

Invitation To Tender: Loch Fleet Bird Hide Design & Build Contract

1. Background

Highland Birchwoods invites tenders for the design and build of timber bird hide at Loch Fleet. This project is supported by Scottish Natural Heritage and the Northern Periphery Programme and is being managed by Highland Birchwoods

Highland Birchwoods, a registered charity and company limited by guarantee, is owned by a Highland Council (THC), Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) partnership. Its purpose is to promote best practice in the management of woodlands and forests through its project portfolio.

Highland Birchwoods' 'Developing the Scots Pine Resource' project seeks to encourage greater use of Scots pine in higher value markets, as a basis for supporting forestry related enterprises. This project has been tasked with building a Scots pine structure which will demonstrate the use of this timber in construction.

The East Sutherland Woodlands initiative seeks to add biodiversity, recreation, economic and tourism value to local woodlands and encourage those who live, work and visit the area to use East Sutherland's woodlands.

Together, these projects have an opportunity to build a wildlife-watching hide at the edge of Balblair Woods near Golspie and within the Loch Fleet NNR.

2. Contract Objective

To design and build a post and beam timber wildlife watching hide which will demonstrate innovative uses of new and traditional construction techniques using Scots pine and other home-grown timbers; provide a suitable environment for observing wildlife; adds to the recreational infrastructure of Balblair Woods and compliments this high value landscape.

3. Outputs

- 1 x set of architectural plans for a timber post and beam structure, compliant with current Highland Council planning process and Building Control requirements.
- 1 x post and beam timber building which demonstrates the use of new and innovative construction techniques using Scots pine.

4. Methodology

The successful contractor will undertake the work in two stages:

Stage 1 : Design The first task will be to produce draft plans for a structure which will be located at NGR NH803974 (OS Landranger Map 21) on the north shore of Loch Fleet NNR and will sit on the estuarine flats at the seaward edge of Balblair Woods, a mature Scots pine plantation with an existing and well-used path network. (See Appendix 1: Proposed Location).

The building is required to meet the following structural requirements:

- offer 180° views over the estuary
- accommodate groups of between 15 – 20 people. (The internal floorspace will approximately 12 – 15m² based on a space requirement of 0.6m² per person although clarification is required on these figures)
- sit well within the landscape, reflect the character of the area and provide an example of innovative design
- include a ramped access suitable for all users. The access will be linked to the existing path network via a boardwalk
- single-storey elevated above the high tide mark to prevent flooding
- provide space for internal interpretation and seating to be installed after completion.
- comply with Disability Discrimination Act (2005) and provide viewing apertures suitable for use by wheelchair and mobility aid users
- have a low-maintenance finish which sits well in the landscape

As a demonstration build, it will meet the following specification:

- demonstrate the use of Scottish-sourced Scots pine as a construction timber within a post and beam timber building
- demonstrate the use of Scots pine in: “massive timber” panels (brettstapel); ‘Glulam’; and/or cladding. Where these construction and fabrication techniques are used, cross-sections should become a feature, or become easily exposed, for demonstration purposes. (The application of additional or alternative construction techniques (such as shaped laminate) may also be considered.)
- be fabricated off-site in kit-form and assembled on site

Highland Birchwoods (HB) will use the draft plans to consult with the wider community and feedback as required to the contractor who will produce the final plans to The Highland Council Planning and Development Service specifications. The contractor will be required to obtain a Scottish Building Standards Agency Certificate of Design.

The Contractor will submit the final plans to the local authority for approval. If the application is rejected pending slight modifications of the design, the Contractor will be required to make any revisions to the design at no extra cost. Should the application be rejected outright, HB reserves the right to review the future of the project

The indicative budget for this stage is £5,000 (inclusive of VAT).

Stage 2 : Build On receipt of planning permission, HB will authorise the Contractor to start building the kit to be assembled on site at between May and July as per consents from Scottish Natural Heritage. The Contractor will be required to:

- Produce a Site Management Plan and associated risk assessments for the work to be undertaken on site. These will detail the provisions to be made for site preparation, security, management, advisory signage and the movement of materials and equipment on and off site. The Plan and associated permissions will be agreed by Highland Birchwoods, Sutherland Estates and Scottish Natural Heritage prior to any work beginning on site.
- Project manage the build of the kit, delivery and assembly on site and associated groundworks to ensure that the site is well-managed and that work is carried out in accordance with SNH's agreed timeframes and with the permission of Sutherland Estates
- Procure all building materials with preference to locally-sourced timber where possible
- Construct the building as per the approved plans and regulatory consents
- Provide regular updates on build progress to HB and attend site meetings as required
- Reinstate any pathways damaged as a result of the build, remove all waste material and carry out any landscaping require to reinstate the area around the build
- Attend the Building Control inspection on completion of the build

On completion of the build, the contractor may be called upon to carry out any 'snagging' as required. Financial provision for this should be included in your tender. The Contractor will not be required to build the boardwalk but will be required to carry out any groundworks.

