

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – DD1491

Title: Commissioning Fund – Tolworth Area Plan

Executive Summary:

Approval was obtained in the High Street Fund report to IPB in January 2015 for a £400,000 'Commissioning Fund' to develop a pipeline of projects in areas of London where there is strong growth potential.

This decision concerns a project in Tolworth, RB Kingston

Decision:

The Executive Director approves expenditure of up to £50,000 of grant funding to the Royal Borough of Kingston towards its costs for the procurement and appointment of a consultant to produce a Regeneration Strategy for Tolworth, which will be referred to as the 'Tolworth Area Plan'.

AUTHORISING DIRECTOR

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: Fiona Fletcher-Smith

Position: Executive Director Development Enterprise and Environment

Signature:



Date:

5.4.2016

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. Approval was obtained in the High Street Fund report to IPB in January 2015 for a £400,000 'Commissioning Fund' to develop a pipeline of well scoped regeneration projects in areas of London where there is strong growth potential, which may have had limited attention to date. The request was made in the light of advice from the High Street Fund moderation panel, that there was a lack of strong proposals from certain areas of London and in particular from some areas which have strong growth potential. The aim of the commissioning fund is to redress this imbalance.
- 1.2. This was signed off in MD1469, which encompassed the decision to delegate allocation of the fund to the Executive Director Development Enterprise and Environment.
- 1.3. The project brought forward in this decision is the Tolworth Area Plan (£50,000).
- 1.4. The scope of the project has been discussed with RB Kingston and will be further defined through the drafting of a brief /specification of works.
- 1.5. The GLA contribution of £50,000 is as a grant award to RB Kingston for the procurement of a consultant to undertake the Tolworth Area Plan study. RB Kingston will procure the services in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
- 1.6. The commission will bring benefit to the GLA's work currently underway with RB Kingston on the Kingston Opportunity Area Planning Framework and directly fits with mayoral priorities around Crossrail 2 and the earlier approvals related to the objectives of the commissioning fund

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

2.1. Commissioning Fund

- 2.1.1. The general criteria for selecting projects for funding, in order to identify suitable areas of London in which to develop pipeline projects, follows that described in the Accommodating Growth in Town Centres report. The report identifies three characteristics for areas to receive regeneration funding. They should have the potential for intensification, be under threat of decline as a result of structural change and there should be a local commitment and capacity to deliver intensification.
- 2.1.2. It is likely that priority areas for intervention will be in the middle category of centres where the greatest retail restructuring is expected. Further indicators would be persistently high vacancy rates for retail floor space, a worsening retail offer, a poor qualitative experience, a high proportion of comparison goods relative to the size of centre, retail rents that are low by sub-regional standards and are stagnant or declining, high levels of secondary office space, land availability for residential development, high levels of public transport accessibility and planned transport improvements that might improve accessibility.

- 2.1.3. Prior to presenting projects for the commissioning funding, the GLA's Regeneration team has spent time with boroughs to develop a series of project proposals. A long list of potential projects was also discussed with the chair of the Mayor's Design Advisory Group in May 2015. This included Erith (LB Bexley), Crystal Palace (cross borough), Wimbledon (LB Merton), Tolworth (LB Kingston), Church End (LB Brent), North Acton (LB Ealing), Uxbridge Road (LB Hillingdon), Feltham (LB Hounslow), Enfield Town (LB Enfield), and Ilford (LB Redbridge).
- 2.1.4. The type of support that is proposed to be provided through the commissioning fund varies depending on the degree to which development work has been undertaken by the borough, local business or community organisation, from town centre strategies to more focussed place specific development projects aimed at addressing the threats and opportunities outlined above.

