Cotswolds Conservation Board

National Grid Landscape Enhancement Initiative (LEI)

Call for Projects in the vicinity of pylon lines ZF3 (Upper Coberley to Cirencester) and 4TE1 (Upper Coberley to Eastington)

Expression of Interest received from the National Trust

Sections 1 & 2 are contact details and have been redacted for brevity and confidentiality

Section 3 - Your Project
Lodge Park Bridgeman Restoration Project

Project start date (please check the indicative timetable in the call for projects)
October 2021

Project end date (Projects can be delivered over up to 3 years and are followed by a 3 years maintenance period)
October 2024 with a 3-year maintenance package

Estimated total project cost
£239,500 for restoration of features as described below and not including 3-year maintenance.

How much funding are you applying for?
£200,000

How will you fund the remaining minimum 20% (match funds can include in-kind contributions such as volunteer hours and pro-bono work)

We will fund the remaining 20% using staff time and various onsite fundraising such as raffle ticket and second-hand book sales.

Briefly describe the extent of the electricity transmission infrastructure that your project is concerned with (please upload plans highlighting the specific sections of line or pylons etc.)

The powerline (4TEI), runs from Cobberley to Eastington, with pylons close to, and negatively affecting the views of, the landscape at the west of the Lodge Park. The pylons are visible as you walk from the back of the 17th century grandstand to the entrance of the historic landscape where they are the only modern infrastructure in view. Please see attached plan and photo.

As this landscape itself is unique in its survival, not only will the restoration project create great interest in its historical value - reliably one of the best preserved Bridgeman landscapes - it will also deliver the first primary objective of the Landscape Enhancement Initiative by directly blocking the powerline from view.

Where will the project take place? (In addition to uploading a project location plan, please provide a brief description of where the project will take place in relation to the boundaries of the AONB and the electricity transmission infrastructure.)

See attached maps: *Bridgeman Restoration Location Map* and *Lodge Park - Proximity of National Grid 400kv overhead transmission line*.

The landscape project will take place at Lodge Park, a Grade I listed park and grandstand owned and maintained by the National Trust. It is situated fairly centrally in the north-south/east west extent of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and on an important 'gateway' into the Cotswolds on the A40 between Oxford and Cheltenham. It is lies two miles South East of Northleach, approximately two and a half miles from the village of Sherborne, and at the southern boundary of the wider National Trust Sherborne Park Estate which covers 1668ha and straddles the A40.
The powerline (4TEI) can be seen from the rear aspect of the property.

The Board has undertaken a landscape character assessment for the AONB. This project falls within landscape character type 10; High Wold Dip-Slope Valley. It is within area 10c, Middle Leach Valley.

How many landowners are affected by the project?

National Trust is the landowner, and the grassland within the park is managed using stock through a grazing tenancy. The tenant has been kept informed of the project details, and works with us positively, with great vision for the future restoration.

If you are not the landowner, do you have written consent from the landowner(s) to carry out this project?
n/a

Project Summary (briefly summarise what you are planning to do and the project's main outcomes)

(Please see attached maps and plans).

Our project will restore a large proportion of a rare historic landscape for people to enjoy and for nature to benefit. The experience will be improved for the thousands of visitors each year by both screening the view of the pylons and by significantly offsetting the impact of the infrastructure through the careful restoration of significant features. Nature will benefit through increased creation of woodland and scrub habitats. Increased numbers of trees in the landscape will improve connectivity and provide valuable habitat for birds, mammals and insects. Shrubby woodland blocks will dramatically increase opportunities for wildlife, offering sources of nectar, fruit and nuts as well as nesting sites for birds and shelter and microclimatic variation which will greatly benefit insects. Parkland is a wonderfully diverse habitat with a number of components and, as the features in the design are restored, the ratio of these components will move towards the optimum for wildlife.

Lodge Park consists of a 152.5-hectare park and former deer course and a grandstand. The park and the grandstand are both listed Grade I. John 'Crump' Dutton built the grandstand in the early 17th Century and then later, Sir John Dutton employed Charles Bridgeman (an English garden designer who helped to pioneer the naturalistic landscape style) to design the landscape at the back of the grandstand in the 1720s.

Now referred to as Lodge Park, the National Trust restored the grandstand building back to its former glory in 1998. However, whilst the parkland has been cared for, many historic landscape features have deteriorated or been lost. Our ultimate vision is to fully restore the park (see Plan 2: Restoration replanting and management masterplan) and an initial phase of works in 2019 saw the Serpentine Walks replanted. The project for which we are now seeking funding would enable the next major phase. Further phases to complete the restoration will be undertaken over time as funding allows but this current phase will take us a significant way towards reaching the long-term vision.

The original design for the landscape was found in the Bodleian Library in 1998 after having been incorrectly linked to another landscape. It confirmed that the Charles Bridgeman design was in fact largely followed. Utilising various sources of information and importantly field evidence from the LiDAR scan as a guide, a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) was produced and Bridgeman's proposed design was redrawn precisely onto a surveyed plan of the park to provide an accurate template for restoration. The vision and plans within the different phases all follow recommendations from the CMP.

