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Award

Provision of Senior Projects Officer (Major Sites Planning Consultancy Services)

North Hertfordshire District Council

UK5: Transparency notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-085196

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-05fb0d ([view related notices](#))

Published 22 December 2025, 12:39am

Scope

Reference

NHDC0178817

Description

North Hertfordshire District Council intends to directly award a public contract for the provision of specialist planning consultancy services in the role of Senior Projects Officer (Major Sites).

The services relate to supporting the progression and processing of a series of complex, strategic development management activities and Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) associated with the Baldock and East of Luton development sites, as allocated in the adopted North Hertfordshire Local Plan.

The scope includes, but is not limited to:

- Progression and coordination of strategic development management applications

- Support to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) scoping and associated statutory processes
- Attendance at Design Review Panels, site visits and multi-disciplinary workshops
- Liaison with developers, statutory consultees and internal Council stakeholders
- Provision of continuity of embedded project knowledge across live planning applications and the transition from masterplanning into outline planning submissions

The services are funded through Planning Performance Agreements with developers.

Contract 1. Senior Projects Officer (Major Sites) - Planning Consultancy Services

Supplier

- THE OYSTER PARTNERSHIP LIMITED

Contract value

- £300,000 excluding VAT
- £360,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Earliest date the contract will be signed

2 January 2026

Contract dates (estimated)

- 2 January 2026 to 1 January 2027
- 1 year

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 71410000 - Urban planning services

Contract locations

- UKH2 - Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire

Participation

Particular suitability

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)

Other information

Description of risks to contract performance

The principal risks to satisfactory contract performance relate to the continuation of Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) funding by third-party developers, which is non-binding and subject to ongoing agreement.

There is also a risk that changes to the timing or scope of planning applications, or external policy or regulatory changes affecting the planning system, could alter the workload profile or sequencing of services.

These risks are mitigated through ongoing engagement with developers, contractual provisions allowing termination on short notice should funding cease, and active project management within the Council's Major Sites team.

Conflicts assessment prepared/revised

Yes

Procedure

Procedure type

Direct award

Direct award justification

Single supplier - technical reasons

North Hertfordshire District Council intends to make a direct award in accordance with Contract Procurement Rules 20.6(e) and Schedule 5, paragraph 6 of the Procurement Act 2023.

Due to an absence of competition for objective technical reasons, the services required can only be effectively provided by the incumbent supplier. The consultant supplied by

Oyster Partnership Ltd has been embedded in the Baldock and East of Luton strategic planning projects for over 12 months and possesses detailed, project-specific technical knowledge that cannot be replicated without significant duplication of work, delay, and material risk to delivery.

The services relate to live development management applications, Environmental Impact Assessment scoping opinions, Design Review Panels, and Planning Performance Agreements associated with strategic housing allocations in the adopted North Hertfordshire Local Plan. Replacing the supplier at this stage would result in unacceptable operational disruption, increased risk of non-determination and appeal, loss of applicant confidence and funding, and harm to the Council's ability to discharge its statutory planning functions.

A review of alternative suppliers has confirmed that no reasonable or technically equivalent alternative is available without disproportionate duplication of previous work and consequential operational risk. Competition is therefore absent for objective technical reasons within the meaning of Schedule 5, paragraph 6.

Any change of supplier would undermine continuity of the existing services and embedded technical knowledge and would create disproportionate technical difficulties in operation and delivery, further evidencing the absence of reasonable alternatives.

Supplier

THE OYSTER PARTNERSHIP LIMITED

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19-20 Berners Street, Bischheim House

London

W1T 3NW

United Kingdom

Email: info@oysterpartnership.com

Region: UKI32 - Westminster

Small or medium-sized enterprise (SME): Yes

Voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE): No

Contract 1. Senior Projects Officer (Major Sites) - Planning Consultancy Services

Contracting authority

North Hertfordshire District Council

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PDWC-9574-WBPY

Council Offices, Gernon Road

Letchworth Garden City

SG6 3JF

United Kingdom

Email: procurement.team@north-herts.gov.uk

Region: UKH23 - Hertfordshire

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government