

**REPORT TO:** Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board  
**DATE:** 20 June 2007  
**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director - Environment  
**SUBJECT:** Widnes Waterfront 3D Animation  
**WARDS:** Boroughwide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

**1.1** To describe the procurement process, development and marketing and other related opportunities associated with the creation of a 3D animation of the Widnes Waterfront programme (and adjacent) areas

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION:** That the Board consider the Widnes Waterfront 3D animation in the context of the wider Widnes Waterfront Marketing and Communications Strategy together with the potential of utilising the animation for other, major regeneration projects in the Borough.

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**3.1** The Widnes Waterfront is one of only fourteen Economic Development Zones in the North West and will, over a six years period, utilise £8 million of European Regional Development funding together with £7.5 million of funding from the North West Development Agency and a further £1.5 million from Halton Borough Council to facilitate the wholesale regeneration of approximately two hundred acres of derelict, former industrial land in Southern Widnes.

**3.2** In 2003, as part of the overall Widnes Waterfront Marketing and Communications Strategy, a 3D graphical animation of the Widnes Waterfront Master Plan was produced. However, to more accurately reflect the commercial development that has taken place in the intervening period it became necessary to update and improve upon that original model.

**3.3** Three North West based specialist 3D mapping and animation companies were, therefore, invited to tender to produce a new 3D digital asset of the Widnes Waterfront programme area.

**3.4** The following companies submitted valid tenders :-

- |                         |            |
|-------------------------|------------|
| ○ Fudge Studios Limited | £46,850.00 |
| ○ DHI 3D Limited        | £49,800.00 |
| ○ T3D                   | £29,480.00 |

- 3.5 T3D supplied the lowest valid tender and were duly appointed.
- 3.5 The total area modelled is approximately 14 square kilometres, including a higher level of modelling for the Widnes Waterfront Programme Area. This includes approximately 45 office and commercial buildings, the proposed leisure and retail complex, new roads, junctions, landscaping area, public green space and, perhaps most, significantly the New Mersey Gateway.

The model is fully interactivity within the virtual environment of the internet effectively letting users 'walk' around the Widnes Waterfront development

The model features a two and a half minute animation which includes :-

- A virtual fly through starting upstream and moving towards the New Mersey Crossing and on towards the existing Silver Jubilee Bridge
  - A virtual flight along the New Mersey Crossing to the Widnes Waterfront programme area
  - A virtual flight around the Widnes Waterfront programme area, pausing at key developments and ending with high overview of the site looking south towards the New Mersey Crossing.
- 3.6 The digital asset will be a key element of the programme marketing and awareness raising activities in 2007. For example, it will form the centrepiece of an enhanced programme web site [www.widneswaterfront.co.uk](http://www.widneswaterfront.co.uk). The animation can also be delivered to specific, targeted individual and companies by email.
- 3.7 The animation will also be made available to individual developers and agents for marketing purposes who can, for example, choose to introduce a greater degree of interactivity to their individual buildings.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The availability of a 3D digital asset of the Widnes Waterfront programme area will be a key element of the programme Marketing and Communications Plan and will contribute positively to the realisation of the Borough's wider regeneration objectives.

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The creation of a 22 square kilometre digital asset of the Borough will benefit many other regeneration projects. For example, the New Mersey Crossing Team intend using the model to analyse different road configurations associated with the new bridge. The model can also be employed to raise awareness of the New Mersey Crossing.
- 5.2 The model can also be employed as part of the planning process. For example, major new developments can be 'dropped into' the model

graphically illustrating the impact they will have on adjacent development and communities.

## **6.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

6.1 The model is accurate to 30 cm across a kilometre. However, it is important that when the model is employed to represent potential developments then firstly, similar tolerances are employed and secondly, it is made explicit that the model is only being used for indicative and illustrative purposes.

## **7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

7.1 The model will make a positive contribution to the realisation of the overall Widnes Waterfront programme objectives which seek to provide inclusive employment and leisure and recreational opportunities for the people of the Borough .

## **8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

<b>Document</b>	<b>Place of Inspection</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>
Valid tender documents	Economic Regeneration Office	Tim Leather