

KIRKHAM HIGH STREET HERITAGE ACTION ZONE AND FUTURE HIGH STREET FUND PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Guidance for Applicants

November 2021



How do I apply or find out more?

Please contact the Regeneration Team who will provide you with further information and guidance on how to apply kirkhamfutures@fylde.gov.uk

Please visit www.kirkhamfutures.org for full terms and conditions

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1. Introduction

What are the Kirkham High Street Heritage Action Zone & Future High Street Fund Property improvement Schemes

The Kirkham High Street Heritage Action Zones (HSHAZ) and Future High Street Fund (FHSF) are government funded regeneration programmes designed to help revive and revitalise Kirkham's historic high street. The Kirkham HSHAZ runs from April 2020 to March 2024 and the FHSF from April 2021 to March 2024. HSHAZ is funded by Historic England, together with Fylde Council and Kirkham Town Council. FHSF is funded by Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

Within both schemes there are a number of distinct projects. More information can be found at www.kirkhamfutures.org. A project common to both FHSF and HS HAZ is the Shopfront Improvement Scheme. This project is designed to restore and enhance shop frontages in Kirkham Town Centre by re-instating historic (pre WW1) shop frontages. Over the last decade, Kirkham has lost many of its historic shop frontages and, sadly, some of its character and uniqueness as a traditional market town. Inappropriate and unsympathetic refurbishments and re-developments have led to a hotch-potch of architectural styles and materials which do not best promote the town centre, are visually uninspiring and which detract from its historical character and appeal.

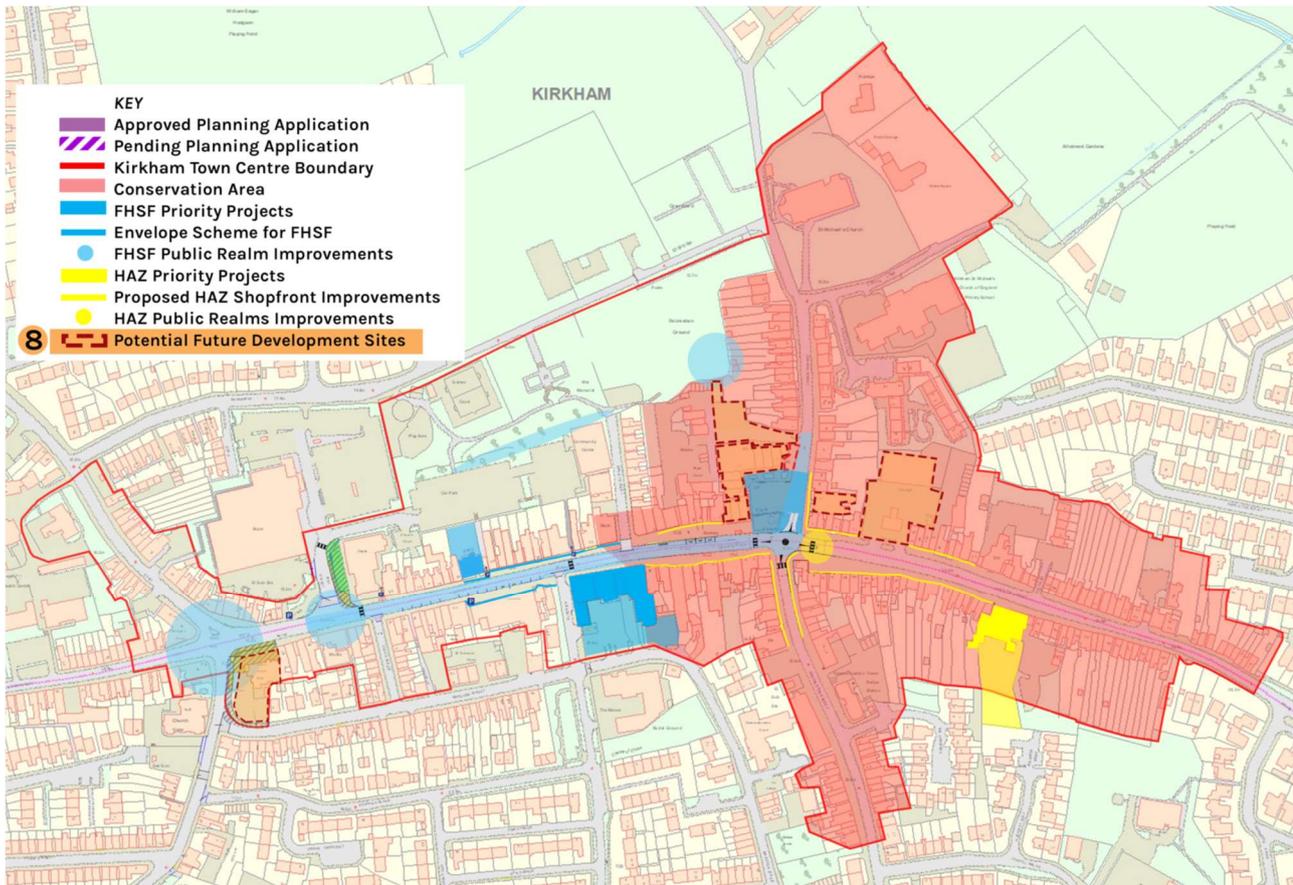
This scheme will seek to redress this and restore by offering improvement grants to high street business premises to reinstate historical features. Grants of **up to 90%** are available for schemes that preserve and enhance the quality and character of the historic high street through the repair and refurbishment of buildings. The fund will be open for applications until 30 September 2023 (subject to funding being available) with all work to be completed and invoiced by the end of January 2024. Applicants should note that there is a finite budget for this grant scheme, so early applications are encouraged.

