



## Corsham Neighbourhood Plan Review

### Consultants' Brief

#### 1. Introduction

The Neighbourhood Plan Delivery and Monitoring Group appointed by Corsham Town Council (CTC) is looking to engage suitably qualified consultants to help in the review of the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan.

A consultant suitably experienced in community engagement, spatial and strategic planning, social and wellbeing considerations, planning policy preparation and, preferably, site selection and promotion, with a proven track record in neighbourhood planning and delivery, is required to provide professional help with the review of the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan. This will include guiding the Town Council's Neighbourhood Plan Delivery and Monitoring Group on the collection and presentation of technical evidence on the potential development sites within the Neighbourhood Plan area. This includes the sites identified in the Local Plan and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) as well as any other potential sites identified by the Group. The consultant will also be required to check and verify the Town Council's evidence base and assist with gathering evidence necessary to produce an effective Corsham Neighbourhood Plan for the period to 2038.

#### 2. Overview

The current Corsham Neighbourhood Plan was made in November 2019 and runs until 2026. The new Corsham Neighbourhood Plan will have an end date of 2038 to align with the new Wiltshire Local Plan - <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/8037/The-Local-Plan-review>. The Corsham Neighbourhood Plan is supported by the Corsham Batscape Strategy (currently being updated) and the Corsham Design Guide. All of these documents are available to view - <https://www.corsham.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plans/>

#### 3. Work to Date

- Establishment of the Neighbourhood Plan Delivery and Monitoring Group to ensure that the current Plan is effective;
- Production of a constraints map;

In addition, the following activities have been, or are being, carried out within other Town Council work streams or by other bodies, which will need to feed into the Neighbourhood Plan as part of the evidence base:

- Strategic Plan
- Biodiversity Action Plan
- Climate Change Action Plan

#### **4. About Corsham**

- Corsham Parish has a population of approximately 14,000 people.
- Corsham is one of four parishes in the community area, the others being Box, Colerne and Lacock. The Neighbourhood Plan is based on Corsham but the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan extends into parts of surrounding parishes in specific areas, in particular Rudloe and Chippenham. The Corsham Community Area lies in a strategically strong position, between the city of Bath and the town of Chippenham. The Community Area is centred on the market town of Corsham and includes a number of smaller villages and settlements which have developed along key routes.
- The Community Area is divided by the steep-sided Bybrook valley to the west, which isolates the Colerne area, rises back up to Box and Rudloe and drops gently back down towards the River Avon valley at the east of Lacock and Chippenham.
- Corsham lies on the A4 which provides a strong connection to the wider highway network and gives access to Bath and Chippenham, both of which provide a wider range of retail services. The town is adjacent to the Great Western Main Line railway however it is not currently served by a station (closed in 1965).
- A map of the Designated Corsham Neighbourhood Plan Area is attached.

#### **5. Development at Corsham**

Corsham has developed a number of distinct characteristics due to developments which have occurred in the town and the surrounding area since the medieval period.

##### **Key Developments at Corsham:**

- Corsham originated as a market town associated with the wool and stone industries. The town centre reflects this as can be seen in the vernacular architecture.
- Corsham Court, with its parkland, has developed since the medieval period to become an increasingly prominent private estate which defines the eastern edge of the town. Much of the estate is publicly accessible and is an important tourism and recreation feature.
- The arrival of the Great Western Railway and opening of Corsham Station in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century improved regional and local connectivity. The station closed in 1965 but studies are looking into the case for its reopening.
- The works at Box Tunnel led to the discovery of Bath stone, providing an important new economy and employer for the area and leading to the development of extensive quarries and mines. The area retains a number of active quarrying sites.
- Following the First World War, the Basil Hill Barracks were established by the Ministry of Defence and areas of the mines were converted for military use. The facility was important during the Second World War and through the Cold War, along with MoD sites at Rudloe and Copenacre. The MoD sites were rationalised in 2010, under an £800 million PFI to create MoD Corsham. Significant ICT infrastructure was installed to support these critical defence uses. MoD Corsham is now home to the Global Operations and Security Control Centre (GOSCC).
- The Spring Park facility was established to capitalise on the town's strong digital infrastructure and, along with the MoD, creates a cluster of high-tech uses around Westwells Road. Hartham Park has created a second cluster of digital industry to the north.
- Corsham Digital Mansion is a Wiltshire Council sponsored redevelopment of an architecturally important Grade II Listed Building in the heart of Corsham town centre. Set within 1.3 acres of land it has around 1,000 sqm of workspace. It brings together under one roof, multiple private businesses, all with a focus on digital technologies and digital capability.

