

# GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

## REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2149

**Title: Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Safeguarded Wharves Review.**

### Executive Summary:

There are currently 49 wharves safeguarded along the Thames in London. They are safeguarded by a direction issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. This means they cannot be released from their use as a wharf unless the Mayor of London is consulted and approves the planning permission to release the wharf.

Advice from a QC has confirmed that any attempt to change the network needs to be underpinned by a Strategic Environmental Assessment. This ADD is requesting expenditure of up to £40,000 to procure external consultants to undertake this exercise. The Mayor will then consider any representations received before submitting his final list of recommendations to the Secretary of State, who will then make the decision on those wharves to be safeguarded.

### Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Planning approves:

1. Expenditure of up to £40,000 to procure by competitive tender external consultants to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the network of safeguarded wharves.

### AUTHORISING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/HEAD OF UNIT:

I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

**Name:** Juliemma McLoughlin

**Position:** Assistant Director of Planning

**Signature:**



**Date:** 22.8.2017

## **PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE**

### **Decision required – supporting report**

#### **1. Introduction and background**

- 1.1 There are currently 49 wharves safeguarded along the Thames in London. They are safeguarded by a direction issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. This means they cannot be released from their use as a wharf unless the Mayor of London is consulted and approves the planning permission to release the wharf.
- 1.2 The wharf network was last successfully reviewed in 2005. Officers have undertaken a review to update the network. The Mayor attempted to update the network in 2013 but the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government refused to endorse the changes to the network as it was not supported by a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). Advice from a QC has confirmed that any attempt to update the network needs to be underpinned by a SEA. The SEA needs to be undertaken by external consultants to give the SEA a level of robustness that the Secretary of State will be seeking. Approval is sought to approach external consultancies to undertake the SEA.
- 1.3 Once the review has a supporting SEA it will be subject to a 3 month public consultation. The Mayor will then consider any representations received before submitting his final list of recommendations to the Secretary of State, who will then make the decision on those wharves to be safeguarded. This will be a separate consultation from the review of the London Plan.

#### **2. Objectives and expected outcomes**

- 2.1 It is envisaged that the consultants will produce a Strategic Environmental Assessment to support the Mayor's review of the safeguarded wharves network. It is expected that the study will be robust as it will need to stand up to scrutiny by the Secretary of State.

#### **3. Equality comments**

- 3.1 Ensuring the network of wharves is up to date should help the Mayor deliver on his ambitions to improve air quality by promoting the movement of freight by the river. Improving air quality will help everyone but especially those with breathing difficulties who are typically the elderly and the poor.

#### **4. Other considerations**

##### *a) key risks and issues*

- 4.1 The contract will be managed in line with standard GLA risk management procedures. If the work is not commissioned it is likely that the safeguarded wharves review will not be accepted by the Secretary of State. If the network is not reviewed, residential developers are more likely to try and seek permission for the redevelopment of wharves, leading to their loss, frustrating Mayoral ambitions to make more use of the river for freight.

##### *b) links to Mayoral strategies and priorities*

- 4.2 This study will help defend the Mayor's approach on a specific land use, which will inform the implementation and review of the London Plan. It will support the Mayor's Environmental Strategy, Mayor's Transport Strategy as well as the London Plan. It will provide evidence to London boroughs on land to be retained in wharf use in the preparation of local plans and in partnership working with the GLA in developing Opportunity Area Planning Frameworks.

##### *c) impact assessments and consultations.*

- 4.3 The work the consultants will do will be guided by the brief (attached below) and GLA officers from the Planning Team.

## **5. Financial comments**

- 5.1 Approval is being sought for expenditure of up to £40,000 to appoint consultants to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment, to review the safeguarding of the wharves network. The cost will be funded from the 2017-18 London Plan Programme budget.
- 5.2 As this work relates to consultancy contract, officers have to ensure that the requirements of the Authority's Contract & Funding Code are adhered to and that the requirements relating to consultancy services within the Authority's Financial Regulations and Expenses & Benefits Framework are adhered to. Any changes to this proposal, including budgetary implications, will be subject to further approval via the Authority's decision-making process.

## **6. Planned delivery approach and next steps**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Procurement of contract	September '17
Delivery Start Date	September '17
Main milestones – Interim Report	November '17
Main milestones – Final Report	December '17
Final evaluation start and finish	January '18
Delivery End Date	January '18
Project Closure:	February '18

## **Appendices and supporting papers:**

Annex 1 – Consultant's brief

**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:

Part 1 of this approval contains information on the financial ceiling for this project. Releasing this information before the contract is awarded could mean that the GLA does not achieve value for money

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring) 1<sup>st</sup> November 2017

**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**

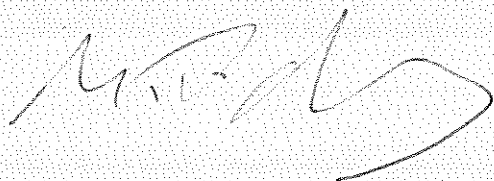
**ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:****Drafting officer:**

Peter Heath has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms that the Finance team has commented on this proposal as required, and this decision reflects their comments.

**HEAD OF FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE:**

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

**Signature:**



**Date:**

22-08-17