The work will be considered complete on confirmation of the Completion Certificate and following a site inspection by SNH, HB and Sutherland Estates.

The indicative budget for this stage is £25,000 inclusive of materials, labour, groundworks, project management costs and VAT.

5. Information & Materials Supplied by Highland Birchwoods

HB will attend the site with the Contractor as part of the contract briefing procedure. At this meeting a full design brief will be issued and the exact location of the hide will be agreed.

HB will make available or obtain site information relevant to the design or build and will liaise with Scottish Natural Heritage, the Local Planning Authority and local interest groups to provide feedback on the design, arrange access and assist in gaining permissions as appropriate.

A key requirement of the build is to demonstrate the use of the construction techniques referred to in the Section 4 of this document, HB appreciates that these are not currently widely used and will offer advice and guidance wherever possible.

Scots pine will be used in the major structural components of the build. While HB will assist in the sourcing of Scots pine and other timbers as required, please indicate as part of your tender submission whether or not you have already identified, or will be able to identify, an appropriate source of Scots pine.

6. Provisional Timescales

It is anticipated that the opening of the hide will take place during the Golspie Gala Week (w/c 2nd August). To achieve this, the following timetable is proposed:

4 th March 2010	Contract briefing meeting with Contractor
March 2010	Draft designs and present to interest groups
w/c 5 th April	Finalise design
20 th April	Submit planning application to Highland Council Provisional date of Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross Planning Committee meeting (NB. Next meeting is 1 st June)
May – July	Groundworks on site; hide fabricated in kit form for assembly on-site in June - July
w/c 2 nd Aug	Opening to public

This timescale is indicative only and assumes a 6-week turnaround time for planning permission. Should planning permission be declined, the timetable will be revised accordingly and the completion date may be delayed.

As part of your submission, please provide a programme of work, which clearly indicates your proposed timetable and availability between March – September 2010 and indicates any likely constraints which may affect your delivery.

7. Cost

The indicative budget for this project is in the region of £ 30,000 (inclusive of VAT)

8. Payment Schedule

80% of the contract fee will be made available during the lifespan of the contract and a payment schedule will be agreed on award. A final payment of 20% will be withheld until award of a Completion Certificate is confirmed by the Planning Authority.

9. Health, Safety & Insurance

All health and safety is the responsibility of the contractor. Any contract resulting from this invitation will be with you as an independent contractor, and you will be required to arrange and evidence appropriate insurance cover. A Site Management Plan and Risk Assessment will be required prior to work commencing on site. It will be the responsibility of the Contractor to provide and maintain adequate PPE for the duration of the contract.

10. Reporting Procedure

The contract will be managed by HB. A preliminary meeting will be held with HB and the contractor on site to ensure that all are fully aware and in agreement with what needs to be done to fulfil the terms of the contract. Day-to-day contact will be with Ben Davies, DSPR Project Manager, contact details below. The Contractor will be required to attend site meetings at the request of the Project Manager; notify HB in advance of work commencing and finishing on site; and provide regular progress updates.

HB will examine the outputs of the contract and the contractor may be called upon to correct any errors, provide missing information, or answer queries regarding any of the outputs at their own cost.

11. Tender Requirements

HB is inviting tender submissions which include the following information:

1. Rough or outline sketches of a suggested design(s) for a single-storey building with no internal partitions or furnishings, shuttered apertures and a pitched roof. Suggested alternative roofing or glazing options are also invited
2. Draft written specification for the suggested design
3. Proposed Programme of Work, which clearly indicates your proposed timetable and availability between March – September 2010; indicates any likely constraints which may affect your delivery and outlines your methodology
4. Full Schedule of Prices & Rates for the full work as detailed and within the indicative budget. Total daily rates should be clearly expressed. Should you identify or recommend any additional spend (i.e. alternative glazing or roofing options) please itemise and include these costs
5. Evidence of the experience, technical capability and qualifications of key personnel
6. Examples of similar work that you have undertaken
7. Details of relevant insurance policies; health & safety policy and a sample risk assessment
8. Confirmation that the tender is bone fide.

Tenders which fail to meet these requirements may be considered incomplete. Each compliant tender will be judged against the following criteria:

- **General Suitability:**
 - Evidence of the experience, capability and qualifications of key personnel
 - Technical capacity
 - Demonstration of understanding of brief
 - Creativity and innovation of the proposal and its fit with the landscape
 - Technical competence of tender (i.e freedom from error)
- **Commercial Suitability**
 - Supply time (ability to deliver on time)
 - Compliance to ITT
 - Acceptance of terms

- **Technical Suitability**
Quality, fit for purpose, ability to deliver to the required standard
Subject matter knowledge
- **Financial Suitability**
Value for Money
Compliance with payment and delivery schedules
Affordability

