

**ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
TASK AND FINISH REVIEW GROUP**

**Northgate  
Heritage Regeneration  
2002-07**

*Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme  
&  
Partnership Scheme for Conservation Areas*

**DRAFT FINAL REPORT**

**MARCH 2007**

**TASK AND FINISH GROUP MEMBERS**

Cllr Stella Robson (Chair)  
Cllr Fred Lawton  
Cllr Ron Lewis  
Cllr Dorothy Long  
Cllr Jim Ruck  
Cllr John Vasey

## **INTRODUCTION**

Environment Scrutiny Committee was asked to undertake a review of the impact of the Northgate Heritage Regeneration schemes, in terms of whether they represented value for money, and whether they had made a notable difference in the area. A Task and Finish Group was established to consider the Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS) 2002 – 2005 and the Partnership Scheme for Conservation Areas (PSCA) 2005 – 2007. The review also considered the extent to which targets have been achieved and the potential for further funding opportunities in the future.

The information presented here is based on discussion following a presentation given by Officers to the Task and Finish Group, as well as information gathered by the group whilst on a site visit along Northgate.

## **BACKGROUND**

The ‘Heritage Economic Regeneration Schemes’ were promoted by English Heritage (EH) in the early 2000’s. Local Authorities were invited to bid for EH money, which had to be match funded by the Local authority. Funds were mainly to help property owners carry out repairs and reinstatements, plus some area environmental enhancements. As with earlier EH schemes, HERS was targeted at conservation areas; was not restricted to listed buildings; was limited to a set period; and managed day-to-day by the Local Authority. Furthermore, the schemes were to be focused on areas which required economic as well as physical regeneration. In particular where repairs and enhancements would help sustain local employment, provide new homes and encourage inward investment.

## **FINDINGS**

### **Northgate HERS**

In Darlington, the criteria for HERS was most closely met by the part of the Northgate Conservation Area fronting onto Northgate/High Northgate (see Map at **Appendix 1**). The Scheme boundary extends approximately half a mile from the ring road to the railway bridge and includes 120 properties, both commercial and residential. The area is important historically as the route of the old Great North Road and as a link between pre-industrial Darlington and the Stockton & Darlington Railway. It contains various listed buildings and others of townscape value, where historic features are threatened by poor repair or may be masked/damaged by previous inappropriate alterations.

The HERS Area is also acknowledged socially and economically as a deprived part of the town which has had low levels of investment for decades. This in turn can impact on the image of Darlington generally, as North Road provides a busy gateway in and out of the town.

In July 2002 EH confirmed the Councils bid for funding, which was to be match funded from ONE Single Programme monies under the banner of Darlington Gateway. The generous grants available reflected the level of deprivation and underinvestment in the area and consisted of:

- 65% for building repairs (eg roofs, walls)
- 75% for architectural reinstatements (eg shopfronts, railings)
- BUT 0% for maintenance and most internal improvements.

To get a grant, work needed to be to conservation standard and reinstatements had to be authentic. Although, various buildings were targeted in the implementation programme as priorities, in practice there was a need for some quick and visible improvements and so funding was given mainly on a first-come, first-served basis.

The HERS scheme was launched in 2003 and twelve building projects were carried out, benefiting 14 buildings. Details of the projects are included at **Appendix 2** ranging variously from:

- structural repairs (essential but inconspicuous), to re-fenestration (low-cost but high impact); and,
- comprehensive restoration of buildings, to reinstatement of boundary features.

### 29 High Northgate



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**

## HERS Expenditure

<b>Northgate HERS total public funding</b> (ONE £187,441) (EH £134,284)	<b>£321,725</b>
<b>Of which building grants</b>	<b>£294,390</b>
<b>Which drew in spending by owners of at least</b> (on eligible works £131,166) (on non-eligible works at least £33,372)*	<b>£164,539</b>
<b>Investment in Assisted Buildings</b>	<b>&gt; £459,000</b>

\* Details of spending on non-eligible works not required from owners

## HERS Targets and Achievements

Indicator	Target	Achieved
<b>Physical regeneration:</b>		
Properties grant-assisted	13	14
(including number targeted for priority action)	-	11
<b>Employment:</b>		
Businesses attracted	1	0
Businesses supported	1.5	2
<b>New homes:</b>		
New homes created with grant aid	0	0
<b>Investment:</b>		
Private investment	£50,200	£164,539

Indicators relate to direct achievements of PSCA, not indirect

### Northgate PSCA

EH supported the idea of extending the HERS through a new Partnership Scheme for Conservation Areas, based on similar principles to the HERS scheme. Again Darlington was successful in its bid and the two-year grant was launched in July 2005. The Council match-funded the EH contribution directly, and although slightly reduced, the grants remained generous:

- 60% for repairs/restoration of historic features
- 70% for the re-introduction of lost historic features.

