



Buckland Hall, Talybont-on-Usk

Brief for a Landscape Management Plan

Brief prepared by: the Landscape Agency

Date: 11/11/19

For: [Regulation 13 Personal Data]

1. Introduction

This brief sets out the requirements for the development of a Landscape Management Plan for Buckland Hall, Talybont-on-Usk.

a. The site

Buckland Hall is a 130 hectares estate which lies about 7 miles south east of Brecon within the heart of the Brecon Beacons National Park, lying on the eastern bank of the River Usk. (See Fig 1 for site boundary.)

The gardens and parkland at Buckland Hall are designated Grade II on CADW's Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. . Planning Policy Wales directs that local planning authorities should 'protect and conserve parks and gardens and their settings included in the register'. Other designations at Buckland include the Buckland Coach House and Ice House SSSI and Bat Site SAC as well as the River Usk SSSI and Special Area of Conservation. There are several areas of deciduous woodland and good quality semi improved grassland. The parkland areas are home to many specimen and veteran trees and a lake (Fish pond). The estate is not currently in any Tir Gofal agri-environmental scheme managed by Countryside Council for Wales.

The entire site lies within the National Park, a designation which gives the highest status for the conservation of landscape and scenic beauty.

Summary of the issues that need to be addressed as part of this Landscape Management Plan and why

Despite its Grade II status on the Register of Parks and Gardens, there is only a basic knowledge of the history and design of the park, but the site has the potential to become an important site in the local network of biodiversity and historic sites within the Brecon Beacons. The new owners would like to gain a good understanding of the development of the park in order to inform future management options and priorities. The idea is to manage the landscape as a whole by sustainable grazing and appropriate land management. Of the parkland features, there are scattered parkland trees and tree clumps partially intact, with the fish pond in need of survey and likely de-silting. There is some arable land which may suit arable reversion. The owner would like to have a better idea of the condition of the grassland and trees on the site and if there was potential to enhance the wildlife and historic value of the site.

