

## **LAND AT MERKLAND PLACE, LANARK WAY, BELFAST**

### **DEVELOPMENT BRIEF**

The Department for Communities invites proposals for the development of land at Merkland Place, Lanark Way, Belfast.



March 2017

# CONTENTS

- 1 Introduction and Strategic Context
  - 2 The Site
  - 3 Vision Statement
  - 4 Design Brief
  - 5 Conditions of Development and Disposal of Site
  - 6 Submission of Proposals
  - 7 Selection of a Developer
  - 8 Urban Development Grant
  - 9 Disclaimer
  - 10 Further Queries
- Appendix A      Assessment Criteria.

# 1 INTRODUCTION AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT

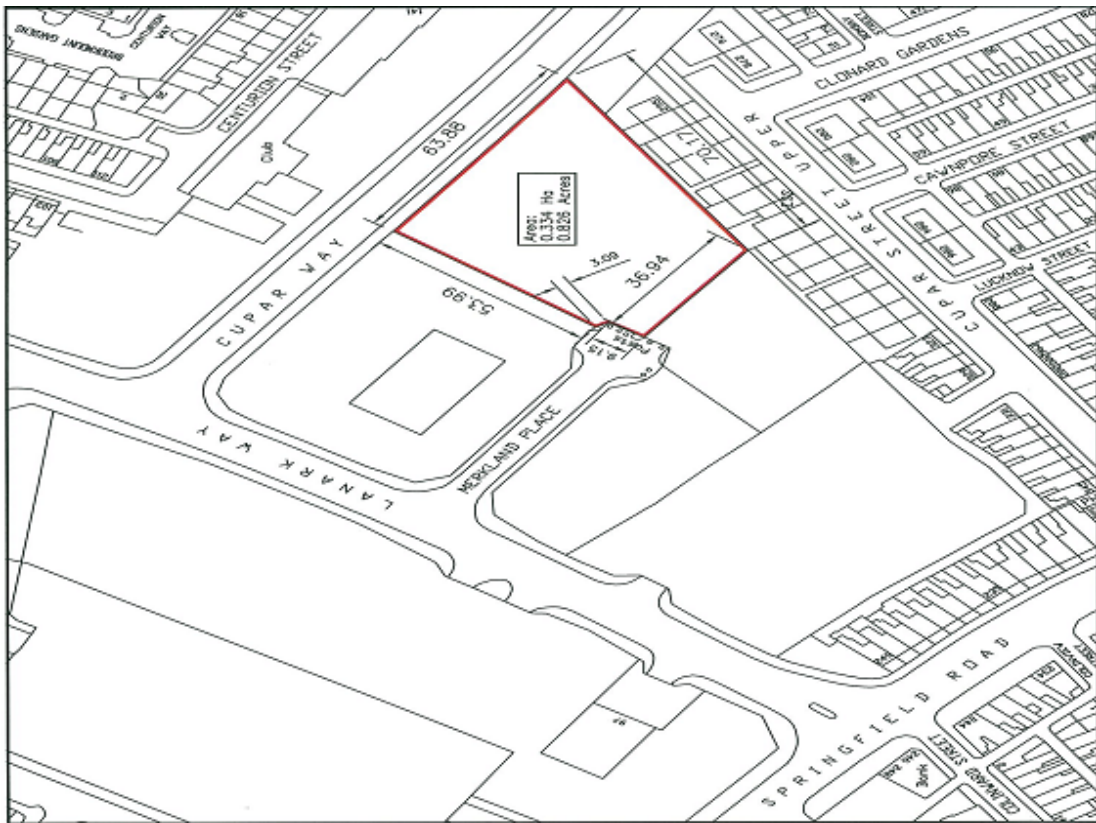
- 1.1 The Department for Communities (the Department) invites proposals for the development of land at Merkland Place, Lanark Way, Belfast. Proposals should be submitted no later than 12.00 noon on 27 July 2017.
- 1.2 The overall objective of the competition is to promote sustainable urban regeneration by selecting a high quality development proposal that also meets the Department's regeneration objectives for the local area. In seeking to work in partnership with the private sector, the Department recognises the contribution that this sector can make to urban regeneration in terms of innovative high quality design, professional expertise and financing.
- 1.3 The Department plays the lead role in promoting and co-ordinating the implementation of urban regeneration programmes and schemes in towns and city centres throughout Northern Ireland. Belfast Regeneration Directorate carries out this role throughout Belfast.
- 1.4 The Department's statutory regeneration authority derives from:
  - The Planning (NI) Order 1991 which provides the legislative basis for comprehensive development schemes, land acquisition and disposal of land and the extinguishment of public rights of way, and
  - The Social Need (NI) Order 1986 which provides the statutory basis for granting financial assistance to projects in areas of special social need and undertaking environmental improvement schemes.