The features within this current phase of the project lie within 'East Park'. Historically, East Park included the more elaborate of Charles Bridgeman's key landscape components, including the central 'Great Avenue'. Please see the attached Bridgeman Restoration Location Map for wider park including the Deer Course which now sits between Lodge Park and the A40.

The phase of works for which we are now seeking funding consists of the following features (Please refer to map: *Bridgeman Restoration Project Features*):

- *Feature 1: Dog-leg avenues extending north and south from Great Avenue* *£30,225.00*
  The avenues in the design would have provided walks around and within the landscape. Evidence of pits where trees were planted and later removed show these avenues were originally present. We now plan to replant these with 65 elm trees and 65 lime trees.

- *Feature 2: Woodland block and belt* *£6,225.00*
  The woodland block adjacent to Lodge Park building was originally planted with beech but replacement is in mixed species. Most of these trees are now badly damaged by squirrels and need replanting. The block also features a recreation of the formal walnut planting at the start of a terrace walk but these trees have succumbed to disease and need replacing. The block will be planted with 10 standard walnut trees.
  The other element to feature 2 is the beech belt at the north-eastern boundary to park, adjacent to Paddock Course boundary. Few trees now survive, and a phased replanting is required.
  The belt will be planted with 10 standard beech trees.

- *Feature 3: Historic park wall* *£80,295.00*
  The historic park walls are a significant feature, enclosing the area laid out in Charles Bridgeman's design. However, they are deteriorating, and restoration is essential. The wall also has a role in keeping in stock which further add to deterioration by climbing tumbled sections. 170m of historic park wall will be restored.

- *Feature 4: Avenues extending north and south from ha-ha* *£17,955.00*
  These avenues (walks) extended from the woodland block around the Grandstand into the landscape, extending north as far as the beech belt. They will be planted with 40 lime and 37 elm trees.

- *Feature 5: Woodland blocks* *£104,800.00*
  The woodland blocks would have been a striking feature extending from the Great Avenue. The blocks are bisected by sightlines which provide views out into the landscape and allow views of other features in the design.

  The blocks will be replanted with over 4,100 shrubs and small trees. They will be bordered by nearly 2.5km of hedgerow which will provide a stock-proof boundary and a straight edge to the blocks which will give a more formal appearance.

Total cost of features 1 to 5: £239,500.00

Therefore, in total, across an area of 51.5 hectares of the eastern half of the Bridgeman landscape, the project will plant more than 4,100 shrubs and small trees and 227 trees of at least 1.5m. It will restore 170m of historic wall and 2.5km of hedgerows.

Briefly explain how you think your project(s) will address either or both of the following:

a) reducing the visual impact of electricity transmission infrastructure; and

When mature, the trees and shrubs will directly screen the view of the power lines as viewed from the main visitor access areas and, crucially, from the primary viewpoint of this internationally important historical landscape, as designed and laid out by Charles Bridgeman.

b) enhancing the landscape in the affected area in ways that may offset or compensate for the impact of the infrastructure

Whilst growing, the new planting and restored landscape structure will draw the eye into and around the landscape, as originally intended, and away from the powerline.

The use of mixed native species will provide a variety of colours, shapes and textures throughout the seasons; nature conservation interest and species range and diversity will increase. Combined with the layout of the design, there will be much of interest to keep the viewer's attention within the park.

More generally, the landscape character of Lodge Park is recognised as important to the local area. Cotswold Conservation Board has developed a detailed landscape strategy and guidelines to inform land management based on the landscape character assessment. This strategy Identifies "Occasional private parklands within or adjacent to the valley" as a key feature for High Wold Dip-Slope Valley stating that such parklands "Influence the local character of the landscape in the form of estate architecture and formal planned planting".

Outline the monitoring measures you will put in place to ensure that the project will successfully achieve its outcomes and meets its objectives

Regular inspections of the new plantings will take place to monitor health and progress. Any problems identified will be rectified swiftly to ensure the uniformity of the design is not impacted. Infrastructure will be similarly monitored. Any early defects will be referred back to the contractor for remedial action in line with timeframes of guarantees for materials and workmanship. Thereafter, condition will be monitored through routine asset and infrastructure surveys (monthly)

with any necessary repairs being undertaken swiftly to ensure protection of plantings and formality of the landscape.

Following completion of the project, wildlife surveys and visitor surveys will provide data for monitoring the success of the project relating to these different objectives.

We will follow the Lodge Park Conservation Management Plan which sets out the implementation of Charles Bridgeman's design. The CMP provides a framework by which to set, implement and review objectives.

A project team has been established, consisting of the Countryside Manager, Estate Manager, Curator, Operations Manager, Project Manager and Project Co-ordinator.

We have consulted with external bodies including the Garden's Trust and Historic England and will continue dialogue throughout the project.

Section 4 – Attachments

1. Bridgeman Restoration Location Map
2. Lodge Park - Proximity of National Grid 400kv overhead transmission line
3. Restoration replanting and management Master Plan
4. Bridgeman Landscape Restoration Features
5. Photograph of power lines