

Appendix 1

Timeline

Item	Timescale
Closing date for quotations	Monday 18 th January 2021
Notification of successful/unsuccessful tenders	Monday 25 th January 2021
Options Paper submitted	Friday 26 th March 2021
Draft report submitted	Friday 23 rd April 2021
Final report submitted	Friday 14 th May 2021

These dates are indicative and may be subject to change.

Methodology

2. Proposed Approach

ORNI proposes the following approach to complete the project within the timescale and on budget.

Step 1 – Project Foundation

1.1 Project Inception Meeting - ORNI will convene an inception meeting with relevant representatives from MUDC to provide the opportunity to gain further insight into the vision and objectives of the project and the practicalities of the site.

1.2 Strategic Context – ORNI will undertake an examination of the strategic context within which the site would operate. As part of this process, a detailed examination of the Plan’s contribution to local and national policies will be undertaken. This will include but not limited to:

- NI Government / Departmental Strategic aims and policy objectives
- Mid Ulster District Council – Corporate Plan, Community Plan, Tourism Strategy, Preparatory Outdoor Recreation Strategy, Parks and Play Strategy.

Step 2 – Current Position - It is essential ORNI understands the current position of the site to identify deficiencies and begin to develop recommendations to improve the current situation. This will provide the foundation for future steps.

2.1 Desk Research – ORNI will undertake desk research of any existing studies and information relating to the site. It is envisaged this will include:

- Public vs private land ownership
- Land use / management e.g. FSNI felling plans, permits licences and operations
- Statutory designations – Built and Natural Heritage
- Identification of nearby villages, reservoirs, landscapes and visitor attractions

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- Formal and Informal Recreation via external sources such as Strava Global Heat Maps and specialist activity websites / forums

2.2. Fieldwork – Informed by the aforementioned desk research, ORNI will undertake fieldwork to identify and assess:

- Deficiencies in current provision
- Opportunities for development / positive control points
- Access points
- Supporting infrastructure carrying capacity e.g. approach roads, car parking, visitor services
- Current recreation offering e.g. trail network, signage, waymarking, interpretation
- Topography/ Ground Conditions
- Risks – e.g. Invasive species e.g. Japanese knotweed, anti-social behaviour, informal activity, dumping / hazardous material

2.3 Consultation – ORNI will undertake consultation at two levels

a) Key agencies and stakeholders – This consultation will further inform the findings from desk research and initial fieldwork. For example, consultation may be required as follows:

- **FSNI** - re felling plans, permits licences and operations
- **NED / HED** – re natural and built heritage designations respectively
- **DfI Roads** – re access roads, new entrances, pedestrian crossing points
- **Council Planning Dept** – re all of above

b) Assessment of need – The objective of this step is to identify the type and need for intervention at the site. This will ensure that proposed solutions are appropriate for the volume, needs and motivations of those who are most likely to engage with the site. ORNI believes a rural project of this nature can only be sustainable in the long-term if it is fully embraced by the local community. This will ensure the viability of services throughout the year but also acts as an appeal to visitors i.e. a receptive and engaged local community provides an improved visitor welcome. It is envisaged an indicative list of topics for the survey will include:

- Views on strengths and deficiencies in current position
- Identification of proposed interventions (facilities / activities / initiatives)
- Discussion around the anticipated demand and potential target audiences for proposed facilities and services
- Private sector interest to deliver outdoor recreation activities on site

Key consultation tactics will include one-to-one consultation with Council staff / Cllrs, key stakeholders / local community representatives, online public meeting (due to COVID restrictions on gatherings) and an online survey. A summary review will provide the key themes identified through consultation.

2.4 Initial Landowner Identification – In order to establish the high-level viability of linkages to areas of interest outside the main site, ORNI will liaise with reputable

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community representative to utilise their local knowledge to identify landowners. This will be supported by online Land Registry checks if required.

Step 3 - Analysis and Initial Findings – ORNI will analyse the findings from the aforementioned steps and draw of international best practice and emerging trends in outdoor recreation to prepare an initial options presentation. This will include a SWOT analysis, consultation feedback, proposed vision, proposed priority visitor segments and spatial concept plan. The latter is a GIS map(s) outlining the interdependence of the key components e.g. recreation, biodiversity, built and cultural heritage, linkages to secondary sites. This presentation and facilitated discussion will allow the Council to provide feedback on the key components prior to ORNI working these up in detail within the development plan.

Step 4 - Concept Development - Following agreement on initial options, ORNI will undertake further investigations (including further fieldwork) to undertake a technical assessment of key components envisaged to be (as a minimum) core visitor hub area(s), outdoor recreation activities / trails), educational and social activities, traffic flow and parking.

ORNI will liaise and provide guidance to the local community in relation to landowner identification and access agreements. Informed by benchmarking, ORNI will also provide recommendations relating to opportunities for the private Sector to provide outdoor recreation activities.

This will be presented in a Spatial Masterplan (which will demonstrate their interdependence) and be supported by commentary. To inform the preparation of costs, ORNI will avail of extensive database of benchmarked costs gained from previous similar projects. Many of ORNI's costed projects have externally verified by CPD or independent Quantity Surveyors and have been found to be accurate. Rather than providing distinct 'either or' options, the development plan will include phased options with each phase building upon the other to deliver the vision over a timeline e.g. 3-5 years. Phases / options may include i.e. Do Nothing (Status Quo), Do Minimum, Phase 1, Phase 2 etc. The phases will be presented to provide short, medium and long-term options with benefits and outcomes clearly presented. Each component and therefore phase will be individually costed. Phasing will also be guided by an appraisal of current and forecast external funding opportunities.

Step 5 – Final Report - Prior to submitting the final draft report, ORNI will deliver a presentation of final recommendations and facilitate discussion. MUDC will be provided the opportunity to further comment on draft reports and these will be reflected as appropriate in the final report.