

National Forest Company – Questions on the Heart of the Forest Masterplan Specification

Questions received up to the 17th January 2020

Budget

Various questions have sought clarification on the budget

We have not specified a budget in the brief to avoid restricting tenders based purely on a set budget. Whilst we do have indicative funds ring-fenced, our decision will be informed by the quality and value for money of tenders as per the scoring criteria in the specification.

It will be important to consider that this is the first part of a two phase process, the objectives, past work and timescales when considering appropriate costs.

Approach

The disciplines you expect to be part of a good team on this brief, or maybe you have no fixed ideas?

Are you expecting a multi-disciplined team to submit are you happy with a small architect/landscape architect team with relevant experience?

Tender submissions should stipulate the disciplines and expertise proposed as part of a consultant team. We are looking for submissions which can meet the requirements of the specification. We have no pre-conceived thoughts on the make-up or size of the team which would make a suitable submission.

The scale of ambition and change that the masterplan is expected to 'optioneer' and articulate?

The masterplan will complement local place-based strategies and be underpinned by evidence, opportunity and long-term deliverability, it will also need to be challenging and ambitious enough to inspire communities, investors, partners and funders. We are therefore not limited in the scale of ambition and change we are seeking to achieve. The area has gone through fundamental change over the last 25 years but further change is necessary to achieve the ambitions set out in the specification. It is also considered that there remains scope to accommodate further change within the landscape.

Process

The nature of the stakeholder engagement process envisaged? Is it one to ones with key landowners and other stakeholder, or workshop events for a bigger audience or a web based process, or a combination?

The specification sets out that the appointed consultants are expected to advise and implement an engagement process in consultation with the Project Steering Group. All of the main landholders will be invited to be part of the governance of the project and will no doubt require 1-1 conversations. There will also be a requirement for some further engagement with other local organisations, businesses and the community to help inform or comment on options, and once published.

We would appreciate a bit of guidance on the working period. We have assumed the appointment would probably be late February but we are not sure if the intention is to complete the study in early or late July. In addition it would be useful to get a sense of potential inputs between the end of July and the final printing of the report in September.

At this stage, timescales are set no more than they are detailed in the specification. If consultants consider that a different timescale is appropriate we are open to discussions within reason. The time between July and September is to allow for partners to take the final report through any necessary board or committee procedures before the final masterplan is published.

I note that there is reference to a Project Board and a Project Steering Group. Would you be able to clarify for me the number of team meetings and/or Project Board/Steering meetings that might be needed during the course of the project?

Consultants should assume that there will be five meetings during the process in total. Some may be with the Project Board but it is envisaged that most will be with the Steering Group to shape and amend the emerging proposals.

Requests for further background information

Various questions have requested copies of the Cullinan Studio masterplan or other documents mentioned in the specification.

We have provided links to all of the documents that we currently have access to. Other documents, while relevant to this project, have been produced for other organisations and are therefore not within our control to circulate. The appointed consultant will have access to these documents in due course.

Submission details

Please could you confirm whether there is a page and word count limit?

We have not specified a word or page count limit. We would ask that submissions are submitted as a single PDF and that they are clear and succinct with additional evidence provided as annexes to the main submission.

Please can you confirm how many attendees are required for the interview?

We would anticipate that 2 or 3 (maximum) would attend the interview.