

Hollingworth Fold, Syke Road, Littleborough

Rochdale Borough Council

29th September 2023

Introduction

Thank you for inviting Rural Solutions to provide a fee proposal for landscape assessment services associated with a planning application for a new glamping project which will include; 6 no. glamping units and 1 no. bell tent, along with associated infrastructure such as recycling/waste facilities, parking areas, a communal BBQ/meeting hut, and secure bike storage on land at Hollingworth Fold, Syke Road, Littleborough, Rochdale.

Following our discussions, a brief review of the project information issued to us and our understanding of the brief, we have carefully considered our approach to this project. We have included within this proposal, a scope of work and an indication of the fees for your consideration.

The scope of work below is split between assessment work based on two levels of complexity. Item 1 is associated with the production of a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA). This is a more cost-effective and quicker report to complete and has often been accepted by various Local Authorities such as National Parks and AONB Officers. This has been when agreement can be made during the application stage that the development probably won't be highly impactful but requires documentation of landscape and visual baseline and the outline appraisal of effects at a higher level.

Item 2 is associated with the production of a full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). It covers all the aspects of Item 1 but goes into more detail to assess all landscape and visual receptors based on the distinct lifecycle of the project: construction, day 1 of operation and operation in year 15 when the mitigation measures, as suggested by the report, should be in full effect.

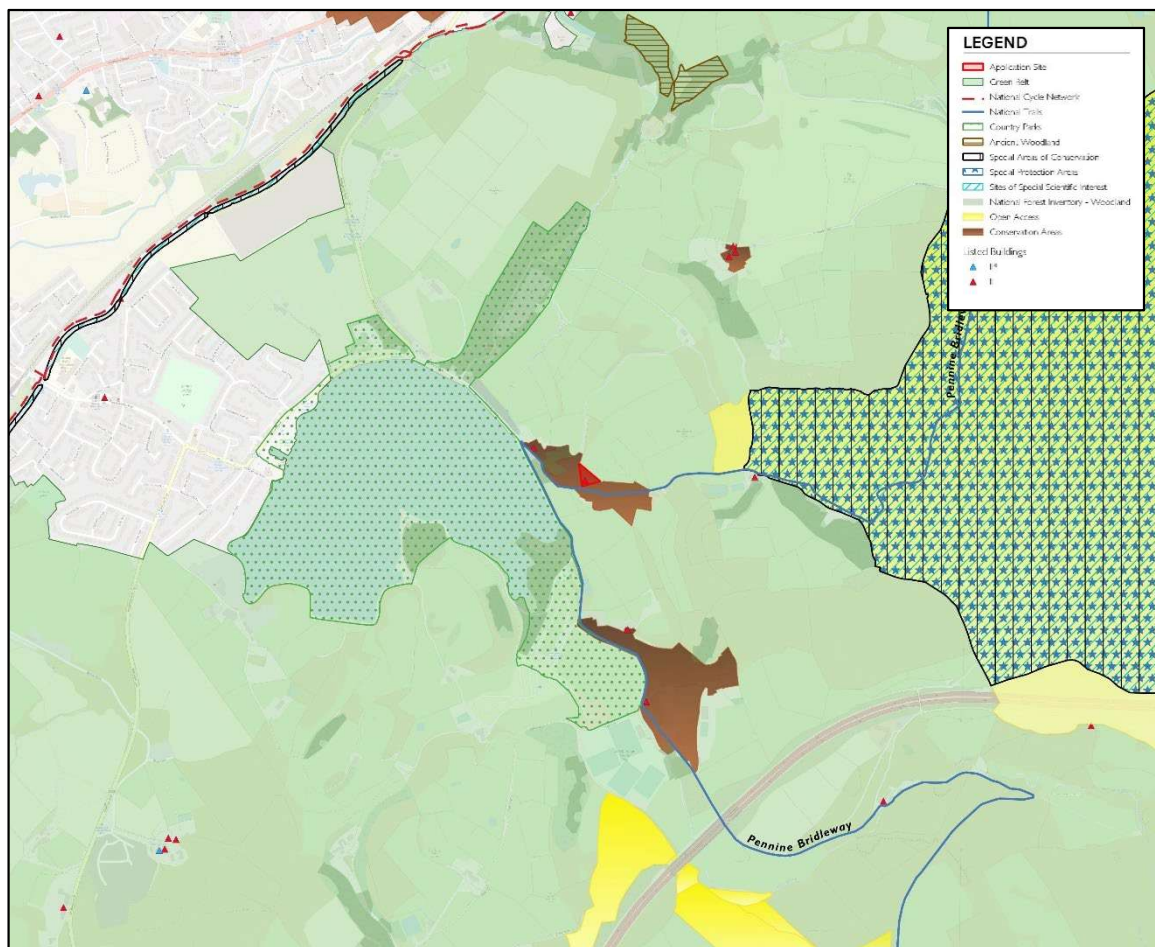
From our initial review of the site and given that the site is well-defined by mature planting, an LVIA may not be required. We understand the baseline includes a Conservation Area, a listed heritage asset and is located within the Green Belt. However, we understand that previous land use has included a camping facility within the site and given the current screening together with the low density and the likely low impact of the proposals, an LVIA could be considered overkill.