- There is growing potential to expand and improve Corsham's tourism offering. Corsham Court, the Almshouses, The Pound Arts Centre, independent shops, The Methuen Arms, walking routes, and even the free-roaming peacocks are among a number of strong reasons to visit. Corsham's increasing use as a film and TV location (BBC One's Poldark, ITV's The Suspicions of Mr Whicher) has also increased visitor numbers.

## **6. Background to the Review of Corsham Neighbourhood Plan**

Since Corsham Neighbourhood Plan was made, four years have passed and many changes have taken place such as (but not limited to):

- Changes in government legislation
- Wiltshire Council's production of a Local Plan
- Corsham Town Council's acknowledgement of the Climate Emergency
- Corsham Town Council's new Strategic Plan
- Corsham Town Council's Biodiversity Action Plan

## **7. Tendering Requirements and Selection Process**

Consultant teams should submit the following material with their bid:

- A document setting out concisely the consultant's proposals to fulfil the brief;
- Outline of specific relevant experience including details of project team members, including specialist sub-consultants if necessary, and their proposed roles within the project. This will include details of relevant professional qualifications and memberships of professional bodies;
- Method statement including details of stakeholder liaison, public engagement and a proposed schedule of meetings;
- Confirmation that no conflict of interest would arise in the event of being appointed;
- Cost breakdown of each stage as Corsham Town Council may wish to select one or more stages;
- Details of at least three referees who may be contacted by the Town Council prior to appointment;
- Inclusive charges for completing the project.

Selection will be carried out by a panel of Town Council Officers and Councillors chaired by a Town Councillor. Following an appraisal of initial submissions, a shortlist will be selected, based on cost, understanding of the requirements, the quality and scope of the proposals and previous experience. The Town Council is not bound to accept the lowest tender nor does it undertake to make an appointment from this exercise.

The timetable is as follows:

- 9am Monday 11 March 2024 - Closing date for proposals
- 12-20 March 2024 - Shortlisting
- 27 March – Interviews

## **8. Budget**

Estimated at £25,000 - £35,000

## **9.**

## **Evaluation of Bids**

The quotations will be evaluated on the basis of price, experience, skills, references and quality of the proposal. The Town Council is not committed to accept the lowest or any bid.

### **10. Indicative Timescales and Programme**

The Steering Group aims to appoint a planning consultant by 1 April 2024.

A draft Stage One report is required by 30 May 2024. The Town Council aim is for the Neighbourhood Plan to reach referendum by September 2025.

### **11. Further Information Included with this Brief**

- Delivery and Monitoring Group Terms of Reference
- Initial analysis of current policies

### **12. Requirements of the Consultant**

Corsham Town Council wishes to engage consultants to help in the following areas:

#### Stage One

- Assessing the current Neighbourhood Plan in light of changes to the NPPF and Local Plan
- Gathering, assembling and refining the technical evidence base, data analysis and survey work
- Explaining local and national policy frameworks
- Advising on current and emerging regulations
- Developing the vision, objectives and options
- Advising on the Sustainability Appraisal
- Advising on site plans, maps and graphics

#### Stage Two

- a) Undertaking appraisals of potential sites for development  
Undertaking development viability checks to ensure deliverability of proposals
- b) Drafting the Plan in MS Word format along with suitable diagrams, illustrations and photographs  
Writing the Policies

#### Stage Three

- Preparing evidence for examination
- Support during the examination process

## 12. Contact Details

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01249 702130

13.	Quotation for Corsham Neighbourhood Plan	Fee	VAT
	Please enter your charges for the three main stages, along with day rates and hourly rates:  <u>Stage One</u>  <u>Stage Two</u> a) b)  <u>Stage Three</u>	£	£
	<b>Total</b>		
	<u>Per Day</u>  <u>Per Hour</u>	£	£

Quotation submitted by:

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_