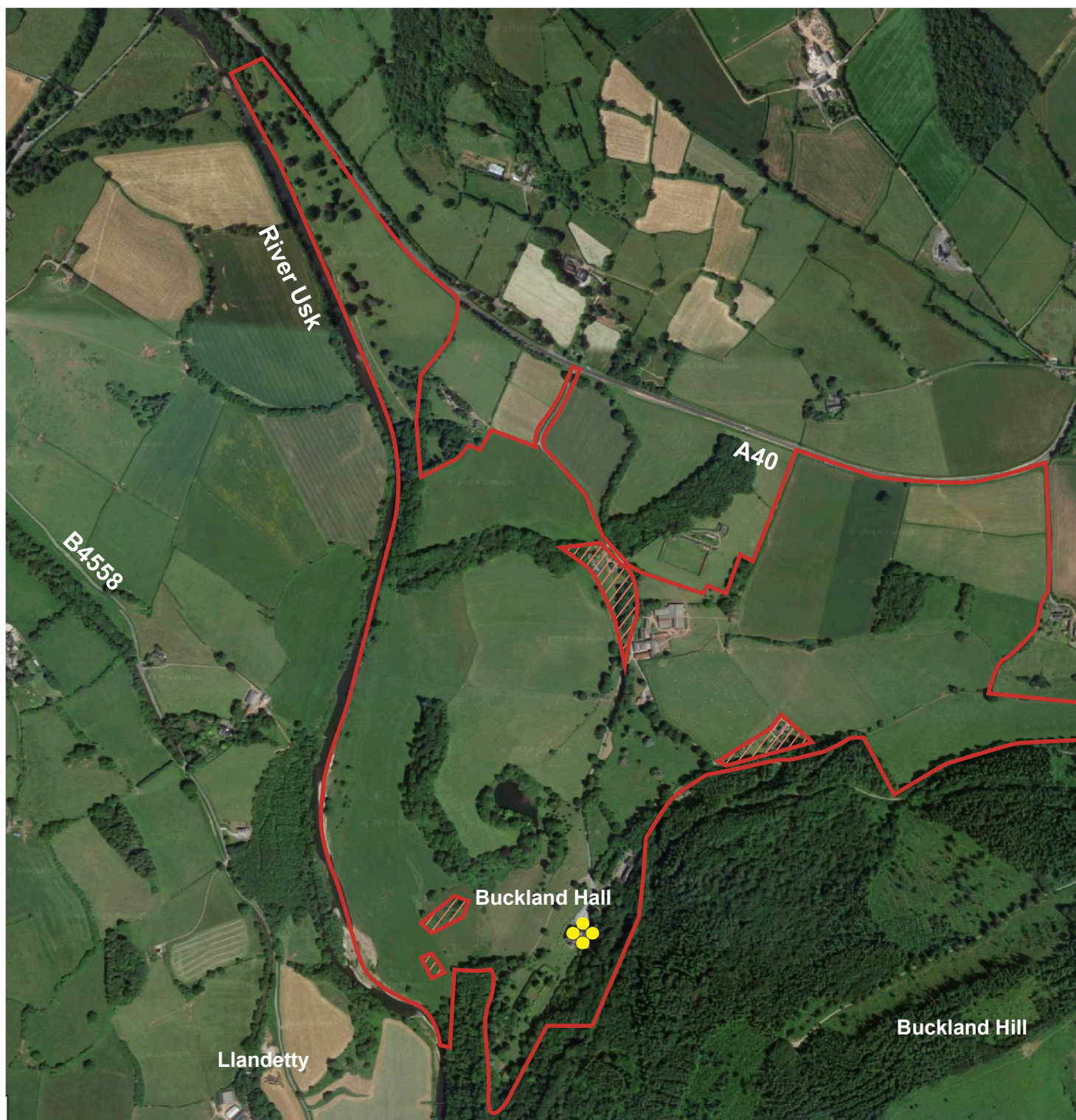


Fig 1: Site Plan illustrating ownership boundary (hatched areas indicate those excluded from ownership)

2. Requirements

Task A: EVALUATION

A1. Ownership, physical character and usage of the park

In relation to the agreed area of the Landscape Management Plan, the consultant will

- i. Describe and map current ownership and occupancy details including leases, land managed under licence, trusts, acquisitions etc;
- ii. Describe the current use and management of the land including land management agreements, farming and forestry types, etc;
- iii. Identify and map any national or local designations within, or directly affecting the setting of, the landscape
- iv. Identify other obligations, such as covenants, 'live' planning conditions, etc.
- v. Describe how the gardens and parkland fits into the wider landscape context and identify any significant impacts that directly affect its character or setting;
- vi. Identify and map/record existing information about the site geology, soils, topography, drainage, climate, landscape designation if relevant;
- vii. Identify and map any public rights of way or other access arrangements, including permissive access where applicable;
- viii. Identify and map services, wayleaves etc;
- ix. Identify and map any known Resource Protection issues.

A2. The history of the park and its development

In relation to the agreed area of the Landscape Management Plan, the consultant will carry out:

A2.1. Documentary research

Carry out archival and desk-based research to draw together detailed information on:

- i. The history of its ownership.
- ii. The development of the landscape and its design over time, including the work by particular designers, and the arrival and loss of specific features.
- iii. The changes to land use over time (for example, how it has been managed through agriculture, forestry, horticulture, etc).
- iv. Events or activities in the park which have had a significant impact on visitor provision and/or the development of visitor attractions (e.g. 18th century carriage drives, contemporary play areas for children, etc).
- v. The broad historical context for the main phases of the site's development (e.g. movements in aesthetics, fashion, politics, technology, key landscape designers).

A2.2 Field survey

Building on baseline information gathered through Tasks A1 & A2.1; undertake an appropriate level of survey of the landscape to capture on a map and in a gazetteer the information relating to:

- i. the location and extent of surviving archaeological features and their condition, including the historic boundary of the site, and the threats and risk factors associated with each site;
- ii. the built historic resource (built landscape features) and their condition, and the threats and risk factors associated with each feature.
- iii. areas of woodland, copses and hedge lines, all scattered trees, veteran and historic trees (their location, number, species, estimated age, wildlife and landscape value, health/need for tree surgery, need for further survey etc.) trees identified as veterans should be surveyed using the Veteran Tree Initiative Specialist Survey Method.
- iv. Wildlife habitats, and their condition, and the threats and risk factors associated with each habitat. The survey should identify the broad habitat types present, provide species lists for plants, animals and birds seen and note potential sites for bats

A3: Landscape design evaluation

In relation to the agreed study area, carry out a visual survey of the current landscape to identify:

- i. any surviving elements of the previous historic design phases, and their condition
- ii. current and surviving historic views and vistas (and any relationship between them or between other landscape features, such as an eye catcher),
- iii. any relationships with current or past communities/settlements.
- iv. any sequential changes in landscape layout or extent
- v. any existing features that either impact on the historic landscape or change its context

