

APPENDIX 2 - Housing and Regeneration Enabling Fund

Assessment Criteria

General

The Housing and Regeneration Enabling Fund is available as part of a suite of funding options to enable housing and employment sites across the West of England to come forward faster and add value, particularly aimed at complex locations and regeneration proposals that unlock additionality.

The aim of the fund is to help to unlock priority places for growth and regeneration by facilitating and accelerating the feasibility and pre-planning process where there is some kind of barrier preventing it from proceeding.

The funding can be used for traditional enabling activities such as scheme feasibility, site referencing and establishing delivery partnerships, and for specific projects that would deliver significant benefits over time, e.g. building capacity for MMC/OSM delivery.

The basic principle is that revenue funding is available of up to £200K per project to take forward proposals which WECA and the UAs are not able to fund individually. Match-funded proposals will be considered favourably.

The Enabling Fund is to be funded from a mix of OPE8 funding (£500K subject to OPE award) and headroom in the WECA Investment Fund (£2M plus a further £500K match funding if the OPE8 bid is successful). Schemes in North Somerset are eligible for OPE8 funding only. Funding awards may include a contribution from OPE8 funding, where appropriate.

Proposals will be assessed on the basis of:

- must deliver a specific output that demonstrates additionality
- must be used for an agreed priority proposal or activity relating to growth or regeneration
- the proposal can show progress towards delivery on site within a reasonable timeframe
- strategic fit and added value.

Gateway stage

Each scheme must pass 100% of the gateway criteria before it can be considered for funding under a more detailed assessment i.e. via a Feasibility and Development Funding Application.

first stage entry criteria - must score Y in all categories to pass initial gateway	explanation
funding request must deliver a specific output that demonstrates additionality	The Fund is not intended for general economic development activity or business as usual costings, and must be used for a specific output, e.g. feasibility report, business case etc. The assumption is that a site/location earmarked for growth would either have a masterplan in place or emerging (<i>separate funding route for masterplanning</i>).
explanation why this fund is required and which other funding options have been considered and discounted	The applicant must provide a narrative setting out the case for the funding intervention, i.e. explaining why proposals cannot proceed without the revenue funding and whether there is match funding available.

must be to be used for an agreed priority proposal or activity relating to growth or regeneration	Self-explanatory. Applicant to provide narrative.
Funding sought must be <£200K	WECA contribution would normally be capped to £200K (including any OPE8 funding). Any higher bids must be genuinely exceptional and must address strategic, regional priorities.
Strategic Fit: SDS, LIS, Investment Strategy, Housing Delivery Strategy or other strategic programmes, economic recovery	Self-explanatory. Applicant to provide written submission. Aligned with a priority location for growth or regeneration in the WECA Housing Delivery Strategy (HDS) or agreed employment land priority
the proposal can show progress within a reasonable timeframe (start on site within 3 years?)	Self-explanatory. Applicant to provide written submission.
basic assumption that full LP policy compliance is part of the proposal (if applicable)	This is an absolute requirement on housing schemes aligned to UA planning policy.
basic assumption that any scheme enabled by the Fund has potential to deliver at least one additional key benefit	capable of delivering additionality that would not otherwise be delivered by the market against at least one of the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbon reduction • Additional affordable housing • Additional adaptable or accessible housing • Improved Private Rented Sector housing • Improved pace of delivery • Improved sustainability • Flagship site for new technologies (MMC or other) • site is suitable for community-led housing and/or low cost/high quality self-build development. • Outstanding design • Brings vacant property into use

Detailed assessment stage

Once through the gateway stage, the proposal is subject to more detailed scoring and weighting focused on a narrative submission, on the basis that the fund is to cover early-stage proposals that may not be well-worked up.

The aim is to allow a range of options to be assessed against each other – i.e. site-specific proposals and medium-term wider projects.

Feedback is welcome on whether the scoring and weighting are correctly balanced and works in practice.

detailed scoring	Qualitative score 0-3	weighting	Explanation
Degree to which the intervention results in a more investable and deliverable proposition	3) very strong case for investment and good confidence outputs will be produced 2) strong case and reasonable confidence 1) moderate case and plans to be further developed	2	must demonstrate that without investment, project will not proceed or not at an acceptable pace
Leverage	3) 50% plus of cost of project from other sources 2) 25-50% 3) below 25%	1	What is the mix of public sector sources in place to deliver the project?
scale of the opportunity	3) very strong case for investment and good confidence significant outputs will be produced 2) strong case and reasonable confidence 1) moderate case and plans to be further developed	2	What can be delivered via the proposal? To what degree does this investment move the proposal forward and the remaining risk? Is the proposal for a large/complex site or regeneration proposal?
Delivery timescales/ project milestone – starts	3 - immediate. 2 - 3 months. 1 - 6 months	2	this relates to the specific output that we are funding
Delivery timescales/ project milestone – completes	3 - 9 months 2 - 12 months 1 - 18 months	2	this relates to the specific output that we are funding
delivery timescales - are we closer to delivering a physical scheme?		1	likely timescale to deliver homes or employment space as a result of delivering the enabling project. May need to be case-specific?
Is the proposal an agreed priority location or theme e.g. part of an agreed 5 year pipeline?	3) top 3 locations/priority 2) locations 4-8/ med priority 1) locations 9-15/ low priority	2	how does the site fit with the priorities for growth and/or regen in the Housing Delivery Strategy or agreed employment priorities?
Wider quantitative and qualitative benefits	UA to provide narrative for assessment of whether a compelling case. 1,000 word limit. Subjective score 1-3	1	As per gateway criteria and in addition: Density zero carbon Brownfield site Economic/job impact Quality Innovation or pilot - incl MMC

			opportunity cost/risk green infrastructure social value i.e. access to opportunity Other benefits such health, education, inequality, addressing deprivation
--	--	--	--