

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2074

Title: Green Space Factor Consultancy Contract

Executive Summary:

The greening of the built environment is recognised as one of the key interventions to increase London's resilience to climate change and to address other concerns, such as the poor air quality.

A Green Space Factor is a planning policy tool that has been adopted by a number of city authorities to increase greening of the built environment, by establishing minimum requirements for new development projects. But a Green Space Factor is not currently applied in London.

The London Plan provides the policy framework for land-use planning decisions and the management of development in London. The London Plan is currently undergoing a comprehensive review and the new Plan will require new and updated policies to address the challenges described above.

Research into a Green Space factor and its applicability in London will determine whether a Green Space factor policy should be included in the new London Plan.

Consultants are required to undertake this research.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Environment approves:

- The expenditure of up to £25,000 to undertake research on the suitability of a Green Space Factor Policy for inclusion in the review of the London Plan.
- A tender process to secure an appropriate consultancy to undertake this work

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: Patrick Feehily

Position: Assistant Director of Environment

Signature:



Date:

1.2.2017

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

London is set to grow. Current land-use policy aims for a denser, taller city. This is to protect London's Green Belt and realise other sustainability benefits of compact urban living, such as efficient public transport systems and reduced energy demand. However, a denser more highly populated city will result in significant additional pressure on London's existing green spaces and natural environment. This is not just because of the threat of development of existing space, but also because existing space will be more intensively used.

New approaches to the design and management of existing green space will need to be adopted, and new ways of providing additional greening within the built environment will have to be found to ensure London remains a city in which parks, trees, gardens and natural spaces are an integral part of the fabric of the urban environment.

The review of the London Plan provides an opportunity to include new policies that can help to address this challenge.

A Green Space Factor

A Green Space Factor is a planning policy tool that has been adopted by a number of city authorities to increase green infrastructure in the built environment, by establishing new minimum requirements for new development projects.

A Green Space Factor is not currently applied in London. Although the London Plan has a number of policies that encourage the provision of green infrastructure within new developments (including Policy 5.10 – Urban Greening and Policy 5.11 – Green Roofs) these policies are not prescriptive and so are reliant on developers integrating green infrastructure because of the known benefits of doing so, or to mitigate impacts on existing green space.

Research into a Green Space factor and its applicability in London will determine whether a Green Space Factor policy should be included in the new London Plan. Consultants are required to undertake this research. A specification for the work is included as Appendix 1.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

Consultants will be required to: a) review the Green Space Factor methodologies currently in use; b) undertake analysis into the applicability of a Green Space Factor in London; c) test initial findings with a stakeholder group, and; d) make recommendations (if appropriate) on how a Green Space Factor policy could be set out in the London Plan.

a) Review of existing methodologies

Green Space Factors, or similar, are currently in use in a number of cities including Berlin, Malmo, Seattle, and Southampton. The methodologies employed are broadly similar but have been tailored to the context of the particular city or local planning authority.

We do not require a comprehensive review of all Green Space Factor models. Consultants are expected to provide a review and assessment of those methodologies that could be applicable to London.

b) Applicability of a Green Space Factor in London

A Green Space Factor has an intrinsic appeal because it provides an objective metric that both developers and planners can use to agree the appropriate amount of greening in developments.

However, there are already mechanisms by which urban greening can be secured in London. These include, for example: statutory requirements relating to biodiversity; and other planning policies relating to the provision of open space or sustainable drainage.

Consultants are expected to set out these existing urban greening mechanisms and briefly assess how effective they are at securing stated policy objectives. This should include:

- A brief description of the strategic policy (in the London Plan) or regulatory instrument supporting the urban greening mechanism
- A brief description of how this has transposed into the policies and frameworks that inform planning decisions at a borough level
- Some examples of outcomes resulting from the current approach.

We do not require a comprehensive review of all strategic policies or regulatory instruments that could influence the greening of the development, just those that are most pertinent and that have urban greening as a primary objective. Nor do we require a comprehensive review of all borough policies that are informed by the strategic framework, just some examples that illustrate how the existing approach is achieving desired outcomes.

The reason for undertaking this element of the work is to help determine whether the development of a Green Space Factor model and policy would (or would not) add-value to the existing policy framework.

c) Stakeholder engagement

Prior to developing final recommendations, consultants are required to co-ordinate and manage workshop to obtain advice and feedback from a stakeholder group comprising planners, developers and other interested parties. This workshop will be convened and hosted by the Greater London Authority.

d) Recommendations for a Green Space Factor metric and policy for London

Based on the review and assessment described above, consultants are required to determine whether a Green Space Factor would be a useful and appropriate mechanism to adopt in London and, if so, how a Green Space Factor could be defined and described in the London Plan.

