

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR DEPUTY MAYOR FOR FIRE & RESILIENCE DECISION – DMFD50

Title: Plumstead Fire Station – Refurbishment and Extension

Executive Summary:

Report LFC-0256x to the London Fire Commissioner seeks approval to refurbish and extend Plumstead Fire Station in line with the recommendations of the recently commissioned feasibility report.

The London Fire Commissioner Governance Direction 2018 sets out a requirement for the London Fire Commissioner to seek the prior approval of the Deputy Mayor before “[a] commitment to expenditure (capital or revenue) of £150,000 or above as identified in accordance with normal accounting practices...”.

Decision:

The Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience approves the expenditure by the London Fire Commissioner of up to £6,195,000 to complete the refurbishment and extension of Plumstead Fire Station as set out in report LFC-0256x to the Commissioner. The majority of expenditure is likely to take place in the 2020/21 and 2021/22 financial years,

Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision.

The above request has my approval.

Signature:



Date:

14/02/2020

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE DEPUTY MAYOR

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. Plumstead Fire Station is identified within the London Fire Brigade (LFB) Asset Management Plan (Property) March 2017 (FEP 2714) as a high priority for improvement, being the sixth worst station in the Brigade with regard to overall condition. A number of elements were identified in 'poor but serviceable' condition (needing replacement in two years) including the roof, yards, boundaries, fixtures and fittings and rewiring.
- 1.2. Constructed in 1907 and a Grade II listed building with frontage onto both Plumstead High Street and Lakedale Road, the station is considered to be in a key strategic location for London wide fire cover for the south east of London. LFB consultants', ORH, modelling has shown the existing site to be in a very good location, only 500m from the optimal location.
- 1.3. Since inclusion in the capital programme as a rebuild/refurbishment in 2010/11, officers have commissioned feasibility studies into various refurbishment schemes alongside concurrent site searches for a new fire station. The option to fully demolish and rebuild on the existing site cannot be explored due to the listed nature of the current station. The most recent decision in November 2015 by the former London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA FEP 2527) agreed to secure land at Griffin Manor Way for a new build fire station, subject to terms being agreed within recognised cost parameters. The business case for this approach was based on:
 - the only way of providing modern premises with community facilities and the flexibility to meet future options for fire cover; and
 - any option to keep Plumstead fire station operational during construction works was deemed prohibitive. This was due to cost and disruption to service provision caused by the requirement to decant the station and deliver enablement works at two nearby fire stations.
- 1.4. Post-LFEPA decision, Peabody Housing Association as site owners concluded that the site was required for strategic industrial development and the purchase did not progress. The search for a new site continued following its subsequent sale.
- 1.5. In August 2018 a report to Major Works Capital Board, the internal officer forum for LFB Capital and Major Works, reviewed the options for Plumstead Fire Station. The Board agreed to pursue a new lead for a site identified on Nathan Way, SE28.
- 1.6. Due to ongoing uncertainties, the declining condition, increasing functional concerns and the current fire station's proximity to the optimal location, the Board also agreed to re-examine the feasibility options should the new site option fail to meet LFC requirements. This would review refurbishing the station and building a new appliance bay extension on unused adjacent LFC land to establish whether an efficient, functional fire station to support London Safety Plan 2017 commitments could be delivered.
- 1.7. Consequently, LFB's estate management consultants Dron and Wright confirmed that the LFB interest in the Nathan Way site could not be progressed due to the adverse impact on the industrial unit scheme earmarked for the site. The previous advice to discount the refurbishment option was based on the assumption that the station could not be demolished and only refurbished due to its listing status. In 2015 the Royal Borough of Greenwich Council set out their proposals to regenerate Plumstead High Street. Since then the local planning and conservation team have opened up to the possibility of constructing a new appliance bay and accommodation facilities on the vacant land next to the fire station, on Plumstead High Street, and are accepting of the idea to work with the listed nature of the fire station to provide community facilities and privacy for accommodation for

firefighters. Based on this new approach, the proposal to refurbish and extend to provide a new appliance bay, privacy for all and SSDB compliant facilities throughout the station is now a feasible option.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

