

## Brownfield Housing Fund FAQs

### Eligibility Questions

#### **Who is eligible to apply for the Brownfield Housing Fund?**

The fund is open to both public and private sector partners within the housing sector (subject to the production of a successful EOI and compliant Business Case), including:

- Local Authorities within York and North Yorkshire
- Housing Associations / Registered Providers
- Private Sector Developers (subject to Subsidy Control compliance)
- Any other Housing Developers (i.e. third sector / community cooperatives)

#### **Can projects only be funded on brownfield land?**

Yes, if the projects are not on brownfield land, it will not be eligible.

#### **What qualifies as brownfield land?**

Brownfield land within this context aligns with Government's [National Planning Policy Framework](#), where this type of land is classified as 'previously developed land', which means:

"Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape."

#### **What is considered a "new home start"?**

A "start" is defined by Government in their [Monitoring Return Guidance](#) as the following:

"A dwelling is counted as a start on the date work begins on the laying of the foundation, including 'slabbing' for houses that require it, but not including site preparation. Thus when foundation work commences on a pair of semi-detached houses two houses are counted as started, and when work begins on a block of flats all the dwellings in that block are counted as started. In the instance of a single house this would be the foundation inspection but on multi-unit apartment buildings this would be the foundation for the whole structure. This is to allow a more accurate and timely representation of the number of dwelling units under construction at any given time. This is particularly relevant on large housing sites encompassing large numbers of individual units on a single Building Regulation Application or Initial Notice and large apartment blocks covering many hundreds of units spanning a long construction period."

#### **Can projects for open market housing be funded?**

Yes, in principal. However, the scheme should align with local and national planning policy context as well as the local housing strategy.

#### **How is affordable housing defined?**

The definition of affordable housing for this fund is aligned with Government's definition in the [National Planning Policy Framework](#).

#### **What are the requirements for the project's Benefit Cost Ratio?**

The scheme must achieve a minimum Benefit Cost Ratio of 1 and comply with [HM Treasury Green Book](#) assessment principles. BCR compliance will be assessed at full Business Case stage, for the EOI demonstrating value for money will be sufficient, however, please bear in mind that you scheme must be capable of achieving a BCR of 1.

***Is there a minimum threshold on the number of units needed within the scheme?***

There are no size limits to a scheme. The funding will be as flexible as possible, but the programme as a whole will need to achieve a balance and need some larger sites to give the necessary economies of scale. If there are a large number of smaller schemes, applicants may want to consider linking a programme of smaller sites or opportunities under one bid.

***Is there a cap on the amount of funding that can be allocated to each house?***

There is not a cap to the amount of funding applicants can request per home. However, the overall programme must comply with government outputs by ensuring the average cost per house is £14k.

***Do schemes need to be additional homes outside of local plan allocations?***

No, schemes don't need to be on an allocated site, but they must be able to obtain, or have in place, planning consent so that they are deliverable within the timescale of enabling new homes to start on site by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

***Can an individual landowner/land agent apply for funding for a site that is not attached to a housing association or developer?***

Yes, individual landowners can submit an EOI.

***Can the fund be used for existing building conversion and refurbishment?***

Yes, we can consider housing conversion schemes of existing buildings, not just new housing schemes on brownfield sites.

***What expenditure is eligible under the Brownfield Housing Fund?***

**This is not an exhaustive list and each will be judged on a case by case basis, but the following provides an indication on the costs that can be covered:**

- Site remediation
- Site investigation and preliminary works
- Site clearance
- Site acquisition
- Utility Diversions – sewage and power
- Substation construction
- Sewer and drainage infrastructures
- Service diversions
- Installation of new service infrastructures
- Drainage attenuation and connection
- Diversion of sewers
- Attenuation tank and off-site sewer agreement
- Right of light and third-party approvals
- Fees and Surveys associates with highways improvements, abnormal substructures, and utility diversions.
- Commissioning of professional surveys as part of land assembly process
- Off-site Section 278 works
- Highway and ground preparations
- Reinstatement work to existing highway after service connections
- Pedestrian road crossing
- Pedestrian links
- Off-site highway improvements – including national cycle route and public promenade
- Removal of relic foundations and obstructions
- Demolition of retaining structures
- Asbestos removal
- Grouting of seams