Following a tender process, we have now appointed two local architectural practices – DC & MG Associates and North West Design Collective (NWDC) to help us deliver the scheme. They will work with shop owners and Fylde BC to produce individual designs for each shop frontage based on images contained in historic archive photos. Re-instatement will mean, for example bespoke hardwood windows and doors and, if needed, some re-alignment of features.

1.2 Which Buildings are Eligible for Grant

All businesses on the high street within the red line area in the map below are eligible for the scheme. The area includes shops on Station Road, Poulton Street, Church Street and Freckleton Street. The shops in the 60s units surrounding west side of Market Square are not eligible because they are not part of the original historic high street. Domestic properties are eligible to apply, however please note that, in the first phases of the scheme, priority will be given to shops as the key purpose of the scheme is to regenerate the high street.

The area shaded in red (below) shows the existing Conservation Area. HS HAZ money can only be spent in this area. FHSF money however can be spent anywhere in the Town Centre, as long as it is not funding the same element of a project. We are currently reviewing the Conservation Area and considering extending west to the whole of the town centre.



1.3 What type of work is eligible

In order to qualify for grant assistance, a comprehensive scheme for your building will need to be developed in conjunction with the design team and agreed with Fylde Council. The type of work that will be considered for grant assistance includes the following:

- External works to shopfronts and upper floors
- Some structural repairs
- Some structural timber repairs
- Re-roofing, including repairs to chimneys, lead-work and rainwater goods
- Brickwork and stonework repairs and re-pointing
- Render repairs and re-rendering
- Joinery repairs
- Certain specialist treatments
- The replacement of signage with more in keeping and appropriate signage only as part of a complete shopfront scheme

1.4 How Much Grant is Available ?

Grants of **up to 90%** are available for eligible schemes and works.

The precise grant award will be dependent on your detailed costed *schedule of works* that will need to be prepared as part of a scheme submission by the design team. These will enable potential

eligible works to be assessed in terms of meeting the grant award criteria (eligible spend) and in delivering value for money for you and the scheme.

In addition to the assessment of the property improvement, taking into account the complexity of repairs or extent of work required, a further assessment will be made of the additional economic benefits generated by the investment including vacant properties and space brought back into use, and jobs created or safeguarded.

1.5 Who Gives the Approval?

A grant panel made up of Council Officers will review each application and decide how much to award. Levels of award are discretionary and all applications will be decided on their merits. The grant panel decision will be final and there is no appeal procedure.

2. Design Principles & Management

2.1 Design Quality & the Historic Environment

It is essential that all schemes are of the highest quality in terms of design, material and repair. All works must be undertaken with respect for the character and integrity of the building and the conservation area in which it lies, in accordance with National and Local Plan policies.