If the recommendation is that a policy framework should be set out in the London Plan, consultants are expected to set out recommendations for the wording of a strategic policy and describe how the policy could be transposed into Local Plans at the borough level. This might include for example, recommendations on the Green Space Factor metric being set at different levels based on:

- spatial parameters (e.g. inner London and outer London, or a more nuanced approach such as town centres, opportunity areas and suburban London);
- development type; or
- areas of London experiencing severe environmental and/or social challenges that could benefit from greater amounts of green space (e.g. areas identified in the forthcoming Challenge Map of London).

Recommendations should also be made about any supplementary planning guidance that might be necessary and where this guidance is best placed (i.e. as part of the London Plan and supporting documents or as part of Local Plan supplementary documentation).

3. Equality comments

No equalities issues have been identified. The contract requires the consultant to undertake desk-top research to inform London Plan policy.

The policy that will be developed as a consequence of this research will result in a greener public realm that will be of benefit to all Londoners.

4. Other considerations

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

The existing London Plan includes a policy on urban greening which encourages local planning authorities and developers to include green infrastructure in new developments. The existing Biodiversity Strategy and Climate Change Adaptation Strategy also include proposals to include more green roofs and other green infrastructure in the built environment.

The London Plan is undergoing a major review and the Mayor's environment strategies are being consolidated into a single London Environment Strategy. This provides an opportunity to update the London Plan urban greening policy and to ensure the policies and proposals in the London Environment Strategy help deliver the greening of the urban environment.

The Mayor has made a commitment to make London a National Park City with target to make more than 50 per cent of the city green by 2050. Achieving this will require a new policy framework in the London Plan and the London Environment Strategy.

Risks and Issues

	Risk description	Mitigation/Risk response	Probability (1-5)	Impact (1-5)	RAG
1	The consultancy work determines that a Green Space Factor is an inappropriate policy response.	GLA officers have undertaken initial research into the Green Factor and have determined it does provide a suitable mechanism that is used by other cities.	2	3	Amber
2	Consultants contracted to undertake the work do not have sufficient skills and experience in analysing the suitability of a Green Space Factor.	A cross-disciplinary consultancy with links will be contracted to undertake the work.	2	2	Green
3	Insufficient time is available to undertake the work.	Timelines are tight but the work is desk-based research which can be turned around relatively quickly.	2	3	Amber

5. Financial comments

5.1 The Assistant Director's approval is being sought for expenditure of up to £25,000 to commission consultants to undertake research on the suitability of a Green Space Factor policy for inclusion in the London Plan. This is to be funded as follows:

£10,000 from the Greening the Built Environment 2016-17 Programme Budget; and

£15,000 from the London Plan 2016-17 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.

5.3 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

Activity	Timeline
Procurement of contract	End January 2017
Delivery Start Date	Beginning February 2017
Delivery End Date	Mid-March 2017
Project Closure: [for project proposals]	

Appendix 1

SPECIFICATION OF REQUIREMENTS

Green Space Factor for London Review

1. Introduction

The Greater London Authority ('GLA') is the citywide government for London. It is made up of a directly elected Mayor (the Mayor of London) and a separately elected Assembly (the London Assembly).

- The Mayor is the executive of London strategic government, working closely with, and setting budgets for, the 'GLA Group':
 - a. Transport for London (TfL)
 - b. Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)
 - c. The London Fire & Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA)
 - d. London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC).
- The Mayor also works closely with London's borough councils, which are responsible for providing many local services, to ensure that local and London-wide policies work together for maximum effect.

The Mayor is required by section 352 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 to prepare a Biodiversity Action Plan that includes information on London's ecology, wildlife and habitats, together with proposals and commitments by the Mayor and partners on the conservation of London's biodiversity.

2. Scope

This contract is for the provision of specialist advice on green infrastructure in relation to land-use planning policy.

Context

London is set to grow. Current land-use policy aims for a denser, taller city. This is to protect London's Green Belt and realise other sustainability benefits of compact urban living, such as efficient public transport systems and reduced energy demand.

However, a denser more highly populated city will result in significant additional pressure on London's existing green spaces and natural environment. This is not just because of the threat of development of existing space, but also because existing space will be more intensively used.

New approaches to the design and management of existing green space will need to be adopted, and new ways of providing additional greening within the built environment will have to be found to ensure London remains a city in which parks, trees, gardens and natural spaces are an integral part of the fabric of the urban environment.

The greening of the built environment is recognised as one of the key interventions to increase London's resilience to climate change and to address other concerns, such as the poor air quality.

The London Plan provides the policy framework for land-use planning decisions and the management of development in London. The London Plan is currently undergoing a comprehensive review and the new Plan will require new and updated policies to address the challenges described above.

