**Request for Quotes**

**Consultancy input for the Planning Service in respect of Basement Impact Assessment**

**Contract Period: 3 year period**

# Summary

1. Lambeth are seeking to appoint a consultancy to provide support for a 3-year period to the Planning service for the review and assessment of Basement Impact Assessments (BIA) in relation to planning applications involving basement works. The support would be for the Development Management team to enable it to deliver against its current planning policies and service delivery targets.
2. This brief sets out:
   * Context – the background and context of the opportunity
   * Specification – what we are looking for
   * Timescales – response deadlines, evaluation timescales, and proposed start date
   * Tender Evaluation process

# Context

1. Semi-basement residential accommodation is a common characteristic of much of Lambeth’s early - mid 19th Century housing. When built, the accommodation generally contained kitchen and service accommodation. At the front the semi-basement accommodation typically looked into a paved basement area although on some of the grander housing along the arterial roads the garden level was often artificially raised to screen the basement accommodation from view and it looked into a shallow light-well. At the rear the ground level is often a half storey lower to give better outlook from the basement accommodation. Irrespective of variation in the detailed design basement accommodation is always visually subordinate to the property as a whole and carefully integrated into the design. All new basement accommodation should seek to achieve similar visual integration and subordination.
2. The Lambeth Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Part 5 (August 2023) sets out the policy context for basement applications across the borough and provides guidance on the application of Lambeth Local Plan 2020-2035 (2021) (LLP) policy Q27. Guidance is provided on the impacts of basements on the geological, hydrological, and hydrogeological environment, and to other properties.
3. The effect of plant and servicing is of particular importance on non-residential basements and matters including ventilation and means of escape need very careful consideration both in terms of functionality and neighbour amenity.
4. As a result of the policy in the LLP, Lambeth Planning service requires independent expert assessment of new applications that are submitted which involve works to basement areas or creation of new basements. Lambeth will require consultancy advice in the following circumstances:
   * + - 1. Where a scheme requires applicants to proceed beyond the Screening Stage of the BIA (i.e., where a matter of concern has been identified which requires the preparation of a full BIA);
         2. Where the proposed basement development is located within an area of concern regarding slope stability, surface water or groundwater flow, where cumulative effects from basement development may be apparent and issues in relation to designated and non-designated heritage assets; or
         3. For any other basement applications where the Council feels that independent verification would be appropriate (e.g., where conflicting evidence is provided in response to a proposal).
5. The following sets out key issues that require consideration as part of the planning assessment and will form part of the BIA; a requirement for all basement development (whether new build or extension to an existing building), which provides extra floor space below ground.

* Part (b) of Policy Q27 sets out general expectations for basement development seeking to protect visual amenity, mitigate against sewer flooding, minimise noise, incorporate sustainable drainage and be naturally ventilated.
* Part (c) sets parameters for basement development beneath buildings.
* Part (d) sets parameters for basement development beyond the footprint of buildings.
* Policy Q27 part (e) relates to the design of basement light wells and areas.
* Part (f) acknowledges that in non-residential development more than one storey of basement development may be possible.
* Part (g) places a requirement for applicants to submit a Stage 1 (Screening) BIA and sets out what it should address.

1. Applicants are advised to seek advice prior to submission of applications from the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS). The Council’s planning team will require review of submitted BIAs, to ensure that the assessment adequately considers the impact of the works on drainage, flooding, groundwater conditions and structural stability. Works should also consider the proposed construction approach and highlight what impacts will be expected during the phases of construction, and the relevant mitigating action for each stage.
2. **Table 1** below provides the number of applications received with basement related works or works affecting a basement level of a property, for the last full four financial years:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Financial Year** | **No** |
| 2020-2021 | 213 |
| 2021-2022 | 164 |
| 2022-2023 | 137 |
| 2023-2024 | 116 |

**Table 2** provides the breakdown by category type of the same applications:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category type** | **2020-2021** | **2021-2022** | **2022-2023** | **2023-2024** |
| MAJOR | 19 | 13 | 10 | 8 |
| MINOR | 63 | 53 | 37 | 31 |
| OTHER | 92 | 69 | 68 | 56 |
| Prior Approval | 6 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| PREAPP | 33 | 27 | 22 | 19 |
| Total | **213** | **164** | **137** | **116** |

\*The other category includes but is not limited to householder, change of use, listed building and commercial applications

1. The number of applications that will be received in any period is not something that can be predetermined, however the activity figures shown in Tables 1 and 2 provide an indicative level of activity.
2. Applications are of varying complexity. It should be noted that not all applications (as noted in the figures above) submitted to the council will include basement impact assessments (BIA) or reports and not all applications including BIA or reports will necessarily be passed for external assessment.

