

**CEO DECISION – CD 170**

**Title: North Acton Public Realm Projects Prospectus**

**Executive summary**

OPDC and the London Borough of Ealing are seeking to procure specialist consultancy services to produce a North Acton Public Realm Projects Prospectus.

The focus of the prospectus will be to define a series of delivery-focused public realm projects for the North Acton area. The prospectus will set out information required for the submission of planning applications. The delivery of the public realm projects will take place during 2022 and 2023 and will be funded through the Delivery Directorate budget.

OPDC will lead the procurement process using the GLA Architecture, Design and Urbanism Framework (ADUP). This will be managed by TfL in accordance with the OPDC Contracts and Funding Code. OPDC will enter into the contract with the successful bidder.

**Decision**

That the Chief Executive approves:

- i. expenditure of up to £150,000 for specialist consultancy services to produce the North Acton Public Realm Prospectus.

**Chief Executive Officer**

I do not have any disclosable interest in the proposed Decision. It is consistent with OPDC's priorities and has my approval.

**Signature:**



**Date:** 23/11/2021

## **PART 1: NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE**

### **1 Background and context**

- 1.1 North Acton is located south of the Central Line within the part of the London Borough of Ealing (LBE) for which OPDC is the Local Planning Authority. The area is home to recently built and permitted high density housing, student accommodation, some retail uses and the existing employment uses at the Victoria Road Industrial Estate and Carphone Warehouse offices.
- 1.2 North Acton has excellent public transport links but has poor quality walking and cycling routes within the area and to surrounding destinations. This includes limited access to large publicly accessible open spaces and future Elizabeth line services from Acton Mainline Station. The existing open spaces in North Acton are small-scale and suffer from a lack of activation and fragmented land ownership.
- 1.3 North Acton is adjacent to the heavily trafficked A40 and Wales Farm Road and is cut across by a busy gyratory connecting these two roads. These connections have a significant negative impact on the public realm.
- 1.4 OPDC is in the final stages of the Local Plan process, with the Plan currently at examination and it is anticipated that this will be adopted in early 2022. The Plan includes policies specific to North Acton and Acton Wells (P7) and North Acton town centre (P7C1). These policies seek to deliver a permeable, inclusive and accessible street network and high-quality open spaces.
- 1.5 OPDC's Local Plan identifies that North Acton has the capacity to deliver a minimum of 5,200 new homes, and over 35,000 sq.m. of non-residential uses providing space for approximately 2,400 jobs across a range of town centre, Use Class E and community and cultural uses. North Acton neighbourhood town centre is an emerging centre designated to provide services to support both the existing and new residential and employee communities. In the longer term, Old Oak major town centre will continue through Acton Wells (to the north of North Acton) connecting to North Acton neighbourhood town centre. LBE is currently seeking to designate North Acton and Park Royal as a Creative Enterprise Zone.
- 1.6 Development is now underway in North Acton, and Section 106 contributions have been secured from these developments towards public realm enhancement projects. These contributions have been secured by and are held by LBE. To inform the expenditure of the Section 106 contributions, OPDC and LBE are looking to identify a series of quick-win projects to rapidly shape immediate improvements to the public realm. To achieve this, OPDC and LBE will commission a consultancy team to develop a Public Realm Projects Prospectus for North Acton which would provide detailed design reports for a selection of public realm projects to a stage where either a planning application or Section 278 application could be submitted and funding approved to a project. This would include RIBA Stage 3 drawings and a report, a cost plan, a Design and Access Statement and digital modelling.. OPDC and LBE do not have the appropriate specialist skills or experience in house to produce the documentation requirements for this.
- 1.7 OPDC is also producing a Public Realm Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which will include OPDC area wide guidance. This will inform the delivery of the North Acton Public Realm Projects Prospectus.

## **2 The proposal and how it will be delivered**

### The proposal

- 2.1 The proposal will deliver a clear and concise deliverable North Acton Public Realm Projects Prospectus that will unlock the rapid delivery of public realm enhancements on primarily publicly owned land. The projects will be developed to RIBA Stage 3 providing detailed designs ready for planning approval or Section 278 agreement stage.