- Deep and piled foundations for specific house plots where required
- Abnormal substructure costs resulting from brownfield nature of the sites, including measures to address quayside wall tie rods and coal seams.
- Pre-drilling and vibro-piling
- Retaining wall and step construction
- SUDS pond
- Energy infrastructure, i.e. heat pumps

## Process Questions

### ***What should I do if I need help with my application?***

If you require support with your application, please get in touch via [enquiries@ynylep.com](mailto:enquiries@ynylep.com) and we may be able to provide advice and guidance, depending on the nature of your query.

### ***Is there a limit to the number of applications an individual can submit to this fund?***

No, applicants can submit multiple EOIs. However, they should consider whether these are appropriate and eligible for the fund, based on the criteria set out in the prospectus.

### ***How do I submit my application?***

You must complete an Expression of Interest form and return this no later than noon on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2023 to the following email address, [enquiries@ynylep.com](mailto:enquiries@ynylep.com)

### ***When will the funding awards be announced?***

Please note, timelines are currently indicative and may be subject to change. EOI applications will be accessed and prioritised in March 2023. If you are successful, a Full Business Case submission will be required in May 2023. Full Business Plans will be approved for funding in August/September 2023. However, funding cannot be issued until a Combined Authority for York and North Yorkshire has been established. It is anticipated that funding agreements will be issued in December 2023.

The acceptance of an EOI proposal and an invitation to progress to Full Business Case stage does not in any way indicate or constitute an offer of grant support. Any costs incurred in submitting an application are at the applicant's own risk.

### ***Does acceptance to the BHF pipeline mean money is ring-fenced for my scheme?***

No. Acceptance to the pipeline offers no guarantee of funding. As outlined in the prospectus, applicants should note that this process is being run at risk in order to maximise the preparedness of projects to deliver by March 2025.

### ***What is the selection process and prioritisation of projects?***

After the EOI submission deadline (noon on 6<sup>th</sup> February), EOIs that have been submitted will be assessed by colleagues within the York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership. All proposals will be assessed against the criteria included within the Prospectus, such as deliverability, strategic fit and rationale for funding, etc, and a shortlist of projects will be identified. This shortlist will be presented to the Joint Committee of the Combined Authority, which has the power to approve that list. Those projects that are approved will then be invited to complete a Full Business Case.

### ***When does planning permission need to be in place?***

In theory, planning permission is not needed for the EOI stage. But ideally you should have received planning comments for your proposal in order to deliver the project, and enable new homes to start on site by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. So, it depends on the complexity of the scheme and the length of time it takes to get planning consent, as this consent is required to start work on site.

***Are all sections of the EOI equally weighted or will some sections have more bearing on the assessment?***

All proposals will be assessed against the criteria included within the Prospectus. A key area of the EOI will be around deliverability, and the need and justification for funding. But other areas around risk management, strategic fit, housing need, low carbon credentials and basic gateway criteria will still be considered.

***Will a portfolio of different sites or buildings be acceptable in one application?***

This would depend on the scale and the number of projects. We would have no objection to the packaging up of potential schemes into a single proposal if this works from a close geographical perspective. However, if any of the schemes are programmed to be delivered beyond March 2025, then these would need to be submitted separately to any schemes that can be delivered within the end of March 2025 timeframe.

***How long after March 2025 will application payments in arrears be allowed for?***

We are unable to confirm grant payment arrangements until the MCA is established in December 2023. Details of grant payment arrangements will be detailed in formal grant agreements issued by the MCA for approved projects.

## Other Questions

**Is there a list of available local authority owned brownfield sites in the region that the public can access?**

Local authorities are required to publish details of their land and building assets. Full details of what must be published can be found within the [Transparency Code 2015](#).

If you have any further questions, please email [enquiries@ynylep.com](mailto:enquiries@ynylep.com)