Middlesbrough Town Hall passes the first stage

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Middlesbrough Town Hall, a magnificent Grade II* listed Victorian building, has been a major icon of the industrial heritage of Middlesbrough and the Tees Valley since it opened in 1889.

Its dominant position in the town centre, where it combines Middlesbrough's original municipal buildings and Victorian concert hall venue, makes it a key part of the town's heritage and thriving cultural life.

The ambitious refurbishment and restoration project will feature major improvements to the much loved neo-Gothic building, offering much wider access visitors, enabling a greater understanding of the history of the building, and creating a unique heritage attraction for the region as a whole.

Proposals include:

- bringing currently unused spaces of heritage significance back into use
- improving/restoring spaces of heritage significance that are currently in use
- developing new activities for engagement with, participation in and learning about heritage in both new and restored spaces
- revealing the full heritage significance of Middlesbrough Town Hall as an iconic physical representation of the town/wider Teesside area's historical and industrial heritage
- contributing to the sustainable future use and longer-term preservation of the town hall by improving its viability as a flagship cultural venue, as well as heritage asset
- delivering significant heritage impacts by boosting local knowledge and pride in the importance of the town / wider Teesside area's history and legacy

The town hall will continue to develop its partnerships with new and contemporary buildings such as mima and the Sage at Gateshead to create a 'past, present and future' package showing the history of the town, the development of local government and the regional arts and music scene.

As originally conceived, Middlesbrough Town Hall was the embodiment of the Victorian Corporation's confidence that Middlesbrough would continue to expand.

This important investment in a cherished building will help to revive that vision and the sense of pride local people have both in Middlesbrough's rich history and its aspiration to continue 'Moving Forward'.

Councillor Charlie Rooney, Middlesbrough Council's Executive Member for Regeneration and Economic Development, said: "The town hall is an iconic symbol for the region and a great focal point for the town, so the confirmation that we're a step closer to major funding is fantastic news. If we are successful in winning the full £3.7million, the work it will enable will restore and refurbish important parts of the town hall, helping to secure the future of this historic building for many generations to come."

Ivor Crowther, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund North East, said: "The town hall is a stunning reminder of the town's proud industrial heritage and continues to stand as an important local landmark for the community. HLF's initial support marks a crucial first step for exciting plans to reaffirm the building's social and historic value, secure its long-term future and

transform it into a flagship heritage asset for Middlesbrough.”

Notes to editors

A first-round pass / initial support means the project meets HLF criteria for funding and HLF believes the project has potential to deliver high-quality benefits and value for Lottery money.

The application was in competition with other supportable projects, so a first-round pass is an endorsement of outline proposals. Having been awarded a first-round pass, the project now has up to two years to submit fully developed proposals to compete for a firm award.

On occasion, an applicant with a first-round pass will also be awarded development funding towards the development of their scheme. Development funding of £299,400 was awarded to help progress the plans towards a full bid for £3.7million which will be used to carry out major improvements to the town hall.

Further information

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