is agreed in principle. Close working with NR is programmed in with approval at appropriate points in line with standard GRIP / station improvement and access processes and protocols