2.2. Tolworth Background

- 2.2.1. Tolworth is the District Centre, which stretches out along Tolworth Broadway and Ewell Road with its landmark Tolworth Tower offices. Outside the District Centre, the prevailing character is two storey housing with a population of around 20,000. To the south of the A3 across Tolworth roundabout, there is housing, leisure facilities, Tolworth Station, the depot, large green spaces and several sites awaiting redevelopment. The A3 and A240 strategic roads with their high levels of traffic, congestion, noise and air pollution have a significant effect on Tolworth's environment and act as barriers separating residential areas, the District Centre, the Station, leisure facilities and open spaces.
- 2.2.2. Tolworth Broadway is the main retail and commercial area of Tolworth District Centre and a key route into Kingston from the A3 and the south. Its boulevard characteristics (grand scale and proportions, simple formality and some tree planting) form a long linear space with a wide section, flanked by formal retail parades dating from the 1930s and 1950s that are an attractive set piece. These features contribute towards the potential to improve the environment and attraction of the Broadway, reduce the dominance of traffic and improve crossing facilities. The subway across Tolworth Broadway was replaced with a surface crossing in 2008, but the unpopular pedestrian subways under Tolworth roundabout remain.
- 2.2.3. The 22 storey Tolworth Tower complex designed by Richard Seifert in the 1960s is a local landmark which accommodates shops, a bar, offices, a hotel and parking, it has significant improvement potential. To the rear of the Broadway, former shop premises in Ewell Road and the Tolworth Close area also require improvement. At the northern end of the District Centre, the Red Lion PH on the corner of Ewell Road and Red Lion Road is awaiting redevelopment. To the south of the A3, Tolworth has a mixed character, with disparate frontages and uses and sites awaiting redevelopment, the largest of which is the cleared government offices, Marshall House and Toby Jug site.
- 2.2.4. Tolworth's residential areas are mainly two storey semi-detached 1930s housing, with some short terraces. There are pockets of Victorian and Edwardian housing in the Douglas Road area and in Ewell Road and 1970s development in Kent Way. There are few public open spaces within residential areas, but significant green spaces to the south of the railway and to the north of the district centre at Alexandra Recreation Ground and adjoining spaces. The local economy is dominated by shops and services in the District Centre, offices in Tolworth Tower and Tolworth Close, the Tolworth Tower hotel and a range of business and leisure activities to the south of the A3 (the Charrington Bowl, Goals 5-a-side centre, garden centre, bus depot, concrete batching and aggregates plants).

2.3 A Regeneration strategy for Tolworth

- 2.3.1 This regeneration strategy for Tolworth focuses on the District Centre and the A240 corridor (Ewell Road, Tolworth Broadway, Tolworth Roundabout, Kingston Road). It aims to provide a Vision for Tolworth and a framework to promote social and economic development and guide development and physical improvements.
- 2.3.2 The Royal Borough of Kingston (RBK) has ambitious plans for development and growth across the borough. It has identified Tolworth as an area where this can be achieved.
- 2.3.3 The Tolworth Regeneration Strategy was adopted in 2010. It aims to provide a vision for the regeneration of Tolworth and a framework to guide and promote development and social and environmental enhancement. The Tolworth Project was initiated in response to:
- concerns about Tolworth's attractiveness and vitality
 - the significant opportunities for social, economic and physical regeneration
 - the need to progress improvements to Tolworth Broadway
 - the need for a holistic, co-ordinated approach to development and enhancement
 - the need for a co-ordinated approach to public engagement, funding, design, approvals and timescales
- 2.3.4 Tolworth is a designated District Centre in the London Plan (2015) and the Council's Core Strategy (2012). The Core Strategy includes Tolworth as a 'Key Area of Change'. There are specific policies (Policy T1) to guide the development of the District Centre and its environs. The Tolworth Regeneration Strategy informed the preparation of the Core Strategy policy
- 2.3.5 Since the adoption of the Tolworth Regeneration Strategy, there have been a significant amount of public realm improvements, i.e. the 'Greenway' and improved pedestrian/cycling linkages from The Broadway to Tolworth Railway Station. There has also been a significant amount of developer interest in key sites identified in the Strategy and many sites have been the subject of pre-application discussions. Since the adoption of the Tolworth Regeneration Strategy, there have been a significant amount of public realm improvements, i.e. the 'Greenway' and improved pedestrian/cycling linkages from The Broadway to Tolworth Railway Station.
- 2.3.6 There has also been a significant amount of developer interest in key sites identified in the Strategy and many sites have been the subject of pre-application discussions. Key development sites include Tolworth Tower and the Former Government offices. In addition, there has been investment interest in the Tolworth area from Transport for London (TfL) who is considering extending the Crossrail 2 route through Tolworth and improving linkages and flows around the A3 roundabout. Sustainable development will be promoted through these improved transport links which will enable and attract further development.
- 2.3.7 Given the number of housing units being proposed, and with planned transport infrastructure improvements, Tolworth could be in a position to receive Housing Zone status.
- 2.3.8 The Tolworth Regeneration Strategy needs to be reviewed to reflect and manage current development opportunities and balance short term interventions with long term development proposals in the Tolworth area. Critically, it should be formulated as a mechanism to build and co-ordinate private sector interest/aspiration with strategic infrastructure requirements, funding, programming and delivery. It will be known as the 'Tolworth Area Plan'.

