

Design Quality Fund (Expression of Interest Template)

<b>Lead authority</b>	<b>Nottingham City Council</b>	
<b>Partners involved</b> (where applicable)	RIBA East Midlands	
	University of Nottingham	
	Nottingham Trent University	
	Derby City Council – for Design Review Panel funding element	
<b>Senior sign-off</b>	Nottingham City Council and Derby City Council’s Chief Planners and Portfolio Holders for Planning	
<b>Funding being applied for</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>
	<b>£ 20,000</b>	<b>£ 100,000</b>
<b><u>Summary of proposal</u></b>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Commission suitably qualified consultant to work within planning team to create a housing design guide for adoption as citywide supplementary planning guidance.</li> <li>2. Design Review Panel (DRP) and initial concept workshops funding to support housing sites being brought forward by Nottingham City Council (NCC) and Derby City Council (DCC).</li> </ol>		
<p><b>1. Housing Design Guide</b></p> <p>Extensive officer time is currently spent in Nottingham encouraging design improvements for residential schemes at pre-app and determination stages. The guide will ensure that “Nottingham quality” design standards are adopted as a norm allowing use of officer time to further enhance overall design quality. The Housing Design Guide will explore how residential schemes can be developed to ensure quality whilst maximising density by considering alternatives to traditional housing and apartments, overlooking issues, back-to-back distances and street widths and layouts. It will incorporate revisions currently being undertaken to the Council’s “streetscape design” and “pedestrian priority/informal streets” manuals to enhance place setting and empower highways colleagues to develop innovative solutions to non-standard schemes. The Housing Design Guide will encourage high standards of contemporary residential design and architectural quality, whilst reflecting Nottingham’s mix of modern and traditional designs. With an emphasis on sustainable, smart and energy efficient homes, the guide will also consider the challenges faced in ensuring that design quality is embedded in alternative opportunities for system/modular building in housing schemes. The guide will help to shape and deliver Nottingham’s draft Housing Strategy to 2021 “Quality Housing for All”.</p> <p>The Guide will be a visual, user-friendly document with precedent images and CGI representations, created through a collaborative approach with major stakeholders: RIBA East Midlands, urban designers, architects, developers, agents and Nottingham’s two universities. The guide will become the first port of</p>		

call for developers and their agents, releasing planning resources to upskill and deal quickly and effectively with pre app discussions and determinations.

## **2. Design review panel.**

In line with Nottingham and Derby's Metro Strategy, this element of the design quality bid is jointly made with Derby City Council who will use Nottingham's Design Review Panel (DRP) for their priority housing/regeneration schemes.

The DRP review is undertaken by a select group of local, regional and national experts from multidisciplinary built environment professions including architecture, urban design, planning, regeneration, sustainability and other specialist expertise where appropriate. The cost is recharged to the developer/applicant.

There are a number of housing sites being brought forward by NCC in conjunction with Nottingham City Homes, and sites being delivered by DCC in conjunction with Derby Homes. Joint funding is sought to cover the cost of initial concept workshops for each authority to build consensus on an overall strategy and direction, followed by pre-application DRPs for each of these individual schemes. The DRP will provide continuity of approach, provide innovation to help unlock difficult sites and cover issues of place appraisal with space syntax and other models. The DRP will also be used in workshops to inform each of Derby's three major regeneration schemes.

### **Description of pipeline of schemes requiring dedicated urban design/ masterplanning skills;**

Nottingham City Council currently has a pipeline of over 30 identified brownfield site schemes in various stages of progression, which are expected to deliver some 2500 new homes by mid-2019. These include a number of former school and education sites, former industrial sites and a number of vacant sites in the developing Southern Gateway. Of these 30 schemes, more than half are expected to deliver in excess of 50 homes, requiring significant dedicated time in terms of urban design, place-making and masterplanning; with five schemes between 50 and 100 homes each, six schemes in excess of 100 homes and five schemes in excess of 250 homes. Nottingham City Council in conjunction with Nottingham City Homes will be bringing forward at least 8 of these sites totalling some 625 new homes.

