

PFCC Decision Report

Report reference number: PFCC/180/23

Classification OFFICIAL

Title of report: Laindon (Durham House) Phase 2 - Contract Award

Area of county / stakeholders affected: Force Wide

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Date of report: 19th December 2023

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1. Executive Summary

Decision report PFCC/088/23 approved the allocation of £2,078,040 of capital investment into the refurbishment and development of Durham House in Laindon to deliver the Chemical Enhancement Laboratory (CEL) Phase 2 Project. This decision report is seeking approval to award the contract to undertake delivery of the project.

2. Recommendations

The first recommendation is for the PFCC to award the contract at a cost of £1,438,406 for the refurbishment and development of Durham House in Laindon. There is £2,078,040 of capital funding allocated within the approved capital programme.

The PFCC is asked to note that the difference between the contract award value and capital budget of £639,634 is made up of professional fees, Home Office IT equipment upgrade (IDENT 1), furniture, fixtures and equipment (FFE).

The second recommendation is for the PFCC to enter into a JCT intermediate Building with contractor's design 2016 Edition contract with the main contractor to undertake the project, with the PFCC executing the contract as a deed under seal.

3. Background to the Proposal

Following approval of capital funding, this decision report seeks approval to award the contract for the refurbishment and development of Durham House in Laindon (CEL Project Phase 2).

A key element of the Essex Police Estates Strategy is to develop the Headquarters site and provide suitable and functional workspaces. To enable the development of HQ, some teams will need to be relocated. The Fingerprint Hub is currently located in A block at HQ and has been identified as suitable to be relocated to an alternative site. Relocating this team will make significant space within A block available for further development.

The CEL occupies just one section of Durham House whilst the rest of this site remains unused. This building has been identified as a suitable alternative location for the Fingerprint Hub. Relocating this team at this site will not only make space available at HQ but will also co-locate the Forensic Identification teams together, providing several operational benefits around shared resources, streamlining of working practices and reduced ongoing costs. The relocation of the Fingerprint Hub to Durham House will form phase 2 of the CEL project.

An assessment of available construction frameworks was considered by both Estate Services and Commercial Services, with the preferred framework being the Crown Commercial Services Framework (CCS). This framework was recommended by Procurement after previous use of the Essex County Council Construction Framework yielded low tender returns.

The tender was published on 13/10/2023 with a planned tender return date of 17/11/23. We received four compliant tender returns that have been assessed against the commercial, technical and social value criteria. The results of the evaluations for the bidders are shown below:

Supplier	Total Bid Price (£) ¹	Commercial Score % (max 50%)	Technical Score* % (max 40%)	Social Value Score % (max 10%)	Total Score (out of 100%)
Bidder 1	1,198,672	47.29	31.00	5.29	83.57
Bidder 2	1,275,979	44.42	25.50	1.25	71.17
Bidder 3	1,133,650	50.00	21.00	7.80	78.80
Bidder 4	1,278,421	44.34	32.00	5.03	81.37

*Technical Score broken down as follows: Project Delivery Timescales 10%, Project Management 15%, Health and Safety 7.5% Project Sustainability and Environmental Management 7.5%

¹ Rounded to nearest £

4. Proposal and Associated Benefits

The proposal is to refurbish the first floor of the current building which will enable the relocation of the Fingerprint Hub to this area. In addition to the refurbished office space on the first floor, a modern and clean environment will be created. This will include break room and kitchen space, enhanced W/C and shower facilities, bookable meeting rooms and quiet spaces which can be used for the purposes of prayer, contemplation, and quiet reflection. Further enhancements to the security on site will be made.

The Fingerprint Hub is currently located on third floor of A Block, HQ. It also utilises space in the basement of A block. Relocating the Fingerprint Hub to Durham House will allow redevelopment at this site to continue without interruption to this operational team. Significant space on the third floor and basement area will be made available to enable the redevelopment of Headquarters. Relocating the Fingerprint Hub is a key enabler to facilitate the HQ Redevelopment Programme.