12. Additional Information

The hide will be situated within Loch Fleet National Nature Reserve (NNR) 3km south of Golspie and 8km north of Dornoch. It is an extensive coastal Reserve containing the most northerly estuary on the east coast of Scotland along with the adjoining dunes, links and pinewoods. These habitats sustain a wealth of wildlife throughout the year. The Reserve supports large numbers of waders and wildfowl and is particularly important during the autumn and winter months when impressive flocks gather in the sheltered waters. The dunes and links are a mosaic of coastal grasslands and lichen-rich heaths. The pinewoods support a number of scarce vascular plants and a rich lichen community and are of particular importance for one-flowered wintergreen and the pinewood specialities, twinflower and creeping lady's-tresses. The Reserve is a designated site managed by Scottish Natural Heritage, Sutherland Estates and Scottish Wildlife Trust. Further information on the Reserve can be found at <http://www.nnr-scotland.org.uk/reserve.asp?NNRId=11>

Planning permission will be granted subject to NATURA assessments and restrictions will be placed on the timings of site works to prevent disturbance to the flora and fauna of the area. It is anticipated that construction on site will therefore be restricted to May – late August.

Contractors will be required to fulfil their duties as required by the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 (Part 2). In the unlikely event that the construction will require over 30 work days, the Contractor will be required to notify the HSE and become the CDM Co-ordinator for the project.

Owing to the requirements of some public funders, parts (or all) of the drawings may be required to remain in the public domain. If this is a concern, prospective bidders should contact HB for further clarification.

13. Closing date for submission of tender

Completed tenders must be received in hard copy by **12 noon on Monday 1st March 2010**. Submissions received after this date and time will not be considered.

14. Contract award conditions

Highland Birchwoods reserves the right not to award any contract as a result of this tender process and is not bound to accept the lowest bid.

15. Submitting your tender

Sealed bids should be marked 'Loch Fleet Hide Tender' and sent to:

Ben Davies
Highland Birchwoods
Littleburn Road
Munlochy
IV8 8NN

For any further information, please contact:

Ben Davies t: 01463 811964 e-mail: ben.davies@highlandbirchwoods.co.uk or

Julie Paton t: 01463 811653 e-mail: julie.paton@highlandbirchwoods.co.uk

This project is supported by:



Appendix 1 : Proposed Location



Figure 1: Proposed location at NH803974



Figure 2: View from NH803974

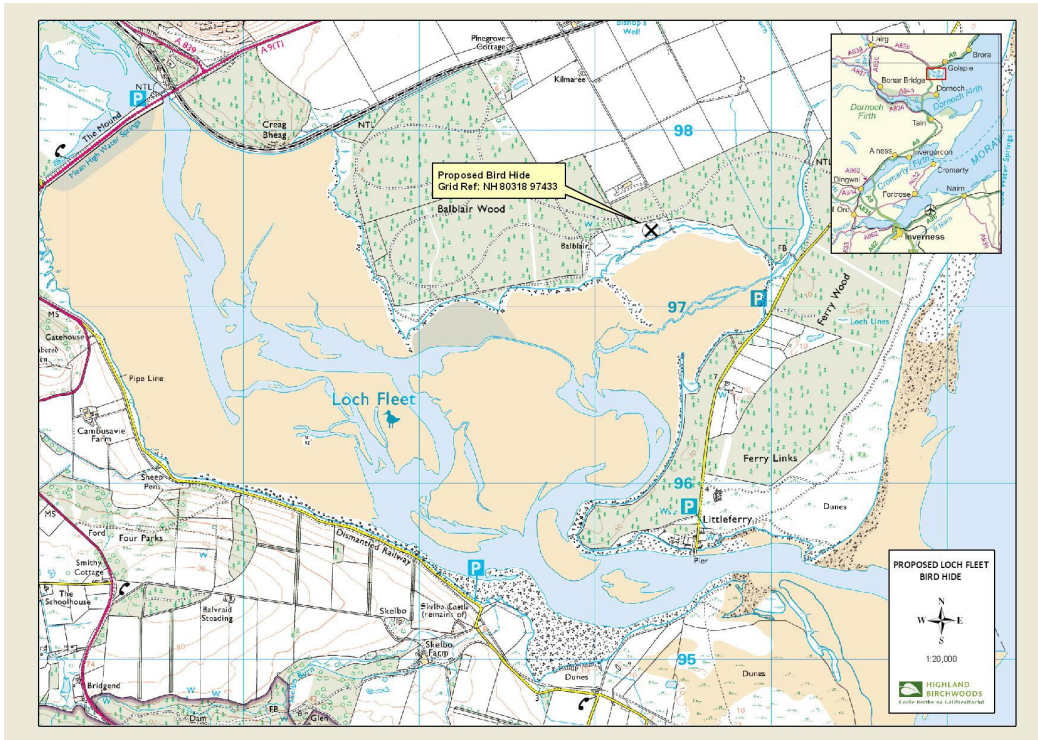


Figure 3: Location Map