

## Gateway to Sheffield Bid

Sheffield City Council has submitted an application for £20 million through the Levelling Up Fund (LUF).

The LUF was established by national Government to 'prioritise investment that not only brings economic benefits, but also helps bind communities together'. The LUF explicitly sought proposals in three areas: transport, culture, city centre regeneration. A 'package' bid can include up to three projects as long as they are complementary, mutually reinforcing and ready to begin in 2021/22.

The City Council worked with partners to assemble a package bid centred on Castlegate, and embracing the culture and heritage projects around Park Hill and Canada House. The ultimate aim is to restore a sense of place and purpose to an important part of the city, while supporting cultural organisations that are currently operating out of spaces that are not commensurate with the quality of their product and programming.

The three projects are:

- The Castle
- Park Hill Art Space
- Harmony Works

**The Castle** is the centrepiece. It provides essential infrastructure and enabling work to unlock the future development of a large brownfield site, while preserving and interpreting archaeology that is vital to a full understanding of Sheffield's history.

Castlegate is the birthplace of Sheffield. At the confluence of the River Sheaf and the River Don, this was once the heart of the city, and the site of the castle demolished in 1648. Once a thriving commercial area, it has lost its identity and purpose.

The Castle project will re-establish Castlegate as a thriving part of the city centre. The River Sheaf will be de-culverted and complemented by new green space and public realm. Land will be readied for future development and activated by 'meanwhile uses' that encourage healthy lifestyles and reposition Castlegate as a desirable place to live, work, visit and invest.

Figure 1: The Castle - Draft Concept Plan



It is important to note that the LUF project proposed for The Castle site is exclusively focused on the de-culverting of the River Sheaf, further protection and interpretation of the archaeology, and the creation of a welcoming landscape and public realm. Any further development is contingent on a full programme of public engagement and will not be advanced until the City Council is confident that it can be delivered at a density and design quality that is appropriate to the site, sensitive to its surroundings, and respectful of the heritage.

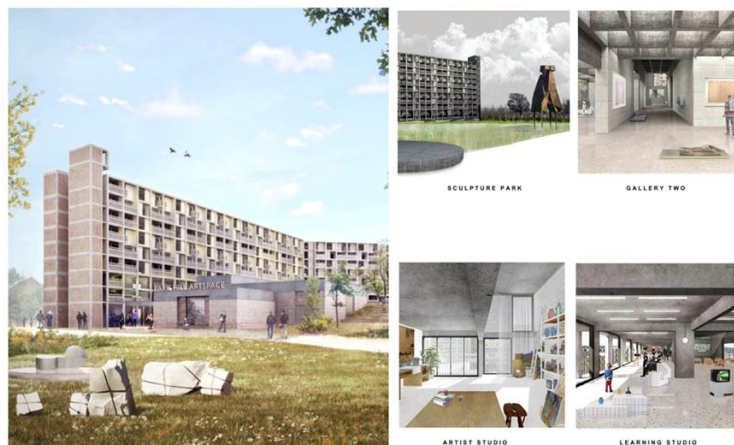
This is the culmination of a 'grey to green' process that is transforming a once derelict 'no go' space into one of Sheffield's most exciting neighbourhoods.

**Park Hill Art Space** will deliver an arts, cultural and heritage destination at the Park Hill estate. It will be one of the largest contemporary art galleries in the North, complemented by creative workspace and learning facilities, within a six-acre sculpture park. The project has been conceived and will be delivered by S1 Artspace, which is currently based in temporary premises on the Grade II\* listed Park Hill Estate. S1 is working in partnership with Urban Splash to create a national flagship venue for art, culture and heritage within the largest listed structure in Europe.

The new space will provide one of the largest contemporary art galleries outside of London, artist studios, accommodation for visiting or resident artists, and a heritage offer – all within a larger scheme of high-quality housing. Not only will the project secure a home for S1 Artspace, but importantly it will also return the building to public use through a programme of exhibitions, heritage interpretation and community engagement.

Park Hill Artspace has the potential to fill a gap in the city and the wider South Yorkshire region for the understanding of international contemporary art, 20th-century architecture and post-war social history, as well as providing much-needed career development for young and emerging artists, practitioners and arts professionals.

Figure 2: Park Hill Art Space

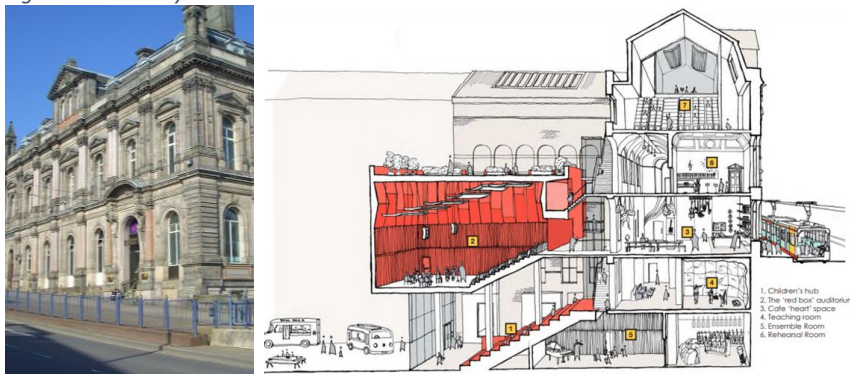


**Harmony Works** is a partnership that brings together two esteemed music institutions: Sheffield Music Academy and Sheffield Music Hub. The Hub introduces young people to music through community outreach; the Academy identifies and develops the most promising young talent, and provides a pathway to employment. Both operate out of 'borrowed' facilities in peripheral locations that are not suited to the scale and quality of their work.

Harmony Works will acquire Canada House, a Grade II Listed building beside the Castle site. It will provide fit-for-purpose facilities in a more accessible location, securing the future of an important asset that would otherwise fall into disrepair.

The benefits of enhanced music education and the continued improvement of the physical environment in Sheffield city centre are significant and demonstrable. Based in a refurbished Canada House, Harmony Works will inspire generations of children and young people through music education, community-building and improved access to heritage. It is well evidenced that music improves health and wellbeing, and music education promotes team working, confidence, academic achievement, employability and citizenship. Combining the work of two of the city's most accomplished music education providers in a more central location and accessible building will make a material impact on the city's cultural infrastructure.

Figure 3: Harmony Works at Canada House



Taken together the Gateway to Sheffield 'package' will:

- Regenerate heritage assets and brownfield sites
- Improve the natural environment and advance the Net Zero Carbon agenda
- Deliver cultural anchors of national significance
- Create education, skills and training opportunities
- Reduce disparities through better connectivity and equitable access to culture and learning
- Create a sense of place and community
- Create jobs and build investor confidence
- Improve quality of life and encourage active travel

The bid was submitted to the Levelling Up Fund on Friday, 18 June 2021. A decision is expected in the autumn. It should be noted, however, that the Fund is known to be highly over-subscribed and Sheffield is categorised as a 'Tier 2' priority out of three tiers indexed in by economic, productivity, and connectivity criteria.

Whatever the ultimate result, the process itself has been invaluable for bringing these organisations together, accelerating the progress and mutual understanding of all three projects, and creating a platform for continued partnership and joint-working.