Why is the procurement of specialist consultancy support required?

- 2.2 The production of the prospectus requires specialist skills (architecture, landscaping and highway design) and detailed knowledge of developing and delivering proposals for high quality public realm projects within an evolving and complex urban environment. OPDC and LBE officers do not have the relevant resources, skills or experience to develop the detailed proposals. Therefore, OPDC and LBE are seeking specialist consultancy support to produce the prospectus.

### How it will be delivered

- 2.3 OPDC will work in partnership with LBE to manage the delivery of the Prospectus. Suitably qualified specialist consultants will be procured through a competitive tender process using the GLA's Architecture, Design and Urbanism Panel (ADUP). This will be managed by TfL in accordance with the OPDC Contracts and Funding Code. ADUP is a recognised framework that seeks tender submissions from a wide range of respected expert consultancies. This will ensure high quality outputs are achieved and best value for money is secured.
- 2.4 Public consultation already carried out will be used to determine the priority of the projects and further engagement/consultation will take place regarding individual projects.
- 2.5 OPDC and LBE will jointly manage the delivery of the Prospectus because this is an area of shared interest reflecting planning roles. A joint approach will also help to reduce or avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and resource. Management will be carried out by OPDC and LBE through fortnightly client group meetings, regular day-to-day communication and joint file sharing.

## **3 Objectives and expected outcomes**

- 3.1 The objective is to deliver a high quality, robust and best value North Acton Public Realm Projects Prospectus that will inform planning applications and Section 278 agreements to unlock the delivery of a series of quick win capital projects. It is estimated that the capital value of these projects will be £2.7m.
- 3.2 The delivery of the public realm projects is envisaged to take place during 2023 and 2024. The projects will be designed and delivered to be used and enjoyed by everyone regardless of abilities, needs, genders, sexual orientations, beliefs and identities.
- 3.3 The expected outcomes will comprise:

- an enhanced public realm and open spaces that supports their use, coordination, connectivity, accessibility and legibility while increasing the social and economic value of surrounding areas. These will instil a sense of civic pride and support the evolving character of the built environment in North Acton;
- increased opportunities for existing and future communities to use and enjoy outdoor and green spaces to support their physical and mental health and well-being.

## **4 Strategic fit**

4.1 The North Acton Public Realm Projects Prospectus will help inform a number of existing and future OPDC workstreams including:

- delivering policies P7 and P7C1 within OPDC's Local Plan regarding enhancements to the public realm and open spaces to enable people to reach destinations in and around North Acton.
- informing the development of the new Public Realm SPD which will include demonstrating the deliverability of emerging SPD guidance.
- supporting LBE's aspiration to designate Park Royal and North Acton as a Creative Enterprise Zone.
- supporting OPDC's wider delivery strategy and programmes where public realm enhancements can play a key role in the new mixed and vibrant neighbourhoods being planned in the OPDC area.

## **5 Project governance and assurance**

5.1 Suitably qualified consultants will be procured through a competitive tender process via the ADUP framework led by OPDC and LBE and managed by TfL in accordance with the OPDC Contracts and Funding Code. Consultants will be shortlisted through selection criteria, including price, Quality and Equalities, and Diversity and Inclusion. OPDC would enter into the contract with the successful bidder.

5.2 The contract will be managed by the Principal Planning Policy Officer with oversight from the Director of Planning and Head of Planning Policy. An OPDC and LBE client group will be set up to steer the project from inception to completion.

### *Risks and issues*

5.3 Project delays will impact on the timeline for delivering public realm enhancements. The consultants will be expected to prepare a clear project plan with milestones, timely delivery of outputs and adequate resourcing. Project management by the OPDC and LBE client team will manage risks associated with the delivery of project.

5.4 Poor quality outputs will affect OPDC's ability to use the work as intended – as planning application material and associated legal agreements. OPDC and LBE client team will seek suitably qualified consultancy team with the necessary expertise and experience. Project management by the OPDC and LBE client team will manage risks associated with quality control.