# Specification

1. Lambeth are seeking to appoint a consultancy to provide support to its Development Management team (see context above)
2. This support will comprise of assessment of BIAs or reports that accompany relevant planning applications (excluding applications which are subject to Planning Performance Agreements).
3. Following your assessment, the Council will require you to advise on the degree of compliance with current planning policy requirements, whether sufficient information has been provided to achieve compliance with planning policy, on potential amendments that would further improve the performance of the developments and on suggested conditions and planning obligations that would ensure the delivery of the highest standards of sustainable design and construction and subsequent operation, and that would ensure the impacts of the basement development are appropriately mitigated.
4. Consideration of other key policies will need to be part of the provision and the expertise/understanding of these policies should form part of your submitted bid, along with any other key considerations in terms of basement works. The following list of policies is not an exhaustive list of all policy requirements but provides an example; these policies are all within the LLP 2021:

• Policy Q2 – Amenity

• Policies Q9 and Q10 – Landscaping and Trees

• Policies Q19, Q20, Q22 and Q23 – Heritage Assets

• Policy T7 - Traffic, road access, parking and servicing (the completed

development)

• Policies EN5 and EN6 - Flood risk, ground conditions and land instability

• Policy H5 – Housing standards

1. Bids should demonstrate a full understanding of the calculations involved in the process, for example, LLP policy Q27d.
2. Bids should consider and demonstrate how the successful tender would provide assurance that all key issues identified in the Lambeth Design Guide SPD Part 5 - Key Issues, have been considered and addressed in any submitted BIA and provide examples for how this would be presented back to the service as part of their consultation on each BIA submitted for assessment.
3. Timing of responses to all consultations are expected to be within 21 days, to enable the council to deliver against its statutory planning application performance targets of:
   * + - 8 weeks for minor and other applications; and
       - 13 weeks for major applications.

Timings for responses should form part of your proposal. For pre-application responses, the turnaround for comments should be 10 working days.

1. The provision will be for an off-site, electronic service. The selected contractor delivering the service will be required to collaborate remotely with officers within the Development Management service. Meetings and site visits for more complex sites may also be required from time to time along with occasional attendance at the council’s Planning Applications Committee. Bids should indicate the cost for attendance at Committee.
2. It is not possible to predict an exact workflow arising from planning applications. Lambeth will therefore require a degree of flexibility to account for peaks and troughs of submission, to ensure optimum service delivery. Paragraph 9 provides an indication of volume based on the last 3 years activity. The cost of the contract will be monitored on a monthly basis, along with the quality of advice being provided.
3. Key outputs will include:

* Review of Basement Impact Assessments and providing advice to the Development Management service in relation to key planning policy (national, regional and local) and guidance requirements for all types of planning applications.
* To attend meetings and / or site visits where necessary.
* To attend planning committee and contribute to office presentation / committee reports (including visual aids if and where necessary) and questioning from members of the committee where required.
* Providing ongoing training to members of the Lambeth Planning Team and other relevant officers.

1. The types of applications requiring assessment will fall into 5 main category areas:

* Major, Minor, Other, Unknown, Prior Approval and Pre-application advice (excluding PPA[[1]](#footnote-2)s)
* Major, Minor and Other applications are as defined in DLUHC’s PS1, PS2 returns guide: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/district-planning-matters-return-ps1-and-ps2/ps1-and-ps2-district-planning-matters-return-guidance-notes#appendix>

1. Proposals should include an estimate that provides the average time to review and assess each category type of application. Hourly rates should also be provided.
2. The selected contractors delivering the service will be required to submit a detailed timesheet, including a breakdown of hours worked on each task, alongside their monthly invoice. Additionally, the supplier will need to provide a comprehensive breakdown of staff resources allocated to this project.

