

Award of contract for the design and construction of 42 dwellings and associated works at the former middle school site, off Walnut Tree Walk, Stowmarket to Pentaco Construction

Introduction

1. The site was granted planning permission for 42 affordable dwellings consisting of a mix of flats and houses for social rent, affordable rent tenure and shared ownership (part buy, part rent).
2. The site consists of two parts for re-development section 1 (former Middle School site) and section 2 (former Community Education site)

Tender process

1. Richard Utting Associates acting as Employers' Agent and Quantity Surveyor for Mid-Suffolk District Council and as sub-consultant via Icen Homes were instructed to complete a tender for the design and construction of 42 dwellings with associated works at the former Middle School site off Walnut Tree Walk, Stowmarket.
2. Tenderers were from the pre-qualified lot of contractors procured via an open tender process managed by the Councils Commissioning and Procurement team. A single stage process was agreed and all seven pre-qualified contractors within band C were invited to tender for works.
3. The tender documents were issued in January 2020 with a return date of February 2020 and six tenders were received.
4. The Client team took the decision to delay the evaluation of the tenders for two reasons
 - A delay in the determination of the Planning Application for the former Community Education Centre (contract section number 2)
 - COVID-19 to assess the implication of the pandemic on the construction industry and potential viability of the scheme.
5. Changes were made to the original tender documentation and an updated tender was issued to all six tenderers in May 2020 with a new deadline of submission in June 2020. Four contractors submitted revised tenders.
6. The tender report was issued in July 2020 and recommended that Pentaco Construction be appointed the main contractor for scheme.
7. Advice was sought on the tender in the current market and Richard Utting Associates confirmed that it still offers good value, and would be a higher price if the work was re-tendered.
8. Alongside the tender process there have been legal negotiations with Stowmarket Town Council relating to a deed of easement and related matters. These have nearly concluded and therefore the Council is in the position to award the Design and Build Contract.

Recommendation

To award the contract for the design and construction of 42 dwellings at the former Middle School site, Stowmarket to Pentaco Construction.