

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

### Questions received up to the 17<sup>th</sup> 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.

## Questions received up to the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2020

### Budget

*Do you have an anticipated overall construction budget for the end project?*

No. The second phase will identify potential funding sources to bring forward aspects of the masterplan.

### Submission details

*Is there a set format for the tender?*

A clear and succinct single PDF document.

*Is there a maximum size for the submission?*

No, but it needs to be emailable or if larger than 10mb then submitted by a file transfer such as [www.wetransfer.com](http://www.wetransfer.com).

### Assessment

*A lot of consultants have previously worked on the wider project over the years, will the tenders be assessed fairly?*

All tender returns will be assessed against the criteria set out in the specification.

*You mention relevant documents produced by other consultants – Roger Tym & Partners, Cullinan Studio, Planning Solutions etc. Are they able to bid for this piece of work or are they regarded as conflicted?*

These consultants are able to bid should they wish. They will be considered against the same criteria as all other tender returns.

*Are there any further criteria applied to assess the tender or only the percentages listed?*

All criteria are set out within the specification.

*How many teams are you envisaging will be shortlisted?*

Up to 5.

*You also ask for referees without specifying numbers – will two suffice, or do you want more?*

Two will suffice but more can be provided if necessary.

### Viability assessment

*I am interested to understand what (if any) level of market / viability assessment work you were expecting to accompany the vision at this stage please (noting viability assessments will be conducted in phase 2 of the project)?*

In phase one the successful consultants, working alongside our partners will be required to articulate an agreed and realistic vision for the Heart of the Forest. This is a long-term vision which will be brought forward in various phases, hence we anticipate viability of specific projects and identifying funding packages will be undertaken during phase two.

### Relevant background information

*Are you able to provide an overview of “relevant background information and previous studies” that would be available to the project team (both written reports and/or geospatial information)?*

As previously set out, the specification includes links to background documents that are accessible. There will be further documents provided to the appointed consultants in due course, such as those listed in the specification. With regards to geospatial data, we have access to a range of information, relevant aspects of which will be provided to the consultant subject to copyright and data protection restrictions. Partners, such as our Local Authorities, may also be able to provide some geospatial data.

*What parts of the Vol 3 Action Plan (Sept 2009) have been implemented?*

We are not able to specify which elements of the Action Plan have been implemented. It will be for the appointed consultants to determine what actions should form part of the new masterplan which may or may not be actions highlighted in previous studies.

### Site visits

*Is a group tender visit planned? If not, please confirm if there are any restrictions to accessing the site, and if so, what protocols should be followed?*

No group visits are planned. The Heart of the Forest is an extensive area with high levels of open public access. Should any consultants wish to explore the area they are free to do so from public areas.