**Your quote**

1. Proposals should cover all the components identified above along with reference to relevant Policy and Supplementary Planning Documents. It is recommended that proposals are kept to a maximum of 6 pages (using a minimum of font size 10, Arial – single line spacing), excluding CVs.
2. The proposals presented should not exceed £99,999 (excluding VAT) over the course of the contract and should be informed by the activity provided in Tables 1 and 2 of point 9, taking an average of those activities presented. Proposals should indicate the expected number of years that the pricing covers. Proposals that exceed £99,999 will not be considered.

# Timescales

1. A timetable for the selection process is detailed below:

**Table 3**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Stage** | **Component** | **Indicative timescale** |
| Request for quotation | Requests distributed | w/c 29 July 2024 |
| Clarification question closing date | 21 August 2024 |
| Proposal submission deadline (Closing date) | 30 August 2024 |
| Selection | Commencement of Evaluation | 2 September 2024 |
| Successful applicant selected and confirmed | w/c 16th September 2024 |
| Contract Commencement | Successful applicant commences contract | October 2024 |

1. Any clarifications questions and proposal should be submitted to Clare Taylor at ctaylor1@lambeth.gov.uk by the relevant deadlines as per Table 3 above.
2. The proposed period of the contract is expected to run from October 2024.

# Tender Evaluation

1. The ratio that will be used to evaluate the tenders is as follows:
   1. Quality – 65%
   2. Price – 35%

**a. Quality evaluation**

1. Proposals should take into account the requirements laid out in the specification section of this document.
2. The proposal components along with the minimum acceptable score, the marks available and weightings are set out below:

**Table 4**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Questions** | **Marks Available** | **Weighting %** |
| **Technical Requirements** | 1. Please detail your knowledge of the legislative requirements around Basement construction and design for planning applications including details of expertise on listed buildings and basement construction with adjoining properties. Also provide evidence, experience & approach to the analysis of structure surveys. | 0-5 | 10% |
| **Skills and Knowledge** | 1. Please detail your experience around providing advice reviewing basement impact assessments for Local Authority Planning Services. | 0-5 | 10% |
| **Skills and Knowledge** | 1. Please demonstrate your understanding and experience in assessing the integration of plant and servicing within basements, ventilation of basements, and means of escape in terms of functionality and neighbour amenity. | 0-5 | 10% |
| **Skills and Knowledge** | 1. Please detail your understanding of the local Lambeth policies in relation to basement construction within the Borough. | 0-5 | 10% |
| **Technical Requirements** | 1. Please provide detail around your expertise and knowledge for determining applications in the following scenarios, giving case studies[[2]](#footnote-3) as examples for how you would deal with: 2. Where a scheme requires applicants to proceed beyond the Screening Stage of the Basement Impact Assessment (i.e. where a matter of concern has been identified which requires the preparation of a full Basement Impact Assessment); 3. Where the proposed basement development is located within an area of concern regarding slope stability, surface water or groundwater flow; or 4. For any other basement applications where the Council feels that independent verification would be appropriate (e.g. where conflicting evidence is provided in response to a proposal or concern is raised regarding cumulative impacts of basement development in an area). | 0-5 | 15% |
| **Service Management and Delivery** | 1. i) Please describe your availability and capacity to start work and deliver to timescales (including how the contract would be resourced to effectively manage workloads). | 0-5 | 2.5% |
| **Quality Processes** | 1. i) Please outline the systems / approaches that you will use to manage and record application advice and technical detail.   ii) Please detail your approach for presentation of reports / reviews / advice for this work – you may wish to include a sample piece for this response. | 0-5 | 2.5% |
| **Provision and Quality of Service** | 1. Please provide the names, CVs, professional membership details, roles and the technical expertise & experience of the consultants that will be assigned to this project and their experience in providing similar assessments / advice. Please also state if any aspects of the brief scope are to be subcontracted to external and/or subsidiary companies/ organisations. | 0-5 | 5% |
| **Total** |  |  | **65%** |