Task B: ANALYSIS

Analyse the information gathered during the evaluation stage and produce a fully illustrated report that provides the following key elements:

B1. Understanding the site and its vulnerabilities

- i. A chronology of the historic park up to present day, highlighting key dates, ownership changes and events
- ii. Details of the development of the landscape and its design elements over time, and their survival or loss, including
 - specific phases and/or work by particular designers;
 - significant vistas, views and features and their individual and collective contribution to the landscape;

- how the design works now and historically;
 - sequential changes in layout, extent or condition;
 - changes resulting from natural or other causes, such as storm damage or modern development
 - the overall condition of the historic landscape and its component parts
 - the current condition of the known archaeological, built and biodiversity assets in the landscape and their priority for management intervention
- iii. A visual synthesis of b (above) in terms of mapped and defined ‘character areas’
- iv. A brief summary of gaps in knowledge and any historic information not available

B2. Significance

- i. An assessment of the contribution of the park to its wider landscape setting, including its relationship with key significant features, such as the main house, ancillary buildings, local settlements, etc
- ii. An assessment of the component parts of the landscape and their contribution to the significance of the landscape
- iii. An assessment of the significance of the site in relation to its contribution to landscape history design, both in Wales and the UK
- iv. An assessment of its value and rarity, for example, in relation to a particular period; design or features; its level of survival, vulnerability, or documentary evidence
- v. An assessment of the significance of any ‘associations’, such as with an event, person, sense of place or ownership; and its aesthetic qualities
- vi. A summary paragraph stating the site’s overall significance which supports, or otherwise, its restoration.

B3. Issues and constraints

A summary of the issues and constraints that may affect the significance of the site as a whole and/or its character and historic, archaeological, ecological and resource protection features, including:

- Policy frameworks or Action Plans for the area
- Obligations/limitations imposed on management by, for example, designations or covenants
- Any form of access, wayleaves, field sports, licences and rights;
- Current or proposed estate and land management principles and practice;

Task C: APPROACH TO FUTURE MANAGEMENT

Using the outcomes of Tasks A & B:

C1. Develop a succinct ‘statement’ that summarises the overall Future Management Approach that needs to be taken with the landscape to safeguard its special interest and character.

C2. Set out the underpinning principles for implementing the Approach in terms of future planting and ongoing management of the landscape and its assets. This might include defining the period(s) of restoration, planting palettes, conservation principles and replacement strategies.

C3. Develop a Master Plan, in the form of a map and table, which identifies a series of prioritized and integrated Actions as a framework for delivering the Future Management Approach, cross referenced as appropriate to the detailed information provided in A & B. This should clearly identify

- i. Where potential grant aid would be a key driver for delivering the Action/activity
- ii. Any dependencies between activities
- iii. Priorities for the activities over the next 10 years - divided into immediate (1-2 years), necessary (2-5 years) and desirable (5-10 years), with a 'long term' view of 20 years
- iv. Where any actions taken will result in longer term maintenance requirements;

Task D: CONSULTATION ON AND FINALISATION OF THE DRAFT REPORT

On completion of Tasks A, B & C the consultant shall:

D1. Send a fully illustrated draft of the report and its underpinning information to the client and agreed key partners and stakeholders (such as CADW and Brecon Beacons National Park Authority) in advance of a meeting to discuss the findings.

D2. Organise and hold a meeting on site with all interested parties in order to

- i. Capture the outcomes of a full discussion of the findings of the report
- ii. Present the management approach and discuss the principles and priorities that have been identified
- iii. Inform Task E – the drafting of a schedule of work for a potential application for grant aid.

D3. Following this consultation, amend the draft to reflect the comments received and re-submit it for 'sign off' by CADW and Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, before proceeding to Task E.

Task E: SCHEDULE OF WORKS

Based on the outcomes of Task D, the consultant shall develop a Schedule of Works detailing the individual activities required to deliver the agreed priority repair/restoration proposals and optimum management of the landscape. This must:

- show a clear prioritisation of the work required
- Identify any 'critical path' in terms of the timing of proposed options or capital items
- be based on the recommendations in the Landscape Management Plan

- be drawn up in conjunction with the client

Task F: PRODUCTION & ARCHIVING OF THE LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Following finalisation of the draft report, the consultant shall produce three paper copies of the approved Landscape Management Plan, alongside an electronic version in pdf format



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