

Consultancy Brief for Scoping New Heritage Attraction at Lowther Castle

Project Overview

Title: Lowther Castle and Gardens North Park Heritage Development Scoping Report

Status: Freelance Contract

Fee: £6,000 (inclusive of VAT and expenses)

Duration: October 2026 – February 2027

Closing Date: 4th September 2026

Lowther Castle and Gardens Trust (LCGT) is seeking to commission a heritage consultancy to scope the development of a new heritage attraction in the North Park at Lowther Castle and Gardens (Cumbria), bringing to life the estate's medieval past. This will build on the current visitor offering at Lowther Castle and Gardens, which includes the 19th-century castle, exhibition, café, gardens and 'Lost Castle' adventure playground.

Background

[Lowther Castle and Gardens](#) are one of the Lake District's most popular attractions. Visitors flock to discover the picturesque ruins of Lowther's 19th-century castle and its historic gardens, learn about the estate's history via the castle's exhibition, and explore the 'Lost Castle' adventure playground. Few realise that, in the parkland just to the north, stands a medieval site potentially of national, even international, significance.

The North Park is an open area of meadow, with a woodland and tree-lined avenue, running approximately 600m in length between the 19th-century castle and St Michael's church, on a promontory overlooking the River Lowther. It is currently free to access, mostly used by walkers. LCGT has recently brought St Michael's church within its care, with plans to give it a new lease of life as part of heritage development in the North Park. The North Park falls within Lowther's programme of [Natural Land Management](#), which seeks to reverse the decline in insects, birds, wildlife and wildflowers by looking carefully at the management of lowland, woodland, wetland and upland.

Recent research in history and archaeology is revealing the North Park's biography c.700-1300. This dramatic promontory was home, between 8th and 11th centuries, to a wealthy and important church marked out by a sculptural landscape. In 1092, the Normans conquered Cumbria and built a castle in the North Park, together with a village, and overwrote the early church with a Norman building. The village flourished and, from the later thirteenth century, the emerging Lowther family played a key part in the Anglo-Scottish wars. Medieval Lowther thus stood at the crossroads of Britain, both geographically and historically. Ongoing research is investigating the site's historic environment through archaeobotany and other methods.

In line with Lowther Castle and Gardens' current visitor offering, the North Park will be a landmark attraction to excite, inspire and educate visitors. The North Park's significant assets include: distinctive topography; the remains of early medieval monumental crosses and hogback monuments; a standing medieval church; the earthworks of the Norman castle and

village; the estate's charters documenting its people; and emerging research on the North Park's historic environment.

Further information on the North Park's medieval history is available in the attached briefing.

Scope of the Brief

The Trust is seeking a heritage consultant to support LCGT to scope the development of the North Park as an ambitious and dynamic attraction that will excite, inspire and educate visitors.

The consultant will work with LCGT trustees, Jim Lowther and the Lowther Castle and Gardens team, and historians and archaeologists; they will also consult with stakeholders (e.g. regional government, heritage and third-sector organisations).

They will report to the LCGT trustees, chaired by Bryan Gray.

The appointee will prepare a final report for trustees, likely to include:

- analysis of comparator sites
- identification of heritage risks and opportunities
- an exploration of how the North Park's assets can be used through inclusive design to engage visitors
- how the heritage development of the North Park can complement Lowther's Natural Land Management programme
- signposting of potential funding routes and business models

In accepting this commission, the consultant will agree not to use generative AI in any form for the commissioned work.

The deadline for the report is expected to be in January 2027.

Who we are looking for

We are looking for a consultant with:

- experience or understanding of working across historic landscapes, from archaeology and history to historic buildings and topography
- familiarity with established and cutting-edge heritage technologies and methods
- an understanding of how to engage a broad visitor demographic
- an appreciation of inclusive design in visitor attractions
- An interest in environmental heritage and supporting current conservation commitments
- An understanding of heritage funding opportunities
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills, verbal and written
- A willingness to travel to visit the site as needed, as well as working remotely

How to apply

To apply for this role, please submit the following materials to LCGT trustee Dr Sophie Ambler s.ambler@lancaster.ac.uk by midday **Friday 4th September 2026**:

- CV
- Details of two recent referees (these can be for employed positions as well as freelance work). We will contact referees after interview
- A proposal of no more than 6 sides of A4, including:
 - Relevant experience and knowledge to meet the brief
 - Outline of methodologies and delivery plan
 - A breakdown of your budget, including your daily rate

Informal inquiries are welcomed and should be addressed to Sophie Ambler via the address above.

For more information on the research underpinning this project, see the attached briefing and the [project website](#).

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview the week of 28th September 2026. The deadline for the report is expected to be in February 2027.