1. The components which are indicated with appropriate weightings will be evaluated by the panel and the appropriate score will be agreed and added to form the total Quality Evaluation Mark. The score achieved for this section, Quality Evaluation Mark, will be weighted at 65% to give the final score for quality (Quality Score).
2. The council reserves the right to challenge any information provided in response to the RFQ and request further information in support of any statements made therein.
3. Potential providers must achieve the minimum acceptable Quality Score of 3, for each of the component areas in the table above. Only those responses which achieve or exceed the minimum for all component areas will be included in the Price Evaluation Process.
4. Where only one (1) submission is received and it does not meet the minimum acceptable score, the council reserve the right to enter into dialogue and seek assurances regarding the delivery of the requirement.
5. The scoring matrix:

**Table 5**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 0 | Failed to address the question/issue. |
| 1 | An unfavourable response/answer/solution. There is limited or poor evidence of skill/experience sought; a high risk that relevant skills will not be available. |
| 2 | Less than acceptable. The response/answer/solution/information lacks convincing evidence of skill/experience sought; lack of real understanding of requirement or evidence of ability to deliver; medium risk that relevant skills or requirement will not be available. |
| 3 | Acceptable response/answer/solution/information to the particular aspect of the requirement; evidence has been given of skill/experience sought. |
| 4 | Above acceptable – response/answer/solution/information demonstrates real understanding of the requirement and evidence of ability to meet it (based on good experience of the specific provision required or relevant experience of comparable service or supply. |
| 5 | Excellent – response/answer/solution provides real confidence based on experience of the service or supply provision required. Response indicates that the supplier will add real value to the organisation with excellent skills and a deep understanding of the service or supply requested. |

**b. Price Evaluation**

1. For the price evaluation, each submission will be assessed on the total cost of delivering the programme over the number of years that the supplier has identified that they will offer the service (up to a maximum of three years)
2. To allow us to evaluate the price all proposals should include a detailed summary of the proposed costs for the identified requested areas of work, as described in the specification. Pricing should be clear and broken down in a way that identifies category type and type of position undertaking the assessment, hourly rate and the cost per application. Proposals should provide an indication of any extra costs such as attendance at Planning Application Committees.

**Table 6** this table provides an illustration of how proposals could be set out by suppliers

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | A | B | C | D |  |
| Category type | Expected time / duration to review (hrs) | Type of position allocated | Hrly rate | total cost per app | Total cost for 1 year's provision |
| Major | X hours | Director | £xx | A x C | D x average of Table 2 |
| Minor | X hours | Senior | £xx | A x C | D x average no |
| Other | X hours | Junior | £xx | A x C | D x average no |
| Prior Approval | X hours | Etc | £xx | A x C | D x average no |
| Pre App | X hours | Etc | £xx | A x C | D x average no |

1. For each application type please provide an estimate of:
   1. The average time to provide assessment on the 5 different types of application category along with an hourly rate.
   2. Average cost of site visit for each type of application
   3. Average cost of attendance at planning committee for each type of application (for evaluation purposes – assume two meetings per year)

Please also provide any details for provision of this as part of the contract:

* 1. Training for Lambeth Officers (for evaluation purposes – assume 1 session per year).
  2. Training for Lambeth Members (for evaluation purposes – assume 1 session per year).

1. To calculate the Price Score, we will use the ‘difference from the lowest tendered price’ method and the following equation:

Price Score % = (100% - ((Quote Price – Lowest Price)/ (Lowest Price))) multiplied by 35

1. The Lowest Price in the equation above will be the quote with the submitted lowest price where the Council believes, from the information submitted in the quote, that the services can be delivered in accordance with the minimum acceptable quality score in each area and contract terms and conditions.
2. The proposals presented should not exceed £99,999 (excluding VAT) over the course of the contract. Proposals that exceed that amount cannot be considered for an award.
3. **Final Score**

The Price Score (35% weighting applied), is added to the overall Quality Score (65% weighting applied), to give a final score for each Potential Provider (Final Score).

The contract will be awarded to the supplier with the highest Final Score. Feedback will be supplied to unsuccessful bidders on request.

1. Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. These can be dummy scenario examples [↑](#footnote-ref-3)