## 2 THE SITE

- 2.1 This vacant site, measuring 3,340 square metres, occupies a prominent position at Merkland Place, Lanark Way, Belfast. The area is mainly commercial/retail/light industrial in its make up with a corridor of outlets fronting Lanark Way which links the Shankill and Springfield Roads. The site is located in close proximity to residential housing.

A Tier 1 contamination assessment of the site in July 2013 stated that the soil assessment did not identify any contaminant sources on site. It also stated that no contaminant remedial measures are required prior to the redevelopment of the site.

[www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/33740.aspx](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/33740.aspx)



Location of site.

- 2.2 The site has been zoned in the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 within a major Area of Existing Employment and Industry (BT011/35). The site would be best suited to commercial, light industrial and retail uses.
- 2.3 A Transport Assessment Form (TAF) will be required at application stage to demonstrate how the development is to function in transportation terms. Until the scale of the proposed development is confirmed, it is not possible to confirm whether a detailed Transport Assessment / Traffic Statement will be necessary.
- 2.4 Any vehicular access to the site must satisfy Policy AMP2 of Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) and Development Control Advice Note 15 (DCAN15) - Vehicular Access Standards. Proposed access onto minor roads is preferable.
- 2.5 Car parking for servicing the development must satisfy: Quality Residential Environment - Policy QD1 of PPS1, non-residential development - Policy AMP7 of PPS3 & associated "Parking Standards". Any reduction in the level of car parking must be fully justified (residential in accordance with DCAN 8: Housing in Urban Areas). Parking could be considered on the basis of in-curtilage provision, in lay-bys / on-street (subject to capacity and availability), or any combination.
- 2.6 BMAP & BMTP do not include any significant proposals likely to impact on the future development of this site. There are no proposals at this time to extend the Belfast Rapid Transport away from its proposed route on the Falls Road.
- 2.7 The proposed development site is outside the BMTP controlled parking zone. There are no parking restrictions in the vicinity of the site in either Lanark Way or Cupar Way, however, there is an Urban Clearway on the Springfield Road.

### 3 VISION STATEMENT

- 3.1 The Department is seeking a development proposal for this site which, as well as addressing a specific pocket of dereliction, will contribute to the regeneration of Lanark Way. The winning proposal will be a sustainable development which enhances the existing streetscape for the benefit of those living in the immediate area and those travelling through it. As far as possible, it will also seek to contribute to the social, community and economic renewal of the local area.

- 3.2 The frontage of Lanark Way is dominated by business development. Given the proximity of residential development which surrounds the site, consideration should be given to the desired usage to ensure there is no adverse impact on the residential community. General Industrial uses would be precluded to ensure no adverse impact on residential amenity however; Call Centre, Research & Development, Light Industrial, Storage and Distribution would be considered although the Department will consider any development proposal that is consistent with the Regional Development Strategy.'

