

INVESTABLE PROPOSITIONS TEMPLATE



Investable Propositions

It is not expected that your investable propositions are fully formed and that if they were to be taken forward, additional information and depth would be required. At this stage, your investable propositions are primarily a learning exercise that will enable you to use as an alternative means of generating resources to traditional grant funding. You will hear at 18th February workshop and 5th April programme conference the emerging concept around the Impact Coalition in East Birmingham for which drawing up investable propositions will be a key component.

1. Describe your investable proposition.

(Type your answer – up to 500 words. You may include an additional graphic or diagram to support your description, but this is not mandatory!)

Legacy Placemaking Project

This project aims to reimagine Newtown's future, establishing a vibrant Cultural Quarter in the city's north. North Birmingham Cultural Quarter.

The core of this Cultural Quarter will feature Legacy Centre of Excellence, the Grade II listed Bartons Arms, a significant historical landmark, and Phillips Street Park, reimagined as an engaging green space tying the area together. Centre to this new Quarter will be the proposed 17-storey Legacy Tower which will introduce 191 mixed-tenure 1/2/3/4 bed apartments, addressing local affordable housing needs. It will also incorporate a mixed-use development with commercial co-working spaces, offices and business centre to foster local business growth and entrepreneurship, alongside community leisure facilities such as a cinema, grocery store, and nursery, designed to enhance the quality of life for residents.

An adjacent new green space will promote ecological connectivity and placemaking. This development will serve as a prominent gateway feature into the City of Birmingham, catalysing community-led regeneration in Newtown and Aston.

Newtown will become a key cultural district, adjacent to the Knowledge Quarter, fostering urban regeneration, improving the cultural ecology and building social cohesion.

A key legacy of this project will be the "Legacy 2025" program, a world-class training, mentoring, and apprenticeship initiative. This program will engage young people from Black, ethnic minority, and economically disadvantaged backgrounds in partnership with local schools, colleges, and universities we will supercharge the careers of local people giving them the opportunity for technical role and participation in constructing Birmingham's future.

The goal is to create pathways to careers in architecture, civil engineering, quantity surveying, and construction, generating hundreds of job opportunities from entry-level to professional positions.

This initiative will provide training, accreditation, mentorship, career development, and practical experience on a landmark project, promoting social equity and economic empowerment.

Enhancements to Phillips Street Park will encourage increased usage by children and families, promoting active recreation and community engagement. An area-wide tree planting program will initiate the re-greening of Newtown, improving environmental sustainability and urban greening.

Finally, a program will fund the retrofitting of local homes, improving their environmental performance, energy efficiency, and suitability for 21st-century living, promoting sustainable development and improving residential amenity.

Please see the concept design of the new Legacy Tower below:



2. How does your investable proposition fit with the outcomes of the mapping you've done and the vision and themes for your Quarter?

(Type your answer – up to 300 words, noting that the workshop on 18th February will include a session exploring the vision and themes for your quarter).

We conducted two in-depth community mapping sessions within the Newtown section of the Knowledge Quarter, employing a participatory approach to gather insights directly from residents. These sessions facilitated a rich dialogue, revealing critical place-based challenges and opportunities. The discussions highlighted:

1. **Lack of leisure facilities:** A significant deficit in recreational facilities, hindering social interaction and community well-being. Residents expressed a need for diverse leisure options to foster a sense of place attachment.
2. **Poor air quality and insufficient green spaces:** Poor air quality and a scarcity of green spaces, impacting environmental justice and the overall liveability of the area. We identified a critical need for urban greening initiatives to enhance ecological resilience.
3. **Substandard housing stock:** Outdated and unsuitable housing, particularly for families, contributing to spatial inequality and diminished residential amenity. Addressing this requires a focus on housing equity and sustainable development.
4. **Inadequate Park facilities:** Parks in a state of disrepair, failing to serve as effective community hubs or promote active recreation. The need for park revitalisation was a recurring theme, emphasising the importance of public realm enhancement.

