

APPENDIX 2

Barnard Castle

The Barnard Castle Town Park Project

Section 106 monies bid for investment

A Landscape, Greenspace and Community Proposal

Introduction

It is proposed that a bid for section 106 monies is made in respect of section 106 investment to benefit Barnard Castle residents and visitors.

The Barnard Castle Vision has as one of its key Aspirations

- to preserve and embrace the existing spirit of place – physical, historical and emotional

To that end studies have been commissioned and completed as follows:

- Conservation Area Character Appraisal
- Streetscape Strategy
- Transport and Access Strategy (including footpath and cycleway development)

In the past Barney was a place that attracted world famous artists, such as Cotman and Turner, to come here and paint. What was it that brought them here? How can we best improve the overall attractiveness of the town to ensure that those special qualities are restored and maintained? How can we knit the recommendations of our work so far together, in a vision, which will sustain the enthusiasm of visitors to come here and make also Barney a town in which people want to live? Ultimately how the town looks has a considerable economic benefit to everyone.

The Barnard Castle Town Council has an aspiration to improve the opportunities for recreation and community involvement building upon the modest infrastructure that already exists in terms of playing fields, play areas, open spaces and allotments. Many of the open spaces and linking paths and route-ways have had no investment for some time. New growth of trees and shrubs blocks the view of the castle. Paths through Flatts Wood are dark and off-putting. The opportunities to walk along the Tees and around the countryside are unclear. Aspirations for the improvement to children's play facilities have not always been able to be fulfilled. Even with only a modest investment much could be achieved in collaboration with and help from volunteers and the wider community. With a more significant investment the town could be transformed.

The Town Council and The Vision proposes that an exciting opportunity exists, working together, to renew the landscape, recreational areas, and green-space in and around Barney for the benefit of its inhabitants and visitors alike – The Barnard Castle Town Park Project.

The Project

Stage 1.

A Landscape and Greenspace appraisal study of the town as a whole, focusing on

the historic core of the town, Galgate, Newgate The Castle, Scar Top and environs, and the Tees Valley, including Flatts Woods. The study would also consider the opportunities to improve and extend opportunities for the community within the town, notably the Demesnes, the Parish Church Approaches, the rose gardens, the proposed link from the town to the Bowes Museum, the playing fields and areas adjacent the schools, and areas near to Churchill Road. It is proposed, subject to Board approval, that this is funded from The Vision programme.

This would deliver:

- A plan for gradual improvement and conservation of the areas covered by the study taking into account the ideas and suggestions made already in the studies commissioned to date.
- Similarly specific detailed proposals for the area around the Castle, and the Riverside Walks.
- Specific detailed proposals for Scar Top, the area around the Woodleigh building and how this area might link with Galgate.
- Proposals for enhancing the visibility and awareness of the castle from the town itself. ("The castle is lost in the town")
- A landscape critique of the commissioned studies
- Suggestions and ideas as to how to enhance the town in terms of green and hard landscape.

The proposals would be made in the form of a project list, and would also highlight the scope to enhance The Town Park funding prospects. The study would deliver a design guide for future works and maintenance. The study would include more detailed proposals for key landscape areas where this would be appropriate, such as around Scar Top and the Castle.

During the study a funding strategy and initial applications would be prepared.

Stage 2.

- Consultation with and involvement of community groups and volunteer participation.
- Review of project proposals and preparation of project plan.
- Preparation of maintenance proposals
- Completion of fundraising and applications
- Implementation

Potential Funding

A number of potential funding schemes currently exist that could contribute towards the cost of implementation. They are all dependent upon partnership working and

community involvement. The Town Council and The Vision envisage a continued and strengthened partnership throughout the project and would seek to involve other groups such as The Bowes Museum, Rotters, young people's groups, young offenders, as well as enabling the development of new volunteer bodies.

It is proposed that the funding of the initial appraisal study will be met by The Vision programme.

The use of section 106 monies would provide the necessary leverage investment for bids to be made for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Goundwork and other sources. The opportunity exists for potential other funding as follows:

Groundwork Community Grants Scheme	Upper Level £100,000
Heritage Lottery Fund 'Parks for People'	£250K - £5 million

For the scheme to succeed partnership funding will be necessary for HLF funding in particular. A partnership between the Town Council, The Vision and the community with the section 106 monies and investment from The Vision would provide the opportunity to bid for investment of around £1 million overall. Such a sum would enable a significant programme of improvements to take place.