

# GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

## REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD169

**Title:** Crystal Palace Consultancy Services – Regeneration and urban design study

### Executive Summary:

Approval is sought for the release and expenditure of up to £50,000 of funding to provide consultancy services to carry out a regeneration and urban design study that explores future opportunities for the Crystal Palace and its surrounding town centres in light of the potential new designation of Crystal Palace as an Strategic Outer London Development centre with a strategic function around leisure/ tourism/ arts/ culture/ sports and the emerging development proposals within the park boundary.

£25,000 for this work has been secured and its use agreed in principle following a bid for funding to the 2013/14 central programme budget. The remaining £25,000 will be funded from the 2014/15 Crystal Palace revenue budget.

### Decision:

The Assistant Director is requested to approve expenditure of up to £50,000 to deliver a regeneration and urban design study, including public consultation, assessing future opportunities for Crystal Palace and its surrounding town centres.

### AUTHORISING ASSISTANT 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:** Debbie Jackson

**Position:** Assistant Director - Regeneration

**Signature:**



**Date:**

31/03/14

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

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

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

- 1.1 Crystal Palace Park lies in the London Borough of Bromley (LBB) and is bounded by the London Boroughs of Lambeth, Lewisham, Southwark and Croydon. The park covers around 80 Hectares. It is located between the town centres of Upper Norwood to the east and Penge to the south and is served primarily by mainline public transport at Crystal Palace railway station by both London Overground and Southern Rail, as well as the bus terminus. The park was established primarily as a Victorian pleasure garden and over its history has been used for many cultural, patriotic and sporting events. It was home to the Crystal Palace, originally erected to house the Great Exhibition of 1851 and relocated there from Hyde Park in 1854. The palace was destroyed by fire in 1936. The park is English Heritage Grade II\* listed. The park is owned by Bromley Council who took control in 1986 from the Greater London Council.
- 1.2 The park requires significant investment to its infrastructure to ensure that it can continue to be enjoyed for generations to come. Much of the character and underlying richness of the site is eroded or obscured. The landscape of the park is fragmented in part by the National Sports Centre (NSC). The hard and soft landscaping are of poor quality and the potential ecological value of the site is not being fully realised. Nevertheless, the site is well used for a wide variety of recreational and sporting activities.
- 1.3 In 2007 London Development Agency commissioned Latz + Partner to create a masterplan for the park which enhanced the landscape and gave the National Sports Centre facilities a stronger future. The vision was to rejuvenate Crystal Palace Park as a metropolitan park, heritage asset, cultural, leisure, educational and recreational resource to meet the needs of the local people, sports people whether elite or amateur, and the public at large. The masterplan included controversial proposals for housing on the eastern boundary of the park to generate funds towards the delivery of the rest of the masterplan.
- 1.4 The masterplan was granted planning permission by the Secretary of State in 2010 and was subsequently challenged in the High Court by a local group, the Crystal Palace Community Association. The plans were upheld by the Court in early 2013 and work is currently in progress to begin the implementation. The cost of delivering the masterplan was estimated to be £67.5 million in 2007 and this did not include works to the NSC. Funding the necessary improvements has always been a challenge.
- 1.5 GLA officers have been working with LBB officers to develop a proposal for a 'ten point plan' which is based on the masterplan principles and aims to improve access, permeability and reveal and improve assets in the park. The GLA has set £2m aside for this project and LBB £500k.
- 1.6 In early 2013, the GLA and LBB were approached by Zhong Rong Group (ZRG) who is keen to redevelop a large section of the north side of the park. A proposal to rebuild the Palace was launched at a joint press conference with the Mayor and Leader of Bromley Council on 3 October 2013. The intention is to rebuild the Crystal Palace on the 'top site' in a way that is faithful to the original building. The new Palace will be a major new cultural asset for London. Additionally, ZRG has committed to restoring the park in line with the approved masterplan to create a modern 21<sup>st</sup> Century park. The plans for the Palace will be developed over the coming months in consultation with the GLA, LBB, stakeholders and the local community.
- 1.7 The park houses the National Sports Centre (NSC) complex, built in 1964. In 2005, the Mayor of London and the London Development Agency (LDA) took control of the NSC from Sport England as part of London's bid for the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics. The National Sports Centre (NSC)

includes a 50m swimming pool, an international standard athletics track, a gym and an outdoor beach sports facility. The NSC is leased by LBB to the GLA and operated by Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL).

## 2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1 The principle objective of this study is to undertake an assessment of the regeneration potential of the Crystal Palace area and develop a high level strategy and action plan for possible interventions. It will also identify any current impediments which may result from the existing planning policies for the area. The study will be used to inform decision making in respect of the future planning policy context and to prioritise future areas of activity.
- 2.2 The study should consider implications and opportunities for town centre intensification, public realm improvements and the regeneration of the area and be flexible enough to be relevant given a range of scenarios regarding the nature of the redevelopment of Crystal Palace Park and the facilities located there.
- 2.3 The commissioned studies (of which this is one) will need to address the key interrelated elements as set out below:

<p><b>Planning context</b></p>	<p>The Palace is a new proposal which as yet has not been considered in local planning policy. Whilst some of the boroughs may wish to consider the Palace proposal as part of the updating of their plans this is unlikely to be done before a planning application for the Palace comes forward. As such the existing local plans, together with the London Plan, are likely to form the policy context within which the major application would be determined.</p> <p>This study will undertake a review of the existing planning policy context established by the five borough's Local Plans and the London Plan and identify a list of requirements likely to be necessary in order to make the new Palace development acceptable in policy terms.</p>
<p><b>Impact on Masterplan</b></p>	<p>A clear vision is needed for the role that the wider park should play in creating a new destination in south London and recommendations for how this should be delivered.</p> <p>The impact of the Palace proposal on neighbouring high streets needs to be considered, including but not limited to Crystal Palace, Penge and Sydenham. The impacts will need to be understood and addressed as part of the Palace proposals.</p> <p>The study will also identify any additional development opportunities outside of the Park which might arise as a result of the proposals for the park and Palace.</p>
<p><b>The future role of the NSC</b></p>	<p>The future role of the NSC must be considered in the context of changes in the wider park.</p> <p>The study will explore a broad range of options for the future of the NSC and athletics track; in particular consider educational uses, community facilities and the potential role of sports clubs. It will consider the future of the NSC in light of the Palace proposal to identify options where the NSC and Palace could work together to complement each other.</p> <p>The study will particularly consider how an educational facility could be aligned</p>

	<p>with the NSC and what form this might take and recommend a process for how this could be achieved.</p> <p>This will include analysis of the future users of the NSC will be and how this fits within the wider vision for the park. The NSC currently accommodates significant sports facilities including unique facilities for volleyball and diving. The study will consider the need for such facilities given the changed context following the London 2012 Olympics.</p> <p>The study will assess a series of scenarios for the future role of the NSC taking into account the running and maintenance costs of each scenario, as well as potential funding sources. The study will include recommendations for how each scenario could be achieved, both in terms of physical works which might be required and operational changes.</p>
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2.4 The procurement of consultants for this commission is to be via GLA/TfL approved processes for a tender to invited bidders (given the specialist nature of the commission) and officers will liaise with TfL procurement in this regard. The assessments will be made by officers from Strategic Projects & Property and Regeneration.

### 3. Other considerations

- 3.1 The regeneration of Crystal Palace Park has been established as an important priority for London and the scale of the proposed Palace redevelopment requires that individual issues are dealt with in an integrated way.
- 3.2 It is important that this work is progressed in a timely manner in order that a strategic position on the future of the NSC can be integrated within the wider Crystal Palace Park objectives and reflected in the proposals to redevelop the Palace so that global benefits can be realised.
- 3.3 In view of the extensive activity currently taking place, co-ordination is a key requirement, especially in relation to any public consultation undertaken.
- 3.4 The core study area includes the whole of Crystal Palace Park as well as the Park's immediate environs. The park is located within LBB and shares boundaries with the London Boroughs of Croydon, Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham. As such the study area covers multiple boroughs.
- 3.5 **Impact assessments and Consultation** - The GLA has been active in engaging the necessary Boroughs and other stakeholders in this work. . These discussions will be ongoing during the study period and engagement will ensure that the draft study produced has broad support. This will be vital to ensuring that recommendations from the study are realistic, achievable and mutually desirable. In addition, engagement with local stakeholder groups will be key to understanding the constraints and opportunities presented.
- 3.6 **Risk** - There is reputational risk associated with this work. The regeneration of Crystal Palace Park has been established as an important priority for London. It is imperative that:
- the Mayor and Mayoral bodies are seen to develop coordinated responses addressing detailed and strategic issues.
  - Mayoral bodies are not perceived to be impeding progress.

It is important that this work is progressed in a timely manner in order that a strategic position on the future of Crystal Palace Park is reviewed and re-established and opportunities to benefit from the proposed Palace redevelopment can be maximised.

#### **4 Financial comments**

- 4.1 Approval is being sought for revenue expenditure of up to £50,000 relating to consultancy services to carry out a regeneration and urban design study that explores future opportunities for Crystal Palace and its surrounding town centres.
- 4.2 It is expected the commission will continue until 31 May 2014.
- 4.3 A carry forward request will need to be submitted for approval as part of the year end closure of accounts process for any expenditure of the 2013/14 budget to be incurred in 2014/15. All budget carry forward requests are subject to approval.
- 4.4 The revenue cost of £50,000 will be funded as follows :
- £25,000 2013/14 central programme budget  
(subject to the approval of a carry forward budget request)
  - £25,000 2014/15 Crystal Palace budget
- 4.5 If the carry forward budget request is unsuccessful, the scale and scope of the work will be reduced accordingly.
- 4.6 All requisite budget adjustments will be made.
- 4.7 As this decision relates to a contract, officers have to ensure that the requirements of the Authority's Contracts and Funding Code are adhered to.
- 4.8 As this contract is consultancy based, officers also have to ensure that the requirements relating to consultancy services within the Authority's Financial Regulations and Expenses & Benefits Framework are adhered to.
- 4.9 Any changes to this proposal must be subject to further approval via the Authority's decision-making process.
- 4.10 The Regeneration Team within the Development, Enterprise & Environment Directorate will be responsible for managing this project.

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

- 5.1 The procurement of consultants is to be via GLA/TfL prescribed processes and officers will liaise with TfL procurement to progress this.
- 5.2 It is intended that consultants be appointed in March 2014 with the programme of delivery to be two staged, completing in May 2014.

**Appendices and supporting papers:**

**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:**

Patrick Dubeck has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms that:

✓

**Assistant Director/Head of Service:**

Debbie Jackson 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**



**Date**

28.03.14