

# Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site Research Strategy

---

Brief for Tender, issued 29/10/2007

---

## 1. Introduction

The Jurassic Coast World Heritage Team requires a consultant to undertake a range of tasks that will support the development of a scientific research strategy for the Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site (The Jurassic Coast). Dorset County Council will issue the contract on behalf of the team.

## 2. Background to Jurassic Coast

The Dorset and East Devon Coast was inscribed on the World Heritage List in December 2001. The Site, commonly known as the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site (JCWHS), contains the finest record through the Mesozoic anywhere in the world and has been described as a walk through time, 185 million years in just 155km of coastline. The specific interests are the geology, in representing the rock record, the palaeontology, as the record of life, and the geomorphology, the exceptional range of coastal processes displayed along the coast.

Dorset and Devon County Councils have taken a lead role in developing conservation, management and monitoring systems, educational initiatives and sustainable tourism along the coast. Natural England remains the statutory body responsible for the conservation of the SSSIs that comprise all but a tiny part of the Site and is therefore a key partner. The Jurassic Coast World Heritage Team (JCWHT) has specific geological expertise to assist Natural England. A monitoring programme is in place and a report on the State of Conservation is updated regularly.

There is a strong partnership across the entire length of the Site and across a wide range of work, represented by a broad Steering Group of key stakeholders. The Steering Group comprises representatives from a range of local regional and national partners, including Natural England, DCMS, SWRDA, all six Local Authorities and landowner representatives. The Steering Group guides the work the Jurassic Coast Team, based in Dorchester but co-funded by Dorset and Devon CCs and SWRDA, and covering the whole coast.

The guiding objectives and policies relating to site management are set out the World Heritage Site Management Plan, signed by the Secretaries of State for DCMS and DEFRA, and which is effectively the contract between the UK Govt and UNESCO. The Management Plan and a wide range of supporting documents and strategies are available on the Jurassic Coast web site at [www.jurassiccoast.com](http://www.jurassiccoast.com)

The Jurassic Coast Science and Conservation Advisory Group (SCAG) oversees the work of the Earth Science Manager in protecting the Site from damage. It is independently chaired and is composed from representatives of the research community, (local universities, the BGS and Natural History Museum, together with Natural England and the fossil collecting community). The Jurassic Coast Science and Conservation Advisory Network (SCAN) was established following the generous contributions made by the research community to the Nomination document that was submitted to UNESCO in 2001. The aim of the network is to inform experts with an interest in the Site about threats and opportunities created by human and natural change.

### **3. Background to the contract**

#### **A. JCWHS Research Strategy**

There is a commitment in the JCWHS Management Plan to develop research along the World Heritage Site and in 2006 a preliminary research strategy was produced by the Chair of the Science and Conservation Advisory Group, the group responsible for overseeing the conservation and monitoring work programme for the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Team. The Steering Group endorsed the preliminary work and has agreed that the research strategy should be developed further.

The strategy clearly identifies science that informs management of the Site as the priority for the research agenda. Wider research and scientific study is, without doubt, important, but remains the responsibility of universities, the Research Councils and others. It is recognised that funding for such resources is highly competitive and limited.

The JCWHT currently holds a small budget to help promote specific projects along the coast for both research and site improvements. Research projects that inform management are potentially wide and varied;

- Studies that require improved access to geological exposures currently obscured due to natural processes (e.g. along parts of the Fleet Shore)
- Studies that contribute to and update the GCR sites and documentation
- Studies on specific fossils or groups of fossils and how that research can benefit from and improve existing management mechanisms such as the West Dorset fossil code
- Studies to evaluate the impact of removal of old and / or failing coastal defences or other structures (e.g. Peveril Point or Bowleaze Cove)
- Studies that examine specific issues of climate change on the interests of the Site
- Studies that can integrate and support current work on the Dorset and South Devon Coast Shoreline Management Plan
- Studies that can benefit from new sources of data such as the Strategic Monitoring Programme now covering the entire Site
- Studies based on new sources of information gathered as a result of engineering studies such as for coastal defences (e.g. Lyme Regis) and/or developments (e.g. Portland Gas Ltd)

#### **B. Potential Research Links**

In order to develop research there is a need for a focused effort to develop further links between the Jurassic Coast, Natural England, Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), other funders and academic institutions.