The Regional Development Strategy "Building a Better Future" is a strategic and long term perspective on the future development of Northern Ireland up to the year 2035. It has been prepared in close consultation with the community and aims to take account of the economic ambitions and needs of the Region and put in place spatial planning, transport and housing priorities that will support and enable the aspirations of the Region to be met. It will influence the future distribution of activities throughout the Region. It is not limited to land use planning but recognises that policies for physical development and use of space have an important bearing on other matters such as developing a strong spatially based economy, a healthy living environment and an inclusive society which tackles inequalities relating to health, education and living standards. The promotion of sustainable development allied to social and economic cohesion is an integral part of the drive to provide a strategic and long-term perspective for the development of the region up to the year 2035. "Building a Better Future" is available online at the following address: <http://www.drdni.gov.uk/shapingourfuture/>.

- 3.3 It has been confirmed by the Housing Executive that that the site is not required for social housing.
- 3.4 The site lies within land zoned within a major Area of Existing Employment and Industry (BT011/35). The site would be best suited to commercial, light industrial and retail uses. The presumption would therefore be in favour of development subject to all planning considerations detailed in the following design brief section.
- 3.5 It is advisable that any proposal is discussed with the Planning Service of Belfast City Council prior to the submission of a planning application. This would take the form of a Pre Application Discussion which would be requested formally in writing.

## 4 DESIGN BRIEF

Following consultation with relevant statutory bodies, the Department has identified the following objectives for the development.

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| <b>PLANNING AND DESIGN</b><br><br>Further information on planning policy statements and guidance is available on the Northern Ireland Planning Service website.<br><a href="http://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy.htm">(<a href="http://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy.htm">http://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy.htm</a>)</a> | <b>Objective 1: To secure a development that complements and enhances the existing Lanark Way/CuparWay streetscape in terms of both design and use.</b>   |
|  | General Design Considerations   |
|  | In general, the proposed development should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ be designed to comply with the Northern Ireland Building Regulations (NI) 1994;</li><li>▪ as far as possible, be in scale with other buildings in the area;</li><li>▪ be compatible with buildings in the vicinity, in terms of design and choice of materials.</li><li>▪ any development should be designed to deter crime.</li></ul>   |
|  | Specific Design Considerations  |
|  | More specifically, following a review of relevant strategic documents and consultation with the relevant statutory bodies and key stakeholders, the following should be considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Depending on the scale of the proposed development, further information may be required in the form of a Detailed Transport Assessment, based on the guidelines contained in the Transport Assessment - Guidelines for Development Proposals in Northern Ireland, to ensure that any adverse traffic and transport impacts can be mitigated effectively and minimize the overall effect on the surrounding network and encourage sustainable means of travel.</li></ul> |

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|                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The levels of development beyond which a Detailed Transport Assessment would be required are given at paragraph 3.5 of the Transport Assessment document - 'Guidelines for Development Proposals in Northern Ireland' published in 2006 (A-Z index under 'T').<br/><a href="http://www.planningni.gov.uk">www.planningni.gov.uk</a></li> </ul> <p><i>Please note that the preferred developer will be required to obtain planning permission and all other necessary approvals and to liaise with the Statutory Authorities in the design process. The developer should also discuss their proposals with Transport NI at an early stage to determine whether a traffic impact assessment is necessary along with the provision of sufficient parking for the development.</i></p> |
| <p><b>REGENERATION IMPACTS</b></p> | <p><b>Objective 2: To secure a development that will have positive regeneration impacts on the local community.</b></p> <p>Submissions should identify potential positive regeneration impacts of the proposed development. These could include: improvement to quality of local environment; contribution to local economy; job creation; provision of services/facilities to local community etc; addressing housing need etc.</p>  |



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| <p><b>ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY</b></p> <p>Further information on sustainable development is available from the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister.</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/index/economic-policy/economic-policy-sustainable-development.htm">http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/index/economic-policy/economic-policy-sustainable-development.htm</a>)</p> | <p><b>Objective 3: To secure a development that promotes economic sustainability.</b></p>   |
|   | <p>Submissions should demonstrate that proposals are sustainable (e.g. proposals for a retail led scheme should submit evidence regarding retail capacity and any likely displacement).</p> |