5. Socioeconomic marginalisation: High unemployment, marginalisation, and a lack of job opportunities, perpetuating social exclusion and hindering economic empowerment. We aimed to address this through inclusive growth strategies.
6. Limited entrepreneurial spaces: A lack of suitable spaces for businesses and entrepreneurs, stifling local economic development and placemaking. The need for mixed-use development to foster a vibrant local economy was clear.
7. Restricted food access: Limited choices for food shopping, impacting food security and the overall community resilience. Enhancing local retail options was seen as crucial for improving quality of life.
8. Repeat emphasis on park quality: The recurring mention of poor park standards underscored their significance as public spaces and the urgency for their improvement.
9. Overarching regeneration needs: A strong consensus on the need for comprehensive urban regeneration to address the area's multifaceted challenges and create a more equitable and sustainable future.

By developing a project that delivers new homes, business units, revitalised parks, green spaces, and training/job opportunities, we are directly responding to these identified needs. Our project aligns with the core principles of community-led development, aiming to create a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable place for all residents.

3. How has the engagement with, and feedback from your community and stakeholders helped to shape the proposition?

(Type your answer – up to 300 words. You may include 1-2 photos from your community events).

This project's development has been fundamentally rooted in community-led placemaking, ensuring alignment with the aspirations of Newtown's residents. The Legacy Centre of Excellence serves as a crucial community anchor, fostering social capital and facilitating stakeholder engagement. It hosts regular meetings for key organisations, including:

- Councillor Ziaul Islam, Newtown's representative, ensuring civic engagement.
- Aston Manor Community Forum, enabling neighbourhood governance.
- Birmingham City Council Ward Meetings, promoting local democracy.
- Newtown North Community Forum, facilitating community cohesion.
- Burberry Park Forum, focusing on public space stewardship.
- SCRAG – Phillips Street Park Residents Group, advocating for resident-led improvement.

Our stakeholder engagement strategy has included:

1. Leveraging a 2023 public consultation, and Community Action Plan incorporating resident and organisation feedback into the project's design, ensuring participatory planning.
2. Collaborating with Birmingham City Council's Planning team, sharing consultation results and aligning the project with the Newtown masterplan, fostering strategic partnership.
3. Developing a community-led Culture Strategy for Newtown, commissioned by Birmingham City Council's Culture team, with peer review by Professor Monder Ram of Aston University, ensuring expert input and cultural relevance.
4. Conducting a visioning workshop with 20 community and cultural sector members, fostering collective visioning for Newtown's future.
5. Presenting ideas at the Culture Central Placemaking Workshop, gaining insights into 21st-century placemaking and Birmingham's approach, enhancing knowledge exchange.
6. Participating in a cultural compact, engaging with leading Birmingham cultural organisations to shape the city's cultural future, ensuring sector collaboration.

7. We engaged Birmingham Highways Team, introduced them to the community forums and collectively they designed new road improvements to make the roads safer, and the area greener by introducing road traffic measures.
8. We met with Sustainability West Midlands and Birmingham Tree People, and they advised us air quality in Newtown, and how the local environment can be improved.
9. Holding a public consultation on the Newtown Cultural Strategy, integrating resident and business feedback into the design, strengthening community ownership.
10. Presenting placemaking ideas at Newtown Cultural Day, promoting community dialogue and public awareness.
11. Engaging the public at Legacy COE cultural and community events, ensuring ongoing community feedback and placemaking strategy refinement.

4. How has being part of the Coalition for Impact programme helped to inform the proposition?

(Type your answer – up to 250 words)

The Coalition for Impact programme has significantly refined our project proposition through a structured placemaking lens.

Firstly, it fostered a "think big, act strategically" ethos, encouraging us to transcend conventional project scopes and envision transformative, community-centric outcomes.

Secondly, the programme facilitated early-stage spatial analysis and asset mapping of the Newtown Area. This process, crucial for place-based intervention, allowed us to identify existing resources, community narratives, and potential intervention points, directly informing our design and placemaking strategy.