Scope of work

Item 1 – Landscape & Visual Appraisal (LVA)

The scope of work below is associated with the production of an LVA and is in accordance with the recommendations contained within the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', Third Edition, IEMA/LI 2013 (GLVIA3).

In terms of the level of research and analysis associated with the production of an LVA, this will require the outline appraisal of a number of important and sensitive receptors. The below plan illustrates the landscape designations applicable to the site.



Initial research illustrates the site is located within Hollingworth Fold Conservation Area which includes two Grade II listed buildings and is not covered by a Conservation Area appraisal. The site is located in close proximity to Hollingworth Country Park which demonstrates the popularity of the area for recreation activity. The site is also located within Green Belt, although this is a planning designation and not considered a matter for an LVA/LVIA.

The site is also located near the South Pennine Moors and forms areas of open access land, along with a number of highly sensitive designations such as; Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Sites of Special Scientific Interest. However, it

is possible that these areas won't be significantly impacted, given the scale of the development.

In addition to these landscape receptors, an assessment of a range of visual receptors would be required to assess the potential impact of the proposed development on the existing visual amenity. These would include views of the site from other nearby residential properties, particularly along Syke Road. Also, views from the nearby Country Park should be considered.

Other important receptors to consider are the existing public rights of way and transport routes surrounding the site (Footpaths – No. 473, 455, 486, Bridleway which also forms Syke Road and Rakewood Road to the edge of Hollingworth Lake). The site will likely be visible from a number of nearby routes therefore further assessment will be needed to illustrate representative views on the day of the site visit.

Also, a long-distance national recreational route (Pennine Bridleway) designed specifically for equestrians and mountain bikers is located adjacent to part of the site, formed by Syke Road. In addition, to the north-west of the site is the National Cycle Route 66, although is predicted not to obtain any views of the site due to intervening built form, landform and vegetation, however, this should be checked during the site visit.

In summary, the LVA will have to set out a clear and robust assessment as to why the site is suitable for new leisure development within the context and sensitivities of the various landscape and visual receptors as identified and will be structured as follows:

Baseline studies

- Review published landscape assessments and relevant landscape policies and briefly summarise;
- Review existing project information and provide initial advice on landscape mitigation matters during the design development stage;
- Identify existing landscape site character;
- Clearly define a suitable and proportionate assessment methodology; and
- Identify landscape and visual receptors which may be affected by the proposal.

Site survey

- Site visit by a qualified landscape architect;
- Undertake a photographic survey of the site and surrounding landscape setting, documenting the landscape character and associated landscape receptors such as trees, hedgerows etc.;
- Obtain a series of key views of the site based on short, medium and long-distance views; and
- Assess the visibility of the site from a range of visual receptors such as:
 - Public rights of way;
 - Transport routes;
 - Local community infrastructure such as the Country Park;

- Heritage receptors such as Hollingworth Fold Conservation Area and any listed buildings and structures which may have intervisibility with the site; and
- Residential dwellings near the site, where public access allows.

Presentation of findings

- Produce an A3 colour report;
- Illustrate predicted landscape impacts, in outline, based on the site and landscape receptors located within the wider study area;
- Assess at outline, a maximum of 8no. visual receptors from a range of sequential viewpoint locations;
- Identify areas of possible landscape mitigation where required;
- Provide supporting plans illustrating relevant contextual information (Site Boundary, Study Area, Viewpoint Location Plan and Zone of Theoretical Visibility based on bare earth visibility);
- Prepare and submit an initial draft of the report and plans electronically; and
- Obtain client feedback and agree on the final issue of the report and plan electronically.

Outputs will include

- 1no. site visit by a qualified landscape architect;
- 1no. A3 colour LVA report, presented in a graphical format, approx. 30-40 pages;
- Illustrated photo viewpoint locations together with location plans;
- Production of supporting plans which includes; site boundary, study area, public rights of way, landform, viewpoint location plan and landscape designations; and
- 1no. A3 ZTV Bare Earth assessment.