Proposed refurbishment and partial new build – Outline benefits

- 2.1. The resolution of operational and structural issues is primarily due to the proposal to construct a new two-story appliance bay to the side of the current station on Plumstead High Street. A detailed breakdown of how the proposed solution rectifies these issues is detailed within a comprehensive feasibility and cost report which is available as background information to this report. A high-level summary of resolutions provided by the feasibility exercise can be referenced in Appendix 1 to report LFC-0256x.
- 2.2. The existing station will significantly benefit from a full refurbishment throughout, addressing key structural concerns and remodelling the internal layout to ensure the station can effectively support the delivery requirements of a modern fire and rescue service.
- 2.3. The design of the new two-story appliance bay will complement the heritage of the existing fire station, resolving the issues of turn out and return provision, providing a new wash down area to the rear and providing additional space within the bays required by modern pumping appliances. The upper floor of the new extension will be utilised to replace significantly undersized accommodation within the current building, providing a new compliant kitchen/mess area and lecture room facilities in line with the Standard Station Design Brief (SSDB).
- 2.4. The rationalising of space and adjoining of adjacent land to form a larger footprint will provide more space to support training provision on site. Further design development will also explore provision of a drill tower facility as part of the proposed extension.
- 2.5. New gender-neutral resting and washroom accommodation will be delivered to attract and enable delivery of a diverse workforce, meeting the commitments of London Fire Brigade's (LFB) Safer Together inclusion strategy.
- 2.6. The existing appliance bay will be converted into an inclusive community engagement facility reflecting LFB's commitment to open up fire stations for use by the local community, as well as providing capacity to support Prevention and Protection aims from a local and strategic perspective. The community engagement facility will be fully accessible and compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) provisions of the Equalities Act 2010.
- 2.7. The assessment of environmental performance is measured by the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM). The project is targeted to achieve a BREEAM classification of 'very good' in line with the current SSDB recommendations.
- 2.8. Sustainable development commitments will include the replacement of all mechanical and electrical installations with new energy efficient plant, services and fixtures. This will support reduced energy consumption and environmental harm and allow the LFB to positively influence the built environment, supporting the Mayor's Carbon Reduction target of 60 per cent reduction by 2025. Subject to further investigations, photovoltaic solar panels will be installed on the roof of the new appliance bay and enhancements to improve the thermal efficiency of the station will be made wherever possible.
- 2.9. The proposed refurbishment/extension proposal is based on keeping Plumstead Fire Station operational during the construction works, a major benefit in avoiding further delay, disruption to operations and cost of enablement works to host stations. LFEPA report (FEP 2527) estimated decant costs for the only feasible host stations of Erith and Lee Green as circa £400,000. These costs are

likely to have increased since this estimate and would leave little benefit in terms of legacy for either station. Fire cover modelling also identified significant increase in first appliance response times of one minute 45 seconds in the Royal Borough of Greenwich. The ability to deliver a phased construction is a primary factor in considering these recommendations.

- 2.10. The proposal to undertake a major refurbishment of Plumstead Fire Station aligns with wider regeneration planning by the Royal Borough of Greenwich whose plans in Plumstead are particularly focused on the High Street vicinity. Local authority officers are aware LFB are reviewing options for Plumstead Fire Station. Pending agreement of recommendations, early engagement on proposals with planning officers will take place to ensure plans reflect the aspirations of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan, part of the Local Development Framework.
- 2.11. The intelligent client brief for the feasibility study sought to resolve the issues identified, bringing the station in line with the SSDB whilst acknowledging the constraints of a Grade II listed building. Concessions to the SSDB are a slightly smaller station office, communications room and circulation space limited by the structural layout of the existing station.
- 2.12. The feasibility outcomes provide a significantly improved, inclusive fire station at a recognised 'very good' location whilst maintaining the assured prevention, protection and response services to the local community and strategically for London.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. The Public Sector Equality Duty – and the potential impacts of this decision on those with protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation) – has been considered by the London Fire Commissioner and the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience. The equality impact assessment performed for the project indicates that the proposals in the report to the Commissioner will have no adverse impact and deliver several positive benefits in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 3.2. The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Commissioner and the Deputy Mayor when they make decisions. The duty requires them to have regard to the need to:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- 3.3. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- 3.4. The refurbished station will provide DDA compliant access to the new community engagement facilities in line with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010. In addition, the SSDB provides guidance on publicly accessible space meeting requirements of Dementia Friendly buildings. These provisions will enhance the use of community engagement facilities for all users enabling inclusive, collaborative working across a range of agencies and local vulnerable groups to meet Prevention and Protection priorities.
- 3.5. A significant benefit is the internal remodelled provision of resting and washroom areas to meet LFB's new privacy for all specification. This will benefit station-based staff across a range of protected characteristic groups and create a working environment to support an inclusive and diverse workforce.