In addition to these, major regeneration proposals are underway and emerging in the Waterside Regeneration area and the Island Site in the city centre. The Waterside regeneration area is anticipated to deliver around 1200 new homes over ten years and delivery of over 600 new homes on the Island site could begin during late 2018. Insistence on high qualities in architecture, urban design and placemaking as part of strategic masterplans are essential to create these two new and distinct sustainable urban neighbourhoods.

Other significant Nottingham sites for future consideration include the former Stanton tip site with around 500 new homes and the Boots Enterprise Zone, expected to deliver a further 230 homes.

Derby City Council currently has a number of key residential and mixed-use regeneration developments that are in design stages within the city centre, where good design quality will be essential to create new urban neighbourhoods that reflect Derby as a modern thriving city. These include Becketwell regeneration site and North Riverside sites, which are expected to deliver around 1125 new homes. In addition to these city centre schemes, Derby City Council has identified strategic priority housing sites, which are expected

to deliver around a further 5000 new homes by 2028. These include the former Celanese Acetate site; a significant, brownfield regeneration opportunity which lies immediately to the south of the Derby to Nottingham railway line and Spondon Railway Station. The vacant area of the site covers approximately 72 hectares, including the potential for a major housing site of up to 1,500 units.

Derby City Council will be bringing a number of these sites forward in conjunction with Derby Homes.

**Specific activities and timetables** (including a breakdown of activities, milestones and profile of expenditure)

**1. Housing Design Guide consultancy**

**2017/18:**

February 2018 – Agreement on scope and format with portfolio holders and chair of planning, seek tenders/quotes

February 2018 – appoint consultant

March 2018 - Interaction and assimilation into planning and urban design team and in-house consultees  
Determination of key issues through series of internal and stakeholder workshops linked to planned review of streetscape design manual

**Anticipated cost 2017/18 - £5,000**

**2018/19:**

April to September - Best practice review and benchmarking with other authorities.  
Production of first draft report and recommendations for initial consultation with wider stakeholder audience. Review of comments to produce draft Supplementary Planning Document for:

September - Executive Board approval to undertake formal consultation.

October/November - Statutory consultation and engagement.

December/January - Responses to consultation and review of draft to produce final SPD for

February 2019 - Approval at Executive Board and adoption

**Anticipated Cost 2018/19 – £60,000**

**Total cost housing Design Guide Consultancy £65,000**

**2. Design Review Panel (joint with DCC)**

**2017/18**

February/March 2018 – 2 No. concept workshops to cover NCC/NCH and DCC/DH housing sites (£10,000)

March 2018 – 1 No. workshop for DCC North Riverside regeneration masterplan (5,000)

**Anticipated Cost 2017/18 - £15,000**

**2018/19**

Ongoing 2018/19 – Design Review Panels for individual housing schemes in Derby and Nottingham (approximately 12, £30,000)

2 No. workshops for DCC Becketwell and Celanese Acetate regeneration schemes (£10,000)

**Anticipated Cost 2018/19 - £40,000**

**Total Cost Design Review Panel funding £55,000**

**Impacts expected from funding** (including description of outputs and outcomes you expect to achieve, and how they will be measured)

**1. Housing Design Guide impacts**

Production and adoption of SPD – (physical document and approval)

In conjunction with the proposals for 3D modelling, Nottingham City Council will work with the consultant to develop a baseline position against which to monitor progress, outcomes and outputs including:

- Housing density (as built and currently proposed)
- Reduction in uncharged (free) pre-application requests/meetings (measured by baseline and monitoring/time recording?)
- Improvement in design quality of schemes at pre-app and submission stages (using KPIs for approval at design review panel, time taken to determine, reduction in number of refusals/appeals won)
- Introduction of alternative housing formats (new design/construction types)
- Increase in housing densities (monitored from current baseline average/ha built/approved and estimates for pipeline schemes?)
- Maximise use of brownfield sites
- Consistency in application standards, recommendations and decisions at planning committee
- Step-change in tackling highway related issues inc s278 and s38 works for adoption

**2. Design Review Panel impacts**

Using the design review panels for NCC and DCC led schemes will ensure impartial professional scrutiny of schemes, consistency and continuity in design advice, help to unlock difficult sites and provide training for officers and members to raise urban design skills.