In addition, relocating the Fingerprint Hub to Durham House will have operational benefits. The Fingerprint Hub and CEL work closely together and are part of the same line management structure. Once co-located at Durham House, travel between sites will no longer be required. Like the CEL, the Fingerprint Hub is a collaborative team providing services for both Essex and Kent Police. Relocating the Fingerprint Hub to Durham House will reduce travel time for Kent Police officers and staff who need to attend the Fingerprint Hub as part of their role.

The Fingerprint Hub has been in the same space in A Block for several years. No investment in this area has taken place and the environment needs modernising and improving. There is also a backlog of maintenance required within A block which cannot take place whilst the building is occupied. Relocating this team to Durham House addresses this and will provide a modern and functional workspace equipped appropriately for the team. Before the team is relocated, refurbishment to the first floor of Durham House will be required including the modernising and expansion of shared areas and facilities.

The Fingerprint Hub utilises dedicated IT services provided by the Home Office. This IT needs to be upgraded regardless of the relocation to new estate. The relocation will be used as an opportunity to progress this forward.

In addition, improvements to site security and car parking facilities will be made within the programme of works. These improvements include the provision of electric vehicle charging points.

No improvements have been made to the site security at Durham House for several years. The proposed improvements will mitigate against Op Javelin incidents and provide a safe and secure work environment for staff working at Durham House and the forensic exhibits stored there.

The benefits are summarised below, these are:

- Enables the HQ Redevelopment Programme.
- Allows required improvement work in A Block to take place.

- Provides modern and fit for purpose estate.
- Reduces ongoing accreditation costs at Durham House.
- Co-locates both strands of Forensic Identification.
- Reduces travel between Forensic Identification sites.
- Reduces exhibit delivery time between the CEL and Fingerprint Hub.
- The Fingerprint Hub will be geographically closer to Kent.
- Further utilisation of vacant space at Durham House.
- Reduction in lone working for CEL staff.
- Improvements to accessibility, wellbeing, and faith facilities at Durham House.
- Enhanced site security, parking and electric vehicle charging points.

5. Options Analysis

In addition to the recommended option within this decision report (option 3), which has been developed and is associated with the proposed contract award, a further three options were previously explored. Within the resulting four options, in addition to the Fingerprint Hub, we also considered if it would be possible to relocate Basildon and Grays CSI teams as well as the DNA Recovery Unit (DRU), which is currently located on the HQ site, to Durham House. The DNA Recovery Unit consists of just a small team but requires access to two laboratory clean rooms.

A feasibility study was carried out by the appointed estates delivery partner. The feasibility study determined the potential development options available to us. Each of these options was analysed in depth in order to determine the preferred option.

Option 1 – Do Nothing – The Business-as-Usual / As Is Option

The Fingerprint Hub will remain at its current location in A Block, HQ. The DRU will remain at its current location in J Block, HQ. Basildon and Grays CSI will remain at their current locations in Basildon and Grays Police Stations.

Whilst this option has no impact on staff and requires no investment, it severely impacts the HQ Redevelopment Programme by leaving the Fingerprints Hub in A block and will not allow the required maintenance work at HQ to take place.

Durham House has a vacant floor that has limited use unless aligned to the forensics department.

Option 2 – Relocate the Fingerprint Hub and DNA Recovery Unit (DRU) to Durham House

Carry out the refurbishment to the first floor of Durham House and relocate the Fingerprint Hub there. Refurbish the current garage structure without extending the building and relocate the DRU to this area. CSI will either remain at their current locations or another building will need to be identified to relocate them to.

Although this option further supports the HQ Redevelopment Programme by relocating the DRU out of HQ, to achieve this will require further investment which will exceed the budget already allocated to this project. In addition, it has been deemed a priority to provide Basildon and Grays CSI with new estate in order to achieve the

accreditation required for them to operate. Although we are exploring alternative estate provisions for Basildon and Grays CSI, if an alternative location cannot be identified, using Durham House as an operating base for these CSI Teams may need to be revisited.

Option 3 – Relocate the Fingerprint Hub and Basildon and Grays CSI to Durham House (the preferred option)

Carry out the refurbishment to the first floor of Durham House and relocate the Fingerprint Hub there. Rebuild the current garage at Durham House and provide a two-storey structure linked to the main existing building. This area will be suitable to be used by Basildon and Grays CSI.

