



## **Invitation to quote: For Consultation to inform the Causeway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management and Action Plan**

### **INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND**

Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust (CCGHT) was established in May 2002 as a public/private/voluntary sector partnership body and is a registered charity. CCGHT's mission statement is: "to raise awareness of the special qualities of the natural built and cultural heritage of the Causeway Coast & Glens area including the Antrim Coast & Glens, Causeway Coast and Binevenagh Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; promoting environmental management and sustainable development that aims to conserve and enhance the unique heritage of the area for the benefit of all."

CCGHT is seeking a qualified and experienced consultant to conduct in-depth consultations with the public and key stakeholders. The consultant will engage with these groups to help develop a vision, aims, and objectives that will shape a 10-year Management Plan and a 5-year Action Plan for the Causeway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

**The closing date for return quotations is Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024 3:00pm.**

**Completion of this commission is required by Friday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2025 12:00noon.  
The anticipated budget is £12,000 including VAT.**

### **WHAT IS AN AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY?**

An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a designated landscape that has been recognised for its exceptional natural beauty and distinctive character. Due to their national significance, the primary aim of designating AONBs is to ensure that the landscapes are conserved and enhanced for future generations. These areas are protected to maintain their beauty, biodiversity, and cultural heritage while balancing the needs of local communities and allowing for sustainable tourism and recreation.

The Causeway Coast AONB, which incorporates the Giant's Causeway, was designated in 1989. The Causeway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) extends for 30 km along the North Antrim Coast in Northern Ireland and encompasses a diverse range of stunning landscapes. Among its key features is the Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its striking hexagonal basalt columns formed by volcanic activity millions of years ago.

The AONB is also notable for:

- An extensive dune system at East Strand, particularly in its western part, that is home to many important coastal habitats
- A dramatic and contrasting coastline marked by alternating white chalk cliffs and black basalt cliffs
- Its rich geological features, vibrant biodiversity, and scenic beauty attract visitors from around the world.

In addition to its natural wonders, the Causeway Coast AONB also has cultural and historical significance, contributing to its reputation as one of the most iconic landscapes in the UK and Ireland.

***NIEA Natural Environment Map Viewer can be viewed [here](#)***

***DfC Historic Environment Map Viewer can be viewed [here](#)***

## **WHAT IS AN AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN?**

An AONB Management Plan outlines the vision and management priorities for an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) over a 10-year period. It is designed for all stakeholders whose actions impact the AONB, emphasising their role in protecting its natural beauty for future generations.

The plan highlights the value of the landscape and the benefits that the AONB designation brings. It encourages collaboration among partners to support society's needs through sustainable and integrated land management.

## **WHY IS A MANAGEMENT PLAN NEEDED AND HOW SHOULD IT BE USED?**

A Management Plan is vital for coordinating the effective management of AONB landscapes. It reflects statutory policies and aims to guide stakeholders in protecting the unique natural, built, and cultural heritage of Causeway Coast AONB. The Plan sets out a vision, aims, and objectives for the next ten years.

The Plan should be used to:

- Influence decision-makers in policy and development
- Advocate for excellent management of protected areas
- Identify key issues and provide recommendations
- Foster collaboration among stakeholders to achieve a shared vision
- Guide actions for AONB projects
- Support funding applications
- Serve as a valuable resource for the Causeway Coast AONB.

