

The Incline

Brief for conservation management plan

1. Introduction

Exmoor National Park Authority own and manage the site known as 'The Incline and Winding House'. It was purchased in 1998, with a substantial grant in 2007 from the then Heritage Lottery Fund as part of a wider programme focused on the West Somerset Mineral Railway (WSMR) and the iron industry of the Brendon Hills. The works conserved the historic structures and improved public access.

The Incline consists of a 1:4 inclined plane, a brick and stone winding house and associated structures. The Incline was built to convey iron ore from pit heads at the top of the Brendon Hills to Watchet harbour. From there the ore was transported by sea to South Wales for smelting. The WSMR was in operation from 1857-1861.

Access today is via a footpath from the road at Brendon Hill, from a footpath a third of the way down the Incline, or lastly from the bottom of the Incline at Comberow. Further mapping and background information can be provided.

Exmoor HER reference is MEM15203 and Scheduled Monument number is 1021350. The conservation management plan is for the area of The Incline owned by Exmoor National Park Authority (north of the road bridge over the B3224).

2. Objectives

Exmoor National Park Authority is seeking quotations from suitably qualified consultants to prepare a 5-year Conservation Management plan for the Incline.

As part of the plan, a condition assessment will be made. This will form the basis for management interventions over the next 5 years that will:

- 2.1 Conserve the historic and landscape significance of the asset
- 2.2 Stabilise and protect existing fabric
- 2.3 Manage vegetation appropriately
- 2.4 Reduce risks of erosion and damage
- 2.5 Guide contractors
- 2.6 Inform future funding bids, if required

The CMP must be guided by some core principles:

- Meeting our legal obligations as owner of a SM
- Ensuring that historic structures are kept free of intrusive vegetation
- Maintaining the operation of the water management features (French drains, culvert and sluices)
- Controlling tree growth on the steep cutting slopes
- Keeping the Incline trackbed free of scrub and trees

- Allowing low scrub (1-7 metres) to develop on the slopes of the Incline
- Continuing to allow public access to the Incline where safe and practicable

3. Timescales and scope

Allow approximately 3 months. The work will include a review of information about the Incline, followed by a detailed condition assessment in the field and the production of a draft report for discussion and approval. The product of this piece of work will be a final report (format to be agreed) and a digital photographic archive. To be completed by the 1st March 2027.

The appointed consultant will prepare this plan, this should include:

- 3.1 Conservation of historic fabric
- 3.2 Landscape character
- 3.3 Practical land management
- 3.4 Health and Safety
- 3.5 Cost effective delivery

A. Understanding and significance

- Key features requiring conservation
- Heritage and landscape significance

B. Condition and risk assessment

- Current condition
- Structural or erosion risks
- Vegetation impacts
- Access and safety considerations

C. Vegetation management

- Areas where vegetation should be retained for slope stability
- Areas requiring control or removal

D. 5-year management plan

- Annual tasks
- Maintenance requirements
- Inspection regime
- Priority and/or urgent works

4. Submitting a quote

If you would like to submit a quote for consideration, please ensure the following information is included in submission:

1. Your experience relevant to this brief
2. Any added value you can provide in addition to meeting the core requirements set out above
3. An outline of how you will approach the brief, how the results will be presented and any obstacles you envisage
4. Your availability and an outline of how you will meet the deadline
5. Budget and detailed cost breakdown
6. Two references and/or proof of previous relevant experience

Submissions should be emailed to estates@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk by 1st October 2026 (all submissions will be acknowledged).

If you would like to discuss the brief, please email Rob Wilson-North (rwilson-north@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk) and we would be very happy to set up a call to discuss any questions that you may have.

5. Selection process

Selection will be based on the following criteria (which are not listed in order of importance). Each criteria is scored out of 1-5, the weighting that will be applied to each criteria is shown in brackets:

Criteria	Weighting
Understanding of the brief and proposed approach to delivering the commission	x3
Capacity and resilience. The ability of you/your organisation to deliver the services requested within the timeframe	x2
Capability. Skills, knowledge and qualifications of the personnel that will be undertaking the tasks requested	x2
Experience. Please give details of your company's / organisation's involvement in similar projects	x3
Fees. A breakdown of the costs you would propose to charge for undertaking the work requested	x3

The following definitions will be used in scoring submissions:

Definition	Score
Question not answered / response is totally unsatisfactory. Does not meet minimum requirements or provide a solution	1
Only partially satisfies requirement, major deficiencies apparent.	2
Response meets acceptable criteria but is not comprehensive. Is sufficient response but more detailed proposals would score higher.	3
Response satisfies requirement and the details provided support the bid and add a good degree of value and information.	4
Proposals very comprehensive and/or innovative so as to exceed expectations	5

Exmoor National Park Authority:

- May seek to run interviews following initial shortlisting
- Shall not be bound to accept the lowest or any quotation
- May, at its sole discretion, accept the whole or part of any quotation; and
- Will require the preferred supplier to follow the Authority's Terms and Conditions

6. Disqualifications

The Authority will not consider any quote in respect of which the Respondent or any person acting on the Respondent's behalf, or with the consent, approval or knowledge of the Respondent is reasonably believed to have:

- directly or indirectly canvassed or attempted to canvass any Officer or Member of the Authority
- obtained or attempted to obtain information concerning the Invitation to Quote or award of the Contract or any other quotes from any Officer or

Member of the Authority or any other person who supplies services to the Authority;

- fixed or adjusted or attempted to fix or adjust the prices shown in the Pricing Schedule by or in accordance with any agreement or arrangement with any other person;
- communicated or attempted to communicate to any person other than the Authority the amount or approximate amount of the prices shown in the Pricing Schedule, except where such disclosure is made in confidence in order to obtain quotations necessary for the preparation of the quote or for the purposes of insurance or financing;
- entered or attempted to enter into any agreement with any other person to the effect that such other person shall refrain from submitting a quote, or shall limit or restrict the prices to be shown or referred to in another quote;
- paid, offered or agreed to pay to any person any sum of money, inducement or valuable consideration, directly or indirectly, for doing or having done or causing or having caused to be done, or forbearing to do in relation to a quote;
- committed an offence under the Prevention of Corruption Acts 1889 to 1916 or given any fee or reward the receipt of which is an offence under Section 117(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 or the Bribery Act 2011.

7. Freedom of information

Information relating to any contract or procurement exercise to which the Authority is a party, including information about price and performance, is covered by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act). The Authority is under a legal obligation to disclose such information if requested unless an exemption under the Act applies.

Any person submitting a Quotation or entering into a contract with the Authority should, as part of the contract process, inform the Authority of any information which it regards as being confidential and/or eligible for a claim for exemption from disclosure by the Authority under the Act. The final decision as to what information can be disclosed rests with the Authority.