This option supports the HQ Redevelopment Programme and enables the redevelopment of A Block by relocating the Fingerprint Hub out of A block. Basildon and Grays CSI will be provided with the new and functional estate they require to achieve and maintain accreditation.

Whilst investment and planning permission will be required, option 3 provides modern and functional workspaces for the Fingerprint Hub and CSI Teams as well as improved welfare and shared facilities for these teams and the CEL Team already based at Durham House. In addition, further space will be created at both Basildon and Grays Police Stations which is in demand and will be utilised by other teams.

Within this option, there will be insufficient space for the DNA Recovery Unit at this site. However, we have been working with SCD Forensics and have determined that we will be able to reduce the current footprint of the DRU without causing any operational impact. This will make it easier for us to find an alternative location for this team away from J Block at HQ.

Whilst the options analysis process found this to be the preferred option, due to inflated costs affecting the construction industry currently, the focus of this decision report is to proceed with providing suitable estate and relocating only the Fingerprint Hub to Durham House at this stage. The estate provision for Basildon and Grays CSI is subject to a separate review and options analysis.

Option 4 – Relocate the Fingerprint Hub, DNA Recovery Unit and Basildon and Grays CSI

Carry out the refurbishment to the first floor of Durham House and relocate the Fingerprint Hub there. Rebuild the current garage at Durham House on an increased footprint and provide a two-storey structure linked to the main existing building. This area will be suitable for use by Basildon and Grays CSI and the expanded footprint will also allow for the DRU to be located here.

Whilst this potential cost has not been calculated, our consultants have indicated that additional capital will be required. This option will also be subject to further planning consent and consideration as to the impact of the site and site services will be required.

Whilst option 4 facilitates the relocation of all teams to Durham House, this option will significantly increase the budget required to develop the site and will also be subject to further planning approval which is outside of our control. In addition, there is likely to be a loss in vehicle parking capacity as space will be required to increase the building footprint.

6. Consultation and Engagement

In order to capture the specific operational requirements, engagement with SCD Forensic Management and specialists within this department has taken place. The information recorded was used to produce the client brief which allowed our estate consultants to produce the Durham House feasibility study.

The results of the feasibility study, options analysis, preferred option, and Stage C Business Case were presented to the Assistant Chief Constable for the Serious Crime Directorate who has the role of Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for this project. The Stage C Business Case was signed off by Corporate Finance, 7F Procurement and Estate Services and approved by the PFCC alongside the funding decision report.

Informal engagement between SCD senior managers and staff has been undertaken for those teams who are proposed to be relocated to Durham House. Following advice from HR and Unison, staff will be formally consulted with at the appropriate time within the project (likely to be early 2024).

7. Strategic Links

In line with the Essex Police Estates Strategy, the CEL project will adhere to the Essex Police Estate vision by "...ensuring our officers, staff and volunteers are ... equipped and enabled in their mission to prevent and detect crime, keeping the people of Essex safe...". The Fingerprint Hub will be provided with modern, functional, and equipped estate which will allow it to carry out forensic processes with the aim of identifying suspects through forensic evidence in accordance with the ISO standards set by the Forensic Regulator.

As referenced in the Essex Police Estates Strategy, the CEL project "relates to works to Durham House and the relocation of specialist forensics teams and equipment from the headquarters site. These are enabling projects related to the headquarters development and are among several teams / premises which will require re-provision to facilitate the anticipated net receipt and the next significant step on the journey to releasing space at HQ".

The CEL project will achieve and facilitate the following priorities:

- The creation of modern open plan working environments to support agile working practices with improved welfare facilities.
- Addressing urgent health and safety issues.
- Replacing failing building components to improve the resilience, cost efficiency and energy performance of our buildings.
- Improving the current estate where it fails to meet the current minimum legislative and policy standards.

- Estate rationalisation through better utilisation of space.