## PROJECT PROPOSAL AND METHODOLOGY

Date	Activity	Description
8th October 2024	Invitation to Tender	Invitation to tender circulated. <b>The deadline for submissions is Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024 3:00pm.</b>
W/C 18 <sup>th</sup> November 2024	Tender Scoring	Scoring submissions and appointment of successful applicant.
W/C 25 <sup>th</sup> November 2024	Project Initiation Meeting	CCGHT will meet with the successful applicant. CCGHT will provide the applicant with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2013-2023 Causeway Coast AONB Management Plan</li> <li>• 2020-2025 Causeway Coast AONB Action Plan</li> <li>• Current 2025-2035 Causeway Coast AONB Management Plan working document.</li> </ul> <p><i>Agree on the contract including, milestones, schedule, and potential dates and locations for consultation events.</i> <i>**26<sup>th</sup> or 27<sup>th</sup> November likely to be the meeting date**</i></p>
W/C 25 <sup>th</sup> November 2024- mid-January 2025	Preparatory	Organise consultation events, including venue hire, registration, and catering. Collaborate with the CCGHT to promote these events effectively.
W/C 25 <sup>th</sup> November	Review	The successful bidder should familiarise themselves with relevant plans and strategies, analysing current situations and future environmental trends to guide the consultation process. This should include reviewing the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council's Local Development Plan, Corporate Plan, and Biodiversity Strategy.
W/C 13 <sup>th</sup> January - 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025	Facilitation	Conduct extensive consultations with a diverse range of stakeholders across the study area using various methods. Gather and compile relevant feedback to shape the Causeway Coast AONB Management and Action Plan. Ensure events are accessible to everyone.  <i>Organisations for consultation and activities required are listed below.</i>
W/C 2 <sup>nd</sup> December 2024	Engagement of stakeholders	<b>Stage 1</b>  Causeway Coast AONB Management Forum Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Elected Members and Council Officials.  Compile DRAFT themes with associated DRAFT actions with Stage 1 stakeholders and present them to CCGHT.  Once approved, present DRAFT findings to Stage 2 stakeholders and the public as an informed guide for further engagement.

		<p><b>Stage 2</b></p> <p>Consultation and engagement with the <b><u>Community Sector</u></b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Causeway Rural and Urban Network</li> <li>• Northern Area Community Network</li> <li>• Causeway U3A</li> <li>• Local Community Groups</li> </ul> <p>Consultation with <b><u>other relevant bodies</u></b> including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ulster Farmers Union</li> <li>• Translink</li> <li>• DAERA Marine &amp; Fisheries</li> <li>• National Trust</li> <li>• Tourism NI</li> <li>• DFI Roads</li> <li>• Ulster Wildlife Trust</li> <li>• Royal Society for Protection of Birds (RSPB)</li> <li>• NI Housing Executive</li> <li>• Landscapes NI</li> <li>• Woodland Trust</li> <li>• NI Environment Link</li> <li>• Conservation Volunteers NI</li> <li>• Geological Service NI</li> <li>• CEDaR</li> <li>• NI Raptor Study Group</li> <li>• Butterfly Conservation</li> <li>• Keep NI Beautiful</li> <li>• PSNI</li> <li>• Enterprise Causeway/ The Courthouse Shared Space Creative Hub</li> <li>• Taste Causeway</li> <li>• Craft NI</li> </ul>
<p><b>W/C 13<sup>th</sup> January - 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025</b></p>	<p><b>Public Engagement</b></p>	<p>Undertake four in-person Public Consultation events – suggested 2x daytime and 2x evening.</p> <p>Undertake 2x online consultation events- 1x daytime and 1x evening.</p> <p>Advertise any proposed public engagement via various offline and online platforms across the study area.</p>
<p><b>W/C 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025</b></p>	<p><b>First Draft</b></p>	<p>CCGHT and Causeway Coast AONB Management Forum to receive a first draft document. Allow for feedback via relevant online and offline platforms.</p>
<p><b>May 2025 (TBC)</b></p>	<p><b>Final Reporting and Presentation</b></p>	<p>Formal presentation of the final draft to Causeway Coast AONB Management Forum and CCGHT Board. (Dates TBC). Allow for feedback via relevant online and offline platforms.</p>

		Present an Executive Summary Report and two final reports. One report will be an internal document for CCGHT, the other report must be in a suitable public-facing format.  CCGHT to sign off.
<b>Throughout project's lifetime.</b>	<b>Controls</b>	Set out clear governance arrangements with roles and responsibilities for the management of this commission to ensure effective management and delivery on time and within budget.  Collate an evidence database to show the depth and extent of engagement captured and to whom feedback has been attributed.

## **COPYRIGHT, DATA PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

The copyright of all text and images shall remain with CCGHT.