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| <p><b>ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY</b></p> <p>Further information on sustainable development is available from the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/index/economic-policy/economic-policy-sustainable-development.htm">http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/index/economic-policy/economic-policy-sustainable-development.htm</a>)</p> | <p><b>Objective 4: To secure a development that promotes environmental sustainability.</b></p>   |
|   | <p>The Department is also keen to promote environmental sustainability through, for example, the use of sustainable materials, energy efficiency measures, and renewable energy products etc and welcomes proposals which support this agenda.</p> |

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| <p><b>ACCESSIBILITY &amp; EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY</b></p> <p>Further information on equality issues is available from the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.</p> <p><a href="http://www.equalityni.org/site/default.asp?seid=home">http://www.equalityni.org/site/default.asp?seid=home</a></p> | <p><b>Objective 5: To secure a development that is easily accessible to all members of the community and that, where possible, promotes equality of opportunity.</b></p> <p>Submissions should consider ease of access to and within the building for people with disabilities, in compliance with all regulations with regard to disability. The Department is also keen to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between and within the groups identified under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and welcomes proposals which support this agenda. This could include commitments to equal opportunity employment; creating neutral/shared space etc.</p> <p>The Department is keen to promote social clauses regarding employment opportunities for the long term unemployed, and the assessment panel will look favourably on proposals that indicate they will take this approach on a voluntary basis.</p> |
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## 5 CONDITIONS OF DEVELOPMENT AND DISPOSAL OF SITE

- 5.1 The development will be carried out under a development agreement, followed by the sale of the site in Fee Simple to the selected developer.
- 5.2 Prospective developers should make their own enquiries as to the existence of any physical encumbrances and to the suitability of the site for any particular purpose.
- 5.3 The developer will be required to produce all necessary plans and construction documents, obtain all necessary permissions and consents, erect and maintain all buildings, control building operations, abide by all by-laws and regulations, pay taxes, rates, fees and other outgoings including insurance.
- 5.4 A development licence will be entered into before access to the site is permitted and the conveyance/transfer will be executed only on completion of the terms of the building agreement and all the works to the satisfaction of the Department.

## 6 SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

- 6.1 Prospective developers should submit 4 copies of their proposal document (including supporting drawings) to the Department at the address below by not later than 12 noon on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2017. Proposals should be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "Development Site at Merkland Place, Lanark Way - Commercial in Confidence." Please note that proposals received after the closing date will not be considered and proof of postage will not be accepted as proof of delivery.

Physical Development Unit  
Belfast Regeneration Directorate  
Level 4  
The Lighthouse Building  
1 Cromac Place  
Belfast  
BT2 2JB

- 6.2 The proposal document should include the following:
- A clear statement of proposed uses for the site including the design philosophy, the rationale behind the uses of internal and external spaces and the relationship with the surrounding streetscape.
  - A clear statement of how the proposal meets the Design Brief in terms of planning and design, regeneration impacts, sustainability and accessibility and equality of opportunity.
  - Diagrammatical drawings illustrating the broad scope of the proposal including:
    - a sketch layout of the site at 1:200 scale on an adequately surveyed base plan showing the position of the building, the type and means of access to the public road, proposed boundary treatment and landscape;
    - sketch layout plans for the building on a 1:100 scale indicating the disposition of uses within the development;
    - sketch elevations and sections at 1:100 scale in sufficient detail to indicate the conceptual architectural form including use of materials and standard of finishes; and,
    - at least one perspective showing the relationship of the proposed development to surrounding buildings and features.
  - The premium offered for the site on the basis of a Fee Simple Title and the percentage deposit offered (minimum 10%).

- The estimated development costs (at current rates), including an allowance for the site acquisition costs, building costs, professional fees, financial costs and developer's profit.
- The estimated rental and capital value of each unit on completion.
- The estimated start and completion dates for the development.
- Précis of the developer's relevant past experience and/or capability to undertake work and manage the property. (To include 4 most relevant pieces of experience of working in similar projects in the past 3 years)
- A copy of the company's latest accounts.
- Any other supporting information which the developer feels may commend them for further consideration.

6.3 Please note that costly design work should not be undertaken at the initial stage.

6.4 The submitted proposal documents will be treated as private and confidential between the developer and the Department, however, those submitting proposals should be aware that the Department is fully compliant with the Freedom of Information Act. Unless an exemption provided for under the Act is applicable, a public authority will be obliged to disclose requested information. Bidders are asked to consider if information supplied in the course of this competition should be withheld from disclosure because of commercial sensitivity and to note documents accordingly.

## 7 SELECTION OF A DEVELOPER

7.1 Development proposals will be considered by an assessment panel comprising members appointed by the Department of appropriate standing and professional expertise. The assessment criteria for this development, including the relevant weighting, are included at **Appendix A** for information.

7.2 After the initial assessment, it may be necessary to shortlist proposals for further consideration.

7.3 Following the selection of a development proposal, a formal response will be made to all competitors, and work will then proceed on the legal formalities with the Department's preferred developer.

7.4 The Department is not bound to accept any proposal submitted and will only consider proposals which fully meet the objectives outlined above.

## 8 URBAN DEVELOPMENT GRANT

- 8.1 Urban Development Grant is a discretionary grant paid under the Provision of the Social Need (NI) Order 1986. Its objective is economic and physical regeneration of areas of need by stimulation of private enterprise and investment. For physical development projects, the amount of grant offered will be the minimum necessary to trigger a scheme. This will usually take the form of a cash grant to cover the funding gap or shortfall between the cost of the development and its value on completion.
- 8.2 All development proposals should indicate any requirement for Urban Development Grant assistance. **However, it should be noted that the Department is currently not accepting applications for UDG assistance.**
- 8.4 For further information on Urban Development Grants, please contact Belfast Regeneration Office, Physical Development Branch on (028) 90 829243.

## 9 DISCLAIMER

- 9.1 While every care has been taken in compiling the information contained in this document, the Department can give no guarantee as to the accuracy thereof. All information is given on the understanding that it will not be construed as part of a contract, conveyance or lease.
- 9.2 The site should be taken as found and no warranty or guarantee is given by the Department as to the suitability of the site for any particular purpose. Enquirers must satisfy themselves as to the descriptions and measurements. The identification and, if necessary, relocation of any services such as water, electricity, telephone, gas and sewage or any other encumbrances which may be located in, on, or over the sites will be the sole responsibility of the developer and at the developer's own expense.

## 10 FURTHER QUERIES

- 10.1 If you require any further clarification on this Development Brief, please contact Belfast Regeneration Directorate, Physical Development Unit on (028) 90 829177.

## APPENDIX A: ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

| CRITERIA  | CONSIDERATIONS   | WEIGHTING |
|---|--|-----------|
| PLANNING AND DESIGN                             | Considerations will include but may not be limited to: site layout, visual impact and enhancement to the area, compliance with general and specific design considerations identified in brief.   | 20        |
| REGENERATION IMPACTS                            | Considerations will include but may not be limited to evidence of positive regeneration impacts (e.g. improvement to quality of local environment, contribution to local economy, job creation, provision of services/facilities to local community, addressing social need e.g. housing.) | 15        |
| VIABILITY OF SCHEME/<br>ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY | The viability of the entire scheme, taking into account the purchase price offered,* development costs identified, any requirement for UDG etc., projected rental and capital value.   | 5         |
| TIMESCALE FOR DEVELOPMENT                       | Potential developers should demonstrate that development will be carried out within a reasonable timescale.  | 5         |
| DEVELOPER EXPERIENCE                            | Has the developer provided evidence that other projects have been completed satisfactorily?  | 5         |
| ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY                    | Considerations will include, but may not be limited to, evidence of environmental sustainability.  | 5         |
| ACCESSIBILITY & EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY         | Considerations will include but may not be limited to: accessibility by all users, promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations between and within groups identified under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act.  | 5         |

\*The Department is obliged under Managing Public Money (NI) to ensure that the consideration received for development land is the best that can reasonably be obtained.