2.4 The Tolworth Area Plan

- 2.4.1 The overarching ambition of the Tolworth Action plan is to provide a comprehensive and robust vision for Tolworth Town Centre. Building on the recent improvements and positive characteristic of the area, the Tolworth Plan will provide spatial guidance on the opportunities associated with key strategically significant sites, movement, the public realm and the development benefits associated with the prospect of Crossrail 2. The plan will also encompass guidance to help realise the social and economic potential of the area.
- 2.4.2 The Tolworth Area plan will be underpinned by the following project objectives:
- Capture and articulate a strong vision for Tolworth
 - Identify areas for strategic intervention for RBK, TfL and other partners
 - Optimise the potential for the area and provide a structured and prioritised Action Plan
 - Focus development within an established area of change as set out within the Council's Core Strategy (2012)
 - Ensure that a range of short, medium and long term regeneration outcomes are achieved, encompassing local and wider strategic ambitions
 - Work collaboratively with partners to optimise the potential benefits of Crossrail 2

Activities

It is anticipated the study will take between 9 and 12 months. RBK will commission consultants to:

- Review existing spatial and economic strategies and projects on the ground and in the pipeline
- undertake feasibility, capacity and deliverability assessments
- provide the evidence required to inform plan preparation including transport, spatial and character assessments, economic etc.
- prepare a masterplan that identifies and prioritises areas for development
- co-ordinate public and private sector interest/aspiration with strategic infrastructure requirements, funding, programming and delivery
- undertake innovative and effective consultation with the community and stakeholders throughout the process
- Develop an Action Plan for delivery; identifying short, medium and long term interventions/projects and objectives

The project will be partly funded by the GLA to support the borough's various capital investment work streams, and will be supported by borough officer time. The estimated cost of the study is £200k; to which RBK have committed a contribution of £150k (75%) and the GLA Commissioning Fund £50k. The commissioning fund contribution has specifically enabled Kingston to include work to develop an Action/Implementation Plan for delivery of short, medium and long term interventions in the scope of work.

It has been agreed that outputs of the Tolworth Area Plan will feed into The Growth Commission's report in spring 2016, allowing the Crossrail 2 team to ensure plans for local development and the route are aligned.

3 Equality comments

3.1 Through their existing public sector duties and via the requirements which will be set out in the funding agreement, the Council must ensure that they give due regard to the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty: eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out this project.

3.2 The following issues have been considered specifically:

- Design and strategy (project) proposals: All proposals will be assessed in terms of accessibility to ensure we minimise disadvantages suffered by people who share a protected characteristic: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation.
- Documents and publications: All documents produced will comply with Mayor of London branding guidelines, it being based on guidance from the Royal National Institute of Blind People. Where possible accessible formats will be available.

4 Other considerations

4.1 Key risks and issues:

4.1.1 Key risks and their control measures will be reported to BPR as part of the regular updates and performance management. At present a strategy document does not pose any significant risks in terms of delivery. There may be risks in managing various stakeholders and achieving buy-in from teams within the council, and the private sector partners, however not attempting to do this has an opportunity cost where things proceed in an uncoordinated manner, lacking a wider strategic purpose in terms of maximising economic growth.