## **INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS**

Please note your submission must contain evidence of the 7 criteria outlined below. Failure to include this will invalidate your submission:

A detailed, clear, and costed methodology (with timescale) that demonstrates the proposed approach to achieving project targets and delivering outputs along with a detailed breakdown of activities
Key dates, and project milestones, including how and when partner and public consultation will take place.
Evidence of the skills of the applicant(s) including a portfolio of relevant work.
Evidence of stakeholder and community consultation and explanation of role in previous relevant projects.
A breakdown of project personnel, activities they will be responsible for and contact details for the project lead.
A clear breakdown of project costs, including all expenses and including VAT.
Contact details for two referees who have recent knowledge of your work.

## SCORING CRITERIA AND WEIGHT

Submissions will be scored according to the following criteria under *Evidence of the skills of applicant/s*, *Proposed Methodology* and *Total costs*.

		Score	Weighting	Max points
Evidence of the skills of the applicant/s	Evidence of skills required to conduct in-depth consultations with the public and key stakeholders and engage with these groups to help develop a vision, aims, and objectives that will shape a 10-year Management Plan and a 5-year Action Plan for the Causeway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).	0-5	6	30
	Evidence of stakeholder and community consultation and involvement in the facilitation of consultations with the public and key stakeholders.	0-5	4	20
Proposed methodology	Present a clear and realistic project methodology demonstrating an approach to achieving project targets and delivering outputs	0-5	5	25
Total costs	Cost - including a clear breakdown of costs including daily rates, number of days, VAT and other proposed expenses (please note mileage will only be paid up to a maximum of 45p/mile)	Under this criterion, the lowest acceptable tender price is awarded the maximum of 25 points. Second lowest awarded 20 points, third lowest will be awarded 15 points etc.		25
		<b>Max score</b>		100

The following table details how assessors will evaluate and score each criterion except costings:

Score	Description
0	The response does not address the criterion
1	The evaluator is <b>not confident</b> that the Bidder: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understands the requirements covered by this criterion; and / or</li><li>• Will be able to satisfactorily meet the criterion requirement(s)</li></ul>
2	The evaluator has <b>reservations</b> about whether the Bidder: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understands the requirements covered by this criterion; and / or</li><li>• Will be able to satisfactorily complete the contract requirements covered by this criterion.</li></ul>
3	The evaluator is <b>reasonably confident</b> that the Bidder: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understands the requirements covered by this criterion; and</li><li>• Will be able to satisfactorily complete the contract requirements covered by this criterion to a <b>reasonable</b> standard</li></ul>
4	The evaluator is <b>confident</b> that the Bidder: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understands the requirements covered by this criterion; and</li><li>• Will be able to satisfactorily complete the contract requirements covered by this criterion to a <b>high</b> standard</li></ul>
5	The response exceeds the expectations of the evaluator or is deemed to offer added value to the project

Your submission should be no longer than twelve A4 pages using font size 12. Evidence of previous work is not included in this maximum page allowance.

CCGHT welcomes proposed quotations for this work and suggestions that offer value for money.

The anticipated budget is £12,000 (including VAT). Quotations must include all fees, travel, direct and indirect costs, expenses, and VAT. CCGHT may pay the contractor a series of payments with the final payment being forwarded on completion of the project. This can be discussed at the Project Initiation Meeting.

## **AWARD CRITERIA**

CCGHT does not bind itself to accept the proposal with the lowest stated price. The contract will be awarded to the most advantageous proposal based on an assessment of price, quality, delivery, technical ability, relevant experience, and stated ability to satisfactorily meet the requirements of the contract.

CCGHT will not compensate the proposer for costs associated with the production of this proposal. It is expected that tender respondents will be informed of the outcome of the tender process in the week commencing 18<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

If you require any clarification, please contact: Tiérna Mullan (Heritage Project Officer)  
E: [tierna@ccght.org](mailto:tierna@ccght.org) or T: 07595413239

**The closing date for proposals is 3:00pm Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

The contract will only be signed after the Project Initiation Meeting, due to be held the week commencing Monday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2024. *\*\*26th or 27th November likely to be the project initiation meeting date\*\**

Proposals must be sent via email to [tierna@ccght.org](mailto:tierna@ccght.org) as an attachment with *Tender for the Causeway Coast AONB Management and Action Plan* as the subject. Attachments will ONLY be opened after the closing date and time. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure the submission has been received before the deadline.