- 3.6. Conversely, it should be noted that due to the structural constraints and Grade II listed status of the building, there will be no improvement to the accessibility of operational areas in the existing building. This has also been considered in the EIA and the impact of not improving accessibility is balanced against the practical, budgetary and historic considerations. The layout of the fire station is set over three floors, with a change in level on the ground floor and narrow corridors for circulation space

4. Other considerations

Sustainability

- 4.1. The project will be administered in alignment within the LFB's sustainability policies. Details on how this project impacts on those policies is located within the Sustainable Development Impact Assessment (SDIA) checklist completed and agreed for this refurbishment proposal. On agreement of report recommendations, the project will incur a full SDIA alongside a benefits realisation process to monitor ongoing sustainability benefits.
- 4.2. The Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method is an industry benchmark used to evaluate the sustainability of built environment assets. Credits are awarded under this scheme for a variety of reasons such as building fabric thermal performance, energy conservation measures and consideration of the buildings impact on occupants' health. The project is aspiring to attain over 55 credits to achieve the 'very good' BREEAM rating.
- 4.3. Proposed works will see the installation of more efficient appliances, fixtures and fittings with a complete overhaul of both the mechanical and electrical plant. The upgrade of services will greatly reduce the energy consumption of the station, along with upgrades to the building fabric where possible to support compliance with LFB policies as well as the Mayor's wider energy efficiency targets.
- 4.4. In addition, the provision of renewable energy installations on top of the new appliance bay roof will be explored. This is currently included in the cost plan; however, the viability of the site may be limited by shadowing from the surrounding buildings blocking the panels.
- 4.5. In line with LFB responsible procurement practices, the selected contractor will be required to demonstrate that they comply with statutory and mayoral policies such as London Living Wage, anti-slavery, anti-bribery, opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as well as equality and diversity requirements. The contractor will be required to supply suitable welfare facilities for the number of contractors working on site, and it is likely that noise producing activities will be limited to strict working hours as part of the planning agreement.

Project Management and Procurement

- 4.6. A consultant was appointed via competitive tender using the Multi-Disciplinary Consultancy (MDC) framework to undertake a feasibility study, design, cost and project management services to deliver the refurbishment. Tenders were evaluated and responses were scored against cost (40 per cent) and quality (60 per cent) weighting with award provided to Frankham Consultancy. Pending agreement, Frankham consultancy will be instructed to ensure the works are delivered in accordance with the specification standard through to handover and post-completion.
- 4.7. LFB project management oversight will be led by Property Department's client-side project manager, who will remain responsible for liaising with Frankham via regular design review meetings (including value engineering of the proposals) and overseeing progress for the design, construction, commissioning and handover of the project.
- 4.8. The feasibility has been undertaken in consultation with LFB's Major Works Capital Board members and internal stakeholders including the Station Commander (SC) with concept design proposals to

inform feasibility being signed off by senior officers. The Brigade's project manager will ensure that pre-start and soft landings/hand over meetings, as well as periodic and ad hoc site meetings, are held to monitor the progress of the works, keeping all stakeholders fully informed.