To date, 12 grants have been provided assisting 9 Properties. The details are set out in detail at **Appendix 3**.

The EH grant was conditional on the Council preparing a Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) for Northgate and adopting an Article 4 Direction to remove various permitted

development rights in the area thereby protecting the grant investment made in the properties. Both these conditions have been met and the CAA is available on the Council's Website, or hardcopies are available from the Council's Conservation Officer.

### 109 High Northgate



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**

#### PSCA Expenditure

<b>Northgate PSCA total public funding</b> (DBC £200,000) (EH £160,000)	<b>£360.000</b>
<b>Of which building grants</b>	<b>£360.000</b>
<b>Which drew in spending by owners of at least</b> (on eligible works £113,311) (on non-eligible works at least £ (not known))*	<b>£113,311</b>
<b>Investment in Assisted Buildings</b>	<b>&gt; £473,311</b>

\* Details of spending on non-eligible works not required from owners  
> plus costs of conversion to residential accommodation

### **PSCA Targets and Achievements**

Indicator	Target	Achieved
<b>Physical regeneration:</b>		
Properties grant-assisted (including number targeted for priority action)	10 -	9 7
<b>Employment:</b>		
Businesses attracted	-	1
Businesses supported	-	6
<b>New homes:</b>		
New homes created with grant aid	-	7
<b>Investment:</b>		
Private investment	-	<b>£113,311</b>

Indicators relate to direct achievements of PSCA, not indirect

### **FOLLOWING THE LEAD**

As hoped, other owners have started to invest in, and adjacent to, the area without grants. Some of the owners had expressed interest in grants but were either not offered them because of a shortage of funds in a particular year, or the nature of their project, or because they opted not to take them up because they were not willing to carry out work to 'conservation' standard. Nevertheless, some of these owners may not have come forward without the uplift in confidence engendered by the HERS and PSCA.

### **FUTURE GRANTS**

The T&F Group were informed that EH have no proposals at present to extend the PSCA grant scheme, in its current or any other form. Furthermore, Officers are not aware of any similar funding available from other sources. Members were keen that the good work achieved through the HERS and PSCA should be continued and that officers should investigate further sources of funding and, where the opportunity arises, bid for these resources where appropriate.

### **FINAL COMMENTS**

Having considered the information before them, and visited the Northgate area to assess the Grants Scheme results on the ground, the T&F Group makes the following observations:

- The Review Group can confirm that there is a general view that the work undertaken over the past five years through the two Schemes of Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS) and Partnership Scheme for Conservation Areas (PCSA) has been both successful and encouraging in improving the gateway approach to Darlington, however there remains a lot more work to do;

- The improvements to the area have been noticeable however it has been a slow process although momentum is gathering.
- Both grant and private money has been used as residents and owners of property in the area have noticed the difference being made. If the work were continued hopefully others would be encouraged to follow, success breeds success.
- The Northgate Conservation Area appraisal is supportive of both HERS and PCSA schemes.
- During the study of this important Gateway area the Group has identified a number of issues which could be pursued to improve this important Gateway approach to Darlington Town Centre as follows :-
  - There is a general need for more work on properties within the Northgate Conservation Area and as the current schemes cannot be extended therefore research should be undertaken to locate complementary economic funding through other sources i.e. Tees Valley Partnership;
  - The economic regeneration of the area should be a priority with traffic management and parking facilities being identified and solutions found;
  - The HERS and PCSA Schemes are commendable and worthwhile, however there is a great deal left to do and it is hoped that funding can be found to continue the existing schemes or alternatively pursue a local authority-run scheme with similar goals;
  - The Group had identified many problems in the area and further lines of research are required which are beyond the parameters of this study, it is felt that research should be undertaken into the following
    - Commercial Issues;
    - Economic Issues
    - Traffic and Parking Issues; and
    - General appearance of the area.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That, in view of the success of these Schemes, the Council consider financing a complementary scheme for visual improvements to properties facing onto Northgate and also seek further finance to provide further schemes for regeneration of properties.



