

# BRIEFING REPORT

Woolwell to The George: Vickery Holman Contract  
Award



## **I. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. This Executive Decision approves the appointment of Vickery Holman to act as surveyors on the Woolwell to The George (WTTG) scheme.
- 1.2. The work will involve surveys, valuations, negotiation and purchase of land and property required to support delivery of the WTTG scheme to be secured either by agreement with landowners or included within a proposed Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO).
- 1.3. The proposed procurement approach is to direct award to Vickery Holman.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1. The Woolwell to the George (WTTG) Transport Improvements Scheme will alleviate congestion at the notorious pinch-point between Woolwell and The George junction, on the A386 Tavistock Road. More than 30,000 vehicles use this section of road each day and there are regularly queues and delays at peak times, caused by traffic having to merge over very short distances. The impact of this congestion extends far beyond the immediate Woolwell area, affecting the A386 Tavistock Road as far south as Manadon Roundabout and also disrupts the reliability of the bus network. The route also has poor provision for pedestrian and cyclists and crossing the A386 in particular is very difficult in busy periods.
- 2.2. With significant growth planned for the north of the city and traffic forecast to increase along this route, it is vital to provide improvements that will encourage more walking, cycling and bus travel, as well as minimise congestion and delays for general traffic. The scheme is needed to ensure that the additional travel demand generated by future developments can be accommodated. It will deliver targeted capacity improvements to address existing congestion problems and ensure that the transport network does not become a constraint to new developments coming forward.
- 2.3. The WTTG scheme will be delivered in three phases:
  - Phase 1 – New signal junction at Woolwell Crescent/Tavistock Road, cycle facilities on Tavistock Road (north of Woolwell Roundabout) and pedestrian/cycle improvements on Woolwell Road. Phase 1 has secured £5m from the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF)
  - Phase 2 – Woolwell Roundabout upgraded to a signalised junction and widening of the existing carriageway between Woolwell Roundabout and The George Junction in order to provide two lanes in each direction. Phases 2 and 3 have secured over £19m from the Levelling Up Fund (LUF)
  - Phase 3 - Increased parking capacity at the George Park and Ride site (500 additional spaces); including 100 spaces with Electric Vehicle charge points.
- 2.4. The carriageway widening to be delivered as part of Phase 2 will require the acquisition of a number of land plots from third party land owners and occupiers. Vickery Holman's services are being secured to assist the Council by undertaking surveys, valuations and negotiations in relation to affected land plots.

## **3. PROCUREMENT STRATEGY PROCESS**

- 3.1. The proposed procurement route is a direct award to Vickery Holman. The following points set out why a direct award has been chosen as the most appropriate way to award the Woolwell to the George valuation work:

- Vickery Holman were previously appointed to support the WTTG scheme via a procurement framework which has now expired;
- Vickery Holman's experience means that they have the full history and background, along with an understanding of the sensitivity and confidential nature of the scheme;
- The project is highly sensitive as it requires the acquisition of land and property through either negotiation or compulsory purchase. At least 30 land plots are affected by the project and a direct award protects confidentiality and avoids the need for wider circulation of sensitive information to other companies;
- Due to the numbers of plots involved in the scheme the pool of companies that can undertake the work in the local area is decreasing as individuals and commercial properties look to appoint their own surveyors. Affected parties have been supplying information to the council as to who is acting on their behalf and four other local companies are now engaged in the project acting for affected parties which could lead to potential conflict of interest issues;
- The project is time critical, due to the funding timescales of TCF and LUF. Therefore having a team on board that already knows the project will allow them to hit the ground running and minimise any time lost in getting up to speed; and
- Vickery Holman have already established a good working relationship with the project team and have had ongoing contact with affected parties. Continuity through the process for residents/business affected by the scheme is considered to be an important consideration.

#### **4. REQUIRED PROJECT APPROVALS**

- 4.1. The WTTG Scheme Approval & In Principle CPO Resolution Cabinet Report was approved at the Plymouth City Council Cabinet meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021.
- 4.2. Cabinet approved:
  - in principle to compulsorily acquire land and rights by way of a compulsory purchase order (CPO) for the Scheme
  - for the progression of documents required to make a side roads order (SRO); and
  - to place the necessary funding required for the Scheme onto the capital programme
- 4.3. Cabinet will be asked to consider a final scheme approval and CPO Resolution report at a future date. The work undertaken by Vickery Holman will continue to support the process of securing land by agreement if possible or through the CPO process if required.

#### **5. CONTRACT PROGRAMME**

- 5.1. It is expected that the contract period will run for up to 18 months. This is to allow enough time for negotiated sales, the CPO element of the scheme to be completed and any valuations/compensation claims to be dealt with following the CPO being granted should it go to Inquiry.

#### **6. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT**

- 6.1. Vickery Holman have provided a tender document setting out the work they will undertake and their fees. They have agreed, in writing, to undertake their work under Plymouth City Council's standard terms and conditions.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1. This contract award is for the surveys, valuations and negotiations associated with the land negotiation and CPO element of the Woolwell to the George Transport Scheme.
- 7.2. The total contract value under this award is £167,000.
- 7.3. The funding for this award has already been accounted for within the approved WTTG budget.

## **8. RECOMMENDED DECISION**

- 8.1. It is recommended that the Service Director (SP&I):
  - directly awards the contract for undertaking surveys and valuations to Vickery Holman, for the land negotiation/CPO element of the Woolwell to The George Transport Scheme.