The design team will liaise with the shop owner to understand individual requirements and will provide a design for the shopfront based on historical (c. pre WW1 designs) to create a traditional looking shopfront. The design team will project manage the design and construction (RIBA Stages 1-6) of the project. Any costs associated with the scheme designs, essential surveys and fees including planning and building control can be covered by the grant.

A photographic and written report on the building or structure will be made by the design team before work commences and applicants will be expected to enter into a development agreement. The design team will discuss the design with you and advise how your ideas and needs might be incorporated into the project.

Most buildings within the scheme area have shopfronts at ground floor level and some may have upper floors with empty space which they might wish to convert to residential. In this case please discuss with the design team and we may be able to fund conversion to residential, but at a lower grant rate of around 40%. However, repairs to, and replacement of, shop fronts will form the vast majority of eligible schemes.

Where traditional shopfronts have been replaced with plastic or other inappropriate materials, the new shopfront will need to be constructed to traditional design with wood as closely as possible in terms of its form and proportions.

2.2 How Will My Project Be Managed?

The whole scheme will be overseen, administered and monitored by Fylde Council. Individual shops and day to day liaison with shopowners will be managed by the design team, who will be your main port of call during the project.

The design team will work with you as applicant to develop your project and to obtain all the necessary consents required. Once a scheme has been developed and approved by the grants panel and a grant agreement is in place, the design team will then undertake a competitive tendering exercise on your behalf and will recommend a preferred contractor to undertake the works. It is expected that applicants will proceed with the recommendation of the preferred contractor made by the design team.

3.0 The Grant Application/Approval Process

3.1 How Do I Apply For A Grant ?

In order to apply for a grant you **must** have a freehold interest in the property or an un-expired lease of **at least 3 years**. Evidence of ownership or lease terms and period will be required to be submitted along with the written consent of the landlord for proposed works at the application stage.

You will need to complete a Grant Scheme Application Form which can be requested from the design team or the project officer by emailing kirkhamfutures@fylde.gov.uk

A simplified chart illustrating the grant application and assessment process is provided at **Appendix B**

3.2 Statutory Consents & Surveys - See section 6 for useful contacts.

Before a scheme can physically begin works and the grant agreement be drawn up, all of the necessary statutory consents will need to be obtained for the planned works.. The design team will assist you in ensuring that you have all the relevant consents and information for your scheme before it begins. ***Applicants will be expected to cover the costs of initial fees associated with planning permission and building regulations, however the fees associated with these consents will, in most cases, be covered by grant funding if approved.***

Planning Permission

Most building work to commercial properties will require planning approval

- **Advertisement Consent**
This may be required for any new fascia or hanging sign
- **Building Regulations**
You will need to check whether building regulation approval is required for your scheme
- **Structural Survey** - depending on your building and the type of work proposed, you might need to have a structural or specialist survey carried out. The scheme architect will discuss this with you in more detail. If you have a recent existing structural survey then please submit this alongside your application.
- **Asbestos survey** – where required
- **Legal/ Party Wall consents** – where these already exist or are required
- **Licensing** - If you are applying for a change of use this may require a licence for the proposed use if this includes alcohol ,food and entertainment.

3.3 Quotes

The design team will undertake a preliminary inspection of each property and identify any potential issues including any structural issues and indicative costings will then be determined.

The design team will work up detailed and fully costed design proposals for individual properties and work with you to complete an application form and submit this to the grant panel for consideration.

Careful consideration will need to be given to the form of contract entered into as grant levels will **not** normally be increased to cover any un-foreseen costs arising once work commences.

The applicant is responsible for paying for any works that have not been approved or any unforeseen additional costs.

3.4 Additional Works

You may be thinking of further internal works that are outside of the scope of this grant. You are welcome to discuss your requirements with the Contractor appointed to your scheme but such work must have a separate schedule of works to ensure such works do not undermine or duplicate any grant supported work and must also have the necessary consents.

3.5 Grant Assessment

Once all of the relevant information has been submitted by the applicant and the design team, the grant panel will assess your application and decide on the maximum amount of grant the Council is willing to provide for your scheme and the Council will inform you of the decision and offer.

3.6 Grant Offer Letter and Contract

If your application is approved, you will receive a formal offer of grant in the form of a grant offer letter (offering the grant in principle), once the grant offer has been accepted a grant agreement will be issued which you will be required to sign and return a copy to Fylde Council. This then forms a grant agreement between yourself and the Council. No grant-aided work can start until the Council has received a signed copy of the agreement and all of the necessary consents are in place. There will be a time limit for you to implement your works, or your grant offer may be withdrawn.

3.7 Conditions

A number of conditions will be attached to the grant. Some of these will be standard conditions and some will be specific to your project. The grant will only be paid as and when all conditions have been certified as having been fully complied with.

3.8 Work On Site

The design team will monitor work on site as it progresses with the appointed contractor responsible for day to day project management.

3.9 Health and Safety

The design team and contractor will manage the Health and Safety elements of the scheme ensuring that all works have the necessary permissions and works are carried out within strict Health and Safety guidelines.

4.0 Grant Payments

4.1 Payment Process

- Once the completed works to the property have been checked by the design team, the applicant/landlord and Fylde Council and then have been signed off for compliance, the grant will be paid directly to the applicant/landlord in accordance with the terms and conditions laid out in your grant agreement.

Please note: cash payments for works materials etc are not acceptable – this is the case even if receipts are provided.

- On receipt of the grant from Fylde Council you will be expected to pay the contractor's invoice in full including VAT .

Any additional works that you have agreed separately with the **contractor** will be your responsibility to pay. Similarly, any additional works agreed between the applicant and **the**

design team, which fall outside of the agreed grant aided work, will be the direct responsibility of the applicant to arrange payment to the design team.

It may be possible for you to make interim payments to the contractor at agreed stages of work for larger scale projects, on the recommendation of the design team. The grant would be administered accordingly to allow for this.

- If the final bill is less than anticipated, then the applicant will still be required to pay 10% of the lesser amount.

4.2 Clawback

The Grant or any such part of it as Fylde Council & Historic England sees fit, may be recovered from the grant recipient under Sections 58 and 80(7) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 if:

(a) any term or condition to which the Grant is subject is not complied with or is contravened;

or

during the period of 5 years from the payment of the final instalment of the Grant, the recipient disposes of the interest held in the property on that day ("the relevant interest"), or any part of that interest, by way of a sale exchange or lease for a term of not less than 21 years.

Fylde Council must be notified immediately in writing of any disposal of the whole or any part of the relevant interest, to take place within 5 years from the payment of the final instalment of the Grant, by way of sale or exchange or lease for a term of not less than 21 years, or by gift (otherwise than by will). Notification must include details of the proposed purchaser or recipient of gift, and the proposed sale price.

5.0 Public Subsidy

The Brexit transition period has ended and new rules on subsidy control now apply. The Kirkham High Street Heritage Action Zone/FHSF Funding is a subsidy. If receiving a grant may mean that your business (or any group of which it forms part) has had £1,950,000 or more in subsidies in the last three years, we will need to ask you for more information, and you are invited to contact us directly regarding your business. You can read more on the rules about subsidies here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complying-with-the-uks-international-obligations-on-subsidy-control-guidance-for-public-authorities/summary-guide-to-awarding-subsidies-from-1-january-2021>

6 Business Support

6.1 What other support is available

Fylde Council's Economic Development & Regeneration Team may be able to help you to secure additional in-house or external support for your business such as:

1. **Business Support** – we can signpost you to various business support organisations who can help new, young and growing businesses to expand, offering a range of advice and training such as business planning, marketing, social media. This may apply to you or the business occupying your premises.
2. **Grant Support** – from time to time the Council administers various grant funds that might be relevant to your business.
3. **Skills Training** – the Council works with a number of agencies and training providers who may be able to offer free or subsidised support to address your training needs, including pre-recruitment training
4. **Business Groups/Landlords Forums** – The Council can put you in touch with local business groups and forums that you/your business could join for additional support and advice.

To access this support please email invest@fylde.gov.uk

7 Key Contacts

Kirkham Futures Team

Email: Kirkhamfutures@fylde.gov.uk

Design Team

Michael Goode/Jill Cowgill
DC & MG Associates Ltd & North West Design Collective
Tel 01772 686030
Email: michael@dcmgassociates.co.uk

Fylde Council - listening@fylde.gov.uk

- **Planning Team**

Applications, planning and conservation advice, general enquiries (Development Management)

E: Planning@fylde.gov.uk

- **Building Control**

For building regulation applications and enquiries

T: 01253 658674

E: Buildingcontrol@fylde.gov.uk

- **Licensing**

E: licensing@fylde.gov.uk

- **Other Business Support**

Access to finance , recruitment , training and general business advice and growth support

T:01253 658478 E:invest@fylde.gov.uk

Appendix A: Eligibility of Works

Eligible Categories of Work and Costs

The Kirkham High Street Shopfront Improvement Scheme includes properties within the Town Centre Conservation Area. As such, all work will be undertaken with respect for the character and integrity of conservation area and work should be appropriate in terms of materials and design. The Council will work with the design team and applicants to ensure that appropriate schemes are implemented.

Quotes will only be invited from contractors known to be able to achieve the standards of quality required and who are preferably VAT registered. The design team will work with the applicant to recommend and appoint a nominated contractor.

This scheme **does not allow** for the applicant to appoint contractors.

Grant funding will not be paid for work that, in the reasonable opinion of the conservation officer, design team or Council does not meet generally accepted standards of quality in materials or workmanship appropriate to the circumstances, whether in conservation work or new construction.

The following categories of work and costs will attract grant assistance under the Kirkham Shopfront grant scheme.

1. Building Repair

This includes the structural and external repair of buildings, which are in use. It can sometimes include internal repairs, but only if these are necessary for structural stability. It does not include routine maintenance, redecoration, or internal repairs alone unless this is needed as a direct result of eligible repair.

The objective is to put into sound repair the structure and external envelope of buildings that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area. Repairs should be comprehensive in scope, using appropriate techniques or methods of construction and high quality natural or traditional materials, normally on a like-for-like basis except where poor quality materials (plastics or synthetics) have been used. Substitute or artificial materials (things like plastics and powder coated metals) are ineligible and their use generally unacceptable on grant-aided projects.

Repairs may include:

- Preparatory inspection is eligible including where this is in support of developing a credible schedule of works
- Consolidation or reinforcement of the existing structure, using the most conservative approach that is practicable, although limited reconstruction as existing is eligible if unavoidable.
- Appropriate repairs to timber frames, roof structure, beams, floor joists and other structural timbers, based on a careful and comprehensive survey of the existing structure.
- Dry rot eradication and timber preservative treatments, preferably based on an analysis and specification by an independent consultant (whose fees are also eligible) and using non-destructive techniques and non-toxic applications wherever possible.

