

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE PRODUCTION OF GEODIVERSITY AUDIT AND ACTION PLAN FOR THE CAUSEWAY COAST AND GLENS

Background

Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust (CCGHT) is a partnership organisation involving public, private and voluntary sector representatives from five local authorities, the community sector, and the environment sector together with representatives from the farming and tourism industries. The overall aim of the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust is to 'promote environmental management and sustainable tourism which aims to protect and enhance the unique heritage of the Causeway Coast and Glens area'.

Geodiversity in the Causeway Coast and Glens

Throughout this specification *geodiversity* is defined as the:

“variety of rocks, fossils, minerals, natural processes, landforms and soils which underlie and determine the character of our landscape and environment” (Scottish Natural Heritage, 2003)

Geoconservation is defined as:

“actions taken with intent of conserving geological features, geomorphological processes, sites and specimens” (Burek and Prosser, 2008)

The nature and distribution of our landscapes, biodiversity, land-use and local character are defined by underlying geology, landforms, and geomorphological processes. Access to geological and geomorphological sites to record, study and interpret features is essential for scientific study, training of future Earth Scientists and provision of quality recreation and tourism activities. The Giant's Causeway is Northern Ireland's key natural heritage resource and takes centre stage within the Causeway Coastal Route (CCR) which connects Binevenagh, Causeway Coast, and Antrim Coast and Glens Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs). Despite progress in protection of our geological heritage as Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs), geoheritage sites remain vulnerable to damage or loss and their conservation, presentation and promotion remain a low priority amongst decision makers and the public.

The World Heritage Committee attaches considerable importance to the relationship between a WHS and its 'setting'. The Causeway Coast, Binevenagh and Antrim Coast and Glens AONBs provide statutory recognition to the quality of Northern Ireland's coastal landscape. AONBs are designated for their unique landscape and heritage. Geodiversity plays an important role in the Causeway Coast and Glens' AONBs. The world famous Causeway Coastal Route (CCR) connects the 3 AONBs and WHS with the wider Causeway Coast and Glens Region. In addition to the CCR, AONBs and WHS, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has awarded a development grant under their Landscape Partnership Scheme for the Glens of Antrim. Entitled 'Heart of the Glen's Landscape Partnership' this scheme is developing projects which aim to conserve and enhance this outstanding and historic landscape. The Causeway Coast and Glens showcases a rich geodiversity that has influenced, is influencing and is influenced by the area's natural, built and cultural heritage.

Overall Outcome

Produce a geodiversity audit and action plan which contributes to the delivery of key projects and relevant management plans within the setting of the Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast WHS, defined here as the Causeway Coast and Glens Area (including Limavady, Coleraine, Ballymoney, Ballymena, Moyle and Larne Council Areas).

What is expected?

The successful consultant will prepare, in partnership with the Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust, a geodiversity audit and action plan for the Causeway Coast and Glens Area. The geodiversity audit will review the main components of geodiversity within the Causeway Coast and Glens Area and their relevance to management plans, primarily those of the WHS and AONBs. A clear action plan will aim to raise awareness of all aspects of natural heritage in the Causeway Coast and Glens Area and contribute to existing and future plans for the WHS, AONBs, CCR and Heart of the Glens Landscape Partnership Scheme.

In addition to areas of geodiversity interest, the audit and action plan will feature links with wider natural heritage (including biodiversity and landscape), the historic environment (including industrial heritage and buildings) and cultural heritage (including myths and legends and the importance of the area for the development of the geology as a science). It will consider and contribute to tourism developments specifically, but not exclusively the Causeway Coastal Route and loops. It is essential the audit includes a review of access conditions and details of site ownership.

The successful consultant will report frequently to a steering group comprising representatives from Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust, Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) and Geological Survey of Northern Ireland (GSNI).

The completed document will consist of the following:

- (1) Background on the geological and geomorphological history of the area and its relevance to the Giant's Causeway World Heritage Site and the wider Causeway Coast and Glens Landscape.
- (2) Importance of the area in the development of geological science
- (3) Identification of key sites of geodiversity interest, including an assessment of their:
 - a. Economic value and tourism potential
 - b. Access conditions and recreational opportunities
 - c. Geoconservation Challenges and Opportunities (including review of existing designations¹ where appropriate)
 - d. Education and Learning Opportunities
 - e. Current site use
- (4) Connections with landscape and biodiversity, built and cultural heritage
- (5) A **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-Limited (SMART)** action plan based upon objectives relevant to existing and future plans and strategies. It will highlight lead and supporting partners, timescales and estimated costs

¹ Existing designations include sites selected through the Earth Science Conservation Review Programme (ESCR) designated as Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs), sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLNCIs), National Nature Reserves (NNRs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), AONBs and Country Parks.

The successful candidate will be supplied with a basic information pack outlining potential sources of information

Tender submissions will be evaluated in accordance with the following criteria:

- **Understanding of the brief** – Your submission should show clearly your understanding of what is being proposed.
- **Proposed methodology** – Your submission should clearly outline your proposed approach and methodology. It should highlight target dates for completion of different work stages and indicate proposed reporting arrangements.
- **References** - Your submission should include at least two references (work/community/personal) to certify the ability of the candidate to carry out the required project through previous experience of the candidate's competences in this area
- **Previous experience** – Your submission should detail any previous consultancy experience undertaken by you or your organisation or other consultants within your proposed team which may be relevant to the proposed study. It should clearly demonstrate a working knowledge of the geology of Northern Ireland and include details of at least two relevant publications/documents.
- **Specialist experience** - in undertaking projects of a similar nature – Your submission should clearly outline any specialist knowledge in relation to the proposed study.
- **Value for money** – Your submission should include a detailed breakdown of costs, including consultant fee and travel and subsistence costs.

Budget

The maximum budget for this project is £15,000 inclusive of VAT and all expenses

Deadline for Tender Submissions

The deadline for submission of tenders is **Thursday 31st January 2013 at 1pm** with a view to commence **Friday 1st February 2013**. Project must be completed by the **Friday 29nd March 2013**.

Tenders should be sent via post or hand-delivered for the attention of Andrew Bratton, AONB/WHS Manager. Tenders will be accepted via email provided a postmarked hardcopy is received. Envelopes should be clearly marked "Geodiversity Audit and Action Plan". The postal address is:

Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust

18 Main Street,
Armoy,
Ballymoney,
Co. Antrim,
Northern Ireland,
BT53 8RQ

TEL: 02820752100

Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust is not bound to accept either the lowest or any of the tenders received.