- 4.9. A project board chaired by the Head of Property will be established to monitor progress against key milestones and the project budget. Subject to agreement of recommendations, corporate project status will be assigned to the project by the Programme Management Office, enabling monitoring and scrutiny in line with LFB governance requirements.
- 4.10. The proposed procurement route for the construction element will be tendered in accordance with the Commissioner's Code of Practice on Tenders and Contracts. Frankham consultancy, as the Commissioner's external consultants, will recommend the appointment of the most economically advantageous tender to carry out the works.
- 4.11. Where possible, the Brigade attempts to deliver a Greater London Authority (GLA) collaborative procurement approach by utilising existing frameworks for tendering works. It should be noted this approach is not suitable for bespoke asset replacement works due to unique specifications and phasing proposals involved where the risks are priced differently for each project and premises.
- 4.12. The pre-tender estimate on the construction value of the refurbishment currently falls below the Official Journal of European Union (OJEU) works threshold of £4,733,252 (which has increased since the report at Appendix A was written), negating the need to conduct an OJEU procurement process. The selection of the successful tenderer will be based on a process that evaluates cost and quality at 40 per cent and 60 per cent respectively. This is a process and ratio suitable for major and complex building contracts. It will ensure that best value is achieved through robust assessment of tender cost and provide assurance on the contractors financial and insurance status as well as their services in relation to resources, skills and experience, quality control, health and safety and environmental processes.
- 4.13. The London Fire Commissioner's statutory duty under the Police and Crime Act 2017 and the London Safety Plan 2017 principle of collaboration require heads of estates for blue light services to liaise regularly with a remit to review opportunities for improved efficiency and effectiveness across respective estates. This refurbishment option provides limited scope for shared use due to constraints of the site. However, provision of community engagement facilities will promote local collaborative delivery mechanisms to be explored in line with the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and London Ambulance Service (LAS) estates strategies currently being refined.
- 4.14. That as part of standing orders the Assistant Director Technical and Commercial has authority to approve procurement initiation, accept a tender, award and enter into a contract in accordance with existing standing orders. And, procurement authority also extends to any action required under any existing contracts (e.g. deductions for unsatisfactory performance or giving notice and termination of contracts), expect where actions relating to contract performance are in accordance with a formula or process included in the contract.

Risks and dependencies

- 4.15. The proposed extension and refurbishment design are dependent on emergency response fire cover for Plumstead remaining the same with no changes to vehicle types or an increase in crewing levels. Although the new two storey appliance bay is SSDB compliant, due to the constraints of the site and revised site layout it cannot accommodate vehicles larger than the Series 3 pump and pump ladder vehicles currently stationed there.
- 4.16. The commencement of construction is dependent on receiving listed planning approval for the proposed scheme. Current estimates indicate a decision date in August 2020. To mitigate any risk of planning refusal, the consultant and Property officers will engage early with the local planning

department to ensure the proposed scheme is in keeping with their requirements. Consultants advise that it is currently unlikely that an agreement would not be secured.

- 4.17. As Plumstead Fire Station is Grade II listed, listed building consent will also be required to deliver any structural changes to the building. A similar approach to the planning risk will be adopted and the conservation officer for the area will be engaged early in the design process to ensure feedback is incorporated, as opposed to causing unacceptable or late design revisions. Consultants are currently positive that listed building consent can be achieved.
- 4.18. The current programme is dependent on the station remaining occupied while the works are completed in phases. The proposed phase plan would allow station-based staff access to almost all facilities throughout the project. Where some minor facilities are impeded, either temporary provisions will be brought in, or the phasing plan refined throughout the following stages. The lead client Property officer will manage this risk by early liaison with the Station and Borough Commanders to ensure that the phase plan is clearly defined and accepted. The likelihood of the phase plan being unacceptable is low.
- 4.19. A number of adjoining properties may have a party wall interest in the site. Risk mitigation will be achieved by completing a survey and early consultation with the neighbours to gain support and secure any agreements required. It is unlikely that any right to light issues will be raised with most of the adjoining properties on the planned extension works.
- 4.20. The current pre-tender estimate for construction work falls below the threshold for OJEU processes to be applied. In the event that the pre-tender estimate rises as an outcome the final technical design phase, an OJEU process will incur up delay of 2–3 months to the outline programme. This risk will be managed closely by the client-side Property lead through regular design review meetings and value engineering processes with consultants