## **6 Equality comments**

- 6.1 OPDC must have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation as well as to the need to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.<sup>1</sup> There are considered to be no adverse impacts to those with protected characteristics arising from this decision.
- 6.2 The projects will be developed having due regard to OPDC's emerging Public Realm SPD's approach to supporting the delivery of a more equitably designed public realm. This will ensure project proposals are able to be used and enjoyed by everyone, regardless of abilities, needs, genders, beliefs and identities. This will ensure that London is a fairer, more inclusive and more equal city.
- 6.3 The prospectus will involve engagement with stakeholders including local residents, landowners, developers, businesses and other representative body groups.

## **7 Other considerations**

- 7.1 There are no other considerations that need to be considered in the taking of this decision.

## **8 Conflicts of interest**

- 8.1 No one involved in the preparation or clearance of this Form, or its substantive proposal, has any conflict of interest.

## **9 Financial comments**

- 9.1 Expenditure of up to £150,000 will be funded from the Delivery Directorate budget. Based on a six-month delivery timeframe, £75,000 will be financed from each of the 2021/22 and the 2022/23 financial year budgets.
- 9.2 Expenditure on the public realm improvements is subject to further approval.
- 9.3 Further expenditure and contract variations are subject to the Corporation's decision-making process.

## **10 Legal comments**

- 10.1 The report above indicates that the decision requested of the Chief Executive falls with the OPDC's object of securing the regeneration of the Old Oak and Park

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1. The protected characteristics and groups are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation and marriage/ civil partnership status. Fulfilling this duty involves having due regard to: the need to remove or minimise any disadvantage suffered by those who share a protected characteristic or one that is connected to that characteristic; taking steps to meet the different needs of such people; and encouraging them to participate in public life or in any other activity where their participation is disproportionately low. Compliance with the Equality Act may involve treating people with a protected characteristic more favourably than those without the characteristic. The duty must be exercised with an open mind and at the time a Decision is taken in the exercise of the OPDC's functions.

Royal area and its powers to do anything it considers appropriate for the purpose of its objects or purposes incidental to those purposes, as set out in the Localism Act 2011.

- 10.2 In taking the decisions requested, the Chief Executive must have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, namely the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, and to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment) and persons who do not share it and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010).
- 10.3 The services required should be procured in accordance with the OPDC's Contracts and Funding Code by relevant procurement officers. Officers must ensure that appropriate contract documentation is put in place and executed by the successful consultant and OPDC before the commencement of the services.

## 11 Summary timeline

Activity	Date
Procurement of contract /Grant award	November 2021
Announcement	December 2021
Delivery start date	January 2022
Draft Report	May 2022
Final Report	June 2022
Project closure	June 2022

## Appendices

N/A

### **PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

Information in this Form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA). OPDC aims to publish the Form within three working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the Decision (for example, impacting a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date (when it will be published). Deferral periods are kept to the shortest length strictly necessary.

#### **Part 1 – Deferral**

Publication of this Part 1 is to be deferred: **Yes**

The deferral is until: November 2021

This is because: This decision includes an overall budget for procuring consultants and could impact the procurement process. This decision should not be published until the consultant has been appointed.

### Part 2 – Confidential information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under FoIA should be included in or attached to any separate Part 2 Form, together with the rationale for withholding the information at this time.

There is a separate and confidential Part 2 Form: **No**

### DECLARATIONS

**Drafting officer:** Lauren Laviniere has drafted this Form in accordance with OPDC procedures, including for handling conflicts of interests, and confirm that:

**Advice:** The Finance and Legal teams have commented on the proposal.

### CONFIRMATIONS

**Section 106 funding:** N/A

**SMT review:** This Decision was circulated to the **Senior Management Team** for review on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

#### Chief Finance Officer

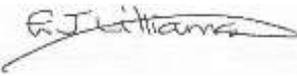
Financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this Form.

**Signature:** 

**Date:** 22.11.2021

#### Director Emma Williamson, Director of Planning

I do not have any disclosable interest in the proposed Decision. It is consistent with OPDC's priorities and can be referred to the CEO for final approval.

**Signature:** 

**Date:** 16.11.2021