

## LUF20361 - From the Station to the Sea - Revitalising St Anne's Town Centre and Promenade Gardens

Fylde | England | Cultural | £13,140,000

### **Bid Summary:**

The LUF bid will kickstart delivery of the St Anne's-on-the-Sea Masterplan (Attachment 16) by transforming public realm and connectivity from the station gateway to the Promenade, integrating the town centre and seafront and providing a linked, high-quality experience for residents and visitors alike.

Alongside the agreed £12m investment in the sea wall, the bid provides the foundations for the relaunch of St Anne's offer as a high-quality family seaside resort and Fylde Coast's 'retreat', encouraging new investment in a refreshed and more diverse town centre, and a transformed family-focussed offer along the seafront, extending activity into the evening.

### **Headline:**

This was a relatively strong bid, with good information on strategic fit, rationale for investment and a well-presented economic case, with relevant information and data. The bid would have benefitted from an improved deliverability section. The bid felt unambitious in scope, with the potential to be delivered in discreet phases rather than as one project, and possibly premature in being submitted for funding with preparatory work still to be undertaken. Some of the funding interdependencies and the procurement strategy could also have been better developed and explained.

### **Assessment Overview**

#### **Strategic Fit:**

There was clear and robust engagement with local stakeholders. These were both strong and broad, with both local community members / groups and local businesses being contacted about the proposal.

The bid made excellent reference to local / regional / national strategies. The bid's discussion of the Redefining Lancashire and the positive references to its key objectives showed its excellent symmetry to regional strategies.

There was a clear rationale as to how the investment would challenge the barriers to growth. This had been supplemented with a strong degree of rationale and evidence.

However, there was not a clear link between the UK's environmental strategy (Net Zero) and the proposed interventions set out in the bid.

There were some gaps on how the proposed interventions would improve the lives of the elderly within St Anne's. Much of the bid discussed how St Anne's had a higher average age than the rest of the UK, yet the interventions, such as the improvements to the town centre, did not discuss how this would impact those with mobility issues.

#### **Economic Case:**

The bid included comprehensive analysis of the issues facing St Anne's with a number of key metrics used to demonstrate where the area had underperformed compared to regional and national trends. Data came from reliable sources (local data sources and studies, national statistics and third-party data). Robustness was ensured through use of multiple data sources. Evidence around barriers, costs, and benefits (including assumptions used in modelling) was in line with guidance and the studies used were listed throughout the Technical Note.

The bid included a well-presented logic model which covered all the outputs, outcomes and impacts (broken down in to short, medium and long-term). The Theory of Change set out a strong narrative for how proposals would achieve the stated aims and address existing and future problems. Evidence and case studies were referenced which link outputs to outcomes – however, some additional evidence on how these outcomes would drive the expected impacts would have strengthened the Theory of Change.

The bid explained to a good level of detail the methodology behind calculations of costs and benefits. Economic costs had been correctly derived from financial costs. All relevant outcomes had been included and these had been monetised in line with official guidance, using suitable appraisal periods. Additionality assumptions were specified for each benefit and were sensible. The size of benefits were proportional to the proposals and were justified by the analysis and evidence. All costs and benefits had been reported by time period and had been adjusted to the correct price year and discounted appropriately.

**Deliverability:**

This application was underpinned by a masterplan for the thoroughfare from St Anne's station to, and along, the seafront. It was limited in its ambition to upgrading the public realm in a programme of six distinct projects which were relatively straightforward projects to deliver.

However, the application appeared premature, given the substantial work required to turn the masterplan into delivery. Such work included the appointment of a design team, designs, cost estimates refined, planning approval sought and obtained, procurement strategy approved, tenders sought, and a contractor appointed before a start on site can be achieved.

In consequence, there was little wriggle room within the programme should any delays be incurred, and it was noted that some of the works were dependent on the successful and timely implementation of works to the sea defences. It was noted that this dependency was not included within the programme's risk register.

It was not clear how the £300k from the UKSPF was to be considered as eligible match funding given that it was proposed to be used for events and it was not obvious where the costs of such activity were included within the project budgets. A more refined procurement strategy would have made the application more convincing. The approach to commissioning was not clear and it would have been helpful to have seen a more definitive approach to the number of construction contracts envisaged and the routes to market.

The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan set out clear objectives and discussed the need for agreement on research questions to monitor the outcomes of the bid. Indicators were provided, to allow for effective monitoring. No explicit governance arrangements were provided.