Workforce

- 4.21. The recommendations within this report do not require formal staff-side consultation. Nevertheless, officers from Property Department, working alongside the Station Commander, Borough Commander and Deputy Assistant Commissioner (South East Area), agreed concept design proposals to support the feasibility process. The Property project manager has continued to keep the SC updated and engage with crews on questions surrounding the scheme.
- 4.22. As part of the project's risk management strategy, the Health and Safety at Work Impact Assessment (HSWIA) detailing the phasing of construction works will be reviewed and updated continually. This process will identify and control health and safety impacts and secure the site from unauthorised access, ensuring that the workforce and public are protected from the construction hazards. Application of responsible procurement methodology will ensure the contractor will be required to demonstrate an excellent health and safety record, with a high level of experience working on similarly occupied projects.
- 4.23. The Fire Brigades Union are represented on the Major Works Capital Board and have welcomed the decision to reuse and regenerate the existing fire station. Wider representative body consultation will be sought as part of the LFB governance process and representation will be invited at project board level.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. Report LFC-0256x to the London Fire Commissioner recommends that delegated authority is provided to complete works at Plumstead Fire Station at an estimated cost of £5,387,000, with a tolerance of up to 15 per cent; approval is therefore sought for total expenditure of up to £6,195,000. Funding for this project of £5,900,000 is included within the approved capital programme over a four-year period

to 2022/23. If the total cost exceeds the estimated budget but is within the approval of £6,195k, (£5,387,000 plus 15 per cent) the budget will be amended to reflect the revised funding requirement. If the cost of the planned works of £5,387,000 is funded from external borrowing and based on a useful life of 60 years, the annual revenue debt charges will be £252,000, being £90,000 for the repayment of borrowing and £162,000 in interest payments at a projected rate of three per cent. The proposed expenditure will be funded from the Commissioner's existing budgets. No further funding from the Greater London Authority is required.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1. Under section 9 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the London Fire Commissioner (the "Commissioner") is established as a corporation sole with the Mayor appointing the occupant of that office. Under section 327D of the GLA Act 1999, as amended by the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the Mayor may issue to the Commissioner specific or general directions as to the manner in which the holder of that office is to exercise his or her functions.
- 6.2. By direction dated 1 April 2018, the Mayor set out those matters, for which the Commissioner would require the prior approval of either the Mayor or the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience (the "Deputy Mayor").
- 6.3. Paragraph (b) of Part 2 of the said direction requires the Commissioner to seek the prior approval of the Deputy Mayor before "[a] commitment to expenditure (capital or revenue) of £150,000 or above as identified in accordance with normal accounting practices...".
- 6.4. The statutory basis for the actions proposed in this report is provided by sections 7 and 5A of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 ("FRSA 2004"). Section 7 (2)(a) FRSA 2004 the Commissioner has the power to secure the provision of personnel, services and equipment necessary to efficiently meet all normal requirements for firefighting and section 5A allows the Commissioner to procure personnel, services and equipment they consider appropriate for purposes incidental or indirectly incidental to their functional purposes.
- 6.5. General Counsel to the Commissioner notes that the proposed service will be procured in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Commissioner's Scheme of Governance.
- 6.6. The recommendation to the Commissioner gives authority to the Assistant Director Technical and Commercial to complete the refurbishment and extension of Plumstead Fire Station, based on a pre-tender estimate of £5,387,000, within a 15 per cent tolerance of the submitted pre-tender estimated price. It delegates Procurement Authority to the Assistant Director Technical and Commercial for the works. DMFD50 seeks consent from the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience for the consequent spend requirements.

Appendices and supporting papers:

Appendix A: LFC-0256x: *'Plumstead Fire Station Refurbishment'*

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** This form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after approval or on the defer date.

Part 1 Deferral:**Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? YES**

If YES, for what reason: The commercial interests of the London Fire Commissioner require deferral of the decision until after the cooling off period for the contract award has expired.

Until what date: 1 April 2020

Part 2 Confidentiality: Only the facts or advice considered to be exempt from disclosure under the FOI Act should be in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form – NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to
confirm the
following (✓)

Drafting officer

Richard Berry has drafted this report with input from the LFC and in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Assistant Director/Head of Service

Tim Somerville has reviewed the documentation and is satisfied for it to be referred to the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience for approval.

✓

Advice

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal.

✓

Corporate Investment Board

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 10 February 2020.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

Signature

M. D. Allen

Date

11.2.20