**APPENDIX 1: NORTHGATE HERITAGE REGENERATION SCHEMES  
BOUNDARY**





## APPENDIX 2: HERS PROJECTS

### **29 High Northgate**

(Former vacant shop, now Printing.com)

•**First grant to be offered, and probably the most important.**

- within primary target block, 11-29 High Northgate;
- poor condition visually and structurally;
- prominent - major impact on image of area and town.

•**Main grant works:**

- structural repair;
- reinstatement of traditional shopfront;
- reinstatement of traditional windows (inc. bay);
- Reroofing;
- repointing, re-rendering & brick repair.

•**Eligible costs:** £52,291

•**Grant:** £35,002

### **19 High Northgate**

*(Sadie's shop with flat above)*

- Again part of the primary target block, 11-29 High Northgate.
- Works essential to the structural integrity of the terrace and to the retention of the property. But almost inconspicuous.

•**Main grant works:**

- structural roof repairs
- structural wall restraint to front & rear
- reroof in Welsh slate
- replace cast iron rainwater goods
- reinstate rear chimney

•**Eligible costs:** £21,849

•**Grant:** £13,826

### **73 High Northgate**

*(Residential)*

- Part of the secondary target block, 69-81 High Northgate.
- One of the oldest groups of buildings in the area (early-mid 19thC). A fine building whose character had been diminished.

•**Main grant works:**

- reinstate front sash windows
- repair front door
- overhaul & repair rear windows
- reroof in slate
- replace CI rainwater goods

•**Eligible costs:** £27,881

•**Grant:** £18,430

### **97 High Northgate**

*(Residential)*

- Part of the secondary target block, 91-109 High Northgate.
- Close to the S&DR complex.
- Part of a pair with No.99.

•**Main grant works:**

- reinstate CI railings & repair stone steps
- reinstate/repair windows & surrounds
- repair doorcase
- reinstate hardwood front door
- reroof rear range
- renew CI rainwater goods
- rebuild chimney & reinstate pots
- rebuild rear wall
- cosmetic imps. to No.99

•**Eligible costs:** £65,253

•**Grant:** £44,772

## **95, 101 & 103 High Northgate**

*(Residential)*

•Again, part of the secondary target block, 91-109 High Northgate.

•**Main grant works:**

–reinstate CI railings and repair stonework  
–to match style of No.97

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•**Eligible costs:** £26,567

•**Grant:** £19,926

## **105 High Northgate**

*(Residential)*

•Another part of the secondary target block, 91-109 High Northgate.

•**Main grant works:**

–reinstate sash windows  
–repair/renew CI rainwater goods  
–reinstate front door  
–repair rear wall & gate  
–remove pebbledash  
–render in traditional manner  
–reinstate stone boundary wall & steps  
–reinstate CI railings

–

•**Eligible costs:** £65,967

•**Grant:** £47,425

## **149 Northgate**

*(Residential, behind vacant shop)*

•Part of the secondary target block, 143-163 Northgate. Late-18thC/early-19thC.

•**Main grant works:**

–remove render from brickwork  
–reinstate first floor sash windows  
–repair front door  
–repair shop parapet

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•**Eligible costs:** £27,037

•**Grant:** £17,954

### **151 Northgate**

*(Residential, behind shop)*

•Again, part of the secondary target block, 143-163 Northgate.

•**Main grant works:**

- reroof in slate; associated chimney repairs, flashings
- renew CI rainwater goods
- remove render from brickwork
- reinstate sash windows
- overhaul doorcase & door
- renew access gate
- 

•**Eligible costs:** £33,446

•**Grant:** £22,660

### **153 Northgate**

*(Residential, behind shop)*

•Part of the secondary target block, 143-163 Northgate.

•**Main grant works:**

- reroof dwelling in slate
- reroof shop in stainless steel
- repair flashings & CI guttering

•**Eligible costs:** £25,673

•**Grant:** £16,688

### **172-176 Northgate**

*(Now Topoli Joe's play centre & Joeggio restaurant)*

•Major commercial property, empty since vacated by Thornleys.

•**Main grant works:**

- reinstate traditional shopfront
- reinstate first floor bay windows

•**Eligible costs:** £31,322

•**Grant:** £23,492

### **32 High Northgate**

*(Darlington DIY)*

•Small 19thC shop on prominent junction.

•**Main grant works:**

- reroof in slate
- reinstate CI rainwater goods
- repair shopfront
- reinstate sash window

•**Eligible costs:** £9,938

•**Grant:** £6,503

### **108 High Northgate**

*(Residential)*

•Residential terrace on east side of road which has lost much of its original character.

