



People & Place: A Spatial Framework for the North of England

Part of the Great North Plan project

Invitation to Tender

May 2018

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE RTPI

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) is the UK's leading planning body for spatial, sustainable and inclusive planning and is the largest planning institute in Europe with over 25,000 members.

The RTPI is:

- A membership organisation and a Chartered Institute responsible for maintaining professional standards and accrediting world class planning courses nationally and internationally;
- A charity whose charitable purpose is to advance the science and art of planning (including town and country and spatial planning) for the benefit of the public;
- A learned society.

To this end, the RTPI promotes research into planning practice, theory, policy development and education. The RTPI's strategic research agenda in the UK aims to:

- Promote the funding and dissemination of research and project activity informing and evaluating planning policy and practice;
- Promote awareness and engagement of planning practitioners in planning research at local, national and international scales;
- Encourage interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral research and dialogue;
- Support research in planning education and lifelong learning.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE GREAT NORTH PLAN

Why the North?

Commentators have argued that the former government regions of the North East, North West and Yorkshire & The Humber should be viewed collectively as a single interconnected region: with a combined population of 15 million, successful cities, thriving rural areas and diverse physical, economic and social geographies. Over the past two/three years, this idea has captured the imagination of politicians and policymakers, including the former chancellor of the exchequer who galvanised the 2010 government behind the concept of the Northern Powerhouse and Transport for the North (TfN). The approach has been broadly continued under the present government through its Industrial Strategy, the appointment of a Powerhouse Minister and the designation of TfN as a statutory body.

Blueprint for a Great North Plan

In 2014 a number of organisations came together to hold two events in the North West under the banner 'Framing the Future'. At these events, participants expressed

a clear sense of frustration that, at a national level, matters of planning and economic development were not being given the attention that they deserved, and that spatial planning processes at the sub-national level were fragmented. There was agreement that, in the absence of any serious national spatial plan, the north of England needed a plan of its own.

In 2015, the RTPI and its partner IPPR North issued a call for evidence and carried out a wide process of engagement, including 11 roundtable discussions with 400 business, local government, civil society and other key stakeholders across the North. We then held a Northern Summit in January 2016, with further plenary debates and interactive voting. Through all of these activities we asked the question, 'Do we need a Great North Plan?'. The response was an overwhelming 'yes' (93%); and, when asked about their more specific attitudes towards the Great North Plan, 58% of respondents said that, 'We need to get on and do it'.

In June 2016, the RTPI and IPPR North published *A Blueprint for a Great North Plan* (GNP). The GNP Blueprint can be viewed at: rtpi.org.uk/greatnorthplan.

GNP workstreams

The Blueprint anticipated work being divided into seven workstreams. These are 1) a Vision for the North, 2) Transport, 3) Economy, 4) Natural Assets, 5) People & Place, 6) Prospectus for the North, and 7) Governance and Delivery. The workstreams are reviewed and monitored by a TfN/IPPR Steering Group.

Work has commenced on a number of workstreams, principally (2) through the [Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review](#) published by SQW, and (3) through the [draft Strategic Transport Plan](#) published by TfN. IPPR North has commenced work on (7) with the publication of [Taking Back Control in the North](#), and on (4) through the establishment of the Northern Energy Task Force and their [Northern Energy Strategy](#), collaborative work on a Northern Natural Assets strategy.

The purpose of this tender is to advance workstream 5 by procuring a sub-national non-statutory spatial framework (a *People & Place* strategy) for the North of England. This rest of document sets out the purpose and key criteria for this work.

2 TENDER INFORMATION

2.1 BUDGET

This project will be funded up to a maximum and fixed sum of **£19,000 (to include all disbursements but excluding VAT)**, with the intention that this be paid in three equal instalments according to agreed project milestones (i.e. on signing of the contract, delivery of the draft report and delivery of the final report to an acceptable quality standard).

This budget is non-negotiable, however, we would be happy to consider bids that involve match-funding or co-funding the project, and for project/research teams to consider how leveraging in additional funding could extend the scope of the project. Bids should demonstrate clear value for money.

2.2 ELIGIBILITY

Tenders are invited from RTPI accredited planning schools, other university-based research teams/departments, planning consultancies and other appropriate organisations, particularly those that can demonstrate a track record in procuring successful regional and/or subnational plans. Collaboration between organisations is welcome.

2.3 PROJECT BRIEF

The purpose of this tender is to procure a sub-national non-statutory spatial framework (a *People & Place* strategy) for the North of England. This will clearly align with the other Great North Plan workstreams set out in Section 1.2 of this document.

With current economic and political uncertainty, Brexit on the immediate horizon, a hung parliament and devolution to city-regions underway, there is a critical need for the North of England to speak with a unified voice. The Great North Plan process creates an opportunity to explore strategic issues relating to people and place across the North.

In the context of severely reduced resources for spatial and strategic planning, many northern local authorities and their stakeholders have already demonstrated innovative ways to meet pressing housing need and collaborate on cross-boundary issues. However, these have primarily operated at a sub-regional level. A framework is needed to connect sub-regional planning for people and place to strategic issues affecting the North as a whole.

These issues include the cumulative impact of additional housing and jobs, integration with regional transport, energy and economic strategies, and wider processes of population movement, demographic change, environmental risk and climate change. Here, national policy often struggles to recognise and account for regional and sub-regional variation, which limits opportunities to develop effective, context-specific responses which contribute to the rebalancing of economies in the North relative to the remainder of the UK.

In support of the above, the *People & Place* strategy should seek to:

- Emphasise the importance and quality of place, set within the context of the wider GNP project.
- Describe the 'North Today' by using data from the Northern Independent Economic Review and other key documents to review current population dynamics, economic drivers and settlement patterns across the North.
- Describe the 'North Tomorrow' by analysing processes of demographic, population and economic change and the implications for development. This could include a broad spatial analysis of areas with the capacity for sustainable growth, and a consideration of roles for different cities, towns and rural areas.
- Consider the spatial implications for people and place of key regional and national policies and strategies, including (but not limited to) the emerging Strategic Transport Plan, the Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review, and the government's Modern Industrial Strategy and Clean Growth Strategy.
- Consider the implications for people and place of technological change and the need to travel, for example by reference to the scenarios in the TfN draft Strategic Transport Plan
- Show how to improve quality of life by optimising the value of northern natural, cultural and economic assets.
- Provide a long-term, pan-northern focus which adds strategic value to existing and emerging local and sub-regional plans and policies.
- Enhance cross-border cooperation and collaboration across the North, strengthening the duty to cooperate and the adding value to the city-region devolution agenda.
- Summarise key challenges, opportunities, and areas for future work.

The principles of the framework should reflect those set out in the GNP Blueprint, namely that it should be:

- High level, strategic and brief, and neither statutory nor bland
- An ambitious long term vision, supported by clear actions in the short and medium term
- Evolutionary and collaborative, acting as a reference point for all
- Inclusive, speaking for all places across the North but asymmetrical in its treatment of places and themes

For more detail on these principles, see pages 4 to 6 of the [GNP Blueprint](#).

The *People & Place* strategy should utilise the findings of the RTPI's [Location of Development](#) project. This maps and analyses the location of planning permissions for housing granted between 2012 and 2017 in 12 fast-growing English city-regions, including Leeds, Warrington, Blackburn and Newcastle. It demonstrates how spatial data can be used to understand whether changes to planning policy are effective in

delivering sustainable patterns of development at the city-region scale, as oppose to sprawl and dispersal.

Data and analysis from 2012 to 2015 is currently available on the RTPI website at rtpi.org.uk/locationofdevelopment. Updated data from 2015 to 2017 will be published during May 2018, accompanied by a research paper which sets out the relationship between settlement patterns, urban form and issues of economic productivity, climate change, public health and ageing populations. The data and research will be made available to the successful bidder.

2.4 METHODOLOGY

The supplier should propose a methodology which includes a process for obtaining information and views from government, public and private sector agencies operating throughout the North of England. As a reference, the process for developing the *Blueprint for the Great North Plan* included roundtable discussions with over 400 participants and the organisation of a Northern Summit, with Sir Michael Heseltine as the keynote speaker. See para 2.8 for further details.

2.5 PROJECT TIMESCALES

We anticipate that the project will last eight months, starting at the beginning of June 2018 and being delivered early 2019. Below is an indicative timescale for the project:

- Appointment of supplier and project inception meeting: early June 2018
- Commence desktop research and prepare for roundtables: June 2018
- Meeting to review discussion paper: August 2018
- Engagement and consultation: September – November 2018
- Strategy preparation and graphic design: October – December 2018
- Review of final *People & Place* strategy: early January 2019
- Publication and publicity: late January 2019

The precise timescale for the project will be determined in collaboration with the selected research team during the inception meeting, which is expected to take place during June 2018.

2.6 GOVERNANCE

The RTPI will be represented by Sue Bridge, Chair of the RTPI Policy Practice and Research Committee (PPRC). She will act in consultation with other members of RTPI GNP *People & Place* Project Group, which comprises representatives of the three Northern RTPI regions, the RTPI Policy and Networks Manager, University Planning Schools, IPPR North and independent consultants. Interim findings and the draft report will be scrutinised by PPRC and the Project Group.

2.7 OUTPUTS

- Details for a sub-national non statutory spatial framework (a *People & Place* strategy) for the North of England as part of the Great North Plan initiative
- Well-designed standalone infographics and maps, along with clearly written discussion papers and final report, provided in MS Word and Adobe PDF formats, which the RTPI will publish
- Presentation slides to accompany consultation on the discussion paper
- Questions on the discussion paper for use the various consultation events
- Attendance, as required by the RTPI and partners, to promote the discussion paper at a series of consultation events across the North of England
- The RTPI will also work with the successful suppliers to consider other places to promote the findings and conclusions from the strategy (for example, the RTPI's magazine *The Planner* and at the RTPI Planning Convention)

2.8 ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

The project timescales requires that the supplier produce a discussion paper by August 2018, supported by data, analysis and mapping. Once this has been agreed by the Project Group as suitable for consultation, the supplier is expected to consult on the discussion paper during the Autumn, by leading at least six regional roundtables which capture the views of professionals and political leaders. The format for consultation will be determined by the suppliers in consultation with the Project Group, drawing on the lessons of the successful process for the *Blueprint for a Great North Plan*. The outputs of the consultation will inform the final *People & Place* strategy.

2.9 APPLICATION PROCESS

Organisations/project teams should submit a tender document that includes:

- Proposed methodology, including methods for stakeholder engagement
- Proposed outputs, demonstrating conformity (or otherwise) with the project purpose and brief described in Section 2.3 of this document
- Project team and general experience
- Statement of experience relevant to the project, and selected projects that demonstrate relevant experience
- Proposed approach to project management, identifying risks and mitigation strategies, and specifying how the project will be delivered on time and do a high standard
- Total cost of the project
- A budget breakdown between the stages, daily rates and personnel inputs.

2.10 EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applications will be evaluated against five criteria:

1. Quality, rigour and depth of the proposed methodology and analysis
2. Experience/track record/knowledge of research and/or project delivery relevant to the project
3. Experience of effective and impactful partnership working (i.e. with project commissioners and/or public stakeholders)
4. Experience of managing politically-sensitive projects
5. Value for money and added value

2.11 ASSESSMENT PANEL

An assessment panel comprising members of the GNP Project Group will evaluate tenders and decide which application to support.

2.12 DEADLINES FOR APPLICATIONS

Tender applications should be submitted electronically to: research@rtpi.org.uk

Applications should be received by no later than **Friday 25 May 2018**.

We intend to interview a shortlist of bidders during **w/c 4 June 2018** and to appoint the successful research team.

2.13 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The RTPI will retain ownership of the work, but will grant the researchers the right to publish and re-use the material submitted to RTPI, and will be fully credited for their work. Respective consultancies and institutions should not apply if they will not be able to agree to this provision. They should acknowledge the support from the RTPI in any subsequent publications and activity based on the supported projects.

Any outcome from the project shall remain strictly **CONFIDENTIAL** until such time as the RTPI determine that it be released for consolation or publication.

2.14 FURTHER INFORMATION AND ENQUIRIES

Summary information and background material on the Great North Plan and the material already in the public arena on preparation of the “Blueprint” can be found on the RTPI website at: rtpi.org.uk/greatnorthplan

We welcome enquiries about this project, but please note that all responses to enquiries will be issued as (anonymised) Q&A’s to all bidders.

For enquiries, please contact research@rtpi.org.uk