

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – DD1456

Title: Modifications to the SHLAA system

Executive Summary:

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) system was created in 2013/14 as approved by MD1050. This system requires a number of functional modifications to provide greater flexibility for both the GLA and London Borough Planning departments. This was originally approved under ADD281 but the requirements have changed and this approval replaces that decision.

The present approval seeks additional expenditure of up to £30,000 for the modifications set out below. However, since the aggregate value, including that approved by MD1050, is of up to £100,000, a Director's Decision is sought.

Decision:

That the Executive Director approves:

- Expenditure of up to £30,000 for the development of modifications to the SHLAA system
- An exemption from section 4.1 of the Contracts and Funding Code on the grounds that the supplier is unique in its ability to provide compatibility with an existing service.

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:

24.2.2016

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) system was developed in 2013 (MD1050) to work in collaboration with London Borough Planning departments. The overarching aim of the system is to identify parcels of land in London that are suitable for the construction of dwellings.
- 1.2 A number of changes and enhancements are planned for the 2016 update of the SHLAA system including the ability to:
- Add new map layers.
 - Add sites (containing parameters not previously used) arising from the LLC (London Land Commission) Register (as approved by DD1415).
 - Allow GLA officers to change the full range of policy constraints and calculation parameters to accommodate changes as required by the new Mayor of London.
 - Carry out new types of modelling based on changing / uncertain criteria
 - Allow London borough planning departments to test new scenarios in relation housing capacity and density.
- 1.3 ADD281 approved to carry out changes to the SHLAA system, which included some of the items in the list above. However, in the intervening period, a number of factors have changed, in particular the creation of the LLC Register and therefore, this approval supersedes and replaces ADD281. None of the work outlined in ADD281 has happened to date and therefore that budget is being allocated for the changes and enhancements planned for 2016.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1 The objectives of this project are:
- To carry out a brief review of the current SHLAA system
 - Agree the list of amendments by priority order
 - Develop, test and implement the new features

2.2 Exemption from the Contracts and Funding Code

The SHLAA system was produced in 2013 by OpenIQ Ltd. The system is completely bespoke and built in its entirety by the supplier to fit specific GLA requirements. From a technical perspective, it is a highly complex system containing extensive coding that allows Planning Officers to run sophisticated algorithms. These algorithms calculate/model the capacity and density of housing that can be built on a particular plot of land under various scenarios that are themselves based on planning regulations issued by government, central and local.

The additional functionality sought in this approval is an extension of current functions which the supplier has unique knowledge of and built up over a long time of both developing and supporting the SHLAA system. OpenIQ is therefore in a unique position to provide these services.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1 In keeping with established GLA practice, all relevant new (or amended) developments of the SHLAA system is aimed to meet the standards set out by the W3C (World Wide Web Consortium) Web Accessibility Initiative's AA standard. It is not considered that the system will adversely impact on any group with protected characteristics.

4. Other considerations

- 4.1 This project relates directly to the Mayor's Housing Strategy and the ability to respond quickly to the Housing and Planning priorities of the new Mayor.
- 4.2 The changes proposed in this document are the result of a number of consultations involving GLA teams in Housing and Planning. Additionally, consultations have been carried out with London Borough Planning departments, who have all agreed with the proposals.
- 4.3 The only major risk perceived is the tight timeframe for completing the essential work ahead of year end. As mitigation, a priority order of functions will be produced and the developer will carry out the work strictly in accordance with the agreed priority.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 Approval is sought to spend up to £30,000 on updating the Planning team's SHLAA system as detailed in this report. The anticipated costs are:
- Up to £25,000 for the analysis, development, testing and live release of the functionality.
 - Up to £5,000 for providing technical support to the system for 2 years.
- 5.2 All costs will be met from the London Plan budget allocated to this under ADD281 that approved £50,000 spend on SHLAA in 2015. The work and spend described in ADD281 did not happen and therefore this approval is now being sought to carry out the enhancements described in this decision. It is anticipated that the work will happen by the end of this financial year (2015-16).

6. Legal comments

- 6.1 Sections 1 to 5 of this report indicate that:

6.1.1 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 discharge of its general duties; and

6.1.2 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;

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.

- 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 4 of the Contracts and Funding Code (the 'Code') requires the GLA to seek three or more written quotations in respect of the services required or call off the services required from an accessible framework. However, the Director may approve an exemption from this requirement under section 5 of the Code upon certain specified grounds. One of those grounds is that the approval of the exemption is on the basis that OpenIQ are appointed due to their unique knowledge in providing compatibility with an existing service. Officers have indicated at paragraph 2.2 of this report that this ground applies and that the proposed contracts affords value for money.

On this basis the Director may approve the proposed exemption if satisfied with the content of this report.

6.3 Officers should ensure that appropriate documentation is put in place and executed between the GLA and OpenIQ for the provision of the services.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Procurement of contract [for externally delivered projects]	Feb 2016
Announcement [if applicable]	N/A
Delivery Start Date [for project proposals]	Mar 2016
Final evaluation start and finish (self/external) [delete as applicable]:	
Delivery End Date [for project proposals]	March 2016
Project Closure: [for project proposals]	April 2016

Appendices and supporting papers:

Single Source Form.

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? NO

If YES, for what reason:

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring)

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:

Duminda Baddevithana has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms that:

✓

Assistant Director/Head of Service:

Stewart Murray has reviewed the documentation and is 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

M. J. Allen

Date

23.2.16