The CEL project promotes several areas of the Force Plan:

- We are professional: Providing fit for purpose estate for our teams provides a professional environment in which operational functions can be carried out.
- We are skilled, equipped and enabled: The CEL project will provide the Fingerprint Hub with the estate and facilities required to achieve accreditation and adopt an agile approach.
- We are collaborative: By locating forensic teams together, working processes can be streamlined and improved. Relocating teams that provide a service to both Essex and Kent Police closer to Dartford will make it easier for Kent colleagues to attend the site.
- Investigate: Locating forensic teams together will reduce the movement of exhibits between sites. The various forensic functions can be carried out under the same roof, in some cases increasing the speed at which identifications are made and officers are notified.

In line with the PFCC's Police and Crime Plan, the CEL project will support:

- Further investment in crime prevention: The Fingerprint Hub will be provided with modern and functional estate and facilities which will allow it to operate in accordance with the Forensic Regulator's Codes of Practice.
- Supporting officers and staff, by providing suitable and functional workspaces including improved welfare provisions.
- Increasing collaboration: Locating the Fingerprint Hub, which is a collaborative Essex and Kent team, closer to the Dartford Crossing will make it easier for Kent-based members of staff to attend work in Essex and for Kent colleagues to visit.

In addition to the above, opportunities to incorporate energy reduction technologies into Durham House and the wider HQ estate will be exploited. Electric vehicle charging will be introduced at this site to prepare for future requirements and accommodate electric fleet vehicles.

8. Police operational implications

Continuous Improvement will work closely with the Fingerprint Hub to ensure it has all it needs to operate immediately from Durham House in advance of its relocation. In particular, the Fingerprint Hub will be set up with its specific Identification IT system, and engagement is underway with the Home Office to ensure this is delivered in time.

The Fingerprint Hub is an accredited team, and the accreditation body will be invited to carry out its site assessments before the relocation goes ahead. This approach will ensure operational delivery will not be impacted.

9. Financial implications

The proposed scheme has been allocated £2,078,040 of capital funding. Following the procurement exercise the most economically advantageous tender for the

construction element of the project was returned at £1,198,672.

It was recommended by our delivery partner that 20% general project contingency be added to the winning bidder's contract value to cover any unforeseen works due to the inherent risks of working on an existing building, connecting to existing services and updated information from insurers in relation to location of electric vehicle charging units. This will increase the Contract Sum from £1,198,672 to £1,438,406.

The difference between the between the contract award value and allocated capital budget of £639,634 is made up of professional fees, Home Office IT equipment upgrade (IDENT 1), furniture, fixtures and equipment (FFE).

There are £236,200 of one-off revenue consequences (£208,800 to be funded from the redundancy and relocation earmarked reserve) and recurring revenue consequences of £82,630 over the first five years of the project.

10. Legal implications

Following approval of the decision report, the PFCC will be required to enter into a JCT intermediate Building with contractor's design 2016 Edition contract with the main contractor appointed to undertake the refurbishment and re-modelling project.

11. Staffing implications

Whilst every effort will be made to make Durham House an attractive place to work, the relocation may lead to an increase in travel for some staff. Relocation fees will be paid to staff for four years but there is a risk that some members of the team will not be prepared to travel the additional distance and may decide to leave the organisation. This may lead to a loss in skills, resources, and investment in training in addition to costs associated with redeployment elsewhere within the organisation or redundancy. Forensic Staff are, on the whole, specialists and recruiting to these posts once people leave or move on can be challenging.

Consultation, whereby staff will be informed of the relocation, will commence with the support of HR and Unison in early 2024.

Staff wellbeing and welfare is considered within the development of this project. These staff currently work in an aging estate in need of modernisation. Once refurbished, Durham House will provide a modern and clean environment for staff including break room and kitchen space, enhanced W/C and shower facilities, bookable meeting rooms and quiet spaces which can be used for the purposes of prayer, contemplation, and quiet reflection. This should encourage staff to feel comfortable in their working environment and may lead to staff retention. In addition, fit for purpose furniture will be provided and IT upgraded, making it easier to carry out the requirements of each role.

On site security will also be improved as part of the CEL project, which will provide a safe environment for staff to arrive at and leave work in.

12. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion implications

Engagement with the Disability and Carers Network has taken place to ensure accessibility is considered within the proposed redevelopment at Durham House. The scheme includes improvements to accessibility, wellbeing and faith facilities.

The refurbishment works to the first floor will be compliant with the current building regulations.

13. Risks and Mitigations

Risks associated with not approving the decision report:

- The Headquarters Redevelopment Programme will be severely impacted as space will not be created at HQ. If the Fingerprint Hub remains operational in its current location, work to the rest of the building will not be able to take place. The Headquarters Redevelopment programme will be compromised as the relocation of the Fingerprint Hub to Durham House is key to creating available space at HQ for re-development.

Risks associated with the relocation of staff and IT:

- The Home Office may be unable to support Fingerprint IT relocation at the required time: Early engagement with the HO and its appointed third party will take place and a request for support will be submitted early in the programme.
- Loss of resources due to reluctance of staff to relocate to Durham House: Engagement with staff will involve HR and Unison where required. Durham House will be made an attractive place to work, and relocation costs will be paid for four years. Any impact to service delivery identified during staff engagement will be assessed before any works commence and revisions to the project will be considered if required.

Risks associated with the project and delivery:

- Business risks – Delay to the project start date due to governance and / or vetting issues.
- Service risks – Defining the brief before works commence on site.
- External risks – The construction industry market is currently volatile, with a risk of inflation and / or market prices changing from time of tender to contract award.

All of the above risks are dealt with on a daily basis by the Estates team, and the appointment of a dedicated estates vetting SPOC has been completed. Engagement with the end users, support networks and staff associations will be undertaken at the detailed design stage with the final proposal and plans being subject to a design freeze with no client changes.

14. Governance Boards

Original Project and Funding Approval

- Estates Change Board - 24/07/2023
- Chief Officer Group - 09/08/2023
- Strategic Estate Board – 22/08/2023
- Strategic Board – 26/09/2023

Contract Award

- PFCC Strategic Board – 18/12/2023

15. Links to Future Plans

Phase 2 of the CEL project proposes to relocate the Fingerprint Hub to Durham House. The Fingerprint Hub is currently located on third floor of A Block, HQ, and also utilises space in the basement of A block for storage purposes. A key element of the Essex Police Estates Strategy is to consolidate and develop existing estate to provide suitable and functional workspaces. A Block, HQ, has significant potential to be reconfigured and redeveloped. Relocating the Fingerprint Hub to Durham House will allow redevelopment at this site to continue without interruption to this operational team. Significant space on the third floor and basement area will be made available to enable the redevelopment of Headquarters. Relocating the Fingerprint Hub is a key enabler to facilitate the HQ Redevelopment Programme.

16. Background Papers and Appendices

Appendix A

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Appendix B

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Report Approval

The report will be signed off by the PFCC's Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer prior to review and sign off by the PFCC / DPFCC.

Chief Executive / M.O.

Sign:

Print: P. Brent-Isherwood

Date: 18 December 2023

Chief Finance Officer

Sign:

Print: Janet Perry

Date: 04 January 2024

Publication

Is the report for publication?

YES

NO

If 'NO', please give reasons for non-publication (Where relevant, cite the security classification of the document(s). State 'None' if applicable)

Subject to redaction, as set out below

If the report is not for publication, the Chief Executive will decide if and how the public can be informed of the decision.

Redaction

If the report is for publication, is redaction required:

1. Of Decision Sheet?

YES

2. Of Appendix?

YES

NO

NO

If 'YES', please provide details of required redaction:

Appendices are not for publication and are marked in accordance with the official Government Security Classification as OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

Date redaction carried out:

Chief Finance Officer / Chief Executive Sign Off – for Redactions only

If redaction is required, the Treasurer or Chief Executive is to sign off that redaction has been completed.

Sign:

Print:

Chief Executive / Chief Finance Officer

Decision and Final Sign Off

I agree the recommendations to this report:

Sign: 

Print: Roger Hirst

PFCC

Date signed: 04/01/2024

I

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Sign:

Print:

PFCC/Deputy PFCC

Date signed: