

## CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Methodology
3. Fee and Programme

## **SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **Introduction**

This proposal has been prepared in response to a draft brief issued by Darlington Borough Council in January 2006.

This report outlines the proposed study team, the tasks to be undertaken, the programme and fee proposal. The approach has been tailored to the fixed budget for the project.

BDP and King Sturge are appointed to provide planning related services to the local authority as part of a term commission. BDP will co-ordinate this project and lead on the production of the final Gateway report. King Sturge will provide property and market advise.

However in order to meet the requirements of the brief BDP propose to appoint Regeneris and Creative Industries: Partnerships as sub-consultants.

Regeneris Consulting is a specialist economic development and regeneration consultancy.

CI:P are a consortia of creative industries specialists based in Sheffield.

The remainder of this proposal is structured as follows:

- Methodology
- Programme and Fee Arrangement

-----

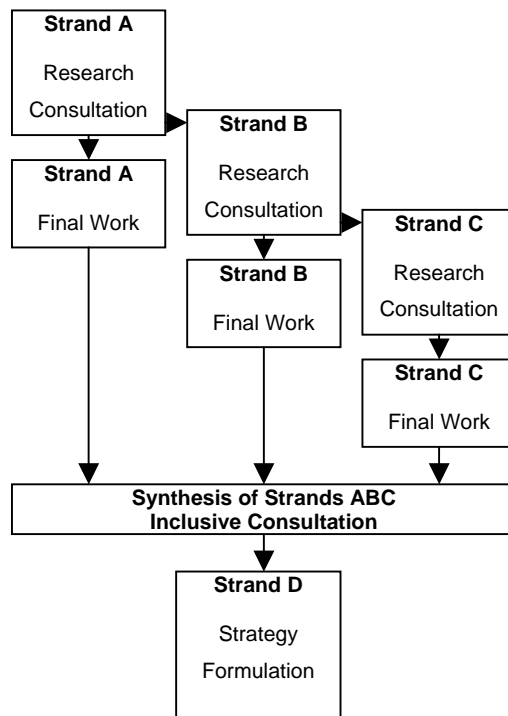
## SECTION 2: METHODOLOGY

### Introduction

This section of the proposal outlines the key tasks to be undertaken in completing each strand within the overall project. The strands are:

- Strand A: Darlington Gateway Assessment
- Strand B: Sectoral Opportunities Study
- Strand C: Employment Land Study
- Strand D: Darlington Gateway Strategy

As noted previously, BDP will co-ordinate the consultant team. However for each strand a principal consultant is identified. All aspects of the study and notably the Sectoral study and Employment Land Review will be fully integrated. The four strands of the study will be drawn together as follows:



Consultation with key stakeholder will run throughout the project. Consultation will take place in line with the Darlington Statement of Community Involvement. Darlington BC will assist with any consultation which goes beyond that to be undertaken by the consultants as set out in this proposal.

The project will be undertaken in line with the Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Appraisal process. Additional work relating to Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental will be agreed with Darlington BC.

### **Strand A : Darlington Gateway Assessment**

Goal : To produce an overview of performance in implementing Darlington Gateway Framework. Overview should celebrate key success stories and identify good practice, but must also provide an assessment of lessons/areas for improvement as you move forward. To produce a 'publicity' brochure.

Principal Consultant: Regeneris

Tasks:

- Consultations with key partners
- Understanding the Gateway process (evidence of framework to action)
- Tracking of output and impact measures, against original framework
- Exploration of key project case studies

Outputs:

A short report articulating key achievements so far and lessons to factor into future development of the Gateway concept. This will be produced in standard Word format . BDP Graphics will produce a digital graphic 'brochure' version for publishing and wider distribution.

### **Strand B : Sectoral Opportunities Study**

Goal: Clear articulation of the sectoral growth prospects within the Darlington economy, and the measures need to help deliver expansion and growth.

Principal Consultant: Regeneris with CI:P leading on Creative Industries

The approach to the tasks will seek the answer the following:

- What are the property needs of these sectors and how effectively is Darlington meeting them?
- How can the property offer in Darlington better meet the needs of these sectors?
- What other infrastructure needs do these sectors have?
- What level of demand exists in these sectors and what share of this can Darlington realistically be seeking to capture?
- How can Darlington provide the maximum level of support to existing companies within these sectors as well as those that could potentially locate in the area?
- What are the key strategic actions that need to be taken to facilitate the economic growth of these sectors in Darlington?

The study will also examine strategically important sectors including chemicals, renewable energy etc. and consider the following:

- How can Darlington maximise future opportunities within or associated with strategically important sectors?
- How can Darlington increase the benefit derived from significant sectors within neighbouring boroughs?
- What strategy needs to be adopted to ensure Darlington does not miss out on growth in strategically important sectors and those prevalent in neighbouring areas?

*Tasks:*

**Core Sectors**

- Baseline review of recent sectoral performance, building on both published and local intelligence)
- Mapping of wider sub regional and regional growth sectors, assessing applicability to Darlington
- Prioritisation of sectors for more detailed review, building on suggestions in the brief
- Identification of key requirements to achieve growth potential – both in terms of physical development and other forms of support.
- Consultation with key developers (KS)

All of above based on both desk based analysis and dialogue with key agencies and sector bodies.

*Creative Industries*

- A desktop study supply survey of creative space will be undertaken to assess the level of existing office, managed workspace, studio, production and incubator units in the area that are relevant to the sector. The availability of FE, HE and other training and courses available in the area, providing specific cultural/creative business development will also be examined as an integral part of the supply infrastructure.
- A demand survey to create a profile of the creative community; desk top review of existing information/strategies; telephone interviews with local sector businesses, entrepreneurs, developers and individual practitioners.
- Review Of Strategic Context for creative industries, considering partnerships and the strategic landscape; sector networks and partnerships; the strategies for improving and increasing the production of cultural products; factors in the consumption of cultural product; the role of life long learning.
- Demand and supply analysis for creative industries in terms of premises and support services

*Outputs:*

A stand alone report detailing sectoral opportunities. Report will also identify the key measures and actions required to take forward growth within the targeted sectors. The report will provide a key input to the subsequent task of producing the new Darlington Gateway Strategy.

The creative industries work will feed directly into the Employment Land Review, and inform the wider study on creative industries sector potential and proposed/required development. The final analysis will also be informed by a Comparator Analysis, where knowledge on best practice with other relevant studios, workspaces, incubators and artist support programmes will be examined.

### **Strand C: Employment Land Study**

Goal: A full understanding of the existing and potential employment land supply to inform the Council's Local Development Framework and the development aspects of the Darlington Gateway concept. To undertake a fresh and creative review of employment land provision.

Principal Consultant: King Sturge

#### Scope

- Existing employment land under pressure from alternative uses or low demand
- Areas of existing employment land or other 'soft areas' that would benefit from detailed master-planning
- Potential future development sites

The review will adopt the approach outlines in 'Employment Land Reviews: Guidance Note 2004', (ODPM)

#### **Stage 1 – Taking Stock of the Existing Situation**

Confirmation of existing data sources and contacts

Desktop/Site Survey of All Employment Sites (Existing Premises and Development Sites)

Drive-around observation survey of the Borough's employment land

Preparation of appraisal matrix comprising:

- site area;
- location;
- nature of existing premises;
- access;
- availability (timescales)
- Brownfield/Greenfield or infill.
- planning status;
- occupier requirements;
- marketability ;

- constraints / issues ;

Assessment of existing employment land and other 'soft areas' that would benefit from detailed master planning.

Assess council and stakeholder aspirations through discussion – consultation with DBC officers and other to assist in gaining an understanding of the key opportunities and constraints for managed workspace, creative industries and other growth sectors in Darlington.

Consult with

- The North East Assembly as the Regional Planning Body
- Neighbouring Local Authorities such as Stockton, Durham County, Sedgefield, Teesdale, Richmond and Hambleton
- Government Office
- Environment Agency
- Highways Agency

Outputs:

- A baseline document setting out the findings of the desktop survey and site visits for both development sites and existing sites. We will provide database/spreadsheet which will show each of the sites and the results of the criteria assessment.
- An issues paper setting out Darlington Council and stakeholder aspirations.

## **Stage 2 – Creating a Picture of Future Requirements**

An examination of the following;

- Economic Structure – employment and population change, qualifications of the labour force, earnings, unemployment and travel to work.
- Property Market – occupier activity, current supply, take-up of sites, vacancy rates, rentals and land values.
- Requirements – what requirements are in the market, what are occupiers preferences for property types, locations, specifications. Where is demand in the market coming from?
- Planning –an overview of the current emerging Regional Spatial Strategy & Local Development Framework and assess the overall regional employment figures in relation to current supply.
- Drivers for Change – the drivers will shape future market dynamics, aiming to predict how future property market trends might depart from past trends.

Outputs:

An Issue paper examining the demand-supply balance, making recommendations in terms of demand and future requirements. Recommendations on the future demand across employment sectors; offices, general industrial and strategic distribution.

### **Stage 3 – Recommendations/Actions Plans/Identifying a New Portfolio of Sites**

#### *Further Analysis of Employment Land Review – Site Recommendations*

The demand-supply assessment to assist in further analysis of sites in order to provide recommendations for each of the sites, including alternative use, scope for creative industries etc.

Recommendations will be made as to the most appropriate process for undertaking action plans/master planning of those sites which are consider requiring development/redevelopment with particular attention paid to sites which have been brought to our attention in the Council/Stakeholder consultations.

Sites may include the area between Valley Street, Parkgate and the Victoria Road roundabout and land between the Central Park and the town centre.

#### *Future Development Sites*

From the Darlington Gateway Development Framework we will use the recommendations made in this report in order to assist in determining the location of future development sites.

We will consider the work we have undertaken in Stage 1 and 2 to inform the process of selecting future development sites, we consider the following to be key considerations in the selection of sites;

- Market considerations – using the best scored sites from the Employment Land Review
- Council Aspirations
- Sustainability Considerations
- Planning fit
- Ability to meet the needs of growth sectors

We will assist BDP in undertaking site feasibility studies for the recommended future development sites. King Sturge will undertake the following;

- Land ownership searches
- Examine the ability to assemble sites
- Examine the physical characteristics
- Comment on the ability to service sites
- Provide advice on the planning issues

BDP will provide schematic designs, costed in outline for each of the sites, King Sturge will prepare development appraisals for each of the worked-up proposals.

King Sturge will provide advice indicating the level and nature of public sector investment.

The three stages of work will be drawn together to form a stand alone Employment Land Review.

### **Outputs**

- Final Report, providing recommendations for each site; analysis and selection of future development sites; Site specific action plans and master plans for those areas or sites which are able to add significant value to the economy.

### **Consultation**

In-depth interviews with the following should take place as part of the first stage work (Strands A to C):

- Developers (BDP to identify)
- Major companies in key sectors (BDP to identify; DBC to assist with Darlington names)
- Key personnel at Darlington Borough Council
- One NorthEast
- North East Chamber of Commerce
- Tees Valley Partnership
- Tees Valley JSU
- Tees Valley Regeneration
- Tees Valley LSC
- Business Link Tees Valley
- Darlington Partnership

The following groups should also be consulted as part of the first stage work:

- Darlington Partnership Economy and Environment Group (next scheduled meeting 23/04/06)

### *Employment Land Review*

For the employment land review the requirement to consult with specific agencies is laid down within Government guidance notes. These should include:

- The North East Assembly as the Regional Planning Body
- Neighbouring Local Authorities such as Stockton, Durham County, Sedgfield, Teesdale, Richmond and Hambleton
- Government Office
- Environment Agency
- Highways Agency

## **Strand D: Darlington Gateway Strategy**

Goal: An overall development strategy is required to consolidate the sector based work and the employment land review. This strategy should provide overall direction for economic activities and identify priorities for economic initiatives or development in Darlington.

Principal Consultant: BDP

### **Tasks;**

Draw together the Stands A to C in an Action Plan orientated report. Advice on marketing.

Review of how the emerging strategy links to the Darlington Community Strategy and its eleven target wards. (DBC to lead)

### **Outputs**

- An evidence based development strategy for developing Darlington's economy
- A fully costed action plan for implementing the strategy
- A summary suitable for use with members of the public

### **Consultation**

As part of Strand D, once some conclusions have been reached across sectors and geographical areas, further consultation will be undertaken to cross fertilise ideas and build local support. This will include:

- Darlington Assembly (date to be confirmed)
- Feedback/further discussion with key individuals participating in the first stage
- Further workshop sessions (if required) to capture the input of anyone unable to attend the Darlington Assembly
- Darlington Partnership Economy and Environment Group
- North East Chamber of Commerce
- Darlington and District Business Club
- Regular consultation with key officers from Darlington Borough Council

## **SECTION 3: PROJECT MANAGEMENT, PROGRAMME**

### **Introduction**

Our programme is set out overleaf. Our approach to project management is set out below. The programme assumes a project start in the w/b 27<sup>th</sup> February 2006.

### **Project management**

#### *Project Director*

BDP will lead the project and are responsible to the client team for the delivery of the commission according to the brief and this submission. However each strand of work will be led specifically by the consultancies which make up the team as follows:

- Strand A: Darlington Gateway Assessment – Regeneris
- Strand B: Sectoral Opportunities Study – Regeneris with CI:P
- Strand C: Employment Land Study – King Sturge
- Strand D: Darlington Gateway Strategy – BDP

### **Programme**

- Strand A: Darlington Gateway Assessment – Draft – 28<sup>th</sup> April 2006
- Strand B: Sectoral Opportunities Study Draft – Draft - 12<sup>th</sup> May 2006
- Strand C: Employment Land Study - Draft – Stage 1 and 2 – 12<sup>th</sup> May 2006
- Strand C: Employment Land Study Strand D: - Draft – Stage 3 – 26<sup>th</sup> May 2006
- Strand D: Darlington Gateway Strategy – Draft – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2006
- Study Complete – 14<sup>th</sup> July 2006

\* will cover scope, document, data review but consultation will be subject to timetabling.