Stage 2 – Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)

The completion of an LVIA will include all those items listed as part of Item 1 and will include additional information as follows:

- Illustrate predicted landscape sensitivity and anticipated effects on relevant landscape receptors as identified within the baseline review. This section should provide a greater in-depth analysis of the predicted landscape effects across a range of landscape receptors and define the nature of the effect together with summarising the significance of the anticipated effects;
- Provide a written description of the sensitivity, predicted visual effects and their significance associated with the selected visual receptors;
- Illustrate the residual landscape and visual effects across three distinct stages of the project;
 - construction,
 - year 1; and
 - year 15.
- Identify potential landscape mitigation measures (additional planting, amendments to architectural proposals, siting of structures etc.) which would help to reduce potential impacts;

- Provide a summary interpretation of the assessment along with final conclusions on how appropriate development can be successfully accommodated; Separate viewpoint photography covering all key views, A1 wide in accordance with GLVIA, together with location plan and viewpoint information, appended to the report;
- Viewpoint data in tabulated form, also appended to the report.
- Prepare and submit an initial draft of the report and plans electronically; and
- Obtain client feedback and agree to the final issue of the report and plans electronically.

Outputs will include:

- 1no. A3 colour LVIA report, presented in a graphical format, approx. 60-70 pages;
- Appended viewpoint photography covering all key views, A1 wide; and
- Viewpoint data.

Fee proposal

Our approach to charging

We are committed to fair commercial relationships with our clients that recognise the value generated by our input, and the costs associated with our business and people. Our approach to charging for project fees is to recover costs based on time spent using hourly rates applied to different roles in the delivery team.

We prefer this approach as it is fully transparent, ensures a fair value to both parties and removes the need for the provision of contingency in fixed price fees. This approach allows for the scope of work to evolve as the project progresses if necessary and ensures clients only pay for what they need and for time spent ‘furthering the mission’ on activities adding value directly to the overall project objective.

We will always provide a fee forecast against an agreed scope of work. Our forecasts include an upper and lower figure. The lower figure is the least that you should expect to spend (on the defined scope), and the higher figure is a guide of what we would expect to be the upper end of the cost. This is not quoted as a fee cap, however, if we are likely to exceed the upper end of the range (due to scope changes, matters we could not reasonably have been expected to foresee or third-party issues or delays), we will communicate that to you in advance. Actual costs will be dictated by time spent.

Fee estimate

For the scope of work outlined above, we have estimated our fee range below which is subject to VAT, expenses, and disbursements. See the summary below for the split of fees between the 2 Items:

- Item 1 Proposed Fee Range: £4,550 to £5,250 plus VAT and Disbursements.
- Item 2 Proposed Fee Range: £5,950 to £6,850 plus VAT and disbursements.

The hourly rates of the team proposed are as follows:

Team Member	Role	Hourly Rate
Matt Jarvis	Associate Director	£ 160
Jon Tunstill	Landscape Architect	£ 125

Table 1: Hourly Rates

Invoicing will be monthly in arrears and subject to our standard 15-day payment terms.

Terms and invoicing

We are VAT registered so must charge VAT at the prevailing rate on all our fees, expenses, and disbursements.

We charge expenses for travel and associated costs and recover disbursements at cost. Expenses as listed below are anticipated to help support the production of an LVA or LVIA:

- Reasonable travel and subsistence costs will be associated with this project, based on a return trip from our Skipton Office.
- Digital mapping which gives rise to costs in the region of £30 to £50 plus VAT and would include;
 - OS Mapping at 1 to 25,000 (OS Explorer scale) to cover approximately 3x3km.

Our hourly rates are set each calendar year and are reviewed annually. Hourly rates applied are those adopted for the calendar year in which the work takes place. For projects that continue over the turn of a calendar year, we will notify you of any changes to hourly rates and these will be applied to work from 1st January. Where this is the case, we undertake that increases in hourly rates will not exceed the average in RPI as recorded by the Bank of England.

Procurement & timescales

We would state the following which may have a bearing on delivery and or additional fees incurred:

- If extensive redrafting is required as a result of factors beyond our control, we may need to revisit the original fee to cover any additional time accrued.
- Costs would be based on our standard rates as contained within the attached Terms and Conditions.
- We estimate that following the receipt of client approval of this proposal, we would require approximately 4 to 5 weeks to complete the commission.

Acceptance of terms

Please indicate acceptance of the scope and terms set out by email to commission the project on our [Terms of Business](#).

Disclaimer: The information, analysis and recommendations within this document are made by Rural Solutions Limited in good faith and represent our professional judgement on the basis of the information obtained from others. No statement made within this document may be deemed in any circumstance to be a representation, undertaking or warranty and we cannot accept any liability should you rely on such statements or such statements prove to be inaccurate. In particular the achievement of particular goals depends on parties and factors outside our control. Any illustrations and otherwise in this report are only intended to illustrate particular points of argument.

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