

# **Brief for the compilation of a City Centre Investment Prospectus**

## **1. Background**

Wolverhampton City Council is inviting qualified organisations to submit formal tender responses to deliver a City Centre Investment Prospectus.

## **2. Purpose**

The purpose of this tender is to create a Prospectus which lays out the city's broad development aspirations for the next ten years. The Prospectus must be aspirational but at the same time believable. It should demonstrate to potential investors that the city has a commercially informed and sensibly phased approach towards developing the city centre. The prospectus can be used not only at property fairs and events, but to provide information to anyone expressing an interest in investing in the city centre. It is intended that the prospectus should be designed in such a way that it can be updated annually.

## **3. Defined Study Area**

Whilst we expect the City Centre Investment Prospectus to cover the entire city centre (bounded by the ring road), it is also not cost efficient to plan the future of every street. It is expected that the Investment Prospectus will need to focus on some key 'change zones'. (Fully listed in Section 7)

The Prospectus will also include key parts of the 'city-fringe' which is the land placed on the outer side of the ring road. This includes all zones in the Canalside area, the former Hospital site and potentially the Molineux Quarter. The Council will agree with the appointed consultants a final defined study area once the work programme is underway, but it is unlikely to significantly vary from the one defined in this brief.

## **4. Utilising the evidence base**

The City Council wishes to complete this work programme in the most cost efficient way possible. It is therefore vital that the appointed consultants fully utilise the strong evidence base and suite of technical studies and reports that have already been published. These reports will be made available on request to the consultants wishing to bid for this commission.

- Wolverhampton Parking Strategy – AECOM Transportation (2016)
- Hotel Study – Bridget Baker (2016)
- Retail Study – Holliss Vincent (December 2014)
- Office Study – JLL (2010)
- Connected Places Strategy – JMP (2016)
- AAP and other related materials

It is expected that some of the evidence base not be fully up to date, and bidding consultants should indicate in their submission where they might want to augment the evidence base.

## **5. Wider Themes**

Attached as an annex to this commissioning brief is a 'Strategic Background Guidance for Bidders'. This highlights the key strategic challenges the city faces. The document includes some of the key questions which the Council invites bidders to consider in preparing their submission. The document should help bidders understand some of the challenges and pressures facing the city.

## **6. Project Team**

The City Council does not want as an outcome either a pure planning document or a broad-brush 'vision' for the future of the city. Therefore, it is vital that the team which undertakes this commission possesses a strong mix of commercial skills and market exposure. As the brief also includes the need to prepare materials to promote the land and development opportunities in the city centre consideration should also be given to including partners or other bodies capable of delivering this element of the brief if these skills are not available in-house.

It is expected that the successful bidder will have considered the best way to present the Prospectus, and will have given consideration to the mix of materials (online and published) that would best meet the objective of communicating our broad ambitions whilst delivering usable (and up to date) information.

The prospectus should also have a 'technical annex' which is designed for an audience of potential public sector funders. This outlines where public funding may be required in order to enable implementation of schemes. For example, by providing new infrastructure, enhanced public realm, environmental enhancements, support for acquisitions and potentially gap funding. The project team must be able to demonstrate a robust understanding of public sector funding and its requirements alongside the requirement to show a wide range of commercial agency skills.

## **7. Expected Outcomes**

It is expected that the end-product may be of a similar format to the 'Big City Plan' generated by Birmingham City Council. It is intended that the 'Change Zone' documents will include indicative layouts and buildings that will show the city's aspiration for the 'Zone'.

To maintain consistency across the document it is recommended that the same artist/visual format is used across all of the sites irrespective of the availability of existing material. The budget will not allow for a set of detailed master-plans, and this is not the intention of a 'Change Zone' document.

The minimum physical outcome should be;

- An overall Investment Prospectus document which is designed for investors and developers and key public stakeholders. This should be capable of highlighting the key opportunities in a single document, and should be capable of being used at events such as MIPIM.
- A set of 'change zones' plans. The 'zone' plans are designed to show progress to date (if any) and what's happening now alongside presenting the remaining opportunities to an external audience. The 'zone' plans should be informed by the recently completed and adopted 'Area Action Plan' but must give a much stronger and commercially informed assessment of the sites development potential.

The level of existing information in each of the planned 'change zones' is as follows;

**Interchange:** There is an existing master-plan which lays out the site. Most of the plots and layouts in this area are firmed up (and much has already been achieved) and therefore the 'Change Zone' document can draw upon this existing resource.

**Canalside South:** The desired development mix for this area has been identified (mainly residential) and an initial layout has been prepared by engineering consultants. The layout plan identifies the scale and location of buildings. There are no other Masterplan, design or marketing materials available. The Zone plan will need to present some aspirational ideas around the heritage buildings and the need for some anchor leisure uses.

**Canalside North:** The land area is well defined and the aspiration is for residential development. There are no drawings or overall plans in place for the area. However the available development plots are well defined and bounded.

**Canalside Knowledge Quarter:** This land is entirely in the ownership of the University of Wolverhampton. Some existing buildings are underway and the site is well defined and laid out. The site is clearly bounded and well defined, there is a large volume of remaining development land.

**Westside:** A development partner has been selected for this site. The plans are for a multiplex cinema, an f&b terrace, multi storey car park and potentially a hotel. The layouts are well established and the main job in relation to this zone will be to bring it into the same format as the other change zones.

**Southside:** This site has the lowest level of planning documentation. A high degree of input will be required to identify potential commercial uses and layouts for the site (albeit aspirational). On this basis drawings will need to be speculative and it is expected that the winning bidder will work with the Council to identify a development vision for this site. It is likely the area will require considerable environmental upgrading.

**St George's:** This is a large site (former Sainsburys supermarket) which the Council owns the freeholds for. There is a remaining (nine year) lease to Sainsbury's on the site. Therefore, at this stage the documentation will need to make it very clear that the site won't be available to the market for a number of years. This means we can visually depict an indicative layout for when the site becomes available. The site itself is well defined and clearly bounded. There are no fixed views of use.

**Learning Quarter:** This is a bounded site which contains a diverse ownership. The Council has an aspiration to locate the city college in this location, which also includes the main library. The Zone plan must consider how this area can be configured to meet the College requirement and how other uses and public spaces link.

**Former Hospital Site:** This site is in the ownership of the HCA. A site Masterplan has been commissioned and broad layouts have been established. The key task here is to consider how the site links to the city centre (it is directly over the ring road) and to work the existing plans into the same format as the other zones.

Whilst these have been identified as the main change zones, it is possible that as client we may decide to add an additional zone. The budget could usefully include a contingency in the event that we decide to do so.

For each of the 'change zone' plans it will be necessary to provide a level of information that will be useful for any party interested in investing in that zone. These would have much more technical detail than the overall prospectus document.

The 'change zone' plans should include, but not be limited to;

- Visualised layout with indicative uses

- Identification of planning opportunity and constraint (the AAP is fully up to date and was adopted in the last month)
- Market opportunity statement
- Land ownership details and plot demarcation
- Infrastructure within the zone (including transport)
- Opportunity for environmental enhancement/implementation of Connected Places strategy
- Potential development constraints
- Possible availability of public funding/intervention opportunities

An absolutely fundamental aspect of this brief will be to marry the site opportunities to the market intelligence on the city. Identifying in each zone plan the phasing, the interconnectivity between the different zones and a commercially informed statement of ambition.

An annex designed for promoting the prospectus to public funding bodies will also be required. This will assist the Council in making the case to draw down public resources to support implementation of the prospectus. It is expected this document will help demonstrate the scale of economic outcome that could be achieved by implementing the prospectus. It should help make the case for investments in activities which don't necessarily deliver direct outputs, but facilitate major private sector investment in the city centre.

## **8. Audiences**

Each of the three main products will have different audiences;

- The Main Prospectus is designed for anyone with an interest in the future development plans for the city centre. This can be used with public and private sector stakeholders, at property fairs and other events where the city is promoting itself, and by Developers seeking to convince occupiers of the merits of investing in the city.
- The 'Change Zone' plans are designed for those wanting to find specific investment opportunities in the city. It will provide a level of technical and back-up information that would be directly useful to a potential investor or property agent. These documents should be targeted at an investor/developer community to help identify the best places in the city to construct hotels/restaurants/housing schemes and offices.
- The 'Public Funding Annex' is designed for LEP/Combined Authority/Mayoral audiences. It should help establish the viability of funding a 'programme' approach towards Wolverhampton City Centre.

It is for the bidding team to consider how best to format the Main 'Prospectus' and 'Change Zone' documents.

## **9. Stakeholder Engagement**

It will be critically important to ensure that key stakeholders in the city are engaged in this brief.

These will include (as a minimum) a mix of public bodies, including the College and University, the Canals and Rivers Trust, Network Rail, the HCA and the West Midlands Combined Authority.

The key private sector bodies to be engaged will include as an absolute minimum key landowners and developers in the city centre. This should include Neptune (developers of Interchange) Urban and Civic (lead developer for Westside) Benson Elliot (owners of the Mander Centre) and a range of other private stakeholders the Council will direct the winning bidder towards.

## **10. Updating**

The Council will provide the appropriate branding guidelines so it can fit in the family of Wolverhampton documents.

The Council wants the opportunity to update the document on an annual basis for at least the next three years. (Probably in January 2018, January 2019, and January 2020)

The Consultant is asked to provide a base quote for updating the documents in each of the following three years to keep the material up to date. (Please note that if more fundamental changes were needed an additional commission may be issued)

## **11. Budget**

Whilst the maximum budget for this work programme is £100k excluding VAT, the Council will hope to achieve the outcomes contained in this Plan for less than this sum.

In addition to this it is requested that bidders include an outline amount for updating the Prospectus in each of the following three years (as noted in Section 10).

Those organisations tendering for this work should provide a detailed break-down of costs as a part of the submission.

- Price for compiling the overall prospectus
- Price for compiling the 'Change Zone' Plans
- Price for producing the public funding document

Included in the cost of the submission should be the costs of printing and an online version of the prospectus and 'change zone' plans.

For planning purposes it is expected that an initial 800 printed copies of the prospectus should be generated.

It is requested that the cost of providing an online version of the Prospectus and Change Zones should be included (it will be placed on the Invest Wolverhampton web site)

It is expected that the public funding document will be a technical annex and will not require any special printing arrangements.

## **12. Evaluation Criteria**

Consultants interested in bidding to fulfil this brief should provide the following in their submission.

1. A detailed response to the Brief which includes methodology, timescales and creative ideas for how this commission can be realised.
2. Details on the internal and potentially external project team identified to complete this commission and their proposed time inputs (to include CV's of the key staff involved and briefer details of wider experts that might be engaged).
3. At least two examples of where commissions of this nature have been undertaken. Please also include references or contacts of the key public sector client.
4. Please provide detailed costs for completing the commission. The prices are to be inclusive of all materials, travel and expenses, but exclusive of VAT. The pricing schedule should be used to enter all costs into.

The weightings for the above evaluation criteria are as follows:

	<b>Quality</b>	<b>70%</b>
1	Extent to which the proposal meets the requirements of the brief and quality of the proposal  - Quality of the Prospectus Proposal  - Assessment of approach to Change Zones  - Quality of approach to public funding document	30%
2	Skills and experience of the Consultant Team  - Relevant experience in completing similar assignments  - Extent of market expertise demonstrated	20%
3	Previous experience of delivering similar commissions  - Quality of similar commissions  - Relevance of similar commissions	20%
	<b>Price</b>	<b>30%</b>
4	Cost for the work programme (completed price schedule) broken down as follows:  - Costs for compiling the prospectus, “Change Zone” Plans, and public funding document  - Costs for 3 years of updates  - Costs for generating printed materials and web enabled version	20%  5%  5%

### **13. Deadlines**

Tender submissions are to be made via the Due North portal by 12 noon on the 19th October 2016.

### **14. Informal enquiries**

Organisations interested in submitting tenders for this work must direct any enquiries via the Due North portal.

# **‘Wolverhampton City Centre Investment Prospectus’**

## **Annex**

### **Strategic Background Guidance for Bidders**

# **The Wolverhampton City Centre Investment Prospectus**

## **Strategic Background Guidance**

### **1) Purpose of this Paper**

The purpose of this paper is to provide strategic background to support the organisations bidding to undertake this commission.

This paper summarises some of the macro and micro issues which will face the city over the next few years. Some issues are big picture and global by nature others are questions of how the city makes the most of shorter term opportunities.

It must be noted that it is not expected that the lead consultant will be in a position to answer all the questions outlined below. Rather, they have been included to provide context and to invite consideration of the key challenges the city faces in attracting new investment.

### **2. The City Councils changing approach to economic development**

The City Council recognises that it is now working in a very different environment from that which prevailed a few years ago.

The Council recognises that a strategy built upon securing discretionary public funding will not secure either the pace or level of change the city is capable of delivering. The Council wants to build confidence in the city as a location where investors can make commercial returns.

The Council recognises that its role is to create a platform for development. It will do this through using its own land and financial wherewithal to create opportunities. We recognise the move away from grant funding and towards investment funding and recyclable finance.

The tone of this prospectus must reflect these changes.

### **3. The Big challenges facing the city**

Wolverhampton faces some major challenges which could be categorised as being fairly global in nature.

- Consideration should be given as to the role the city centre can play as the key centre for the Black Country and the West Midlands region
- Consideration should be given to the inter-relationships between Wolverhampton and Birmingham, in particular in relation to the impact upon retail, leisure and commercial office markets.
- Consideration should be given to the potential for the city centre to contribute to achieving national policy objectives, including playing a much greater role in an increasingly globalised and connected world economy?
- Consideration should be given to the adaptations required to support the city centre transform to a low-carbon economy



- Consideration should be given to the potential for the city centre to support wider strategic objectives, such as retaining (and attracting) more graduates and knowledge workers in the city and promoting healthier lifestyles
- Consideration of how the city could adopt 'smart-city' principles
- Consideration of how the city might implement its 'Connected Places' strategy which specifies how public spaces and link ways in the city can be transformed

#### **4) Identified Strengths**

The Council has identified a number of strengths the city has. A key part of the City Centre Investment Prospectus will be to test these perceived strengths (and identify others) and consider how the Prospectus will build upon them.

- Wolverhampton has outstanding connections to national markets being at the centre of the national rail and road networks
- Wolverhampton is the 'city' in the Black Country, the 12<sup>th</sup> largest city in England in a sub-region with a population around a million.
- Wolverhampton is a big city within a very large metropolitan region and benefits from being part of an agglomeration economy
- Wolverhampton has been more successful than many ex-industrial cities in diversifying its economy. There is good evidence of advanced manufacturing and business service companies succeeding and growing in the city (particularly in the north of the city)
- The city benefits from some very high profile employers. Notably it has the global JLR engine plant, as well as two FTSE 250 headquartered companies, Carillion and Marstons. It has also seen rapid growth of a challenger bank, Charter Court, which plans to have 750 staff based in the city.
- Wolverhampton has the basic ingredients of a very good city centre, with a collection of fine historic buildings, some strong cultural institutions and a retail centre which has the potential to consolidate without leaving large void spaces
- There is very strong demand for industrial space in the city
- There may be the potential to create a larger office and commercial centre, offering investors and occupiers a more accessible and better value proposition than Central Birmingham
- The Council and other strategic partners own some very attractive development land, which if brought forward with vision has the potential for transformational regeneration
- The city has a large and financially successful University. It has a highly active estate strategy which is vital in supporting the regeneration of the city centre.

#### **5) Perceived Weaknesses**

The Council has also identified a number of weaknesses associated with the city centre which could impact upon the successful implementation of a City Centre Investment Prospectus. During the process of building the Prospectus it is expected that measures may be identified that help address some of the weaknesses listed below.

- The city benefits in many ways from proximity to Birmingham, but it can also suffer from proximity. A very big city close by can reduce potential in myriad ways, sucking people out of outlying towns and cities to its offices, bars and restaurants, cultural facilities and urban housing
- The city has a national image problem, it is certainly not alone in this, but may need to take steps to improve perceptions
- The city centre (and the city centre fringe) has an outmoded office stock. Until the city council took action to construct new offices, there had been no new offices built in the city centre since the 1980's
- The retail centre underperforms given the size of the city. There are a number of major UK retailers who are not represented in Wolverhampton
- Whilst the city centre has many fine older buildings, it has few high quality and landscaped spaces in the city centre and it also suffers from a predominance of very poor quality secondary retail
- The city has a weak leisure economy. Whilst the Urban and Civic scheme will address the lack of a cinema and family dining opportunities, the city centre suffers from a real deficit in both numbers of and quality of restaurant and dining opportunities
- The city centre has no real residential population, this is hurting the potential to develop an active and vibrant night-time economy
- The environmental quality of the parts of the city centre with potential for hosting residential development is probably too poor. Public funds tend to focus upon 'starter homes' or loans to developers, the city needs to make the case that instead it requires external resource support to create a high-quality environment.
- The city has around 80% of its housing stock in Council Tax bands 'A' and 'B'. Without diversifying the quality of the housing offer the city will 'lock-in' poverty and will see a drift of higher paid people out of the city
- Educational attainment has been historically poor.

## **6) Thematic Challenges**

### **a) Modern city centre infrastructure**

- Is the city's core infrastructure strong enough to support a growth ambition?
- How might the city leverage links to the proposed HS2 terminus in central Birmingham?
- Can the city implement further phases of the Tram Network?
- What steps can the city take to ensure there is adequate superfast broadband provision in the city centre?

### **b) Promoting Urban Housing**

- Can the city centre transform sufficiently to enable external investment into higher quality urban flats and apartments?
- What scale of environmental enhancements/greening might be required to create a sufficient quality of place to enable new housing development?

- Is there a scalable market for the private rented sector in the city-centre, and how might the city ensure that only schemes of quality proceed?
- Can the city encourage older residents to move closer to the city centre to directly benefit from access to amenities?
- What steps should the city take to create new 'character' residential neighbourhoods, particularly in challenging locations such as the Canalside district?
- How might housing development sites be phased to the market to ensure only high quality development proceeds?
- What is the potential scale of student housing provision and in what locations should it be prioritised?

### **c) Creating a vibrant office market**

- Can the Council play a further key role in facilitating further commercial office development, particularly on sustainable sites close to the main transport hubs?
- What scale of future office development should the Council reasonably prepare for?
- Should the Council strictly designate office development in the vicinity of the Interchange project in order to create critical mass?
- Should the city encourage mixed developments which contain both offices and residential, which can share amenity such as small format supermarkets, cafes and gyms?
- What strategy might the city pursue to promote the refurbishment of older offices, for example the former Marstons office, the Mander tower and the BT building (which is only partially occupied)
- Is there any potential for the smaller older historic buildings in the city to be refurbished for an office related use?
- Can the city take steps to provision space for creative and start-up businesses?

### **d) A city centre education estate**

- Can a modern learning hub/district be created which includes library, college and other educational provision?
- What is the potential of the University led 'Art Park' and does it have the potential to regenerate Stafford Street?
- How might the city better promote connectivity between the University campus in the city centre, in the Molineux Quarter and Springfield?

### **e) The City Centre Experience**

- Can the city implement its 'Connected Places' strategy?
- We increasingly live in an 'experience economy', where people use city centres not just to buy things but as places to pass-time attending events, eating / drinking/ walking/ visiting cultural facilities/sports and live events, can the city do more to improve its 'experience-offer'?
- There is a national trend for authentic dining experiences, how might the Council act to encourage more food entrepreneurs invest in the city

- Can the city consolidate and build upon its reputation as a city with a strong live events calendar?
- Can the city build an active events programme to provide opportunities for mass participation in city life for those with low incomes and to increase footfall and the commercial vitality of the city centre?
- Is there the potential to create a character neighbourhood in the south of the city centre in the St John's Church area?
- What steps might the Council take to support the development of a higher quality business focussed hotel scheme?
- How might the city work with the Football Club to improve the wider 'matchday' experience?

#### **f) Future Proofed Retail Centre**

- Can Wolverhampton thrive in a new retail context, one which has much less physical floor-space?
- How much more floor-space is required in the city centre to accommodate mainstream retailers
- What can be done to attract key retailers who are missing from the city centre? (Hollis Vincent December 2014 Retail Study is available as evidence base)
- How can the city intervene to help make secondary retail work better in the centre, reducing stock (?), focussing on consolidation (?), intervening to bring back vacant units (?)
- What are the retail trends which the city could potentially prepare for?
- How should the city respond to development pressure from budget supermarkets to take key trading sites within the city centre?

#### **7) Positioning the City with Investors/Developers**

Wolverhampton will have to communicate our Investment Prospectus.

The city brand is not as positive as we might want. The city might need to work hard to shift perceptions. We need to be clear what the city has that differentiates it from other similar size cities in the UK (Stoke, Hull, Sunderland, Leicester, Bradford etc)

Wolverhampton and the Black Country also need to position an offer in the context of the West Midlands and the proposals for a new Mayor. There is a risk that the focus will move much more towards Birmingham, at the expense of Wolverhampton. Coventry will also no doubt present itself as a city facing the greater south east of England, as city with latent economic potential, with the meteoric rise of Warwick University and its strong advanced manufacturing profile will make it an attractive investment proposition.

#### Key Issues

- Does the city properly leverage its relationship with Birmingham and its membership of the second largest metropolitan region in the country?
- What do people/businesses/investors associate with the brand 'Wolverhampton' and how might this be altered/adjusted?
- Does and should the city have an international profile and what might be the benefit of having such a profile?

## Communicating our Brand

*'from voters to investors, talented graduates to tourists, you need to think about what they need to hear rather than what it is you want to say' (Cities, The Destination Identity)*

- What is it that Wolverhampton can say about itself in the Investment Prospectus that is unique, interesting and real?
- Is there potential in the metropolitan brand. By global standards the Midlands conurbation is quite densely populated with the major centres being very close to each other. This is proximity to major population centres in surely an advantage over stand-alone towns and cities?
- Can Wolverhampton position itself as a challenger brand to bigger cities?

*'Big cities often have creaking infrastructure, expensive housing, pockets of social and economic deprivation that can foster crime, homelessness and other signs of decay*

*'Smaller cities have the ability to stand-out by offering what they are best at; intangible but vital quality of life advantages, such as, a lack of congestion, shorter or easier commutes, smaller and better resourced schools, access to countryside and better value housing'*

Cities 'Destination Identity'

- How does Wolverhampton become a place 'people want to be?'