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Angie Price
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20th June 2019

Dear Angie,

Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan: Fee Proposal for Work Required to Enhance the Currently Adopted Plan

Thank you for inviting me to submit a fee proposal for carrying out all or part of the work described in your email of 6th June, which is based on the *Approved 2019 NDP Working Party Scoping Plan* (rev. 05/19).

My proposal is to undertake the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (LSCA), but I have included a few thoughts about the design code updates as well.

Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (LSCA)

I understand that the LSCA would form part of the evidence-base which will inform, guide and support the changes required to take Ledbury's Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) on to the next stage.

The Town Council's note which sets out the '*Actions required preparatory to submitting proposals for a revised settlement boundary*' is very clear, and forms the basis for this part of the fee proposal. It aligns with my own thoughts about the most appropriate form of study needed to achieve the stated aims, and as far as I am aware, also with those of colleagues from HC and the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership.

I also understand that the LSCA would need to assess the capacity of the local landscape (and perhaps parts of the settlement) to accept different forms of development, for example residential, educational, medical, commercial and recreational. The sensitivity / capacity studies would need to consider each of these separately, as they all have different 'characteristics' and operational requirements which give rise to different types of effects; for example, theoretically, a 'green gap' would have far greater capacity for recreational than residential use; an already-industrialised area may have more capacity for commercial than residential use.

If appointed, I would suggest a meeting with relevant parties / stakeholders at the start of the process to establish in principle / as precisely as possible a) what forms of development / landuses the town needs / wants (and what evidence it has / may need); and b) if there are places within the study area where certain uses are clearly more appropriate / desirable than others.

Another factor to establish at this stage is feasibility / viability. Normally, LSCAs will only indicate where development may or may not be appropriate in terms of landscape character and visual amenity; it may, but doesn't always, factor in constraints such as access and flooding, and wouldn't consider landownership, services / utilities, availability of / proximity to local facilities, sustainability and so on. In Ledbury's case I feel that the study would be of much more value if it went that bit further - with input from others - to establish broad 'landuse zones'. Once agreed in principle, these would be the subject of the LSCA.

In terms of costs it is difficult to give an accurate figure at this stage as so much depends on the agreed scope and scale of the study, how 'complex' the issues are, and how much involvement you / the community want to have in the process - see below. However, to give you an idea of a 'ball-park' figure for Ledbury, when I average out LSCAs carried out for other NDPs with similar backgrounds but only considering the capacity of residential development, they are in the range of £12 - £15k (see Hindon example below).

Rather than explain the LSCA method and process here, I will send you a link to an LSCA I carried out recently for a small historic village (Hindon) in the Cranborne Chase AONB, for the PC's NDP evidence-base. Although only capacity for residential development was considered, the issues involved are similar to those faced by Ledbury, and the documents may help to illustrate the scope of the studies likely to be required here. In Ledbury's case, the capacity for the other forms of development would need to be assessed; also, my suggestion is that the LSCA goes a step further and establishes proposed landuse zones.

Given the nature of the assessment and the NDP Working Group's stated aims and objectives, my proposal includes advice and input from local architect Ian Singleton (BA (Hons) Dip Arch RIBA FRSA – RIBA chartered practice), who is working with me on several NDPs including Colwall's. He has also contributed to Malvern Hills AONB guidance documents.

His role would be to produce indicative sketch layouts showing how different forms of development might be most appropriately accommodated on specific sites, based on the various studies' findings. This is helpful for estimating numbers of dwellings / floor area etc. Factors such as landscape structure / access / Green Infrastructure should be 'embedded' at this stage, and generalised recommendations for future layout and design development provided where appropriate.

Based on the above, I estimate that the total fee for the LSCA would be in the region of £18,000.

I don't charge VAT.

My fee allows for liaison with other NDP consultants and around six meetings, including with the NDP Working Group and statutory consultees / other stakeholders for example HC and the AONB Partnership. There may be public meetings / events as well.

If additional meetings or work over and above that which had been agreed was required, I would normally charge £55 / hour, assistants would be £35 / hour, and the architect would be £65 / hour, plus costs, but this would be agreed in advance with yourselves.

The fee is inclusive of costs unless there are items such as significant mileage, acquisition of maps / data from outside sources, and / or exhibition material to prepare.

I do understand that the budget for this is limited, and of course you need to keep the costs down as far as possible. One way of reducing the amount of LSCA work and thus cost would be to involve you / the community in the process - in my experience the more input there is from local people the better, as it can help greatly in assessing levels of landscape and visual value.

For example, perhaps someone could volunteer to carry out and write up the 'landscape history' and / or 'settlement pattern analysis' baseline section (see the Hindon report) - that is very time-consuming. There could be a 'call to find Ledbury's top ten views' (we did that for Malvern's NDP and managed to get a 'key views' policy accepted at examination). And ask people about their favourite walks, places to sit, local memories and so on.

Developing the Design Code

I haven't submitted a proposal for updating the Design Code as much of the work required is beyond my area of expertise.

The LSCAs I carry out usually end with a number of recommendations such as identifying candidate Local Green Spaces, developing GI / tree strategies, restoring old / creating new landscape features (hedgerows, orchards, woodlands, wildlife habitats, footpaths / cycleways) and so on.

The LSCA's findings and recommendations should inform, guide, and be incorporated into the updated Design Code.

I did ask Ian Singleton if he would be interested in submitting a proposal with me; he said he would, but in his opinion the cost of the large amount of work he felt would be required would almost certainly be prohibitive. However, he did suggest that if parts of the commission such as designing and producing the document could be carried out at a low or no cost by others, and on the basis that he had been involved in the LSCA studies so had the necessary background knowledge, he would be happy discuss the possibility of him acting as an advisor and helping you take the Design Code forward.

If you require any more information or have any questions about the above, please let me know, otherwise I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Kind regards,

Carly

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