•**Main grant works:**

- repair & reinstate sash windows
- reinstate basement lightwell
- reinstate stone steps
- reinstate boundary wall & railings

•**Eligible costs:** £38,327

•**Grant:** £27,710

## **APPENDIX 3: PSCA PROJECTS (AS AT 5 MARCH 2007)**

### **145 Northgate**

*(Commercial with residential upper floors)*

- First PSCA Scheme project.
- First property beyond North Lodge on the W side of Northgate - a priority property.

•**Main grant works:**

- reroof in Welsh slate
- re-point chimney stack
- cast iron rainwater goods
- new stainless-steel roof to flat-roofed shop.

•**Eligible costs:** £36,758

•**Grant:** £21,777

### **109 High Northgate**

*(Residential)*

- Residential terrace to W side of road, degraded by unsympathetic modern alterations - a priority property.

•**Main grant works**

**grant No.1:**

- 13 new timber sash windows to front and side elevations
- render repairs
- stone wall repairs
- new cast iron railings and gate
- re-paint exterior

**grant No.2:**

- structural repairs to internal bay at 1st and 2nd floors

**grant No.3:**

- replace chimney stack, inc. pots to end gable (works progressing)

•**Eligible costs:** £66,235

•**Grant:** £45,592

**8 High Northgate (The Railway Tavern)** (*Works ongoing*)  
(*Commercial*)

•A priority property, on W side of road.

•**Main grant works:**

- restore external timberwork, inc. windows & pilasters
- replace felt bay roof cladding with lead roll
- new side elevation timber gate

•**Eligible costs:** £11,217

•**Grant:** £6,730

**21 High Northgate** (*works ongoing*)  
(*Commercial, upper floors being converted to residential*)

•Mid-terraced building, opposite junction to John Street - a priority property.

•**Main grant works:**

- rebuild front elevation wall, suffering from structural weakness
- reroof in slate
- 4 new timber sash windows, one triple casement window
- new Victorian-style shop-front

•**Eligible costs:** £66,975

•**Grant:** £44,554

**85 High Northgate**  
(*Commercial*)

•Semi-detached club, re-fronted in the 1920s.

•**Main grant works**

**grant No.1:**

- restore existing windows, inc. stained glass
- 3 timber windows replaced
- render repairs
- new timber front door (replacing later window)

**grant No.2:**

- restore front boundary stone wall
- new cast iron railings and gate

•**Eligible costs:** £42,132

•**Grant:** £27,745



**120-122 High Northgate** (*works yet to start*)

(*Vacant shop*)

•Commercial property on E side of road. Penultimate property before rail bridge. Upper floors being converted to residential use.

•**Main grant works:**

- restore 19thC shop-front, including canopy
- restore & replace timber sash windows
- reroof in Welsh slate
- Remove paint to frontage
- reinstate front elevation stone boundary wall & cast iron railings

•**Eligible costs:** £44,601

•**Grant:** £30,340

**23 High Northgate** (*works yet to start*)

(*Shop*)

•Mid-terrace property on W side of road, opposite John Street. Upper floors being converted to residential use.

•**Main grant works:**

- restore 19thC shopfront, including canopy
- restore 19thC front door
- reinstate timber door to match 19thC original
- restore & replace timber sash windows
- reroof in Welsh slate
- reinstate front elevation stone boundary wall & cast iron railings

•**Eligible costs:** £45,490

•**Grant:** £30,524

**95, High Northgate** (*works yet to start*)

(*residential*)

**Main grant works:-**

- replace broken 19thC front door with replica

**Eligible costs:** £823.72

**Grant:** £412.00

**142-144, Northgate** (*works yet to start*)  
(*Commerical*)

- A priority property, on W side of road.

***Main grant works:-***

- structural repairs to roof, including new slate tiles
- renew rainwater goods in cast iron
- new sash windows
- new timber joists and boards
- rebuild chimneybreast and stack
- repair Georgian staircase balusters, spindles and newel posts

**Eligible costs:** £31,000.00

**Grant:** £18,688.00

**NOTES OF MEETING**  
**HERITAGE ECONOMIC REGENERATION SCHEME (HERS)**  
**TASK AND FINISH REVIEW GROUP**

18th January, 2007

**PRESENT** – Councillor S. Robson (in the Chair); Councillors, Lawton, Lewis, Long and Ruck.

**Officers in Attendance** – Steve Petch, Planning Services Manager, Martyn Kendall, Conservation Officer and Karen Graves, Democratic Support Officer.

Councillor Robson opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the meeting and advised that Councillor D.A. Lyonette had asked Environment Scrutiny to undertake the Review on the HERS Scheme to investigate the effect the HERS Scheme had had on Northgate, whether it represented value for money and if a notable difference had been made to the area. The main purpose of today's meeting was to set the Terms of Reference and give consideration to the timescale for undertaking the Review .

The following points were discussed/considered :-

- The review could be completed with two meetings and a site visit, with one of the meetings being in the format of a presentation of 'before' and 'after' photographs; a target date for completion of the review was set at 31st March, 2007;
- During the site visit Members were keen to speak to occupants of properties who have had work done under the HERS Scheme and to people who wanted work done but owners of properties were unwilling;
- Information required by Members included the amount of properties worked on; the input by HERS; and the final outcome so that a rational judgement on the outcome of the scheme could be made;
- Martyn confirmed that the HERS finished in 2005 and it was replaced by the Darlington Partnership, a separate scheme, which was due to finish in 2007 after which grants could not be given;
- Steve confirmed that the HERS was match-funded from Darlington's share of One North East funding, the Darlington Partnership was match funded by Darlington Borough Council;
- A Member stated that the recommendations of the Review should state how valuable the scheme has been and suggest that it is a pity it has not been extended especially to other areas of the Town;

- Martyn also confirmed that the ‘Bed Shop’ in Northgate was a large scheme costing of £75,000 which was currently being restored and as English Heritage have contributed more than £25,000 they obviously have a large part to play in the works;
- It was stated that the HERS Scheme had assisted 14 properties and had had £300,000 to allocated to applicants, the current scheme had helped 8/9 properties with £50,000 remaining, two applications had been received but structural work was involved;
- Members gave consideration to the works undertaken in Northgate which were seen as essential as it was a corridor area to the Town Centre but recognized that the railway bridge was owned by Network Rail;
- It was confirmed that the aim of the scheme was to improve the appearance of building and restore them appropriately and that some grants were given for structural repairs and may not be visible from the external appearance;
- Steve advised Members that a lot of work had recently been undertaken on Conservation Areas and Article 4 directions had been put in place and were currently at consultation stage;
- It was also confirmed that four Conservation Area appraisals had been completed, two by consultants, and that funding was being investigated to undertake further appraisals, it was hoped to complete three more in the next financial year and have all areas completed within five years, after which the Appraisals would need to be re-visited and updated;
- The Conservation Review Group undertaken by Environment Scrutiny Committee had been a great help.

**IT WAS AGREED** – (a) That the following be this Task and Finish Review Group’s Draft Terms of Reference :-

- The Cabinet Member with portfolio for Regeneration and Planning requested Environment Scrutiny to undertake this Review of the HERS and Darlington Partnership Conservation Schemes within Northgate Conservation Area to determine whether it represented value for money and if a notable difference had been made to the area.
- Establish what the targets were and measure the schemes against those targets.
- Establish whether the schemes have made a notable difference.
- Investigate whether there are opportunities for funding in the future.

(b) That the next meeting of this Group be held on 15th February, 2007 incorporating a site visit to the Northgate Conservation Area.

**NOTES OF MEETING**  
**HERITAGE ECONOMIC REGENERATION SCHEME (HERS)**  
**TASK AND FINISH REVIEW GROUP**

15th February, 2007

**PRESENT** – Councillor S. Robson (in the Chair); Councillors, Lawton, Lewis, Long, Ruck and Vasey.

**Officers in Attendance** – Steve Petch, Planning Services Manager, Martyn Kendall, Conservation Officer, Brendan Boyle, Planning Officer and Karen Graves, Democratic Support Officer.

Councillor Robson opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the meeting and advised that the purpose of today's meeting was to receive a PowerPoint presentation on the Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS) and Northgate Partnership Scheme for Conservation Areas (PSCA) followed by a site visit to the Northgate Conservation Area in order to judge the outcome of both schemes.

The following points were discussed/considered :-

- HERS operated from 2002 to 2005 (with final payment March 2006) and was promoted by English Heritage to help property owners carry out repairs and reinstatements in the early 2000's, together with some environmental enhancements;
- Grant rates were 65% for building repairs and 75% architectural reinstatements;
- Local authorities were invited to bid for, and match-fund, EH funding;
- HERS was targeted at conservation areas, limited for a set period of years and managed by the Local Authority;
- HERS focused on areas which required economic and physical regeneration and that criteria was most closely met by part of Northgate Conservation Area;
- Following the bid process Northgate HERS was publicly launched in January 2003;
- Twelve projects, benefiting 14 buildings, were undertaken covering structural repair, re-fenestration, comprehensive restoration and reinstatement of boundary features;
- Northgate HERS expenditure included building grants of £294,390, with owners spending at least a further £164,539 giving a minimum total investment in assisted buildings of £459,000;
- The Powerpoint presentation gave further details on the schemes undertaken;
- The Northgate Partnership Scheme for Conservation Areas (PSCA) was launched in July 2005 with an initial two year period for grant offers and Local Authority match funding;

- Grant rates are slightly less than HERS at 60% for repairs and restoration of historic features and 70% for re-introduction of lost historic features;
- The first grant was offered in October 2005 and in October 2006 English Heritage reduced funding from £100,000 to £60,000:
- To date, ten grants have assisted seven properties with a final date for grants being offered of 31st March, 2007;
- To date there was currently £19,100 of PCSA funds remaining;
- The Powerpoint presentation gave further details on the schemes undertaken;
- Further property owners within the area have started to invest without grant assistance including some who expressed an interest but were not offered grants due to shortage of funds or the nature of the project;
- The Powerpoint presentation gave further details on the schemes undertaken;
- A site visit to the Northgate Conservation Area then took place.

**IT WAS AGREED** – (a) That the thanks of this Review Group be extended to the Officers for their informative presentation.

(b) That, as the Group has completed its investigations, the final report be compiled and given consideration at the next meeting scheduled for 8th March, 2007.



**NOTES OF MEETING  
HERITAGE ECONOMIC REGENERATION SCHEME (HERS)  
TASK AND FINISH REVIEW GROUP**

8th March, 2007

**PRESENT** – Councillor S. Robson (in the Chair); Councillors, Lawton, Lewis, Ruck, and J. Vasey.

**Officers in Attendance** –Martyn Kendall, Conservation Officer, Brendan Boyle, Planning Officer and Karen Graves, Democratic Support Officer.

Councillor Robson opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the meeting and advised that the purpose of today's meeting was to look at all the information which had been gathered and formulate recommendations for approval by Environment Scrutiny and ultimately Cabinet. She stated that the Review Group had seen very good progress of both Schemes and they had made an excellent impact on the Northgate Conservation Area.

The following points were discussed/considered :-

- Individual gems had been produced with the little money available, the overall visual impact of the area was important and it was felt that this may not have been achieved;
- There were 120 properties in the area with 23 receiving grants – approximately 19% with some grants covering structural works and therefore not readily visible;
- A large number of properties still have eligibility and further improvements could be made if funding was available. There was also an economic element to the Schemes which it was felt could be further explored;
- The size of the problem was greater than the scope of available grants and it was questioned what stimulus could be offered to encourage fruitful use of the properties concerned;
- It was stated that in the West Midlands areas were made special i.e. the Birmingham Jewellery Corner, and as monies had recently been awarded to the Museum could that area be developed, there had already been improvements to the Sure Start building in McNay Street and apartments had recently been built in Stephenson Street – Was it possible to target regeneration in North Road;
- Members did agree that the Schemes had stopped the decline of the area and full credit should be taken for the improvements and enhancements;
- Officers reported that other Local Authorities had run parallel schemes for smaller works that were not within the remit of similar schemes to HERS and PCSA whereby cosmetic improvements could be undertaken at the same time as structural improvements;
- It was felt that the impact of the Commercial Street development on footfall in the area would be minimal and it was suggested that the problems for commercial properties in the Northgate area were traffic-related – Northgate is one of the busiest roads in the Borough and due to traffic regulations and parking restrictions it was difficult for passing

traffic to 'stop and do business';

- It was agreed amongst Members that Valley Street was a thriving area and can attract business as there was ample opportunity for parking however several streets in Northgate, including Garden Street, were bollarded for safety reasons therefore reducing the opportunity for traffic to stop – there was a feeling that traffic should be managed to ensure that the provision for stopping was made;
- Members agreed that a consultation exercise with businesses located in Northgate would be advantageous to determine their needs;
- A Member stated that English Heritage should take into account environmental issues such as global warming and climate change when placing conditions on works to be done, however, Officers advised that English Heritage were aware of the environmental issues but they ensured that the historic details were correct and accurate;

**IT WAS AGREED** – (a) That the thanks of this Review Group be extended to the Officers for their involvement in the investigations and research of the Group.

(b) That, the findings and recommendations of the Group be incorporated into the Final Report for consideration by Environment Scrutiny Committee at its meeting scheduled for 29th March, 2007.