4.2 Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities:

4.2.1 Tolworth is identified as a district centre in the London Plan. Significant scope has been identified for town centres across South London to accommodate growth – specifically housing and mixed-use schemes

4.2.2 Crossrail 2 is a proposed new railway serving London and the wider South East. It would connect the National Rail networks in Surrey and Hertfordshire via new tunnels and stations between Wimbledon, Tottenham Hale and New Southgate, linking in with London underground, London Overground, Crossrail 1, national and international rail services. It will add capacity to the regional rail network, cutting journey times across the South East. It will also support economic regeneration by providing the infrastructure needed to support 200,000 new homes and 200,000 new jobs. Together with TfL, RB Kingston are actively working to optimise the potential benefits of Crossrail 2 ensuring that the new plan for Tolworth is aligned

4.2.3 The Commissioning Fund has been developed to support London Plan policies with regard to Town Centres, Retail, Lifetime neighbourhoods, public realm and urban design. It also supports the ambition set out in *Action for High Streets* to make high streets better places to live in, work in, and do business in.

4.3 Impact assessments and consultations:

4.3.1 As part of the tender process for consultants and contractors on the project, tenderers will be asked to provide details of their equality policy and environmental impact policy.

4.3.2 As part of the commission, there will also be a requirement in brief for consultation on the strategy and the borough obligation to carry out an equality impact assessment as necessary.

5 Financial comments

5.1 The proposed grant of up to £50,000 to RB Kingston to develop the Tolworth Area Plan will be funded from the Outer London Fund Revenue budget allocation of £400,000 approved via MD1469 and earmarked specifically for a 'commissioning fund' as detailed within the main body of this report.

5.2 Any changes to this proposal will be subject to further approval via the Authority's decision-making process. All appropriate budget adjustments will be made.

6 Legal comments

6.1 Sections 1 – 5 of this report indicate that:

6.1.2 the decisions requested of the Director (in accordance with the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code) fall within the GLA's statutory powers to do such things considered to further or which are facilitative of, conducive or incidental to the promotion of economic development and wealth creation and social development in Greater London; and

6.1.3 in formulating the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought officers have complied with the Authority's related statutory duties to:

- pay due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people (further details on equalities are set out in section 3 above) and to the duty under section 149 of the 2010 Act to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation as well as to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not¹;
- consider how the proposals will promote the improvement of health of persons, health inequalities between persons and to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom; and
- consult with appropriate bodies.

6.2 Section 1 above indicates that the contribution of £50,000 to Royal Borough of Kingston amounts to the provision of grant funding and not payment for services. Officers must ensure that the funding is distributed fairly, transparently, in accordance with the GLA's equalities and in manner which affords value for money in accordance with the Contracts and Funding Code.

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.

Officers must ensure that an appropriate funding agreement is put in place between and executed by the GLA and recipient before any commitment to fund is made.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

- 7.1. The project will be commissioned by RB Kingston with a steering group made up of the GLA Regeneration Team, GLA Planning and RB Kingston (Regeneration and Planning teams).
- 7.2. This consultant commission will be procured in line with GLA/TfL consultant procurement procedures.
- 7.3. How the project will be delivered, and the outline timetable is set out below:

Activity	Timeline
Commence procurement of Tolworth Area Plan	February 2015
Evaluate tenders and appoint consultants	Beg. March 2015
Stage 1 - baseline assessment and development of initial options (including inception, identifying key stakeholders, assessment of opportunities and constraints, character assessment, property market assessment, transport and movement assessment (TfL may be commissioning some early work on this), option definition and delivery requirements	March 2015
Delivery of Stage 1 report Note – Stage 1 will be funded through GLA monies	April 2016
Stage 2 - Developing the preferred options including an overarching development framework to include scale, massing and height, proposed uses, design criteria, movement framework and delivery options	July 2016
Stage 3 - Preparation of TAP - August 2015. (Where any public consultation occurs an additional 6 weeks would be added to this period)	August 2016
Stage 4 - Final adoption of TAP	December/January 2016/17

8. Appendices and supporting papers:

None

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:

To allow time to for the procurement process, without unduly providing foresight of these proposals and budget figures to the bidders.

Until what date: 11/04/2016

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:

Tina Jadav has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms that:

✓

Assistant Director/Head of Service:

Debbie Jackson have reviewed the documentation and are satisfied for it to be referred to the Sponsoring Director for approval.

✓

Financial and Legal advice:

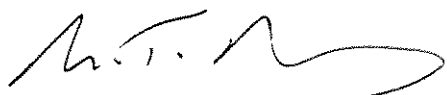
The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal, and this decision reflects their comments.

✓

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

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

Signature



Date

31.03.16

Tom MIDDLETON on BEHALF OF MARTIN CLARKE