One potential model for the future funding of research on the Jurassic Coast can be taken from two examples led by NERC. Firstly, the NERC Co-operative Award in Science & Engineering (CASE) scheme promotes partnerships between eligible research organisations and public or private sector organisations. A CASE studentship is a three-year PhD studentship during which the student enhances their training by spending between three and 18 months with the co-operating body in a workplace outside the academic environment. The impetus and initial requirement for the research originates from the CASE partner, who could in this instance be Natural England and / or the Jurassic Coast Team. These two bodies would provide funding in conjunction with NERC to support the research studentship.

A further example of an appropriate funding model is NERC's programme offering scientific researcher's small project funding through the Consortium grants initiative. Consortium grants are intended to support focused co-ordinated, collaborative research into specific issues that cannot be

addressed through other NERC funding modes. The grants promote flexibility and collaboration between institutions and agencies. One such example of this is a collaborative grant scheme between the Ministry of Defence and NERC. This scheme supports high-quality basic and strategic research relevant to defence needs. Another example includes the Centre for The Ecology Hydrology Funding Initiative (EHFI) which is supported logistically by the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (CEH). Funding is awarded annually, on a competitive basis, to promote wider participation between the CEH and the UK science community, in order to answer key research questions in environmental change. A collaboration between Natural England and NERC to support research associated with Geoconservation and Geodiversity could be investigated along a similar theme.

In both cases, it is important to stress that the nature of geoscience funding from NERC is heavily dependant on their strategic aims;

*“The Natural Environment Research Council delivers independent research, survey, training and knowledge transfer in the environmental sciences, to advance knowledge of planet Earth as a complex, interacting system.*

*Our work covers the full range of atmospheric, earth, biological, terrestrial and aquatic sciences, from the deep oceans to the upper atmosphere, and from the poles to the Equator. Our mission is to gather and apply knowledge, create understanding and predict the behaviour of the natural environment and its resources, and communicate all aspects of our work.”*

This investigation for the Jurassic Coast should be innovative and forward thinking with a strong holistic ambition that encompasses a system-based approach. For example, although the Site has obvious geological interest, research projects should be encouraged to be cross-curricular and relevant to current research trends in the field.

The Jurassic Coast Trust has been established to support conservation and educational initiatives along the coast. The contract should explore ways to secure and establish a fund to support research through the Trust.

#### **4. Details of the contract**

The appointed consultants would be expected to produce a research strategy and action plan for the Jurassic Coast that would link into the aims and objectives of major funding agencies and partners (such as Natural England, NERC, British Geological Survey). We envisage that to reach this point would encompass four stages:

Stage 1 The consultant will be expected to research and outline the current state of peer-reviewed geoscience research (focusing on geology, geomorphology and palaeontology) that is directly relevant to the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site, both geographically and in terms of Earth science interests. This might include research undertaken along the coast itself, or work which references or draws comparisons with features from along the coast. They would be expected to look back as far as 2001. Equally they would be expected to compile a list of active researchers and research projects that are not peer-reviewed but may be of importance to the management of the Site.

Stage 2 The consultant will be expected to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the ambition within the local, national and international research community to undertake geoscience research along the Jurassic Coast, or to undertake work of direct relevance to the Coast and its Earth science interests. Who is active along the coast? Who wants to

do more? Who is interested in using the Site as a research base, and what facilities might they need to undertake this work in-situ?

- Stage 3 The consultant will work with key individuals in the JCWHS Team, SCAG, SCAN and others to identify research questions that are needed to inform the management of the World Heritage Site over the next five to ten years, and any that will be needed to be highlighted for the subsequent ten to 15 years. These research questions need to be prioritised in order of importance for maintaining the quality and integrity of the WHS, and then examined in terms of synergy with the outputs of stages 1 and 2. They must also be considered in terms of net gain in relation to potential cost incurred; value for money. Matching of key research questions with active researchers would be an ideal outcome but not one that will necessarily be expected. It will be important for the consultant to identify gaps in areas of active research that are relevant to the management of the Site.
- Stage 4 The final stage will involve a scoping exercise with geoscience funding bodies to identify the potential for funding research studies identified in stages 2 and 3 that are pertinent to their aims and objectives. This might involve developing partnerships, and should in no way conflict with existing researcher applications for funding. Rather, it is hoped that a partnership approach would “add value” to existing applications.

The final output of this work should be a written strategy for promoting, facilitating and undertaking geoscience research along the, or related to the Jurassic coast WHS over the next five to ten years along with a short action plan for taking the strategy forward. All contact information and details of the consultations undertaken will be provided as annexes.