The Design Review Panels for NCC/NCH schemes will help to shape and implement the findings of Nottingham's emerging Housing Strategy to 2021 (Quality Housing for All) ensuring that space standards, place making and ultimately user satisfaction can be delivered and monitored.

The Design Review Panels for DCC/DH schemes will support the emerging Urban Design Guidance "Successful Places", and support placemaking and design policies within the Derby City Local Plan Part 1.

**Assurance that there is strong commitment to a step change in the design quality of new development, and that any award will be spend in accordance with the award profile** (please outline joint working arrangements in place, or envisaged, and confirm how you will ensure the money is spend as outlined)

Nottingham City Council's Chief Planner, Paul Seddon and the Portfolio Holder for Planning Housing and Heritage, Councillor Jane Urquhart have approved the submission of this Expression of Interest and confirm their commitment to the principles involved in both elements of the EOI: the Housing Design Guide and the funding for Design Review Panels. It is recognised that a step change in design quality for new developments is required to bring forward housing delivery in Nottingham. The process will ensure that councillors are an integral part of the development of the Housing Design Guide and ultimate sign off for approval of the document as Supplementary Planning Guidance will be made at the highest level by Nottingham City Council's Executive Board. If the bid is successful, portfolio holder approval will be obtained to confirm that the funding will be drawn down and spent in accordance with the award profile.

Derby City Council's Head of Planning, Paul Clark and the Portfolio Holder for Economy and Regeneration Cllr Martin Rawson have approved the joint Expression of Interest and confirm their commitment to the principles involved in the use of Nottingham's Design Review Panel. Approval to bid for funding was obtained on 10 January 2018 as Derby City Council recognise that a step change in design quality is required for new housing developments. If the bid is successful, further approval will be obtained to ensure that the funding will be drawn down and spent in accordance with the award profile.

**Assessment of risks to achieving the objectives of the proposal** (please list your top three risks and mitigating actions)

### **1. Housing Design Guide**

Risk 1: One of the key issues relating to housing delivery in Nottingham is development viability. Although good design need not necessarily be expensive *per se*, there is a sense among some developers that cutting corners on design results in a viable product, whereas improved design and layout can potentially generate higher densities and/or better sales receipts and increased land values.

Mitigation: An interactive and iterative consultation process with major stakeholders, developers and agents will help to promote this tenet and will determine the initial parameters that can be sensibly applied to ensure that quality design schemes are deliverable.

Risk 2: Political buy in to a potentially different housing offer and landscape.

Mitigation: this needs to be an integral part of the development of the SPD. This will be brought about through: involvement of portfolio holders and planning committee members in workshops and Design Review Panels; visits to successful schemes and examples; strong leadership and ultimate approval at the highest cabinet level.

Risk 3: "Watering down" of SPD document during development and adherence to the principles in practice once adopted.

Mitigation: This will rely on the collaborative approach described for political and stakeholder buy in. Once adopted the document will provide consistency and certainty for developers and their agents, as well as for planning officers and planning committee to make informed and non-adversarial decisions.

## 2. Design Review Panels

Nottingham's Design review Panel has been in use for ten years and provides an independent, impartial and constructive design review of schemes. The size and mix of the Panel is selected on their professional expertise relevant to the proposal and rules out any conflict of interest. As such, it is not considered that use of the Design review Panel presents any significant risk.

**Does your bid rely on, or align with, other funding or initiatives from Government?** For example, are you part of housing deal negotiations, or have bid for Housing Infrastructure Fund money?

Many of the pipeline sites described above form part of the both authorities' current bid to the HCA for Housing Infrastructure Funding. Whilst this funding will help with viability on marginal sites, the need to increase design quality on some of these significant developments still needs to be tackled.

In Nottingham's case, this will be brought about by both the Housing Design Guide and the Design Review Panels for the NCC/NCH sites. Nottingham's bid to the HCA for Housing Infrastructure Funding is £5.85m and a decision is currently awaited.

Derby's bid to the HCA Housing Infrastructure Fund is £20m and design quality for these DCC/DH priority schemes will be enhanced by the use of The Design Review Panel.