

## Concept Plan Work - Masterplanning

### Case Study: Perry Barr regeneration masterplan

**Client name and contact details;** Birmingham City Council

#### Project Overview

Arcadis was appointed by Birmingham City Council (BCC) to provide multi-disciplinary consultant services that included leading the planning application and designing the masterplan and public realm for the planned Commonwealth Games Athletes Village at the former Birmingham University and brownfield site at Perry Barr in North Birmingham. At c. £350m, this was the largest capital project within the programme of facilities, planned to accommodate 6,500 athletes during the Games. The site will provide **transformational legacy** for the wider area of Perry Barr with over 1,400 new homes and associated new infrastructure.

#### Our Role

In collaboration with BCC, Glenn Howells Associates and Glancy Nichols Architects, Arcadis was commissioned to provide PMO, Cost Consulting, Planning and Masterplanning, Urban Design and Landscape Architecture services for the development of a mixed-use residential Masterplan. Our team established the overall Masterplan vision and concept for the proposed athlete's village (events phase) setting platform for the development of new homes (legacy phase).

#### Outcomes and outputs

Arcadis helped BCC shape and deliver an exemplar residential neighbourhood offering a high-quality living environment that is vibrant, well connected well-being-focussed and sustainable.

Arcadis continues to provide a critical PMO role, integrating and assuring upon delivery to BCC, the site developer and multiple contractors on the detailed landscape design and planning conditions discharge for the high-quality public realm and urban park.

Through effective **multiple stakeholder management**, we were able to link the regeneration of Perry Barr with the nearby railway station to promote greater return on investment through a walkable and cyclable neighbourhood and high quality and connected public realm. This meant working with both Network Rail to redefine the station and passenger use prospects for early buy-in, and BCC to secure a public realm and greenspaces strategy reaching beyond the Village site.

The team worked to extremely tight timescales to support BCC in an approved planning application within 11 months. Ensuring a design that would be agile to the shape of the market post-Games helped BCC to access more than £170m in funding.

#### Challenges and interventions

The real driver for the project was the legacy phase design for future residential living within the city. For this to succeed we designed the green and blue infrastructure, as a defining characteristic for placemaking Perry Barr, by distinct plot packages deliverable by multiple contractors.

Birmingham City Council identified that failure to secure a suitable contractor due to scale and size of works with timescales was a significant risk – therefore we undertook a Soft Market Test and applied our sector knowledge in the process.

Planning delays were anticipated due to the number and variety of stakeholders and client requirement changes. Early engagement, scope expectation management and close stakeholder communications prevented issues from impacting on timescales.

### **Lessons learnt**

Effective engagement with key stakeholders at network rail and their partners helped explain how the project could increase passenger use / footfall, contributing toward early buy in. On behalf of BCC we successfully made the case to plot contractors that, whilst value engineering was cost cutting across all aspects of the project, the importance of the public realm and greenspace design quality was paramount. This was supported by a specific core public realm and park plot contractor.

### **Project synergies**

Derby Riverside is a comparable scale to Perry Barr. Both are strategic residential-led regeneration sites for each respective city, with design stages through planning applications and beyond to delivery. Public realm and the equality of greenspace are central to the ambition to create future sustainable living.

### **Using our Knowledge, Experience and Learning to Advance Derby Riverside**

Knowledge built up around the creation of diverse, accessible, green spaces can help the team contribute to Derby City biodiversity and climate change strategy targets.