The consultant will be expected to present their results at a Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site Steering Group meeting, and the final report will be provided in hard copy, MS Word and pdf format.

Indirect outputs expected from the work are:

- An investigation into potential collaboration between NERC and partner bodies (such as Natural England, Jurassic Coast and BGS) to set up a Consortium Grant scheme to attract high quality academic research
- Raise awareness and research profile of the Jurassic Coast in academic communities, local groups (e.g. Dorset RIGS) and scientific societies (e.g. Geological Society, Geologists Association, Palaeontological Association), across numerous geoscience themes
- Identify key research institutions supporting MSc and other studentships and promote the Jurassic Coast as a research site to relevant course tutors
- Identify the management implications to manage and maintain the research programme.
- An investigation of the potential to develop resources to support research through the Jurassic Coast Trust
- Other opportunities as identified by the consultant

It is anticipated that the study would involve a range of methodologies, including desk research, data analysis, site visits and primary research (through interviews or questionnaires). They might consider raising awareness through published articles/letters in recognised scientific journals, newsletters and circulars (e.g. Nature - Geoscience, New Scientist, Earth Surface Processes and Landforms, EOS, Geological Magazine, Journal of the Geological Society etc).

## 5. Contract management

The contract will be commissioned and managed by Richard Edmonds, Jurassic Coast Earth Science Manager, on behalf of Dorset County Council (as contracting authority) and the Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Steering Group. Mr Edmonds will receive and comment on all reports produced and will be the primary contact in all circumstances. Contact details are:

Richard Edmonds  
Jurassic Coast World Heritage Team  
c/o Dorset County Council  
County Hall  
Dorchester, DT1 1XJ  
T: 01305 224477, E: r.edmonds@dorsetcc.gov.uk

## 6. Draft timetable and milestones

Expressions of interest, submissions by close of:	<b>November 30<sup>th</sup> 2007</b>
Interview short-listed consultants:	December 7 <sup>th</sup> 2007
Inception meeting:	Early January 2008

At the inception meeting the consultant will work with the JCWHS Earth Science Manager to clarify the terms of the brief, schedule a workplan and identify milestones and outputs. The following dates are indicative and will be subject to discussion at inception stage:

Stages 1 and 2 complete	Mid Feb 2008
Stages 3 and 4 complete	End March 2008
Draft report complete	End April 2008
Final report and action plan complete	Mid May 2008

## 7. Budget

The budget for this project is £9,500 (ex VAT), to include all incidental and travelling expenses.

## 8. Payments

Payment will be made by Dorset CC in three instalments: An initial fee of £1,500, a further £5,000 on submission of the draft final report and the remaining £3,000 on completion of the project.

## 9. Tender conditions

The successful tender will be required to conform to Dorset CC Standing Orders and Financial regulations.

## 10. Quote submission

Please send an expression of interest containing the following information:

- Your response to the brief and your proposal for achieving the desired outcome
- A detailed CV with statement of why your experience makes you best placed for undertaking this contract
- Confirmation of what you will be able to deliver within the budget costs
- Confirmation of availability within identified timeframe
- Insurance cover
- A breakdown of costs with VAT charges shown separately

Please also include details of your employment status.

## 11. Selection of consultancy

Award of this contract will be based on the following criteria: quality of the submission with respect to the required outcome; value for money; robustness of the methodology proposed; innovation; demonstrable and relevant experience; and capability of the named staff to undertake the work within the timescales indicated. There is no obligation to accept the lowest or any tender.

Applicants selected for short-listing will be invited to attend an interview on December 7<sup>th</sup> 2007 at County Hall, Dorchester (see contact details above for full address), where they will be asked to present their approach and answer questions. The successful applicant will be informed within one week of this interview process.

The award of the contract for this initial study does not imply any commitment by the client as to the award of future contracts. Future related contracts will be the subject of separate procurement processes, either through invitations to quote or tender.

## 12. Copyright

All materials and reports arising from this contract will be the copyright of the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Team.

## 13. Return of Submission

Please submit your tender application as a pdf attachment in an email to **Kirstie Snow** at [k.snow@dorsetcc.gov.uk](mailto:k.snow@dorsetcc.gov.uk) , or by post to Kirstie Snow at Dorset County Council, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ with **RESEARCH STRATEGY TENDER SUBMISSION** in the subject line, or on the outside of the envelope. Tenderers should ensure they are fully conversant with the requirements of the contract before making a submission. No claims for neglect in this respect will be entertained by the Council. The County Council will not pay any costs connected with the submission.

- END -