- Damp-proofing by traditional methods, but only where damp is causing structural damage to the building. Damp-eradication measures, such as improved drainage, the introduction of French drains, or the lowering of ground levels, are preferable where practicable.
- Re-roofing in materials normally to match the historic covering, using new materials and/or re-using sound existing materials where possible. Repairs to the roof structure and high-level external elements should be undertaken concurrently. Re-roofing with artificial or alternative materials, such as concrete tiles, cement slates, reconstructed slates, artificial stone slates or felt will only be eligible where it can be demonstrated they were used in the original construction and are appropriate to the style of the building.
- Repairs to chimneys, including lining or rebuilding if structurally essential, provided that the chimney is reinstated accurately to the correct height and profile. The retention and repair of existing stacks may be a condition of any grant offered.
- Repair or renewal of existing leadwork, the provision of weathering's, and the reforming of gutters to adequate falls. Lead and cast iron should be replaced on a like-for-like basis, although in certain cases where theft, vandalism or maintenance access is exceptional problematic, there may be a case for using appropriate substitute materials.
- The repair or replacement of rainwater goods or a rainwater disposal system to a building, to appropriate specifications.
- The repair of external stonework and brickwork, including decorative elements, to an appropriate specification. Plastic in-situ resin based mortar repairs to brickwork and stonework are not normally acceptable or eligible, except for minor areas.
- Selective rebuilding of existing stonework and brickwork, if structurally necessary and to an agreed specification. Generally, this will be using salvaged existing materials, and/or new matching materials and should be preceded by a record survey of the existing. Only re-pointing which is structurally necessary, kept to the absolute minimum required and carried out to an appropriate specification, is eligible.
- The appropriate repair (or if unavoidable, replacement) of windows, external doors and other external joinery including fascia boards for signage which contributes to the character of the building and/or the conservation area. Replacement windows in plastic will not normally be considered.
- Repairs to external render, stucco or harling and limited areas of renewal (there should be a presumption against total or substantial renewal, unless this is unavoidable) to an approved specification. If such a coating has been removed in recent years to the detriment of the performance and appearance of the building, its reinstatement may be the most appropriate form of repair.
- The external cleaning of stonework and brickwork is only eligible where there is such a build-up of dirt, paint or built-up resin coatings on the surface that it must be removed in order to assess the extent of necessary repair or where the surface build-up is damaging the fabric of the building by chemical action. Cleaning for cosmetic reasons is therefore not eligible. Any cleaning which is agreed to be eligible must be undertaken to an approved specification and carried out by specialist conservation contractors.
- The repair or reinstatement of retaining walls, boundary walls and/or railings, if they contribute to the stability of the building, enhance its setting, or are of particular interest in the conservation area.
- The removal of asbestos if determined to be present on the exterior of the building.
- Signage where this is part of a wider scheme being implemented. All signage design will need to be agreed with the conservation officer and be in keeping. Advertisement consent might be required.

2. Professional services

Expenditure on fees for qualified professional advisers is eligible for grant funding. The design team will facilitate appropriate professionals to work on the project. ***Applicants will be expected to cover the costs of initial fees associated with acquiring planning permission and building regulations, however the fees associated with these consents will, in most cases, be covered by grant funding if approved.***

Non-eligible Categories of Work and Costs

Non-eligible Work - The following works will not attract grant assistance under the grant scheme. they are referred to as “non-eligible works”.

Examples of works that are non-eligible under the terms of the grant scheme are:

- Minor repairs such as replacing broken window panes unless they will be replaced by larger areas of work
- Routine maintenance such as fixing a loose slate on a roof, clearing debris out of gutters, redecoration (unless required as a direct result of eligible repair or conversion)
- Internal repairs – other than making good or where they are necessary for structural stability, eligible repairs or conversion.
- The use of substitute or artificial materials
- Signage which is not in keeping and has not been agreed with the conservation officer. All signage not covered under grant and approved by the conservation officer will require advertisement consent.

Non-eligible Costs

The following project costs will not attract grant assistance under the scheme:

- Internal works are not eligible. These must be funded separately.
- Contingencies - unseen extra costs are not covered.
- Insurance - this remains the owners or tenants' responsibility
- Interest on any loans taken out to fund your building project

Appendix B - Process

The anticipated project process will be as follows:

STAGE 1: Fylde Borough Council to pass the details of the potential applicants who have filled out full application forms for the shopfront improvement grant scheme (shopkeeper/building owners) on to the Design Team



STAGE 2: The design team will make contact with the applicant to arrange to undertake a preliminary inspection of the property and report back to Fylde Borough Council and the applicant to enable safeguarding by identification of any potentially problematic issues e.g. structural, ownership issues etc that may impact on overall viability of scheme. Indicative costings will also be determined at this stage.



STAGE 3: The design team will work up the detailed and fully costed design proposals for individual properties based on conceptual design and will present these to the grant panel.. If the grant is approved by the grant panel then the design team will work with the applicant to secure all appropriate consents for the project. A grant agreement will then be drawn up between Fylde Council and the applicant.



STAGE 4: Once the appropriate consents have been obtained and a grant agreement is in place, the design team will commission and appoint suitably qualified contractors / tradespeople.



STAGE 5: The design team will support the applicant to appoint the contractor to carry out the works agreed and the design team will manage the build phase alongside the applicant.



STAGE 6: Once all the works are complete a certificate of completion will be submitted by contractor to the applicant and the design team and subject to all parties being satisfied with the works carried out, the grant can then be claimed against the project. The applicant will also be required to pay their contribution at this stage.