A Green Space Factor

The Green Space Factor is a planning policy tool that has been adopted by a number of city authorities to increase green infrastructure in the built environment, by establishing new minimum requirements for new development projects. Green Space Factor models and metrics, and corresponding planning policies, have been applied in a number of cities, including Berlin, Seattle, Malmö and, in the UK, Southampton

A Green Space Factor is not currently applied in London. Nevertheless, the London Plan has a number of policies that encourage the provision of green infrastructure within new developments. These include:

- Policy 5.10 – Urban Greening¹
- Policy 5.11 – Green Roofs²
- Policy 7.19 – Biodiversity and Access to nature³
- Policy 7.21 Trees and woodlands

However, these policies are not prescriptive and so are reliant on developers integrating green infrastructure because of the known benefits of doing so, or to offset or mitigate impacts on existing green space or the natural environment.

3. Project Requirements

Consultants will be required to: a) review the Green Space Factor methodologies currently in use; b) undertake analysis into the applicability of a Green Space Factor in London; c) test initial findings with a stakeholder group, and; d) make recommendations (if appropriate) on how a Green Space Factor policy could be set out in the London Plan.

a) Review of existing methodologies

Green Space Factors, or similar, are currently in use in a number of cities including: Berlin, Malmo, Seattle, and Southampton. The methodologies employed are broadly similar but have been tailored to the context of the particular city or local planning authority.

We do not require a comprehensive review of all Green Space Factor models. Consultants are expected to provide a review and assessment of those methodologies that could be applicable to London. This should include some assessment of the cost impacts on development of enacting a Green Space Factor.

b) Applicability of a Green Space Factor in London

A Green Space Factor has an intrinsic appeal because it provides an objective metric that both developers and planners can use to agree the appropriate amount of greening in developments.

However, there are already mechanisms by which urban greening can be secured in London. These include, for example: statutory requirements relating to biodiversity; and other planning policies relating to the provision of open space or sustainable drainage.

Consultants are expected to set out these existing urban greening mechanisms and briefly assess how effective they are at securing stated policy objectives. This should include:

- A brief description of the strategic policy (in the London Plan) or regulatory instrument supporting the urban greening mechanism

¹ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/current-london-plan/london-plan-chapter-five-londons-response/poli-9>

² <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/current-london-plan/london-plan-chapter-five-londons-response/pol-10>

³ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/current-london-plan/london-plan-chapter-seven-londons-living-spac-21>

- A brief description of how this has transposed into the policies and frameworks that inform planning decisions at a borough level
- Some examples of outcomes resulting from the current approach.

We do not require a comprehensive review of all strategic policies or regulatory instruments that could influence the greening of the development, just those that are most pertinent and that have urban greening as a primary objective. Nor do we require a comprehensive review of all borough policies that are informed by the strategic framework, just some examples that illustrate how the existing approach is achieving desired outcomes.

The reason for undertaking this element of the work is to help determine whether the development of a Green Space Factor model and policy would (or would not) add-value to the existing policy framework.

c) Stakeholder engagement

Prior to developing final recommendations, consultants are required to co-ordinate and manage a workshop to obtain advice and feedback from a stakeholder group comprising planners, developers and other interested parties. The workshop should include a discussion on cost impacts and impact on viability. This workshop will be convened and hosted by the Greater London Authority.

d) Recommendations for a Green Space Factor metric and policy for London

Based on the review and assessment described above, consultants are required to determine whether a Green Space Factor would be a useful and appropriate mechanism to adopt in London and, if so, how a Green Space Factor could be defined and described in the London Plan.

If the recommendation is that a policy framework should be set out in the London Plan, consultants are expected to set out recommendations for the wording of a strategic policy and describe how the policy could be transposed into Local Plans at the borough level. This might include for example, recommendations on the Green Space Factor metric being set at different levels based on:

- spatial parameters (e.g. inner London and outer London, or a more nuanced approach such as town centres, opportunity areas and suburban London);
- development type; or
- areas of London experiencing severe environmental and/or social challenges that could benefit from greater amounts of green space (e.g. areas identified in the forthcoming Challenge Map of London).

Recommendations should also be made about any supplementary planning guidance that might be necessary and where this guidance is best placed (i.e. as part of the London Plan and supporting documents or as part of Local Plan supplementary documentation).

4. Deliverables

The successful consultant will be required to present a report providing the information and recommendations set out above. The report should be provided in electronic format – no hard copies are required.

Prior to presentation of the final report the consultant is required to co-ordinate a workshop with a stakeholder group.

The contract must be completed by the middle of March 2017.

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:

Peter Massini has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms that the Finance and -if relevant- Legal teams have commented on this proposal as required, and this decision reflects their comments.

Corporate Investment Board:

The Corporate Investment Board reviewed this proposal on 30 January 2017.

HEAD OF FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE:

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

Signature:



Date:

31.01.17

