

Record of Executive Decisions Published 24/July/2025

Decision Taker:

Cabinet

Appropriate Scrutiny Committee

Economic Prosperity Scrutiny
Committee

Date decision in force:

1 August 2025

Date of decision:

24 July 2025

Title and author(s) of written report:

Sunniside Regeneration Update and Glassworks Sunderland – Report of the Executive Director of Economy and Place

Full description of decision:

To:

- (i) Note the progress update provided in relation to the regeneration of the Sunniside neighbourhood;
- (ii) Subject to the award of £2,405,000 of UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) grant from the North East Combined Authority (NECA), to authorise the Executive Director of Economy and Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Regeneration and Business, and the Director of Finance, to:
 - a) enter into the necessary grant funding agreement with NECA;
 - b) procure and appoint all necessary consultants and contractors to deliver the design and enabling works as described in this report at the former Peter Smith Antiques building; and
 - c) enter into a partnership and delivery agreement with Sunderland Culture Limited in respect of the UKSPF project and associated works.
- (iii) Authorise the Executive Director of Economy and Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Regeneration and Business, and the Director of Finance, to procure and appoint all necessary consultants and contractors to deliver the design and enabling works as described in this report to the ground floor of Biscop House;
- (iv) Authorise the Executive Director of Economy and Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Regeneration, and Business and the Director of Finance to approve, where required, the subsequent variation of any of the contracts for works or services awarded in accordance with paragraphs (ii) and (iii) above for the delivery of the relevant projects subject to there being available budget provision for each proposed variation within the approved budget for the projects; and
- (v) Approve the funding arrangements as set out in the report and approve the resultant variation to the Capital Programme.

Reasons for decision:

The creation of a new Sunnyside Creative Hub is a key part of the Council's ambition to attract new creative and cultural investment into the Sunnyside neighbourhood, supporting the growth of artists and makers, while satisfying the wider social and economic regeneration objectives set out in the Sunnyside Place Strategy and the City Plan.

Securing UKSPF grant funding via NECA will unlock the delivery of essential pre-development design and enabling works to preserve and enhance the former Peter Smith Antiques Building which has been identified as the potential location for Glassworks Sunderland – a new glassmaking facility that sets out to protect the future of glassmaking in the city and act as the catalyst for the establishment of the Sunnyside Creative Hub.

Entering into a delivery agreement with Sunderland Culture in respect of the UKSPF funded works will help to expedite the preparation of RIBA Stage 3 proposals for the Glassworks Sunderland project supported by ACE and will support the preparation of a business case and implementation plan

Biscop House forms an important gateway to Villiers Street and is located directly opposite the new Nile and Villiers residential development. The proposed design and enabling works to the ground floor unit will allow its short term activation for meanwhile use and longer term role as a critical part of the Sunnyside Creative Hub.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

- (i) Not to enter a grant funding agreement with NECA for the UKSPF grant: This would mean the UKSPF Sunnyside Creative Hub – Glassworks project and the associated enabling works could not be delivered and would leave a significant gap in the funding required to deliver the Glassworks Sunderland project supported by ACE.
- (ii) Not to enter a delivery agreement with Sunderland Culture for the provision of RIBA Stage 3 proposals: This is expected to be a specific funding condition under the proposed UKSPF grant funding agreement with NECA and will help to expedite the delivery of a business case and implementation plan for Glassworks Sunderland. Leadership of this activity by Sunderland Culture is aligned with the expectations of ACE.
- (iii) Not to procure the design and enabling works to the Peter Smith Antiques Building: This is likely to result in further decay of the building and would delay the defrayal of the UKSPF grant which is required by end March 2026 and would impact on the subsequent ability to progress delivery of Glassworks Sunderland.
- (iv) Not to deliver the design and enabling works for the Biscop House ground floor unit: The unit is currently vacant and boarded up and does not provide any ground floor animation to Coronation Street or Villiers Street. Delivering

the works will allow the property to be brought into use, add to the local regeneration impact, and support the delivery of the Nile + Villiers development and the Sunnyside Creative Hub.

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Is this a key decision: Yes

Does the Decision contain Confidential/Exempt information: Yes

Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:

Councillors Mordey, Chequer and Johnston declared interests as members and substitute members of the North East Combined Authority Cabinet.