Furthermore, the Coalition provided a platform for participatory design through collaborative workshops with community organisations, practitioners/facilitators, other non-profits addressing many different agendas, and incorporating many different types of activities but all committed to community. These engagements fostered social capital and ensured collective efficacy in the project's developmental phase. The access to project development experts facilitated

critical feedback loops, emphasising the importance of community engagement and co-creation.

We were encouraged and advised to prioritise consultation, ensuring that the project's design reflects the nuanced needs and aspirations of the local population, thereby enhancing its place attachment and long-term sustainability.

5. What are the next steps that need to happen?

(Type your answer – up to 300 words).

We have conducted an initial public consultation, initiating a participatory placemaking process to gather crucial community insights and ensure the project's alignment with local needs.

We have developed an early-stage architectural concept for the Legacy Tower, establishing a foundational spatial framework for the development.

We have engaged in strategic dialogue with the Birmingham Planning Team, fostering inter-agency collaboration and aligning the project with the city's broader urban development objectives.

To progress, we require funding to commission a comprehensive design development phase for the Legacy Tower, enabling the submission of pre-application and full planning applications to Birmingham City Council. This will involve detailed site analysis, massing studies, phasing, and material selection, all crucial for place-responsive architecture.

Upon completion of the draft detailed design, we will conduct extensive community engagement workshops with local residents and community organisations to solicit feedback, ensuring design inclusivity and fostering a sense of collective ownership. This iterative design process will ensure the project reflects the community's aspirations and needs.

The submission of the final design and planning applications will pave the way for construction to commence in early 2027, transforming the concept into a tangible place-based intervention.

We are finalising the draft of the Newtown Cultural Strategy, which will undergo a rigorous peer review process by Professor Monder Ram of Aston University, ensuring academic rigour and strategic relevance before submission to Birmingham City Council. This strategy will serve as a cultural masterplan, guiding the area's future cultural development.

We will submit a formal request to acquire the former swimming baths, envisioning its transformation into a modern leisure space with a state-of-the-art swimming pool, as a crucial component of a later project phase. This initiative will contribute to the enhancement of public realm and promote active lifestyles, enriching the community's social infrastructure.

6. What resources are needed to make it a reality? As an investable proposition, what is the investment needed for? Buy a building? Working capital to set up a new service?

(Type your answer – up to 300 words).

The key factor required at this time are funds to develop the design, as part of a planning pre-application process and to conduct land, heritage, flooding surveys.

7. Will it generate an income? How?

(Type your answer – up to 200 words)

This community-centred Build-to-Rent (BTR) scheme, offering 191 diverse, affordable homes alongside shared workspaces, a cinema, and a restaurant, prioritises social cohesion and place-based value to achieve sustainable financial returns. The project's core philosophy centres on building a vibrant, inclusive community, where economic success is intrinsically linked to resident well-being and neighbourhood prosperity.

Community-driven tenancy is key. Offering a range of residential units, ensures diverse housing needs are met, fostering a sense of belonging and building a strong, interconnected community. Rent is set with a focus on affordability and

equity, creating long-term stability and minimising tenant turnover, while still ensuring financial sustainability.

The shared workspaces are designed as community enterprise hubs, fostering local entrepreneurship, collaboration and nurturing a collaborative economy.

The cinema and restaurant are envisioned as community anchors, providing accessible leisure and social spaces that enrich the neighbourhood's social fabric. Their role is to enhance community life and draw people into visiting the cultural quarter and spend money with local businesses.

Resident-led governance forms the foundation of property management. Establishing resident councils and facilitating regular community gatherings empowers residents to shape their living environment. This fosters a strong sense of collective ownership and place attachment, enhancing resident satisfaction and long-term tenancy.

Placemaking is integral to the project's design and operation. Creating inviting, accessible public spaces, hosting community events, and integrating local art and culture fosters a sense of place identity and strengthens the neighbourhood's social capital. This approach not only enhances resident well-being but also contributes to the broader neighbourhood revitalisation.

Financially, the project adopts a social impact investment model, prioritising long-term community benefit over short-term profit. A transparent and accountable financial framework, demonstrating the project's positive impact, will attract socially conscious investors and ensure long-term sustainability, while generating community wealth.

